

ISAIAH 53:4-6
THE CHOSEN AND PRUDENT SERVANT --

From March 1, Isaiah 52:13-15 **ASTOUNDS WITH SUFFERING AND WITH VICTORY**
Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.
Just as many were astonished at You

---so His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men---
So shall He sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths at Him.
For what had not been told them they shall see, and what they had not heard they shall consider.

From March 8, Isaiah 53:1-3 **IS JUDGED UNDESIRABLE**
Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground.
He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.
He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

For today, Isaiah 53:4-6 SUFFERS OUR PUNISHMENT IN OUR PLACE
Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.
But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

We continue our study of Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12. Isaiah foresees the miraculous rescue of God's people from captivity--not just from physical captivity to Babylon, but from captivity to sin and its curse and from Satan and his cohorts.

As we have studied, Isaiah sees that

52:13) The chosen Servant will deal prudently; He will be highly honored.

52:14) Many will be astounded (struck silent) at His marred and repulsive appearance and form.

52:15) Kings will be astounded (struck silent) at His unexpected, unheard-of victory.

53:01) The report of His victory will not be believed; His victorious "arm" will not be revealed.

53:02) He will appear as undesirable as a "sucker-sprout" or a hopeless root; no desirability or beauty in Him.

53:02) He will be despised, rejected, enduring grief and sorrow; men hide their faces from Him—no honor.

It's a self-contradictory scene—highest honor yet so great dishonor. The question, WHY? Why would the chosen Servant, so prudent and powerful, the great rescuer, be relegated to the bottom of the heap with suffering and scorn? It doesn't make sense. Because ***Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.*** "Our." The Servant is taking our load and carries our baggage. Our griefs and burdens, weakness, sickness, pain, and sorrow are all on Him. It's a package deal, isn't it—griefs, sorrows, sicknesses and injuries of all kinds—physical, emotional, psychological. They are all the result of sin. When Jesus healed the sick, Matthew quotes this Isaiah passage: "When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took our infirmities and bore *our* sicknesses" (Matthew 8:16-17). Jesus the chosen and prudent Servant takes all our woes upon Himself to make us better. He suffer so, to make our lives better.

But there's more to answering the question, Why? ***We esteemed Him—stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.*** God in heaven Himself inflicted this load upon Him. This was the Servant's assignment from the Father. He carried our load of grief and suffering by the Father's will. **Stricken**—the Hebrew word, "to touch, to strike, to smite." Genesis says that Jacob physically wrestled with God the night before he was to meet his brother Esau who twenty years earlier wanted to kill him. Jacob insisted that God bless him. At daybreak God "touched/struck the socket of Jacob's hip." Jacob let go. He walked thereafter with a limp (Genesis 32:25). Jesus was thus

“touched/stricken” by God with our sicknesses and sorrows in order to ease our load. Smitten—a Hebrew word similar in meaning, “to strike to smite.” In I Samuel the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant. God plagued the Philistine men. Those who did not die were “smitten” with emerods—tumors. (I Samuel 5:12). God smites with a heavy hand. The griefs and sorrows of that Jesus carried for us were laid/smitten upon Him by God. Afflicted--the Hebrew word, “to bestow labor upon, to oppress.” It was not an easy load for the Servant. He was belabored with the weight of our load. In Leviticus God instructed the Israelites “afflict,” belabor, their souls on the Great Day of Atonement. They were to realize their sin, to labor under its guilt--surely also a day of fasting. Not easy. Have you ever tried it?

Did God load this humiliation on Jesus, simply to make our physical life a little easier? No, there is more behind all this. ***But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities.*** Wounded—Hebrew, “to be pierced through, to be perforated, to be opened.” A wound is an injury by which the skin or surface has been pierced, cut, broken. The Servant was indeed pierced. Think of the lashes perforating the skin of His back, and the nails piercing His hands/wrists. Bruised—Hebrew, “to be crushed.” A bruise means that the skin has not been perforated, but the flesh / the tissue underneath has been crushed and broken. There is bleeding inside which gives the skin its purplish color. How many bruises would Jesus have had from being struck and hit? There was also mental wounding and mental bruising. This was all suffered by Him—because of sin, our sin. ***He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities.*** Transgressions--Hebrew, “rebelliousness—in other word, “If you tell me not to do it, I’m going to do it.” Sound familiar? Iniquities—Hebrew, “crooked, unequal, guilty ways—in other words, “I went out of the lines, , but close enough.” Not in God’s eyes. Close enough is not good enough. Because of this rebellion and careless disobedience, the Servant suffered for you.

The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. The chastisement, “the correction, the punishment,” that we should get for our sins was laid upon Him. The Servant was humiliated for us, for our salvation. Christ’s “humiliation”? He willingly laid aside the full use of His ‘God-ness’ to suffer in our place. He was humiliated for us. By His stripes, by His “spots,” we are HEALED! He gets hurt, we get better. !! How often have you watched the miracle of healing in your body. A cut, a gash, stitches, a broken bone, surgery, the flu, a cold. By God’s power the body heals. By Jesus wounds you have healing for your soul too. You are whole and healthy before the Father in heaven. A joy! Lent, Good Friday, and Easter are all about healing. Bask in the healing you have in Jesus. You will be raised back to life on the last day! Your Father no longer looks at you with disapproval and punishment, but with eyes of mercy and love, forgiveness and healing, for Jesus’ sake. Saved!

Isaiah doesn’t want you to forget that this verdict from the Father was not just “a day at the ranch.” It cost dearly—not you, but His beloved Son. Your erring, careless, and foolish choices led to His Son’s serving for you. ***All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way.*** You strive to be independent of God, but when the devil beckons, you all too readily jump. How independent is that? Sinners are like sheep oblivious to what they are getting into, and oblivious to what it will cost the Shepherd to get them back. It’s been said, “Sheep are animals looking for a way to die.” Think of a whole flock of sheep, each wandering off a different way. What a nightmare for the Shepherd! But in love He humbly labors to get back every last one and lost one.

The LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. The Hebrew word for “laid on” is the same word used in I Samuel where faithless King Saul told Doeg the Edomite to kill Ahimelech the priest of Nob and all the other priests, because they had given food to future king David and his men, whom Saul was seeking to kill. The Bible says Doeg “fell upon” them and killed them (I Samuel 22:17-18). In the same way, the Lord has “fallen upon / laid upon” Him the brutal punishment for us all, for all our iniquities, guilt—deliberate, rebellious and otherwise. Jesus took it to free us from our captivity to sin, death, and hell. He endured it ALL so that ALL go free.

Indeed, Christ died for all. He won atonement and forgiveness for every sin and every sinner in the world. In an objective sense, even the condemned in hell have full atonement before God! Yet in the subjective sense, they don’t, because they have walked away from it. The servant died the lowest of deaths, so that sinners go free. This is called the VICARIOUS ATONEMENT. Jesus, the Substitute, reconciled, atoned for, made peace for, your sins with God. Such love.

During Lent be lifted up in your love for the Servant Jesus.

So be it! Amen!

Pastor Kanzenbach--