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ISAIAH 42: 1 "Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delights— I have put my Spirit on him. He will bring justice to the nations.

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The prophet sets forth the meekness of Messiah's character, and the extent and blessings of his kingdom, particularly among the Gentiles, Isa 42:1-9. In consequence of this he calls on the whole creation to join him in one song of praise to God, Isa 42:10-12. After which he seems again to glance at the deliverance from the captivity; although the words may full as well apply to the deliverance vouchsafed to the Church; to the overthrow of her most powerful enemies; and to the prevalency of true religion over idolatry and error, Isa 42:13-17. The prophet then reproves the Jews for their blindness and infidelity in rejecting the Messiah, and gives intimations of these judgments which their guilt would draw on them, Isa 42:18-25.

The prophet, having opened his subject with the preparation for the return from captivity at Babylon, and intimated that a much greater deliverance was covered under the veil of that event, proceeded to vindicate the power of God, as Creator and disposer of all things; and his infinite knowledge, from his prediction of future events, and in particular of that deliverance. He went still farther, and pointed out the instrument by which he should effect the redemption of his people the Jews from slavery; namely, a great conqueror, whom he would call forth from the north and the east to execute his orders. In this chapter he proceeds to the greater deliverance; and at once brings forth into full view, without throwing any veil of allegory over the subject, the Messiah. "Behold my servant, Messiah," says the Chaldee. St. Matthew has applied it directly to Christ; nor can it with any justice or propriety be applied to any other person or character whatever. - L

#### Verse 1

Behold my servant, whom I uphold - בו אתמך ethmach bo, on whom I lean. Alluding to the custom of kings leaning on the arm of their most beloved and faithful servant. All, both Jews and Christians, agree, that the seven first verses of this chapter belong to Christ. Now, as they are evidently a continuation of the prophecy in the preceding chapter, that prophecy cannot belong to Cyrus, but to Christ.

He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles "He shall publish judgment to the nations" - Four MSS. two ancient, add the conjunction ומשפט vemishpat. See Mat 12:18.

The word משפט mishpat, judgment, like צדקה tzedakah, righteousness, is taken in a great latitude of signification. It means rule, form, order, model, plan; rule of right, or of religion; an ordinance, institution; judicial process, cause, trial, sentence, condemnation, acquittal, deliverance, mercy, etc. It certainly means in this place the law to be published by Messiah, the institution of the Gospel.

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ISAIAH 42: 2 He will not shout, nor raise his voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street.

ISAIAH 42: 3 He won't break a bruised reed. He won't quench a dimly burning wick. He will faithfully bring justice.

ISAIAH 42: 4 He will not fail nor be discouraged, until he has set justice in the earth, and the islands will wait for his law."

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## Verse 4

He shall not fail nor be discouraged "His force shall not be abated nor broken" - Rabbi Meir ita citat locum istum, ut post ירוץ yaruts, addat כוחו cocho, robur ejus, quod hodie Ilon comparet in textu Hebraeo, sed addendum videtur, ut sensus fiat planior. "Rabbi Meir cites this passage so as to add after ירוץ yarats כוחו cocho, his force, which word is not found in the present Hebrew text, but seems necessary to be added to make the sense more distinct." Capell. Crit. Sac. p. 382. For which reason I had added it in the translation, before I observed this remark of Capellus. - L.

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ISAIAH 42: 5 Thus says God the LORD, he who created the heavens and stretched them out, he who spread out the earth and that which comes out of it, he who gives breath to its people and spirit to those who walk in it.

ISAIAH 42: 6 "I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness, and will hold your hand, and will keep you, and make you a covenant for the people, as a light for the nations;

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## Verse 6

A covenant of the people "A covenant to the people" - For עם am, two MSS. of Dr. Kennicott's, and of my own, read עולם olam, the covenant of the age to come, or the everlasting covenant; which seems to give a clearer and better sense. But I think the word ברית berith, here, should not be translated covenant, but covenant sacrifice, which meaning it often has; and undoubtedly in this place. This gives a still stronger and clearer sense.

