

8455U

SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL - 1998

YAHWEH IS MY STRENGTH AND MY SONG

BEHOLD, MY SERVANT

Speaker: Bro. Roger Lewis

Study #2 He shall not strive nor cry

Reading: Isaiah 42:1-7

Well, thank you brother chairman, and my dear brethren and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This afternoon then, we come to the first of the Servant songs has we've had it read this afternoon by our chairman, in chapter 42 of the prophecy, in verses 1 to 7. Now a few words of background then, before we begin our consideration of this first song. We need to understand the background that we believe, brought forth the songs, the circumstances that lay behind them.

The circumstance that laid behind this story, we believe, was as follows, is that Hezekiah king of Judah had made a great decision in his life. That decision is recorded for us (which we're not going to turn up now) but we're told in 2 Kings 18 verse 7 that Hezekiah had decided to rebel against the king of Assyria, in fact, we're told that he decided to rebel and serve him not, interestingly enough, says the text of 2 Kings. The reason why he decided to rebel against the king of Assyria was because he desired to be God's servant, not Assyria's. He made a decision that seemed politically unwise, but spiritually turned out to be a prudent one. There's a great lesson in this, by the way, because you know, one of the things that we learn in life in the truth, is that so often those things that seem humanly shrewd are not necessarily in accordance with divine wisdom. Likewise, those things that relate to matters of divine wisdom, may not seem to be sensible or wise, from the human appreciation or the human standpoint, often there's a great gulf between those two things; which by the way, is one of reasons why we ought to settle our lives upon divine principles. Human shrewdness is not the same as divine wisdom, there's a great gulf betwixt the two! and we believe that Hezekiah had made a decision that he wished to serve Almighty God and he decided, therefore, that he would no longer serve the Assyrian.

Then, of course, the Assyrian began to sweep down, as the famous poem says, 'like a wolf upon the fold', and we read the story of the Assyrian marching southwards, and as they did so, reports began to arrive into the capital of carnage, of great cruelties; and as the Assyrian drew closer, it caused, of course, a series of reactions in different people

according to how they were motivated. We're told, for example, in Isaiah 22 verses 13 and 14, that some devoid of faith, were feasting and revelling in expectation of imminent death; 'let us eat and drink and be merry for tomorrow we shall die'. Yet others, in Isaiah 22 verses 8 to 10, were feverishly fortifying the city, building walls, building fortifications but their confidence was in the flesh and not in Almighty God. We're told in Isaiah 22 verses 15 and 16, that yet others were morbidly carving out graves, with a fatalistic apathy that all was lost, these who had absolutely no trust in the divine hand in their lives. We're told in Isaiah 30 verses 1 and 2, that yet others were busy scheming escape plans in conjunction with Egypt, seeking solutions according to the work of their own human ingenuity; what we do know, b&s, that many of these in Israel and Judah in that day, many in Jerusalem, the royal city would have criticized the king. In fact, there were probably many hostile to the king and as the pressure mounted and the story of the Assyrian advance came closer and closer, there would be many in the nation who would turn against the king and accuse him of folly. In the middle of all that, a man stood up whose name was Isaiah the prophet, and he spoke words which I believe, which are the words of this first servant song, in Isaiah 42, and I believe that the first song was the divine endorsement of a beleaguered king under criticism from his own nation.

Now I want you to see and hear the words of the first song; and I want you to get the feeling of the song, as we read it through. I'm going to give you another translation of the song which I think captures some of the poetry and some of the beauty of this song. So imagine that this is the background, this is the moment of time when the king stands criticized on all sides, and the prophet stood up and this is what he said, you see! He said, 'Lo my servant, I will uphold him; my chosen, well pleased is My soul, I have set My Spirit upon him: justice to the nations will he bring forth. He cries not, nor speaks loud, nor lets his voice be heard in the street; reeds that are broken he breaks not off; wicks that are fading he does not quench. Faithfully, will he bring forth justice, he will not faint nor will he break, till he have set in the earth justice: and for his teaching the isles are waiting'.

