

# Isaiah 53 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

[Isaiah 52:13](#)

[Isaiah 52:14](#)

[Isaiah 52:15](#)

[Isaiah 53:1](#)

[Isaiah 53:2](#)

[Isaiah 53:3](#)

[Isaiah 53:4](#)

[Isaiah 53:5](#)

[Isaiah 53:6](#)

[Isaiah 53:7](#)

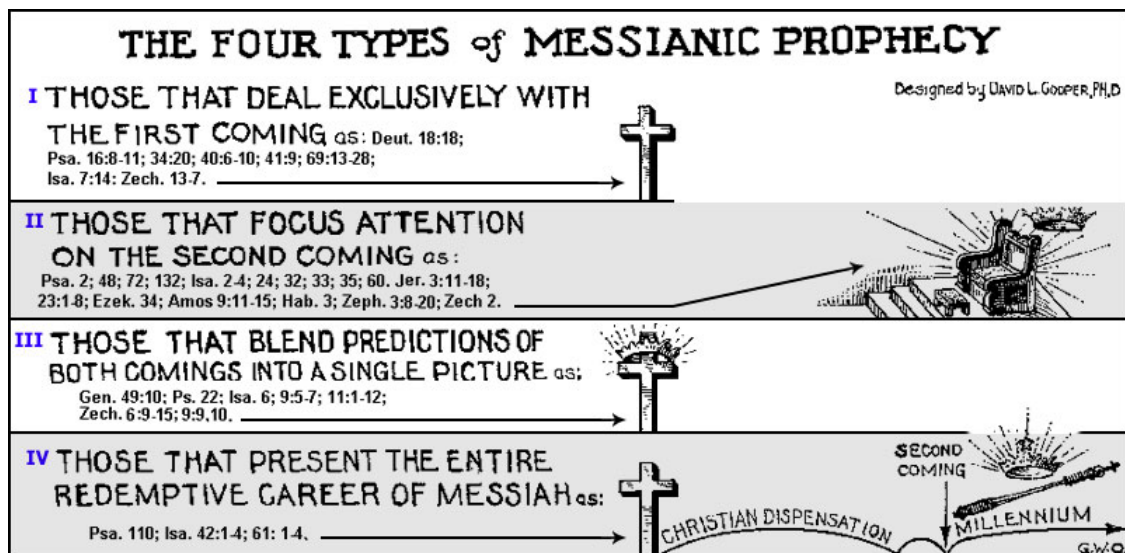
[Isaiah 53:8](#)

[Isaiah 53:9](#)

[Isaiah 53:10](#)

[Isaiah 53:11](#)

[Isaiah 53:12](#)



In this section when mention is made of Isaiah 53, the reader should understand that this includes Isaiah 52:13-15 as these passages compose an integral part of this fourth "Servant Song" in Isaiah. As noted the chapter breaks are not inspired and this is clearly a poor chapter break.

**G. Campbell Morgan** once said that when it comes to this portion of Scripture (referring especially to Isaiah 53:4-6), any analysis almost seems irreverent (The prophecy of Isaiah, Vol. 2, p. 130). And so the following exposition is done with some hesitation and with much recognition of the inadequacy of my human mind to plumb into the depths of the mind and heart of the infinite God in what has to be the greatest chapter in the entire Old Testament.

Isaiah 53 is exalted by many and ignored by many others. Believers in Messiah revel in this great section of Isaiah. Jews who reject Jesus refuse to even read Isaiah 53 in their synagogues. In fact Isaiah 53 has been called "the torture chamber of the rabbis!" And yet it is most fascinating that it was the view of the ancient rabbis that Isaiah 53 had reference to the Messiah though of course the ancient rabbis did not refer this to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the view of the Jewish paraphrase or the Targum. In chapter 52 in verse 13, the Targum reads, "Behold my servant the Messiah." So it's obvious that that particular paraphrase interpreted this passage of the Messiah to come. That's the view of many of the Midrashim and many of the late rabbis as well.

**Related Resources:**

- Messianic Prophecies in Isaiah
- [Sam Nadler alludes to Isaiah 53 in video](#)
- [Jewish man shocked by Isaiah 53 in video](#)
- [What Rabbis Have Said About Isaiah 53](#) - interesting
- [Isaiah 53 The Forbidden Chapter](#) - Eitan Bar (Messianic Believer) - interesting
- [Isaiah 53: About The People Of Israel Or Messiah Of Israel?](#) - Answering Rabbi's Objections to Jesus
- [Is The Plural Form Of Isaiah 53 Talking About Israel?](#) - Eitan Bar (Messianic Believer)
- [An Isaiah 53 Sermon \(by John MacArthur\) - Perspective of a Jewish Listener](#)
- [Messiah: Suffering Servant Or Victorious King?](#)
- [Jewish Testimonies - I Met Messiah](#) - God be praised!
- [Is Isaiah 53 'The Suffering Servant' a prophecy about Jesus?](#)
- [What are the four Servant Songs in Isaiah?](#)
- [Where does the Old Testament mention Christ?](#)
- [If His name was Yeshua, why do we call Him Jesus?](#)
- [What does it mean that Jesus is the son of David?](#)
- [Why wasn't Jesus named Immanuel?](#)

Jewish believer **David Baron** (1855-1926) introduces his exposition of Isaiah 53 with these words -

The first section consists of Isaiah 52:13-15, and may be described as God's **Ecce Homo**. In it God introduces His Servant, and seeks to direct the attention of all men to Him. This introductory section is really a summary of the whole prophecy, and contains in brief the whole story of **Messiah's sufferings and the glory which should follow**.

The second section, consisting of Isaiah 53:1-9 is primarily the lament and confession of penitent Israel in the future, when the spirit of grace and of supplications shall be poured upon them (Zechariah 12:10-14+), and their eyes are opened to behold Him Whom they have pierced.

The third section, consisting of the last three verses (Isaiah 53:10-12), sets forth the blessed fruit of Messiah's sufferings, or the glory which should follow. The prophecy really begins and ends with a description of the exaltation and glory of the Righteous Servant, but in between the mountain tops of glory lies the deep valley of shame and suffering, which "for us men and our salvation" He has to pass. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

Note all the prophecies in Isaiah 53 that were fulfilled in One Man, Yeshua! So it is little wonder that Jews do not read Isaiah 53 in the synagogue! See [Isaiah 53 The Forbidden Chapter!](#)

Remember that Isaiah wrote this majestic prophecy some 700 years before Christ, and that his primary audience was the Jewish people not Gentiles. Keep this in mind as you study this prophecy.

**Constable** notes that Isaiah 53 "is also the middle chapter in part two of the book (chs. 40-66). Most of the approximately 80 references to Isaiah in the New Testament come from this chapter."

**The Gospel According to Isaiah 53** writes that "In informal surveys among Messianic Jews, it is clear that Isaiah 53, more than any other portion of Scripture, has been used by God to lead Jewish people to Himself. However, there has never been an evangelistic campaign that used this text as the focal point in bringing the Gospel to Jewish people. The task of raising the awareness of the average Jewish person to this great passage of the Hebrew Scriptures is a challenge, as many Jewish people today are secular and have not studied the book of Isaiah or the Scriptures in depth. Chosen People Ministries conducted a professional precampaign phone survey of almost 600 Jewish homes in New York City to gauge their degree of familiarity with the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. The results confirmed that most Jewish people are unfamiliar with this chapter....8% of those who responded said they were extremely familiar with Isaiah 53...and 72% had little familiarity with the passage and the concept of the Suffering Servant in it."

**F Duane Lindsey** writes that The fourth Servant song (Isa. 52:13-53:12) "may without any exaggeration be called the most important text of the Old Testament." This is confirmed first by its numerous citations in the New Testament (e.g., Luke 22:37; Acts 8:30-35; 1 Pet. 2:22-25), and second by the voluminous Jewish and Christian literature which has been based on this prophecy down through the centuries....the first two (Servant) songs (Isa. 42:1-9; 49:1-13) emphasized the ultimate success of Yahweh's Servant-Messiah while alluding to His sufferings (Isa 42:4; 49:4), so the third song (Isa 50:4-11) amplified the sufferings and patient endurance of the Servant while implying His ultimate vindication or exaltation (Isa 50:7-9). The distinctive contribution of this fourth (Servant) song is to present the details and purpose of the Servant's sufferings and death, particularly as they relate to His exaltation and the ultimate success of His mission....most scholars agree on the extent of this fourth song—Isaiah 52:13–15 constituting an introduction or prologue to Isaiah 53:1–12....As in the preceding two Servant songs, the fourth song also begins a cycle of thought

that culminates in a powerful message of salvation (54:1–17). ([The Career of the Servant in Isaiah 52:13-53:12](#))

Isaiah 53 has been called the **Great Calvary Chapter**.

