

Pierced

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 September 2011

Preacher: Chris Bowditch

- [0 : 00] Basically, what should be one chapter, but it's not. It's split across two chapters. And tonight what I've got the job of doing is basically introducing you to the context of this chapter so that as we do see how it tells us about Jesus, we know that we're right to go there.
- Because we could very easily read this chapter and just go straight there, but we don't want to do that. We want to make sure we're allowed to, that Isaiah meant for us to see Jesus in these chapters.
- But before we go there, I want to tell you something that you probably already know, which is appearances can be deceiving. You may find it deceiving to think, you may not have thought looking at me, that I had a few friends in high school, for example.
- You may have thought I was Mr Cool, but I was not. Appearances can be deceiving. Now, let me see, is this working?
- It sort of is. There we go. Make me the next model, 2011. This isn't about me, this one. This was a competition run earlier this year.
- [1 : 21] Make me the next model, 2011. And I want to show you a couple of the participants. First of all, we've got a guy called Juwon.
- Whoa. And he looks quite model-like, doesn't he? Juwon. He's even got a model's name. He doesn't have a surname. Just Juwon. And then we've got this guy, Roland Bruce.
- A man with no surname, that's right. And no hair. And really, compared to Juwon and as far as modelling goes, not much going for him.
- Well, who do you think got the most votes in this modelling competition? The answer, well, given the set-up, will probably not surprise you, but it was Roland, the fat guy on the left, on my left.
- He got, at the time the article was written, 27,000 votes, versus Juwon, who won in the end, got 600.
- [2 : 29] 45 times more votes went to Roland than the winner, Juwon, who got 600. 45 times more votes.
- And the modelling agency decided that, well, he doesn't look like a model, therefore he can't be a model, therefore he's disqualified for being too ugly, basically.
- How harsh is that? Poor old Roland probably can't get out of bed in the morning anymore because he didn't fit people's expectations.
- He didn't fit the mould of a model. And as we look tonight at this servant song in Isaiah, this song in Isaiah, we're going to see that perhaps God's chosen servant, the one who's going to redeem Israel and the whole world, is not going to fit the mould.
- He's not going to be what we expect. There's the winner. So let me give you some background. As I think Jono said a couple of weeks ago when he was talking about the sermon, I am in the middle of a subject at Ridley, studying the book of Isaiah, and there's a few people in that class scattered around this congregation tonight.

- [3 : 50] So I've got to be very careful about what I say because I'm going to be judged harshly. And the servant song that we're looking at over the next three weeks goes from chapter 52 verse 13 through to 53 verse 12.
- It's found in the book of Isaiah. And Isaiah was a 6th century prophet BC. So about 6,000 years before Jesus, there's this guy called Isaiah walking around.
- And this book, Isaiah, is basically the book that contains what he said. And it's a very big and a very complex book.
- And there's been thousands and thousands of articles and books and commentaries and things written on this. But there's just a few key things we need to know. And that is what he talks about.
- And I think you can really sum it up in these three words, judgment, hope, and restoration. So Isaiah comes along and he's basically got three things to say. You, Israel, the people of God in the Old Testament, you are going to be judged for your sins.
- [5 : 04] You have done very, very bad things. And the only way for you to pay is for you to experience God's judgment, which is going to come in the form of other nations coming in and taking over your land.
- And you're going to get taken away, going into exile. But then, as that happens, there's hope.
- There's hope that God is not actually judging and abandoning them, but God is actually doing this in order to bring about the continuation of his plan, which is to have a people for himself.
- So he's going to bring hope into this terrible situation where judgment has been. And he's going to bring the people back. And he's going to restore them to being his people in his place, in his land.
- And the servant who we read about is a very key figure in this process of from judgment to hope to restoration. Because it's going to be through this servant that ultimately hope and restoration will happen.
- [6 : 19] So, tonight's passage, 52.13 to 53.6. If you've got your outline, the passage there, it'd be great to follow along.
- I think that it's basically in three sections. Or three parts. So, the first part is the first verse there, verse 13, which tells us about how exalted the servant will be.
- The second part, I think, goes from verse 14 through to verse 53, verse 3, where we read about the disfigured and despised and ultimately destroyed servant.
- And then we get the last three verses, 53.4-6, where we read that he's a substitute for us. So, let's go about unpacking that.
- So, 52 verse 13. This is the sort of like the intro line and it gives us the ultimate truth.
- [7 : 30] We find out two very important things. This servant is going to act wisely. That is, not that he's going to be real smart, but that he's going to succeed.
- It's wisdom in the sense of success. My servant will act wisely. What he sets out to do will happen. He will succeed. And then it says, he'll be raised and lifted up and greatly exalted.
- And all those words, those turns of phrase, to be raised and lifted up and greatly exalted, are actually words that the prophet Isaiah uses to talk about God.
- So, God's servant is actually God. This is a passage about God's Messiah, a guy who we know, this side of the cross, as Jesus.

