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St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
2100 16<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Austin, MN 55912-1749  
Pastor Ted Barthels  
Sermon preached on  
March 15, 2015  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent

Scripture Lessons: Hebrews 10:1-14, Passion: Trial before Pilate  
Hymns: 155; 142:1-4; 163:1-6; 173:1,2

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord  
and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sermon Text: Isaiah 42:1-8

“Behold! My Servant whom I uphold,  
My Elect One in whom My soul delights!  
I have put My Spirit upon Him;  
He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.  
2 He will not cry out, nor raise His voice,  
Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.  
3 A bruised reed He will not break,  
And smoking flax He will not quench;  
He will bring forth justice for truth.  
4 He will not fail nor be discouraged,  
Till He has established justice in the earth;  
And the coastlands shall wait for His law.  
5 Thus says God the LORD,  
Who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it,  
Who gives breath to the people on it,  
And spirit to those who walk on it:  
6 “I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness,  
And will hold Your hand;  
I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people,  
As a light to the Gentiles,  
7 To open blind eyes,  
To bring out prisoners from the prison,  
Those who sit in darkness from the prison house.

8 I am the LORD, that is My name;  
And My glory I will not give to another,  
Nor My praise to carved images. (NKJV)

This is the Word of God.

Sanctify us, oh Lord, through Your truth. Your Word is truth.  
Amen.

In Christ Jesus, God my Savior, dear fellow Redeemed:

INTRO: Different Prophetic Pictures of Jesus

Throughout the Old Testament era the LORD revealed His grace with a variety of different pictures representing the Messiah that was to come. The promised Savior was first referenced as the Seed of the woman, which revealed that the Savior would be born into this world as our flesh and blood brother. The Messiah was also referred to as the Seed of Abraham through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed. It was revealed the Savior would be born of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David and that His kingdom was to be an everlasting kingdom. The Messiah was also presented as the Lamb of God that was to be the perfect sacrifice for sin. The Spirit led the Prophet Isaiah to present Jesus as the Servant of the LORD. There were a number of individuals in the Old Testament that the LORD called His servant, but none that measured up to this picture presented in our text this morning. Here we learn about --

**THEME: The Servant the LORD Upholds!**

The LORD “upholds.” This was to be the Individual whom the LORD sent into the world which He would support and endorse and present to the world as He had no one else. This Servant was the One the LORD -

**I. Upheld for His Gracious Purpose.**

**Isaiah 42:1** “Behold! My Servant whom I uphold,  
My Elect One in whom My soul delights!  
I have put My Spirit upon Him;  
He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

Jesus was the only One who would fulfill this prophecy. God couldn't have made it any clearer than He did on the day Jesus was baptized, and again on the Mount of Transfiguration shortly before Jesus died. He declared clearly on both of those occasions that Jesus was the One that delighted the soul of the LORD, saying, **“This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased!”** At Jesus' baptism the Spirit descended in visible form as a dove and not only landed on Jesus, but remained with Him. John the Baptist heard this voice and he saw the Spirit descend upon Jesus, and John knew that this was the Promised One. This was the Servant of the LORD who was to come into the world to bring justice and judgment. And so the LORD describes the salvation that He would bring into the world. It was to be true justice. The demands of the law would be fully satisfied and the devil's treachery foiled.

Only Jesus could do this as the Servant of the LORD, for Jesus is the Son of God incarnate, who with His sacrifice for sin satisfied the demands of the law. He was the propitiation for sin, but not just for the sins of a few. It was God's will that Jesus be the perfect satisfying payment for the sins of the whole world.

God the Father upheld His Servant Jesus because Jesus was the One who would fulfill His gracious good will for a world of sinners. Jesus submitted to the Father's will for our salvation. In Gethsemane He prayed in a great agony, **“Thy will, not Mine, be done.”** as He took upon Himself that cup of suffering that was rightly ours!

However, this prophecy also leads us to appreciate Jesus' manner in His ministry. This also was according to the will of God. Jesus humbled Himself. He was lowly in His approach to ministry. Even though He was bold in proclaiming the truth, Jesus was gentle with the spiritually downtrodden as our text indicates He would be.

**Isaiah 42:2-3** He will not cry out, nor raise His voice,  
Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.  
3 A bruised reed He will not break,  
And smoking flax He will not quench;  
He will bring forth justice for truth.

Jesus was no rabble-rouser calling for uprisings, but one who taught the people in peace. Jesus did not follow the example of the Pharisees, who looked down on the common man for his sin. Jesus called sinners to repentance. Jesus called common men, and even known sinners to be His disciples! Jesus preached repentance, announcing forgiveness and salvation, yes, even to wretched sinners like the malefactor on the cross. He did not break the bruised reed of a soul, or quench the smoking flax that small ember of faith in someone's heart. Jesus as the Servant of the Lord bolstered the weak with the proclamation of the grace and love of God and the promise of the Kingdom of God.