Then the second strophe, which now has a different mood, a change of spirit! 'Thus saith El Himself, Yahweh, Creator of the heavens that stretched them forth; Spreader of the earth and the products thereof; Giver of breath to the people thereon and of spirit to them that work therein, who walk therein. I Yahweh, hath called thee in righteousness, to grasp thee fast by the hand, and to keep thee, and to set thee for a covenant of the people; for a light of the nations; to open blind eyes, to bring forth from bondage the captive, from prison the dwellers in darkness'. You see, there's something remarkable about this first servant song, isn't there? and you see, I think the overwhelming impression that we get about this servant, is that this first song opens under the mouth of the prophet speaking under inspiration, is that there is something ineffably tender and gentle about this man, the hero of the song! the servant of God! The overall impression is that of a very quiet person, he's not dynamic and aggressive, he's not bold and challenging, he's not a warrior and a fighter, he's a quiet person. Yet the words are arresting in their way, aren't

they? as the prophet stood up to testify in divine endorsement, of the king of the day, good king Hezekiah of Judah.

'Behold my servant' is how this first song shall open; interesting actually, because you see, that phrase, we believe, has been found already with regard to this particular man with whom we deal, King Hezekiah, because we're told in the record this, these words that are found firstly in Isaiah 42 which follows; so here is the phrase, 'Behold my servant whom I uphold', that phrase has already been found in Psalm 116 verse 16, 'O Yahweh, says the record, 'truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.' do you know who wrote Psalm 116, b&s? I believe it was Hezekiah! and in that psalm he describes himself as the servant of God. Not only the book of Psalms but also the historical record of the moment of 2 Chronicles 32 verse 16, 'And his servants (that is the servants of Sennacherib) spake yet more and more against Yahweh Elohim and against his servant Hezekiah'. So just as the Psalmist, and just as the historian, so now the prophet takes up the epitaph 'my servant' with greater fullness and applied it to the king who then sat upon the throne. You may know, there's only a small handful of people described in the bible as the servant of Yahweh, there's only a small group and they're all special every one of them, and this is such a man, 'behold, my servant'!

So the record goes on to say in this first verse of chapter 42, 'Behold, my servant whom I uphold; and mine elect in whom My soul delighteth;' actually in the Hebrew, the emphasis should be on the words relating to God. So the emphasis should be, and it reads this way in the Hebrew, 'Behold, MY servant, whom I uphold, MINE elect in whom MY soul delighteth.' The emphasis is all on God, you see, and this is the first principle then of acceptable service. The first principle of acceptable service is that the servant has surrendered himself to his Master's will; it's all of God not the king. So it was in the life of Hezekiah, as we're going to come and see, the servant belongs to God absolutely! Have a look at this, this is the historical record of this moment of time, you see, in 2 Kings 18 verses 6 and 7, it says of Hezekiah, 'for he clave to Yahweh and departed not from following Him, but kept His commandments which Yahweh commanded Moses. Yahweh was with him and he prospered whithersoever he went forth; and he rebelled against the king of Assyria and served him not'. Of course, as we've said before, the reason why he served him not is because he desired to serve his God; 'no man can serve two masters' says the divine record, and there are times in life where we have to make a choice, don't we? times in life when we're faced with Sennacheribs and Rabshakehs; times in life when the Assyrian comes and encamps at our door, and we have to decide what master we shall serve.

Well, Hezekiah had decided! He had decided to surrender his will to the God whom he loved. Come and have a look at Matthew chapter 3, because here is the spirit of this first song, now taken up in the life of Christ. You'll remember these words in Matthew 3 but let's just have a look at them, because here is the application of the same spirit, as in the life of the king, so in the life of the Son of God. We're told in Matthew 3 verse 15, 'Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill

all righteousness. Then he suffered Him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lightning upon Him. And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'. The spirit, you see, of the first servant song is there, here was a man who was to totally surrender His will, His own will, His own desire to the spirit and to the service of His Master in heaven. Of course, you'll realize that Matthew 3 verse 17 is more than a quotation just from Isaiah 42 verse 1, isn't it? it's an amalgam of Isaiah 42 verse 1, the 2nd Psalm and some words plucked out of Genesis 22, concerning Isaac who was the beloved son of Abraham, his father. But here is the spirit of the servant, the man who is prepared to surrender his will to the service of his Master.

