

God's Servant Revealed

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Date: 04 March 2018

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[0 : 00] I would like you to turn in your Bibles this morning to the passage that will frame, at least start our study.

! And after we look at this passage just for a moment, we're going to go to the Isaiah text that will dominate the remainder of our time together.

Turn in your Bibles, if you would, to Luke chapter 24. Luke chapter 24. Beginning there in verse 13, let me read the passage to you. You follow along in your own copy, if you would, please.

That very day, verse 13, two of them were going to the village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. And they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, what is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?

[1 : 13] And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them named Cleopas answered him, are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened here these days?

And he said to them, what things? And they said to him, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet, mighty indeed, and word before God and all the people. And how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death and crucified him.

But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women in our company amazed us.

They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the woman had said, but him they did not see. And he said to them, O foolish ones and slow of heart, not to believe all the prophets have spoken. Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?

[2 : 31] And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them all the scriptures, the things concerning himself. I want you to turn over to Isaiah chapter 49.

I wasn't on the road to Emmaus, nor were you. But the scriptures tell us that what Jesus did when these dear men were disconsolate and discouraged in the face of the problem of the day, he reminded them of what God had already promised and done and its relationship to our salvation. I want to remind you as we get into this passage this morning of another passage that is the very, very start to the gospel truth. And you go back in your thinking, if you would, to Genesis chapter 3, verse 15.

Remember after the fall, and you can imagine how dark a day that must have been for Adam and Eve as they realized that they had sinned against the infinite holy glory of God and they had caused this breach in their relationship and communion.

God had told them up front and in advance, if you do this, you're going to die. And after they had eaten the fruit, they hid and heard his voice and must have labored deeply in their soul as they considered what was next.

[4 : 12] God comes to them and he speaks to them these words. He starts out early and he says this, speaking to the serpent, he lets the serpent know the consequences of being involved in all of this.

And then he says to the serpent, he says, He will bruise your head and you will bruise his heel.

That is the start of the story that finds us this morning considering this passage in Isaiah chapter 49 in which the reality of our Savior and his coming in the flesh to be our substitute and sacrifice for our sins is played out for us.

Let me read the passage to you there in Isaiah chapter 49 verse 1. It says, We're looking here, first of all, at the servant that is called, Lord Jesus Christ.

It speaks of him here and lets us know that right at the very beginning, God makes it clear that he is the one that is calling his son to become our Savior and bringing him into the world to be exactly that.

[5 : 41] I appreciate the fact that here in the text it says, Listen to me. We've all heard those words, haven't we? On more than one occasion when our parents are trying to give us clear instruction and we're maybe not paying attention, I know that one of the things that worked for us, and I've watched other parents do it as well, say, Look in my eyes.

Have you ever done that? Look in my eyes. You know that if the kid is not looking, probably not paying attention. And here is the Holy Spirit saying to the nation of Israel, Listen, this is important. You better pick up on this. And it's particularly appropriate when you stop and think about the background to which this verse sets or behind what is behind this passage.

Go back just one verse, if you will, to Isaiah chapter 48 and look at verse 22. Look at that passage. There is no peace, says the Lord, for the wicked.

There is no peace, says the Lord, for the wicked. You want to live a disobedient, ungodly, wicked life. Mark this verse as an absolute certain prophecy as how things will play out.

[6 : 51] There is no peace for the wicked. Against that backdrop, we find the Holy Spirit says to Isaiah, Write these words.

Listen to me, O coastlands, And give attention, you peoples afar. It's kind of an announcement that God has something to say. And one of the things I appreciate is our God tells us in advance what He's going to do.

You can't do that, can you? How many of you would say, Well, I'm going to do this after the service is over. And the truth of the matter is, you can't say that. Now, you could say it this way, If the Lord wills.

How many of you do that? I'm going to go have lunch at, Well, if the Lord wills. Only God, sovereign and absolute power, Can say with absolute certainty, This is what is going to happen.

And so here is God telling us, I'm going to be doing something, And you need to pay attention to this, Because it is something that is going to be a declaration of my power and authority, And my ability to save.

[7 : 54] I want you to think with me as well about the fact that not only can God tell us what's going to happen in the future, But it sets Him so far apart from what the rest of the world is like, And what idolatry is like.