The Servant of the LORD was upheld by God for His gracious purpose of salvation. He would not fail in His mission.

**Isaiah 42:4** He will not fail nor be discouraged,  
Till He has established justice in the earth;  
And the coastlands shall wait for His law.

Although Jesus' disciples openly opposed it, His disciples could not deter Jesus from going forth to Jerusalem to suffer and die. The entire ordeal of His passion could not break Jesus' will for our salvation. Even when it was apparent to nearly everyone that Jesus was defeated by His enemies; that was actually NOT the case. Just as Isaiah prophesied in our text He would **succeed** in establishing justice in the earth, and the entire world would look for the salvation found in that decree of salvation Jesus declared from the cross, "**It is Finished!**"

## **II. Upheld by the Power of the LORD**

**Isaiah 42:5-7** Thus says God the LORD,  
Who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it,  
Who gives breath to the people on it,  
And spirit to those who walk on it:  
6 "I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness,  
And will hold Your hand;  
I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people,  
As a light to the Gentiles,  
7 To open blind eyes,

To bring out prisoners from the prison,  
Those who sit in darkness from the prison house.

The LORD is the Almighty, the Creator of all things. He breathes life into all men. Apart from the LORD there is no life. He is the One who made man a living soul. The LORD is the One who made us the crown of His creation, and loved us with an everlasting love since before the world began. So the LORD did not choose to use His power to destroy the world. He sent His Son into the world that the world through Him might be saved (John 3:15-18).

God the Father upheld Jesus, His Son, with the power to save. He accompanied Jesus and blessed Him throughout His earthly sojourn. We remember Jesus glorifying God the Father for all the miracles which He performed, even as the Father declared that His Servant would be the one to open blind eyes and to free those who were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

God the Father blessed Jesus' ministry, and glorified His Son before the world even as Jesus, as the Servant of the LORD, glorified God Father in all He did, and in all He taught. This is the conclusion to which our text brings us. The Servant of the LORD was --

### **III. Upheld to God's Ultimate Glory.**

The LORD makes His Servant the focal point of a contrast between the one true God and all the idols of this world.

**Isaiah 42:8** I am the LORD, that is My name;  
And My glory I will not give to another,  
Nor My praise to carved images.

Start with that declaration of His name, "the LORD!" LORD is the covenant name of God. With this name not only does God present His eternal nature as the great I AM, He also used this name to affirm that all that He promised would surely come to pass. God promised to send His Servant into the world to deliver us from death and hell. God communicated this to us because we needed to know the truth that saves that we might have **hope** in Him.

He alone is able to perform all that He promised. He sent His Son into the world, was glorified by the Son and all that He did. Starting with His holy life and the ministry of Jesus faithfully presented the truth about the Kingdom of God, and also revealed the power of God's love to restore that which has been torn down by sin and its corrupting power. God was glorified as Jesus made His grand entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and the people welcomed Jesus as their King, and sang their Hosannas. However, the Father was also glorified as Jesus was accused and abused, scourged and crucified, for with His death the Servant of the LORD crushed the serpent's head. Victory and salvation was won for a fallen and lost mankind.

This is the LORD, and we are to remember His name. He has revealed Himself to us in His Son, Savior Jesus Christ. God is not willing to share His glory with another. But He does share it with the Son, for Jesus is God with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Together they are **the LORD**, the God of our salvation. Apart from the LORD there is no salvation.

The gods of this world are nothing more than graven images. Since someone carved them out of stone or molded them out precious metals, they may have ears, but they cannot hear. They may have eyes but they cannot see. They may have bodies, but they can do nothing. Our God is in the heavens, He has done whatever He pleases (Psalm 115:3-8). He is pleased to win for us salvation. To God alone the glory!

If we think of ourselves as being something more than the recipients of His grace we would seek to claim glory for ourselves that belongs alone to God.

The Servant of the LORD is the One God the Father upholds. God stands behind Him, endorses Him, is pleased with Him, has blessed Him with His Spirit, the Spirit of wisdom and grace, so that we might know the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent. We know Jesus as the Servant of the LORD who secured our salvation, fulfilling the Father's will. He was glorified by God as the Promised Servant who came in lowliness to draw all men to Himself. He came to Glorify God the Father that all might praise the LORD as the God of their salvation, and praise Him alone who

reigns over heaven and earth, and is our Lord and the only true.  
God.

**AMEN.**

And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep  
your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.