So, he will succeed in what he does and he is God. And then we move into the next section. And it's sort of, if you're reading this in the 6th century, you'd be shocked because you've just read, this is God, he's going to succeed, he's going to be successful in what he does, but it sort of changes tact, doesn't it?

[8 : 56] We read that people will be appalled at him, that he'll be disfigured, that he won't look like a man. And I don't think that means that he'll look alien, as Paul the alien in Simon Pegg's latest movie does, but rather, his beating, it says there, his appearance was so disfigured that he'll be beaten so badly.

And if you've got some sort of history of violence or something, you may not want to look at this next picture, but this beautiful girl who was beaten and disfigured and turned into what you see there, I think it's that kind of thing we're talking about.

Not he looked kind of funny to begin with, but he was beaten so that he did not look like a man, so that he was unrecognisable. And that makes people appalled at him.

If you see that kind of thing, you're appalled, aren't you? You feel, oh, that's not nice. And verse 15 tells us that, See, they're going to be so shocked that this is God's servant, that they shut their mouths, that they can't look at him.

And then we get into the next chapter, and we're given, I think, a little bit of hope again. Who has believed what we have heard, and who has the arm of the Lord been revealed to?

[10 : 52] The arm of the Lord is a way of saying, God is acting in this, that it is God's work. So there's some reassurance there, in the midst of God's servant being disfigured, and people being appalled at him, we say, no, but God is at work here.

But it doesn't stay there for long, because, we read again, in verse 2, He grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground.

He didn't have an impressive form, or majesty that we should look at him, no appearance that we should desire him. I don't know if you've ever noticed, maybe you've got a weed growing in your footpath, or something.

I have a lot of weeds growing in my footpath, but every now and again, there's a patch where there's just one. And the amount of times I just trample over it, I don't even look at it, I don't care for it.

There's a few in front of my driveway, and I just drive straight over the top of them, and run them to the ground. Little saplings, little roots, which we just don't really care for them, do we?

[12 : 04] We don't look after them, we don't protect them. That's what God's servant will be like. Not impressive, not majestic, like a piece of weed out of dry ground that we drive over in our cars, that we don't care about at all.

Pitiful. And because of this, because he is a pitiful being, he's despised and rejected by men.

He's a man of suffering, who knew what sickness was. He was like someone, who people turned away from. He was despised, and we didn't value him.

I went for a walk the other day, around Ridley, and I saw a homeless man, sleeping under one of the roads. And it's a little bit awkward, isn't it, when you walk past a homeless guy, you kind of don't want to look at them, and you hope they don't look at you, and you definitely hope that they, sort of don't talk to you, and it's just, it's really awkward.

You kind of turn this way, so that they, hopefully don't ask you for money, or, because then it's really awkward, what do you do? You know, I think this is saying, you know, Jesus is like that guy, like that homeless man, that you, you turn away from.

[13 : 40] Now maybe some of you don't, maybe some of you are, are better than I, and help. But, this servant, he's like a, he's like a root, that we just run over in our cars, he's like the homeless man, that we just, turn away from.

He's nothing, he's pitiful, he's disgraceful, he's despised. And that last part of verse 3 there, he was despised, and we didn't value him.

That really, I think, captures what it's talking about, when it's talking about, him being despised. He's not valued, he's regarded as worthless, he's, he's not even, it's not like, he's, he's, he's given so much attention, that we just, despise him.

It's more like, he's just not even, he's just not even worth it. He's just not even worth, it's like total contempt. He's not even worth, looking at, or talking to.

We just, ah, go away, you're just not worth it. I want you to feel, feel it. This is God's servant.

