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Christ The Servant

Some years ago, in a quiz on biblical knowledge, an associate was asked to “name fifty titles of the Lord”. He did it in a very methodical way, starting with the letter “A” and naming several, then moving to “B” and so forth. In this study we will consider two associated titles which begin with the letter “S”, of which there are only fourteen which I am aware of. The distinct ones I am aware of are: Seed (Gen. 3:15); Shiloh (Gen. 49:10); Star (Rev. 22:16); Shepherd (Jn. 10:11); Son of Man (Lk. 9:22); Son of God (Matt. 4:3); Servant (Isa. 53:11); Saviour (Lk. 2:11); Stone (Matt. 21:42). Other appellations would include: Shield (Gen. 15:1); Sun (Mal. 4:2); Sanctifier (Heb. 2:11); Stronghold (Zech. 9:12), and Sufferer (1 Pet. 3:18). Such are the glories of the Lord that each term carries a multitude of associated truths. For instance, as the “Stone” He is the “Living Stone” (1 Pet. 2:4); “Corner Stone” (1 Pet. 2:6); “Rejected Stone” (Mk. 12:10); “Stone of Stumbling (Isa. 8:14); “Tried Stone” (Isa. 28:16); and the “Precious Corner Stone” (Isa. 28:16).

In our consideration of Him as the “Servant”, it is observed that this work is often in connection with Him as the “Son”. While we do not read of these two titles together, yet the truth of them is found in at least two verses:

- a) “Give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid” (Psa. 86:16)
- b) “O Lord, truly I am thy servant; . . . and the son of thine handmaid” (Psa. 116:16)

Furthermore, the Lord, as the Son, will be spoken of as the Son who was sent, as in:

- a) The parable (Matt. 21:37; Mk. 12:6)
- b) His declaration: “Thou art my Son” (Psa. 2:7; Acts 13:33)

There are eight scriptures which specifically speak of the Lord as a servant. They are:

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The servant who loved and had his ear bored with an aul	Ex. 21:2-6
The unrelenting servant God supported and delighted in	Isa. 42:1
The servant with the mouth like a sharp sword and arrow like perfection	Isa. 49:2-3 Primary to Israel but by extension to the Lord
The servant who had the opened ear and never was rebellious	Isa. 50:3-10
The servant who will be exalted	Isa. 52:13
The tender hearted servant who suffered and is exalted	Isa. 53:11
The Servant who is the BRANCH who will rule	Zech. 3:8
The mind of the servant prior to coming, and his humiliation	Phil. 2:7

There are six other scriptures which indicate the servant character of the Lord without using the word “servant”. They are:

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The King who serves	Matt. 2:2; 20:28
The God who serves	Mk. 1:1; 10:45
The Lord who serves	Lk. 12:37; 22:27
The servant who was sent to do the will of God	Jn. 13:3-16
The servant who was sent to do the will of the Father	Gen. 24:1-67
The Servant and the word of God	Psa. 119:1-176

The reason I include Gen. 24 and Psa. 119 is because only in these two chapters is the Hebrew word “servant” (ebed) mentioned fourteen times (Gen. 24:2, 5, 9, 10, 14, 17, 34, 52, 53, 59, 61, 65 (twice), 66. Psa. 119:17, 23, 38, 49, 65, 76, 84, 122, 124, 125, 135, 140, 176, and 91) where the same Hebrew word “ebed” is translated servants. My understanding is that these give them an automatic connection with Matthew 1 where the number fourteen is emphasized (Matt. 1:17).

In consideration of the Lord as the Servant Son, our minds can think of two other sons who were sent, Joseph and David. However, there are major differences:

- a) Joseph was sent to be the revealer of secrets and the sustainer of life (Gen. 41:45)
- b) David was sent as the shepherd to defeat the enemy and blasphemer of God, to give victory/liberty (1 Sam. 17:1-55)
- c) Christ was sent to get a bride for the Son (Rev. 21:9)
- d) Being the Son Christ was the perfect Servant
 - i) His placing himself under the direction of God as the Sent One
 1. “I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (Jn. 6:38)
 2. The Lord informs us that this was his meat: “Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work” (Jn. 4:34)
 3. Furthermore, He fulfilled the will of God with delight: “I delight to do thy will” (Psa. 40:8)
- e) This perfect Servant lived a life of perfect un-defilement because:
 - i) He only spoke that which was given Him: “For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him” (Jn. 3:34)
 - ii) He only did that which was the will of God for Him to do: “And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him” (Jn. 8:29)

What was the ultimate cost of the devotion of the Servant Son?

- a) The Servant Son was not spared any in dignity nor suffering for to be our High Priest and Saviour. What depth of fulness there is in the words:
 - i) “I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting” (Isa. 50:6)
 - ii) “He that spared not His Son” (Rom. 8:32)

While there are numerous passages which bring the truths of Father, Son, and Servant together, one of the most precious is the parable of the Lord of the Vineyard who sent his servants and His Son (Matt. 21:33-41) with the main thought in verse 37: “He sent unto them His Son, saying, They will reverence my son”.

