

He Was Marred...

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Date: 27 July 2025

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[0 : 00] So if we can turn back to our reading in Isaiah 52 and Isaiah 53.!

I want us to think today on what it meant for Christ to be marred beyond human likeness when he was on the cross.

By way of context, Isaiah is a really challenging book of the Bible. There's a lot of judgment in Isaiah as God tells Isaiah that he's going to judge both Israel and the nations that surround Israel.

And he gave Isaiah a really challenging ministry because he called him to be a prophet. But he also told him that the people would be ever seeing but never perceiving.

They would be ever hearing but never understanding. Because God was going to harden their hearts because they had hardened their hearts themselves against him and his word.

[1 : 40] They didn't want to hear. So Isaiah has given us an amazing book that reveals much about Christ. And it reveals much about God in judgment.

And all of that came through the great ministry that Isaiah had. A ministry in which very few people wanted to listen to what he had to say.

So he had a really challenging time. But as I mentioned already in the reading that we have, these are words looking forward to Christ upon the cross.

And in particular, the great vein of hope that comes through in reading Isaiah. It's where God introduces the idea of the servant.

Israel was supposed to have been a faithful servant to God, but Israel failed. So God informed them he was going to raise up a better and a true and a faithful servant.

[2 : 46] In chapter 42, Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight. I will put my spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations.

In contrast to Israel who had not done the same. And similarly, in chapter 49, The servant is introduced there.

And a lot has said, This is what the Lord says, verse 7. To him who is despised and abhorred by the nation, To the servant of rulers, Kings will see you and rise up.

Princes will see and bow down. Because of the Lord who is faithful, The Holy One of Israel who has chosen you. And again, In this chapter here, We have the servant.

See, my servant will act wisely. He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. God gradually revealing through this book of Isaiah what the servant was going to do.

[3 : 52] And before we look in detail at those words about the servant's form being marred beyond human likeness, If we just have a look at the fact that it's like they're in brackets, It's those words.

And they're set in a context in verses 14 and 15. Just as there were many who were appalled at him, And then down to verse 15, So will he sprinkle many nations, And kings will shut their mouths because of him.

So, What this is telling us is that The marring that was in Christ Is responsible for this remarkable change from people being appalled at Christ.

I think it says astonished in the ESV. Change in heart from them being appalled To having kings shut their mouths Because of what Christ has done.

Now that word appalled Is one that is used relatively infrequently in scripture. And when God uses it, He speaks in the context of judgment.

[5 : 05] Leviticus 26 and 32, The Israelites were warned what would happen if they were disobedient. And God said, I will lay waste the land So that your enemies who live there will be appalled.

He was saying to them, If you are disobedient, I will remove you from the land. Your enemies will inhabit it. But they will be appalled at what has become of that land.

Similarly in Jeremiah 19 and verse 8, Jeremiah brings this word of the Lord to the Israelites. And God says, I will devastate this city And make it an object of scorn.

All who pass by will be appalled And will scoff because of all its wounds. People were absolutely appalled At what had happened to Israel.

This was the nation Who were supposed to be serving God. And yet, Their nation had been utterly destroyed And ruined because of God's judgment.

[6 : 09] And yet, What God is saying here In verse 15 of chapter 52 Is even though people were appalled, So will he sprinkle many nations.

And the idea of sprinkling Brings that of cleansing And indeed protection From future judgment. And going beyond that, It says the kings will shut their mouths Because of him.

Now if you think People love to speak But the person who always gets the last word Is the king of the nation. The king gets to speak When other people are silenced.

Anyone who goes in to see Our king is told By his retainers That under no circumstances Must they speak first.

They can only speak Once the king speaks to them. But what we have here Is kings themselves Having their mouths silenced Because of the actions of God's servant.

[7 : 18] And all this happened Because of the disfiguring And the marring Beyond human likeness Of God's servant Our Lord Jesus Christ. So let us think a little About this marring That took place upon Christ.

If we think of the word itself Marr or marring It's a short But a very incisive word And it speaks of damage Being done to something. But more than that It speaks of damage Being done to something That is perfect Or beautiful.

If you think A quarry on a If you wander into a quarry Somewhere nearby here If you were to break A piece of rock Off that quarry You wouldn't think There was any marring Taking place at all Because it's just a quarry.