Go back just for a moment. You're there in Isaiah 49, But go back to Isaiah chapter 48, Verse 3 through 5. This is one of several different places in the book of Isaiah, And you will find other places similar in the scriptures, Where God sets Himself apart from idolatry, From idols, By letting people know that He is the only one who can tell us in advance what's going to happen.

Look at verse 3. Isn't that interesting?

God telling His people, Before it ever happened, This is exactly how it's going to play out. Give you an illustration of that. Remember when God predicted to Abraham That His offspring was going to spend time in Egypt, And eventually come out and come into the promised land?

And sure enough, When did it happen? Exactly on the time that God had stipulated that it would. You remember when Daniel was reading in the scriptures, And he realized that the time of the captivity had been fulfilled, And God was going to fulfill His promise.

[9 : 26] He had complete confidence that the God who predicted and prophesied what was going to happen Would bring it about. Here in Isaiah 48, He says, Listen, I did it and it came to pass.

Because I know that you are obstinate, And your neck is an iron sinew, And your forehead brass, I declared them to you from of old, Before they came to pass, I announced them to you, Lest you should say, My idol did them, My carved image, And my metal image commanded them.

You see, God tells us ahead of time what He is going to do, And one of the values of that is that it sets Him apart from every other source of information, And every other individual.

Only God can tell us how the story ends. And it's important to remember that. Coming back now, As you would, To the passage in Isaiah chapter 49, After we read this statement, That He called me from my womb, From the body of my mother, He named my name, We find there an indication that That supports the issue of the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He, He, God, Second person of the Trinity, Came here and became entirely flesh.

[10 : 53] He became a man, And He became a man so that He could die in our place for our sins. Now I want you to understand this. I want everybody here to pick up on this and track it.

Sin produces consequence. Do you understand that? It says in Scripture, The soul that sins shall die. There is a penalty for sin.

There are some of you sitting here this morning that are thinking to yourself, Well, I am getting away with what I'm doing. It's quite all right. Let me tell you, Don't mistake the patience of God for indifference to sin.

God deals with sin. And the fact of the matter is that every single one of us will have to satisfy the debt that our sin has created, Either by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as the substitution for our sin, Or by spending eternity in hell, Suffering the consequence of our rebellion against Him.

Do you understand what I'm saying? Jesus came in the flesh to be the substitute and to die in your place. He satisfied the wrath of God against your sin. And as we read here in Isaiah chapter 49, it says, The Lord called me from the womb, from the body of my mother.

[12 : 16] He named my name. God appointed the Lord Jesus to be our Savior from eternity past. And Isaiah indicates the reality of Christ's coming in the flesh to be our substitute.

Incidentally, on Easter, Pastor Shearer, Pastor Andrew, I'm trying to make an adjustment, Pastor. You should have started out with that.

Well, we had so many Andrews around here. It was tough. I understand. It's Pastor Andrew in the future. Tim, remember that, please. Okay. Pastor Andrew is going to preach on Isaiah 53, And it's going to be a wonderful passage in which we see the Lord Jesus suffering for us.

Just phenomenal. Here is Isaiah making it clear Let me bring up another part that I want you to look at here.

God would bring salvation through the birth of our Savior. It's important to see it there. God would do that. The promise in Genesis. The promise in Isaiah 9.

[13 : 31] The promise fulfilled with the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the promise brought to full fruition in the work of Christ on the cross.

Jesus, our Savior, by virtue of dying in our place and satisfying the debt of our sin. Now, I want you to look, if you will, also at what it says there in verse 2.

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. Question.

What's that talking about? The picture that we generally have of Jesus is pretty soft and cuddly, right? Pretty nice.

I mean, he's wonderful. And he is. So what is all this about? What is a sword for? It's not for paring your fingernails.

[14 : 32] What is an arrow for? It's not for decoration on a wall. An arrow and a sword are means of death.

And here is the Holy Spirit saying to us in relationship to Christ and his coming, He made my mouth like a sharp sword.

How will the words of Christ be a sharp sword? For one thing, we know that they were sharp, particularly during his earthly time here when he was dealing with sinners, the Pharisees, etc., and bringing rebuke and bringing indictment against their hardened hearts.

But I want you to think a little bit further with me of what this issue of the sharpness of his word has to do with salvation and with judgment. Think with me just for a moment what it says over in Hebrews 4, verse 12.

