

Jesus in the Old Testament

Jesus and the Cross

Lesson 13

Key Verse

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

—1 Corinthians 1:18

Key Verse Thought: Read the Key Verse. Use the following definitions to help you understand the key verse:

- **preaching** means *to speak intelligently about the word of the cross*
- **cross** means *the whole passion of Christ and the merit of His sufferings and death*
- **them that perish** means *exposed to eternal death*
- **foolishness** means *foolishness or absurdity*
- **saved** means *those who have obtained salvation through Christ and are kept by Him*
- **power** means *a person in whom the power of God is manifested*

In this lesson, we will see the “power of God” revealed as we look at the promise of Jesus found in Isaiah chapter fifty-three.

Emphasis: We are to recognize what Jesus did upon the cross for our sins, believe it, and then tell others what Jesus did for us and will do for them.

Lesson Summary: In this lesson, we begin with a couple of people in the New Testament who had walked and talked with Jesus, yet did not recognize Him after his resurrection – until He revealed Himself to them. We are to understand that they too, had a hard time understanding Jesus’ death.

As we look back at Isaiah chapters fifty-two through fifty-three, we will understand the promise of Jesus that God gave to His people. We will compare those promises made in the Old Testament that Isaiah recorded with the truths revealed in the New Testament (we will only see a *few* in the New Testament – for there are *so* many!). As we read them, we too, are to understand just what Jesus had to do upon the cross because of mankind’s sin. When Jesus died upon the cross, God made salvation available to the entire world (not just the Israelites).

We will learn that it is a choice that each person must make for himself or herself – whether or not to trust Jesus to take away our sin. Once we understand why Jesus died upon the cross, we are to believe in Him. Then we are to share these truths to the entire world, so that they too, can know just what Jesus did for them upon the cross.

Suggested Bible Reading to Prepare for This Lesson

- Monday: Luke 24
- Tuesday: Isaiah 52
- Wednesday: Isaiah 53
- Thursday: Romans 10
- Friday: Proverbs 2
- Saturday: Proverbs 3

Jesus in the Old Testament: Jesus and the Cross

1. Understanding Jesus’ Death
 - The Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)
 - Jesus revealed
2. God’s Promise
 - God’s Servant (Isaiah 52:13-15)
 - Servant revealed to all
3. Isaiah 53
 - Jesus’ suffering death foretold
 - Jesus’ suffering death explained
4. The Importance of Isaiah 53
 - God’s plan revealed
 - Beautiful feet tell others about Jesus

1. Understanding Jesus' Death

Immediately after Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, there were still many who did not understand what had happened, and many did not believe Jesus had even risen from the dead. There were two in particular who were on the road to Emmaus, not far from Jerusalem. On the evening of Jesus' resurrection, they were walking and discussing all they had heard. "15. And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. 16. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him" (Luke 24:15-16). Even though Jesus was walking with them, they did not recognize Him. "19. And he said unto them, *What things?* And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: 20. And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. 21. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done" (Luke 24:19-21). After walking with them, listening to them as they continue their discussion, He responded. "25. Then he said unto them, *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:* 26. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?* 27. And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:25-27). When they came to the village, they asked Jesus, whom they *still* did not recognize, to stay because it was getting late. He stayed with them. "30. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them. 31. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight" (Luke 24:30-31).

It is almost amazing to those today who are believers, to understand how they could not recognize Jesus. However, remember that we read, "But their eyes were holden that they should not know him." Many times in the Old Testament they should have understood and recognized – yet they most of the time, they did not. All throughout the Old Testament, the people were taught of God, but the part they had a hard time with – was understanding that it was Jesus, who was to come, that they were to be looking for.

Today we will look at a vivid picture of Jesus and His death upon the cross, foretold by Isaiah.

2. God's Promise

As we have been studying the history of Judah, we have noticed that they too, failed to live as God commanded. Even though God sent His prophets to warn the people, they did not truly believe – for the nation did not repent and obey God's commands faithfully. And although the people were carried captive from their homeland for that disobedience, God never left His people without hope. In this lesson, we will once again look at Scriptures of hope that the prophet Isaiah left, not only for the Israelites, but also for us even today.

Isaiah chapter fifty-two tells of the promise that God would deliver His people from the hands of their enemies, Babylon. However, there is a change toward the end of the chapter, starting with Isaiah 52:13: "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." We begin to hear the promise of Jesus again. But this time, there are some specific things God wanted the people to understand. These verses begin telling of the suffering death that Jesus would have to endure. "Behold, my servant" is referring to Jesus. God said Jesus would "deal prudently" meaning Jesus would succeed in completing what God expected Him to do. Continuing through that verse, see that it says that Jesus will be "exalted and extolled" which means "to raise, or lift up; to carry off; take away; it is the idea of one who

is a substitution bearing the guilt or punishment of sin.” So just from that one verse, we understand that God told Isaiah that He would send Jesus who would complete the task of being lifted up as the one who would take away the guilt and punishment of sin by becoming the substitute – the one who took sinful man’s place.

