

# The Cross in Isaiah 53

by Art Katz

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*Art Katz explores the profound implications of Isaiah 53, emphasizing the connection between the suffering of the servant and Israel's future recognition of Jesus as the Messiah.*

**Duration:** 1:14:48

**Scripture:** Isaiah 52:15, Isaiah 53:2, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "The Cross"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the significance of the suffering of Jesus on the cross, which occurred 2,000 years ago. He describes it as a remarkable strategy from God to redeem not only a nation but also all nations. The speaker explains that the suffering of Jesus was a judgment from God, as he bore the wrath and anger that mankind deserved. He also highlights the importance of reading and studying theology to understand the depth and legacy of passages like Isaiah 53.

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## Transcript

I can tell you tonight, I have never come to the pulpit more reluctantly and with a greater sense of dread than now. How do you figure that out? Because I have a formidable task. Formidable.

It means extremely difficult. Complex. Because I think the Lord wants me to attempt, by His grace, some kind of statement on eschatology, on the last days that's appropriate for the church that is the church to consider, to receive, to integrate into its understanding that it might have a right expectation of the things that pertain to the end.

Eschatology, the study of things that pertain to the end. And it has everything to do with the cross. The single great epochal, E-P-O-C-H-A-L.

Somebody is not standing by the dictionary tonight. So, you who have received mercy last night or have been renewed in mercy, you have a first opportunity to extend it to a Jew. Me.

I need mercy. Think I'm kidding. This is a disaster.

This is calculated for disaster, for failure. There's no way that one can succeed in a subject as complex, as difficult as what I am burdened to share tonight. Nevertheless, Lord, with you, nothing is impossible.

And for those aspiring young saints who think that it's an easy thing to trip up to the platform and be valuable with a gift of gab, as if it's falling off a stool and there's nothing to it, let them know that the true preacher comes to this holy desk with dread, with fear, with reluctance. He comes unwillingly like a snail. He would rather be somewhere else and not be charged with the responsibility of the word.

So, my God, only you can succeed. And if you succeed, it will be joy unspeakable and full of glory. If you fail, not because of any inadequacy in you, but the difficulty that I represent for you to succeed through, then it will be a dull thought.

It will fall to the ground with a thought. And we will leave joylessly and listlessly scratching our heads and wondering, what was all that about? So, my God, come and unburden your own soul. We're so grateful that you are the high priest and the apostle of our confession, as well as prophet, priest, and king.

And so, I'm asking my God, if there's a possibility of union with you, by which we can say with Paul, for me to live as Christ, then let that mystery be explicated and demonstrated tonight through this unwilling piece of dust that you will take to yourself and charge with your own life and present out of your own wisdom and ability the word of the living God appointed for this night that was determined by you before the foundations of the earth were laid as a work to walk in. So come, my God, and delight your soul and succeed out of your own great power. It's more than the issue of reputation.

It's more than the issue of enjoyment. It's the issue of a word that will fit the church for its role, its participation in the consummation of the things that conclude the age through Israel's restoration by the cross. In Jesus' name, Lord, we pray.

And God's people said, Amen. I think the principal text tonight will be Isaiah 53. How many are unfamiliar with that text? Raise your hand.

Oh, my. Oh, my. Okay.

May tonight prompt you to immerse yourself in the greatest single prophetic text that describes the suffering of the servant of God at the cross composed seven centuries before the event by the inspiration of the spirit that foresaw the execution of the servant of the Lord who is himself the Lord in such detail of agony and rejection that is an astonishment. It is so Christological. Excuse my language.

It's about time you caught up with me. Christological. It is so Christ-centered that the Jews, my people and kinsmen, have wisely omitted it from their synagogue use.

When I read to my Jewish mother, Isaiah 53, she said, Where in the New Testament are you reading? She understood this was about Christ. I said, I'm not reading from the New Testament at all. I'm reading from the classic Hebrew prophet Isaiah.

Oh, she said, I never heard that. I said, You never will in a synagogue. Because the Haftorah selection, the reading from the prophets that accompanies the reading from the Torah, from the books of Moses, every Shabbat week by week is already determined by rabbinical council so that at a certain point in time they read up to Isaiah 52 12 and the next week they continue with Isaiah 54.

And the great text is omitted from Jewish consideration, which leaves the task for you. Well, let's turn to it. And Isaiah 53 rightly begins in Isaiah 52 from verse 13.

Behold, my servant shall deal prudently. He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. This kind of language exceeds any appropriateness about the servant being a man.

It's the kind of language that is appropriate to a servant who is himself God, extolled and very high. And then the whole thing shifts abruptly. And many were astonished at thee.

His visage, his face was so marred more than any man and his form more than the sons of man. So already crucifixion is beginning to be described. The most cruel and savage form of bringing a man to death that human ingenuity aided by satanic inspiration could ever produce.

So here is the form of death to which Jesus was to be submitted, being described in the spirit by the prophet seven centuries before the advent of Rome, who employed crucifixion as a principal execution for those who are unworthy of being beheaded. Paul was beheaded and not crucified. Crucifixion was reserved for criminals, for rebels, for traitors, for insurgents.

This servant who is yet to be extolled very high evidently has first to be brought very low. And his visage, his face marred more than any man, his form more than the sons of men. So in that condition, see what I'm inserting here, shall he sprinkle many nations with what? With his blood that is extruded by this torture unto death.