[14 : 48] But he is nothing. We don't want to be near him. We don't want to have, anything to do, with him. But then, something happens.

Verses 4 to 6, show us something, quite shocking. They mark a change, because we see, that the disfigurement, the disgustingness, the sickness, all of it, is because of, us.

The things that would, cause us to turn away from him, to not even notice him, to despise him, to shut our mouths, us in shock, if we saw him. All of those things, are our things.

Look at verse 4. He himself, bore our sickness. He carried, our pain. And you'd think, that that would cause us, to be thankful.

But it doesn't, does it? Look, it says, but we regarded him stricken, and struck down by God, and afflicted. This man is sick. He's in pain.

[16 : 06] He must have done something wrong. God must not be blessing him. He must definitely not be, God's blessed servant. But they're our sickness, and our pain.

Verse 5, He was pierced, for our transgressions, crushed, because of our iniquities. Punishment, for our peace, was on him, and we are healed, by his wounds.

It was for our sin, that this servant, is pierced, and struck, and punished. It is for our sin, that this servant, endures the shame, and it is because, of his bad run, it is because, of his endurance, of it all, that we are healed, that we have peace.

The servant, serves us, by taking, the pain, and the shame, that we deserve, on himself. And he had to do this.

Verse 6, Because we, had all gone astray, like sheep. We've turned our own way, and the Lord punished him, for the iniquity, of us all.

[17 : 32] See, sin is serious. And, in the book of Isaiah, we meet a couple of kings, of Israel. And the first king, is called Ahaz, and he sins terribly, against God.

He does, a very bad thing, and chooses to trust, in, foreign, invading troops, over trusting, in God, for his protection.

And that is a terrible sin, and it's, really a sin, in a long, line of sins, that have been committed, by Israel, and Judah's rulers, by the rulers, of God's people.

But then, comes a, a better king, a good king, a king, called Hezekiah, who does, some good things, who sort of, trusts in God, again.

But his good deeds, can't pay off, the sin, of past, rulers, the sin, of past, generations.

[18 : 34] There's still sin, that's been committed, that needs to be dealt with. And it can't be dealt with, simply by, humans changing, their ways. And our sin, can't be dealt with, by adding good works, either.

Our sin, like Israel's sin, needs someone else, to deal with it. But we can be very, self-righteous, can't we?

We can think, that we can, in some sense, earn our salvation, even if we know, yeah, it's, it's, it's, it's by grace alone, through faith.

I think we can, accidentally, function, as, as works, righteousness type people, as people who, work, to, gain the approval, of God.

And we can do things, good things, great things, in order to get, God's approval, in order to pay off sin. I've sinned, I've told lies, I've looked at porn, whatever it is, I'll read my Bible some more.

[19 : 49] I'll pray more this week. I'll work off my sin, I'll work off my sin, and then God might bless me. But it is only, through God's grace, it is only through his servant, his suffering servant, it's only through Jesus, that we can be saved.

It's only through Jesus, that our past, and future sin, can be dealt with. Not by adding on, any good works. The other thing, that's really struck me, as I've been working on this passage, this week, is the shame, of it all.

You know, this side of Jesus, we can, we love the cross, you know, we've got a cross, hanging up the back of the church there. We love the cross, we love what it's done for us, and we can see, the glory in it, can't we?

Because without the cross, where would we be? We know, we'd be, stuffed. But this passage, reminds us, to feel the shame.

It was not, a good thing, to die on a cross. It was reserved, for the worst. It'd kind of be like, hanging a, an electric chair. That's kind of what we do, we hang electric chair, from the top of our building, and worship it.

[21 : 13] Like, that's done. That's shameful. If your, relatives, got hung, or, get electric, chaired, electrocuted in a chair, then you're probably not gonna, glory in that, are you?

You're gonna, be ashamed of that. And that's what happened, to our king. It's just that back then, they used crosses. But it's a shameful thing, and it's a shameful thing, that had to happen, because, our sin, is a shameful, thing.

There's great shame, in sin. You know, too easy, we think, I'm a good bloke, who just does a few wrong things. But actually, you're a shameful, shameful person, who needs someone, to take it away.

And Jesus has done that, on the cross. He's taken, your shame, and he's paid the price, for your sin.

