

# Isaiah Chapter 52

by Stephen Kaung

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*The sermon emphasizes the significance of Jesus Christ as the servant of God, who suffered for the sins of humanity and accomplished the work of redemption.*

**Duration:** 44:25

**Scripture:** Isaiah 52:13 - 53:1, Isaiah 53:5

**Topics:** "Jesus Christ", "Suffering Messiah"

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## Description

In this sermon, the focus is on the person of the servant of God, who is revealed to be Jesus. The sermon emphasizes the suffering and exaltation of Jesus. The Jews struggled to understand how the promised Messiah could suffer and be glorified at the same time. The speaker highlights the need for revelation to truly see and understand Jesus, as outwardly there was nothing appealing about Him.

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## Transcript

Will you please turn to Isaiah chapter 52. Isaiah chapter 52. Isaiah chapter 52.

We'll read from verse 13. And we'll read through chapter 53. Isaiah 52, verse 13.

Behold, my servant shall deal prudently. He shall be exalted and be lifted up and be very high. As many were astonished at thee.

His visage was so marred, more than any man, and his form more than the children of men. So shall he astonish many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at him.

For what has not been told them, shall they see. And what they had not heard, shall they consider. Who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender sapling, and as a root out of dry ground.

He has no form nor lawfulness. And when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire. He is despised and left alone of men.

A man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. And like one from whom men hide their faces, despised and we esteem him not. Surely he had borne our grief and carried our sorrow.

And we, we did regard him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgression, he was bluest for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him.

And with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way.

And Jehovah hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted. But he opened not his mouth.

He was led as a lamb to the slaughter. And was as a sheep done before her shepherds. And he opened not his mouth.

He was taken from oppression and from judgment. And who shall declare his generation? For he was shut off, cut off out of the land of the living. For the transgression of my people was he stricken.

And man appointed his grave with the wicked. But he was with the rich in his death. Because he hath done no violence, neither was there guile in his mouth.

Yet it pleased Jehovah to bluish him. He hath subjected him to suffering. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see a seed.

He shall prolong his days. And the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the fruit of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.

By his knowledge shall my righteous servant instruct many in righteousness. And he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I assign him a portion with the great.

And he shall divide the spoiled with the strong. Because he hath poured out his soul unto death. And was reckoned with the transgressors.

And he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors. The portion of Scriptures that we have just read is one of the greatest and most precious portions in the whole Bible. Now, of course, the whole Bible is precious.

Every part of it is precious. But there are some portions that seem to speak to us very deeply and very dearly. And that portion which we have just read is one among them.

I do hope if you have not remembered, memorized this portion, then you will do it. We should memorize this passage and know it by heart. And you will find how precious that is.

Now, of course, this is a passage which refers to someone. Many years, as a matter of fact, almost 800 years, around 800 years after this portion was written. One day, there was a eunuch of Ethiopia.

He was a proselyte to Judaism. He went to Jerusalem to worship God. And after he finished worshipping God in the temple in Jerusalem, he was on his way back to Ethiopia.

He was on his chariot reading the Bible. And as he was traveling through the desert, there was no man there. It was a desert.

And he was there reading the Bible. But God provided a man to speak to him. Philip, the evangelist.

He was living in Samaria. And God seemed to bless his work of evangelizing very much because many were brought to Christ. It was a very prosperous work of God.

But suddenly, the Spirit of God called Philip to go out of the city and go into the wilderness where there was no man. In obedience to God, Philip went to the desert. And here came this chariot with the eunuch sitting on the chariot and was reading.

And the Spirit of God moved the heart of Philip to run after that chariot. So Philip just ran along that chariot. And of course, he turned to that man and said, What are you reading? Do you know what you are reading? And sure enough, this man was reading the book of Isaiah.

And he was reading that portion that we have just read. Surely he has borne our grief and carried our sorrow. And we, we did regard him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.

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. So when the eunuch was asked by Philip, Do you understand what you read? He said, How can I understand? No one is instructing me. I do not know whether the prophet refers to himself or to somebody else such as Moses or Abraham or Uzziah or Josiah or Jeremiah or Cyrus.