**Warren Wiersbe** appropriately entitles this section of his commentary **"Climbing Mount Everest."** I think that picture is so apropos. One of my fellow pathology residents, [Beck Weathers](#), made an attempt to climb Mt Everest and was one of several who were trapped in a blinding snowstorm in the [1996 Mount Everest disaster](#) killing 8 of the climbers. Weathers survived. I heard him give a "motivational speech" in Austin, Texas about 10 years after the disaster. I would have thought his coming so near death's door would have generated a desire to know about what lies in store in the next life. I was wrong. I shared with him "Mount Everest" truths of Jesus Who died in our place, that we might live forever, but he quickly did the "Texas two step" around my presentation of the Gospel (Beck is one of the most intelligent, quick witted individuals I have ever met). That was some 20 years ago. I wonder if he has yet successfully scaled the Mount Everest of Isaiah 52:13-53:12? While I was probably a poor guide, I did point out the One Who alone is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Many men die on the "Mount Everest" of Isaiah 52:13-53:12, both Jews and Gentiles alike. Praise God that with the enablement of our supernatural Guide, the Holy Spirit, many souls have successfully scaled the heights of this majestic prophetic peak!

**Wiersbe** adds that "Like Mt. Everest, Isaiah 53 stands out in beauty and grandeur, but only because it reveals Jesus Christ and takes us to [Mt. Calvary](#). **The messianic interpretation of Isaiah 53 was held by Jewish rabbis till the twelfth century After that, Jewish scholars started interpreting the passage as a description of the sufferings of the nation of Israel.** ([SEE MORE DETAILED NOTE BELOW](#)) But how could Israel die for the sins of Israel (Isa 53:8)? And who declared that Israel was innocent of sin and therefore had suffered unjustly (v. 9)? No, the prophet wrote about an innocent individual, not a guilty nation. He made it crystal clear that this individual died for the sins of the guilty so that the guilty might go free. The Servant that Isaiah describes is the Messiah, and the New Testament affirms that this Servant-Messiah is Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God (Matt. 8:17; Mark 15:28; Luke 22:37; John 12:38; Acts 8:27-40; 1 Peter 2:21-24). Isaiah 53 is quoted or alluded to in the New Testament more frequently than any other Old Testament chapter. The index of quotations in the appendix of my Greek New Testament gives at least forty-one different citations, and this may not be all of them. (Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Comforted - Isaiah). (Bolding Mine)

**J Vernon McGee** comments that Isaiah 53 is so to speak "A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE CROSS. Those who are acquainted with God's Word realize that the 53rd chapter of Isaiah and the 22nd Psalm give us a more vivid account of the crucifixion of Christ than is found elsewhere in the Bible. This may be a shock to many who are accustomed to think that the four Gospels alone describe the sad episode of the horrible death of the Son of God. If you will examine carefully the Gospel account, you will make the discovery that only a few unrelated events connected with the crucifixion are given and that the actual crucifixion is passed over with reverent restraint. The Holy Spirit has drawn the veil of silence over that cross, and none of the lurid details are set forth for the curious mob to gaze and leer upon. It is said of the brutal crowd who murdered Him, that they sat down and watched Him. You and I are not permitted to join that crowd. Even they did not see all, for God placed over His Son's agony the mantle of darkness. Some sensational speakers gather to themselves a bit of notoriety by painting, with picturesque speech, the minutest details of what they think took place at the crucifixion of Christ. Art has given us the account of His death in ghastly reality. You and I will probably never know, even in eternity, the extent of His suffering. ([Commentary on Isaiah 53](#))

None of the ransomed ever knew  
How deep were the waters crossed,  
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed  
Ere He found His sheep that was lost.

**William Kelly** says that the "The more modern writers, who dread the ancient application of the prophecy to the Messiah by their fathers, have invented a double means of escape, either by applying it to some distinguished man like Josiah or Jeremiah, or to the Jewish people elsewhere styled "My servant" in the prophecy. But in vain. This section is so punctually and exclusively applicable to our Lord that these efforts only prove the will of unbelief and its failure. In the beginning of chap. 49. we have already seen Christ, the Servant substituted for Israel who had been altogether wanting. We have seen in chap. 1. that the godly Jews are exhorted to obey the voice of this Servant of Jehovah, humbled though He has been among men, but vindicated of God, and indeed He Himself is God. ([Commentary](#))

**David Thompson** - What is most interesting is something that Drs. Keil and Delitsch picked up on, and that is, even those Jewish rabbis who believed it did refer to the Messiah yet to come, missed the fact that He already did come (Isaiah, Vol. 7, p. 303). Jonathan Ben Uziel says in his Jewish commentary that he thought that this section referred to the Messiah yet to come (F. C. Jennings, Studies in Isaiah, p. 612). So even those, who believe this does refer to the Messiah, can't seem to realize God's Messiah did come to Jerusalem and was crucified there. Most modern day Jewish teachers totally disregard this text as referring to the Messiah and do not teach it to the people of Israel. The effect is that most in the nation Israel are blind concerning Jesus Christ. However, any honest exegetical approach to this text clearly shows that this is an amazing prediction of precisely what would

happen to Jesus Christ. As Keil and Delitsch say **it is like Isaiah is writing this sitting “beneath the cross upon Golgotha”.** ([Sermon](#))

**Augustine** on Isaiah 53 - “It is not a prophecy, it is a gospel.”

**Polycarp** on Isaiah 53 - “The Golden Passional of the Old Testament.

**Martin Luther** said of Isaiah 52:13-53:12, **“Every Christian ought to be able to repeat it by heart.”** (Are you as convicted as I am? I have only memorized two verses and they are “hazy!”) (See Memorize the Word)

An anonymous **German scholar** wrote of Isaiah 53 - “It looks as if it had been written beneath the cross of Golgotha....Many an Israelite has had it melt the crust of his heart (**ED: PROBABLY A REASON RABBIS DO NOT ALLOW IT TO BE READ IN THE SYNAGOGUE!** cf Heb 4:12-13+) ....This chapter is the most central, the deepest and the loftiest thing that Old Testament prophecy outstripping itself has ever achieved.”

**David Guzik** - Many people are amazed that people – especially Jewish people – can read a chapter like this and miss Jesus. But really it isn’t surprising. When we make up our minds about Who Jesus is, it’s easy to become blind and deaf to the plain, simple message of the Word of God. Put away your pre-conceived notions and your cultural Jesus. Let the Word of God tell you Who He is. (Enduring Word Bible Commentary – Isaiah)

The **ESV Study Bible** makes a point regarding the Jew’s misinterpretation of this passage as referring to the nation of Israel - “To be clear on which parties are described, it helps to observe the pronouns: “I” in this passage is typically the Lord, “he” the servant, and “we” the servant’s disciples, who themselves need the servant to bear their guilt (53:4-6), which is why the servant cannot be Israel or the pious within Israel.”

**Expositor’s Bible Commentary** - The vast majority of commentators hold that the fourth song extends from Isaiah 52:13 to Isaiah 53:12,

**Adam Clarke** writes the following on Isaiah 53 - “This chapter foretells the sufferings of the Messiah, the end for which he was to die, and the advantages resulting to mankind from that illustrious event . . . This chapter contains a beautiful summary of the most peculiar and distinguishing doctrines of Christianity.”

**Constable** helps set the context writing that “The second segment of the section in Isaiah dealing with God’s atonement of Israel (chs. 49-55), after the anticipation of salvation (Isa 49:1-52:12), is the announcement of salvation. This is the fourth, final, and most famous Servant Song.”

**John MacArthur** agrees with Constable writing that Isaiah 52:13-15 is “a summary and preview of the humiliation and exaltation of the Servant, described in more detail in 53:1-12. The details cover the work of Christ in His [substitutionary](#) death, His burial, His resurrection, His saving of sinners, His intercession, and His kingdom.” (Borrow [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

[BEHOLD MY SERVANT A MESSIANIC STUDY OF ISAIAH - 830 pages - page might load slowly](#) by Raymond Miller

**Robinson** remarks on Isaiah 52:13-53:12 that ““The profoundest thoughts in the Old Testament revelation are to be found in this section. It is a vindication of the Servant, so clear and so true, and wrought out with such a pathos and potency, that it holds first place in Messianic prophecy.”