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. This, dear saints, is a key verse tonight. This message, whatever the Lord will give it grace to become, has got to make an ultimate demand of you.

It will stretch you to breaking. You'll want to cry out, enough cats, I can't take more. This is too great a demand for my thought.

All of the complexity of this, the meaning of these verses, the picture being described, that one shall suffer so much that his form and visage is marred, so wracked, so painfully devastated that you could hardly recognize him as a man. And if you have ever seen the great classic painting, the masterpiece at Colmar, France on the crucified Christ, what is it called? The Eisenheim Altar. Wouldn't hurt you to look that up.

You'll see a holy ghost masterpiece of the 16th century which I had the privilege of seeing as a Jewish atheist and was so astonished and stunned I was transfixed by this nine foot high painting of a man impaled on a cross, so gnarled and twisted I had to question was I looking at a man or some kind of animal and whose jaw was dropped, his lips were white and his hair bedraggled and the look of excruciating pain as the final fixation of his features and in his body are pieces of wood and bone and glass, whatever it was that he put on that lash, the cat on nine tails, each strand of that whip had at its end a piece of bone, a glass or stone that would cut through the flesh into the bone. Jesus was more dead than alive when they nailed him, having been beaten to a pulp, punched, had his beard pulled, spit at, he was deformed, he was grossly maligned, so they had no form, no visage or beauty that we should desire him. You turn your face away, you can't bear to look at that ugly depiction and I'm saying it's a holy ghost masterpiece and that was the man naked.

I know when you see those pictures he's got a nice loincloth but I can tell you that part of the suffering of crucifixion was the humiliation of having your hands nailed so you couldn't even cover your private parts. You're exposed, you're naked, you're a camp, not even the dignity of within the city, you're scum, you're a worm and your God suffered that. That has got to stop every man and give him pause to thought.

So here's what I want to say, that this last verse 15 has not yet been fulfilled. What do you mean, Art? I don't think that kings have yet seen or understood, their mouths have not yet been shut, it's not yet been told them what they shall see, what they had not heard shall they consider and I'm saying all that to say this, there's one crucifixion yet to come by which king shall see that which they had not heard and shall consider that which had not been spoken of and so shall he sprinkle many nations. You say but Art, that took place 2,000 years ago.

Yes, but what nation has acknowledged it? Even Christian nations lack something in the depth of their appreciation of this remarkable suffering and death, let alone nations that subscribe to other gods. The kings have not yet seen, the nations have not yet been sprinkled, it has not yet been told them what they shall see and hear and understand. If that's true, Art, are you saying that Jesus will then again be crucified a second time? No, what I'm saying is, and I'm the only one saying it, because no one wants to consider it, but I'm prophetically obliged to express it, that the crucifixion of Jesus is to be reiterated and expressed and demonstrated and set forth before all nations by his own people, Israel, the Jew, in their last days suffering and their road to Calvary, called the time of Jacob's trouble, when they shall be marred more than any man, when they shall be beaten so to a pulp, so driven that they'll have no beauty that any should desire them.

They will be repulsive in their flight and yet because of it, the Lord through that suffering is reiterating and setting before the consideration of the nations what they had not understood nor seen the first time. They have opportunity now to see enacted and depicted by the nation of what had been suffered and experienced before by its Lord. Can you follow that? Can you see why I came reluctantly tonight? Who wants to speak that? Who can communicate that? Art, you're talking about a grotesque suffering for an entire people.

Yes, it's a judgment because Jesus bore it in judgment. Did you know that? The wrath of God upon the sin of mankind, his righteous wrath, his justifiable wrath and anger fell upon his son. It was undeserved by him but born, but Israel will deserve its judgment.

It's everyday moving more sinfully toward a fulfillment that must come to them as a nation and I hope to show you the multiple purposes that are served by God in the visible suffering of that nation before all nations in one night. They keep us here till midnight but if you don't hear it from me, you will not hear it. And if you don't hear it, don't understand, don't consider it, how shall you be fitted to extend mercy to that people when they go through this time of national suffering and shame and expulsion and marring and beating and disfiguring where if no one extends to them a hand of mercy, a towel to wipe their face, a cup of water in their nakedness as it says in Matthew 25, when did we see you naked and thirsty and hungry and in prison? Jesus said if you did not do this, if you did not succor, S-U-C-C-O-U-R with the English spelling, if you did not extend mercy to a people in that condition, you did it not unto me for these are the least of my brethren.

I want to tell you dear saints, that will indicate and show who in fact the true church is in the last days. Those who will have mercy when it will not be convenient to extend it because if they are pursued and beaten, left for dead, that there's not a place of safety in the nations because this shall be enacted globally. If they're so hated and ferociously pursued, what will be the fate of those who dare to stand with them and identify with them and extend mercy to them? You're liable to catch it and why should you? Not only being Gentile but Chinese, what's in it for you? What do they ever do for you? That you should extend yourself at risk to be identified with the people when they shall be marred more than any man.

There'll be only one explanation and it's beyond nationality, it's beyond race, it's beyond culture. It's that you are among the righteous and could not do otherwise than extend mercy no matter what the consequence for yourself. That's why he says to those who extended it, come and enter the kingdom prepared for you, you righteous.

Oh, this is so remarkable. For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground. He has no form, no comeliness, no attractiveness and when we shall see him there's no beauty that we should desire him.

