

(Christ in Isaiah) Part 4

by Tom Orr

The sermon explores the significance of Isaiah 53, highlighting the servant's prudence, tenderness, and suffering, and how these characteristics are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Duration: 51:17

Scripture: Isaiah 1:6, Isaiah 6:10, Isaiah 53:1, Isaiah 53:5, Isaiah 63:1, Isaiah 64:6, John 12:37

Topics: "Jesus Christ", "Faith Testing"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the concept of the servant in the book of Isaiah, specifically in chapters 52 and 53. The preacher emphasizes the importance of spreading the message of the good news and asks who has believed their report. The preacher highlights the significance of Jesus as the servant who startled many nations and the test of faith that he faced. The sermon concludes with a discussion of Isaiah 53, where the speaker explores the question of who has believed the report of the servant and the revelation of the arm of the Lord.

Transcript

In a short reading, and I want to come to where we have been for the three past Monday nights, and that is in John's Gospel chapter 12. John chapter 12, and we come in at verse 37, but though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him, that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, they have blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spake on him.

Now we have come to the fourth and the final night in the book of Isaiah. And our fourth and final study on Christ in the prophecy of Isaiah. Now can I just say one little word as we approach the study, and it's this.

Our dear brother Frank sees so well and so ably to the tape work then, the tape ministry, and I would encourage the tape ministry, and encourage you to get the tape, there are the four tapes. The reason for that is, it's nothing to my advantage, whatever, whatever, but we go through quite a little bit of ground in the four nights, over the four nights we've done that, and I don't think you could easily retain all that has been said, but you can by means of the tapes. And so in time to come, you will have the tape recordings on this subject, and I don't think the spirit of God could have given us higher subject than what we have been on in this book, Christ in Isaiah.

Now we're coming as I say to the fourth night, and I find that one in preparation for another, or for another meeting, is always amply rewarded for their studies and their preparation. And I find this no different, no less, in preparing for this great chapter tonight. In fact, if it was nothing else than what my own soul has recovered from the chapter, I should be more than well repaid in preparation for the Bible class here tonight.

But I find that I come into a lot of good in other directions, and over the course of study, I have looked at quite a number of other preachers, commentators, and teachers, because the Lord has put them in the body, and it's for us to make use of those other members that are in the body, whether we can hear them now, or only read them through what they have said in days gone by. I mention the name here because it is connected with the actual study of Isaiah, part of it, and because I've also mentioned it to you, I don't know how many times. And that is that great Scottish preacher, Alexander White.

Anything that I could get my hands on of his writings, I never let out by. And Alexander White, when he was on a particular prophecy, Isaiah 61, do you remember? Whenever our Lord came into the temple, into the synagogue at Nazareth later, you remember how there was given to him the book of Isaiah, and you remember all that followed there when he was given the book. Now, this is where the great preacher really captured me this last week or two as I read him.

He said this, the book was delivered unto him, that is unto Christ, and he found the place where it was written of him. And then turning to his congregation, he said this, now you have had the book of Isaiah delivered unto you. Have you found the place where it is written of you? In other words, have you found where it is written of you, the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, wounds, bruises, putrefying sores.

And then he comes again, and he said, and have you found the place where it is written of you, that we are all as an unclean thing, of all our righteousness as there is filthy right. And have you found the place where it is written of you, he was wounded for our transgressions, and he was bruised for our iniquity. Whenever I read something like that, I sit back and I say to myself, that is preaching.

That is the word applied, and the book applied, in a very, very true and marvelous way. Now, I mention this again because of it going on to tape, and I know the tapes are going out to other quarters. I mentioned to you before, there are two great passages in the word on the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And the two great passages are, Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. And if there be any difference in the two passages, by way of emphasis and slant, Psalm 22 is more outward to do with the sufferings of Christ outwardly. In other words, it's there you read about the bulls and the lions, all attacking as it were, and those were the Pharisees and the elders and the chief priests, rarely, and they're being represented there as animals attacking Christ.

But when I come into Isaiah 53 and read, he was wounded for our transgressions. That is not the outward. That is the inward.

That is Christ atoning for our sins and for our salvation. And so, the two great passages together give a great sense of the completeness of the record of the suffering of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Now, I said that tonight we would set it apart, the last night, very especially for the study of one great chapter, Isaiah 53, and I will want a little concluding word on the other one, Savior, in chapter 53.