For the word of God... Can anybody finish it off for me? For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

[15 : 48] One of the things that I have found over and over again as the most effective means of ministry is the authority and the supremacy of the word of God.

It is the thing the Holy Spirit uses to convict us of the darkness and the hardness of our heart. And here, early in this exposure of the reality of our Lord Jesus Christ coming to be the Savior of the world, we are told that He also will be the sword and the arrow.

Now, why is it hidden? Hidden in this sense that it's not fully revealed, but the day is coming when it will be fully revealed. And when will that be?

I want you to turn in your Bible just for a moment over to Revelation chapter 19. Revelation chapter 19, verse 15 and 21.

From His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron. Verse 21.

[17 : 05] And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against Him, who is sitting on the horse and against His army. And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet, who in its presence had done the signs by which He deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped His image.

These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur, and the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of Him who is sitting on the horse.

Think about how the story ends. We live in a messy, broken, hard, sinful world, and yet we revel in the fact that our Savior, who is the one who has shown mercy and grace to us, will someday deal with the rebel and with the disobedient, and He is going to punish them with absolute certainty.

And here in Isaiah, we understand that He will have a sword and an arrow. I want you to turn now, and we're just going to take a quick look at this portion, but I want you to recognize in verses 13 through 26 that what we find here, beginning there in verse 13, A general rule of Bible understanding is paying attention to context.

Now, why do I say that? Because the people who are being spoken to have bearing on the message that is being heard. Third, simplest illustration would be when there are four or five young people standing around, and you hear someone say, Come here.

[18 : 59] Everybody looks around to see, Well, who are you talking to? When you see the parent standing over there saying, Come here, who do you think the parent is talking to? The child that they have birthed and have authority on.

Hey, come here. And so context is important. And we look at this passage, and here in the following statements, we are going to find God makes it clear that He is going to keep His promise to the nation of Israel.

But Zion said, The Lord has forsaken me. My Lord has forgotten me. Can you imagine Zion saying that? Struggling as they were, burdened down with sin, enduring the chastisement of God, and kind of thinking, Well, God really doesn't care.

No, no, no. He hasn't broken His covenant or His promises with the nation of Israel. And when we look at this, I want you to understand that it assures us that He will keep His promises with us.

One of the reasons that Tim Kroyer has great confidence that when he dies, he is going to go from this place to that place is because God keeps His promises.

[20 : 10] How do I know He's done it? But I see what He's doing, what He has done, and what He's doing with the nation of Israel, and I have confidence that if He keeps promises with them, He's keeping promises with me.

And I rest in that. Now, I want you to look at Isaiah 50, verse 4. I've skipped over down, all the way down to 26 there, if you follow along with me.

But I want you to look in particular at Isaiah 50, verse 4. The Lord has given me the tongue of those who are taught that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary.

Morning by morning, He awakens, He awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. What we find in this passage is the preparation.

We saw, first of all, the call of Christ. Now we see the preparation of Christ. I want you to think with me just for a moment. Remember when Jesus was a little boy, what was it, 12 years old, and He was in the temple and He was teaching.

[21 : 14] How did that go? How did it go? How did it go? Any of you young people here, 12?

I need a 12-year-old to just raise their hand. Titus! It's a Titus! Jeffrey, how old are you? Ah, you're close.

Molly? I was thinking that. And you're just sitting there trying to hide behind Grandma and you're just not getting there, okay? Would you do me a favor, Titus? Would you please stand just for a second, please?

Please, thank you. Thank you. Molly, if I'm going to do it to Titus, thank you, please, please, please.

Okay, turn around, face the crowd. Okay, thank you.

I want you to imagine a 12-year-old... Have a seat. I want you to imagine a 12-year-old disputing with the Supreme Court.

[22 : 17] Do you follow that? You're into that, right? Okay. Molly and Titus, well chosen. I didn't realize this would happen this way, but, you know, hey, here is Jesus having a discussion with the scribes and Pharisees and how does that go?

They're amazed. They're blown away. Well, he just had this natural ability to know Scriptures. What he did have was the full measure of the Holy Spirit and time that he spent incessantly in the Word of God.

That is a great comfort to me because what it tells me is I can learn the Scriptures with the enabling of the Holy Spirit in a similar fashion to Christ.