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ISAIAH 42: 7 to open the blind eyes, to bring the prisoners out of the dungeon, and those who sit in darkness out of the prison.

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## Verse 7

To open the blind eyes - In this verse the prophet seems to set forth the spiritual redemption, under images borrowed from the temporal deliverance.

Out of the prison house "And from the dungeon" - The Septuagint, Syriac, and four MSS., one ancient, add the conjunction ו va, ומבית umibbeith, and from the house.

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ISAIAH 42: 8 "I am the LORD. That is my name. I will not give my glory to another, nor my praise to engraved images.

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## Verse 8

I am the Lord - יהוה ani Yehovah. This is the famous tetragrammaton, or name of four letters, which we write Jehovah Yehovah, Yehveh, Yeveh, Jhuh, Javah, etc. The letters are Y H U H. The Jews never pronounce it, and the true pronunciation is utterly unknown.

That is my name - A name peculiar to myself.

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ISAIAH 42: 9 Behold, the former things have happened, and I declare new things. I tell you about them before they come up."

ISAIAH 42: 10 Sing to the LORD a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that is therein, the islands and their inhabitants.

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#### Verse 10

Ye that go down to the sea - This seems not to belong to this place; it does not well consist with what follows, "and the fullness thereof." They that go down upon the sea means navigators, sailors, traders, such as do business in great waters; an idea much too confined for the prophet, who means the sea in general, as it is used by the Hebrews, for the distant nations, the islands, the dwellers on the sea-coasts all over the world. I suspect that some transcriber had the Psa 107:23 verse of Psalm 107 running in his head, יורדי הים באניות yoredey haiyam booniyoth, and wrote in this place יורדי הים yoredey haiyam instead of ירעם הים yiram haiyam, or יריע yari, or ירן yaran; "let the sea roar, or shout, or exult." But as this is so different in appearance from the present reading, I do not take the liberty of introducing it into the translation. Conjeceram legendum יגידו yegidu, ut Isa 42:12; sed non favent Versiones. "I would propose to read יגידו yegidu, as in Isa 42:12; but this is not supported by the Versions." - Secker.

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ISAIAH 42: 11 Let the wilderness and its cities raise their voices, with the villages that Kedar inhabits. Let the inhabitants of Sela sing. Let them shout from the top of the mountains!

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#### Verse 11

Let the wilderness - The most uncultivated countries, and the most rude and uncivilized people, shall confess and celebrate with thanksgiving the blessing of the knowledge of God graciously imparted to them. By the desert is meant Arabia Deserta; by the rocky country, Arabia Petraea; by the mountains, probably those celebrated ones, Paran, Horeb, Sinai, in the same country; to which also belonged Kedar, a clan of Arabians, dwelling for the most part in tents; but there were others of them who inhabited or frequented cities and villages, as may be collected from this place of the prophet. Pietro della Valle, speaking of the people of Arabia Deserta, says: "There is a sort of Arabs of that country called Maedi, who with their herds, of buffaloes for the most part, sometimes live in the deserts, and sometimes in cities; from whence they have their name, which signifies wandering, going from place to place. They have no professed houses; nor are they properly Bedau, or Beduui, that is, Deserticoli, who are the most noble among them, and never abide within walls, but always go wandering through the open country with their black tents; nor are they properly called Hhadesi, as they call those who dwell in cities, and lands with fixed houses. These by the latter are esteemed ignoble and base; but both are considered as of low condition." Viaggi, Parte 3 lett. ii.

The villages that Kedar doth inhabit - The Arabs, according to the Targum.

The inhabitants of the rock - They who dwell on fortified places. The Vulgate has habitatores Petraeae, "the inhabitants of Arabia Petraea." Those who make the rock Jesus Christ, the inhabitants

of the rock, true believers in him; the singing, rejoicing for the salvation they have received; abuse and disgrace the passage and the pulpit. I have heard a clergyman, a magistrate, a justice of the quorum, spend an hour in showing from these words,

1. That they meant Jesus Christ, and none other.
2. That he might be fully compared to a rock, as the foundation on which his Church was built, and on which all true believers rested for their salvation.
3. A rock, because of his strength and might in destroying his enemies, and supporting his friends.
4. A refreshing rock, like that in the wilderness; and that rock was Christ.
5. A perspective rock, from which true believers could discover their heavenly inheritance: "When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I, "etc. Now all this is true in itself; but false in respect to the words on which it was professedly built, for they have no such meaning.

