

ISAIAH, PART 2 (COMFORT FOR HIS PEOPLE)
PROGRAM 23 (#911138)
WEEK 5 (#911328) (Guest Teacher David Arthur)
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The following is an actual transcript of the PRECEPTS FOR LIFE Broadcast. For the purpose of filling transcript requests quickly, they have received only light editing. If you have questions concerning the material covered in this broadcast, Kay has published a number of books explaining the Scripture in depth. These books may be ordered by contacting the telephone number or address printed above.

SERIES: Isaiah, Part 2 (Comfort For His People)
TITLE: Program 23 – The Arm Of The Lord Revealed
(Guest Teacher David Arthur)

WEDNESDAY

INTRO

Kay: The book of Isaiah so captures our culture today, a culture filled with sin, a culture where truth has stumbled in the streets. And it is such a joy for me to know that the man teaching beside me in Isaiah Part 2 is a man who knows the truth, who holds to the truth. I know you're going to enjoy David Arthur, the Vice-President of Teaching and Training at Precept Ministries. Be blessed.

OPEN

David: Have you ever realized just how different God's ways are than ours? Have you ever wondered why He does the things He does? The way He goes about it? In our text in Isaiah 53, we will discover what God has designed since the beginning of time to bring restoration and healing to the nations; to bring salvation to the lost. The way He's gonna bring us back to Himself. It will be through a "Suffering Servant;" the Messiah Himself.

PART ONE

David: Hello, my name is David Arthur and I am so excited that you have joined me today to study God's Word. We have before us one of the most amazing chapters of all Scripture: Isaiah chapter 53. Here we will see how God is gonna unveil His final plan for salvation, for not only Israel, but for all the nations. Let's begin by looking at Isaiah 52, beginning in verse 13, he writes this: **"Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted. Just as many were astonished at you, My people, so His appearance was marred more than any man and His form more than the sons of men. Thus He will sprinkle many nations, Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; ...and what they had not heard they will understand."** (Isaiah 52:13-15) That's the opening of our text today. We're gonna ask ourselves, over the next several days, some questions about Isaiah 53. We're gonna see this "servant" that is described back in verse 13. We're gonna see who He is. We're gonna see why He's doing what He's doing, and how He is going about to do it. Today we'll focus on the "who" question: Who is this "servant" described in Isaiah 53? Let's keep reading. We'll start in verse 1 of Isaiah 53. It says this: **"Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him."** (Isaiah 53:1-2) The first thing that we see about this Messiah, or about this "servant," that we will know later on to be the Messiah, is that He was a nobody. Verse 2 makes it very clear: **"...He grew up... like a tender shoot, ... a root out of parched ground...."** (Isaiah 53:2) It's a very weak picture here, it's not this great oak tree, this strong tree, but rather it's one of those little things that you would snip off with your fingers, these little sucklings that grow on the side of a tree. That's His beginning. He was a nobody. And the Scripture tells us that we would not imagine Him to be the

Messiah. He had no stately form. He had no majesty about Him. There wasn't anything on His outward appearance that would clue us in to say, "Ha! This is the Savior of the world! This is the One who we must follow, should we follow God Himself." Now we also want to look at some other things. Go with me to Isaiah chapter 9; Isaiah chapter 9. This is one of those texts that most likely if you go to church you'll hear this around Christmas time. Perhaps you'll hear it sung. There'll be nice, warm fuzzies in the room. You'll have this great, peaceful feeling. But it starts off in Isaiah chapter 9, verse 1: **"But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He...,**" speaking of God, **"...treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali...,**" that's the Galilee area, **"...with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of [the] Jordan...,**" described as the, **"...Galilee of the Gentiles."** (Isaiah 9:1) So we wanna ask the text: All right, how's He gonna do that? How is He gonna make it "glorious?" If He's gonna take the land of Galilee from being the land of "contempt," to a land that's "glorious," how's He gonna do that? Well He says in verse 2, it starts this way: **"The people who walk in darkness will see a great light...the light will shine on them."** (Isaiah 9:2) He then goes on to say in verse 3: **"You shall multiply the nation, you shall increase their gladness; [and] they will be glad in Your presence as with the gladness of harvest, as [the] men rejoice when they divide the spoil."** (Isaiah 9:3) Okay, two images here. The first one is one of "people in darkness." They're trying to get around, everything is dark, they're blind. They have no direction, no future, no guidance, they're in a land that is filled with darkness. Here it's a spiritual darkness. Here it's a darkness that that we incur when we're no longer walking in the light of the Lord. But He says, "But I will send a light." He says in verse 2, "I will send a great light; a light that will shine on them as a nation." And then verse 3, the second image. One you have the light. The second image, you have this multiplication. This is a beautiful picture—this "growing," this "harvest"—

