

Suffering Servant Overview

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[0 : 00] Amen. Tonight begins a study of Isaiah 53 that should take us six lessons including tonight.

! This lesson is going to be a little bit different than usual.

We'll do an overview of the entire passage plus other passages in Isaiah to help set the context.

Then starting next week, we'll study the 15 verses in Isaiah 53 in lessons of three verses each.

Perhaps you're wondering why I keep mentioning Isaiah 53 when our lesson heading is Isaiah 52, 13 through Isaiah 53, 12.

You also may wonder why I just said that Isaiah 53 has 15 verses even though our Bibles have 12 verses in that chapter. Remember that chapter and verse divisions were added to the Bible in the 16th century, years after the text was written.

[1 : 24] Hmm. Some divisions are in the wrong place. Most reputable scholars agree that Isaiah 53 should start with the last three verses of Isaiah 52.

So adding those verses to the 12 already included with chapter 53 gets us to the 15 total. So anytime in this series that we refer to Isaiah 53 as a whole, that actually will be a reference to 52, 13 through 53, 12.

It's just a lot easier to say Isaiah 53. So let's read all 15 of those verses now starting with Isaiah 52, 13. And in Isaiah 52, 13, God is speaking through Isaiah.

Those verses say, Who has believed?

What he has believed? What he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground.

[2 : 51] He had no form or majesty that we should look at him and no beauty that we should desire him. 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. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities.

Upon him the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, and we have turned every one to his own way.

And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 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.

[3 : 55] 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?

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. Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him.

He has put him to grief. When his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring. He shall prolong his days. The will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

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.

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.

[5 : 02] Once again with this text, the Bible goes deep with just a few words. The text in the ESV has less than 500 words.

It's actually 468 words, if you want to be precise. Yet those words summarize the entire gospel. Charles Spurgeon said, A condensed Bible is in this chapter.

You have the whole gospel here. That quote leads us to the main idea, not just for tonight, but for the entire study. Jesus Christ is presented as our suffering servant, whose substitutionary death and victorious resurrection are predicted seven centuries in advance.

Tonight's lesson will have four sections to get us ready for the future lessons that will cover Isaiah 53 in detail.

The first three sections will cover information other than Isaiah 53, so that we get the background and context. The final section will bring us back to Isaiah 53 itself.

[6 : 22] So the first thing we'll cover tonight is the prophet. The prophet is your first blank. And of course that prophet is Isaiah.

And we know several things about Isaiah, his life, his times, and his mission. His name itself means the Lord or Yahweh is salvation.

And that name is similar to the names Joshua, Elisha, and Jesus. Isaiah, the son of Amos, ministered in and around Jerusalem as a prophet to Judah during the reigns of four kings. Uzziah, who's also called Azariah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were those four. And Isaiah prophesied between approximately 739 to 686 B.C.

He came from a family of some rank because he had easy access to the king and he had friendship with the priest. Isaiah 7.3 demonstrates how he had easy access to the king.

[7 : 26] Listen to what Isaiah 7.3 says. It says, And the Lord said to Isaiah, Go out to meet Ahaz, you and Sheer Jaseb your son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the washer's field.

You can tell from that verse that meeting with King Ahaz was no big deal. He apparently could go see King Ahaz anytime God wanted him to visit him. In Isaiah 8.2 is where we see evidence of Isaiah's friendship with the priest.

Isaiah said there, And I will get reliable witnesses, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberkiah, to attest for me. We also know that Isaiah had two sons.

We just heard about one in verse 7.3. Verse 8.3 mentions the second son. And here's what Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 8.3. And I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son.

Then the Lord said to me, Call his name Meher Shalal Hashbaz. So if you need a name for your family coming up soon, there are a couple to think about right there. But those names are actually important.

[8 : 39] They were symbolic names. Sheer Jaseb means a remnant shall return. And Meher Shalal Hashbaz means hasting to the spoil, hurrying to the prey.

So during King Uzziah's prosperous 52-year reign, Judah developed into a strong commercial and military state with a port for commerce on the Red Sea.

And there was also a lot of construction of walls, towers, and other fortifications. But the period also saw a decline in Judah's spiritual status. Uzziah's downfall resulted from his attempt to assume the privileges of a priest and burn incense on the altar.

