

# Isaiah 53 - The "Holy of Holies" of the Old Testament

III. Prophecies of comfort (Is 40:1—66:24)

(2) Israel's deliverer (Is 49:1—57:21)

(D) Suffering servant (Is 52:13—53:12)

(b) Rejection (53:1-3)

(c) Suffering (53:4-6)

(d) Death (53:7-9)

(e) Resurrection (53:10-12)

## Isaiah 53

(b) Rejection (53:1-3)

1 Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

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1 "Who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

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

- This is quoted by John (John 12:38-42) to explain Israel's unbelief and rejection of their Messiah; see note: **The Mystery of Israel's Unbelief** on John 12:37.

— Many "Jehovah passages" in the OT are applied to Jesus in the NT. These include: Ps 102:12,25-27 (Heb 1:10-12); Ex 3:14 (John 8:58; 18:5-6); Is 6:5 (John 12:41); Deut 10:17 (1 Tim 6:15); Is 6:8-10 (John 12:39-40); Is 53:1 (John 12:38); Ps 110:1 (Matt 22:41-45; Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:41-44; Acts 2:34-36; Heb 1:13).

— Technically, this passage has not been fulfilled yet

— It speaks of the Nation of Israel discovering that Jesus is their Messiah

— It is a prediction of their initial rejection and subsequent discovery...

John 12:38-42:

38 That the saying of Isaiah 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?

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again,

40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

41 These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue.

Dan 9:26: And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be **cut off**, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary...

- "...cut off" - *karat*, cut off, kill, execute for a capital crime. In the famous 70th Weeks prophecy, it declares that the Messiah will be executed!

2 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of dry ground; He has no *stately* form or majesty That we would look at Him, Nor an appearance that we would take pleasure in Him.

2 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no *stately* form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.

2 For he grew up before him like a tender plant, and like a root out of a dry ground; he had no form and he had no majesty that we should look at him, and there is no attractiveness that we should desire him.

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 was despised and abandoned by men, A man of great pain and familiar with sickness; And like one from whom **people** hide their faces, He was despised, and we had no regard for Him.

3 He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

3 "He was despised and rejected by others, and a man of sorrows, intimately familiar with suffering; and like one from whom people hide their faces; and we despised him and did not value 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.

- "...people" - especially Israel, but also Gentiles

Matt 27:30-31:

30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

- And apparently they even ripped off His beard! Cf. Is 50:6

(c) Suffering (53:4-6)

4 However, *it was* our sicknesses *that* He Himself bore, And our pains *that* He carried; Yet we ourselves assumed that He had been afflicted, Struck down by God, and humiliated.

4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.

4 "Surely he has borne our sufferings and carried our sorrows; yet we considered him stricken, and struck down by God, and afflicted.

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

- Notice the substitutionary character declared and emphasized ...

- These 12 verses summarize the essence of all of Paul's epistles!

Matt 8:17: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

5 But He was pierced for our offenses, He was crushed for our wrongdoings; The punishment for our well-being *was laid* upon Him, And **by His wounds we are healed**.

5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, and he was crushed for our iniquities, and the punishment that made us whole was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed.

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.

- "...by His wounds we are healed" - watch out for this one as it is often misapplied...

- Caveat: The context of Is 53:5 is soteriological, not medical. It is the healing from the effects of sin:

— If you attempt to apply Is 53:5 to medical healings, you may cloud your confidence in your eternal soteriological security when a medical healing may not occur.

— Medical healing involves the sovereignty of God and is treated in Matt 8:16-17; Matt 8:17 is quoting Is 53:4, not v5

— Your security in Christ vastly overshadows all: John 10:28-29; Rom 8:28-39; et al.

- Did the Cross of Christ purchase physical (medical) healing?

— If it did, Paul never knew it—he gave Timothy bad advice concerning his frequent sicknesses and he left Trophimus sick in Miletus (2 Tim 4:20)

— If it did, Peter never knew it—he wrote two letters dealing with suffering and the Christian life

1 Peter 2:24: 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.

*He was born of a woman  
so that we could be born of God;  
He humbled Himself  
so that we could be lifted up;  
He became a servant  
so that we could be made joint heirs with Him!  
He suffered rejection  
so that we could become His friends;  
He denied Himself  
so that we could freely receive all things;  
He gave Himself  
so that He could bless us in every way.*

6 All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the wrongdoing of us all To fall on Him.

6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

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

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.

- The key to understand Jesus' sacrifice is that it was one of substitutionary atonement...it should've been us who bore our own grief, us who carried our own sorrows. We should be pierced for our own transgressions, crushed for our own iniquities, etc.