Recalling that chapter divisions are not inspired, it is better to read Isaiah 53 in the context of what Isaiah had just written in **Isaiah 52:13-15**. Below is a brief exposition and commentary on these three verses. In fact these 15 incredible verses have been subdivided into five [strophes](#) (stanzas, sections) of three verses in each section.

**Warren Wiersbe** in Be Comforted outlined the five the stanzas writing “The fifteen verses that comprise the fourth Servant Song fall into five stanzas of three verses each, and each of these stanzas reveals an important truth about the Servant and what He accomplished for us.”...

- STANZA #1 - Exaltation: The Shocking Servant (Isaiah 52:13-15)
- STANZA #2 - Humiliation: The Sorrowing Servant (Isaiah 53:1-3)
- STANZA #3 - Expiation: The Smitten Servant (Isaiah 53:4-6)
- STANZA #4 - Resignation: The Silent Servant (Isaiah 53:7-9)
- STANZA #5 - Vindication: The Satisfied Servant (Isaiah 53:10-12)

**Roy Gingrich** writes regarding Isaiah 52:13-53:12 - Now we come to one of the best-known and most-valuable sections of the entire Bible. The following things may be said concerning this section of Scripture:

- (1) It is "a fifth Gospel";
- (2) it is "a summary of the four Gospel narratives";
- (3) it is "the Holy of Holies of the Old Testament";
- (4) it is "the Mt. Everest of Old Testament prophecy";
- (5) it is "the heart of the book of Isaiah";
- (6) it is the most preached-on portion of the Old Testament, and
- (7) it is the section of Scripture most used to convince the unsaved Jews that Jesus is their Messiah.
- The theme of this section of Scripture is the work of the Servant of Jehovah (the work of making a [substitutionary atonement](#) for men's sins. (The Book of Isaiah)

**S Lewis Johnson** observes that "There are three leading interpretations of Isaiah 52:13-53:12, and first of all it has been said by some that the servant is the nation **Israel**. This is the view of many of the later rabbis, both the circumcised rabbis, that is the Jewish rabbis and the uncircumcised rabbis that is (LIBERAL) Gentile students of this great prophecy. But if **Israel** is intended, then these things must be true. Israel must have been an innocent sufferer. But when one reads the prophecy through, reading passages like Isa 53:8 or Isa 1:4 especially and Isa 42:19 and Isa 42:24, it is quite obvious that **Isaiah did not regard the nation as an innocent sufferer**. If this is a prophecy of Israel, they must have been a voluntary sufferer also." (AND THEY CLEARLY WERE NOT!) But most of all, this prophecy states that the servant is to make a [substitutionary atonement](#) for others. In fact, [substitution](#) is set forth many feel twenty-one times in Isa 53:4-8,10-12. And if it is true that the servant is the nation **Israel** and if there is some conviction with regard to it then **why has the synagogue omitted the reading of Isaiah 53 from the Scripture readings?** Why has it been called "**the torture chamber of the rabbis**"? ([The Astonishing Messiah](#)) (Bolding mine)

**F C Jennings** - We are now standing on the very threshold of the **Holy of Holies of our book**, and we do well to fear lest a carnal touch should make its defiling mark on this sanctuary, the walls of which are surely whiter than any fuller on earth could whiten them. Is there not at least one of my readers who will join with me in supplication that the Spirit, whose holiness alone accords with that of this scripture, will guard us from error, lead us into truth, and so take of the things of Christ and show them to us, as to attract our wandering hearts to Him, and bind them there forever. Amen. ([Isaiah 52:13-15-53:1-12](#))

What we have here is the very heart of the book of Isaiah - Jehovah saves in the Person of Jesus Christ.

**Nelson's NKJV Study Bible** summarizes the four Servant songs - The first song celebrates the Servant as the One who will establish justice for all (42:4). The second (Isa 49:1-13) highlights the deliverance that the Servant will provide. He will restore Israel and become a "light to the Gentiles." The third (Isa 50:4-9) emphasizes the God-given wisdom of the Servant. All this culminates in the description of the suffering and death of the Servant in Isaiah 53, the final "Servant Song." (**ED:** Isa 52:13-53:12)

**HCSB Study Bible** on the identity of the **Servant** - A number of songs in the latter half of Isaiah focus on the Servant of the Lord (49:1-6; 50:4-6; 52:13-53:12). The identity of the Servant is much debated, and most modern commentaries give full lists of options. The context of these verses points in the first instance to Israel or Judah filling the role of the Servant. After all, 41:8-9 addresses the nation as the Servant. In answer to the objection that this song's description of the Servant is much too positive to refer to the nation as a whole, it can be conceded that Isaiah spoke of the remnant that would emerge from the purifying fires of judgment. However, even the postexilic survivors did not live up to the hope expressed in these verses. Accordingly, Christian readers recognize that the NT writers (Mt 12:15-21) applied the description of the Servant, both here and in the three other songs, to Jesus Christ (**so the HCSB appropriately capitalizes Servant** - **ED:** HCSB is only modern translation that does this.).

This chapter's description is the most individualistic of all the Servant Songs in the book of Isaiah, and thus most clearly points to application beyond Israel.

**Arnold Fruchtenbaum** summarizes the **four Servant "songs"**:

1. The first is found in Isaiah 42:1-4, which spelled out the ministry of the Servant at His First Coming.
2. The second passage is found in Isaiah 49:1-13 and contains three main points: First, the Servant came as described in Isaiah 42:1-4 and accomplished His mission with great difficulty because He was rejected by Israel (Is 49:1-4). Secondly, because of His rejection, the Servant will now become a light to the Gentiles (Isa 49:5-7). Thirdly, all Israel will ultimately come to a saving knowledge of this Servant (**ED:** cf Zech 12:10-14+) and then the final regathering and restoration of Israel will take place.
3. The third Servant passage is found in Isaiah 50:4-9 and deals with the sufferings of the Servant, just short of His coming death.
4. The fourth and most strategic passage is Isaiah 52:13-53:12 because it deals with two things: first, the reason for the sufferings of the Servant, and secondly, the death of the Servant. (The Messianic Bible Study Collection)



**Moody Bible Commentary** - The Jewish interpretation of this Song is significant. In the ancient Rabbinic literature, the Servant was frequently identified as the Messiah (e.g., Targum Jonathan ben Uzziel [written c. AD 100–200] on Isaiah 52:13 states, “Behold, my Servant the Messiah will prosper”; Bab. Sanhedrin 98a). However, the influential medieval Jewish interpreter Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (Rashi, AD 1040–1105) identified the Servant as Israel. Today, most Jewish interpreters follow Rashi, as do most critical scholars. The following are six reasons the Servant in the fourth Song cannot be identified as Israel.

**First**, the pronouns of the Song would be inconsistent. In the body (Isa 53:1–9), the people of Israel are speaking and uniformly identify themselves in the first person (we, our, us). They also describe the Servant in the third person (He, Him). Thus, Israel cannot be the Servant.

**Second**, the Servant is said to die for “my people” (Isa 53:8). Isaiah’s people were the people of Israel. Therefore, the Servant cannot be Israel and also die for Israel.

**Third**, the Servant is described as completely innocent (“He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth,” Isa 53:9). Yet, throughout Isaiah, Israel is called guilty (e.g., Isa 1:16–20; 5:7). The nation cannot be the innocent Servant.

**Fourth**, the Servant suffered for the sins of others (Isa 53:6). But the nation of Israel suffered for her own sins (Isa 40:2).

**Fifth**, the Servant was a willing sufferer, rendering “Himself as a guilt offering” (Isa 53:10). But Israel did indeed suffer, in fact, twice as much as she deserved (40:2), but never did so willingly.

**Sixth**, the Servant actually died (“cut off out of the land of the living,” Isa 53:8). Certainly many in Israel did die but the nation collectively did not perish. In fact, God promised that the nations could never totally destroy His people (Jr 31:35–37). On the whole, it seems best to maintain the earliest Jewish view that the Servant should be identified as the Messiah.

**Isaiah 52:13 Behold, My Servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted.**

ESV Isaiah 52:13 Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted.

- **My Servant** : Isa 11:2,3 42:1 49:6 53:11 Eze 34:23 Zec 3:8 Php 2:7,8
- **will prosper**, Isa 53:10 Jos 1:7,8 \*marg: Jer 23:5
- **He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted**: Isa 9:6,7 Isa 49:6 Ps 2:6-9 Ps 110:1,2 Mt 28:18 John 3:31 5:22,23 Eph 1:20-23 Php 2:9-11 Heb 1:3 Rev 5:6-13
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **BEHOLD!** **THE SERVANT OF JEHOVAH** **GREATLY EXALTED**

While critics attempt to apply Isaiah 52:13-53:12 to Israel, it clearly is a Messianic prophecy and God is speaking throughout this section. As discussed above, it would be far more appropriate to begin Isaiah 53 at this verse to facilitate continuity of the teaching on the Servant.