You look at this passage and it says, The Lord has given me the tongue of those who are taught. It's better to be taught before you say anything. Would you agree with that?

How many of you have spoken before you've been taught? I have been taught on many occasions and the more I'm taught, the less I wish I would say.

[23 : 30] Here it says, 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. What was the purpose that we find here in this passage to the teaching that Jesus received?

It was so that he would be more effective in ministering to brokenhearted and grieving people. I want you to imagine with me just for a moment what it must have been like to be Jesus.

Having devotions in the morning, getting up fairly early, in the quiet of the morning, just beginning to read the Scriptures. And by the way, did he have the New Testament?

What's the answer? Nope. He had the Old Testament. He had the Pentateuch. He had the prophets. He had the Psalms. And as he's reading in these things, just imagine what it must have been like for him as he's reading his way through to get into the book of Isaiah and begin thinking, Whoa, that gives me cold chills to think what he must have felt like, right?

Whoa, this is me. Not me. But Jesus discovering the reality of the divine plan of God in the flesh. He learned from day to day.

[24 : 55] And he learned for the sake of other people. Let me encourage you to think with me just for a moment here that this text tells us the purpose of God's gifting to Jesus.

Why did Jesus receive the word here in this passage? So that I may know to sustain with a word him who is weary. That I will know how to answer the brokenhearted and the grieved of spirit, the one who is burdened, that I will know the right things to say.

In Proverbs, it says that as, I think it's, as apples of gold in a chalice of silver, so are the words of the wise.

How many of you have been comforted by people who say the right thing at the right time? When your heart is broken and a person brings to you the sweetness of the scripture and lifts your conscience and your heart, here we find that Jesus learned the word and that was God's purpose. But we also find that the text tells us the process that Jesus went through to get that. Look what it says. Morning by morning, he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught.

[26 : 16] When are you going to learn the word? By osmosis. Osmosis is a very important principle to hold on to spiritually. It's the transfer through a membrane from a place of lesser density or a greater density to a lesser density.

Did I get it right? Someone help me out here. I think I lost you all on that one. We'll take biology off the map as well as math. Okay. You don't learn the word just by sitting around passively and showing up periodically at church and kind of, well, okay.

You know, it's trying to... No. Morning by morning, he opens my ear to hear. Why? Does it happen that way?

Because there is a conscious and deliberate desire to know what God has to say for the sake of his glory and for the good of other people. So let me ask you a practical question.

If this is a description of the Lord Jesus Christ in preparing his heart for the purpose of ministry to others, how closely does it match your daily morning pattern?

[27 : 37] Fair question? How closely does it match your daily morning pattern? The blessings that Jesus received in his daily time in the Word were actually for others, to be shared with others.

And I would say that our blessings that we receive should be patterned in the same fashion to be a blessing to other people. I'm afraid there are sometimes people who are Dead Sea saints. You know what the Dead Sea is?

It's a place where water and minerals and all that kind of comes in and just evaporates. It doesn't do anything. It doesn't move on. It's right there it is. Dead Sea saints are those who kind of occasionally sit and soak, but it never really ends up helping them to be productive and serving and a blessing to other people.

Well, let's come to one other piece as we look at this passage, and let's look at a servant that is committed. In Isaiah chapter 50, we'll go to verse 7. The Lord God helps me.

Therefore, I am not 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?

[28 : 54] Let us stand up together. Who is my adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God helps me, and who will declare me guilty? What we find here in the remainder of this passage is we find a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ dealing with the adversity that went with the ministry that he had.

Earlier in verse 6, it says this, 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.

Can you imagine the picture of the Lord Jesus Christ during his judgment when he was falsely betrayed and he was falsely accused and then he was so vilely mistreated?

Described for us there in verse 6. And yet in the face of all that adversity, how did he handle it? How did he deal with the challenge that he was enduring?

He was committed to his call and to his purpose and his mission, and he was not overwhelmed by it. I gave my back to those who strike and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard.

[30 : 07] I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting. And I want you to imagine with me just for a moment, here is the Lord Jesus Christ standing in for you and me and enduring the absolute brutality of what he went through during that time of hardship and suffering.

And how did he do it? What was his attitude? It says there, I have set my face like a flint. Think about that.