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After their repeated rejection, the Lord of the vineyard says: “they will reverence my Son”, and He is sent. As we enter into the heart of God we are struck with the deep affection He had for the Lord, and the amazing truth, God puts His trust in a man! The Servant Son is called “My Son”. It is an expression God uses several times of Christ and only of Christ. I say this because Mormonism teaches that God also said it to Moses! In an extract from the book of Moses as revealed to Joseph Smith, it is recorded: “The words of God, which he spake unto Moses . . . and he saw God face to face . . . and God spake unto Moses, saying: Behold . . . thou art my son” (Moses 1:1-4). This is blasphemous for it sets Moses above the angels, and God never said to any of them “Thou art my Son” (Heb. 1:5). It is an expression of Jehovah to the Lord (Psa. 2:7).

- a) The unique sonship of Christ is verified by:
 - i) The prophecy concerning Him
 - 1. Regarding His Kingship (Psa. 2:7)
 - ii) His creative activity (Col. 1:13-16)
 - iii) Identification (Matt. 3:17)
 - iv) Declaration
 - 1. By demons (Matt. 8:29)
 - 2. By disciples (Jn. 1:49)
 - 3. By the centurion and those with Him after His death (Mk. 15:39)
 - 4. By the angel before His birth (Lk. 1:35)
 - 5. By God at His transfiguration (Matt. 17:5)
 - v) Glorification (Jn. 11:4; 17:1)
 - vi) Self designation (Jn. 5:25; 10:36)
 - vii) Resurrection (Matt. 28:19; Rom. 1:4)
 - viii) Self confession (Matt. 26:63-65; 27:43)

- b) It was questioned by Satan at His:
 - i) Temptation (Matt. 4:3, 6)

As the Servant Son we are given a glimpse into the tenderheartedness of the Lord in His condescending grace. As the Servant He was coming to earth, to Judea, to Bethlehem, and to Nazareth. Nazareth! even to this day a place of questionable character. Recently I heard from a brother about a man he worked with. On questioning him where he came from, he said “Israel”. This led to further discussion and the believer said: “I knew a man from Israel, he came from Nazareth, His name was Jesus”. The man dropped his head and then said: “That is where I come from and I am embarrassed to say it, that is the place of corruption, baseness, and the lowest of the low”. When I heard this I thought, such was His condescension that He left the glories of celestial heights to come to Nazareth.

This was His being in “the form of a servant” (Phil. 2:7), not just outward likeness but inward character. To be a true servant one must have a servant’s attitude and with Christ as such, what did that mean? It meant an uncomplaining spirit concerning that which the Father had designed for Him or permitted to pass into His life! It was not a spirit of frozen inability to react in silence that marked His life, but the silence of quiet composure in the will of God. Never was there the mumbling of internal agitation or displeasure with the pathway God designed.

As such:

- a) There was never a taint of pride in Him, no mock modesty, no exerting of His rights but genuine humility taking the low place.
- b) No matter what anyone did to Him, he never demanded an apology and the snobbish look was never seen in Him.
- c) When the population sought Him to depart, there was no word of remonstrance or ridicule, but accepting it He went His way (Mk. 5:17).
- d) When they would cast Him over the hill, He will go away and then come back to seek their good (Lk. 4:29; Matt. 15:34).
- e) Never does He cast up to them a censuring word because of what they said or did to Him.
- f) When the disciples were too aloof to stoop down to wash the others feet, He did it (Jn. 13:5).

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- g) He stood having His face spat on, He did not turn his head (Isa. 50:6).
- h) He was openly mocked, derided and made a drunkard's song (Psa. 69:12).
- i) His accusation was written to "humiliate Him" (Matt. 27:37).
- j) This servant did not criticize, lose His temper, or inwardly think in smug superiority "God will punish you for this".

There was no reverence for the Servant Son. Sorrows, rejection, and mockery was to be the story of His life.

The Lord tells us that we are to bear fruit (Jn. 15:5), the fruit of His character, and that means servanthood. How rebuking this may be to us for we think we have our rights, our position, our name! We will not let anyone treat us lower than we deem ourselves to be deserving of; do they not know who I am; he/she offended me; perturbed because someone did not speak to me; and all in the huffs we kick up a fuss about something. Oh saints of God, must it be asked: "Where is the likeness of the Son who became the servant in such attitudes?" The words of scripture ring through the ages: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves" (2 Chron. 7:14); "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God" (1 Pet. 5:6; Jam. 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:5); "Walk humbly with thy God" (Mic. 6:8). God dwells with those of a humble and contrite spirit (Isa. 57:15). This is the character of the Servant Son.

May the Holy Spirit help us to follow His steps in humility and servant character for His glory.

... Rowan Jennings

God's Word



**is the ruler with which
we measure our lives**