is one of the ways He describes it. A farmer, when he goes to harvest, the more happier he is, right? The more crops that actually reach harvest, the better it is. And Isaiah 9 says when this “great light” comes into the land of Galilee, that the harvest will be multiplied, there’ll be a great harvest, and those around will rejoice as they divide the spoil. What goes on? Look at verse 4. Not only will there be a “great light,” “great multiplication,” but verse 4 says: **“For You shall break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian.” (Isaiah 9:4)** And here Isaiah and the Lord are taking us back into history the battle of Midian, and we see this great rescue that God had provided supernaturally, at that battle. (See Judges 7) He says, “It will be like that battle.” At the battle of Midian, we saw God’s hand manifested. We saw God’s power demonstrated in in a supernatural way, and He says, [“I will break the rod of your oppressors just like I did at Midian]. (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 9:4) How’s this gonna come? What is the vehicle that God is going to bring His deliverance to His people? Well I’ve already warned you there’s gonna be a surprise. I’ve already warned you that His ways are not like my ways and your ways. That His thoughts are not like man’s thoughts, they’re much higher. (See Isaiah 55:8) They’re much more complex. There’s actually a surprise here in the text. In verse 5 it goes on to talk about the battle; says: **“For every boot of the booted warrior in the battle tumult, and cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for...fire.”(Isaiah 9:5)** Okay, so here comes the climax. We’re expecting in Isaiah 9, a great king to come marching in with his army. We’re expecting, to see, this amazing entourage come that’s gonna secure this great light, that’s gonna bring multiplication and harvest, that’s gonna smash the rod of the oppressor, but the very next verse tells us how God’s gonna do it. Look what he says in verse 6: **“[For a child] for a child will be born....” (Isaiah 9:6)** Can you picture it? It’s the deliverance of Israel. It is the One who will bring them out of darkness. It’s the One who will bring a harvest. It is the

One that will break the rod of the oppressor. (See Isaiah 9:4) It's a wheeeeeeeee— I mean it's a baby! **“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given...and the government will rest on His shoulders....” (Isaiah 9:6)** But this is no ordinary child. This child, it says, **“...His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. [And] there will be no end to the increase of His government or of [His] peace, [and] on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness....” (Isaiah 9:6-7)** Verse 2 of Isaiah 53 tells us who the “servant” was. He's a nobody. He grew up like a tender shoot. There was nothing about His appearance that would make us take a second notice. There's nothing about His appearance that would say: “That's the one. That's the one whom God has chosen of whom I'll follow.” This is the first description of what we see of this Messiah. I don't know about you, but I'm a little bit surprised that God would, in His authority—in His sovereign power—would decide to bring deliverance through a baby. But it gets even more surprising. Let's look in verse 3 we learn a little more about this “nobody.” It says, **“He was despised...forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.” (Isaiah 53:3)** Did you hear those descriptive words? “Despised;” “forsaken of men;” “a man of sorrows;” “acquainted with grief.” He's the One that you want to hide from when you encounter Him. He's One that you want to turn your face away from and stay out of His path because He is despised. He's “esteemed not.” So not only was He a “nobody,” but He was despised and rejected. You know, being despised and rejected, those aren't neutral terms, all right? Those are terms that describe there's something really wrong. That not only was He un-noticeable but He was not what you would expect. It was more than just that He was, you know, normal, or below the the radar, He was despised and rejected, a man who was acquainted with grief. That means He experienced grief on a

