

HAVE YOU MET HIM?

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Cecil Clements

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Scripture: Isaiah 42: 1-9

Isaiah 42: 1-9

42 *"Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold;
My chosen one in whom My soul delights.
I have put My Spirit upon Him;
He will bring forth justice to the nations.
2 He will not cry out nor raise His voice,
Nor make His voice heard in the street.
3 A bent reed He will not break off
And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish;
He will faithfully bring forth justice.
4 He will not be disheartened or crushed
Until He has established justice on the earth;
And the coastlands will wait expectantly for His law."*
5 *This is what God the Lord says,
Who created the heavens and stretched them out,
Who spread out the earth and its offspring,
Who gives breath to the people on it
And spirit to those who walk in it:
6 "I am the Lord, I have called You in righteousness,
I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You,
And I will appoint You as a covenant to the people,
As a light to the nations,
7 To open blind eyes,
To bring out prisoners from the dungeon
And those who dwell in darkness from the prison.
8 I am the Lord, that is My name;
I will not give My glory to another,
Nor My praise to idols.
9 Behold, the former things have come to pass,
Now I declare new things;
Before they sprout I proclaim them to you."*

700 years before Jesus ever walked the dusty roads in Galilee, God was already telling the world what His Messiah would be like. Through the prophet Isaiah, God paints a portrait, not of a warrior king shouting commands in the streets, but of a servant marked with quiet strength, deep compassion, and unwavering faithfulness.

"This is My chosen One," God says. "The One I delight in. I have put My Spirit upon Him. And this Messiah will bring justice, not only to Israel, but to the nations. And yet, He will not establish His kingdom through noise, spectacle, or even coercion. He will not cry out in the streets. He will not force His way forward. Instead, He will be gentle. A bruised reed, He will not break. A smoldering wick He will not snuff out. He will come close to people who are already broken, those barely holding on. Those whose faith is flickering like a dying flame." And yet, while the task is enormous, while the

darkness is thick, Isaiah tells us something very remarkable. He says, “He will not grow faint. He will not be crushed. He will not stop until justice is established across the earth.”

And then the passage shifts almost like an interlude. God steps forward and reminds us who is speaking. “I am the Lord,” He says. The One who created the heavens and stretched them out, who formed the earth, who gives breath to its people and spirit to all who walk upon it. And this is not a hopeful prediction from a distant observer. This is the creator of the universe making a covenantal promise. It is God binding Himself to His word, staking His own name and faithfulness on its fulfillment. What He promises here is not based on our strength but on His unchanging commitment.

Then God addresses the Messiah directly. He says, “I have called you in righteousness. I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you. I will appoint you as a covenant for the people and a light for the nations.” And the mission is so unmistakable. The mission is to open blind eyes, to bring prisoners out of dungeons, to release those who dwell in darkness.

And then it ends with one of the most sobering passages, I think, in scripture. God says, “I am the Lord, that is My name. I will not give My glory to another nor My praise to idols.”

When you look at these 9 verses, they can very easily be subdivided into four thoughts that kind of leap out at us to dig deeper.

1. The sending of the Messiah is God’s initiative.

Because the passage doesn’t begin with human need but with divine initiative. God Himself introduces the Messiah and qualifies Him by saying, “My chosen One.” Handpicked by Him. Then He says, “In whom My soul delights.” He is deeply loved by the Father. Then, “I have put My Spirit upon Him.” Empowered by God, not self-made.

And this reminds us that salvation begins in God’s heart, not in our search for Him. Before we ever reach for God, God is already reaching out for us. John 3:16 captures this so beautifully. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

2. The Messiah’s mission, what He has come to do.

God tells us what the Messiah will accomplish. He will bring justice to the nations, restoring what is broken. He will open blind eyes – not only physical sight, but spiritual understanding. He will release prisoners that are bound by darkness and fear and sin and despair.

This is not some abstract spiritual idea. It’s God’s active rescue plan – healing, freeing, restoring, illuminating real lives.

3. This will be carried forth because of the character of the Messiah.

The task is overwhelming. Yet Isaiah tells us that He will not grow faint. Even though the task is onerous, He will not be crushed. He will persevere until justice is established. And this shows us the heart of Jesus – quiet strength, unbreakable, unshakeable resolve and steady faithfulness.

He does not abandon the work halfway. What He begins in the world and in us, He completes.

4. The final word from God Himself.

God steps in with a very sobering declaration. He reminds us that He is the creator of heaven and earth, the giver of breath and spirit. And then He says, “I am the Lord. I will not give My glory to another.”

Beloved, this is the holy boundary line. Everything! The sending of the Son, the saving of people, the miracles, the restoration is God’s work from beginning to end. We may witness it, benefit from it, and even participate in it. but we can never claim it as ours. And this passage ends where all true faith must end – with God alone receiving the glory.

The passage is framed by God’s initiative at the beginning and God’s glory at the end. and between those two divine bookends is the living heart of the Messiah, His mission and His character. His mission on what He has to do and the character that is going to take Him through it. That’s where I want us to spend a little time looking at those two areas.

