

As we saw in the previous sermon, like Isaiah, **ALL GOD'S REDEEMED** in every generation have been called to preach out God's "**REPORT**" - "**Who hath believed OUR REPORT.**" "**OUR REPORT**" is our testimony or declaration of 'what we have heard' and believed - "**That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen [it], and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.) THAT WHICH WE HAVE SEEN AND HEARD DECLARE WE UNTO YOU, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship [is] with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.**"(I Jn.1:1-4) It is our responsibility while in this life to declare this wonderful message of redemption full and free in and by Christ alone, but for the most part it is rejected and despised by those to whom we deliver it. But to those whom "**the arm of the Lord is revealed**", this same message which is rejected by most, will and is embraced by God-given faith, seeing the "**arm of the Lord**" is manifested to them - "**All that the Father giveth unto me, shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.**"(Jn.6:37) **This is so important: "OUR REPORT"** concerns **ONE THING ONLY** - "**the arm of the Lord**". **Christ made this clear:** "**And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all [men] unto me.**"(Jn.12:32) Like Paul told those at Corinth - "**For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.**"(I Cor.1:21-24)

Look at Vs.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.**" This verse begins a clear Scriptural revelation of "**the arm of the Lord**" by the Prophet Isaiah. If the "**arm of the Lord**" is the "**POWER of God unto salvation**" (AND IT IS), it is imperative that we preach out the entirety of the God sent Messiah's **PERSON** and His **WORK**. Paul declared: "**For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ - "Jesus" (JEHOVAH IS salvation) "Christ" (which means 'the anointed Son of God) (His PERSON) and Him CRUCIFIED (Messiah's WORK).**"(I Cor.2:2) We must pay careful attention to the way Isaiah begins this verse - "**FOR HE SHALL GROW UP before Him.....**". This phrase, "**for he shall grow up**" is one word in the original which means 'to lift oneself'. Who is this that is being lifted up or exalted - The "**arm of the Lord**" in Vs.1, which is none other than the God sent Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ. But when the "**the arm of the Lord**" appeared, being sent into this world as Jehovah's **servant**, His appearance was vastly different than what national Israel expected - "**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.**" **Here's**

**a literal translation** – “Yea, he cometh up as a tender plant before Him, And as a root out of a dry land, He hath no form, nor honour, when we observe him, Nor appearance, when we desire him.” Before the eyes of national Israel, and all unregenerate sinners by nature, “*He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him [there is] no beauty that we should desire Him.*” National Israel, including their religious leaders, were looking for a king like David, one who would deliver them from their physical enemies and reestablish them as a powerful and feared nation. Yet all the prophecies concerning Messiah declared that Jehovah’s “*servant*” was sent to save His people from their **SINS**, establishing His kingdom in righteousness. I believe this verse is a reference back to the last three verses of the previous chapter – “*Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men. 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.*”(Isa.52:13-15) John Gill wrote of these verses – ‘Here properly a new chapter should begin, these three last verses treating of the same person and subject as the following chapter; even of Christ, his person, offices, humiliation, and exaltation, and the effects and fruits thereof; for of him undoubtedly the whole is to be understood.’ When I think of Isaiah’s words concerning Christ’s humiliation, it always brings to my mind Paul’s words to the believer’s at Philippi concerning our Lord – “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*”(Phil.2:5-8) Consider the prominent features the Holy Spirit gives of our Redeemer by these words, and then compare them with what the writers of the four Gospels record concerning His birth and life. How did our **KING**, the “*Prince of peace*” appear when He was born in the lowly manger of Bethlehem? It says “*He grew up before Him as a TENDER PLANT*”. The original word translated “*Him as a tender plant*” is ‘a sucker’, which means ‘new growth that grows out of the root of the tree, at some distance from it, of which no notice is taken, nor anything hoped for from it.’ This word sets forth perfectly the humble and unpromising appearance of Christ at His incarnation. Born in a manger in Bethlehem; the son of a carpenter from lowly Nazareth – “*Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.*”(Jn.1:45,46); Christ had no formal education – “*And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?*”(Jn.7:15) These were the reason that the Jews despised, rejected, and refused to believe that He was the Christ. But all of this was purposed in the everlasting covenant of grace and prophesied throughout the Old Testament – “*Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and [let] him [be] your fear, and [let] him [be] your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.*”(Isa.8:13-15)

This is exactly what occurred with national Israel when the true Messiah came – “*Wherefore? Because [they sought it] not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*”(Rom.9:32,33) Paul made it very clear **WHO** does not “*believe our report*” – “*But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*”(Rom.10:16,17)

In the next words, Isaiah continues to set forth the humiliation of our Lord’s incarnation – “*and as a root out of a dry ground.*” The word translated “*of a dry*” means ‘desert’. The word translated “*ground*” means ‘land’. So the “*arm of the Lord*” sprang forth as ‘a root out of a desert land.’ I don’t know about you, but not very many roots grow in a desert but cactus. That being the case, this was no ordinary thing that is prophesied. The Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ’s power and authority didn’t come from the sap of the earth, but came in an extraordinary way. I believe what Calvin wrote in his commentary on this phrase the prophet used is insightful – “*The present subject is not the birth of Christ, but his whole reign. He says that it will resemble a twig springing out of a dry soil, which looks as if it could never become large. If we take into account the whole method of establishing his kingdom, and the agency which he employed, and how feeble were its beginnings, and how many foes it encountered, we shall easily understand that all these things were fulfilled as they had been foretold. What sort of men were the Apostles that they should subdue so many kings and nations by the sword of the word? Are they not justly compared to offshoots? Thus the Prophet shows by what means the kingdom of Christ must be set up and established, that we may not judge of it by human conceptions.*”

Isaiah next declares of Christ’s incarnation – “*HE hath no form nor comeliness and when we shall see him, [there is] no beauty that we should desire him.*” Do you recall what caught Samuel’s eye when he was looking for the one **HE THOUGHT** would replace Saul? “*And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD’S anointed [is] before him. But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for [the LORD seeth] not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*”(I Sam.16:6,7) Think about this, not as it relates to **PERSON** of Christ (which was despised by the world and ultimately condemned to a disgraceful death of crucifixion, reserved for the worst of criminals), but as it relates to the entirety of the kingdom of righteousness and grace Christ came to establish. To the eye of sinful man, Christ’s kingdom “*had no form nor comeliness*”, i.e., no beauty or splendor to captivate the hearts of men by its outward appearance. **Pilate asked Christ:** “*Art thou a King?*” **Listen to Christ’s reply** – “*Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus*

*answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.”(Jn.18:34-37)* Although Christ arose from the dead, the Jews always regard Him as a person who had been crucified and disgraced, in consequence of which they pridefully hold Him in contempt to this day. A famous conservative political commentator who is an orthodox Jew who was pressed on who Christ was said: “Jesus was a historical Jew who lead a revolt against Rome, who failed and was killed for it.” Truly, “*having eyes they see not, and having ears they hear and hear not.*” What a place of humility and humiliation our Lord took to Himself in coming to seek and to save His people from their sins! Keep all of this in mind as we move forward, that Christ **ALONE** is the “*arm of the Lord*”, and everything written in **Isa.53** concerns the entirety of both **His PERSON** and **His WORK**, all of which was **ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL** for God to be both “*a Just God and a Savior.*”

We’ll close with this – “*And he said unto them, These [are] the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and [in] the prophets, and [in] the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.*”(Lk.24:44-48)