

Turn in your Bibles to Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Nowhere in all the OT does the glory of Jesus Christ shine more clearly than in Isaiah 53--Scandal of the Cross.

*700 years before Jesus entered the world, God opened the eyes of his prophet to see Jesus' coming in the world.

***What Isaiah saw--was the Scandal of the Cross:** shame-disgrace-humiliation of Jesus' suffering & death on the cross.
Scandal is something that shocks people-causes shame, disgrace... something done that should NOT be done=violation!

Scandal of the Cross is that Jesus, God's eternal Son suffered & died for sinners so sinners could be saved.

*Jesus is scourged & crucified on behalf of sinners. *Jesus, the Righteous One, suffers for the unrighteous many.

*The loving Shepherd dies to save lost sheep. *The exalted King sacrifices Himself to rescue rebellious subjects.

My Purpose: Spirit will cause you to experience the glory & power of the 'scandalousness' of the Cross of Christ.
Your greatest need is to experience Jesus Christ as He really is and not just as you think He is.

WHY? 1. Because real life has seasons...It is NOT just summers but has winters-times of hardship & difficulty.
2. Because God is most glorified when you are most satisfied with His Son—Jesus by the Spirit's power!
3. Because your personal happiness depends on you seeing & submitting to Jesus with a pure heart.

There are three important questions we want to ask and answer today...

1. Who Is the Servant referred to in Isaiah 52:13-53:12? Jesus Christ, God's Perfect Servant

1. Servant of the Lord is the people of Israel (Isaiah 41:8,10).
2. Servant of the Lord is the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 49:5).
3. Servant of the Lord refers prophetically to the Messiah (Isaiah 42:1ff).

Who then was this servant of the Lord? Both the details of 52:13-53:12 and the NT tells us it is #3.

In **1 Peter 2:24**, Peter quotes Isaiah 53:5 "by his stripes we are healed" and says that Isaiah was speaking of Jesus.

In **Acts 8**, the Ethiopian eunuch was reading Isaiah 53 when Philip joined him in his chariot.

The eunuch asked, "Of whom does the prophet speak, of himself, or of someone else?"

Acts 8:35 says that "Philip opened his mouth and beginning from this scripture he preached Jesus to him."

2. To whom was Isaiah writing this to? Sinners who scorn God's rule over them

Isaiah 53:1 begins, "Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

The answer to those rhetorical questions is: **scarcely anyone**. Why not? **Because no one is believing...**

Why? Why did Isaiah then, and why do we today, find such unbelief when the message of salvation is preached?

Answer... **Is. 53:6** "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way..."

This is the essence of rebellion & unbelief—people going their own way. Think of man's ungrateful rebellion.

Is. 43:7 says God created everyone for His glory—to reveal His greatness.

But how many people ask, 'How can I glorify God right now? How can I keep from straying from God?'

Not many? In fact the easiest way not to feel like a rebel against the King is not to think about the King.

If you can keep God out of your mind, then doing your own thing & going your own way seems natural/right!

This is what makes the suffering of Jesus—such a scandalous (shocking) thing—Jesus suffered for sinners.

We are all rebel subjects—we are the boss—we do our own thing—we choose to simply not think about God.

3. What did Isaiah See? He saw eight images or pictures of 'scandalous-ness'!

1. Sorrowing – rejected Servant (53:2-3,4b) Jesus was sorrowful because He was rejected by sinners.

Is. 53:3 "He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

WHY? **Is. 53:2** tells us...

Is. 53:2 "For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him

1. Jesus was outwardly **unimpressive**--no outward greatness or charisma that attracted people.
2. Jesus did not endorse **our way of life**--view of life, money, possessions, lust, prayer didn't agree with ours.
He was so lowly and unimpressive -- that our aspirations for power and reputation felt evil.
His happy poverty -- made our wanting more and more feel foolish.
His willingness to suffer for others -- made our craving for comforts feel selfish.
3. To protect ourselves, we believed **God killed Jesus because He was a fake.**
Is.53:4b "...yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted"

2. Substitutionary Servant (53:4a, 5, 6b)

Jesus gave Himself over for the benefit of sinners. 7 times

Is. 53:4a: "Surely **he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.** . . ."

Is. 53:5a " **But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities;**

Is. 53:6b: "... and the **LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.**"

1. **Jesus knew the rejection He experienced was not because of His failure but because of man's sinfulness.** It didn't take him off guard. He did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.
2. **Jesus knew His suffering—taking our sins upon Himself**... was to be our substitute. To die in our place!
Is. 53:5b **upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.**"

Message of the Cross of Christ—Jesus was punished so sinners don't have to be—He was punished in their place. This is the great message of good news that God has for rebel subjects who are willing to lay down their rebellion. Instead of collapsing in grief over our rejection, he bears our griefs. Instead of increasing our sorrows, he carries our sorrows. Instead of avenging our transgressions, he is pierced for them in our place. Instead of crushing us for our iniquities, he is crushed for them as our substitute. All the whipping belonging to us for our rebellion, He took on himself so we might have peace & be healed.

