

Isaiah 52:13-53:1

“Redeemed Without Money”

Sometimes you don't know *how* to say what you *want* to say. & What I mean by that is as Paul the apostle said, “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*”¹ & Again, “*It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’*”² So, I would never seek to *infer*, never want to *imply* that any one portion of scripture is somehow more important than the other.

Yet by the same token, though all mountains are majestic, some peaks stand higher than others. & As it pertains to the Mtn tops of the Word of God, surely, it's the “Everest” of summit peaks that we embark upon in this our current section of scripture. It's the sacred section of sacred sections, the Holy of Holies (if you'll allow me). & The reason it's the highest peak, the “Mt Everest” (if you will) is because it takes us to Mt Calvary.

It's w/out a doubt the most widely known portion of the book of Isaiah. It's quoted *from*, referred *to*, & pulled out *of* (by those who penned the N.T.) dozens & dozens of times. & We know that the “Servant” that comes into focus for us in this passage is none other than God's Son, our Savior, the Person of J.C. -- & We know that because the Holy Spirit reveals that to us in those passages of the N.T. from which it's quoted w/specific reference to being fulfilled in Christ.

Matthew applies it to Christ, Jesus Himself quotes from Isa 53 in Luke 22:37 & applies it to Himself. John applies this passage to Jesus (Jn 12:37-38). Paul applies this passage to Jesus; Peter applies this passage to Jesus. Philip applies this passage to Jesus in Acts Ch 8. Over & over again throughout your N.T. it's either quoted from directly, or alluded *to*, or taken *from* & applied to Christ. There's simply no doubt that the “Servant” in view throughout this section of scripture is our Savior, J.C.

& The “snapshot” that we have here is of His suffering & His rejection. However, the primary point is that His *suffering* will lead to His exaltation & triumphant *success* before the Father & that His *rejection* will lead to our *redemption*. It wasn't *His sin* He suffered for; He *had no sin*. He suffered for *your sins* & for mine. Back in Vs 3 of Ch 52 we read, “For thus says the Lord: ‘You have sold yourselves for nothing & you shall be redeemed w/out money.’” & What begins to come into focus for us here is the radical *cost* of our redemption.

¹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (2 Ti 3:16-17). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Mt 4:4). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

As the apostle Peter said, *“...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*³

Vs 13-14

For many believers, there’s a bit of an astonishment how that anyone (even, perhaps especially a Jewish person) could read this section of scripture & completely miss Jesus. Now, (in fairness) some don’t. Some see Jesus & are converted to faith in Christ. Many others just don’t see Him at all... But I’m not sure that we should really be surprised by that. Because * when someone makes up their mind about who Jesus is, (be it a well-meaning historical figure, perhaps a prophet, or maybe even the factitious character of man’s imagination) it’s very easy to become blind/deaf to the plain, simple, straightforward message of the Word of God.

This is why it’s so dangerous to simply be a person who goes along w/the crowd. Or trusts whatever you’re told w/out ever doing your own personal *verification* regarding the *information* you’re given. Even w/in the confines of the church! You want to make sure that you’re being given the truth of what God’s Word teaches! & When it comes to something as *critical* as your eternal destiny, you better *know* that you *know* what it is you believe & *why* you believe it! “Well, I heard some college professor blowing holes in Christian theology & it seemed to make sense so that’s what I believe.” Really? That’s what you’re going with? “Well, I listened to someone who *used to be a Christian* & he was telling me all the problems he had with it.” “Well, I don’t really know, but I’m not too worried about it.” Listen, you *need* to be worried about it! Don’t take my word for it, don’t take anyone else’s word for it. No one else is going to stand w/you before God, you’ll be there all alone! You need to see for *yourself* what the Scriptures teach & decide for *yourself* what you’re going to believe about who Jesus is. *

There are 2 things that God wants us to know about “His Servant” before He even breaches the subject of His suffering. #1 He will deal prudently & #2 He will enjoy tremendous *victory* & be *highly* exalted. #1 He will deal prudently. Maybe your Bible says He will act wisely, or perhaps it reads that He will prosper. The point is that what He does will exude wisdom, will lead to the success of His mission. The cross wasn’t a failed mission attempt (as though He came for one thing, but was put to death instead).

³ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (1 Pe 1:18-19). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

The suffering of the Messiah would signal His success... Which leads to the 2nd thing, He will enjoy triumphant victory (pointing ultimately to His resurrection & subsequent exaltation to the right hand of the Father). – When Paul was writing to the Philippians He spoke of the suffering of J.C. His obedience to the Father in taking the form of a bondservant & coming in the likeness of men. How that He humbled Himself & became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. & He said, *“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*⁴

Having said all of that, allow me to say this as well. * This word, “Extolled” literally means, “lifted up”. Some of your Bibles may read, “He will be high & lifted up & greatly exalted.” What I want to point out is that this word translated, “lifted up” is the same word that Jesus picked up on in Jn 12 when He said, *“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.”*⁵ But then we read this, *“This He said, signifying by what death He would die.”*⁶ When Jesus grabbed this word & applied it to Himself. He didn’t use it w/reference to being lifted up or magnified in praise, He spoke w/reference to being lifted up off the earth & nailed to a cross! That salvation would be made available to all mankind in every place through the lifting up of His body upon the cross.