Come back to Isaiah 42 and see what the record goes on to say! We're told there, that having introduced the servant, having invited us to contemplate him and to behold him, as a man whom God Himself endorses, the record goes on to say in that first verse, 'I have put My spirit upon him', says the record. What we're being told, I believe, in that phrase, is that the servant has no character of his own, I think the word 'spirit' here has relationship to mental disposition. 'I have put My spirit upon him', funny thing, you know, in the gospels you'll probably know, each of the gospels has a genealogy, doesn't it? a genealogy of the Lord. You know how Matthew opens his gospel in the first chapter, with this long genealogy that traces the Lord back to, back to where? well, back to David, to Abraham, to show that He's the rightful inheritor of the royal line of David. In the gospel of Luke, we have the genealogy of the Lord traced all the way back to Adam himself, because this is the gospel of the humanity of Christ. In the gospel of John we have a strange genealogy that says, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the Word was made flesh, and we beheld His glory', and the genealogy of the gospel of John is that this man was the divine manifestation of the Deity in the heavens above. Do you know how the gospel of Mark opens, the gospel of the servant? It says, 'The gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written', and immediately in Mark's gospel he plunges off into the story and into the record of his servant's service, because you see, servants have no genealogy! Mark's gospel is stripped of all the long lineage that's prevalent in the other gospels. 'I have put My spirit upon Him', His mental disposition is that of His Master; the process of surrender here is so complete that the personality of the servant has been completely absorbed in the expression of His Master's purpose. Hezekiah was going to be set forth before the nation, as the embodiment of the divine will, and the divine purpose in the nation, to the exclusion almost of his own character. We're going to see how remarkably that story would work it's way out in the very history of the times.

I'd like to read to you an extract from a marvellous book which some of you, well, most of you might have, it's called the Guiding Light and written by, does anyone know? Islip Collyer, you're absolutely right! He's got an excellent paragraph, actually an excellent little chapter on the 'spirit of service', and I just want to read some words from page 54 and 55 in relationship to this idea, 'I've put My spirit upon Him', just listen to these words! Concerning any servant or any man who desires to be God's servant, he says

this, 'He must not think of that which will best express his own individuality, but of that which will most help others. If his personality is weak, an attempt to assert it only leads to failure; if his personality is strong, it will be quite strong enough even when subdued under the influence of a passionate desire to render true service after the example of Christ. Christ, of whom it was prophesied that a 'bruised reed shall He not break, and dimly burning flax shall He not quench', who came to seek and save that which was lost, who gave His life for men who were unrighteous and unthankful, and who continue unto this day with their vanity and self expression, breaking the bruised reeds and quenching the smoking flax, often claiming to do such work in His name. Christ, Christ came not to do His own will, but the will of the One who sent Him, and in His service to humanity, He surrendered Himself entirely to God, and the result of this self-effacement, was a personality so strong and distinctive that it shines through history with a lustre that makes the individualism of self-expressing men look dull and dirty by comparison'. Isn't that an excellent paragraph, b&s, 'I have put My spirit upon Him', and you see, the paradox is this, in the self-effacement of Christ, in the surrender of Christ to His Father's will, His own personality became so strong that it gripped and fascinated people! It had a magnetism that drew people, it had a power to influence and change people, and that was the spirit of Hezekiah, by the way, at the very height of the crisis!

You know, at the very moment of crisis in his life, you probably remembered that he received a blasphemous letter from Sennacherib, do you remember that? he got the challenging letter from Sennacherib and what did he do? Well, we're told that he took the letter before the Father and he gave up a prayer; I want you to see the prayer! You just think about this, 'I have put My spirit upon him', was the cry of the prophet, and this is what Hezekiah prayed for: And Hezekiah prayed before Yahweh and said, 'Oh, Yahweh Elohim of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubim; Thou art El, even Thou alone of all the kingdoms of the earth. Thou hast made heaven and earth, Yahweh, bow down thine ear and hear; open Yahweh thine eyes and see and hear the words of Sennacherib which hath sent him to reproach the living God'. Do you know what really happened in 2 Kings? b&s, you'll find in the 18th chapter that Sennacherib by the mouth of his ambassador and spokesman, Rabshakeh, what he actually did was reproach Hezekiah as well as God; he vilified Hezekiah as well as God, he castigated Hezekiah as well as God. But there's no trace in these words of a man who said that he'd been reproached; the only thing that concerned Hezekiah was that the words of Sennacherib had reproached the living God. He says there, chapter 37 and at the end of the 20th verse, 'that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou art Yahweh Elohim, even Thou only!' You see, there's no trace of self in Hezekiah, is there? in this prayer. This is the same spirit of self effacement, the only desire of the king was that God's righteous judgments might be seen in the earth and that God's supremacy might be exalted! 'I have put My spirit upon him'.

