

Behold My Servant

Sermon Delivered on April 14th, 2019
AM Service

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Text:

Isaiah 52:13 Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. 14: As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: 15: So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

Isaiah 53:1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? 2: For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. 3: He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4: Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5: But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 6: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7: He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. 8: He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. 9: And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. 10: Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11: He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. 12: Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Introduction

We read [Isaiah 52:13-15](#), because it is an introduction to the great theme of [Isaiah 53](#) which is the Servant of the Lord. We see here that the Servant of the Lord shall be **exalted** and be **extolled** and be **very high** but He would have to go through deep trial and humiliation that will bring great redemption to sinners.

[Isaiah 53](#) is well-known passage of Scripture. It is the second most quoted Old Testament book in the New Testament. It is mentioned in the New Testament 83 times. It is also the most preached-portion of the Old Testament. Martin Luther said of this chapter, *“Every Christian ought to be able to repeat it by heart.”*

This 53rd chapter of Isaiah foretells the sufferings of the Messiah, some 700 years before it actually happened. It describes in **detail** and in **graphic** way the **atonement suffering** and the **victory** of the Servant of the Lord, who will bear the sin of the world.

Someone has said of [Isaiah 53](#), these words, *“It looks as if it had been written beneath the cross of Golgotha.”*

As you read this chapter, you will notice that **Isaiah never identified the person** of this passage, but we know that he speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ. How do we know that Isaiah speaks of Jesus Christ? Please turn to [Acts 8:26-35](#). Here is the account where Philip was led by the Spirit of God to approach a traveling Eunuch who was at that time reading verse 7 and 8 of Isaiah 53.

[Acts 8:30](#) And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, **Understandest thou what thou readest?**

[Acts 8:34](#) And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? [35](#): Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

We know that the person of whom Isaiah spoke is our Lord Jesus because when Philip was asked the question by that Ethiopian eunuch, he told him and beginning with Scriptures in the Old Testament, **he explained to him Jesus**. So, we know that the servant Isaiah spoke of is our Lord Jesus Christ.

This morning, in preparation for Easter Sunday, I invite you to **look at the nature of the Servant of Lord** that Isaiah reveals in this amazing chapter. We will see today in chapter 53 that Isaiah completely unveils for us the nature of God’s ‘ideal servant’ as well as the work that He would perform in becoming the once-for-all time sacrifice for the sins of mankind.

In [Isaiah 52:13](#), we read ...

[Isaiah 52:13](#) **Behold, my servant** shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. [14](#): As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: [15](#): So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

Isaiah invites God’s people to behold the Servant of the Lord, and that is also my invitation this morning. **Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!** Behold the Servant of Jehovah - His nature and what He has accomplished for you and me. Behold the **Sorrowing** Servant, the **Suffering** Servant, and the **Submissive** Servant.

As you and I behold Him, it is my prayer for those who are still lost among us that they will be brought to Jesus Christ in repentance and faith, and thus experience the great salvation that He has purchased on the cross for sinners. And for those who, by the grace of God are already saved, may you be brought to a **new and greater appreciation** to the One who suffered and died for our sins, resulting in a **greater love, commitment and service** to Him.

I - The Sorrowing Servant

The first thing I want us to see in this rich passage is the sorrows of Christ in verses 1 to 3.

Isaiah 53:1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? 2: For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. 3: He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Isaiah begins with two questions ...

Isaiah 53:1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

Who has believed our report? Who has believed our message? To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? These questions are more of an **exclamation** than an interrogation. Isaiah is amazed at way the good news about Christ was received. He is astonished at the lukewarm reception that the Jews given to the news of Christ. And we know in history when our Lord came ...

John 1:10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11: He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

Here is the most glorious news that man would ever hear and when He came they receive Him not.