ISAIAH 42: 12 Let them give glory to the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands.

ISAIAH 42: 13 The LORD will go out like a mighty man. He will stir up zeal like a man of war. He will raise a war cry. Yes, he will shout aloud. He will triumph over his enemies.

ISAIAH 42: 14 "I have been silent a long time. I have been quiet and restrained myself. Now I will cry out like a travailing woman. I will both gasp and pant.

#### Verse 14

I have been still "Shall I keep silence for ever" - After מעולם meolam, in the copy which the Septuagint had before them, followed the word הלעולם, heleolam, εσωπησα απ' αωου: Μη και αι σωπησομαι according to MSS. Pachom. and 50. D. 2 and Edit. Complut., which word, הלעולם haleolam, has been omitted in the text by an easy mistake of a transcriber, because of the similitude of the word preceding. Shall I always keep silences like that of Juvenal: Semper ego auditor tantum? Shall I always be a hearer only?

ISAIAH 42: 15 I will destroy mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs. I will make the rivers islands, and will dry up the pools.

#### Verse 15

I wilt make the rivers islands "I will make the rivers dry deserts" - Instead of יימ iyim, islands, read יי צי tsiim; a very probable conjecture of Houbigant.

ISAIAH 42: 16 I will bring the blind by a way that they don't know. I will lead them in paths that they don't know. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. I will do these things, and I will not forsake them.

## Verse 16

In paths - The Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and nine MSS., (two ancient), read **ובנתיבות** ubenotiboth.

Will I do unto them - **עשיתם** asitem. This word, so written as it is in the text, means "thou wilt do, "in the second person. The Masoretes have indeed pointed it for the first person; but the י yod in the last syllable is absolutely necessary to distinguish the first person; and so it is written in forty MSS., **עשיתים** asithim.

Jarchi, Kimchi, Sal. ben Melec, etc., agree that the past time is here put for the future, **עשיתי** asithi for **אעשה**; and indeed the context necessarily requires that interpretation. Farther it is to be observed that **עשיתים** asithim is put for **עשיתי להם** asithi lahem, "I have done them," for "I have done for them;" as **עשיתני** asitheni is for **עשיתי לי** asithi li, "I have made myself," for "I have made for myself," Eze 29:2; and in the celebrated passage of Jephthah's vow, Jdg 11:31, **והעליתיהו עולה** veheelitihu olah for **עולה לו** heelithi lo olah, "I will offer him a burnt-offering," for "I will offer unto him (that is, unto Jehovah) a burnt-offering;" by an ellipsis of the preposition of which Buxtorf gives many other examples, Thes. Grammat. lib. 2:17. See also note on Isa 65:5. A late happy application of this grammatical remark to that much disputed passage has perfectly cleared up a difficulty which for two thousand years had puzzled all the translators and expositors, had given occasion to dissertations without number, and caused endless disputes among the learned on the question, whether Jephthah sacrificed his daughter or not; in which both parties have been equally ignorant of the meaning of the place, of the state of the fact, and of the very terms of the vow; which now at last has been cleared up beyond all doubt by my learned friend Dr. Randolph, Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford, in his Sermon on Jephthah's Vow, Oxford, 1766. - L.

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ISAIAH 42: 17 "Those who trust in engraved images, who tell molten images, 'You are our gods' will be turned back. They will be utterly disappointed.

ISAIAH 42: 18 "Hear, you deaf, and look, you blind, that you may see.

ISAIAH 42: 19 Who is blind, but my servant? Or who is as deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is as blind as he who is at peace, and as blind as the LORD's servant?