You know, they are different theories. Or even Israel. He said, How do I know without anyone explaining to me? What does the prophet refer to? Whom does he refer to? So he asked Philip to come and sit by him on the chariot.

And as they were going on the way, the Bible said, Philip took up the Scripture and announced to him the good news of Jesus Christ. And the news was so good, the prophet was referring to the Lord Jesus who was to be born almost 800 years later. He was the one who was wounded for our transgressions.

He was the one who was bruised for our iniquities. And with his stripes we are healed. So Philip announced to the eunuch the baptizing of Jesus Christ.

The eunuch believed. He asked to be baptized right away. And after he was baptized, the Spirit of God took Philip away.

He was raptured away. And the eunuch went on his way with joy in his heart. And possibly this was one of the ways of God to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ into Africa because Ethiopia was in Africa.

Dear brothers and sisters, this is a very precious, this eunuch, he turned to Judaism because he found that all the other religions could not satisfy his heart. He went to Jerusalem to the temple to worship God, to hear the word of the rabbis in Jerusalem. He was reading the Word of God, the oracle of God Himself.

But you can see, even after he became the apostolate of Judaism, even after he worshipped God in Jerusalem in the temple, even after he had heard the teachings of the great rabbis of those days, there was no understanding. He was still seeking. His heart was still empty.

He still was not satisfied until the good news of Jesus Christ was announced to him. And immediately you will find his heart entered into rest and was full of joy. Dear brothers and sisters, it is true, this portion speaks not of Isaiah the prophet.

He does not refer it to himself. He is not worthy of it. This portion cannot be applied to anybody else.

This portion cannot be applied collectively to the nation of Israel, neither. This portion is a prophecy that is prophesied concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. And He is the only one in the whole universe that fulfills everything that is mentioned in this prophecy.

Of course, in the preceding chapter we have already seen that our Lord Jesus, so far as His origin is concerned, He is the Son of God. But He came to this world to become the servant of God. The Son became the servant.

And the Son was sent into this world to accomplish a great work. We mentioned last Lord's Day that He came to establish the kingdom of God on earth. That was what He came.

Now, in this portion you'll find He is again described as the servant of God. But there is a difference. And the difference is here.

The emphasis is more on the person. The emphasis is on the person. Who is this servant of God? What kind of a life does He live? How much does He suffer? And why does He suffer? And what is the result of His suffering? What does He accomplish through His suffering? And after He has suffered, how does God exalt Him? And give Him a name that is above every name.

And to that name every knee shall bow. And every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord. In other words, in this passage, we are shown the person of the Son's servant of God.

In this portion, the theme is His sufferings and exaltation. You know, with the Jews throughout the centuries, they just couldn't understand one thing. And that one thing was how could the promised Messiah suffer and glorify at the same time? They couldn't solve this puzzle.

And because of that, when they read the Old Testament, when they read the prophecies, they do not know whom to applaud. The suffering, they know the Messiah will come and He will be glorified. And yet, the prophecies also prophesied of His suffering and they just couldn't understand.

That's the reason why they sometimes say this refers to the nation of Israel or this refers to some godly man of God. You know? They just couldn't understand. Not even the Jews throughout the centuries do not understand.

Even the Jews, the disciples of the Lord Jesus, at the time of our Lord Jesus, they couldn't understand. You remember the story in Luke chapter 24? After the Lord was crucified and on the third day He was raised from the dead and the news was brought to the disciples that the Lord has risen and they just couldn't understand it. So you remember two disciples of our Lord Jesus, they were so discouraged, so disappointed, they left Jerusalem, they were on their way to Emmaus.

And as they were walking on the way they talked about the thing that had happened in Jerusalem, that Christ was crucified and some women said He was risen from the dead. They just couldn't understand it. And suddenly a man came and walked with them and asked them what are you talking about? And they said well you must be a stranger in Jerusalem because this is the topic, subject of conversation everywhere.

One whom we considered as the prophet, as the hope of Israel, but He was crucified. And yet some women said He had risen from the dead. And we just couldn't understand it.

Remember these are disciples. They couldn't reconcile the whole thing. And you remember our Lord Jesus scolded them, scolded them in a sense, reprimanded them and said oh you are so foolish and dull of heart.

