

A Surprising Gospel

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

"The Suffering Servant"— May 7, 2023



Introduction

The book of Isaiah is broken into two chunks. Chapters 1 - 39 are a long message about God's judgment on Israel for their disobedience. In chapters 40 – 66, there is a sudden turn. The message of judgment turned into a message of comfort, hope and salvation. Though they are going into exile, God will bring them out and ultimately, God will send His Servant to deliver them.

The Servant will establish justice (Isaiah 42). The whole world would hear the message of salvation. This Servant will experience humiliation, rejection and suffering. (Isaiah 49) This passage talks about that suffering as well as the reason for the suffering. The suffering of God's servant for the sins of His people is the defining act through which God would save the world.

Sermon Outline

1. The Servant's Life Isaiah 52:12-53:3
2. The Servant's Death Isaiah 53:4-11
3. The Servants Resurrection Isaiah 53:12

Read & Discuss

1. Read 52:13-53:3

The Servant was commissioned by God to bring salvation to all the earth. You might expect Him to be kingly, yet we find that He was totally unremarkable. (53:2) The Servant, the tender shoot, came from the same dust of which Adam was made in Genesis 2. There is absolutely nothing about His physical appearance that would catch your attention.

It is His wisdom that will lead to His success in carrying out the mission. (52:13) Do you remember Isaiah's astounding vision of God on the throne? (Isaiah 6) The Servant will be high and lifted up. He will be God as well as man.

His life would be a life of sorrow and rejections. (53:3) He wasn't worth anything to anyone. Are you experiencing sorrow, affliction, or rejection? Do you see how Jesus understands our difficult situations? Do you feel like an outcast? This coming Servant would experience sorrow and grief as well as rejection from His people. He understands.

Additional Reading: Genesis 2; Isaiah 6

2. Read 53:4-11

His death will be terrible. He will be pierced, crushed, having multiple wounds. (52:14) People will be appalled at the sight of Him, and He will be unrecognizable.

This death will be unjust. (53:9) Yet He was completely innocent. His arrest, trial and death were unjust. But it was all planned by God. (53:10)

The Servant agreed to the plan. (53:7) He set His face like flint to the suffering. (Isaiah 50:7) He knew that His mission to bring salvation would bring this suffering. Why would the Lord will that His Servant be crushed and why would the Servant agree to this? The answer comes from Israel's history. A sacrificial system was established to teach the Israelites that sin brings death and that it brings cleansing and reconciliation. Yet those sacrifices were not sufficient. A greater sacrifice was needed. This is why the Servant was crushed willingly. God planned this all along to atone for sin once and for all. (53:4-6) This was for us!

When you read a passage like this, what do you think about it? Does it seem fair? Where should the judgement have fallen? Does this help you understand the seriousness of sin? This judgement should have fallen on sinful mankind, but it fell on Jesus. Praise be to God! He was the completely innocent Servant - the spotless Lamb. He is not only the sacrifice. He is also the Priest. (53:10b; 52:15)

3. Read 53:12

In a chapter full of bewildering predictions, the most bewildering of all would be that the Servant will rise from the dead. ([53:10-11](#)) Death will NOT be the end for the Suffering Servant. He will receive a King's reward. ([53:12](#)) Who are the "many" who will share in this King's victory? ([52:14, 15; 53:11](#)) By coming to know the Servant, many people from many nations will be made righteous. The many are those with whom the Servant will share His reward.

Isaiah had no way of knowing how the prophecy would be fulfilled and who the Servant would be. This is 750 years before Jesus is born. ([1 Peter 1:10](#)) Jesus is the Priest, the Lamb, the Prophet, and the King. God's plan is fulfilled in Jesus. None of the Old Testament prophets got to see this. Israel would go into exile. The prophets would die. There would be 400 years of silence. Then one day, the root sprang up. A baby was born in Bethlehem. He grew up in obscurity. We know little about His life before His ministry. Then, He faced rejection and hatred. He was oppressed and afflicted. He was arrested, tried, sentenced to death. He suffered the terrible agony and shame of a crucifixion. After His death, He was buried by a rich man. ([Matthew 27:57-61](#))

Through it all, Jesus didn't defend Himself. Why? He understood that He came for this very purpose. ([John 1:29](#)) Jesus came to serve and to give His life a ransom for many. ([Mark 10:45](#)) But He did not stay dead! He rose from the dead. After His resurrection, He ascended into heaven where He was highly exalted. ([Philippians 2:9-11](#))

Jesus clearly fulfills the prophecy in Isaiah. When you think of all that Jesus, the Servant, did for our salvation, what is your response? How should we respond to what Jesus has done for us? ([Is. 54:1](#)) Those who experience God's redemption should SING. The response for God's completed work through Jesus is celebration! What are some ways you can celebrate the work of Jesus? What songs lead you in praise to God for our salvation?

Jesus heals and restores. Are there times when, even though you have trusted Christ for salvation, you feel like you need to "measure up?" Do you feel like a failure as a Christian? We do not have to earn God's favor. We can just be thankful. We are not perfect, but God will bring about the completion of His work in you. ([Philippians 1:6](#)) God loves you and is for you. You come to Him daily to receive His mercy, and He delights to give it to you. ([Matthew 11:28-30](#))

One of the most important realities is that we have grace from God **and** peace with God. This is crucial. Ever since the Fall, we have not had peace with God. You can have peace with God because of what Jesus did. There is no better news for you today. Have you experienced the grace of God? Do you have peace with God?

If you have trusted in Christ, there is more good news. ([53:12](#)) You have been healed, now Jesus makes intercession for you - daily and ongoing. He is a sympathetic High Priest. He pleads your cause continually before the Father. ([Hebrews 7:25](#)) Because of this, we will always have peace with God. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus is ever pleading your cause before God?

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come. If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at fbcum.org

Next week's sermon text: we turn to [Genesis 27:1-40](#) "Needless Deceit"