The fascinating aspect of Isaiah 52:15-53:12 is that it begins with the Triumph of our Lord before it explains the cost He paid to bring about the Triumph. It is alike an old time fairy tale (but of course it is NOT a fairy tale) which ends "and they lived happily ever after." Here Isaiah begins the story of sorrow with a "happily ever after" passage! In a word, the fourth Servant Song begins with what is really the end of the song, the glorification of the Messiah!

**Charles Ryrie** commenting on Isaiah 52:13-53:12 writes that "This is one of the most treasured and important passages in the OT. These verses present the Servant suffering vicariously for men's sins. **Traditional Jewish interpretation** understood the passage to be speaking of Messiah, as, of course, did the early Christians, who believed Jesus to be that Messiah (Acts 8:35). **Not until the twelfth century did the view emerge that the nation Israel is referred to, a view that has since become dominant in Judaism.** But the Servant is distinguished from the "people" (Isa 53:8), and He is an innocent victim, something that could not be said of the nation (Isa 53:9)." (Ryrie Study Bible) (Bolding mine)

[Targum Jonathan to the Prophets](#) - Behold, My servant the Messiah shall prosper; he shall be exalted and

great and very powerful.

**Fruchtenbaum comments** - Among the earliest Targums are those of Jonathan ben Uzziel dating from the first century A.D. His Targums on this passage of Isaiah begin with these words: "Behold my servant Messiah shall prosper...." The Targums of Jonathan ben Uzziel were heavily quoted by the early rabbis and he was certainly considered an authority on the Jewish view of Scripture. He definitely considered the Isaiah passage to speak of Messiah. Jonathan ben Uzziel could hardly be accused of adopting the "Christian interpretation."

**Fruchtenbaum** adds that "That Jonathan ben Uzziel was not alone in this interpretation becomes clear from a quotation from Rabbi Don Yitzchak Abarbanel from about 1500. While he himself did not accept the view that the Isaiah passage referred to the Messiah, he makes a dramatic admission:

The first question is to ascertain to whom (this scripture) refers: for the learned among the Nazarenes expound it of the man who was crucified in Jerusalem at the end of the second temple and who according to them was the Son of God and took flesh in the virgin's womb as it is stated in their writings. Jonathan ben Uzziel interpreted it in the Targum of the future Messiah; but this is also the opinion of our learned men in the majority of the midrashim (*italics added*). (Jesus Was A Jew).

**Fruchtenbaum** - In spite of Abarbanel's personal view regarding this passage, he freely admits that the majority of the rabbis of the Midrashim took the passage to speak of the Messiah. He thus points out that Jonathan ben Uzziel was not alone in his opinion but rather this was the Jewish view of the period of the Targumim and the Midrashim....Among the most famous rabbis of this period was Moses ben Maimon, better known as Maimonides or the Rambam. In his writings he, too, makes the Isaiah passage refer to the Messiah: *Regarding the mission by which Messiah will present himself, ... he will not commend himself to our veneration by reason of his notable extraction; but the marvelous deeds he shall perform will show him to be the anticipated Messiah ... Isaiah states, "He grew like a tender plant, and as a root out of dry land," signifying, that his exact descent will not be known, till his successful career will direct people's attention to it.... But a noteworthy circumstance will be that crowned heads will stand amazed.... So they will remain in utter silence, as Isaiah predicts, "At him will kings shut their mouths, for what had not been told unto them shall they see, and what they never heard shall they understand."* The Rambam quotes from Isaiah 53:2 and 52:15 respectively and refers these passages to the Messiah's person. This is his view regarding the entire passage.

**John Oswalt** writes "The basic thrust of these verses (Isa 52:13-15) is clear enough: the nations will be shocked to speechlessness by what they see in God's Servant, something they had not been prepared for....Most commentators (e.g., Muilenburg) see a comparison between two shocks: the first (Isa 52:14) over the **disfigurement** of the servant, and the second (Isa 52:15) over his **exaltation** (resuming Isa 52:13)." (NICOT-Isaiah)

**James Smith** - "BEHOLD." At once our attention is invited and arrested. The "Beholds" of Scripture are all impressive and important, and without exception, challenge and merit our most careful attention. This "Behold" excels all others, for it is the herald drawing attention to the only Begotten of the Father.

God the Father is not ashamed to draw attention to His Son. "Hast thou considered My servant Job?" God proudly drew Satan's attention to the patriarch; "there is none like him;" and right nobly did Job bear up under his crushing sorrows. He did not let God down. There yet was sin and also much imperfection in this honoured and much tried servant. The fiery trial brought to the surface the sin of self-righteousness Job never dreamt was present in him. There is no such fear in our examination of the Lord Jesus. No one ever detected a flaw or blemish in His spotless character. The fiery trial only brought out all the clearer His perfections, as the fire from the Altar in Tabernacle and Temple only revealed more than ever the wonderful fragrance of the sacred incense.

There are four specially attractive "Beholds" connected with the Lord Jesus, and they wondrously harmonise with the predominant message of the four Gospels.

1. "Behold thy King" (Zech. 9:9), agreeing with the Gospel of Matthew wherein is drawn for us the portrait of the Lord Jesus as the King.
2. "Behold My Servant" (Isaiah 52:13) agreeing with the portrait drawn of our Lord in Mark's Gospel.
3. "Behold the Man" (Zech. 6:12) agreeing with Luke's portrait of the Saviour, wherein the humanity of the Lord is emphasised over and over again.
4. "Behold your God" (Isaiah 40:9) where attention is drawn to the Deity of the Servant, as in John's Gospel. (Handfuls of Purpose)

**Behold** - God is saying to the Jews (we in the Church tend to forget that this prophecy was originally addressed primarily to the nation of Israel!) in essence "Give what follows your full attention." Dear Jewish (and Gentile) reader, take a serious look at **My Servant!** Read it "actively" (engaging with it), not "passively" (as if uninterested or uninvolved). In fact, before you read further in the notes, read Isaiah 52:13-53:12 asking the Spirit of Truth to open your heart to understand the profound truths in this "mountain top" passage in the Old Testament. It is worth noting that the "First Servant Song" (Isaiah 42:1-4) also begins with "**Behold**, My Servant."

God introduces His Servant with "Behold" again in Zechariah -

**Behold**, I am going to bring in My Servant the Branch." (Zechariah 3:8)

**Behold**, a Man whose name is Branch, (Zechariah 6:12)

**Behold**, your King is coming to you; (Zechariah 9:9)

God is not begging Israel to pay attention but He is strongly encouraging them to pay attention. How tragic that God has sent His Chosen People an invitation to receive the Messiah and eternal life but many (if not most) modern Jews and Jewish teachers do not even read or teach this majestic Messianic passage. It is as if most Jews have responded to God's "Invitation" in Isaiah 52:13-53:12 not with a polite "**Decline with regrets**" but instead actually showing contempt ([kataphroneo](#) in present tense = continually) for "the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads (them) to repentance." (Ro 2:4+) As John wrote "He (THE SERVANT OF JEHOVAH) came to His own (THE JEWS), and those who were His own did not receive Him." (John 1:11+)

**David Thompson** on **Behold** - This is God speaking and God basically says I want you to take a serious look now at My Servant. This is God asking us to take a serious, deep, consecrated look at His special Servant/Savior. This is God's Servant, this is God's Messiah, this is God's Savior and God says take some time right now and take a serious look at what I have to say to you about Him right here and right now. If a person does this, if a person honestly takes a serious look at these 15 verses, there is no other conclusion that you may draw except this is an amazing prediction pertaining to Jesus Christ. ([Sermon](#))

**Jennings** on "**Behold**" - The Speaker giving this command is evidently God, the very God Who in the opening words of Genesis appears as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. It is He Who here tells us to "**behold**," that is, to consider with deepest, most concentrated attention One whom He terms His Servant. ([Isaiah 52:13-15-53:1-12](#))

**Behold** ([02009](#)) ([hinneh](#)) is an interjection meaning behold, look, now; if. "It is used often and expresses strong feelings, surprise, hope, expectation, certainty, thus giving vividness depending on its surrounding context." (Baker) As **C H Spurgeon** says "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

The Hebrew word **servant** describes one who does not have a will of his own, but submits himself or herself to the will of the master, seeking to obey the master. Messiah as the Servant of Jehovah seeks not His own will, but the will of His Father, even as He agonized (over the fact that He would soon bear the sin of the world and be separated from fellowship with the Father for a time on the Cross) in the Garden of Gethsemane declaring "**yet not My will, but Thine be done**" (Lk 22:42+). The writer of Hebrews picks up on the will of the Servant of Jehovah writing...

Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME; 6 IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE TAKEN NO PLEASURE. 7 "THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME (IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME) TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.'" 8 After saying above, "SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE in them" (which are offered according to the Law), 9 then He said, "**BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL.**" He takes away the first in order to establish the second. (Heb 10:5-9+)

**My servant** ([05650](#)) (['ebed](#)) is a phrase which occurs 17x in 16v in Isaiah - Context determines the identity of each **servant** - **Isaiah** (Isa 20:3), **Eliakim** (Isa 22:20), **David** (Isa 37:35), **Israel** (Isa 41:8,9, Isa. 44:1; Isa. 44:2; Isa. 44:21; Isa. 45:4), **Messiah** (Isa 42:1, 19, 49:3, 6, 52:13, 53:11). Isaiah 42:1 is the first of four "Servant Songs" (Isa 49:1-13; Isa 50:4-11; Isa 52:13-53:12) that are Messianic prophecies describing Jesus Christ. Isaiah 42:1-3 is quoted in Mt 12:18-20 as applying to Jesus Christ.

The Name "**My Servant**" does not appear again until Isaiah 53:11 and nowhere in this fourth "Servant Song" does He Himself speak. Instead, except for the second person pronoun "You" in Isaiah 52:14, He is always spoken of in the third person throughout the song.

**David Baron** on **My Servant** - Insignificant, fallen man ever aims at exalting himself, but here is One who, though in the form of God counted not His equality with God a prize ("to be grasped" at), but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant "and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the Cross." No wonder, then, that the Father points with delight to Him, saying, "Behold My Servant," and would have our eyes fixed on Him, not only as our Saviour, but as our example, that we might follow in His footsteps. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))



**Jennings on will prosper** - He ever acted so wisely as to insure success, hence the very word rendered "act wisely" (will prosper) comes to mean, as in the Authorized Version, to "prosper," and both meanings may well be seen in it here: His wisdom and its prospering are united in the one word. His wisdom led Him to infinite suffering, and by that suffering His purpose was attained. This first line then takes us to that "wise" path of suffering only terminated by the Cross. ([Isaiah 52:13-15-53:1-12](#))

**Will prosper (07919)(sakal)** means primarily to act wisely, to show prudence, good sense, insight and understanding. The natural fruit expected from acting wisely is that this leads to prosperity or success. In Joshua 1:8+ we see this pattern where meditation in the Word and obedience to that Word will result in "**success**" which is the same word **sakal**. What this affirmative description does is give us a general statement of the effective accomplishment of the great work of the Servant." (Allan MacRae - The Gospel of Isaiah) Sakal is used in 2 Ki 18:7 which says of Hezekiah that "the LORD was with him (read why in 2 Ki 18:3-6 esp verse 6!); wherever he went he **prospered**." In short, combining both senses of sakal, prudence begets prosperity!

We see this association of wise behavior and prosperity in 1 Sa 18:14 we see why "David was **prospering** (sakal) in all his ways for the LORD was with him." The 1 Sa 18:14KJV says "David **behaved** himself **wisely** in all his ways and the LORD was with him."

And so to **prosper (sakal/sākhāl)** means Messiah will act with insight and prudence. NET Bible has "He will succeed." ESV has "shall act wisely." So He will prosper because He acts wisely. Jeremiah uses ([sakal/sākhāl](#)) in his description of the Messiah...

"Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and **act wisely** ([sakal/sākhāl](#) - Jer 23:5KJV has "shall...prosper") And do justice and righteousness in the land. (Jer 23:5).

**David Thompson on will prosper** - This is a sequential action; one acts in a way that pleases God and then God prospers the person. When a person chooses to act wisely from God's perspective, the end result is always success and prosperity. What is revealed here is that Jesus Christ would always think, say, and do the things that would lead to the full blessings and prosperity of God. This becomes staggering when one considers what is described in these verses, because what He would actually do is not what we would expect a prosperous servant to do. There has been only one Person who has ever walked on this earth who has always acted in a wise way in the sight of God. Every other human who has ever walked on this earth has played the part of a fool. ([Sermon](#))

Notice the apparent paradox for verse 13 describes success, but in verse 14 God's Servant seems to be a failure. And yet God says He will be exalted, similar to the description of Jehovah in Isaiah 6:1 "**I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted.**" In short in Isaiah 53:14 the Servant of Jehovah looks like anything but "lofty and exalted," and yet Isaiah 52:13 assures us that the Servant's end is a successful one! Do we not see a similar pattern in Php 2:7-8+ in which Messiah

"emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant (cf "Servant of Jehovah"), and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

This description of His humiliation parallels the picture of the Servant in Isaiah 53:14. But following the Servant's humiliation, comes the exaltation which explains the startled reaction of the nations and of kings in Isaiah 52:15. Paul describes the Servant's final exaltation...

For this reason also (Php 2:8), God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:9-11+)

Indeed, Christ's exaltation will not be universally recognized until He returns and rules over His Messianic Kingdom.

**John MacArthur** sums on **My Servant** noting that "There are four times in the prophets where you have, "**Behold My**," or "**Behold**," referring to the Messiah. Here, "**Behold My Servant**," also in Zechariah 3:8, "**Behold My servant**," referring to Messiah. In Zechariah 6:12, it's "**Behold the Man...the Man**," which tells us Messiah will be the Servant of God, He will also be a Man. In Zechariah 9:9, the prophet says, "**Behold your King**," so the Messiah will be the Servant of Jehovah, a Man and King. And in Isaiah 40:9, it says of Messiah, "**Behold your God...Behold your God**." ("Here is [hinneh](#) your God" is literally "Behold your God.") **Messiah will be Man and God, and Servant and King**....He is all of that. "**Behold**," look at Him. And that quartet of titles, **Man, God, Servant, King**, become the theme of the four Gospels. Matthew presents Him as **King**. Mark presents Him as **Servant**, Luke presents Him as **Man**, and John presents Him as **God**. Look at Him. Look at My Servant. The One whose food is to do the will of Him who sent Him (Jn 4:24) and finish His work (Jn 17:4), the One Who said, "I always do the things that are pleasing to My Father (Jn 8:29). My Servant - " He says - "will prosper." ([The Startling Servant of Jehovah](#))

**My Servant will prosper** - God says His Servant will prosper or succeed and then immediately describes what that success will look like - **He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted.**

### THREE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE SERVANT'S PROSPERITY

**He will be high and lifted up** - Here we see Messiah's preeminence, and is the very same description ("**lofty and exalted**") given of the **Lord** (['adonay](#)) in Isaiah 6:1+ which John 12:41 explains as a Theophany, which I personally believe was a [Christophany](#), a manifestation of Jesus Christ in the OT in His glorious splendor. And so it seems that in Isaiah 52:13 we see the "Crowning of Christ," which follows the "Crucifixion of Christ." How many times we have heard "There is no crown without suffering." First the sufferings, then the crown. Peter describes the puzzlement of even the men God's Spirit used to write these great Messianic prophecies...

As to this salvation, **the prophets** who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as **He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.** (1 Peter 1:10-11+)

Comment: Isaiah 52:13-15 predicts the **sufferings** of Christ and the **glories** to follow, in short, the suffering and the crowning of the King of kings!

Let's look at the three descriptions of the Servant's prosperity. A number of expositors have pointed out that Isaiah's use of three words to describe the Servant of Jehovah are a foreshadowing of future events in Messiah's life.

At first reading **He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted** seems to be somewhat redundant, but it is not. I like Delitzsch's comment that these three verbs describe "the commencement, the continuation, and the result or climax of the exaltation."