You might remember from that that Uzziah was judged with leprosy from which he never recovered. The year that King Uzziah died was an important one for Isaiah.

That year was when Isaiah was called to be a prophet for God. And Isaiah chapter 6 tells us about that. Let's look at what Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 6 verses 1 through 13.

[9 : 44] In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up. And the train of His robe filled the temple.

Above Him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings. With two He covered His face. With two He covered His feet. And with two He flew. And one called to another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

The whole earth is full of His glory. And the foundations of the threshold shook at the voice of Him who called. And the house was filled with smoke. And I said, Woe is me, for I am lost.

For I am a man of unclean lips. And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar.

And he touched my mouth and said, Behold, this has touched your lips. Your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for. And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will

go for us?

[10:58] Then I said, Here I am, send me. And he said, Go and say to this people, Keep on hearing, but do not understand.

Keep on seeing, but do not perceive. Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn, and be healed.

Then I said, How long, O Lord? And he said, Until cities lie waste without inhabitants, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste.

And the Lord removes people far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled.

The holy seed is its stump. We could camp out a long time in these verses, but this is a series about Isaiah 53 rather than Isaiah 6.

[12:04] So let's just note a few things about what Isaiah said in these verses. First, the passage dates Isaiah's calling in the year that King Uzziah died.

Second, the calling terrified Isaiah. Third, the Lord cleansed Isaiah's mouth and pardoned Isaiah's sins.

Fourth, Isaiah willingly accepted the call. Fifth, Isaiah learned that the people would fail to believe his words. Sixth, the unbelief would persist until nearly all of Judah was captured and taken into exile.

And seventh, a remnant of God's people would remain. Think how he must have felt to know that most of the people would fail to believe what he said.

We know that Isaiah lived until at least 681 B.C. because he wrote about the account of Sennacherib's death. Tradition has it that he met his death under King Manasseh by being cut in two with a wooden saw.

[13:07] Based upon the dates from Uzziah's death to Sennacherib's death, Isaiah prophesied approximately 50 to 60 years. So he stayed faithful to what God wanted him to say, knowing that the vast majority of his people would never believe him.

So that summarizes the prophet. In the second part of our lesson, let's spend some time on an overview of the prophecies. So the prophecies is your second blank.

Isaiah is quoted directly in the New Testament over 65 times. That's far more than any other Old Testament prophet. And he's mentioned by name more than 20 times.

Isaiah, we know, prophesied during the period of the divided kingdom, directing the major thrust of his message to the southern kingdom of Judah. And we'll see that he condemned empty ritualism of his day and the idolatry from which so many of the people had fallen victim to.

He foresaw the coming Babylonian captivity of Judah because of his departure from the Lord, or because of Judah's departure from the Lord. Listen to what Isaiah wrote about the people's empty ritualism in verses 1 through 10, or actually chapter 1, verses 10 through 15, that is, in Isaiah.

[14:34] Isaiah chapter 1, verses 10 through 15 say, Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom. Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah.

What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices, says the Lord? I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and fat of well-fed beasts. I do not delight in the blood of bulls or of lambs or of goats. When you come to appear before me, who has required of you this trampling of my courts? Bring no more vain offerings. Incense is an abomination to me.

New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations. I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly. Your new moons and your appointed feast my soul hates.

They have become a burden to me. I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you. Even though you make many prayers, I will not listen.

[15:33] Your hands are full of blood. Those verses are real cheery, aren't they? So now you get an indication of why so many people failed to believe Isaiah's prophecies.

They weren't your feel-good prophecies that a lot of the people wanted to hear. Starting off by comparing your nation to Sodom and Gomorrah, typically will be met by resistance from other sinful people, even if those words are true.

But people thought that their rituals would bring them salvation. Isaiah told them that empty rituals mean nothing to God. People today who base their salvation on empty rituals react the same way.

Jumping over to Isaiah chapter 39. Isaiah 39 verses 6 and 7 are where Isaiah prophesied to King Hezekiah about the coming exile to Babylon.

This prophecy is direct and it's perfectly accurate. Isaiah 39 verses 6 and 7 say, Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house and that which your fathers have stored up till this day shall be carried to Babylon.

[16:46] Nothing shall be left, says the Lord. And some of your own sons who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

Moving on a little further, let's look at some more of Isaiah's prophecies. Before King Cyrus of Persia lived, Isaiah referenced him by name and said that Cyrus would deliver Persia from Babylon, or actually deliver Israel from Babylon.

And listen to Isaiah 44 verses 24 through Isaiah 45 1. Isaiah 44 24 through 45 1 say, And here's the verse we really want to focus on.

And then continuing on into chapter 45, verse 1 says, Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to list the belts of kings, to open doors before him, that gates may not be closed.

Isaiah no doubt knew that the penalty for false prophecy in those days was death. Yet here God told him to prophesy by name about someone who had yet to be born.

[18:54] Perhaps Isaiah sometimes thought, Are you sure, God, that you really want me to get that specific? But he mentioned Cyrus not once but twice in those verses. Isaiah also prophesied about the first coming of Christ.

And here are some of the passages from Isaiah that we typically hear at Christmastime. This is Isaiah 7 14. Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel. Then Isaiah 9 verses 6 and 7 say, For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end. On the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. Similar to how Isaiah 53 summarizes the entire story of salvation, some people point out that the whole book of Isaiah summarizes the entire Bible.

[20:18] And there are some interesting similarities between the book of Isaiah and the entire Bible. Isaiah, the book, is divided into two main sections. The first contains 39 chapters, and the second contains 27 chapters.

We know that the Bible is divided into two sections, the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New. That second major division of Isaiah begins and ends exactly where the New Testament begins and ends.

It opens with the ministry of John the Baptist, as does the New Testament. It concludes with the new heavens and the new earth, which is also how the New Testament ends.

So Isaiah's incredible prophecy accurately anticipates and foreshadows the flow of the New Testament, even though it was written several centuries before the birth of the Messiah.

Listen to Isaiah 40, verses 3 through 5. Isaiah wrote these words, Now listen to the verses from the first book of the New Testament.

[21:56] Here are Matthew chapter 3, verses 1 through 3. In those days, John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make his path straight.

Now listen to God speaking through Isaiah about the new heavens and the new earth. Both of these verses are near the end of the book of Isaiah, and the first verse is Isaiah 65, 17.

Isaiah 65, 17 says, Now here's Isaiah 66, 22.

Isaiah 66, 22 says, In the next to last and then the last chapter of the Bible, we also see references to the new heaven and the new earth.

[23:12] Here's Revelation 21, 1. John wrote there, So you can see how Isaiah parallels the whole Bible itself.

The second half of Isaiah contains four songs about the servant of God, another name for the Messiah. Each of these songs are prophecies, And the first song comes in Isaiah chapter 42, verses 1 through 9.

So let's read those verses. Here are Isaiah chapter 42, verses 1 through 9. Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights.

I have put my spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice or make it heard in the street. A bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench.

He will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth and the coastlands wait for his law.

[24 : 31] Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk in it.

I am the Lord. I have called you in righteousness. I will take you by the hand and keep you. I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

I am the Lord. That is my name. My glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols. Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare.

Before they spring forth, I tell you of them. The second servant song comes in Isaiah chapter 49, verses 1 through 13.

And in this song, the coming Messiah speaks through Isaiah to the Gentile nations. So here are Isaiah 49, verses 1 through 13.

[25 : 40] We hear the Messiah say, Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The Lord called me from the womb. From the body of my mother he named my name.

He made my mouth like a sharp sword. In the shadow of his hand he hid me. He made me a polished arrow. In his quiver he hid me away. And he said to me, You are my servant Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

But I said, I have labored in vain. I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity. Yet surely my right is with the Lord, and my recompense with my God. And now the Lord says, He who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him.

For I am honored in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength. He says, Is it too light a thing that you should be my servant, and raise up the tribes of Jacob, and bring back the preserved of Israel?

I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach the end of the earth. Thus says the Lord, the redeemed one of Israel, to his holy one, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation, the servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes, and they shall prostrate themselves.

[27 : 03] Because of the Lord who is faithful, the holy one of Israel, who has chosen you, thus says the Lord, in a time of favor I have answered you, in a day of salvation I have helped you.

I will keep you, and give you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages, saying to the prisoners, Come out, to those who are in darkness, appear. They shall feed all along the ways, on all bare heights, shall be their pasture. They shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind, nor sun, shall strike them.

For he who has pity on them, will lead them, and by springs of water, will guide them. And I will make all my mountains a road, and my highways, shall be raised up. Behold, these shall come from afar, and behold, these from the north, and from the west, and these from the land of Syene.

Sing for joy, O heavens, and exalt, O earth. Bring forth, O mountains, into singing, for the Lord has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his afflicted.

[28 : 15] The third servant song comes in Isaiah chapter 50, verses 4 through 11. And there the servant says through Isaiah, The Lord has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with the word him who is weary.

Morning by morning he awakens. He awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. The Lord has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious. I turned not backward.

I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard. I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting. But the Lord God helps me.

Therefore I have not been disgraced. Therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame. He who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who is my adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God helps me. Who will declare me guilty?

[29 : 16] Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment. The moth will eat them up. Who among you fears the Lord, and obeys the voice of his servant? Let him who walks in darkness, and has no light, trust in the name of the Lord, and rely on his God.

Behold, all you who kindle a fire, who equip yourselves with burning torches, walk by the light of your fire, and by the torches that you have kindled. This you have from my hand, you shall lay down in torment.

You can see from this third song that the servant introduces the theme of suffering, and that theme is more fully developed in the fourth and final servant song. Of course, we've already read that fourth song.

It is the song from Isaiah 52, 13 through 53, 12. We've touched on some of the gloom and doom passages from the book of Isaiah, but here's a description of Isaiah that may be a little bit new to you.

Listen to this quote from John MacArthur. He said, Also known as the evangelical prophet, Isaiah spoke much about the grace of God toward Israel, particularly in his last 27 chapters.

[30 : 29] The centerpiece is Isaiah's unrivaled chapter 53, portraying Christ as the slain lamb of God. So now that we've learned something about the prophet and the prophecies, we should ask ourselves a question, and that question is, why should we care?

Why should we care about something that was written thousands of years ago now? And that question sounds almost blasphemous, and it would be blasphemous if we said it with the wrong attitude.

However, we learned in the Sermon on the Mount that God wants us to test prophets to determine whether they're true or false. And in this third section of tonight's lesson, we'll show that Isaiah indeed was a true prophet, because in the third section of the lesson, we will see the proof.

So the proof is your next blink. The second section touched on how most of Isaiah's prophecies have come true already. We talked about how Isaiah predicted the exile to Babylon.

We talked about how Isaiah predicted that a man named Cyrus would rescue the people from Babylonian exile. We talked about how Isaiah predicted the coming of the Messiah.

[31 : 47] We read the three servant songs where the servant through Isaiah said the servant would do certain things and what would happen to that servant. We also have read Isaiah 53 and used this as the main idea for that section.

Jesus Christ is our suffering servant whose substitutionary death and victorious resurrection are predicted seven centuries in advance. So we should care about Isaiah's words because history has proven them to be true.

So far, every prediction that Isaiah wrote down has come to pass. The only prophecies that have not yet been fulfilled are those that pertain to the future reign of Messiah.

So Isaiah provides a ringing endorsement for the value of knowing Scripture well enough to see prophecy fulfilled. Unbelievers have a hard time dealing with the accuracy of Isaiah.

The Jews skipped this chapter because of what it says about their Messiah. Unbelievers try to explain it away by saying that it is too accurate.

[32 : 56] Several people say that the book of Isaiah must have been written after the events took place. However, God has provided proof that Isaiah was written well before most of the prophecies came to pass.

The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947 and one of the first and best preserved documents discovered was a complete scroll of Isaiah. Known as the Great Isaiah Scroll, it's now on permanent display at the Shrine of the Book, a special wing of the Israel Museum.

That scroll is more than a thousand years older than any other existing manuscript. Subsequent research has identified fragments from at least 20 other Isaiah scrolls and these scrolls prove that Isaiah's prophecy was highly prized and well known in the first century.

Here's what Gleason Archer said about the scrolls and he's the person who meticulously examined the scrolls from the Dead Sea collection. He wrote, Even though the two copies of Isaiah discovered in Qumran Cave 1 near the Dead Sea in 1947 were a thousand years earlier than the

oldest dated manuscript previously known, they proved to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95% of the text.

The 5% of variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling. So what that means is that nearly 200 years before the time of the apostles, the book of Isaiah was already well established and thoroughly documented in exactly the same form and content that we have today.