So it was! and this king in this prayer was a beautiful illustration of the fact that he had totally surrendered himself to the will of the God whom he served! There's no trace of self, is there? in the prayers of this king in a time of desperate crisis. So you see,

although we realize that each of these songs are outworked in their fullness in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and we're going to see that, we're going to see that ultimately it's only Christ that fulfills the songs to perfection, we understand that! Yet what we're saying is, there was definitely an initial application, an earnest, a primary fulfilment in the life of the king himself at the time of deepest distress.

Then the verse goes on to say, 'he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles'. Do you see how that's a key word, by the way, in this first song. Verse 1, 'He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles', verse 3, 'he shall bring forth judgment unto truth'; verse 4, 'till he hath set judgment in the earth'. So here is a key idea! this is the burden of the servant's work, this is the prime thing that he has been asked to achieve, to advance the judgment of God. By the way, of course, you may know that the word 'judgment' here is not 'shaphat' (8199), it's 'mishpat' (4941), it doesn't really mean 'judgment', it means both 'law' and 'statutes', but more particularly it means the principles behind the statutes. A better translation is probably the word 'justice' rather than 'judgment'; the king is not there to advance judgment upon the nations, He's there to advance the principle of God's justice, God's just and righteous principles. The work of the servant is to pervade the nations with the righteous principles of truth! How, by the way, is he going to do that? how is the servant in verse 1 going to bring forth justice to the Gentiles? to the nations? and the answer is, he was going to do that in his own life. He was going to do that by exhibiting divine principles of justice in his own life, and we're going to see that this was absolutely worked out marvellously in the life of Hezekiah; it was going to be a dramatic wonderful way in which this man, recovered miraculously out of his worst nightmare, became a marvellous setting forth of the principles of divine justice to the nations, and Hezekiah would be that light, that beacon, that glorious individual servant in the eyes of all the nations round about! It was going to happen that way and he would be a marvellous foreshadowing of the work of Christ in a time to come. Of course, that was the work of Christ, wasn't it? and yet will be the work of Christ, to pervade the nations with the righteous principle of Almighty God, and so ourselves, and this is the lesson. If we want to be God's servants then the great role that we're asked to play is to pervade the nations amongst whom we walk and live, with the righteous principles of God. That's what the servants of God do! they bring forth those principles.

Now look at chapter 42 and verse 2, because you see, we're introduced now, to I think, one of Isaiah's favourite devices, if I can use that word, Isaiah favours the use of the paradox. There are many, many paradoxes in the prophecy of Isaiah, and this is what it says, 'He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street', so you see, here is a marvellous paradox. Verse 1 has just said that the servant's work is so mighty, so extensive, so pervasive, as to take forth divine principles to all the nations, yet verse 2 says you won't even hear his voice; 'he shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street', so if we cannot hear his voice then how will he set forth principles of divine justice on every hand? It's a paradox, you see, it's a wonderful paradox. Of course, the answer to the paradox is this, that this second verse is a reference to the tone and to the character of the servant, rather than the means he will

employ. Of course, he'll speak, of course his voice will be heard, but when it says 'he shall not cry', it's not a reference to the means he'll employ but to the tone and character that he will have. There will be restrictions on the way he speaks; the word 'cry' here is an interesting word in the Hebrew it's 'tsaaq'(6817) it's almost what we call an 'onomatopoeic' word, in other words, it sounds as bad as it means, the word actually means in the Hebrew 'to scream' or to 'shriek' - tsaaq - he shall not scream; the word 'lift up' means 'to be louder and noisy' (5375) in this particular context; and the word 'heard' here 'shama' we believe means 'to proclaim or advertise oneself' (8085) in the context of this verse.

So what are we being told here then in the second verse concerning the tone and the character of the servant of God? Well, what we're told is this, the servant will speak but he will not scream, he won't be loud, and he won't be advertising himself; he's surrendered himself to his Master's will. It's the natural out workings of verse 1, that if the servant is totally devoted to pursuing the cause of his Master, then he won't be promoting himself, verse 2, in any way. So here is a man who would have eloquence without screaming, here is a man who would have clarity without loudness, here is a man who would have distinction without showiness; so what's the spirit, do you think, of the second verse? well, I think the spirit, the lesson, the principle is that the great characteristic of the servant is that he is one with meeekness and calmness! These are the two characteristics of the second verse, he's a man known for his meekness and his calmness; he doesn't scream because he knows that God upholds him and therefore he is calm and unhysterical. He's not noisy because he knows that he's God servant, and that his role is to promote the cause of his Master. He doesn't advertise himself because he appreciates that his work is to bring forth justice to the nations, and therefore he is restrained and self-effacing for the sake of advancing that work. We're going to find that Hezekiah had just this approach in the way that he stood for the truth in the great drama of his own life.

Now Matthew 12, just takes up that particular passage actually, and quotes it for us again in the gospel record of the life of Christ. We may just turn to that for a moment, because Matthew 12 says, well, here's a fulfilment or an outworking of this spirit then of the song you see. We're told in verse 14 of Matthew 12, it says this, 'Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him. But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew Himself from thence: and great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all; And charged them that they should not make Him known: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; My beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.' Now you see, here's an interesting thing in the life of Christ, verse 14 says that the Pharisees held a council how they might destroy Him. But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew Himself, let me ask you this question, b&s, did the Lord ever have any trouble dealing with the Pharisees? the answer is NO, He didn't! in fact, there were many times when the Pharisees probably wished they'd never opened their mouths in debate with this man, because of

His fearsome ability in scriptural things! Yet we're told in the record here, that when He knew they were going to have council with Him, He withdrew, why? I think the reason is because the Lord knew on this occasion, at this particular time, that this argument, this debate, this controversy with these men, would have interpreted His work. It wasn't profitable! and the Lord had the wisdom to know that there is a time for conflict and there is also a time to avoid conflict in the issues of the truth. That there is a time when one withdraws, so that the real work of the truth might not be hindered, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah, He shall not strive, nor cry. The Lord had the wisdom to know that you see, it's to do with the style of the servant, it's to do with the character of the servant, that the greatest thing that he's there to do, is to advance the work, and he will not engage in debate or controversy if that hinders the true and righteous advance of the great cause of Almighty God.

Isaiah 42 verse 3, 'A bruised reed shall he not break and smoking flax shall he not quench' says the song. Interesting actually, because we have come across this already in our earlier studies already by brother David. You see, both the bruised reed and the smoking flax are terms used or found in the book of Isaiah with political overtones, aren't they? So one suggestion has been, is that the promise here in relation to the work of Christ, is that He would not engage in any political activities of judgment until His second advent; that may be the case! But I think that whatever the bruised reed and the smoking flax are of verse 3, whatever political overtones there might be, I think the great spirit of this verse is that not only is the servant meek and calm, but he is also gentle. That's the spirit of this verse, isn't it? you see, he has no desire to vindicate himself but rather to encourage and to strength what remains in others!

Now one of the great things about the truth, b&s, it's very easy to confuse the vindication of God and the vindication of self. Sometimes in ecclesial life, you see situations developing where there are problems and someone rushes in, and they deal with the situation and they tell the brother or sister concerned that there's a problem that they ought to be changing their lives and they quote scripture at them, and they walk out and say to someone else in surprise, 'you know, I told the brother he had a problem, I told him good and proper and he never listened to me'. Really, I wonder why! and the reason why is because he didn't understand the gentle spirit of the servant. The servant's work, b&s, in this particular verse, the servant's work is to foster the good qualities in other people, to encourage and to strengthen; not to break off, not to snap, not to extinguish! So what are the bruised reed and the smoking flax of the verse? Well, I think that the ideas are metaphors that are being deliberately left vague so they can be expanded into a variety of applications. The divine virtues are expiring but are not yet dead, the sense of God that has not yet flickered into extinction, the glimmering ideal of acceptable service almost crushed; you see, the whole spirit here is of a man who focuses, who concentrates on fostering good qualities in others, who blows them, who fans them into flame!

You see, I think that was the spirit of Hezekiah, do you want to see that? 'a bruised reed shall he not break', now look at this! In 2 Kings 19 we're told this, 'They said unto him (this is the 3 men delegated by the king to go to Isaiah) 'this is a day of trouble and

rebuke and of blasphemy, for the children have come to the birth and there is not strength to bring forth'. You see, isn't that the smoking flax almost about to expire, 'the children have come to the birth and there's not strength to bring forth'; so at the end of those verses there you'll see that the prayer, the desire, the spirit of the king is, 'wherefore, lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left', (a bruised reed shall he not break), it was the desire of the king to save, to heal, to fan back into flame, Psalm 130, 'Let Israel hope in Yahweh' (the king did!) the king already hoped in Yahweh, but it was the earnest desire of Hezekiah that the nation might follow him, and to that which was almost flickering into oblivion, might be revived by the nation if they could only set their heart and their hope in the power of Almighty God). Psalm 122, 'For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, peace be within thee'. You see, Hezekiah had a marvellous care for other people! he had a spirit of genuine care for other people, 'a bruised reed shall he not break'.