I started with, those pictures of, Roland and Juwan. And, I think it, as we read this passage, we're left with, an uncomfortable reality, aren't we?

[22 : 44] You see, we may not think, that we'd, let Juwan win, if he got the votes, you know, we should let Roland, have his day, in glory.

But this passage, where we read, about Jesus's, about God's, suffering servant, we see that, he's not great, he's not, glorious, but he's, disgusting, and filthy, and nothing, nothing to look at.

And we know that, and we read that, God uses the weak things, of the world, to shame the strong, that God is into, using, weakness, for his glory.

but I don't think, Christians are, I don't think I am, I don't think we are, we are into, outside appearances, we like, preachers, who, speak, well, who can, explain things, well, who can do it, in a way, that we, like, we don't like, people who, stutter their way through, or who, do any of those things, and, you know, hey, we want to preach, as well as we can, but, I think too easy, we judge, based on, outside appearances, what about Christians, just people in the pews, you know, we're always, mostly, judging people, based on, what they look like, how they wear, how they wear, how they wear their clothes, you know, this really interesting thing, I've noticed, over the last few years, at my old church, my minister, there, he came from,

Wollongong, which is, just south of Sydney, and it's a real, sort of surfer town, right, everyone surfs, in Wollongong, and he used to be, the youth pastor up there, so he was all like, into surfing clothes, and whatever, and he used to wear them, and we're in Hobart, right, no one surfs in Hobart, and we did kind of look at him, and think he was a bit of a weirdo, and eventually, by the time I left, maybe four or five years later, he was wearing, Kathmandu, and snow gum, and appropriate Hobart clothes, for our church, right, the way we dress, we judge people on, there's a dress code here, at Holy Trinity, it's not very cool, and I'm glad, about that, because I wouldn't fit in otherwise, but you go to other churches, and I think, geez, look how baggy my jeans are, they need to be black, and tighter, you know, and, and you have to fit in, we're always trying to get people, to fit in, and we effectively, function, like the models, like the people, who ran the modeling competition, we want people to, fit our expectations, but they only, need, one thing, and that is, to know, that their sin is serious, to know, their shame, and to trust, in the servant Jesus, who's dealt, with it all,

[26 : 19] Jesus has dealt, with all our sin, with all our shame, and so we don't need to judge, based on how we talk, or what we wear, no, we simply need to judge, on where our hearts, are at, and I've been convicted, recently, as I've gone to, what a funny place, to get convicted, as I've gone to these things, called the year of discernment, which is this thing, run by the Anglican Diocese, of Melbourne, and we get together, with some all sorts, of crazy people, who think they one day, might want to call themselves, Anglican ministers, it's a cool group, and, I've been very convicted, of the way I judge, simply by how people, speak, or what they wear, or what they say, or how they, even do church, but actually, are they seeking Jesus, to deal with their sin, which is serious, which is shameful, and are they trusting him, fully, for forgiveness, and grace, to live each day, and is that what you're doing,

I pray that it is, let me pray, now, Father God, we thank you, for Jesus, we thank you, that he, willingly, lovingly, endured, much, for us, that he was beaten, and spat on, and disfigured, and despised, and rejected, and pierced, he was, scorned, by people, in authority, and died, the most shameful, of deaths, for us, we thank you, that he endured that, on our behalf, so that he could deal, with our sin, and our shame, will please, help us, to treasure that, deeply, to love, what Jesus, has done for us, or if there's, anyone here tonight, who, has been thinking, for a while now, that they, need to trust, in Jesus,

Lord, would you move them, tonight, to do that, to trust, in him, for their forgiveness, and salvation, Lord, thank you, for the beautiful thing, Jesus did, and thank you, for your word, which prophesied, that it would happen, long before it did, and thank you, that you are, a faithful God, who continues, to be true, to his word, and you promise, a day, where those of us, who've trusted in you, will live with you, in a perfect world, where there is, no more shame, no more, sin, and that we'll live, with you, rejoicing, and singing, and dancing, and praising you, forever, so please, Lord, embolden us, and make us, eagerly, await, that day, make that day, a reality, in our hearts, and minds, so that we might, boldly share you, wherever we go, in Jesus name,

Amen. Will you stand with me, as we proclaim, that this is our God, the servant king.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you. Amen. God wants good to have fun.

[30 : 26] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen.