

The Divine Tapestry

PART 77

Isaiah - Part 6

“The Source of the Servant’s Suffering”

Presented by

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John Phillips writes, “No more astonishing words, surely, have ever been written than these: ‘He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter.’ In the first place, it is astonishing that He should be brought anywhere. He was God, the incarnate Son of the Living God, the Creator of the universe. Ten thousand times ten thousand angels were at His command. All power, absolute power, was His. A word from Him and every sun and star in space would have vanished from the sky.

It is even more astonishing when we not only consider *who He was* but *where He went*. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter. What amazing grace ... beyond all thought!

Before the invention of sonar and other navigational aids, which have taken all the guesswork out of the business, sailors approaching an uncharted shore

always set an experienced hand at a key place on the deck with a sounding line in his hand. His job was to report how shallow or how deep the waters were below the keel. It was music to the captain's ears when the leadsman called back to the quarterdeck, 'No bottom with this line.' Deep water was good news.

But when we come to Calvary, it is quite the opposite. We drop our sounding line into the dark mysterious depths of the verses before us. We report back the dreadful news, 'No bottom here!' We tie on more sounding line, we tie on more and more, and always the result is the same, 'No bottom here.' Our lines are too short. We cannot measure these dark depths."

The View From Mount Calvary, John Phillips, pp. 123-124

REMEMBER

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FOUR OBSERVATIONS

I. THE **ARRIVAL** OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT IS **PERPLEXING**

Let's take a quick journey as an early Old Testament reader through Isaiah 40-49 (*emotions in parenthesis*).

1. 40:1 (**Comfort**) – Chosen from all the **nations** for special attention.
2. 41:8 (**Proud**) – Israel “My Servant ... offspring of **Abraham**, My friend.”
3. 42:1-7 (**Quizzical**) – My Servant, meek ruler bringing salvation to **Jews** and **Gentiles**.
4. 42:18-25 (**Startled**) – Jewish nation described as **willful**, stubborn, deaf, blind. Question: Are we servants?
5. 43 (**Rejoice**) – By God's grace we are His **witnesses** ... chosen by Him.
6. 43:22-28 (**Embarrassment**) – Even though God loves ... Israel got **bored** and burdened God with their sins. God would have to revile and **destroy**.

7. 44:1-2, 21-23 (**Amazement**) – Even though they are **sinful servants** worthy of destruction, God would wipe away sin!
 8. 45 (**Double Amazement**) – God would save His people through a pagan ruler not yet born ... **Cyrus!**
 9. 46-48 (**Quizzical** again) – A **hidden** thing is being **revealed** (48:6-11). God would save them Himself through a way they would not expect.
 10. 49:1-6 (**Shock**) – The Servant is **one man** ... in Israel, from Israel called to redeem Israel. The Servant speaks in the first person.
- By the time the reader arrives at Isaiah 53 no self-deluding pride is left ... *“It is now clear that the author had a **double-edge purpose**: To give His readers hope and to **recast** the source of that hope.”* ~ Gene Smillie
 - Their hope? The **Suffering Servant!**

II. THE PICTURE OF SUFFERING IS **POWERFUL**

- It seems that this chapter was written at the foot of the **cross**.

ISAIAH PREDICTED THAT THE SERVANT...	700 YEARS LATER, JESUS...
would be disfigured by suffering (52:14; 53:2-3)	was struck, spat on and mocked (Mark 15:17-19)
would come from humble beginnings (53:2)	grew up in Nazareth, a city with a very (53:2) poor reputation; and not where the Messiah was expected to come from (Luke 2:39-40, 51)
would be rejected by many (53:1, 3)	while on the cross, was mocked, blasphemed and reviled, even by those who were crucified with Him (Matthew 27:39-44)
would bear our sins and suffer in our place (53:4-6, 11)	“...Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2:24)
would heal many (53:4-5)	healed many (Matthew 8:16-17)
voluntarily took our punishment upon Himself (53:6-7)	said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11)
remained silent during His suffering (53:7)	did not defend Himself to Herod, Pontius Pilate or the Sanhedrin (Matthew 26:62-64; 27:11-14; Luke 23:9)
would die (53:8, 12)	died on a cross (Mark 15:37; John 19:33-34)
would be buried with a rich man (53:9)	was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man (Matthew 27:57-60)
would not remain dead, but see His seed, prolong His days and be exalted (53:10-11)	rose from the dead three days after the crucifixion and still lives today and millions of people see themselves as His spiritual seed (Matthew 28:1-10)

III. THE REASON FOR HIS SUFFERING IS **PROFOUND**

- We needed a **perfect** offering for sin (53:6, 10).
- Note: This is a song, written in the **past tense** as if it has already happened ... this was always **God's plan!** (cf. Deuteronomy 32:1-43)

IV. THE APPLICATION OF THE SUFFERING IS **PERSONAL**

- Note: The nations are **sprinkled** (52:15) by the One who bore our sin (53:6) as an **offering** (53:10).
- The sin offering was to be "**laid hold**" of ... have you trusted in Christ?

WRAP