But if you Go and knock a piece Off a marble sculpture You would then say That sculpture is marred Because of what has happened to it. And most often Today I think We tend to think Of marring In relation to Somebody's reputation.

They can be Have a really Really high reputation And one action That they perform Mars them For the rest of their lives. In scripture King David He Marred his reputation When he Sinned with Bathsheba And when he ordered The killing Of Uriah the Hittite And he had Right down to this day We will say His reputation Was marred Because of what Happened there.

[9 : 00] And often It's just simply Impossible To repair That reputation. That's what happens To individuals A marred reputation.

But what we have Been spoken Of in our verses Here Is of a marred Saviour. We read In verse 14 Of 52 His appearance Was so disfigured Beyond that Of any man And his form Marred Beyond human likeness.

Now the words There's actually One word In the Hebrew That's translated Here As disfigured And also As marred In the two instances Within the one sentence.

But it can be Translated in that way Because of the Actions That were taking place And what happened To Christ Upon the cross.

If we think of Christ disfiguring First of all And as we are singing In Psalm 22 In verse 14 He cried out I'm being poured out Like water My bones Are out of joint Think back to When God Made a covenant With Abraham Back in Genesis 15 He had to cut The bones Of an animal And had to slice An animal in half And God Passed through The animal With a smoking Brazier As a smoking Brazier And what in effect God was saying There was I'm making a covenant With you Normally two people Would walk up Between those The split Open animal And what they Would be saying Is If one of us Breaks this May that person Be torn apart Like this animal Now God

[10 : 53] Went And he did that In that circumstance On his own And he was saying Let me be torn apart If I don't Fulfill my word And here we have Christ Upon the cross Saying All my bones Are out of joint My tongue Sticks to the roof Of my mouth He could look down And say They have pierced My hands And my feet I can count All my bones Just think of The nails In Christ's Hands and feet As his body Was being Damaged And disfigured By what was Happening To him But more than that We have the gospel Accounts Which speak to us Of Of the suffering That Christ Went through The disfigurement Of his body And the marring That took place Upon his body When the priest Got hold of him They spat on him

And they struck him With their fists Pilate had him Flogged Before sending him Away for crucifixion And in the hands Of the soldiers They put a crown Of thorns Upon his head They spat on him Struck him on the head With his staff Again and again According to Mark They also struck him In the face Now if you think Of soldiers Striking Someone It isn't just A little slap They're going to Give somebody We are talking Severe punches I had a friend At school Who was unfortunate Enough to have Someone else Punch him in the face Because this guy Decided that A tackle at football Wasn't 100% fair And the next day His face Was up like a balloon And it was yellow And purple With all the damaged Blood that was There And here we have Christ being struck By multiple blows Within his face To the point

That it would Swell up And very occasionally You might see a picture On the TV Of someone Who's been beaten Up like that And you would Look at them And you say They no longer Look like they're human Because you can hardly See their eyes Or the features And the damage To the face Is something terrible It's like They are being marred Beyond human likeness We have Christ Pierced with a spear And in Isaiah 50 And verse 6 And we have A few more words That speak again Of his suffering I offered my back To those who beat me My cheeks To those who pulled out My beard I did not hide my face From mocking and spitting We have a bit of detail there That we don't get In the gospels Christ's beard Being pulled out You can imagine The pain And the suffering That he went through In that And therefore

He would have Been totally distorted In his face And it's the face That shows you The humanity Of a person Here he was Being marred Beyond human likeness By the time He got to the cross He would no longer Have looked As though he was human And I think Just thinking On those things It's worth thinking Of purported images That are made Of Christ Upon the cross And they really Look nothing like What he would have Looked like Upon the cross In terms of The suffering And the damage That was done To him So I would say It's just another Reason Not to make Or to keep Images of that Nature Because they don't Represent the true Suffering that Christ went through On the cross But more than that We know that In the bible Often the physical Pictures that are Painted and given To us Represent a Spiritual reality And so what is

That spiritual Reality that's Going on here And that is That Christ himself Was being marred To represent Where sin Takes humanity Because that really Is where sin Takes you It takes you To a point Where you no longer Look like you're human So our second point Is a marred humanity We all know That we are marred By sin God created Mankind Perfect Beautiful Even But in our Rebellion We no longer Look anything Like what we Should Although thankfully We still Carry the image Of God With us But sin Is something That distorts And damages People And the more We sin The more damage That is done And if you Think about it Sin Is something