But I do want to thank our brother Tom Robinson for all the work. He's had a lot on hand in a short period of time to do it, and I thank our brother Albert here for getting him up on the wall for me. Now, this chapter raises a question that I think a lot of Christians are bound to ask from time to time, and the question is this.

If you and I come, as ordinary men and women, to the 53rd of Isaiah, and we try out with Scripture, how we see Jesus in this chapter, we see him roll through the chapter from start to finish, then this raises for me a major question. We can understand how we see the Lord Jesus in the 53rd chapter. Why is it the Jews don't see him there? Why is it the Jews who accept Isaiah and read the Old Testament, why do they not see Christ? And how do they explain it to them? Well, the answer is simply this.

They deny, especially the later Jews, the old, old Jews, and apologies await entry, but would have said, yes, that is the Messiah. But then they got into too many problems, because too many Jews then were becoming converted to him. And so they changed the whole approach and interpretation of the chapter and said, no, that is not a man, the Messiah, that is the nation that's in that chapter, not a person.

In other words, what they were saying here, it's the path, it's the nation, represented as an individual. And so they would look on these words, he was wounded for our transgressions, as really the nation that was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our inequities, that's really the nation that was bruised for our own inequities.

And so they seek to explain away this great Messianic chapter. But we know, in spite of this, God has blessed the chapter, and thousands of Jews have been converted through it. It is one of the great Messianic chapters.

Now, we come straight away then, and we'll open our Bibles at the 53rd, and we're coming now for the very first thing tonight, and we start at the end of chapter 52. We've got to take 13, 14, 15, really the 53rd should have started after verse 12 of chapter 52. And so the first thing that I want tonight here is this, I want the servant, look at him here in verse 13.

Behold my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. And the first vision or sight we get of the Savior here is the servant who has now come to undertake the great task of redemption both for Jew and Gentile races. He has come here for the great task of redeeming man.

Behold my servant. Now, look at him and see how he's described the three things in the three verses that I'll pick out. It says, behold my servant shall deal prudently.

Now, that's the first thing that is said about him as the servant. And the servant does need to be very prudent, especially if he has got a mighty task on his hands, and our Lord hath thus, he shall deal prudently. Can you recall all the times when he dealt prudently? You remember how prudent he was in the temple when he was only 12 years of age? Whenever the priests and the doctors were all amazed at the questions that he was asking and answering, he shall deal prudently.

And we see how prudent he was in the temple. And you remember later whenever he was dealing with the doctors and the lawyers of his day, and how they thought to trap him, and how he dealt very prudently with them. And our Lord had to be that.

And our Lord was that. And Isaiah said he would be that. Isaiah was giving a full view of the prudent savior as we see him later in the temple, and we see him with the lawyers and the Pharisees.

And then you remember also how prudent he was with his own disciples. He said to them on one occasion, I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. He dealt very prudently with them.

He shall deal prudently. That was the first mark of the servant that our Lord Jesus, that was pictured of our Lord Jesus here. Then I notice the second thing here.

It says as many were astoned. And that's an old word not familiar with us. It should be astonished.

As many as were astonished at thee. And so they were astonished at him. And again you can recall the times and places whenever they were astonished at him.

They said to the man in the house when he'd been carried in on the stretcher of lower down, son thy sins are forgiven thee. And all that were gathered were astonished. And they said who can forgive sins but God only.

It says here many shall be astonished at him. And to remember whenever he was on the ship and in the sea and he spoke to the waves and the wind and said peace be still. This great prophecy of Isaiah, this Old Testament passage, this Old Testament book so full of Christ was fulfilled yet once more and again as many as were astonished at thee.

Go through his whole life and record and you'll see case on case of those who are astonished at him. Again I find here it says verse 15 and he shall sprinkle or he shall startle as better many nations. And of course he did.

He startled the king when he was born. He started a governor when he was dead. He started his own when he was alive.

He startled all and will and has right to the end. King shall startle many nations. Our Lord Jesus Christ is and we're being introduced to the servant prudent.

Many astonished at him. He shall startle many nations. What a testimony to a servant.

But then this is no ordinary servant. This is our Lord Jesus. I move on that quickly.

Let's come now to chapter 53. I have got there first of all I have the servant. Now come to verse one.