There cannot be a description of Jesus before his crucifixion because before his crucifixion he was ruddy and handsome and a precious and supreme piece of humanity like the David before him. This is the description of a man who has suffered abuse, punched, plucked, spit at, whipped. There's no beauty we should desire him.

He's despised and rejected him and 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. Who's speaking here? Come on, you guys have got to become Bible scholars.

You've got to become exegetes not dum-dums. You've got to not just read passages, you've got to interject yourself and wrestle and draw out. There are several voices in Isaiah 53.

We have to identify who's speaking at a certain part. This is no longer Isaiah himself speaking. This is not the prophet narrating.

This is now the people themselves. This is Israel. This is the Jewish people who are looking back 2,000 years to this suffering servant and saying there was no beauty that we desired him.

We rejected. He was despised. He was a man of sorrows acquainted with grief.

We hid our faces from him. We had nothing to do with this guy. We didn't esteem him.

But now in verse 4, we are coming to understand that in that condition as a man of sorrows acquainted with grief and devastated in his body and his face, he hath borne our sorrows, our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions and he was bruised for our iniquities and the penalty, the chastisement for our peace that should have come upon us was upon him and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray.

We've turned everyone to his own way and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Oh, you dear young saints, you naive, innocent, shallow saints. What a description is this? That Israel who has for 2,000 years rejected Jesus and put him aside as a magician, a misfit, someone who irritated the Roman authorities and earned for himself an execution and he deserves no more consideration than that are speaking another tune here.

This is a new acknowledgement. He was wounded for our transgressions. All we like sheep have gone astray.

Show me a Jew today who will acknowledge that and say that. What then does this prophetically mean, dear man? It means that there is a short time in which Jews will suffer in such a way that it will open their

understanding and a consideration to consider him whom they have now for two millennia rejected and set aside and see him not only in a new way but a true way for to see him as the crucified Lamb of God who bore our transgressions and our iniquities and suffered in our behalf and by whose stripes we are healed is to be saved. So what's going to happen, Art, that this Jewish worldwide Judaistic community that has rejected him is going to see something new that they have not seen till now? What will enable and bring them to that new seeing? Suffering, rejection, persecution, being marred more than any man because I have coined the phrase the mutuality of suffering.

Nothing reveals like suffering. That's why those aspiring actors who attended the dramatic schools of Russia and New York used to say I want to suffer. Suffering reveals.

Suffering is deep. The things that are shallow and flimsy fall aside. The things that are facetious, the things that are imagined, the things that are deceptive, when suffering comes you become strangely single-eyed and have a view toward reality that is no longer disguised by your amenities or your comfort.

This will bring you of age and it's about time. It's got to, you're on time, you guys. So what are you saying, Art? Summarize this for us.

We can hardly follow you. I'm saying this. This statement that is being made here in this prophetic text is yet future.

It's a people who have long rejected the Holy One of Israel as being of no consequence and are now seeing him newly out of the mutuality of their own suffering because now they are being marred more than any man. They are being rejected and despised. And somehow when you suffer what he suffered you begin to perceive his sufferings in a new way.

And in fact, if it were not for that provision, Israel would never see the Lord, never understand his sacrifice, never receive its benefit. And if they do not avail themselves of what he wrought on the cross unto salvation, how shall they bless all the families of the earth? What do you mean, Art? I mean Israel's destiny spoken by God to Abraham that this people shall bless all the families of the earth. I've raised them up to be a nation of priests and a light unto the world which includes Asia, which desperately needs that light which only this priestly people can bring when they are in the priestly condition.

But to come into that condition will require a suffering. Lord, mercy. Because a priest is not a technician.

He's not a religious functionary. A priest is identified with those for whom he intercedes as well as with God. The priests were barefooted.

They were clothed from head to toe but the feet themselves were never shod. How come? Because it had to be on the earth. It had to be an identification with the grip reality of those to whom they were sent as the ministers of God in compassion and identification in sympathy and in mercy or else their intercessions would have been vain.

Today's Jew is in that description? Far from it. They don't give a rap for the nations. And yet God has called them to be a light to the nations and a nation of priests.

So the question then comes, how can modern Jewry fulfill their destiny which God spoke to Abraham which if it is not fulfilled, how is God God? If it's not fulfilled, if the callings and gifts of God are irrevocable and without repentance and they're not fulfilled, how valid is the God who made that gift and calling? How

valid are his covenants and his promises that they would be restored and fulfill this destiny millennially and eternally despite 2,000 years of apostasy? The issue of Israel's restoration is the issue of God as God for the nations. Everything, the Lord has put all his eggs in one basket. The whole issue of his truth and reality is his ability to take this apostate people who have been marked by their brilliance in finance and in art and culture and psychiatry, Freud and Marx and all of these great geniuses, but they have not been a priestly nation.

How do they go from this present preoccupation with the world and finance and money and wealth and fame and playing a violin to becoming a priest? Through suffering, through the road to Calvary, through walking the same kind of path that the Lord before them trod where they will be despised and rejected of all men and have no beauty that any should desire them, let alone Singaporean Chinese. Got the idea? God has stacked everything against himself that if he should succeed in forming such a people out from such suffering for which most of them shall not survive, we're talking about a surviving remnant. How do you know that art? Because I put two and two together.