If you remember, in Luke’s gospel ch. 4, Jesus stands in the synagogue at Nazareth and reads directly from Isaiah. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He has appointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the captives and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” And then Jesus says something that’s absolutely breathtaking. He says, “Today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Isaiah does not only describe what Jesus would do. It tells us how He would do it.

- He opens blind eyes without crushing the broken. Remember Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52). Jesus does not hurry him or silence him, though the crowd even rebukes him telling him to be quiet. Jesus stops, listens and gently asks: What do you want Me to do for you? A bruised reed He does not break.
- He released prisoners without snuffing out dim faith. To the woman caught in adultery in John 8 – Jesus does not excuse her sin, but He also does not shame her. “Neither do I condemn you,” He says, “but go and sin no more.”
Compassion without compromise.
Justice without cruelty.
- He brought justice, yet never grew faint or crushed. When rejected in Nazareth, when He was opposed by the Pharisees, misunderstood by even His disciples and abandoned at the cross. “He does not turn back for the joy set before Him, He endured the cross,” as the writer of Hebrews says in ch. 12. Isaiah said He would not be crushed and even death could not crush Him.
- He persevered gently with flickering wicks. Take Peter. He denied Him three times and Jesus does not humiliate Him on the beach. We read in John 21. He gently restores him with the same questions repeated thrice: “Peter, do you love Me?” He rekindles a dimly burning wick instead of extinguishing it. And then He carries out this divine mission with divine tenderness.

Every miracle, healing lepers, touching the unclean, forgiving sinners, eating with outcasts is Isaiah 42 in flesh and blood. Justice without the noise, strength without cruelty, persistence without any pride, and compassion without compromise. Between ‘God sending’ at the beginning of Isaiah 42 and ‘God’s glory’ at the end, stands the beautiful truth.

This is how God saves the world. Through a Messiah who never breaks bruised reeds and never puts out flickering flames. And so, the most important question for us this morning is this:

Important Questions for us.

Have we met the Messiah? Have we been touched by the Messiah? Have we truly received the good news or are we still living as captives caught up in the things of this world? Have we allowed Him to break the chains of fear, shame, bitterness, and maybe even hidden bondages and addictions? What are we seeing now that maybe we could not see before. And what should we be seeing now but are not seeing? Because we have not yet allowed Him to remove the blindness, to lift the inner restraints that keep us moving only in one maybe narrow direction.

Another question: Are you still under oppression? Or have you begun to experience victory over the taunts, the temptations, the threats, the quiet pressures that often weigh us down? Remember, He came to release the oppressed. And if you feel tied down today, then what you need is not more effort. You need a touch from the Messiah.

That brings us to a deeper question. Has His character become your character? Do we deal gently with people who are barely holding on? Are we restoring rather than condemning people? Protecting flickering faith instead of snuffing it out? Are we standing for justice when it is inconvenient? Showing strength without cruelty? Persistence in our behavior without any pride, compassion without compromise?

Where are you, beloved, in that spectrum today? Has the Messiah touched you? Has He changed you? Is He still changing you? Are you moving from glory to glory, walking the quiet path of sanctification, of being changed? Is Christ shaping you for heaven? And he does it through His Holy Spirit. While He once touched people physically in the towns and villages of Galilee, today, through His Spirit, He reaches the entire world and reaches you and me.

So, the final question is simple but searching. Are we on track? And if not, what will you do about it today? So let me ask you as we close.

1. Have you met the Messiah? Have you invited Him into your heart? because that is the first step. If you have not, beloved, that is the most important decision that you will make in your life – to receive Jesus as your Savior.

As Jesus Himself said, “What will it profit a man or a woman if they should gain the whole world and yet lose their soul?” If you don’t know Him, beloved, today is a good day, the right day to invite Him in.

2. Perhaps you have invited the Messiah into your heart, but He does not yet have full control in your heart. You have given Him residence but not authority. Your will, which is still in play, is blocking Him from certain rooms and areas in your life.
3. It may be that you love Jesus and you have yielded your life to Him. Yet the things that He is speaking into your life, you are hesitant to obey. We often say that 99% obedience is still 100% disobedience. If Jesus is your co-pilot today, you’re in deep trouble. You need to get out of the driver’s seat and let Him take charge.

So this morning, just three things for our consideration. If you haven’t received Him as Savior, would you take a moment and do it now? If you’ve not given Him full control, would you give Him that control now? And if you’re resisting His voice, turn around today and say, “Here I am, Lord, and I will do what You want me to do.”

Let's look to the Lord in prayer.

Heavenly Father, in the quietness of these moments, we just invite Your Spirit to speak to our spirits, that we may know how to respond to You this morning.

Lord, I pray for those who are receiving you for the first time. Let joy flow into their hearts, Lord, confirming for them that they have made the greatest decision of their lives. And let them know, Lord, that Your Holy Spirit has now taken residence in their hearts and will lead them.

Lord, for those who've just handed over the whole key bunch to You, take charge, Lord, clean rooms, and present us as faultless before the throne room of grace. Lord, and for those who have been resisting Your move, thinking it's too daunting or too fearful, Lord, we pray that You would remove this trepidation and replace it with confidence, that where You invite us to go, You are already there and have paved the way. So, Lord, do as we have purposed in our hearts this morning, and we will give You the praise.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.