Ought not the Christ suffer? And then they entered into His glory and the Lord began to expound to them the Scripture and when the Lord expounded the Scripture to them their heart was warm. Brothers and sisters, the Christ, the one whom God sent to be the Savior of the world, He must first and then enter into His glory. Our Lord Jesus, He is the Son of God.

He is the eternal Son of God. In eternity past, He shared the glory with His Father. But He ended Him.

He led the glory as it were. He humbled Himself to become a man. But one day He will return to His glory.

Not only the glory that He shared with His Father in eternity past, but you'll find as He returned to glory, He returned to the glory that He shared with His Father from eternity and also the glory that He earned for Himself as the Savior. And to earn for Himself that glory, the glory of the Redeemer, He had to go through suffering. Because with His suffering on the cross, He accomplished, He has accomplished the work of redemption.

And this portion speaks to us of the great theme of the Messiah, the cross, His suffering, and His exaltation. It begins actually with chapter 52 verse 13. Behold My servant shall deal prudently.

He shall be exalted and be lifted up and be very high. You know, every time you find in the Bible the word behold, when the Spirit of God uses the word behold, He is trying to catch our attention. You know, we also carry it.

Our eyes are not single. Our ears are hearing different things at the same time. We are so divided.

We do not concentrate. And because of that, you'll find what we see and hear just pass by and finish, and evaporate, vanish. Nothing remains.

So here you'll find the Spirit of God is trying to arrest our attention. He is calling us to concentrate, to focus our attention upon one thing. He says, behold my servant.

He wants us to see the Lord Jesus. As His own, the Father is always trying to draw people's attention to His Son. God is always trying to draw us to see His servant in other words, how we need to see the Lord Jesus.

As the disciples of the Mount of Transfiguration, God dismissed Moses, God dismissed Elijah, that the eyes of the disciples might see the Lord Jesus and Jesus alone. Let every man be dismissed. Let us see the Lord Jesus this morning and Him alone.

Behold, my servant shall deal prudently. The Lord Jesus, as He is sent by God, He will deal prudently, wisely. He will accomplish the will of God wisely and prudently.

He is harmless as a dust. But why? Very why. Why is knocking the saints off? Being very clever, as we say.

You know, in this world, if you are worldly wise, worldly clever, and worldly prudent, now how will you conduct yourself? A man who is wise and prudent in the worldly sense, he is very slippery. You just cannot get hold of him. He will maneuver himself in a way, he always will protect himself, so he will not be touched, he will not be reached, he will not be hurt and harmed.

Now that is worldly wise and prudent. It is foolish to be frank and open, because you will be caught, you will be hurt. But this is not the meaning here.

Behold, my servant shall deal prudently. It is not the earthly prudence, it is the heavenly. Our Lord Jesus is so wise, so prudent, that he alone is the You find all kinds of things, but actually nothing is there.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, what was his vision, what was his appearance? His vision was so much, more than any man. And you know, to be literal, what does it mean? It means that his figure, his vision, his appearance, his physical appearance, was so much, that he does not look even like a man. When Christ was born, he must be a beautiful baby, no doubt, every baby is beautiful.

When Christ grew up, well, he might not be handsome, but he couldn't be ugly, because he was to be a man, just like we are. So I do not think he was extraordinary handsome, but he wouldn't be very ugly either. He must be common, just like a common boy, not too ugly, not too handsome, just common.

He must be common. And yet the Bible says his visage was so marred. He suffered so much.

The wear and tear of his life, the hardship, the tribulation, the persecution, the sorrow, the grief. Things have come into his life so much that his whole visage was destroyed, was marred beyond human recognition. He looked like not a human on the cross, with the crown of thorns, with his body scorched, with his hand and fingernails there on the cross.

He doesn't look like a man at all. Think of that. Think of the suffering.

We just couldn't, couldn't comprehend the suffering that our Lord Jesus went through. His visage was marred more than any man. He doesn't look like a man anymore.

His form more than the children of men. And no wonder, when he was 30, people thought he was 60. You remember that.

No wonder the two thieves that were crucified with him lingered there until their heads had to be broken to speed them to death. But our Lord Jesus, he was only six hours on the cross, and he died. His body was so bruised, his body was so fragile, his body had suffered so much, only in six hours.