[15 : 56] That does Not have A life Of its Own The Dutch Theologian Herben Bavinck Describes sin As a deletion It takes away From what it means To be human Because you're doing Something contrary To what God Created you To be And if you Think of that Going all the way Through Your ultimate Destiny Is then to go Beyond Human likeness Think of Something like Vandalism For example We have Vandalism As a problem Today Buildings get Vandalized Parks get Vandalized But if there Were no buildings And no parks There would be No vandalism It requires Something that Has been Made And made Beautiful For someone To decide To go And vandalize It And so It is With human Likeness Sin is always Something that Takes away From what it Means to be Human And one of the Biggest deceptions

Of the devil Is to try and Convince people That in sinning You're actually Becoming more Human How often Today do we Hear of people Talking about Following their Heart in order To express Who they Truly are But that is Completely wrong For we know That the heart Is deceitful Above all Things The reality Is every Time we Sin and Move away From God's Word we Become less Human And in fact If we keep On doing it So many people When they're Young who Think they're Becoming free By what they're Doing by the Time they're In the 50s And 60s It's like They're in Slavery To whatever Has entrapped Them That is the Effect of Sin But how Can I say You know This is taking Us all the Way away From human Likeness Until there Is nothing Of humanity Left in Us Think of Jesus Speaking to The Pharisees When he was Having contention

With them And he said You are like Your father The devil He said That in John 8 And 44 And went On to say That the devil Was a murderer And a liar From the beginning Now just think Of the devil Himself We think Of him As being The ultimate In evil And he is Incapable Any good Whatsoever But something Else we also Know about The devil Because scripture Tells us Is that the Devil Was an Angel He was Created as An angel He was Created Perfect He was Created To do God's Will And He Like man And before Man rebelled Against God's Will And what Has happened To him He has Gone to be Completely And utterly Evil There is Nothing good In him Whatsoever The difference Between the Devil and Ourselves Is that With us God has

Restrained The evil That has Come in There is Much Grace Comes into Our lives And into The world In which We live Whereas There is None Whatsoever In the Devil Himself And so The prospect For any Person Who does Not believe In the Lord Jesus Christ Is that They will End up Going beyond Human Likeness And being Like the Devil After they Die We wouldn't Have known The devil Was an Angel Unless Scripture Had told Us And if You are Going to Follow The devil As your Father That Is where You end Up That is Where anybody Will end Up Literally Marred beyond Human likeness You cannot Recognize them Because we Would never Have guessed That the devil Was an Angel Unless Scripture Had told Us And what Does the Devil Do He attacks Human Likeness The first Thing he Did was To cause

Adam To sin And God Had said On the Day you Sin You will Surely Die And then One of the Earliest Sins he Did was To Convince Cain It was a Good idea To murder His brother He brought About the Physical Death Of Abel And there Would have Been that Very visual Impact Upon his Parents Of their Dead son And ultimately The worst Thing that he Was involved In was Inciting Wicked Men to Bring about The death Of Jesus The devil Attacks Human Likeness In all Its forms He aims For the Destruction Of man Why does He do That Because Mankind Men Women And children Carry the Image Of God Around With them The devil Hates God Because He can't Be God Himself And if He wants To destroy That image He can't Destroy God So he Seeks to

[20 : 58] Destroy it In ourselves Jonathan Our name Just gone Straight out My head Great American Theologian Jonathan Edwards He offers The opinion That the Devil was Happy To be An angel To be A servant Of God As long As he Was at The top Of the Tree The head Of all The angels But he Suggests That when You learned He was Created To serve Man This lesser Being Who had Less powers Than himself He rebelled Against God That may Well be True And you Can understand How that Would be If he Wanted to Be At God's Side Rather than At the Side Of men And women Anyway He rebelled Against God And He ended Up falling From the Very top To the Very bottom Of creation You belong To your Father

