

The Suffering Savior

ISAIAH 53:1-12

I. SEE HOW HE CAME TO EARTH-WHY WOULD ANYONE BELIEVE?

JOHN GILL – (Born Nov.23, 1697-Died Oct.14, 1771) 319 years ago. Dr. Gill presents [Isaiah 53:2](#) in a magnificent way. The expression “tender shoot” and “root out of parched ground” along with **“For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant.”** is described as that which: springs out of the earth without notice; low in its beginning, slow in its growth, liable to be crushed with the foot, or destroyed with the frost, and no great probability of its coming to any perfection; or rather as a little "sucker", as the word signifies, which grows out of the root of a tree, at some little distance from it, of which no notice or care is taken, nor anything hoped for from it; and the figure denotes the mean and unpromising appearance of Christ at his incarnation; which is the reason given why the Jews in general disbelieved, rejected, and despised him; for this phrase of "growing up" does not design his exaltation, or rising up from a low to a high estate; but his mean entrance into the world, like that of the springing up of a low and insignificant plant or shrub out of the earth: and the phrase "before him" is to be understood either of God the Father, by whom he was taken notice of, though not by men; and in whose sight he was precious, though despised by men; or his growing up, and the manner of it, or his mean appearance, were all before the Lord, and according to his will: or else it may be understood of Christ himself, and be rendered "before himself", who was meek and lowly, and was mean and low in his own eyes; or rather it may be interpreted of the unbelieving Jew, of any or every one of them that did not believe the report concerning him: because before him, in the sight of every one of them, he sprung up in the manner described; unless it can be thought that it would be better rendered "to his face"; or "to his appearance"; that is, as to his outward appearance, in the external view of him, so he grew up: **and as a root out of a dry ground;**

or rather, "as a branch from a root out of a dry ground"; agreeably to ([Isaiah 11:1](#)), meaning not so much the land of Judea, where he was born; or the country of Galilee, where he was brought up; as the family of David, from whence he sprung, which was reduced to a very low condition when he was born of it; his supposed father being a carpenter, and his real mother a poor virgin in Nazareth, though both of the

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lineage and house of David; from this passage the ancient Jews are said to conclude that the Messiah would be born without a father, or the seed of man: **he hath no form nor comeliness**; like a poor plant or shrub just crept out of the ground, in a dry and barren soil, ready to wither away as soon as up; has no strength nor straightness, of body; without verdure, leaves, blossom, and fruit things which make plants comely and beautiful. This regards not the countenance of Christ, which probably was comely, as were his types Moses and David; since he is said to be "fairer than the children of men"; and since his human nature was the immediate produce of the Holy Spirit, and without sin: but his outward circumstances; there was no majesty in him, or signs of it; it did not look probable that he would be a tall cedar, or a prince in Israel, much less the Prince Messiah; he was born of mean parents; brought up in a contemptible part of the country; lived in a town out of which no good is said to come; dwelt in a mean cottage, and worked at a trade: **and when we shall see him**:

as he grows up, and comes into public life and service, declaring himself, or declared by others, to be the Messiah: here the prophet represents the Jews that would live in Christ's time, who would see his person, hear his doctrines, and be witnesses of his miracles, and yet say, **there is no beauty, that we should desire him**; or "sightlines" in him; nothing that looks grand and majestic, or like a king; they not beholding with an eye of faith his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father; only viewing him in his outward circumstances, and so made their estimate of him; they expected the Messiah as a temporal prince, appearing in great pomp and state, to deliver them from the Roman yoke, and restore their nation to its former splendor and glory; and being disappointed herein was the true reason of their unbelief, before complained of, and why they did not desire him, who is the desire of all nations.

II. SEE HOW HE WOULD BE TREATED WHILE ON THE EARTH – [ISAIAH 53:3](#)

“Despised and forsaken – rejected, a man of sorrows, grief stricken.”