[34 : 35] So we have proof that Isaiah existed before the events happened that he prophesied about. And for further proof, listen to one more passage from Isaiah.

These verses prophesy about the fall of Babylon. The passage started to be fulfilled in Daniel's day and it's still being fulfilled in our day. And these verses are Isaiah 13, verses 17 through 22.

God said through Isaiah, Behold, I am stirring up the meads against them who have no regard for silver and do not delight in gold.

Their bows will slaughter the young men. They will have no mercy on the fruit of the womb. Their eyes will not pity children. In Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the splendor and pomp of the Chaldeans will be like Sodom and Gomorrah when God overthrew them.

It will never be inhabited or lived in for all generations. No Arab will pinch his tent there. No shepherds will make their flocks lie down there.

[35 : 40] But wild animals will lie down there and their houses will be full of howling creatures where ostriches will dwell and where wild goats will dance. Hyenas will cry in its towers and jackals in the pleasant palaces.

Its time is close at hand and its days will not be prolonged. Babylon was in modern day Iraq. So let's see how accurate Isaiah's prophecy has been.

More than 300 years after Isaiah recorded it, the prophecy was indeed fulfilled. As we said, the fall of Babylon began in Daniel's time and Babylon was ultimately destroyed by the Medes just as Isaiah had predicted.

To this day, the site, which is some 50 miles south of Baghdad, remains uninhabited. Some attempts have been made to reconstruct the site.

The most recent attempt was from 1983 through 2003 by Saddam Hussein. But Babylon today is largely a mound of debris with some unfinished brick structures.

[36 : 48] There hasn't been a sustainable city there for centuries. So with that in mind, listen to Isaiah 13 verses 20 through 22 again. It will never be inhabited or lived in for all generations.

No Arab will pitch his tent there. No shepherds will make their flocks lie down there. But wild animals will lie down there and their houses will be full of howling creatures. Their ostriches will dwell and their wild goats will dance.

Hyenas will cry in its towers and jackals in the pleasant palaces. Its time is close at hand and its days will not be prolonged. Still today, the proof continues to mount that Isaiah was a true prophet. That means we can believe the future events that Isaiah prophesied about. We know that those will happen too. So, so far we have seen the prophet, the prophecies and the proof and that takes us to the fourth and final section for tonight.

We come back to the passage. So, the passage is your final section and that passage of course is Isaiah 53. We will indeed see a suffering servant but we will see more than that.

[38 : 06] We will see a successful servant, a victorious servant. Jesus Christ and only Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. Unlike many other Old Testament prophecies, there is no immediate fulfillment of Isaiah 53 in Israel before its long-term fulfillment in Jesus.

The central message of this prophecy is of substitutionary atonement and that is the death of an innocent substitute for the sins of his people. Andrew Davis said, the substitutionary death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are the greatest events in redemptive history.

God's ability to predict the future comes to its pinnacle in Isaiah 53 and its clear prediction of the purpose and details of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection shine like a miraculous beacon to us sinners.

Remember the main idea. Jesus Christ is presented as our suffering servant whose substitutionary death and victorious resurrection are predicted seven centuries in advance.

Remember how Paul summarized the gospel in 2 Corinthians 5.21. He said, for our sake he made him, talking about Jesus, to be sin who knew no sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

[39 : 35] Now here's a quote from Mitch Glazer about Isaiah 53. He said, Isaiah 53 is one of the clearest prophecies of Jesus the Messiah in the Hebrew scriptures.

This chapter has changed the lives of thousands of people, both Jews and Gentiles, who have read the text and believed in the one who fulfilled these prophecies in glorious detail.

Acts 8 includes an account of a Gentile changed by Isaiah 53. Listen to Acts 8 verses 27 through 35. And actually we'll back up and start in verse 26.

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza. This is the desert place. And he rose and went.

And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning, seated in his chariot and he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

[40 : 44] And the spirit said to Philip, Go over and join his chariot. So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and said, Do you understand what you are reading?

And he said, How can I unless someone guides me? And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this.

Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearers is silent so he opens not his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation for his life is taken away from the earth? And the eunuch said to Philip, About whom I ask you, does the prophet say this?

About himself or about someone else? Then Philip opened his mouth and began with this scripture. He told him the good news about Jesus. And next week we'll start digging into Isaiah 53's good news about Jesus.

[41 : 45] Let's pray.