## Verse 19

As my messenger that I sent "As he to whom I have sent my messengers" - **כמלכי אשלח** kemalachey eshlach, ut ad quem nuncios meos misi. The Vulgate and Chaldee are almost the only interpreters who render it rightly, in consistence with the rest of the sentence, and in perfect agreement with the Hebrew idiom; according to which the ellipsis is to be thus supplied: **כל אשר מלאכי אשלח** kelaasher malachey eshlach; "As he to whom I have sent my messengers."

As he that is perfect "As he who is perfectly instructed" - See note on Isa 44:2 (note).

And blind as the Lord's servant "And deaf, as the servant of Jehovah" - For **ועור** veiver, and blind, we must read **וחרש** vecheresh, and deaf: **κωφος**, Symmachus, and so a MS. The mistake is palpable, and the correction self-evident, and admissible though there had been no authority for it.

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ISAIAH 42: 20 You see many things, but don't observe. His ears are open, but he doesn't listen.

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#### Verse 20

Seeing many things "Thou hast seen indeed" - The text has ראיית רבית raith rabith, which the Masoretes in the marginal Keri have corrected to ראות רבות reoth rabboth; as indeed one hundred and seven MSS., and five editions, now have it in the text. This was probably the reading of most of the MSS. of their time; which, though they approved of it, out of some superstition they would not admit into their standard text. But these wretched critics, though they perceived there was some fault, yet did not know where the fault lay, nor consequently how to amend it; and yet it was open enough to a judicious eye: רבות rabboth, sic veteres; et tamen forte legendum, ראות reoth, vide cap. Isa 6:9." - Secker. That is, ראיית ראות raith, reoth, seeing, thou shalt see. I believe no one will doubt of admitting this as the true reading.

But he heareth not "Yet thou wilt not hear" - For ישמע yishma, read תשמע tishma, in the second person; so all the ancient Versions and forty MSS. of Kennicott's, (four of them ancient), and seventeen of De Rossi's, and perhaps five more. Two others have תשמעו tishmeu, second person plural.

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ISAIAH 42: 21 It pleased the LORD, for his righteousness' sake, to magnify the law, and make it honourable.

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#### Verse 21

He will magnify the law "He hath exalted his own praise" - For תורה torah, the law, the Septuagint read תודה todah, praise.

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ISAIAH 42: 22 But this is a robbed and plundered people. All of them are snared in holes, and they are hidden in prisons.

They have become captives, and no one delivers; and a plunder, and no one says, 'Restore them!'

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#### Verse 22

They are all of them snared in holes "All their chosen youths are taken in the toils" - For הפח haphch read הופחו huphachu, in the plural number, hophal; as החבאו hochbau, which answers to it in the following member of the sentence. Le Clerc, Houbigant. הפח huppach, Secker.

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ISAIAH 42: 23 Who is there among you who will give ear to this? Who will listen and hear for the time to come?

ISAIAH 42: 24 Who gave Jacob as plunder, and Israel to the robbers? Didn't the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in his ways, and they disobeyed his law.

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 Verse 24

We have sinned "They have sinned" - For **אָנֹכִי** chatanu, "we have sinned," first person; the Septuagint and Chaldee read **אָנֹכִי** chateu, "they have sinned," in the third person.

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ISAIAH 42: 25 Therefore he poured the fierceness of his anger on him, and the strength of battle; and it set him on fire all around, but he didn't know; and it burned him, but he didn't take it to heart."

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## Verse 25

The fury of his anger "The heat of his wrath" - For **חַמָּה** chammah, the Bodl. MS. has **חַמַּת** chammath, in regimine, more regularly.

It hath set him on fire round about - So thoroughly hardened are the Jewish people, that they are represented as being in a house on fire, and even scorched with the flames, without perceiving their danger, or feeling that they are hurt! What a picture of mental induration! and this is their state to the present day. But by whom shall Jacob arise? for in this sense he is small indeed. Many efforts have been made to Christianize them, but without effect; and is this to be wondered at, while we tell them how great they are, how learned, how wise, how much we owe to them, that they are still the peculiar people of God, etc., etc.? If all this be true, what can they gain by becoming Christians? Whereas a more stupid, proud, hardened, ignorant people can scarcely be found in the civilized world, and they are most grossly ignorant of their own Scriptures.