Because I combined Old Testament and New Testament prophecy. Because I take the Lord seriously when he was asked by his disciples, Lord, what are the signs of your coming and of the end of the age? Matthew 24 and Luke 21. And he said among those signs there'll be havoc in nature, great upsurge, calamitous geophysical eruptions like the tsunami, earthquakes and social unrest and wars and rumors of wars and persecutions.

And as far as the nation is concerned, he said, there shall come upon them such a time of trouble as will exceed any trouble that that nation has ever previously known. Do you know what troubles they have experienced? Nobody knows the troubles I've seen. Nobody knows my sorrow.

You guys need to do some homework and get a volume of the history of Israel and see what they suffered in the Middle Ages. In this very Passover Easter season, the cry of Christ killer went up and the accusation that some Gentile's blood was being used to make the ceremonial matzah or the wells were polluted and the great black plague that took one third of Europe was a conspiracy by Jews because they were not affected by the plague. So therefore they must be responsible and therefore burned them at the stake, which they did.

How come they didn't suffer the plague? Because unlike you, they kept kosher. They didn't eat pork because in that generation in time, pigs roamed the streets and lived from the garbage that was thrown out of windows. They were saved by obedience to God in the elementary rules of diet given in the Torah.

But it earned for them persecution and it will again. Do you guys know what is happening in the world? Do you know that it's dangerous to be a Jew in France today? That the leaders of the French community have told their people, don't go out into the street with your yarmulke on. Don't wear your little beanie that reveals you as a Jew.

Put something else on your head, wear a cap because you'll get beat up because you're only 500,000 in a nation with almost 10 million Muslims and you're an open target. There's a growing pall over the earth of hatred against the Jew already. If they're not safe in France, they're not safe in Great Britain, they'll not be safe in Germany, where will they be safe? Will they be safe in the United States? Oh is that so? Then why has the Lord for 30 years have us to establish a place of refuge and haven for Jews and fight for persecution in North America? Oh you guys, better than my speaking to you is that I should just be rung out before you.

Because there's no way to summarize and communicate the substance of all the things in which I have been privileged by God to be instructed and to instruct others in one speaking. Which if you fail to understand it and receive it, you're condemned to becoming only charismatic. What a fate, too horrible to consider.

He wants you to be apostolic and prophetic. How do you know that Art? Because I'm here. And here more than once.

He's persistent. He has faith to believe beyond my ability. He has an intention for you and he's given you a precious pastor and leaders to cultivate and nurture and bring you to a place of maturity where you can receive a hard word and gave you opportunity to obtain mercy last night that you might extend it to them.

But Art, there's hardly just a handful of Jews here now. But how many will come through all of the shipping that takes place here in Singapore that goes out to nations and from nations? How many will come with those cargo ships and containers and by one means or another passing through? How do you know that? Because the scripture says, I will sift you through all nations. Why? Not only to sift you, but to sift the nation.

Not only to sift the nation, but to sift the church in the nation. So that when the Lord takes his throne and pronounces his first judgment in separating sheep from goats for their eternal destination, either in the kingdom or in the lake of fire, it's over one question. Only one question.

What did you do with the least of these, my brethren, when you saw them naked, beat up, pulverized, chased, persecuted, marred? Because your response to them is your response to me. And your failure to respond shows that your so-called faith was facetious and shallow, inadequate if not counterfeit. Because if you were authentically in the faith and were in the righteousness of God, you could not do other than to succor them, than to comfort them, than to take them in, than to love them and bathe them with your own tears and wipe their wounds and heal them and feed them a good Chinese meal and send them on their way to their next destination, which you know by the spirit.

So we're reading in this text, and I can tell you, dear saints, this is new to me. I have loved and read Isaiah 53 for many years until it pleased the Lord to show me who in fact is now speaking. It has shifted.

It's no longer the prophet narrating the text. Now it's the voice of a people who have come to a new recognition of a critical kind that they must come to in order to be saved and the only way they came to it is because their seeing has been affected by their own suffering. While at the same time their suffering is duplicating the sufferings of the Lord 2,000 years before them so that kings who had not known and not understood shall see.

So the purpose in one sense is to reveal the Lord to Israel and at the same time to reveal the Lord to the nations through Israel's suffering for they shall see in the suffering of that nation that of the Lord 2,000 years before which they did not understand, did not receive, did not consider and now as it's passing through all nations they cannot hide their face from it. They must see it and understand what that Jewish suffering represents because it so reiterates and captures again the suffering of the Lord 2,000 years before. It's a remarkable last day's stratagem from God.

It's an eschatological sweep of genius to redeem a nation and the nations by the same single stroke of a last day's suffering which is the reiteration of the cross. Praise God that this is being recorded. So you'll

have many opportunities to hear this again until it comes into your spirit and consciousness and understanding.

Surely verse 4, he hath borne our griefs. The Allah is Israel, the Jews and carried our sorrows and yet we didn't esteem him. He was stricken, we considered him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted but that affliction was for our transgressions.

We didn't understand that, that there had to be a blood sacrifice though it said in Leviticus 17 without the shedding of blood there's no remission for sin but since the destruction of the temple in 70 AD and the dispersal of all the priesthood of which I'm descendant, one of the few, there's been no blood sacrifice. So what's the atonement for sin? A day in the synagogue, day of fasting and mitzvot, good deeds. But art, that's a shabby substitute for blood.

