

army, this tremendous danger that is ahead of you. You don't need to fear because you are my pet! Because I've selected you in order to bless you and take special care of you. He does not say that. He says, "You don't need to fear, Israel my servant. You don't need to fear because I said, You are my servant."

So here we find a stress on a particular note. That Israel was brought into a situation for a definite purpose. God brought Israel into existence to accomplish His purpose and Israel cannot be destroyed as long as that purpose has not been entirely fulfilled. You are my servant. So that is the great theme of this section of Isaiah --that Israel is God's servant.

Now the term "my servant" or "God's servant" occurs a number of times earlier in the book, in the OT we find Moses frequently called the servant of the Lord. We find David frequently called the servant of the Lord. But here we have the nation spoken of specifically as the servant of the Lord and God will not let them perish because they are His servant. They are the ones He has brought into existence in order to accomplish a wonderful purpose.

What is this purpose Israel is to accomplish? The very next ch. (ch.42) the purpose is described and it is given in God's describing the servant. He says, "Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight. I will put my spirit on him, and He will bring forth justice to the nations." Israel is to bring forth justice to the nations. Israel is a small nation. They are in exile. They are in suffering. They are weak. How can they bring forth justice to the nations?

If you read on you can easily be puzzled. "I will put my spirit on him and he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out or raise his voice in the streets. A broken reed will he not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness He will bring forth justice." In other words He is so powerful he can calmly and quietly go forward to accomplish the purpose for which is there. He is able to do it without shouting, without tremendous effort. He is able to accomplish God's purpose as God's servant. He won't break a bruised reed, one who is trying faithfully follow God. He won't cast him aside and say, You can't do it; you are useless. He will treat him with gentleness and care.

This is a wonderful picture of what is to be done by God's servant. You can just imagine some Israelite saying, Well, look here. We don't need to be afraid of Cyrus because we are God's servant! Yes, but God's servant is supposed to bring justice to the nations. God servant is not supposed to have to work with energy and force in order to have to do away with what is bad, he is able to move gently and quietly and he won't break the bruised reed, he will move with confidence and certainty, he will move ahead and he will accomplish his task. How can He fulfill that. So we have here a problem. We have here, in other words, the picture of the ideal servant. We have the picture of the one who is going to perform the tremendous work that God wants done.