

#### Isaiah 52:13-53:12

See, my servant shall prosper;  
he shall be exalted and lifted up,  
and shall be very high.  
<sup>14</sup> Just as there were many who were  
astounded at him  
—so marred was his appearance,  
beyond human semblance,  
and his form beyond that of mortals—  
<sup>13</sup> so he shall startle many nations;  
kings shall shut their mouths because  
of him;  
for that which had not been told them  
they shall see,  
and that which they had not heard  
they shall contemplate.  
1 Who has believed what we have  
heard?  
And to whom has the arm of the Lord  
been revealed?  
2 For he grew up before him like a  
young plant,  
and like a root out of dry ground;  
he had no form or majesty that we  
should look at him,  
nothing in his appearance that we  
should desire him.  
3 He was despised and rejected by  
others;  
a man of suffering and acquainted  
with infirmity;  
and as one from whom others hide their  
faces  
he was despised, and we held him of  
no account.  
4 Surely he has borne our infirmities  
and carried our diseases;  
yet we accounted him stricken,  
struck down by God, and afflicted.  
5 But he was wounded for our  
transgressions,  
crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the punishment that  
made us whole,  
and by his bruises we are healed.  
6 All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have all turned to our own way,  
and the Lord has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.  
7 He was oppressed, and he was  
afflicted,  
yet he did not open his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its  
shearers is silent,  
so he did not open his mouth.  
8 By a perversion of justice he was taken  
away.  
Who could have imagined his future?  
For he was cut off from the land of the  
living,  
stricken for the transgression of my  
people.  
9 They made his grave with the wicked  
and his tomb with the rich,  
although he had done no violence,  
and there was no deceit in his mouth.  
10 Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush  
him with pain.  
When you make his life an offering for  
sin,  
he shall see his offspring, and shall  
prolong his days;  
through him the will of the Lord shall  
prosper.  
11 Out of his anguish he shall see light;  
he shall find satisfaction through his  
knowledge.  
The righteous one, my servant, shall  
make many righteous,  
and he shall bear their iniquities.  
12 Therefore I will allot him a portion  
with the great,  
and he shall divide the spoil with the  
strong;  
because he poured out himself to death,  
and was numbered with the  
transgressors;  
yet he bore the sin of many,  
and made intercession for the  
transgressors.

The Greek word [*HODOS*] mean “**WAY, PATH , ROAD.**” It’s used in this passage in verses 32, 46 & 52. It’s the first name given to the followers of Jesus in history “the people of the Way” in Acts 11:26. You can hear the echo of it in the famous Jesus saying of John 14:6 “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.” Jesus and the disciples continue on the same path to Jerusalem. They’ve been distracted, delayed and waylaid by encounters in Mark 8-10, but they continue focused committed on the Way like a triumphant ascent or pilgrimage. Compare to **Psalm 122:1, Isaiah 2:2-3** : “In days to come the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. <sup>3</sup> Many peoples shall come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.””

#### Mark 10:32-52

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

32 They were on THE ROAD, going up to Jerusalem, and **Jesus** was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and **those who followed were afraid.** He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him, <sup>33</sup> saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the **Son of Man** will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles; <sup>34</sup> they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again.”

<sup>35</sup> James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, “**Teacher**, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” <sup>36</sup> And he said to them, “What is it you want me to do for you?” <sup>37</sup> And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” <sup>38</sup> But **Jesus** said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink **the cup** that I drink, or be baptized with the **baptism** that I am baptized with?” <sup>39</sup> They replied, “We are able.” Then **Jesus** said to them, “**The cup** that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be **baptized**; <sup>40</sup> but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”

The word “baptism” [baptizo] in Greek means to dunk, drown, by surrounded by the waters. We think of church baptism, but the initial context of the word is related to suffering and death. See **Psalm 42:7** and **Isaiah 43:2** : “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.”

#### Isaiah 50:4-9

<sup>4</sup>The Lord God has given me  
the tongue of a teacher,[a]  
that I may know how to sustain  
the weary with a word.  
Morning by morning he awakens—  
wakens my ear  
to listen as those who are taught.  
<sup>5</sup>The Lord God has opened my ear,  
and I was not rebellious,  
I did not turn backward.  
<sup>6</sup>I gave my back to those who struck  
me and my cheeks to those who  
pulled out the beard;  
I did not hide my face  
from insult and spitting.  
<sup>7</sup>The Lord God helps me;  
therefore I have not been  
disgraced; therefore I have set my  
face like flint, and I know that I shall  
not be put to shame;  
<sup>8</sup> he who vindicates me is near.  
Who will contend with me?  
Let us stand up together.  
Who are my adversaries?  
Let them confront me.  
<sup>9</sup>It is the Lord God who helps me;  
who will declare me guilty?  
All of them will wear out like a  
garment;  
the moth will eat them up.

Verse 32: **AFRAID**: What are they afraid before Jesus even reveals the prophecy? Is this related to Peter in 10:28 who is fearfully complaining that they’ve left everything to follow Jesus...and still don’t know if it was worth it? Or is it from the horrible predictions of defeat that Jesus has already given in **Mark 8:31-32** “<sup>31</sup> Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup> He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.” and **Mark 9:31** : ““for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.”?”