That's the suffering of Christ. That's a surprise. And yet there is another surprise.

Verse 15. So shall he as punish many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at him, for what had not been told them shall they see, and what they had not heard shall they consider.

He was a surprise because he doesn't, he didn't fit in with our concept of greatness, and even almost the opposite of it. And yet after he had accomplished the work of redemption, he again becomes a surprise to the nations. Why? Because the work of salvation is accomplished.

And many shall come and bow at his feet. And you know the word. So shall he surprise many nations.

There's another rendering, and that is he shall sprinkle many nations. And the word sprinkle simply means in the Old Testament time, you know, the priest, they will sprinkle the blood on the lapis to make the lapis clean. So here it means that because our Lord has suffered so much for us, and out of his suffering, there comes his blood, and his blood is sprinkled upon many nations, and many nations, they shall be cleaned, shall be washed.

And that is a surprise, because what have not been told shall they see. What have not been heard shall they hear. How true it is.

The story has never been fully told, even today. What we have heard, what we have seen, is only something that we try to understand. But there is much more.

The story has never been told, the salvation of our Lord. And this is Christ. And then, of course, in chapter 53, verse 1, who had believed our report, and to whom had the arm of Jehovah been revealed? Both the Apostle John and the Apostle Paul, quote this verse.

In John chapter 12, John quotes this verse. He said, who believed? Who believed? And who will receive Paul? In Romans chapter 10, quote this again, who believed our report? This good news, the Lord Jesus. How He suffered and died for us.

How He accomplished the work of salvation for us. And anyone who comes to Him shall be sprinkled and be cleansed. But who will believe the report? To whom does the arm of the Lord reveal? To whom will the salvation of the Lord come to? Remember, brothers and sisters, the whole matter is so foreign to our natural mind that unless there is revelation, no one, no one can believe.

You need a revelation. The Lord Jesus can only be believed in by revelation. As Paul said, it pleased God to reveal His Son in me.

There must be a revelation. If you look at outward appearance, there was nothing appealing. There was nothing appealing.

No wonder when the Lord Jesus was on earth, they despised Him. They rejected Him. There was nothing that appeared outwardly.

But if God shall open your eyes to see what He is inwardly, then, brothers and sisters, you'll find it is a different story. So how do we need revelation to know Christ? There is only one way to know Christ by revelation. But it pleases God to reveal His Son in us.

If we only open our heart to Him, He will reveal His Son. Now, of course, the whole chapter there, we do not have time now to explain it. But I do believe that if you read it yourself, you will see much in that chapter.

Oh, how the Lord Jesus, in the eyes of the world, He is like a root out of dry ground. There is no calmness, there is no lordliness for us to admire Him. And yet before God, He is a tender suffering.

He bore, He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. But it is our sorrows that He bore. It is our grief that He carried.

He was wounded, but for our transgression. He was bruised, but for our iniquities. We do not understand.

We thought that He was rejected by God. If God, if He pleased God, certainly God would deliver Him from the cross, would not allow Him to suffer so much. But we don't know.

It is for our sake that He suffered all these things. Not only from man, but it is God's will that He should so suffer. Because God has made Him a sin offering.

But thank God, He shall see the travail, the fruit of the travail of His soul. He shall have a seed and those who believe in Him shall have their sins forgiven and shall enter into the knowledge of righteousness. So I do hope that you will continue to read this chapter yourself.

We do not have time to explain it. But one thing let us remember, the suffering and the exaltation. Thank God the sufferings are over.

He is now exalted at the right hand of the Father, waiting for His end to be His first day. And this is the cross that we announce, we believe and we love. Our heavenly Father, how we praise and thank Thee for Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is Thy faithful and wise servant.

How we praise and thank Thee for the work of redemption that He has accomplished, but what a cost He paid. O Lord, our hearts are moved by Thy love for us, that Thou Thyself should bear our sorrows and carry our griefs, that Thou should die in our stead for our transgressions. O Lord, we cannot understand this love.

We only know that it is real and we do thank Thee. Lord, we pray that Thou should ever be before our eyes, in our hearts, throughout our life. We ask in the name of our Lord Jesus.

Amen.

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