As we continue, see the next verse. “14. As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men” (Isaiah 52:14). **Visage** means “*the outward appearance of Jesus that was marred beyond our comprehension.*” Compare this verse with the following: “26b. ... and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. 29. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! 30. And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head” (Matthew 27:26, 29-30). They abused Jesus: scourged, crown of thorns, mocked, smote, crucified, etc.

Finally, we see in the last verse in that chapter. “15. So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider” (Isaiah 52:15). Understand that this verse tells us that Jesus would die to be able to “sprinkle” many nations. **Sprinkle many nations** means “*to cleanse from sin; the Servant of the Lord came to make an atonement for the sins of even the Gentiles.*” Remember the high priest had to sprinkle the blood of the ram upon the altar to cover their sins for another year. “Then shalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood ... and sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about” (Exodus 29:20). God had sent His Son to deliver His people, but He allowed the entire world to “see” and then to “consider.” **See** means “*to gain understanding*” and **consider** means “*to observe; to pay attention to; to gain insight or understanding.*” Each person has to see and decide for himself.

3. Isaiah 53

As we look at Isaiah chapter fifty-three, we will make some amazing observations. Look up the following verses and compare them:

Isaiah 53:1-12:

“1. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?”

2. For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

3. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Compare them with the scriptures below:

(1). with John 12:37-38: “37. But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: 38. That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

(2). with Revelation 22:16: “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.”

(3). with Hebrews 4:15: “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” And John 1:10: “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.”

4. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5. But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

9. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth.

10. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

11. He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

(4-6). with 1 Peter 2:24-25: “24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 25. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

(7). with Matthew 27:12: “And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.” and 1 Peter 2:23: “Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not ...

(8).with Acts 2:22-23: “22. ... Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs ... 23. Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:”

(9). with Matthew 27:57-60: “57. When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph ... 58. He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus ... 60. And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock ...” and I Peter 2:22: “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:”

(10). with 2 Corinthians 5:21: “For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

(11). with Romans 5:15, 18: “15. But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 18. Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. ”

12. Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

(12). with Philippians 2:9: “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:” and Mark 15:27-28: “27. And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. 28. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.” and Luke 23:34: “Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.”

By comparing the above verses, we can understand that God told His people exactly what His plan was. We can also understand that it was fulfilled exactly as God required.

4. The Importance of Isaiah 53

We have now learned that God revealed His plan: One had to be lifted up and die as a substitution offering for the sins of mankind to appease the wrath of a perfect God. Only One could fulfill that task – Jesus. “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, *Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses*” (Matthew 8:17). The word **infirmities** here means “*that Jesus, in his manhood, took upon Himself the consequences of our sins without sinning Himself. He became a man so he could die for mankind’s perverseness.*” **Sickness** means “*the result of our illness (the consequences of our sins), which deprives us of the strength we would enjoy if we were not sick (sinners).*” In other words, Jesus took upon Himself not only the sin, but the consequences of that sin as well.

Read the following verse:

8. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; 11. And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:8-11)

Because of Jesus’ obedience in fulfilling God’s plan, we can now be saved from our sin (because Jesus took that sin and the consequences of sin away). What are we to do?

9. That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9-10)

Also read Romans 10:12-13: “12. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

One amazing thing to recognize: the next verses in Romans are quoted from Isaiah chapter fifty-two. See Isaiah 52:6-7: “6. Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore *they shall know* in that day that *I am* he that doth speak: behold, *it is I*. 7 .How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” These

verses reveal God letting the people know that His people will know His name. They also tell how good it is for people to reveal the truths' God promised.

Compare those verses, with the following:

14. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15. And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! 16. But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? 17. So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:14-17)

When it says “as it is written,” it begins quoting Isaiah chapter fifty-two. We can have “beautiful” feet when we tell others about the good news of Jesus.

No one will ever know God’s truths today, if we do not tell them.

Reinforcement: After remembering the accounting of the two on the road to Emmaus, we recognize that they were looking for, and believed, that Jesus was the One who was supposed to “redeem Israel.” Nevertheless, when Jesus died, they were confused and did not understand. Jesus walked with them “**and beginning at Moses and all the prophets**” explained God’s plan. As we have been learning the history of God’s people, the Israelites, we have learned that God has not changed His plan from the beginning when man first sinned (Genesis 3). However, we have seen that God revealed more details to help His people recognize that Promised One when He came. Isaiah chapters fifty-two and fifty-three are one of the most vivid revelations of Jesus and God’s plan in the Old Testament. We should now know ***with certainty*** that it took Jesus’ atoning death upon the cross to make salvation available to all of mankind. All one must do is believe. After we believe, we are to share the “good news” of Jesus with everyone we meet.

Closing: It would be good to close with a short prayer reinforcing today’s lesson. Always include any prayer requests you may have. *Today, pray that we will recognize the importance of what Jesus did on the cross. Pray that we will want to tell everyone about Jesus.*