**The cup** is a common metaphor for one’s life, representing a happy fate (Psalm 23:5) or God’s affliction on the evil (Psalm 75:8, Isaiah 51:17, 22) and suffering (Jeremiah 49:12, Habakuk 2:16).  
Verse 40: includes the divine passive voice. It’s God who does the doing.

They will participate in the cup and baptism Jesus will know. So will we – look back to the we of v.33 – which implies participation.

**Jesus offers an extremely rare vision of leadership.** In Antiquity there is writing about meek, mild kings that care for the people. Servant King was a term associated with an ineffective leadership who pandered to the will of the masses. But the vision of Jesus is nearly non-existent. He makes a radical association of kingship with slavery. He says that power is from weakness, authority from submission.

**a ransom for many** In the First Testament “ransom” is often associated with the notion of atonement or expiation of sins. See **Exodus 21:30**: “<sup>30</sup> If a **ransom** is imposed on the owner, then the owner shall pay whatever is imposed for the redemption of the victim’s life.” ; **Exodus 30:10-12** : “<sup>10</sup> Once a year Aaron shall perform the rite of atonement on its horns. Throughout your generations he shall perform the atonement for it once a year with the blood of the atoning sin offering. It is most holy to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> The Lord spoke to Moses: <sup>12</sup> When you take a census of the Israelites to register them, at registration all of them shall give a **ransom** for their lives to the Lord, so that no plague may come upon them for being registered.” ; and **Numbers 35:31** : “Moreover you shall accept no **ransom** for the life of a murderer who is subject to the death penalty; a murderer must be put to death.”

**for many** the Greek word [pollon] can mean both “many” and “all.” Is Jesus saying that the Son of Man will die for a particular people, or for all of them?

**BARTIMAEUS** the name means son of (bar) Timaeus (the Greek word for honor). Curiously he’s not at all treated with honor in the passage.

Bartimaeus is **alongside THE WAY** (or path or road) but not in or on it. This could be physical and geographical, but it can also be spiritual. He’s alongside the way of Jesus but he can’t see it, can’t find it, and so unable to walk with him on it.

Jesus is talking about the **HODOS – A WAY, A PATH** – of service. It’s a tippy-turvy, backwards view of greatness. He calls followers to take up the lowest possible point of shame and degradation as glory: not just humility, but what is seemingly dehumanizing debasement. It’s a vision that’s actually more offensive than beautiful to our eyes and ears when we fathom it.

<sup>41</sup> When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. <sup>42</sup> So **Jesus** called them and said to them, “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. <sup>43</sup> But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> For the **Son of Man** came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life *a ransom for many.*”

<sup>46</sup> They came to **Jericho**. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, **BARTIMAEUS** son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting **by THE ROADSIDE**. <sup>47</sup> When he heard that it was **Jesus of Nazareth**, he began to shout out and say, “**Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!**” <sup>48</sup> Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, “**Son of David, have mercy on me!**” <sup>49</sup> **Jesus** stood still and said, “Call him here.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart; get up, he is calling you.” <sup>50</sup> So **throwing off his cloak**, he sprang up and came to **Jesus**.

<sup>51</sup> Then **Jesus** said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man said to him, “**My teacher**, let me see again.” <sup>52</sup> **Jesus** said to him, “Go; your faith has made you well.” Immediately he regained his sight and **followed him on THE WAY**.

**followed him on THE WAY**: Bartimaeus responds instantly, trusting Jesus, abandoning his future into his hands. He doesn’t go home (as would be expected) but rather follows Jesus. This re-orienting of life incarnates the prophetic vision of the Way of God in **Isaiah 35** : “<sup>1</sup>The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; ... They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. <sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. <sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.” <sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; <sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ... <sup>8</sup> A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God’s people ... <sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

**Jericho** was the place from which Joshua invaded the promised land [see Joshua 2; 5:13-6:26 for the story]; paradoxically Mark presents it as the places from which Jesus invades Judea [the region of and around Jerusalem: the center of the Jewish world].

The town is located between the Judean desert (as you go up towards Jerusalem) and the vast richness of the Jordan valley. It’s an in-between place.

But what did he do there? It’s a lightning fast trip. He appears (v 46) and then leaves (the same verse). Maybe Bartimaeus failed to find Jesus during his brief Jericho sojourn and was out looking for him?

**Son of David**, : this is a title that is nationalistic and militaristic. It’s the Messiah in all his royal glory who will come to wipe out the enemies of God and restore the David reign 2 Samuel 14:4 2 Kings 6:26

**“have mercy on me”** this phrase in Greek is “Kyrie Eleison” – the refrain often sang in mass and worship. This entreaty echoes those made to other kings in **1 Samuel 14:4** and **2 Kings 6:26**. The encounter and dialogue mirrors that of **Matthew 20:30-31** : “<sup>30</sup> There were two blind men sitting by the roadside. When they heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted, “**Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!**” <sup>31</sup> The crowd sternly ordered them to be quiet; but they shouted even more loudly, “**Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!**”

**throwing off his cloak**, Some see a connection between this physical disrobing and that historically done before baptism in the early church. Is this like a baptism, in which Bartimaeus is coming to faith in Christ?