There was not a shadow of turning. There was not a moment of doubt. There was not a pause in Christ's heart as he marched resolutely towards Jerusalem knowing fully that in Jerusalem was going to be his crucifixion, knowing what was going to happen, knowing that all those people that he'd ministered to were going to turn against him.

Within days of crying out in adoration and welcoming him in, Hosanna, Hosanna, they were going to cry, crucify him, crucify him.

And every one of those completely thoughtless to the ministry that he had come to accomplish. And yet, in the face of all of that, what we find here is these reverses reflect on how Jesus suffered for us.

[31 : 29] And he suffered for us without any hesitation, without any backing away from it. He willingly pursued it with our salvation in mind. That's what he was doing. Now, if he was willing to do that for us, does that leave you any reason to believe that he will hesitate to do whatever else needs to be done for you?

What's the answer? Absolutely not. If he was willing to suffer such shame and such indignity and such physical hardship and then the burden of your sin for your salvation, he will do all that is needed to bring you home to glory.

He will take care of the journey that you have in front of you. And so I want you to know that you can trust Jesus because of his faithfulness and suffering. He stood the course for you and he stood the course for me and he can be trusted.

Let me come to one other thing that I held off in bringing to your attention earlier and I want you to go back to Isaiah chapter 49, verse 5 and 6. Isaiah chapter 49, verse 5 and 6.

I want you to follow along with me as I read the passage. And now the Lord says, he who formed me from the womb to be a 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.

[32 : 54] He says, it is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel. Do you know what that's saying?

Yes, the Lord Jesus and his purposes include the nation of Israel and salvation and all you have to do is read Romans chapter 9, 10 and 11 to kind of get a flavor for how that's going to play out.

But mark what it says in the last two lines there. I will make you a light for the nations that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.

Do you know what that's saying? Go back if you will with me. He says, verse 6, it is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob.

That's easy peasy. No big thing. I got it. Christ, the Messiah, a blessing to raise up the tribes of Jacob to bring about blessing to the nation of Israel to bring about the fulfillment of the covenant promises that God made to the nation.

[34 : 11] But, is that the end of the story? Is that all that God is going to do? Not at all. I will make you a light for the nations that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.

That encourages me. Because, the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world not only to be a blessing to the nation of Israel and to believers in the land, but also to be a blessing to the uttermost ends of the earth.

All, all open to the gospel message. And here is Jesus being the Savior of the entire world. So, let me ask you a question.

This morning, as you think about the Lord Jesus Christ, I trust that one of the things that is clear in your mind is what He came to do.

My question is this, if He came to die for your sins and He has satisfied the judgment of God upon your soul for your rebellious heart, the question is, have you believed in Him and put your faith in what He has done for you?

[35 : 20] I had a very interesting conversation earlier this week with an individual regarding the matter of salvation and came down to, well, so, what gives you confidence in where you're going to spend eternity?

Well, I really don't know. I love that statement because I can then recite what it says in 1 John, these things are written, what? That you might know.

God's in the business of making things clear. Wouldn't you agree with that? It's not like, well, I'm not so sure. I'm hoping I can make it. No, no, no. God says, I have made things clear.

Salvation is through the finished work of Christ who came into the world to pay the debt for our sins and offer salvation to all who believe.

And so, let me put it to you very plainly. If you are here today and you do not know Christ, now is the hour, now is the time to come to grips with the darkness of your heart and realize that you will never be able to save yourself by your own good works.

[36 : 35] That the judgment of a holy God will fall upon the absolute imperfection and hardness of your heart and condemn you to eternity. and yet, God sent His Son born of a virgin in the flesh to die for my sins and to die for yours and salvation can be had by believing in what Jesus did for you on the cross.

Let's close in prayer. Our Father God, we are thankful that we have the Scriptures in hand and we can read here in the text centuries before the Lord Jesus Christ came clear indication of His birth, of His preparation for ministry, and the resolute spirit with which He endured the cross for our sakes. This morning, we who know the Lord Jesus Christ rejoice in that victorious truth and we know that the adversity and the difficulties we face in the day in front of us are nothing compared to the glory to be had in the life to come.

We're confident in the victory that is yours and the victory that we enjoy because of you. And Father, we pray also this morning for those that are here that do not know the Lord Jesus Christ that this morning the Spirit would rest upon their soul and bring conviction to them and they would be drawn to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.