-- This passage perfectly describes the doctrine of Atonement. For a number of false views about doctrine of the Atonement, see [Soteriology 03 - Atonement \(Is 53:3-6\)](#).

2 Cor 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.

(d) Death (53:7-9)

**7** He was oppressed and afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.

7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.

7 He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he didn't open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, as a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

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.

[Matt 26:62-64; 27:12-14; Mark 15:3-5; Luke 23:9; John 19:8-9]

8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off from the land of the living *For* the wrongdoing of my people, to whom the blow *was due*?

8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living *For* the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke *was due*?

8 "From detention and judgment he was taken away— and who can even think about his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living, he was stricken for the transgression of my people.

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.

[Matt 27:11-16; Luke 23:1-25]

9 And His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

9 Then they made his grave with the wicked, and with rich people in his death, although he had committed no violence, nor was there any deceit in his mouth."

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.

- Andrew Bonar, using just the text of Leviticus, described details of the "Garden Tomb" in his expositional commentary—published 40 years before General Gordon discovered it.

- With 18 specifications from the Scriptures...

- The Garden Tomb complies with the paradox of being among—yet separate—from the graves of the wicked... and yet the personal tomb of one of the richest in the area.

[Matt 27:57-60,63-65]

(e) Resurrection (53:10-12)

**10** But the LORD desired To crush Him, causing *Him* grief; If He renders Himself as a guilt offering, He will see *His* offspring, He will prolong *His* days, **And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.**

**10** But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting *Him* to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see *His* offspring, He will prolong *His* days, And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.

10 "Yet the LORD was willing to crush him, and he made him suffer. Although you make his soul an offering for sin, he will see his offspring, and he will prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will triumph in his hand.

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.

- "...And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand" - this part of the verse is Messianic

— v1-9 of this chapter prophesied the death of the Messiah, in v10-12 He is very much alive again. He will see His seed and His days are prolonged. This was fulfilled by the Resurrection.

— See [Dispensational Gaps](#) for a list of 24 intervals in Scripture.

[1 Peter 2:22-23]

11 As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it and* be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, For He will bear their wrongdoings.

11 As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it and* be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.

11 Out of the suffering of his soul he will see light and find satisfaction. And through his knowledge his servant, the righteous one, will make many righteous, and he will bear their iniquities.

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

[Acts 13:38-39; Rom 5:15,18]

12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the plunder with the strong, Because He poured out His life unto death, And was counted with wrongdoers; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the wrongdoers.

12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the

transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.

12 Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong; because he poured out his life to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he carried the sins of many, and made intercession for their transgressions."

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.

[Luke 23:34; Rom 3:25]

### **OT Prophecies Quoted in the Gospels**

- He was to be of David's family (2 Sam 7:12-16; Ps 89:3-4; 110:1; 132:11; Is 9:6-7; 11:1)
- He would be born of a virgin (Gen 3:15; Is 7:14)
- He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)
- He would sojourn in Egypt (Hosea 11:1)
- He would live in Galilee (Is 9:1-2); in Nazareth (Is 11:1)
- To be announced by an Elijah-like herald (Is 40:3-5; Mal 3:1; 4:5)
- Would occasion massacre of Bethlehem's children (Gen 35:19-20; Jer 31:15)
- Would proclaim a Jubilee to the world (Is 58:6; 61:1)
- His mission would include the Gentiles (Is 42:1-4)
- Ministry would be one of healing (Is 53:4)
- He would teach through parables (Is 6:9-10; Ps 78:2)
- He would be disbelieved, rejected (Ps 69:4; 118:22; Is 6:10; 29:13); by Rulers (Is 53:1)
- Would make a triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Zech 9:9; Ps 118:26)
- Betrayed by friend for 30 pieces of silver (Zech 11:1-13; Ps 41:9)
- Would be like a smitten shepherd (Zech 13:7)
- Would be given vinegar and gall (Ps 69:21)
- They would cast lots for His garments (Ps 22:18)
- His Side would be pierced (Zech 12:10; Ps 22:16)
- Not a bone would be broken (Ex 12:46; Num 9:12; Ps 34:20)
- Would die among malefactors (Is 53:9,12)
- His dying words foretold (Ps 22:1; 31:5)
- Would be buried by a rich man (Is 53:9)
- Rise from dead on 3rd day (Gen 22:4; Jonah 1:7; Hosea 6:2)
- Resurrection followed by destruction of Jerusalem (Dan 9:26; 11:31; 12:1,11)