Isaiah had constantly faced unbelief in his day. As he prophesied to rebellious Judea the nation continued to rebel and refuse to listen and obey the word of the Lord. Now, Isaiah prophesies about the coming Messiah and that many would refuse to believe the word of God through them. Isaiah is astonished at the unbelief of Israel and their reception of the Messiah and His message. They **saw** Him; they **heard** Him; **but they would not trust Him.**

Then Isaiah goes on and talks about the person the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 53:2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

He tells us that the Lord in His earthly beginning came from a **humble root**. He describes Him as a **tender plant** not a robust plant and **nothing about Him outwardly that seem to attract attention**. People who are attracted to powerful and charismatic rulers see no beauty in Him.

Isaiah 53:3 **He is despised and rejected of men**; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; **he was despised, and we esteemed him not.**

He repeats it twice – He is despised and rejected of men ... he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

The religious and political leaders of Israel and the people of the nation at large did not exalt and recognize Jesus as the Messiah come from God. Instead, men looked down at their noses at Him. They treated Him with contempt. **This Servant though valued by God was despised and rejected by men.** He was not only treated with contempt He was rejected – they withdrew from Him.

The gospels reveal that **many turned away from Jesus** after initially following Him. Judas betrayed Him; Peter denied Him; the same crowd who shouted “Hosanna” in His triumphant entry **a week later shouted crucify Him**; all His disciples fled and forsaken their Leader.

Isaiah tells us that God’s ‘ideal servant’ would be ‘like one from whom men hide their face.’ In **John 3:20-21**, Jesus taught that **men and women avoided Him** and the light of truth **because they were content living in their sin**,

John 3:20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. **21: But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.**

The One who alone can atone for sin is despised and rejected. His **message is rejected**; His **person is refused**; and His **mission is misunderstood**. Is it any wonder that He is described as the sorrowing Servant of the Lord!

Isaiah 53:3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

That is Isaiah’s depiction of our Lord - a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He was man who was **intimately associated with sorrow and grief**. He knows experientially grief and pain.

It was said that when the great composer **Handel**, when he was composing the oratorio “Messiah” when he came to this verse, “**He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief**”, that he **broke down over his core in tears**.

A word to those who are going through pain and sorrow - **Jesus Christ knows your sorrows and pain.**

Hebrews 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. **16: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.**

II - The Suffering Servant

Isaiah then moves from a general description of our Lord's status in life to a more detailed account of His sufferings. In the following verses, Isaiah gives us a **graphic and detailed description** of what Christ endured to redeem lost sinners.

Isaiah 53:4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5: But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

He bore our griefs, carried our sorrows, stricken, smitten of God and afflicted, wounded, bruised, oppressed and afflicted, falsely accused and tried, numbered with the transgressors, and poured His soul unto death.

The physical suffering and beating that our Lord endured was so severe that when they were done with Him, His appearance was disfigured beyond that of any man, and His form was marred that He hardly look like a human.

The description of Christ's suffering in the New Testament Gospels clearly indicates the severity of His physical suffering: the agony in the garden, His disfigured face and form, the severe scourging, and the torture of the crucifixion itself.

Then what is worst is that we, **mankind in general, misunderstood His suffering.**

Isaiah 53:4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: **yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.**

The word “**esteem**” means accounted or credited. We credited to Him sins. The people who saw Him on the cross **thought that it was because of His sins**; when men saw the Lord suffering on the cross **they thought He was dying for His own sins**. We credited sin to His account. God had struck Him because of His sins. **They complete misunderstood of the suffering of Christ.**

But we read in ...

Isaiah 53:5 **But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.**

It is for us! He was wounded for our transgression, He bruised for our iniquities, the punishment of our iniquity was laid upon Him. **This great and awesome God who made the world; who spoke creation into being, went to the cross for you and me.**

Matthew Henry, *“In these verses is an account of the sufferings of Christ; also of the design of his sufferings. It was for our sins, and in our stead, that our Lord Jesus suffered. We have all sinned, and have come short of the glory of God. Sinners have their beloved sin, their own evil way, of which they are fond. Our sins deserve all griefs and sorrows, even the most severe. We are saved from the ruin, to which by sin we become liable, by laying our sins on Christ. This atonement was to be made for our sins. And this is the only way of salvation. Our sins were the thorns in Christ's head, the nails in his hands and feet, the spear in his side. He was delivered to*

death for our offences. By his sufferings he purchased for us the Spirit and grace of God, to mortify our corruptions, which are the distempers of our souls. We may well endure our lighter sufferings, if He has taught us to esteem all things but loss for him, and to love him who has first loved us.”