Me you're telling? Who invented that art? The rabbis. Rabbinical Judaism. So that for 2000 years my people have been living without the covering, the kapora of their Messiah and his blood and therefore they have been open to every assailment, every attack, every vicious expression coming from the hateful gentile world against them without the protection of the blood of the Lamb.

How much do you esteem that blood? How much do you invoke it daily upon arising and in prayer? Lord your blood upon my head afresh, upon my door, upon my house, upon my children, upon my family. I don't dare leave this room, I don't dare start to go to work without invoking the blood. And Lord going to bed that night, I'm too tired to pray but this much I want to say, your blood be upon my head and upon my children, upon my house afresh through the night hours so that the evil one will not have opportunity to harass, to molest, to give me dreams and fantasies that I wake up with a bitter taste in my mouth.

Are you invoking the blood? The most precious provision of God for your continuing salvation? That if there be any iniquity, you can appeal to the blood for forgiveness and for washing, which I have done today. Are you? You're an impeccable saint. You needed the blood? We look to you as an example.

Well you dear man, why did Paul say that he's the chief of sinners? Was he talking about what he was before his conversion? Or what he was and is presently? The deeper you come in God, the more you know what a wicked sinner you are. What's your sin, Lord? My sin is the iniquity of priesthood. My sin is the profusion of much speaking.

Because the scripture says in much speaking is sin. Well Lord, I can't help it. As they say in American Midwest, Hepet.

I'm called to be a speaker. Well that does not absolve you from the sin that is inherent in your very calling. And that's why even after speaking as solemnly and as seriously as you know how, you can almost count on it something inadvertent, something out of your humanity, some illustration, some point, some accent that was not from me got into there and corrupted the text, corrupted the speaking.

It was defiled. You're always conscious of the iniquity of much speaking, of the iniquity of priesthood, of the iniquity of ministry. We need the blood.

I dare not come to this platform tonight if I had not prayed before coming for the fresh application of the blood to purge me and make me chaste so I could be a vessel through whom the word of the Lord can be expressed without being tainted. Because there's much at stake tonight, not just a man's reputation, whether you like him or you don't like him. What's at stake tonight is your call to the eschatological

conclusion of the age where the church is the salvific agent of God for a people who are so battered, so bruised, so marred more than any man that none will have any mercy for them.

There'll be no beauty that any should desire them except for you. You'll have a strange love for that people in that marred condition, in their ugly spirit being churned up. Your heart palpitates for them because it's the love of God for his own people and not some little sentimental thing rising up in your fancy.

If you're that united with him in Christ. The Jew is the test of where we in fact are in God. When did we see you naked and thirsty? Well, you didn't see me.

You know why? Because you turned your face away. You didn't want to see. You wanted to be absolved of any obligation that would threaten you, your security, your comfort, your family, your future.

Like the German brother, the old man I met years ago in Berlin, who was there, he said, when the brown-shirted Nazis with their swastika armbands were downstairs in the Jewish neighborhood beating the Jewish kids to a pulp and breaking the shop windows and making the old men to wipe the sidewalk with their beards. I said, Brother, what did you do? He said, What could I do, Hud? I pulled the shade down and I walked away. You're going to have an opportunity either to pull the shade down and walk away or come down and expose yourself and be vulnerable in their defense.

Even if you don't succeed, you still have an obligation rather than to be passive and unmoved. Righteousness requires response and you better start cultivating it now and not wait for that moment in which you'll be embarrassed and found wanting. Now you ought to be writing letters to the editor of the newspapers.

Now you ought to be standing for issues of righteousness in your society. Now you ought to love righteousness and hate iniquity and express yourself in that regard in a way that you're heard and felt and your presence counts so that it becomes a mode of being that when the ultimate crisis and test comes, you'll pass it. All we like sheep have gone astray.

I can't wait to hear my Jewish people acknowledge that. We have turned everyone to his own way, highly individualistic, full of our own opinions. What do they say? If you have two Jews, you have three arguments.

Everyone turned to his own way and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He's brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before his shears is done, so he openeth not his mouth.

If I think that I'm walking a tight wire tonight prophetically, how about Isaiah in the 7th century describing a suffering servant who as he's going to his death and being beaten to a pulp and spat at and castigated and saying come down and we will believe you, bears all of that insult, all of that injury without a single word of retaliation or answer. He bears it silently as a lamb to the slaughter. If Jesus had so much once opened his mouth and spat out from the cross, you dumb-dumbs don't you know what you're doing? I came for you and I'm suffering this for you and you're telling me come down and you'll believe me? What does it take? He had every reason, every justification to let them have it.

I would have, you know that, but he went as a lamb to the slaughter. That's an obedient son. If he had missed only this one particular, he would have invalidated his entire messianic credential.

How come that these Jews should be astonished that he went as a lamb to the slaughter because they're not going silently? They're groaning, bitching, complaining. How come us? Why me? Why did I ever do to suffer this? And I was living so comfortably in Toronto. I had a penthouse and a condominium.

And now I've got nothing. I'm stripped. I'm hated.

I'm despised. I'm pursued. How come me? Where's God? Full of complaints.

And the contrast will be staggering. He who suffered more exceedingly anything that we ever bore because not only was he a man, he was equally God. It's God crucified who is going to his death silently as a lamb to the slaughter.

And my Jewish people will not honor him and receive that work that he performed until they begin to see it in the rejection of two millennia by comparison to the suffering through which they themselves are now passing. Isn't there any other way that God could have redeemed Israel and fitted them to be a nation of priesthood? No. Priestliness requires identification and brokenness.