Wasn't that the spirit of Christ? How many passages can we think of in the New Testament record, b&s, and the gospel records, where the Lord fanned into flame the notion of spiritual things in the lives of other people? So many examples that we can think of, the Lord was famous for that, wasn't He? and so are we, if we are to be the servants of God and that will be our spirit as well, will it not? That we don't break off bruised reeds but we try and fan them back into flame! You see, there are those in the truth, who for some peculiar reason, focus on the weakness and shortcomings of others; the servant of God doesn't do that! These are they who had not yet matured to the ideal of acceptable service, that they are empty enough of themselves so that their only desire is to promote the good of others in developing them in the things of the truth. Yet we say, 'ah, that's all very well, but we've got to stand for truth, you know, we can't compromise the truth!' Well, of course not, b&s, and therefore, verse 3 finishes with this statement, 'he shall bring forth judgment unto truth', or as Rotherham translates the phrase, 'faithfully will he bring forth justice'. There's no suggestion here that in caring for bruised reeds and nourishing smoking flaxes, there's no suggestion that the servant will compromise the principles of the truth; he won't do that, will he? because he's here to advance his Master's cause. He does his work faithfully, says the verse, which guards against the abuse of gentleness; no one is suggesting here that the servant is gentle to the point of a compromise of principles. You see, here is a man who is solicitous about the weakness of others, but who will never allow righteousness to suffer. Here is a man who practices mercy but never compromises truth, here is a man who exhibits gentleness yet always upholds principle!

Then verse 4 says, 'he shall not fail nor be discouraged till he has set judgment on the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law'. So what's the spirit of verse 4? Well, just as the spirit of verse 2 is that he is quiet and self-effacing, and the spirit of verse 3 is that he is a gentle man, what's the spirit of verse 4? The spirit of verse 4 is that he's known for his patience, 'he shall not fail nor be discouraged till he has set judgment on the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law', and so the servant manifests a patient enduring spirit until his objective is achieved. You see, he really is a servant to the purpose that he's espoused. This is a lesson that we all need to learn in life, isn't it? the

spirit of patience and endurance! especially in times of provocation of spirit. To never lose sight of what the great objectives of the truth are, and to remember that the objectives of the truth are things that are brought forth with patience and care over a long period of time, so that even when difficulties arise the lesson of this fourth verse is that the servant is patient, when problems develop he endures, when hostility comes he presses on, when there are those about who oppose, he perseveres! 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged'. The verbs in the 4th verse, by the way, are the same verbs as in the third verse, so how it should be translated is , 'that he shall not be broken off nor shall he quenched until he hath set judgment in the earth; it's the same two verbs borrowed from the previous verse. Here's a man who endures in those things that he believes in. And the verse goes on to say at the end of verse 4, 'and the isles shall wait for his law'. Interesting you know, when Matthew quotes this in Matthew 12 verse 21, instead of saying at the end of verse 4, 'And the isles shall wait for his law', Matthew translates it as 'In his name shall the Gentiles trust', it's a little bit different in the gospel of Matthew; I believe that Matthew was quoting not just from Isaiah 42 verse 4 but also from Isaiah 51 verse 5, in fact, Matthew's quoting two different parts, two different sentences out of the prophecy of Isaiah, but whatever the translation it doesn't really change the principle. It doesn't matter whether it's 'wait for his law', or 'trust in His name', but the lesson of the verse is this, the servant is someone who inspires confidence and respect in others. That's the lesson! the servant is a man who inspires confidence in others, 'they shall wait for him' , 'they shall desire his teaching'. Hezekiah was going to be like that! we're going to see as the nation came within the grip of the Assyrian, that in the end, they rallied around their king as the only man that could help them, the only man who could save them. Hezekiah was a king, who inspired confidence in his subjects.

Then Isaiah 42 verse 5 says, (and now you'll see that we've come to the second strophe, the second stanza of the song), and you'll see that there's quite a different spirit here, verse 5, 'Thus saith El Himself, Yahweh, Creator of the heavens, He that spread forth the earth and that which cometh out of it; the Giver of breath to the people upon it, and of spirit to them that walk there'. So what's this all about then in verse 5? Why the sudden change of spirit? Is this mere ceremonial commonplace, merely the ornamentation of words to describe Almighty God? God summoning as it were, all the forces of nature to hail Him? Why, I think the words of verse 5 are deliberately chosen, because you see, what I think we're being told in this 5th verse, is that He who was the Creator of all things, Who is the power that sustains all things, is the same God verse 6, Who will hold the hand of His servant. This is a lovely thought when you think about it! You see, God's servant has been sent forth meek and gentle with quiet methods and slow effects, but he will succeed because he is supported by creative power, El Himself, Yahweh, the Creator of all things, 'I will hold thine hand', and that's why this man will succeed. Bro. C.C. Walker described the servant as a 'quiet but invincible man' (lovely phrase), a quiet but invincible man because the Almighty power that created all things, is the power that sustains this particular servant, so that he might succeed.