Jesus Said All grace Will be Removed At the End Of your Life Sin Left to Work Itself Out And the Judgment Of God Upon sin Will come Upon you If you Do not Trust in Christ And what We see Upon the Cross Is the Same thing Happening To Christ Himself That Judgment Upon sin Verses 4 and 5 of Chapter 53 We Considered Him Stricken By God Smitten By him And afflicted But he Was pierced For our Transgressions He was Crushed For our Iniquities We have Christ Being stricken For our Sins Being crushed For our Iniquities What a Terrible Thought that Is of Christ Upon the Cross In that Period That he Was on The cross He was Stricken And he Was crushed And the

Same will Happen To anybody Who does Not trust In Christ If they Leave this Earth without That necessary Faith in Him A marred Humanity But the Wonderful thing Is scripture Tells us also That there is a Redeemed Humanity Each and Every one of Us needs to Be saved From going Beyond Human Likeness Christ Himself Went there Physically We've Just been Discussing All the Detail Of that But did He go There Spiritually Is a Thought that Will come To somebody's Mind And the Answer we Have to Say on That one Is no He did Not His Appearance And his Form Were marred Beyond Human Likeness But he Remained But he Remained Pure In Spirit How Then Can He Save If his Spirit Was not Corrupted In the Way that Ours Has been Corrupted And we Need to Think here Upon The Suffering That Christ Went Through And in

Verse 6 We have The Lord Has laid On him The Iniquity Of us All Elsewhere In scripture We are Told that Our Righteousness Are as Filthy Rags And Just Imagine Christ Being on The cross And God Laying All these Sins Upon him One After Another Like a Layer Of Filthy Rags One Layer Then a Second Then a Third Until you Can no Longer See Christ Whatsoever All you See Is this Filth And This Dirt And on The cross God Was taking The Sins Of his People And laying Them Upon Christ That he Would pay That price And it Was as Though God Was saying To Christ You Have Created And worshipped False Gods You Have Abused My Name You Have Murdered You Have Committed Adultery You Have Coveted

Your Neighbors Goods All of These Things Were Placed Upon Christ And What We See In Verse Seven As a Result Of That It Said He Was Oppressed And Afflicted Yet He Did Not Open His Mouth Christ Did Not Open His Mouth Upon The Cross Because As he Represented Humanity As he Was there As the Second Adam And he Was there As sinful Man With Sin Being Judged Upon Him He Had Nothing To Say Because There Was No Defense To Be Made For Our Rebellion Against God And in That Instant That Time Upon The Cross Christ Was No Longer Human In God's Eyes At That Time What a Thought That Is As to What Would Happen To Our Lord Jesus Christ In Order To Bring Salvation To Us But He Did Remain Pure In Spirit His Spirit Wasn't Corrupted And Yet Verse 11

[26 : 01] Of Chapter 53 It Tells Us That His Soul Suffered And Though The Lord Makes His Life After The Suffering Of His Soul He Will See The Light Of Life And Be Satisfied The Psalms Again Give Us Wonderful Insights Into The Suffering Of Christ I Will Read A Few Verses From Psalm 69 Verses 1 To 3 Save Me And Verses 14 And 15 Rescue Me From The Mire Do Not Let Me Sink Deliver Me From Those Who Hate Me From The Deep Waters Do Not Let The Flood Waters Engulf Me Or The Depths Swallow Me Up Or The Pit Close Its Mouth Over Me We Have A Picture There Christ Having Entered Into The Pit Into

That Experience Of Hell And Yet Here He Was Calling Out To God Saying Do Not Let It Close Its Mouth Over Me His Soul Suffered Terribly!

While He Was On The Cross And If We Think To Ourselves Think Of Someone Who Commits A Terrible Crime They Are Taken Into Court And They Are Sent To Prison For A Very They Deserve What They Are Getting They Are Getting The Just Desserts For The Crime That They Have Done But The People Who Are In Prison Who Suffered The Most Are Those Who Who Been They Are The People Who Are Set Free After 20 Or 30 Years And Maybe If They Said Yes I'm Guilty They Would Have Been Sentenced To Prison For Ten Years But Their Sense Of Their Right Acting And Their Refusal To Admit Guilt For Something They Hadn't Done Makes Their Suffering Ten Times Worse Because They Know They Do Not Belong There And That Is The Situation That Christ

