



## THE SUFFERING SAVIOR

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In Acts chapter eight, we learn of the evangelist Philip's interaction with an Ethiopian man whose curiosity was sparked by Isaiah's writings about the silent sufferer in Isaiah 53. Beginning from this Scripture, Philip "preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35).

First, Isaiah revealed that the word that best describes the man of Isaiah 53 is "insignificant." Humanity was unimpressed as they beheld this "tender plant," "a root out of a dry ground," one who had "no form or comeliness" and "no beauty." The promised Messiah was viewed only as a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," and He was summarily rejected by men (Jn. 1:11).

Secondly, Isaiah identifies the vicarious nature of this man's great suffering by using the word "our" multiple times. This man, who was judged to be insignificant and unimportant, bore our griefs, carried our sorrows, was wounded for our iniquities and chastised for our peace. Isaiah demands that we acknowledge the vicarious nature of this man's silent suffering. He was guilty of nothing and could not be convicted of sin, yet He was pierced, chastened, scourged and experienced the most violent execution known to man (Jn. 8:46).

Thirdly, Isaiah depicts this sufferer as the atoning Lamb, brought to the slaughter, on whom the Lord has laid "the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6-7). Sin demands a price, and our just and righteous God cannot withhold the wages earned by every sinner (Rom. 6:23; 1 Pet. 1:18-19). The unjust trial, the false imprisonment and criminal's death suffered by this Lamb pleased the Father only because it enabled Him to accept His Son as offering for our sin (Isa. 53:10-12).

A reading of Isaiah 53 leaves us humbled and ashamed to have rejected the one who left glory to "bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). When we are faced with the horrible reality of our own sinfulness and the terrible penalty owed, Isaiah 53 presents us with the spotless Lamb of God who suffered and died in our place.

If you believe all that Isaiah reveals about Jesus, be like the Ethiopian eunuch, accept the sacrifice of the suffering Savior by obeying His gospel and you will be set free (Jn. 8:36)..

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