It requires humility. It requires a death to your ego, your vanity, your religious and ethnic and racial superiority that only being banged out of you and knocked and bruised and suffered in flight and persecution can succeed in doing. And all the more when you're saved out of that because there's a people whom God has prepared.

Though all the world will hate and despise you, they will take you in. They will wash your wounds. They will speak to you words of comfort.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people for they have suffered double for their sins. It's a drama of the coming together in the last days in a moment of time, the remnant of Israel and the remnant of the church. And the stage is set for Israel to collapse, for destruction and devastation to come, for anti-Semitism to reach its boiling point where it's not safe to be a Jew in France, England or any place where they're already in flight.

The only reason that the Lord has his hand of restraint on that situation is because you are not ready to receive them. He was taken from prison and from judgment. 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.

So being the careful Bible students that we are, we note that in that verse the voice has shifted. It's no longer the nation Israel speaking, it's very God himself with the pronoun my for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in death because he had done no violence.

Neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him. He has put him to grief.

And when you shall 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. He shall see the travail of a soul and shall be satisfied by his knowledge.

My righteous servant justify many for he shall bear their iniquities. Here is already a hint that this suffering servant who's to die in his sufferings and be buried in the grave with the wicked is also to see of the travail of his soul, indicating that there's a life beyond that death through resurrection. Though he has poured out his soul unto death, he shall yet see the travail of a soul and be satisfied.

What a text is this? How wisely the leaders of the Jewish community have kept this from Jewish consideration by not allowing its promulgation in their Shabbat services. How much then does this word need to come to their attention and their consideration through those who have understood this word and realize how much it's a key to the salvation of the Jew and you yourself need to proclaim it. I let Shelly Volk to the Lord who was the Simon of his generation in charge of the books in the office, a former Jewish stockbroker, a Jewish whiz kid, new Buick every year and a new wardrobe.

He only made one mistake. He invited me to his home. Why? Because his wife had gone berserk.

She woke up in the morning having dreamed and recited the entire Lord's Prayer by heart, never before having read it nor seen it. He thought his wife had gone off to deep end and she found my first book somewhere in a Christian bookstore and she gave it to her husband and he didn't want to hear about it but he was courteous and so I'm speaking in Connecticut so they invited me to be their house guest. And he attended my first meeting.

I spoke on Act 16 on apostolic suffering and consecration and he stood up to the invitation before he was saved. That's a Jew for you. And then over his kitchen table on Isaiah 53, word for word, the Lord melted his heart and opened his understanding and saved him.

This is what it means to extend mercy, not just condolence or little syrupy affection but to give them the word that opens their hearts and understanding to call upon the name of the Lord and to receive the blood shed in this cruelty that he suffered and described in this remarkable chapter. Here's a remarkable book. Talks about this eschatological climax of the age where something will be demonstrated in the sight of all nations revealing his glory and his salvation in the deliverance of his people.

This Lord, the wisdom of God that at the same moment by which his own nation Israel is restored through suffering by that same token and same action, the nations are being informed and instructed of his salvific power and they themselves will be saved because the issue of Israel is the issue of the nations. That's what Israel was born for, for the nations. So even in its helplessness and in its last days suffering in this road to Calvary when the nations observe because it's going to take place throughout all nations that this knocked out and battered people are being rescued and saved and restored to Zion for the redeemed of the Lord shall return to Zion with everlasting joy on their heads and mourning and sighing fleeing away and he'll bring them out of dungeons and prisons and death and bring them again into their land.

That will be the real return, not the 1948. The nations will observe both the judgment of God and his mercy and as many as will will believe. The salvation of Israel is God's last statement and testimony to the nations and if they refuse that demonstration of his cross and what he suffered now being reiterated in the nation there's nothing more that he can do to save and the only thing that follows is the day of the Lord's vengeance and wrath and judgment.

So all the ends of the earth will acknowledge him as God and turn to him for salvation. It is in his great act of eschatological salvation, the new exodus that the one and only God will demonstrate his unique deity universally which is also the coming of his kingdom. No wonder the powers of darkness will resist this with everything in them by seeking to obliterate the Jewish nation that they should not return to Zion for once they return to Zion their king will come and rule out of Zion, the law shall go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem according to Isaiah chapter 2. The powers of darkness know this better than you and want in every way not only to obstruct this eschatological conclusion by which the kingdom comes but remove that people who are the key to the kingdom by obliterating them through global racial

annihilation through genocide of the kind that Hitler almost succeeded in performing now the same powers of darkness will go at it globally and not just in Germany, Poland and Europe.

It will even take place where you are. This new exodus which demonstrates his deity to the nations it was in this context between the uniqueness of God and his eschatological acts for the salvation of Israel and the world that the early Christians saw Jesus as Lord and God who both suffered humiliation and death but is exalted and lifted up. The nation will follow exactly the pattern of the Lord.

They will be abased, they will be brought down that they might be exalted and brought up. They will no longer be the tail but the head. All nations will come to Jerusalem to acknowledge their Lord and the people whom he has redeemed on the Feast of Tabernacles and if you will not go, you will not have rain.