So, it’s very possible that we see a reference to both His *condemnation* here in Vs 13 (being lifted up & through that bringing salvation) & His subsequent *exaltation* to follow.

It’s no wonder then that Vs 14 speaks of the astonishment that startles & staggers people when they understand the message of the gospel. This man who was condemned has Himself demonstrated that all of humanity is condemned unless they turn from their sin & trust in Him! *As it’s been said, you can’t rejoice in the Good News of salvation until you first face the bad news of condemnation.* Jesus wasn’t tortured & put to death because He was guilty, He was tortured & put to death because we were guilty.

Once people understand this it blows their minds, it (Vs 15) “shuts their mouths”. *There are no words, what can we say? **

“So His visage was marred more than any man, & His form more than the sons of men.” Here, Isaiah begins to inform the reader, the hearer of the suffering that would come upon our Savior.

⁴ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Php 2:9-11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁵ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Jn 12:32). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁶ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Jn 12:33). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

*“His visage was marred more than any man,” what that means is that His face would be so disfigured by the time they were done w/Him that He wouldn’t even be recognizable as a man. It would just be swollen, bloodied, mangled mess. Your tendency would be to turn away you would be so shocked, so startled... *

If you’ve ever had the misfortune to come upon a car accident, & perhaps someone has been thrown through the window... *When I was a young man, I (along w/a work crew I was with) was driving to a job site. It was raining & as we came around the corner there was someone standing on the side of the road waving frantically. We pulled over & out in the field was car that was overturned. As we ran up through the mud & rain filled ruts that the car had formed as it slid & flipped through the field there was an elderly lady laying w/her body laying across the inside of the car. One of her legs was somehow wrapped up in the steering wheel, & her body was laying kind of parallel to the dashboard so that her head was laying outside the passenger window. So she was kind of ¾ in & ¼ out of the vehicle... Her face was so mangled, so swollen, muddied, bloodied & disfigured that the only way I could tell that it was a woman was by what I could discern of the style of her hair & the clothes that she was wearing... You just couldn’t look upon her. Something in you made you look away...*

* *Read the gospels. Jesus had His beard, ripped from His face. They blindfolded Him & beat Him across the face, they spat upon Him, they placed a crown of thorns on His head & beat Him over the head w/a rod... His face was unrecognizable.*

& His “form”, His “figure” was marred (or disfigured) more than the sons of men. By the time the scourging was finished, His whole body was just looked like a bloody piece of quivering human flesh. The scourging was done w/a cat-o-nine tails. A leather whip w/ 9 leather straps embedded w/lead & bone, shards of glass, whatever they could find. *It was simply a brutal interrogation method meant to extract the confession of crimes. If you would confess, the stripes would grow less & less intense until the sentence had been carried out. If you refused to confess, the lashings got increasingly intense. Jesus had nothing to confess... He kept silent. His entire torso would’ve been flayed wide open. **

Perhaps one reason that God shrouded the earth w/darkness for 3 hrs while Jesus was on the cross was because He wasn’t there to satisfy the morbid curiosity of the onlooker. He was there to pay the price for the sins of the world!

**When you get to Rev Ch 5. You find John sobbing convulsively because there was no one in heaven, no one on the earth, nor anyone under the earth who was worthy to step forward & take the scroll from the right hand of Him who sat upon the throne & to loose its seals.*

But one of the elders said to him, “Don’t weep. Behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed to open the scroll & to loose its 7 seals.” & John looked, but do you remember what he saw? He saw a “Lamb as though it had been slain...” Jesus bearing the marks of Calvary... & It’s as if all of heaven suddenly gains a glimpse of what took place, of the price that was paid, & that’s when we all fall down at His feet & sing a new song, saying, “You are worthy to take the scroll & to open its seals... *“For You were slain, & have redeemed us to God by Your blood.”* & Again, *“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”*⁷ & W/one voice we’ll cry out, *“Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”*^{8*}

It’s interesting, after Jesus had risen from the dead, we read of several encounters that Jesus had w/His disciples. & Though they knew it was Him by the things He did, the way He spoke, moved & ministered, they didn’t recognize Him & they were afraid to ask if it was really Him... & Knowing that, He would go ahead & confirm it for them (touch Me, handle Me, see that it is I Myself, not a spirit). Most likely, He didn’t look the same as He did having the scars of disfigurement remaining upon Him... Badges of His matchless love for you & me.