Who has believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Now who is speaking and who's he asking and talking about when he talks about who has believed? And what is Isaiah after here? Well now this gives me my second thing tonight with the servant. Now I have the search. And if I were to connect up now the last of 52 and the past of 53, there's the servant.

And there he is. And he's been about in his ministry our Lord Jesus Christ. And he has worked for three and a half years.

And at the end of three and a half years, the question is being raised. Who has believed? Well if you labor for three and a half years in any direction or labor for five, six, ten, or twelve years and you have sought to spread the message of the good news, won't you inquire? Won't you ask who has believed? Well I might first of all who ask whose report? Who has believed our report? Whose report? Well I might start back with Isaiah and take his report of the Christ. And come through all the prophets and take their report of the

Christ and stand back and ask who has believed our report? Or I might come again and come right into the New Testament more immediately and I take John the Baptist proclaiming the coming of the Messiah the Christ.

And I take the 12 sent out and I take the 70 sent out. And after three and a half years asking this major question, who has believed our report? Well Isaiah has raised that question for them 700 years before. And in answer to that question, Isaiah didn't give the answer, he raised the question.

But now with scripture fulfilled and time passed, we can answer this man's inquiry. Who has believed? We can come to Anna and say Isaiah, well Anna believed. And we can come to Ephraim and we can say Isaiah Ephraim believed.

And we can tell how Anna wanted Jerusalem and spilt up all them that looked for redemption in Israel and said Isaiah what about all them? What about Nathanael? What about Peter? What about John? What about Thomas? Both. They have believed the report. Well that is the question that Isaiah raised but he raised it not so much with a joyous note crediting all that had happened but rather with a laugh.

Because the nation by and large did not believe the report either of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah, John the Baptist, the 12, the 70, the Caesar himself. It was the nation sent into the cross. And so well might Isaiah ask the question, who has believed our report? That's the subject.

Why should I become subservient here as the next thing that I want in verse 2 is this. I want now what I've called just for the convenience of preaching, the semblance. In verse 2 you'll see what I mean in a minute.

But it says he shall grow up before him. That is the Christ, him, that is the Father. He shall grow up before him as a tender plant.

I love that. I love to think of him as a tender plant because he was tender. He was a tender man.

And this is how Isaiah said he would grow up as a tender plant. You come right through the gospel records and fill it all in on the back of these prophecies. He was tender with the sick.

He was tender with the suffering. He was tender with the sorrowing. He was tender even with the sinning.

Whenever they repented and turned to him, oh, he was tender. Do you remember on occasion he went into the house of Jairus? And do you remember how the little daughter, she was now not only at the point of death, she was dead. Do you remember how the master acted toward the little girl? He went into her and said, daughter, rise.

And I said to you before when I preached on that, there's a tremendous lot behind that. Why? Because those were the very words her mother had said to her times without number every morning. Daughter, rise.

Get up. In other words, when Jesus spoke to her as a little girl, he spoke to her like a mother, like a mother. Isaiah said he would grow up as a tender plant.

He was and he is. That's the symbol. Come with me for foreseeing here.

And the next thing is I want, in verse 2, I want you to notice now the source of this tender plant. He shall grow up as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground. Now the two things straight away seem to me

a contradiction.

How do you get tender plants growing out of dry ground? You don't. If you've got dry ground, you haven't got tender plants. But it says he shall grow up before him as a tender plant and a tender plant coming out of a dry ground.

Now, what is the dry ground then to begin with? The dry ground there is the nation out of which he came, out of which he grew, and in which he grew up. That's the nation. And was the nation dry ground at that time when Jesus was born? Never more so.

It was dry, it was dead, it was barren. Spiritually, it was dry ground, but for a handful. The nation was at a low end.

And Josephus, the great Jewish historian, tells us at that time, and he was a Jew belonging to the nation, and he says, not only was it barren dry ground, it was corrupt. And if the Romans hadn't come 40 years later and destroyed it, he said, God would have had to have done it himself. It was so corrupt.

And here is a tender plant growing up out of dry ground like that. Oh, I'm amazed. I don't know.

You see, what I can see here is this. Our Lord Jesus Christ was not affected by the age in which he lived and grew up. Are you? He wasn't.