You will suffer a curse because it's the last act of Gentile rebellion that refuses to acknowledge the people whom God has restored and redeemed and given a place of celebration, exaltation and honor as the head of all nations. Not the UN, not New York, Zion. Jerusalem is God's intended capital through a redeemed and restored nation but odd if that happens, won't they become egotistical? Won't they become proud? Won't we have the same problem, they'll look down upon us as Gentiles? Now you silly folk because in their route to restoration they pass through suffering, brokenness, devastation that when they are restored, the memory of that through which they had passed as well as the sin that had occasioned it throughout their history will continue to haunt them and always be a factor in their national memory and consideration.

They will be another kind of people more like me which leaves something to be desired but it's better than what they were. I'm kidding. Gentiles will kiss their feet.

Those that oppress them will bring their children on their shoulders and on their, what do you call it, stretches. The treasure of the Gentiles will be brought to them. They will be honored not because they deserved it, not because they earned it but because it pleased God who allowed them to be abased and reduced also to be extolled and exalted and made very high just like the Lord before them.

This is the revelation of God as God. This is why the nations will recognize that there's only one God, it's the God of Israel. This Jesus, this suffering servant because his suffering, his abasement and his exaltation is not just the last moments adjustment by the Father, it's an everlasting and eternal statement of what God is in himself always and ever.

He's always a suffering servant. If he's not a servant, he's not a Lord. He's always in humility.

He's always abased that he might be exalted. This is very God and it takes the cross to reveal him and if not his cross then the cross which the Jew will exhibit which is essentially what he himself bore because the way of the servant is the way in which God reveals his glory. Remember what Jesus said? I'm now going to glorify the Father and the Father will be glorified in me.

He was talking about going to the cross and to his death. His suffering was to glorify the Father for it will reveal him, reveal him in judgment, reveal him in righteousness, reveal him in truth, reveal him in mercy. There's nothing that reveals God more succinctly, more powerfully, more demonstrably than Jesus crucified.

It's not a momentary lapse. It's not a little act of accommodation. It is a statement of the intrinsic nature of very God himself who knew the cross before he even came down from heaven.

He was the Lamb of God slain before the foundations of the world. Nothing reveals him as his sufferings for another which he did not have to do. In fact, he didn't even have to create the world.

He didn't need Chinese people, sorry to tell you that, or us Jews. How come then that he created us? Because he loves, because he wants to share, because he wants to exhibit and demonstrate and share his glory, because he wants to bring many sons to glory. He wants eternal fellowship in righteousness and truth.

He didn't need it. His love required it. And it's the same love which sent his son from heaven down to earth to suffer what Isaiah described, silently as a lamb to the slaughter.

They will see the exaltation of his servant and turn to him for salvation. Because those who did not see and did not know and did not hear will consider. Those who were ignorant will be sprinkled, kings and nations, not having the opportunity of observing Jesus 2,000 years ago, but seeing now the suffering of his nation.

They will see the reiteration and the demonstration of the setting forth of his sufferings before and believe and be saved by it. Israel is saved by it. The nations will be saved by it.

And what is it? Nothing less or other than the issue of the cross as the final eschatological act of God. This is so rich, page after page of remarkable insight, only that the writer does not realize that he's describing Israel's sufferings in the last days, who together with the Lord must bear humiliation that they might experience exaltation, which reveals the identity of the one true God. This is the way in which the one and only God reveals his identity to the whole creation and is acknowledged as God by the whole creation by the revelation of himself at the cross.

To miss Jesus at the cross is to miss God. The issue of Jesus is the issue of God. And he's giving mankind one last opportunity to observe what they had not been told, consider what they had not heard, and to see that which had not been told them in the suffering of Israel for their sake.

Israel is unconscious that it's performing that function, but nevertheless they will perform it to the benefit of nations. The cross reveals who God is, not as we think him to be, but as he in fact is. He's a suffering servant or he's not a Lord.

What then ought we to be? Who's going to demonstrate Jesus to the Jews before their suffering, by which they might be saved and come into the ark of safety before having themselves to be pummeled and beaten? How shall they see the demonstration of the reality of God except they see the reality of the crucified one in a Christian people who have known the cross and exhibit and have borne sufferings? Because tonight for me, dear saints, is a suffering. It's a moral suffering. That's why I came like a snail, if I could find an excuse to avoid it, because I knew that to attempt a subject of this kind is a suffering.

Faith requires it. It's in keeping with his character, and to the degree that we bear it, it reveals him. Especially if we bear it without complaint, silently, and even counted privilege.

When my Jewish people will meet saints like that, who are enchristened and show forth to Christ in their Christ-likeness, they might not have to wait to suffer in order to understand and to be saved. The revelation of who God is to the world takes place in Jesus' death and takes place in the death and suffering of the nation. His humiliation, which is the reality of God, and his exaltation is something that they shall pass through and know and exhibit.

It's the exaltation of God, who himself is a sufferer and a servant, as well as Lord. God's identity is not simply revealed, but enacted, E-N-A-C-T-E-D, in the event of salvation for the world, which the service and self-humiliation of Israel accomplishes. Christ is demonstrated by being enacted, by re-enacted, by a people who themselves are being sent as lambs to the slaughter, albeit they'll not be silent.

It will yet be a demonstration of an enactment of the suffering of Jesus 2,000 years before them, and it will save the nations. The unique act of God's self-giving, in which he demonstrates again his deity to the world, by accomplishing salvation for the world, will occur in full reality in this way. To those who have not seen, will he be revealed.