consistent basis. His nickname was: A man of sorrows. (See Isaiah 53:3) We find out in verse 4; we find out in verse 4 that he— not only was He a nobody and not only was He rejected and despised, but in verse 4 it says the people esteemed Him as being punished by God. Look at verse 4: **“Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”** (Isaiah 53:4) Those three words: “stricken,” “smitten of God,” and “afflicted;” We have a Messiah here described for us—the Servant of God—seems to be punished by God. He seems to be despised and rejected by those whom He actually came to save. He also is One who is a “nobody.” He’s unexpected. And we’re going to continue to look at Isaiah 53 in “Precepts for Life,” and I want to encourage you to download the study guide on the website: preceptsforlife.com. And there you can study with us and you can know this “Servant of the Lord” for yourself.

PART TWO

David: Welcome back, we’re looking at the “servant” of God in Isaiah 53. We’ve already noted a couple of things about Him: One; that He was a “nobody.” We wouldn’t expect Him to be the Messiah. Two; we saw that He was despised and forsaken by men, and then thirdly, we also esteemed Him as being punished by God Himself. (See Isaiah 53:4) Churchill, when he was still a soldier before he reached his Prime Minister state, when he was a soldier in the Battle of Boer, B-o-e-r, he was captured and a few days later he escaped. They posted a a reward for him and a little poster went around town and it said something like this: “Looking for Winston Churchill. He’s five-foot eight, he’s pale, he walks with a stoop, he talks through his nose, he can’t pronounce words correct—.” I mean, just kind of described this goofball. And the reward was a whopping twenty-five pounds. Not very much is it? Little did they know that Winston Churchill would one day be one of the most powerful men in the world. We have a very similar thing

here in Isaiah 53. We are asking the question: Who is this servant? And we've noted that He was not one that we would expect. He was a nobody, a "tender shoot". He was a child born, the One who would bring restoration, would bring forgiveness, would bring reconciliation between God and His people; was One that we would not expect. But even though we thought He was punished by God, that in some sense He had done something evil or wrong and He was now stricken by God, smitten by God, afflicted by God, much like we saw Him, you know, do that to guys like Pharaoh or guys like King Azariah in 2 Kings 15 when He struck him with the disease of leprosy. We were wrong. We're wrong in that. Let's keep reading. We see in verse 9 of Isaiah chapter 53, that that's not the case. **"His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death, [and] because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth."** (Isaiah 53:9) All right, let's ask the text: What is the Messiah like? What is the Servant of God like, here? Well in verse 9, the last two phrases tells us, number one, **"...He had done no violence..."** (Isaiah 53:9) There was no action on His part that would retaliate, that would cause God to come back with Him with punishment. But what about His heart? Maybe He didn't do anything wrong, but what about the inside? What did He think? What was He filled with? And it says, last verse, **"...Nor was there any deceit..."** (Isaiah 53:9) Here's a true, godly, sinless person. Paul picks up on this in 2 Corinthians 5, verse 21, Paul describes Jesus as [One who knew no sin, there was no sin in His life, and yet He became sin that we might become righteous.] (PARAPHRASE, 2 Corinthians 5:21) He who knew no sin, He had never had a lustful thought. He had never done anything wrong; never stolen anything. And yet He became sin. We thought that He had done something wrong. We esteemed Him, right? As being punished by God, is what it says. We esteemed Him, in verse 4, as being stricken by God. But we find out in the beginning of verse 4 that the reason why He is stricken by God was not due to His own sins, but what? Look at verse 4. It starts off:

[Surely our griefs He himself bore, and our sorrows He carried] **“Surely our griefs He himself bore, and our sorrows He carried....” (Isaiah 53:4)** Do you; do you see the pronouns playing there? It’s not His sins, His griefs were the cause, but it was our sins that brought about that punishment. Now also, He’s not a helpless victim. Look at verse 1 of chapter 53. **“Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?” (Isaiah 53:1)** Now we’ve seen this phrase before: “The arm of the Lord.” This frustrates me sometimes when I watch television. I see people re-enact Jesus or portray Jesus. They tend to pick these weak, wimpy, little Galileans that just kind of— walk their way around life. And they’re just kind of, you know, really sweet and really gentle and you know, whatever, and they’re just soft and tender. And yet we find out in 53, verse 1, that this One who comes is described as One who is coming as **“...the arm of the LORD....” (Isaiah 53:1)** And it’s the “arm of the Lord being revealed.” It’s His strength being shown. It’s His power being shown. He’s not a helpless victim. He’s not One who is weak and wimpy. So we see here in Isaiah 53 that this man is first, One whom we would not expect. Let’s make a list. He is One in whom we would not expect. So He is, number one: a “nobody.” His appearance— there was nothing about His appearance that would draw you to Him. (See Isaiah 53:2) There’s nothing about the way He carried Himself, or the way He looked, would do it. But secondly we also saw that He was “despised,” and “rejected,” by whom? By His peers. He was despised and rejected by man. (See Isaiah 53:3) And then thirdly, we “esteemed” Him as being “punished by God,” literally “stricken” by the hand of God; “smitten” by God. (See Isaiah 53:4) This is who the “Servant of the Lord” is. This is the One who is going to bring salvation to His people, and yet we found out that He is somebody. He is somebody who: **“...the arm of the Lord [is] revealed.” (Isaiah 53:1)** This is God flexing His divine muscles. This is God demonstrating His power. Who is this “Servant” that God’s gonna send? Well we found out that He was a young

“tender shoot.” (See Isaiah 53:2) We found out that He was “despised;” “forsaken.” That His nickname was “a man of sorrows;” that He was very “acquainted with grief.” (See Isaiah 53:3) “Despised,” and not esteemed. “Stricken” by God. (See Isaiah 53:4) But we find out as we look, it is “**...the arm of the LORD [being] revealed.**” (Isaiah 53:1) So we have one of those divine curveballs coming to us. One of those surprises that come in Scripture: The way God is. I mean, doesn’t this sound like God to you? Think about it for a moment. There’s a great story in the book of Judges. It’s about a young man who’s threshing his wheat down in a wine vat. He’s hiding. He’s hiding from the Midianites. They had been oppressing the people of Israel for years. The Angel of the Lord approaches this man, his name is Gideon, and says, “Gideon, I want to use you to deliver My people.” Gideon’s response was basically, I’m nobody. I’m the— I’m from the least of the tribes. I’m a nobody. Why me?” And then God tells him as he builds his army and he finally collects an army still way too small to fight the Midianites, but God says to him this amazing statement: “Gideon, you have too many men.” “Wh— what do you mean, ‘too many men’? You can’t have too many men when you go into battle.” And God, through a series of process— of events breaks down his army—down to three hundred men against thousands and thousands of Midianites. What is God up to? You know, we found out in Isaiah that His ways are not our ways; that His thoughts are much higher than our thoughts. (See Isaiah 55:8) We find out in Isaiah 53 that the Messiah, the “Servant of the Lord,” that would deliver His people is One who was a nobody. A “tender shoot,” One that had no form, had no majesty. There would be no second looks. There would be no consideration for Him to be anything of a deliverer or anything of a king. Secondly, we also saw in Isaiah 53 that He was despised, that He was rejected by His peers, those around. Ruh— He was the One that we would hide our faces from. And then thirdly, we considered Him to be punished by God, “stricken” by God, “smitten” and “afflicted” by God for His sins, but

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we were wrong. As we continue to look in Isaiah 53 and ask the question: Who is the Messiah? Who is the Servant of the Lord? We found out He was One that had no sin, no deceit in His mouth, no violence had He done. (See Isaiah 53:9) But He was the “arm of the Lord.” He was what happens when the “arm of the Lord,” revealed His strength. (See Isaiah 53:1) He is gonna be the One that though [He knew no sin, as Paul writes; He became sin that we might become righteous]. (PARAPHRASE, 2 Corinthians 5:21) Surely God’s ways— they’re not our ways. His thoughts are not our thoughts. (See Isaiah 55:8) But we have here before us a “suffering servant,” One whom we know to be the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom we can follow.