Our Lord Jesus Christ grew up independent of the age in which he lived. And you and I can do the same. I wouldn't know for you there, really, not personally and fully.

I wouldn't know your environment or circumstances. I don't know how dry and barren and corrupt it may be. It could be totally.

But I want to tell you tonight, you can grow up entirely independent of the place you live in, kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. And this was our Lord Jesus Christ, grew up as a tender plant out of dry ground. That's what he came for.

I want you now to come further. We get more into the heart of the chapter. The next thing that I want here is in verse 3-4, and we come to the sorrows.

It says here, he is despised and rejected of men. The two things together. If he was, first of all, despised, then he would likely to be rejected.

He is despised and rejected of men. Now, notice that. Not despised and rejected by God, despised and rejected by men.

Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Now, a sister in the Bible class learned, my wife, the other week, a take of the testimony of a converted Jew. Very, very striking, very wonderful.

I want to tell you about another. A testimony of one who had been a Jew, and converted to convertitude. A testimony of one who had been a Jew, and converted to convertitude.

And he says, I know my own countrymen. I have spoken to them about the Lord Jesus. And then he has this.

No person in the history of the Jew has provoked such deep-seated abhorrence than the person. He says, I have known them personally, the most admirable of men, who immediately, the name Jesus is mentioned, a change comes over the whole country. And I have seen them fall into a rage, and clench their fists at the ground.

Do you see now what Isaiah meant when he said, he is despised? That was being despised. Being rejected, that was being rejected. You know, when I was coming through the study, hymns from every direction were coming at me.

One was a Christmas hymn. Child in a manger, infant of Mary. Outcast and stranger, Lord of all.

Child who inherits all our transgressions, all our demerits, on him. Come with me into verse six now. And the next thing that I want is the sheep.

We are in verse six. He says, all we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way.

Now, there's nothing more true than that. If I were to take hold of the last expression quoted there, we have turned everyone to his own way. I could go around this class tonight, starting at the first man in this seat, ending with the last man in that far corner, and address every one of you personally and say, every one of us, you, me, and all, we have turned everyone to his own way.

You did it. I did it. You turned your own way, didn't you? And I turned my own way, didn't I? We have turned everyone to our own way.

We've all done that. The way you went, I didn't. The way I went, you didn't.

Because we turned everyone to our own way. That's the story. Everyone.

What he says here is, all we like sheep have gone astray. And there's someone that's put it and put it well. He said here, he didn't use the venom of a serpent, or the ferocity of a tiger, or the cunning of a fox, but he used the foolishness of a sheep.

I sat back and I said, yes Lord, that's exactly it. When I look back, how foolish, how foolish I was. I went astray.

That's exactly our position. That is how we all were. We went astray, like sheep.

Come with me into five and six now again. And I want now to look here, five and six, at the substitute. But he was wounded for our transgressions.

He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was in him, and with his stripes we are healed. Now you notice here, he was wounded for ours.

He was bruised for ours. And then it says further, verse six, the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Now when I come to that, my mind takes me back.

I don't know whether it's two, three, four years ago now or not, but the Lord's table on a Sunday morning, just in the church building. And I can remember speaking that morning on these words, the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. But the word all expanded and became very great.

And I began to ponder, who all would they all be? And I began to think of all ages, back to the flood and before it, at some length of time. And I began to think of all nations, and they would be in the hunt. And all races, and they could be in the fighting.

And I began to think of all the millions of all the races. Now could you sum total up all that sin? There it was. Through all the ages, and all the nations, and all the places, with all individuals, that was the iniquity of us all.

What a monstrosity. What did our Lord do with that iniquity? Scattered over the ages, in all the nations. He gathered it all up into one big pile.

And there it was. And he laid it in hell. Could I put it this way? All the sin of all the ages, in all places, was made to meet in one day, in one place, and on one person.

No wonder it cut. That was the subject teacher. Come with me now into seven and eight here.

And the next thing I wanted to notice, he was oppressed and he was afflicted. Yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought to the land to the slaughter, and the sheep before us years is done.

So we open not his mouth. Rather striking. Do you notice twice over repeated in that one verse? He opened not his mouth.

He opened not his mouth. Notice the twice over. He had every cause to open his mouth.

He had every reason to open his mouth. He was unjustly blamed, unjustly treated, unjustly nailed on the cross. But he opened not his mouth as he had.