In this act, in this enactment of self-giving, God is most truly himself and defines himself for the world. You ought to be reading stuff like this. Theology is for the church.

The thinking of astute men like this, who have wrestled and grown through Isaiah 53 in these scriptures and texts, and come with these insights, is a legacy and a privilege for us as saints. What are you reading? Are you reading at all? Or are you just glued to the TV set, or videos, or some other cheap stuff that makes no demand on your brain? I'm jealous over you guys. I want to shake you.

So, Lord, we thank you for the privilege of Richard Bacham and other giants of the faith who have wrestled with the scriptures to get at the mystery of Christ, the mystery of Israel, the mystery of the church, the mystery of the last days, the eschatology of God that he has designed in his own great wisdom and set Jesus at the cross as the hub and pivot of all reality for all time and all ages, and especially at the end in its conclusion. It has called us to be participants in that conclusion, not as dum-dums who wonder what's happening and how come and where's God that these Jews should be suffering again, but who knew that there's a suffering that is inescapable, that they must bear, not only for their sake, but for the nation's and for his glory and name and honor and that they might be fitted by it for their role as a priestly nation in the Zion to which he might come as their king. For when he comes as king to Israel, it's his kingdom for all nations, for the Lord shall go forth to all nations out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

If you don't believe for this, if you don't desire this, if you're not living for this, you're not only a dum-dum. I don't know what you are. Can we distinguish you by the word Christian? If you have not this anticipation, this desire, this love, this hope, this is the hope of the church.

This is the glory of God eternally as king when he's restored through a restored nation, through a church that extends mercy, when they will be despised and rejected and have no beauty that any should desire them. So, Lord, what shall I say? How shall I pray? My God. Mercy, Lord, I ask you for mercy.

I was stretched out in that apartment at 5 o'clock, on my face and crying out, mercy to speak, mercy for these people to hear, mercy to understand, mercy, Lord. If it takes mercy just to comprehend the last days purposes of God, what will it take for us to fulfill them? But mercy, mercy tonight, Lord, for these young, delicate, precious little saints. They should be spared from this kind of assault and abuse from a man like me.

But you've brought them to here. They have not the luxury to remain children. They're being called to grow up and grow up fast for the time is short and the Lord is at the door and is wanting mature saints who are capable of sacrifice without complaint and count it all privilege to be extended for the people of Israel even in their unbelief and apostasy.

Thank you, Lord. So I suspect, my God, to the degree that you are successful in propagating your word tonight that Jews who don't even know that we're meeting here, who are not even presently in Singapore, will one day receive the benefit of your word and its reception by the people to whom it was given for they shall be the beneficiaries of their mercy to save them from destruction and to bring them to salvation. Thank you, Lord.

Bless this church, my God. Bless this church. You've invested so much in them already.

You're giving them your best. You're pouring out your soul and your heart. You're giving them hard words and things to contemplate and to think and to understand that strain their minds because you love them, because you're jealous over them, because they have a destiny for which they're called and they must fulfill to the eternal praise of your glory, that there be a true worship that issues out of adoration for the majesty of God who has conceived of such a scheme as this that through a suffering nation, the nation shall see the revelation of Christ and believe.

You're majestic in all your ways. Your wisdom and ways are past finding out and it centers in the despicable cross by which you were marred more than any man, that you had no beauty, not even a human form that was recognizable, that somehow that was necessary. How great then must the issue of evil be that it required this from the Son of God to bear.

We want to adore you, Lord. And I confess, 76 years old and 41 years in the faith, I've not yet come to that place. Adoration is not a cheapie.

It's not something glib we can turn on and off like a faucet. Adoration is the deepest reverence and awe when the majesty of God breaks upon our hearts and our consciousness as it can only be seen and conceived in the mystery of Israel in the last days and not in any other way. If you miss that mystery, you miss God.

You miss God in His majesty, in His wisdom, in His righteousness, in His glory. So have true worshipers, Lord, who love you for what you are, for your way and your wisdom and the things by which you shall be eternally glorified and not content except that we would have part with you in this so great drama. Thank you, Lord.

And we were not even Jewish. Thank you, my God. All nations shall exalt you from one coast to the other, from one end of the earth to the other.

The praises shall rise up out of this earth from people of every race and color and nationality because they have bowed at the feet of the Holy One of Israel who is Savior and Redeemer and the now seated King. Thank you, Lord. Seal these words.

Let not a syllable return to you void. Let it be like a hammer upon the rock on those whose hearts are hard or whose minds are dense. Let it be like a fire on those, my God, who have prepared to be inflammable.

But let the word have its work because you said that your word shall not return to you void but accomplish every purpose whereunto it is sent. And it performs a work in them that believe. And, Lord, we have to confess, we need that work.

Save us from being dumb-dumb. Save us from being superficial charismatics. Save us from just being successful.

We want your glory. We want your honor. And it's going to take more than what we presently are, but we're willing.

So I bless this church, Lord. Seal these words, even those who are not able to take it in, only in part. Nevertheless, it went forth by your spirit.

It will perform its work. Let them hear the tape. Let them consider it together.

Let someone transcribe it and publish it that it can be read and marked and considered. We thank you, Lord, for sending the word in your great love and mercy. It was a privilege that you considered us to receive this burden of your deepest heart.

Receive our gratitude, our love, because you have been so gracious to consider us in this way as sons and daughters of the Most High. In Jesus' name we pray, and God's people said, Amen.

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