3. Suffering Servant (53:7)

Jesus willingly suffered for sinners as God's Lamb.

Is. 53:7 "He was **oppressed**, and he was **afflicted**, yet he opened not his mouth; **like a lamb that is led to the slaughter**, and like a **sheep that before its shearers is silent**, so he opened not his mouth.

Four things happened to Jesus Christ...

1. **Jesus was "oppressed."**
The word "oppressed" described what taskmasters would do to make the life of their slaves miserable. They demanded they make bricks without straw, pressing them hard with labor and impossible requirements. Jesus experienced this in the way his enemies continually stalked him & finally captured and tormented him.
2. **Jesus was "afflicted."**
"Afflicted" implies humiliation, being brought low, treating with contempt, shaming, belittling, scorn. This was the gall Jesus sipped during his whole ministry & had forced down his throat in the last awful week.
3. **Jesus was "like a Lamb that is led to the slaughter."**
The slaughter doesn't come until **verse 8**. Verse 7 just says that He was led to it. And that is a terrifying thing. It is one thing to be oppressed & afflicted if you know you will walk out of the jail soon into freedom & life. It is something different if you know that it is all leading to the slaughter. Jesus knew that death awaited Him.
4. **Jesus was like a sheep is "sheared."**
He was stripped of his clothes, his friends, his honor, his divine protection. No one has ever been as naked as Jesus was on the Golgotha of Good Friday. No one has been as sheared of everything as Jesus was when He was scourged and crucified.

How did Jesus respond? Verse 7 gives us three phrases that tells us how Jesus responded to this suffering...
"He opened not His mouth...He was silent...He opened not His mouth."

His response was an amazing silence, patience & submission to His Father's will for Him.

We see Jesus' response as He was being tried that early Friday morning before Caiaphas, Pilate & Herod.

Matt. 26:62 Caiaphas: 'Do you not answer, what is this that these men are testifying against you?'

Mark 15:4-5 Pilate: 'Do you make no answer? See how many charges they bring against you.'

Luke 23:9 Herod: 'Herod questioned him at some length, but he answered him nothing.'

4. Slaughtered Servant (53:8-9a)

Jesus died and was buried for sinners.

Is. 53:8 'By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was **cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people** "'

Jesus was slaughtered for sinners--He was slaughtered not for His sin but for people's sins. Jesus died!

1 Cor. 15:3 sums up the gospel with these simple words: "Christ died for us according to the scriptures."

"Christ died"—"he was cut off out the land of the living." "For us"—"for the transgression of my people."

"According to the scriptures"—just as Isaiah 53:8 said, 700 years ago.

And what does Isaiah was the response of the people around Him—the Response of His Generation?

He says that no one "considered it." 'Consider'=ponder or meditate. People saw—but did NOT see!

Sinners easily assess spiritual things wrongly & choose to simply ignore the things of God.

Jesus was buried for sinners.

Is. 53:9 'And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death,

Matt.27:57-59 tells us about Jesus' burial: "There came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph,

who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus... and Joseph took the body... laid it in his own new tomb."

Why did God plan & prophesy 700 years beforehand Jesus would be buried in a rich man's grave?

When Jesus died, the work of redemption was done. He cried, "It is finished." He had suffered. He had died.

Having died, there was no more need for suffering and humiliation.

Instead God signified the greatness of Jesus by having Joseph of Arimathea bury Jesus in an honorable grave.

Jesus' burial was done in hope... He may have looked like a criminal dying for his own crimes but he wasn't.

He was the Servant of the Lord... God honored Him in the way He was buried.

5. Sinless Servant (53:9b)

Jesus was sinless... He is the sinners' substitute.

Is. 53:9b *although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth*

So WHY was He 'slaughtered' if He was innocent?

Jesus	-Perfectly obeyed the <u>Law of God</u>	-Completely satisfied the <u>Justice of God</u>
	-Exhausted (propitiated) the <u>Wrath of God</u>	-Incarnated the <u>Mercy & Love of God</u>
	-Removes sinners' sins from the <u>Presence of God</u>	-Redeems sinners from the <u>Curse of God</u>
	-Reconciles sinners to become the <u>Friends of God</u>	-Declares sinners to be <u>Righteous before God</u>

6. Submissive Servant (53:10)

Jesus willingly died at His Father's hand!

Is. 53:10 *Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief;*

Jesus knew it was God's plan to crush Him ... He would be an offering for sin... to which He agreed!