No understanding of the cross is complete until you and I understand that He was there because of you and me. The griefs that Christ bore, the sorrows that He carried is ours. So, when we think of the suffering and sacrifice and the death of Christ, we ought to conclude that He died in our place. It was for us; it was for our sins. He was our substitute.

1 Peter 2:22 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

III - The Submissive Servant

Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. 8: He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. 9: And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Not only do we see in this chapter Christ's **sorrow** and **suffering**, we also see His **submission**. Jesus Christ **willingly submitted** to the punishment for our sin. **He gave His life willingly.**

Don't we also see this truth in the New Testament from the very lips of our Lord Himself...

John 10:17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18: **No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.** I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

He laid down His life willingly. No man can take it from Him, He laid down His life on His own free will. He laid down His life because of His love for you and me.

And then what follows in [Isaiah 53](#) is amazing ...

Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, **yet he opened not his mouth**: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, **so he openeth not his mouth.**

Jesus Christ was treated unjustly and yet He opened not His mouth. **He refused to defend Himself.**

In the movie "The Passion of Christ" the man who played the role of Christ in that film, was a man named Jim Caviezel. In the part where they portrayed the scourging of Christ in the film, Caviezel was tied apparently to a post and actually looked like he was being whipped by the

Roman soldiers. But they had a board that was placed on his back so that the actor who is playing the part of the Roman soldier was actually striking the board. And at one point at Mel Gibson's direction he was bringing the whip at a certain direction and the whip actually made contact with Caviezel's back and he screamed in agony and Gibson gave him some more instructions and he struck him again and this time he cut a 14-inch wound in the man's back and instinctively when he did so the actor turned and swore at the other actor.

That is the difference between **someone who is acting the part of Christ** and **someone who is Christ**. Oppressed, afflicted, reviled, mocked, insulted, harassed, mistreated, misfired, yet He opened not His mouth. This amazed Pilate.

John 19:8 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; 9: And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

Pilate asks our Lord, "Whence art thou?" "Where are you from?" Pilate demands something of the Lord but no response from our Lord.

John 19:10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

"Aren't you going to speak to me? Do you realize that I have the authority to release you and the authority to crucify you?"

Then the Lord responded ...

John 19:11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Notice how the Lord responded. No reviling, no depending, no excuse making, Jesus answered. **Jesus wants Pilate to know and understand that God is completely in charge**. But He did not open His mouth. He had no word of complaint. While being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously.

Christ willingly, lovingly, submissively took that punishment so that our sins could be cleansed.

Closing Thoughts

Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world! Behold Him in His **sorrow!** Behold Him in His **suffering!** Behold Him in His **submission!** As you and I behold the Lamb of God, the sorrow, the suffering, and the submissiveness of the Servant of the Lord, **may it cause us to gain a new appreciation of what Christ has done for us.**

If you are a born again Christian this morning and you have a **low commitment to Christ and His church**, it is because **you have a low view of Christ in His suffering**. If you have not seen what He went through in your place you have not begun to comprehend His love unless you have begun to comprehend His love you cannot love Him and serve Him as you should.

The God of Heaven took on Him flesh so He could take on human sins and human suffering and it is time for us as humans deserving that suffering to exalt Him in our lives.

To those who have not believe our report and who arm of the Lord have not been revealed, I have a question to ask you...

Lamentation 1:12 Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

Is it nothing to you that Jesus Christ the Son of God suffered and died for sinners like you and me? Oh, repent and call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ today and be saved!

Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

AMEN!