As **John MacArthur** says "It's high, higher, highest. God is going to make Him high, then higher, and then highest. **High**, I believe, looks at His resurrection. **Higher** looks at His ascension. And **highest** looks at His coronation. He is going to be so successful that God is going to raise Him from the dead, God is going to take Him into glory, and God is going to sit Him at His right hand, Philippians 2:9-11. God is going to give Him a name above every name, the name Lord. And at that name, every knee will bow. God is going to make Him the ruler over everything in the universe. He's going to be the King of the universe, as well as the head of the church. The astonishing revelation of the Servant of Jehovah is this, He will come, He will succeed, He will accomplish the purpose of God by His great effort, and God will validate that by raising Him from the dead, taking Him into glory and seating Him on His throne. That is an astonishing appearance of the Messiah. ([The Startling Servant of Jehovah](#))

To summarize:

- (1) **High** (Rising up) - His Resurrection
- (2) **Lifted Up** - His Ascension
- (3) **Greatly exalted** - Seated at the Right Hand of the Father

**Jennings** - First, He is raised up from the depths of humiliation, to which that path had led Him, the tomb: then still higher does He rise, as from Olivet His feet leave this earth, and the cloud hides Him from sight; till finally to Him is given the highest place in all the universe, or, as a very literal rendering of these last words would be, "High, Very." Thus are we told in these few words the whole path of the Messiah, till He reaches, as Man, the Throne He had left as the divine Son. ([Isaiah 52:13-15-53:1-12](#))

**S Lewis Johnson** - He shall be **exalted**, a verb *ya'ruwm* — that can mean "he shall rise," and then **extolled**, *nasa*, which means something like "to lift up," to bear away in many contexts, and then **shall be very high**, a verb that means essentially that. In fact, can it possibly be that these three verbs refer to the commencement of our Lord's exaltation in His resurrection, the continuation of it in His ascension and the climax of it in His session at the right hand of the throne of God? He shall be exalted, he shall be extolled, he shall be very high. ([The Astonishing Messiah](#))

(1) **High** ([07311](#)) (*rum*) is a verb which literally describes something raised up high (water in the global flood = Ge 7:17). **Rum** can describe God as being exalted (2 Sa 22:47, Ps 99:2, 108:5, Isa 33:10). In Isaiah 52:13 **rum** is in the Qal which can signify either being high or rising up.

(2) **Lifted up** and is the verb *nasa'* which literally means to lift up which would be compatible with the idea of ascension for Luke records that after the resurrection from the dead, Jesus "**was lifted up** while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight." (Acts 1:9+)

**Nasa'** also conveys the sense of bearing and so the picture Isaiah presents is of the Servant of God, the Messiah, **lifted up** (*nasa'*)

Who "surely our griefs He Himself **bore**" ([nasa'](#)) (Isa 53:4+) for "He Himself **bore** ([nasa'](#)) the sin of many" (Isa 53:12+)

Was it for crimes that I have done  
He groaned upon the tree?  
Amazing pity! Grace unknown!  
And love beyond degree!  
—Watts

We can never sacrifice enough for the One  
Who sacrificed His all for us.

It is interesting that the Septuagint translates **nasa'** with the verb [hupsōo](#) which can refer literally to lifting one up (on the Cross - Jn 3:14, 8:32, 12:32, 34 to heaven - Acts 2:33) or of exalting one in the sense of granting them enhanced honor (Lk 1:52, Jas 4:10, 1 Pe 5:6).

**(3) Greatly exalted - Exalted** is the verb [gabah](#) which means to be high or exalted (of God Isa 5:16) but in a negative sense can also mean arrogant (2 Chr 17:6, 26:16, 32:25), this latter clearly NOT descriptive of the Servant of Jehovah (cf Isa 50:6). The Septuagint translates **exalted** here in Isaiah 52:13 with the verb [doxazo](#) meaning to glorify, which would certainly fit with Jesus' position of glory at the right hand of His Father in the glory of Heaven! Christ's exaltation to the right hand of God is referred to by Dr Luke quoting the apostle **Peter**...

This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore **having been exalted to the right hand of God**, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. (Acts 2:32, 33+, cf Acts 5:31)

**Paul** incorporates Christ's resurrection and His exaltation in the great description of Jesus in Ephesians 1

Which He brought about in Christ (Eph 1:18-19), when He **raised Him from the dead** and **seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places**, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And **He put all things in subjection under His feet**, and **gave Him as head over all things to the church**, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Eph 1:20-23+)

#### Related Resource:

- [What is a theophany? What is a Christophany?](#)
- The Angel of the LORD
- [The Astonishing Messiah](#) - S Lewis Johnson

---

**David Thompson** - W. A. Criswell said that one time he heard of an American soldier who had been in World War I in France and had been critically injured by a bomb that exploded in front of him. He lost the use of one of his limbs and was greatly disfigured. The saddest part of all of this was that he also lost his memory. He couldn't remember his family name and he couldn't remember where he was from. For years he would travel to various gatherings and he would ask, "Does any one know who I am?" People would look at this mangled, disfigured soldier and no one had a clue as to who he was (Isaiah, pp. 229-230). That is the way it was when Jesus Christ was here on earth. He walked through this world and when people looked at Him they were astonished. He basically kept asking, "Does any one here know who I am?" "Has any figured it out?" No one should have missed the identity of Jesus Christ, especially when you have a prophetic text like this in Isaiah. ([Ref](#))

---

**James Smith - THE SERVANT.** It is well to observe that God the Father is not ashamed to direct the attention of the Universe to His only begotten Son as "the Servant." There is nothing derogatory in this. In distant parts of the earth, in the habitations of paganism, idolatry, and cruelty, a gentleman is one who never works, and as a proof of this, allows the finger nails to grow to great length, and is arrayed in lengthy and costly robes. But the very glory of Christ is that He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. On the eve of His Passion, fully conscious of His Deity and glory, like a common Eastern slave He girded Himself with a towel, and washed the feet of His disciples. He could even say, "I am among you as one that serveth." There is a great deal of miserable cant in even these so-called democratic days. For why should a domestic servant be considered worthy of less respect and honour than another girl in office or professional labour? Even the King and Queen upon the Throne are but the servants of their subjects. The Lord Jesus, by becoming a servant, has for ever sanctified and dignified that humble word.

Here in this Golden Passional the great service rendered by the Divine servant is that of atoning for the world's sin. The Hebrew word for servant means a person at the disposal of another, to carry out that person's will, to do that person's work, to represent his

interests, and to fulfil a mission. This also is the New Testament definition of a servant. In those days a servant and a slave were synonymous terms. The Lord Jesus placed Himself entirely at the disposal of the Father.

In the Scriptures various individuals are referred to as God's servants.

1. Worshippers (Psa. 134:1) are called God's servants. How important worship is to be sure, and what an important service it is.
2. Trusting Ones (Psa. 34:22) are honoured by that designation. To place and exercise faith in God is delightful and important service.
3. The Jewish Nation (Isa. 41:8) is so designated. It would have been well if they had more constantly remembered this, and lived up to this great honour.
4. Certain Individuals are so marked, as for example; David (Isa. 37:35); Isaiah the Prophet (Isa. 20:3); and Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 25:9). But the greatest and most glorious of all the servants of the Most High was the Lord Jesus (Isa. 42:1-7).

### III. THE QUALITY OF HIS SERVICE.

1. Filial Service, the Service of the Son. There is a tremendous difference between a mere servant and a sonservant. That is, between a mere hireling and one who, because of a recognised and proud relationship, renders the service more whole-heartedly and more devotedly. It is well to notice He was first Son, then servant, or may we put it—God's servant because He was God's beloved Son. Before we can become God's servants labouring in His vineyard, we must become His children through faith in Christ Jesus.
2. Compulsory Service, the Compulsion of Love. "The love of Christ constraineth us," was the testimony of St. Paul, and was the secret of his incessant and abundant labours in the Gospel. Love was the great constraining force in the life of Christ. It was because He loved the Father that He was so ready to place Himself at the Father's disposal; it was because He loved mankind that He so readily came to render the service of the Cross. Love should be the great dominating force in our lives.
3. Heart Service, not the Service of the Eye. How significant is the phrase used by St. Paul with regard to service. "Not with eye service as men pleasers." Our blessed Lord's service was a real heart service, and so should ours be.
4. Chosen Service, a Service by Wondrous Grace.  
"My servant whom I have chosen" (Isa. 43:10). Undoubtedly our gracious Master is referred to here. He was the chosen one of the Father. But how significant when we can place side by side with this, that amazing verse in John 15, "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." We, too, are His chosen ones. He has some special work that we alone can do, for which His choice has fallen upon us.
5. Commissioned Service, not an Unrenewed Commission. "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." He came for a definite and specific work, and He has some definite and distinct work for us to do. It is the highest wisdom for all young Christians to place themselves entirely and unreservedly in the hands of the Redeemer,
6. Powerful Service, Energised by the Holy Ghost. "For He spoke with authority, and not as the Scribes," There was wonderful unction in all His addresses. Not one of His words fell to the ground. God save us preachers and speakers and Sunday School teachers from becoming as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal, a mere sound. But may there ever be recognised a definite power behind all that we say.
7. Sustained Service, Upheld by Wondrous Grace. Isaiah 42:1 clearly shows this. Is that not a significant phrase found in Revelation 2:1, "He that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand," indicating the seven leaders of the seven churches in Asia upon whom so great a responsibility rested had special supporting grace given to them. He will sustain us. We, too, will always be held up by wondrous grace. (Handfuls of Purpose)

**Isaiah 52:14 Just as many were astonished at you, *My people*, So His appearance was marred more than any man And His form more than the sons of men.**

**NET** Isaiah 52:14 (just as many were horrified by the sight of **you**) he was so disfigured he no longer looked like a man;

**ESV** Isaiah 52:14 As many were astonished at **you**-- his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind

**NLT** Isaiah 52:14 But many were amazed when they saw **him**. His face was so disfigured he seemed hardly human, and from his appearance, one would scarcely know he was a man.