It was the will of the Lord to crush him, NOT because of his own sins, but because of our sins.

Jesus submitted to God's 'pleasure' to crush Him... NOT divine 'child-abuse' but sacrificial love for others.

Is. 53:10 *when his soul makes an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand*

Jesus knew His death would (*soul made an offering for sin*)

1. Result in saving sinners.
2. Be followed by resurrection—raised from dead.
3. Accomplish ALL of God's purposes for it!

All of God's purposes in the death of Jesus will succeed—NOT fail!

7. Satisfied Servant (53:11)

Jesus justifies sinners who believe in Him!

Is. 53:11 *Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.*

Jesus was happy knowing the purpose of the Cross... many sinners would be justified.

Jesus saw the good pleasure of His Father succeeding through his own anguish & He was satisfied—not angry.

Jesus also knew that if He bore sinners' sin—if He was punished by dying for them... then sinners had a way!

If your sin has been punished by Jesus Christ, then you don't have to be punished for it—ever!

Jesus alone can make sinners justified. What does it mean to be 'justified'?

To be justified—accounted righteous means Jesus declares all your sins forgiven so you will not be punished.

Are you justified? By whom? God or yourself?? 2) On what basis? Jesus' death/resurrection or your works?

1. Do you believe you are a sinner—is nothing you can do to forgive your sins—you have no hope in yourself?
2. Do you believe Jesus died for sinners like yourself, was raised again? If so... God has justified you

8. Successful Servant (53:12)

Jesus did what He set out to do: Now He rules/empowers!

Is. 53:12 *Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,*

Jesus rose victorious over death.

53:12 **THEREFORE ... I will divide Him a portion with** ... **He shall divide the spoil with**

Jesus gave His all for S_____:	Scandal of Cross	...numbered with the transgressors
BECAUSE	...He poured out His soul to death	...makes intercession for the...
	...bore the sin of many	

1. Jesus is praying for You
2. Jesus wants to COMPLETELY Save You.

Jesus is THE Sorrowing, Substitutionary, Suffering, Slaughtered, Submissive, Satisfied, Successful SERVANT. ONLY Jesus Can Satisfy These Longings...

1. Have a Clean Conscience *Hebrews 9:14*
2. Be a part of a Caring Community *Ephesians 2:12-13*
3. Have a Compelling Calling *1 Peter 2:9, Titus 2:14*

Jesus' suffering was an outpouring of God's wrath because of sin.

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46)

Jesus' suffering was an act submission & obedience His Father's will.

"Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." (Ephesians 5:2)

Jesus did not wrestle his angry Father to the floor of heaven and take the whip out of his hand. He did not force him to be merciful to humanity. His death was not the begrudging consent of God to be lenient to sinners. No, what Jesus did when he suffered and died was the Father's idea. It was a breathtaking strategy, conceived even before creation, as God saw and planned the history of the world. That is why the Bible speaks of God's "purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began" (2 Timothy 1:9). Already in the Jewish Scriptures the plan was unfolding. The prophet Isaiah foretold the sufferings of the Messiah, who was to take the place of sinners. He said that the Christ would be "smitten by God" 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 crushed for our iniquities. . . . 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. (Isaiah 53:4-6)*

But what is most astonishing about this substitution of Christ for sinners is that it was God's idea. Christ did not intrude on God's plan to punish sinners. God planned for him to be there. One Old Testament prophet says, "It was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief" (Isaiah 53:10). This explains the paradox of the New Testament. On the one hand, the suffering of Christ is an outpouring of God's wrath because of sin. But on the other hand, Christ's suffering is a beautiful act of submission and obedience to the will of the Father. So Christ cried from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). And yet the Bible says that the suffering of Christ was a fragrance to God. "Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Ephesians 5:2). Oh, that we might worship the terrible wonder of the love of God! It is not sentimental. It is not simple. For our sake God did the impossible: He poured out his wrath on his own Son—the one whose submission made him infinitely unworthy to receive it. Yet the Son's very willingness to receive it was precious in God's sight. The wrath-bearer was infinitely loved.

Restored Sight

The Lord knew people who knew nothing, will be sprinkled by the Servant and see Him (52:15).

The gospel doesn't save unless we see & grasp it for our own. But rebel subjects don't do that—at least not on our own. But Isaiah says something will happen: restored sight to rebel subjects.

Isaiah 52:15: "He [the Servant] will sprinkle many nations, kings will shut their mouths on account of him; for what had not been told them they will see, and what they had not heard they will understand."

Even though Isaiah 53:1 says that scarcely any have believed Isaiah's message, because the arm of the Lord had not been revealed, nevertheless 52:15 says that the arm of the Lord will be revealed.

