

"Of whom does the prophet speak?"

Isaiah's Servant Song



"My Servant Will Suffer"

Isaiah 53:1-6

Introduction:

"the Mt. Everest of Scripture"

Augustine: "the fifth gospel"

Calvin: "the Gospel according to Isaiah"

I. THE SUFFERING SERVANT AS VIEWED BY MAN (vs. 1-3)

A. The Rejection of the Message (vs. 1)

"Who has believed our message?" (John 12:38; Romans 10:16)

"And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?"

B. The Repulsiveness of the Man (vs. 2)

"For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground"

"He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him."

C. The Repudiation of the Messiah (vs. 3)

"He was despised and forsaken of men..."

"a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"

"and like one from whom men hide their face He was despised"

"and we did not esteem Him"

II. THE SUFFERING SERVANT AS VIEWED BY GOD (vs. 4-6)

A. The Cause of His Suffering (vs. 4)

"Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried..."

"yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted"

B. The Severity of His Suffering (vs. 5a)

“But He was pierced through for our transgressions”

“He was crushed for our iniquities”

“the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed”

The Servant's Part

- 53:4 - he took = lifted, bore
- he carried = bear a burden
- 53:5 - he was pierced = wounded
- he was crushed = broken
- his punishment = chastisement
- his wounds = stripes, bruises
- 53:6 - laid on him = fell upon

The People's Part

- our infirmities = sickness, disease, calamity
- our sorrows = afflictions, griefs
- for our transgressions = rebellion, sin
- for our iniquities = perversity, depravity
- brought us peace = wholeness
- we are healed = mended, cured
- the iniquity of us all

C. The Results of His Suffering (vs. 5b-6)

“All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way...”

“but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.” (John 1:29; Hebrews 9:11-14)

Conclusion: (adapted from *The Message*)

Who on earth would believe what we've heard and seen? Who would have thought God's saving power would look anything like this?

Jesus, God's servant, grew up before Him - a scrawny seedling, a scrubby plant in a parched field. There was nothing attractive about him, nothing to cause me to take a second look. I looked down on him and passed him by - a man who suffered, who knew pain firsthand. But one look at him and I just turned away. I looked down on him, thought he was scum.

But the fact is, it was my pain that Jesus carried - my messed up life, all the things that are wrong with me. I thought he somehow brought it on himself, that God was punishing him for whatever. But it was my sins that did that to him, that ripped and tore and crushed him - my sins! Jesus took my punishment, and made me whole. Through his bruises I am healed.

I'm just like a smelly sheep that's wandered off and gotten lost. I've been doing my own thing, gone my own way. Now I see that God has piled all my sins, everything I've done wrong, on him, on him!

Food for Thought:

- 1) How should we understand Israel's “unbelieved report” in vs. 1?
- 2) Why would an unimpressive appearance be an advantage for the Messiah? a disadvantage?
- 3) Why was the judgment of the Messiah so harsh?
- 4) Reread this passage, substituting “my/I” for “our/we” and inserting “Jesus” wherever it speaks of “him/he”.