Again Dr. John Gill paints this awful picture: “he was not reckoned among men, was accounted a worm, and no man; or, if a man, yet not in his senses, a madman, nay, one that had a devil: or "deficient of men"; he had none about him of any rank or figure in life, only some few fishermen, and some women, and publicans, and harlots. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "the last of men", the most abject and

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contemptible of mankind; despised, because of the meanness of his birth, and parentage, and education, and of his outward appearance in public life; because of his apostles and audience; because of his doctrines, not agreeably to carnal reason, and His works, some of them being done on the Sabbath day, and, as they maliciously suggested, by the help of Satan; and especially because of his ignominious sufferings and death: *a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*: or "known by grief"; he was known by his troubles, notorious for them; these were his constant companions, his familiar acquaintance, with whom he was always conversant; his life was one continued series of sorrow, from the cradle to the cross; in his infancy his life was sought for by Herod, and he was obliged to be taken by his parents, and flee into Egypt; he ate his bread in sorrow, and with the sweat of his brow; he met with much sorrow from the hardness and unbelief of men's hearts, and from the contradiction of sinners against himself, and even much from the forwardness of his own disciples; much from the temptations of Satan, and more from the wrath and justice of God, as the surety of his people; he was exceeding sorrowful in the garden, when his sweat was as it were great drops of blood; and when on the cross, under the hidings of his Father's face, under a sense of divine displeasure for the sins of his people, and enduring the pains and agonies of a shameful and an accursed death; he was made up of sorrows, and grief was familiar to him. Some render it, "broken with infirmity", or "grief": **and we hid as it were our faces from him**; as one loathsome and abominable as having an aversion to him, and abhorrence of him, as scorning to look at him, being unworthy of any notice. Some render it, "he hid as it were his face from us"; as conscious of his deformity and loathsomeness, and of his being a disagreeable object, as they said; but the former is best: **he was despised, and we esteemed him not**;

III. SEE HIM DYING FOR THE SINS OF MANKIND - [ISAIAH 53:5](#)

"But he was wounded for our transgressions"

Not for any sins of his own, but for ours, for our rebellions against God, and transgressions of his law, in order to make atonement and satisfaction for them; these were the procuring and meritorious causes of his sufferings and death, as they were taken upon him by him to answer for them to divine justice, which are meant by his being wounded; for not merely the wounds he received in his hands, feet, and side,

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made by the nails and spear, are meant, but the whole of his sufferings, and especially his being wounded to death, and which was by bearing the sins of his people; and hereby he removed the guilt from them, and freed them from the punishment due unto them: **“he was bruised for our iniquities”**; as bread corn is bruised by threshing it, or by its being ground in the mill, as the manna was; or as spice is bruised in a mortar, he being broken and crushed to pieces under the weight of sin, and the punishment of it.

IV. SEE THE SUBMISSIVE SAVIOR IN [ISAIAH 53:7](#)

We see Submissive Silence

“He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth” (vs. 7).

Sometimes you are known by what you don’t say. In this case, Isaiah prophesied that Christ would not open his mouth to defend himself, even in the face of certain death. Hundreds of years later that came true when he stood in front of his accusers:

“But Jesus kept silent” – *“But Jesus kept silent, and the high priest said to Him, I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.”* ([Matthew 26:63](#)).

“He did not answer” – *“And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He made no answer”* ([Matthew 27:12](#)).

“But he kept silent and did not answer” – *“And the high priest arose and came forward and questioned Jesus, saying, ‘Do you make no answer to what these men are testifying against you?’ But He kept silent, and made no answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, ‘Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?’”* ([Mark 14:60, 61](#)).

“But Jesus made no further answer” – *“But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was astonished.”* ([Mark 15:5](#)).

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“But he answered him nothing” – *“Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus, for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him. And he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing.”* (Luke 23: 8, 9)

“But Jesus gave him no answer” – *“When Pilate therefore heard this statement, he was the more afraid; and he entered into the Praetorian again, and said to Jesus, ‘where are You from?’, But Jesus gave him no answer”* (John 19: 8, 9).

Sometimes you are known by what you don’t say.

V. SEE THE RESULTS OF HIS SACRIFICE – [ISAIAH 53:10](#)

“Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him”

The sufferings of Christ are signified by his being "bruised"; and as it was foretold he should have his heel bruised by the serpent, ([Genesis 3:15](#)) but here it is ascribed to the Lord: he was bruised in body, when buffeted and scourged, and nailed to the cross; and was bruised and broken in spirit, when the sins of his people were laid on him, and the wrath of God came upon him for them: the Lord had a hand in his sufferings; he not only permitted them, but they were according to the counsel of his will; they were predetermined by him, ([Acts 2:23](#); [Acts 4:27,28](#)), yea, they were pleasing to him, he took a kind of delight and pleasure in them; not in them simply considered as sufferings, but as they were an accomplishment of his purposes, a fulfillment of his covenant and promises, and of the prophecies in his word; and, particularly, as hereby the salvation of his people was brought about; see: *“For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My Life that I may take it again.”* ([John 10:17](#)).