God will not let the work of his Servant be done in vain. He will bare his arm and sprinkle the nations with the healing blood of his Servant (v. 15a) and the kings of the earth will see and understand. Their eyes will be opened. Their sight will be restored.

Paul quoted this verse in Romans 15:21 to justify his hope in the success of frontier missions. "I aspired to preach the gospel not where Christ was already named . . . But as it is written, "Those who had no news of him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand"' (cf. Acts 26:18).

The gospel of Jesus Christ is good news not only because the heart of it is God's rejected Servant dying as a ransoming Substitute for rebel subjects, but also because God guarantees that he will bare his arm and open the eyes of kings to see and believe. He will restore sight.

Isaiah 52:13 begins, "Behold, my servant shall prosper!" He will succeed. His substitutionary ransom will not abort. God has sent the servant; God will make sure that people see the servant. He will restore sight so that rebel subjects see the servant no longer as rejected but as the glorious ransoming substitute that he really is.

Reverent Silence

The Lord knew the result of all this—Servant lifted up so kings shut their mouths in silence (52:13,15)

When God sprinkles the nations with the blood of his Servant and grants the kings of the earth to see what they had not been told and to understand what they had not heard, the result will be reverent silence: "The kings will shut their mouth on account of him." And why do they do this?

Isaiah 52:13 gives the answer: "Behold, my servant will prosper, he will be high and lifted up, and greatly exalted."

The kings will be silent because the suffering servant is the sovereign of the universe. He is high, is greatly exalted. This is what God grants them the eyes to see—the majesty of Jesus.

The despised and rejected servant is the Lord of glory. Let there be a reverent silence before him.

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

- 13 *Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted.*
- 14 *As many were astonished at you — his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance,
and his form beyond that of the children of mankind —*
- 15 *so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told
them they see, and that which they have not heard they understand.*
- 1 *Who has believed what they heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?*
- 2 *For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty
that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.*
- 3 *He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*
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upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.*
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and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*
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and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.*
- 8 *By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that
he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?*
- 9 *And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.*
- 10 *Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for sin,
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.*
- 11 *Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.*
- 12 *Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,
because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.*

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Violation! Scandal of Cross: Jesus, God's eternal Son suffered & died for rebellious sinners.
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Answer: **scarcely anyone**. Why not? **Because no one is believing...** Why?

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We are all rebel subjects—the boss—doing our own thing—choosing to simply not think about G
We are the ones who Jesus was cruelly scourged and crucified for.

3. What did Isaiah See? He saw eight images or pictures of 'scandalous-ness'

God, gave Himself in the person of His Son Jesus Christ to suffer instead of sinners the death, punishment and curse due to sinners as the penalty for their sin.

God the Father gave His Son to save rebellious, God-hating people, knowing that he would be despised and rejected by those He had created, that He would be a man of sorrows, & familiar with suffering. He spared sinful people from condemnation, death and punishment, but He did not spare His own beloved Son, with whom He was well-pleased.

God the Son gave Himself, willingly undertaking the task appointed for Him by His Father. He veiled His glory in a human body, experienced every temptation sinners' face without succumbing to any and lived a perfect human life. Yet He took sinners' sin and guilt upon Himself and died a cursed death, suffering in His human nature the infinite torment of the wrath and fury of His Father that was directed at mankind's sin that He bore while on the Cross. After three days He was proven to be God the Son by being raised from the dead, before being exalted to His heavenly throne. From there, Jesus Christ rules His kingdom, waiting the day of His glorious appearing when every eye shall see Him, every knee bow before Him, and every tongue confess, "Jesus Christ is Lord", to the glory of God the Father.

God the Holy Spirit, having been sent by the Father and the Son, now works in the hearts of sinners through the proclamation of the Gospel to convict sinners of sin, righteousness and judgment, to draw sinners to Christ in repentance and faith, and so to unite those who believe to Christ that they may share in every blessing He has won for true believers.

God the Holy Trinity thus satisfied His own righteous wrath against sinful humanity, endured and exhausted the curse of the Law that stood against sinners; and graciously cleanses believing sinners of their sin and clothes them in Christ's righteousness; ransoms them from their slavery to sin, the world and the devil by paying their debt, cancelling the devil's power of accusation against them, and liberates them to live new lives empowered by the Spirit since God triumphed over all evil powers by punishing evil in the person of His Son.

God reconciles these believing sinners with Himself by removing the barrier of sin and enmity; so they can stand blameless and forgiven in His glorious presence, fully credited with the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, as adopted children of God, who will gaze upon Jesus' all-glorious face for all eternity.

Thus God vindicated His truthfulness by remaining faithful to His promise that sin will be punished; He manifested His justice by punishing sin that was placed on His Son; He glorified His name by exalting His Son and placing all things under His feet; and He demonstrated His love by dying for sinners and reconciling to Himself those who were once His enemies.