Vs 15

Here we’re told that what the Messiah would accomplish wouldn’t be limited in its scope. He shall sprinkle “many” nations. Israel’s Messiah, yes. But the Savior of the *world*. The idea behind this word “sprinkle” has to do w/the ceremonial cleansing rites found in the Mosaic law. What’s being said here is that the shedding of His blood would bring about the cleansing of the nations. Salvation will be freely given to all who will believe upon Him.

Again, this is why “Kings shall shut their mouths at Him”. He was brutalized, mistreated, condemned as a criminal. Yet the glory of His great work will stop every word. They will be horrified by *what* He suffered & humbled by *why* He suffered.

Isaiah 53

Vs 1

We have here what we might refer to as “prophetic anticipation”. Isaiah sees 2 things coming down the prophetic pipeline as it pertains to this message. First, he gathers the counter intuitive, paradoxical dilemma that people will struggle with...

⁷ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Re 5:12). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁸ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Re 5:13). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

It seems contradictory in nature that a suffering Servant, One whose visage was marred more than any man, is simultaneously the salvation & cleansing of the nations. 2^{ndly} He anticipates the rejection of such a message, such a Messiah. “Who will believe our report?”

*The prophet had the same struggle then that any who would proclaim the gospel have today! Unless a person’s heart is ignited by faith, they won’t believe the message of the cross. It’s so counterintuitive, so fantastical, so incredible, yet so simple... it must be impossible... How can it be?

People don’t want to believe that they have a real problem & that a Savior had to suffer so they could be justified (made right) in the sight of God. They want to believe that I’m ok, that you’re ok... They want to follow (as one commentator put it) the Pied Piper of liberalism who has a tune they can all dance to that makes them feel like everything is going to be ok. It’s not ok...

Paul told the Corinthians, “*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing...*”⁹ It’s crazy to me, the *foolish preaching* that so many people cling to. Yet the message they *need to cling to* so many count as *foolish!* – What does the Bible say? “*But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*”¹⁰

Ladies and Gentlemen: it’s true. God doesn’t do things the way man would do things. He doesn’t use man’s methods, He doesn’t have man’s message. God uses the weak things of the world to put to shame the mighty... & the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise. Because foolishness of God is wiser than men, & the weakness of God is stronger than men...

Who has believed our report? That God has become a Man, & as a Man died for the sins of mankind. * That’s a lot to take in.

“And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? This is kind of another way of asking the same question. “To whom has the *salvation* of the Lord been revealed?”

But what I want you to pick up on here is the apparent contrast between the strong arm of the Lord & the apparent weakness of a suffering Savior. When Isaiah speaks of the “arm of the Lord” It’s a picture of strength, of power & might. “Rolling up your sleeves” (so to speak) & getting to work. It’s the picture of a tremendous undertaking.

⁹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (1 Co 1:18). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹⁰ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (1 Co 2:14). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

But what's amazing is that the strength & power of God will be expressed through what appears to be the weakness of our suffering Savior...

* & This is what I want to leave you w/today. The tremendous cost to God & the tremendous power of God in accomplishing our salvation. By way of comparison. When God created the vast & enormous expanse of the universe, it was the work of His "fingers". Ps Ch 8, "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?"¹¹ We're such a small speck in an enormous universe, yet God has loved us & given Himself for us... it's overwhelming. Close

When He delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt, Ex 13:3 tells us it was by the strength of His *hand*. But in order to bring salvation to the sinful, to eradicate & eliminate the penalty of sin, He had to "bare (reveal) His mighty arm". Now you know what Paul was talking about in Rom Ch 1 when he said, "I am not ashamed to the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes." The free gift of *salvation* is an incomprehensible *demonstration* of the power of God.

Yet people refuse to believe. May that not be said of any heart here today, or w/in the sound of my voice. The reason salvation is free for *you* is because it cost God *everything*. He gave His only begotten Son to die upon the cross... Redemption is an infinite task that only God could perform. – Redeemed w/out money. To God be the glory, great things He has done... *

Prayer Points:

God, we really don't know how to pray... Or what we can even say after a word like we've received today. We just find it in our hearts to *thank You, thank You, thank You...* We worship & adore You Jesus. Your obedience, Your submission unto death, even the death of the cross. Be exalted, be glorified, be magnified, for You alone are worthy to receive all honor & glory & power forever & ever...

If you've not readied your soul to stand before God through faith in J.C. I'd encourage you to do that today. Believe in Jesus & you'll never perish but have everlasting life. Forgiveness is free to you, it cost God everything. Honor Him by humbly receiving it today.

¹¹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Ps 8:3-4]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.