The cross work was finished. There was no return. It all depended on that silent lamb of God.

Not a word. There he is all going to the cross. You've been listening to television.

You heard about that case upon trial and death row for murder of about 10-12 years ago, man Ingram. You heard how in his last moments, as he went to the electric chair, he spat out defiance to the law, to the government, and to the man that asked him the question, have you any request before you die? He spat out his defiance. What did Jesus do? He was led as a lamb to the slaughter.

That is a sheep before our shears is done. He opened not his mouth. What comes next? What? It seems to me the silence speaks louder than he was.

Come with me a little further. We see him now gone down to death. We're into verse 9 of the chapter.

Now in verse 9 we see this epilogue following his death. It says that he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death. Now you can see the translators are just correct there.

He didn't make his grave with the wicked. He was with the rich in his death. That's perfectly true.

Rather that should read, they appointed him his grave with the wicked. That is, the wicked rulers would have had him alongside of the thieves and the crooks as he lay outside the city wall down yonder with the buried, the wicked. And this is the place they had appointed, that his grave should be with the wicked.

They appointed that. That's what they said would have to happen. Well the Lord appointed otherwise.

What did he say? He would be with the rich, not to the thieves. With the rich. And you know how Matthew tells you the story.

When even was come certain rich man went and bent the body of Jesus and took and laid it in his own tomb. Another, yet another scripture has been fulfilled. We come now to 10, verses 10 to 12.

And we come now to what I call the summit. From the sepulchre to the summit, or from the sepulchre to the throne, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him. When thou shalt make a soul an offering for sins, he shall see the seed.

Now a soul has been made an offering for sins. He has died. And yet the very next sentence says, he shall see his seed.

He shall prolong his days. But he's already dead. Where are we now? Well onto resurrection ground.

We see him now alive from the dead, raised in power. He shall divide the portion, give him a portion with the great. Verse 12.

And he shall divide the spoil with the strong. I love to stand back and look at that. There he is, the servant.

He has come right through. He's been despised and rejected. He's gone to the cross.

And now he's lined to the third day God has raised him. And what did he do with him? He appointed him a portion with the great. Where are the great? I come first of all to the great in Bible history.

There's Moses. He was great. There's David.

He was great. There's Abraham, the father of the Jews. He was great.

And there is our Lord Jesus Christ within that same portion with the great. Or I come again. And I come into church history.

And I take all the outstanding figures. John, beloved John. And Peter had the keys and opened up the door to Jew and Gentile.

There they are in James, a pillar of Jerusalem. And there is the Lord Jesus. And he's amongst He's the greatest.

He's king of kings. And he's Lord of lords. And he's king of the Jews.

He's our Lord. And this is our blessed Lord. Let me just summarize that chapter up for you.

And then I beg a moment and one more passage. You can see his birth, birth to growing up and childhood as a tender plant. You can see his life despised and rejected of men.

You can see his death. He was cut off out of the land of the living. You can see his burial.

He was the rich and his death. You can see his resurrection and his ascension. The whole life is gathered up in one chapter.

Come with me into the 63rd. 63rd. And this is our last view, our final view of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ in Isaiah. Let's come here to 1, 2, 3, 4. That was the fight. Who is this that cometh from Eden, with dyed garments from Bosrae, this that is glorious and is appearing, traveling in the greatness of his strength, that speak in righteousness, mighty to save? That's the first question and the answer.

Who is this that cometh from Eden? Eden was Israel's old enemy. Bosrae is the capital. Stands for the enemies of our Lord.

And here he is coming. And then it says in verse 12, Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? And he answers, I have trodden the wine-press alone. Something strange.

I have trodden the wine-press. There are two wine-presses I want to mention. Two places should I put it.

The first of all, that wine-press he trod alone that we saw in Isaiah 53 when he was wounded. But there's another here that is future. Because it says in verse 4, For the days of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

Where are we now? We're a way into the future. The days of great tribulation that's coming on the earth. Whenever he will tread the wine-press, when he will stomp and crush down his enemy, and whenever the year of his redeemed.

So when I look into this chapter and see the Savior, I see him coming out of Calvary. God sustains with blood what I see a future day. When they will sustain with other blood, the blood of his enemy, that they crush.

Lovely that that should be the final view we take of Christ in Isaiah.

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