Verse 5 says, 'Thus saith El Yahweh, He that created the heavens, and stretched them

out; He that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it', interesting actually! Do you know that that phrase, was a favourite phrase of Hezekiah, Creator of the heavens and Spreader forth of the earth; just have a look at this, Psalm 115, a psalm of Hezekiah. Verse 15, 'Ye are blessed of Yahweh which made heaven and earth'; Psalm 121 one of the songs of degrees of Hezekiah, verse 2, 'My help cometh from Yahweh, which made heaven and earth'; Psalm 124 verse 8, 'Our help is in the name of Yahweh, who made heaven and earth'; Psalm 134 verse 3, 'Yahweh that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion'; and finally, in 2 Kings 19 at the time that he goes into the house of God that he might pray there, it says in verse 15, 'That Hezekiah prayed before Yahweh, and said, O Yahweh Elohim of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubim, Thou art the El, even Thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; Thou hast made heaven and earth'. You see, this was a favourite phrase of Hezekiah himself, and that phrase is now caught up in the very song that instructs the servant here, that he will be guided and strengthened and nourished by Almighty God, 'He that created the heavens and spread forth the earth, will hold thine hand'.

That phrase becomes famous on the very lips of Hezekiah himself, because I Yahweh, verse 6, have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee'. So the lesson of the 6th verse, is that the servant is one who experiences God's power to direct and lead him. He's conscious of the Father's influence in his life, and he's obedient to that; interestingly enough, by the way, I think there's an allusion to the name of Hezekiah in that verse, can you see it there? there's an allusion to the name of Hezekiah in that verse, because the promise of the first song here is, I Yahweh hath called thee in righteousness, says the 6th verse, and I will hold thine hand'; do you know that the word 'hold' here in the Hebrew is 'chazaq' (2388) it's the root word of Hezekiah 'chizquyah' held of Yah (2396). Who holds the hand in verse 6? I, Yahweh! So you see, the Yahweh of verse 6 who holds the hand, is the very root of the name Hezekiah, held by Yahweh, strengthened of Yahweh. Yes, this was the king! to whom this promise came at this time, that God would be with him to guide him and to direct him.

Not only to do that, but the 6th verse goes on to say, 'I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles'. Now this was something unusual, this was something unique in the experience of the nation. A servant, a man, who wasn't just asked to keep a covenant with God, who wasn't just brought into covenant with God, but who shall be given as a covenant, the man himself! So what this is saying is that this man, this servant whoever he was, would experience as it were, a typical death as a covenant victim. In the crisis of Hezekiah's life, as it comes to the peak of the drama, we're going to find that the nation would learn that their king had indeed been given to them, as a covenant, and he would suffer a symbolic death on behalf of them all, and be miraculously raised again. This was a remarkable prediction when you think about it, a man given as a covenant. Do you know where those ideas are taken up elsewhere? A king, by the way, a king given as a covenant, Daniel chapter 9 is going to take up the spirit of Isaiah 42. Daniel 9 verse 26, 'And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, verse 27, 'And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one

week'. Do you know what Messiah is called in Daniel 9, he's called Messiah the prince, a royal man, who is given for a covenant. The man himself becomes the covenant victim, Zechariah 9, 'Behold, thy king cometh' says the 9th verse, and then in verse 11 it says, 'as for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have set forth the prisoners out of the pit', a royal man given as a covenant. Matthew 26, what's the gospel of Matthew the gospel of ? the royalty of Christ, 'And He took the cup and gave thanks and gave to them saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is My blood of the new covenant'. You see, here is an idea taken up out of Isaiah 42 and it ends up in Zechariah chapter 9, Daniel chapter 9, and comes through into the gospel records, into the very life of Christ Himself, the man who comes as a covenant for His people. Not only for His own people, because verse 6 goes on to say that it would be a covenant both for the people, that is the Jews, but also a light to the Gentiles. It would extend beyond Israel to the Gentiles themselves, and what we're going to find is, as a result of the great victory of Hezekiah over Sennacherib and the defeat of Sennacherib's army, that Assyria as a power was removed from this whole area of the Middle East, for about 80 years. Assyria was pushed to one side for about 80 years and all the nations round about would see this man who was given as a covenant for them, and who would be a light to all the nations after this miraculous deliverance that would occur and which we're yet to contemplate in songs yet to come.

