

Isaiah Lesson 15 Articles

Startled at the Servant's appearance (Isa. 52:14). “They shall see My Servant beaten and bloodied, so disfigured one would scarcely know it was a person standing there”. “So disfigured did He look that He seemed no longer human”. When you consider all that Jesus endured physically between the time of His arrest and His crucifixion, it is no wonder He no longer looked like a man. Not only were His legal rights taken from Him, including the right of a fair trial, but His *human rights* were taken from Him, so that He was not even treated like a person, let alone a Jewish citizen.

When He was questioned before Annas, Jesus was slapped by an officer (John 18:22). At the hearing before Caiaphas, He was spat upon, slapped, and beaten on the head with fists. Pilate scourged Him, and his soldiers beat Him (John 19:3). Scourging was so terrible that prisoners were known to die from the ordeal. “I gave My back to the smiters,” said God’s Servant, “and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not My face from shame and spitting”. *And they were doing this to the very Son of God!*

The graphic account of His suffering that is given in some sermons is not found in Scripture, except perhaps in Psalm 22. The Gospel writers give us the facts but not the details. Suffice it to say that when the sinners were finished with the Savior, He did not look human; and people were so appalled, they turned their faces away. What was done to Jesus should have been done to Barabbas—and to us.

Startled at the Servant's exaltation (Isa. 52:13). The Servant suffered and died, but He did not remain dead. He was “exalted and extolled, and [made] very high.” The phrase “deal prudently” means “to be successful in one’s endeavor.” What looked to men like a humiliating defeat was in the eyes of God a great victory (Col. 2:15). “I have glorified Thee on the earth,” He told His Father; “I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do” (John 17:4).

Jesus was not only raised from the dead, but His body was glorified. He ascended to heaven where He sat at the right hand of the Father. He has all authority (Matt. 28:18) because all things have been put under His feet (Eph. 1:20–23). *There is no one in the universe higher than Jesus.* What an astonishment to those who esteemed Him the lowest of the low. (See Phil. 2:1–11.)¹

All of this was planned by God and His plan was a complete success. See 52:13 and 42:1–4, where we see the success of the Savior’s work. These verses in chapter 53 show us the Godward side of the cross: His death “pleased the Lord.” Does this mean that the Father rejoiced in His Son’s suffering and death? No. But it pleased Him to see the work of salvation completed, the sacrifice accepted, and sin atoned for. Now a holy God could, in His grace, save undeserving sinners. Though Christ was slain by the evil hands of men, their deeds were overruled to accomplish the purpose of God (Acts 2:22–24). Christ’s death was not a “moral example”; it was an offering for sin (v. 10). He died in our place.

What was Christ’s reward, apart from the joy of having done His Father’s will? He was raised from the dead (“He shall prolong His days”) and given a spiritual family (“He shall see His seed”). Verse 11 presents the picture of a spiritual family, for it describes the “travail” of His soul on the cross. See Ps. 22:30 and Heb. 2:13. In Isa. 9:6 Christ is called the “Everlasting Father” and this is the reason why: His death and travail on the cross have made possible God’s family of saved sinners. These are people whom He has justified, declared righteous through His grace.

Verse 12 presents another reward of the faithful Servant: an inheritance from the Father. He has conquered sin and Satan; now He divides the spoils (Eph. 4:8). When He was on earth, Christ was lightly esteemed, but now He is ranked with “the great.” Kings will bow to Him (52:13, 15; Ps. 72:8–11; Rev. 19:14ff). Psalm 2 describes how Christ will one day claim His inheritance.

The closing statements take us back to the cross. Christ was numbered with transgressors—He was crucified between two thieves and treated like a criminal (Matt. 27:38). He made intercession for the transgressors, praying for them (Luke 23:34, 43). He did not speak when men cruelly reviled Him, but He did speak for the sake of lost sinners. And today He is interceding for His own (Rom. 8:34). There is no judgment upon them because He bore it all Himself. Have you trusted Him as *your own* Savior?²

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *Be Comforted* (pp. 133–134). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

² Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament* (Is 53:10–12). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.