Was In Upon The Cross He Knew He Was Pure In Spirit He Knew That He Was Righteous And Yet He Had To Go Through The Suffering Of His Soul At Being Made Sin In God's Sight So Therefore His Suffering I'm Quite I Don't Have A Problem In Saying Christ Suffering Upon The Cross Was In Fact Worse Than Our Suffering Because He Himself Was Completely Innocent So Let Think About How We Apply Some Of These Thoughts To Ourselves Given That Christ Human Human Likeness Just Think Of His Love For Lost Sinners That He Was Willing To Go That Far And Take That Much Filthiness Of Sin Upon Himself To Save Sinners Like You And Me Truly Remarkable And What A

Wonderful And A Gracious Savior We Have And Just Think Of The Worst Of Sins You Have Committed Christ Took Those Kind Of Sins Upon The Shoulders Upon The Cross And Therefore He Is Freely Able To Forgive And To Bring You Into His Family Given That Christ Was Marred Beyond Human Likeness Upon The Cross Just Think For A Minute!

[29 : 42] What A Crime It Is To Reject! There's Probably No Greater Sin Than To Say That The Sacrifice Of Christ Is Not Good Enough Scripture Tells Us In fact Jesus Himself Said That Any Sin Can Be For Given Except The Sin Against The Holy Spirit If Christ Works In Someone's Heart Through His Spirit To Reveal Himself To Them And Then They Refuse To Acknowledge Christ There Is A Risk That That Sin Against The Holy Spirit Is Taking Place Because What You Are Saying Is Christ Your Sacrifice Isn't Good Enough I'm Not Going To Repent And You Are Rejecting The Work Of The Holy Spirit Don't Reject Christ If He Is Speaking To You Today Don't Reject The Holy Spirit If He Is Calling You To Put Your Faith In Christ And For Believers We Temptation

While He Was On Earth And Yet He Remained Pure He Fulfilled God's Law In Its Entirety He Has Born Every Sin To Wash Us Clean No Half Measures So There's No Sin That He Hasn't Forgotten Or Was Unable To Cleanse Maybe He Is Calling You Today To Serve Him In Some Capacity Given That He Was Marred Beyond Human Likeness For You There's Nothing That He Can Ask You To Give Up Is Really Too Much Your Possessions Your Family Honor Standing In The Community Those Are Nothing Compared To Whatever He Might Wish You To Do And I Think In Many Churches There Are Some People Are As Well Am I A Christian Or Am I Not And Sadly There's A Few People Manage To Convince Themselves They Are When They Not They Deceive Themselves But I Think In Our Text Today There's A Bit Of A Litmus Test Which

We Can Apply To Ask Whether We Are In Christ Or Not If We Look Back To Those Words In Verse 14 Just As There Were Many Who Were Appalled At Him And Again In Verse 15 So Kings Will Shut Their Mouths Because Of Him Question I Want To Ask You Today Is As I Have Been Preaching Today Are You Appalled At The Thought Of A Savior Like Christ Who Would Do Something Like That Someone Who Came To Such An Ignominious End Upon A Cross That Is Not The Kind Of Person That People Of The World Put Their Trust In Or Have You Seen The Wonder And The Majesty Of The Work That Christ Did In Taking Your Sin Upon His Shoulders And Have You Been Silenced Like Kings Have Been Silenced When They've Considered The Marvelous Work Of Christ Upon The Cross If

You've Never Been Silent As You've Looked At The Work Of Christ You Need To Ask Yourself Am I Saved But If You've Been Stunned Into Silence And Then Drawn To Praise Of What Christ Has Done Then There's A Very Good Chance That You Are Indeed In Christ And If That Is The Case You Want To Confess Christ Before Men Before The Church Here And Before Your Community Because If Christ Was Willing To Do That For You You Should Be To Declare That Your Trust Is In Him One Final Thought When We Get To Heaven All The Effects Of Sin Upon Us Will Go As We Get Older Our Bodies Age They Decline Some Of Us Are Born With Defects Most Of Us Develop Defects As We Get On But When We Go To Heaven Our Bodies Will Be Created

New Made Beautiful And All The Effects Of The Curse Will Be Removed But There Will Be One Body In Heaven That Will Remain Eternally Marred And That Is That Of The Lord Jesus Christ His Wounds Will Be Beyond Show To To See And For All Of To Worship Him Because He Was Willing To Be Marred Beyond Human Likeness That We Might Not End Up Being Marred Beyond Human Likeness But That We Might Be Fully Human In His Presence As God Created Us To Be What A Wonderful Thought To Close!