

ANCIENT WHISPERS PART THREE
SUFFERING SERVANT
PASTOR ROGER BARRIER
ISAIAH 52:13-15; 53:12
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Ancient Whispers from the Old Testament Prophets arrest our attention this Christmas Season. The Old Testament is packed with references to both the first and second comings of Christ. Today we will experience an Old Testament prophecy that began as a whisper and ended as a shout.

Isaiah 53 is often referred to as the Fifth Gospel. It is as if Isaiah sat at the foot of the cross 750 years before Jesus was even born. He provided a better picture of Jesus' feelings and meanings on the cross than any one of the four gospel did on its own,

- AN ANCIENT WHISPER: AN UNIMAGINABLE, CRUCIFIED SAVIOR (Isaiah 52:13-53:4)
"... his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness ..."

No one suspected this whisper—so they never heard the shout!

Israel never expected to see Christ on a cross—dying! The first century Jews could not conceive of God suffering because the reason people suffered was because they sinned! Messiah could not suffer because He had no sin! But, this is the beauty of Christ. He took our sin on the cross and the sin brought with it much suffering.

Isaiah's heart was breaking because he shared what God revealed and no one believed.

Isaiah 52:13-14 shows Christ at His first coming. The prophet was awestruck at the extreme disfiguring and bodily marring of the Suffering Servant. Verse 15 shows Christ's second coming—He will startle many with His exaltation and glory.

The death of Jesus Christ always startles people when it is properly understood.

- TODAY'S DEAFENING ROAR: (Isaiah 53:5-12) *"...and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."*

DAMAGED GOODS: *"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way;"*

"All have gone astray" is a universal truth.

It is like we are damaged goods (infirmities, sorrows, transgressions, iniquities, punishment, and wounds).

We are all born into sin and failure: "Sin nature vs. sins": *"For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again"* (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

Our sin problem must be recognized in order for us to see the relevance of Christ's work on the Cross.

COMPLETE HEALING: *"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed."*

Jesus knew He was the suffering servant.

The cross was an altar between Heaven and earth where Jesus suffered for our sins. Now we see why His suffering was so different—so deep and intense. A divine transaction occurred on the Cross that transcended normal human death.

THE ROAR OF RESURRECTION: *"After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life]..."*

We cannot avoid the feeling that 700 years before the crucifixion Isaiah predicted not only Christ's death but also His resurrection! He was *"cut off from the land of the living,"* yet, *"He will see His offspring and have His days extended—and see the light of life."*

The resurrection is assurance that His sacrifice was accepted by God the Father. We are promised that if we believe in Jesus we can be resurrected to live with Him forever!

RESPONDING TO THE SHOUT

Make the prophecy personal. Change all the pronouns in this passage to the first person singular.

Recognize that your sin has separated you from God.

Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

Realize that the wages of your sin are death.

Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ His Son."

Repent—change your thinking about the person of Jesus Christ.

John 1:29: "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Receive the gift of God.

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

John 1:12-13: "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."