**CSB** Isaiah 52:14 Just as many were appalled at **You**-- His appearance was so disfigured that He did not look like a man, and His form did not resemble a human being--

**NIV** Isaiah 52:14 Just as there were many who were appalled at **him**-- his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness--

- **Many:** Ps 71:7 Mt 7:28 22:22,23 27:14 Mk 5:42 6:51 7:37 10:26,32 Lu 2:47 4:36 5:26
- **His appearance:** Isa 50:6 53:2-5 Ps 22:6,7,15,17 102:3-5 Mt 26:67 27:29,30 Lu 22:64
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE SERVANT OF JEHOVAH'S ASTONISHING HUMILIATION

**Just as many were astonished at you, My people** - Note that "*My people*" is added by the NAS translators. This is probably not the best translation as it tends to suggest that this statement is directed at the nation of Israel. A better translation is the **ESV** rendering of **as many were astonished at you**. Note that this passage begins with "as" which is picked up in Isa 52:15 that begins with "so" the significance of which will be discussed below. Suffice it to say just as the Jews were horrified at Jesus' appearance at His first coming, so the nations will be startled (the alternative reading of "*sprinkle*") by His Second Coming!

Note that the pronoun in the previous passage was **HE** (Isa 52:13 - "**He** will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted."), but is now switched to **YOU**, John MacArthur noting that "switching pronouns from the second to the third is not uncommon in prophetic language in the Old Testament." (from his sermon [The Startling Servant of Jehovah](#))

**NET NOTE** on the pronoun "**YOU**" ((just as many were horrified by the sight of **you**) he was so disfigured he no longer looked like a man = Isa 52:14NET) - Some witnesses read "**him**," which is more consistent with the context, where the servant is spoken about, not addressed. However, it is possible that the Lord briefly addresses the servant here. The present translation assumes the latter view and places the phrase in parentheses.

Note some versions render "**YOU**" as "**HIM**" - For example - NIV (and NLT) = "Just as there were many who were appalled at **HIM**" (Isa 52:14NIV)

Here is [Dr MacArthur's full statement](#) related to **YOU** in Isaiah 52:14 - Verse 14, "Just as many were astonished at **you**," and I think that is directed at the Messiah and so some (**ED**: THE NAS TRANSLATION) add "*My people*" in italics. That doesn't help because He's talking really to the Messiah, not Israel. "*Just as many were astonished at You*" and switching pronouns from the second to the third is not uncommon in prophetic language in the Old Testament. "*Just as many were astonished at You, so His appearance was more than any man and His form more than the sons of men.*" Many are going to be astonished at Him, but not because of His exaltation, many. They're going to be astonished because of His humiliation. Many? Yeah, many, the people of Israel basically. They're the only ones that saw His humiliation."

Isaiah is saying that many will be **astonished** by the Servant's appearance. This theme is described in more detail in Isaiah 53:1-9. I like the HCSB rendering of "many were appalled," a similar reaction from men being evoked by the destruction of Tyre in Ezekiel 27:35 ("Are **appalled** at you")

**Lindsey** adds that "It could be translated "amazed, shocked, aghast, or horrified," and indicates that those who gaze on the Servant are petrified by paralyzing astonishment and stupefying surprise at His deep abasement and degradation." ([The Career of the Servant in Isaiah 52:13-53:12](#))

**Astonished** (**shamen/samen**) has the root idea of desolation caused by some great disaster and the second major sense is "horror" and "shock" brought about by the vision of the desolation, in this case the "desolation" of the God-Man Christ Jesus. Astonishment will be the inner response to the outward scene!

This reaction of astonishment or horror is fulfilled by **many** in the Jewish crowd who looked at Him, for the Jews were the only ones (other than Pilate and the Roman soldiers) who actually witnessed Messiah's humiliation and disfigurement. What they saw was the Messiah's condition after being beaten and mocked (Luke 22:63-64+), and scourged (Mt 27:26, Mark 15:15+) in preparation for His walk on the [Via Dolorosa](#) to His ultimate destination, the Cross of Calvary.

As the crowd lining the street saw Jesus bearing His cross, beaten and bloodied, they were appalled at His appearance. While many in the crowd were antagonistic to Him, there were also some who loved Him and to whom this sight must have been heart rending! May our thoughts of His broken appearance be used by the Holy Spirit to break our hearts, motivating us to greater and greater loving obedience to Him. Amen.

**Unger** understood "**appearance**" as a "special reference to His face," and "**form**" as a reference to His "physical body in general." That may be the case as clearly both His face and body were beaten.



As a side note it is a horrifying truth that Christian art prior to Constantine depicted Christ's normal appearance as repulsive. That they would have done so is unconscionable to me!

**David Baron** comments that "By these strong words and expressions the Spirit of God seeks to give us a glimpse unto the depth and intensity of the vicarious sufferings of our Saviour, and of the greatness of the cost of our redemption; and as we contemplate this picture of the Man of Sorrows, with the "face" which for us was "**marred**" more than that of any man, and with His form bowed and disfigured more than the sons of men, may our hearts be stirred with shame and sorrow for the sin which was the cause of it all, and with greater love and undying gratitude to Him who bore all this for us!" ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Thompson** on **marred** - When He was before Annas, Jesus was smashed in the face by an officer (John 18:22). When He was before Caiaphas, He was spit on, slapped, and beaten in the face with fists (Matthew 26:67; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63). When He was before Pilate, Pilate had him scourged with whips (John 19:1; Matthew 27:26; Mark 15:15) and soldiers brutally punched Him in the face with their fists (John 19:3). His beard was ripped out of His face (Isaiah 50:6). By the time this was all over, you could not even recognize that this is Jesus. (Ibid)

**So His appearance was marred more than any man** - (ESV = "His appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance") The noun **mishhat** is used only here in the OT and is used to describe the disfigurement of Jesus as a result of the beating He endured. The Septuagint uses a verb (found only here in Scripture) **adoxeo** (opposite of **doxazo**) which means literally "without glory," and conveys the idea of being held in no esteem, of being of ill repute or even of being despicable! It can mean to hold one in contempt. It suggest that the Jewish crowd while on one hand were appalled on the other hand they held Him in contempt. Certainly we know the Jewish religious leaders held Messiah in extreme contempt! What callousness was on display on that horrible Passover day!

Most lexicons say that the noun **marred** (**mishhat**) is derived from the verb **shachath** which means corrupted or ruined and in Malachi 1:14 describes the sacrifice of "a **blemished** (shachath) animal." Do you see the bitter irony? The Jews see Jesus' appearance which would make any Passover lamb unacceptable for sacrifice as it would be disqualified after inspection by the Temple priests! And so the irony is that the Passover Lamb of God (Jn 1:29) would have been an unacceptable sacrifice physically speaking, but He was in fact the perfect, sinless sacrifice (praise God) spiritually speaking!

[The tempest's awful voice was heard.](#)

O Christ, it broke on Thee!

Thy open bosom was my ward,

It braved the storm for me.

Thy form was scarred, Thy visage marred;

Now cloudless peace for me.

-- A R Cousins

**And His form more than the sons of men** - The **NET Bible** renders it "He was so disfigured He no longer looked like a man"! O but He was still the Lamb of God! So let us take a moment and ponder with astonishment His suffering for us - play [Watch the Lamb, The Lamb of God](#).