Yes, this was something remarkable and unusual in terms of the prophecy that is made about the servant of this particular servant song; that He would not simply be a light, but He would Himself, be a covenant victim, and yet the wondrous work that He'd perform in verse 7, would effectively open blind eyes. To bring out the prisoners from the prison and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. You know, in Isaiah 8 verse 21 to 9 verse 7, which I'm not going to spend any time on, because it does relate to some of the other studies for the course of this school, but we're told that when Hezekiah came to power after Ahaz his father, that the nation rejoiced that a light had come, and that those that had dwelt in darkness had seen a great light, because Ahaz had lead the nation into darkness and Hezekiah would bring them back out into light again so that they might see. This was the promise of Hezekiah's life, here in the 7th verse, is that his great work was to be that he would open 'blind eyes, to bring the prisoners out from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house'. Hezekiah's influence was going to be just so, he was going to enlighten the nation spiritually and he was going to deliver them who had been imprisoned as captives in their own land by the might and the power of the Assyrian. Everything that Hezekiah was to do in this context was, of course, going to be marvellously taken up in a greater and deeper sense by the Lord Jesus Christ, in a later time: because in the time of Christ, the nation languished in spiritual darkness. It was again, under the yoke of foreign dominion, and Christ's work was to liberate those who were not only under the thralldom of Rome but in bondage to sin, in bondage to mortality, captives of the carnal mind, and the Lord was going to release them all, he was going to open blind eyes and bring the prisoners out of the prison, and them that sit in darkness, out of the prison house. This is gospel proclamation! isn't it? it that how we see it, by the way? Is that how we see the work of gospel proclamation, to open blind eyes and to bring the prisoners out of the prison, that's how we should feel, isn't it? That's what we're doing when we preach the truth,

we're giving people the chance to be liberated from the prison house! and that their eyes might be opened to see for the first time. Hezekiah was a man who would do that in the nation of Judah, many would see finally the real issues of the truth, when they understood the spirit and the disposition of this remarkable man who was king over them, and yet Yahweh's servant.

Now remember what we said about these particular studies is that we were going to try and find an application in each of these songs to our own lives; so I'd like you to come by way of conclusion to 2 Timothy 2 and just have a look at this! now just see how the apostle Paul here, takes up this first servant song and marvellously applies it to ourselves. So here it is, 2 Timothy 2, and here's what we might describe as our key passage, just look at these words! Verse 24, 'And the servant of the Lord must not strive;' now where does that come from? 'he shall not strive, nor cry, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets', this is Matthew's quotation of the first servant song, isn't it? this is Isaiah 42 verses 1 to 7. Now what I'm going to do is I'm going to read these verses in Timothy out for you, and I want you to see if you can capture the spirit of the first servant song. Here it is, 'And the servant of the Lord must not strive; he shall not cry nor lift up; but be gentle! a bruised reed shall he not break. Apt to teach and for his teaching the isles are waiting. Patient, he shall not fail nor be discouraged. In meekness, nor shall his voice be heard in the street; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. To open blind eyes, and that they might recover themselves out of the snare of the devil who have been taken captive by him, at his will, and the prisoners from the prison house!' Oh, you see, b&s, I think the whole spirit of the first servant song is wonderfully taken up by the apostle Paul here in 2 Timothy 2 verses 24 to 26. This is the whole work of the servant! isn't it? But it's not Christ that the apostle has in mind here nor Hezekiah, it's ourselves, is it not? and the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle onto all, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance'. You see, this Master is the pre-eminent thing, this servant serves His Master and if we take up the spirit of these words in 2 Timothy, we shall have taken up the very spirit of that song in our own lives. Messianic it might be, pointing forward to Christ it might be, but all those who desire to be the servants of Almighty God, need to take up the lessons of that song, and live them in their own lives, so that Christ shall live in us; and the spirit of Hezekiah.

All these things, b&s, we believe, are beautifully brought together by the apostle Paul in this wonderful chapter in 2 Timothy. 'He shall not strive, nor cry'!