---

### **James Smith - THE SERVANT'S PRUDENCE. "Behold My Servant shall deal prudently" (Isaiah 52:13)**

In this introductory stanza to the Golden Passional we have God's "Ecce Homo." Let us never forget that this was a prophecy uttered many years before Bethlehem and Calvary. Have you ever thought of the goodness of the Father in not only prophesying of the sufferings of Christ, but also of the glory that was to follow? "He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." These are expressions confined by Isaiah to the Godhead (consult Isa. 6:1; 57:15). Therefore we here not only have prosperity foretold, but much more than that: surely this means nothing less than the exaltation and enthronement of Deity. Unlike mere mortal and finite men, the Man of Sorrows knew exactly all that awaited Him—the betrayal, the failure of His followers, the cruel scourgings, and the awful death. But how often, as He reflected on all these sad accompaniments of His death, His heart must have been cheered by this bright and attractive forecast.

That prosperity should follow prudence is to be expected. "My Servant shall deal prudently—He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." Sometimes prudence fails in man, but never in the Man Jesus Christ.

**I. THE NATURE OF HIS PRUDENCE.** What is prudence? Prudence and wisdom are not one and the same thing. "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent"—here they are referred to as separate and distinct, though closely related. Prudence is wisdom in action. The prudent are not only the possessors of wisdom. They are those who use that wisdom wisely and well. It is possible to be wise and yet not prudent. In other words, for wisdom to dwell alone. But prudence always dwells with wisdom, as is pointed out in Proverbs 8:12: "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence." Prudence and wisdom are twin sisters.

**II. THE FACT OF HIS PRUDENCE.** Our Blessed Lord Jesus was greater in wisdom and prudence than Solomon. Indeed He was, and is, the source of all wisdom and prudence. The greatest and grandest example is found in Him. This declaration in the Golden Passional is, of course, a prophecy. His own life is its fulfilment.

**III. THE EXERCISE OF HIS PRUDENCE.** A very devoted and eminent preacher of the Gospel of our own time has pointed out how our Lord so wonderfully exercised prudence in His life, and manifested it also in His death.

1. In Not Prematurely Surrendering His Life. Time and again His enemies sought to slay Him, but our Lord and Saviour took every precaution. Till He knew His work was done He would not allow His life to be squandered,
2. His Insight into Character. All who came into touch with Him became conscious of the fact that He knew them through and through, better than they knew themselves. They were aware, time and again, of the fact that He could read their thoughts; and He acted toward all with unerring wisdom.
3. In the Adroitness of His Replies. Christian workers cannot do better as a preparation for missionary work, whether at home or abroad, than to study our Lord's methods with individuals. Both as a preacher and as a teacher He manifested amazing skill—was calm, never flurried, had always an apt reply, ever hitting the nail on the head. Over and over again we simply marvel at His replies.
4. In His Concessions to the Limitations of His Hearers. That He was the All-Wise One, and the All-Knowing One, possessing and exercising in His human life all the attributes of Deity is a fact, yet He never talked or preached above the heads of His hearers. As an example of this He stooped to parabolic teaching, conveying the most abstruse thoughts in simple language. Hence "The common people heard Him gladly," as well as the learned scholars of His time. Many a public teacher is destroyed through lack of prudence.
5. In His Encouragement of all Good Living and Well-intentioned Folk. Time and again, in dealing with individuals, He recognised and complimented them where He could. As for example: "Thou art not far from the kingdom." How encouraging this must have been. "Ye search the Scriptures" (R.V.). There He admitted their diligence in ascertaining the mind and will of God in the written Word.
6. In His Work of Salvation. He ever recognised that man's greatest need is not teaching, but disposition, not merely a code of morals, but a clean heart. Nicodemus right away opened the interview by acknowledging our Lord Jesus as a peerless teacher, assuming that all that was required for the regeneration of mankind was better teaching, but this our Lord at once countered by a firm declaration that man's chief need was a new life. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."
7. In His Wondrous Scheme of Redemption. Study Ephesians 1:8. It is in the redemptive work of our Lord that we have the greatest example of His prudence. So marvellous is the scheme that Satan with all his skill has never yet been able to find fault with it, and we may add, he never will. Every Divine attribute is in perfect and harmonious operation in this wondrous plan of salvation. There at the Cross mercy and truth met together, there, righteousness and peace kissed each other.

**IV. THE REWARD OF HIS PRUDENCE.**

1. Exalted to the highest pitch of honour. Study Ephesians 1:21.
2. Extolled. Study Philippians 2:9-11.
3. Glorified.

**V. THE EXAMPLE OF HIS PRUDENCE.** These records of His wonderful prudence are given to us not merely for our admiration, but also for our emulation. Heavenly wisdom is exceedingly practical, as is pointed out in James 3:17. Prudence is much to be coveted and desired in our daily lives and service, and "who is sufficient for these things?" Christ is. The marvel of our redemption is that not only did our Lord Jesus suffer on the Cross in our stead, but after we have accepted that great fact and received Him, He comes to dwell within us and to live out His own wondrous life. The Prudent One will be prudence to us. Oh, that He might fill us with His own gracious presence! (Handfuls of Purpose)

**Isaiah 52:15 Thus He will sprinkle many nations, Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand.**

mouths because of Him; for that which has not been told them shall they see, and that which they have not heard shall they consider *and* understand.

- **He will sprinkle:** Nu 8:7 Eze 36:25 Mt 28:19 Ac 2:33 Tit 3:5,6 Heb 9:13,14 10:22 Heb 11:28 12:24 1Pe 1:2
- **Kings will shut their mouths:** Isa 49:7,23 Job 29:9,10 40:4 Ps 72:9-11 Mic 7:16,17 Zec 2:13
- **what they had not heard they will understand:** Isa 51:5 55:5 Ro 15:20,21 Ro 16:25,26 Eph 3:5-9
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE SERVANT OF JEHOVAH WILL STARTLE SOVEREIGNS

**Oswalt** writes that "If the common interpretation is correct, this verse compares the astonishment that greeted the Servant's humiliation with that which will greet His exaltation. In other words, the thought of Isa 52:13 has been resumed. The nations will be just as surprised at the **greatness of the end** (**ED**: INTERESTING STATEMENT BUT WHEN IS THE END? SEEMS TO IMPLY THE "SECOND COMING"! ) as they were at the **smallness of the beginning**....In this case, the surpassing greatness of the Servant causes the kings of the earth to shut their mouths (cf Ps 107:42) , that is, they are rendered speechless. **Their own greatness is so small that they have nothing to say in his presence and can only fall at his feet** (see Isa 49:7). Thus what they have never heard of before is how one who took such a lowly place could ever sit on the very throne of God in the end. (NICOT-Isaiah)(Bolding mine)

**Thus He will sprinkle** (naza) **many nations** - This is a difficult verse to interpret because the verb **naza** usually means to sprinkle but it can mean to startle. There is considerable variation on how this verse is interpreted, the NET, NLT, NRS, and NAB translate this as "now He will **startle** many nations." But even the **NIV** marginal note on **sprinkle** has "Or so will many nations be **amazed** at him (see also Septuagint)." Similarly, the **ESV** note on "*sprinkle*" reads "*or startle*."

Probably the most common interpretation of verse 15 is that Messiah will sprinkle the nations, which speaks of His provision of forgiveness as a result of His atoning work on the Cross. This is interesting for "**sprinkling**" is not typically described for nations but individuals. Thus Peter writes "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and **be sprinkled with His blood**" (1Pe 1:2+) To whom is Peter describing as being sprinkled? Peter says "to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout" nations (or regions)." (1 Pe 1:1+) So the sprinkling of nation is a bit problematic. Then Isaiah records that "**Kings will shut their mouths**." The explanation by many is that they will respond in this dramatic manner because they will recognize Messiah's atoning work. But has that really been the case in world history? How many kings have shut their mouths because they came to understand Messiah and His work of redemption? Yes, some kings have become believers, but they are a minority. Do they fulfill Isaiah's prophecy? That seems to be a "stretch." And so for these reasons (and several others discussed below) I favor that Isaiah 53:15 speaks of the startled reaction of the nations at Christ's Second Coming when even Kings will be forced to shut their mouths ("seeing is believing") because they will then see Him in His glory and understand that He alone is King of kings. That's exactly what Isaiah says **what had not been told them they will see** (AT HIS SECOND COMING), **And what they had not heard they will understand** (AT HIS SECOND COMING).

In fairness below are a few examples of interpreting this passage as Messiah **sprinkling** rather than **startling**. Perhaps this is a passage where we will just have to agree to disagree.

**David Guzik** - So shall He sprinkle many nations: Sprinkling is often associated with cleansing from sin in the Old Testament (Exodus 24:8, Leviticus 3:6, Numbers 19:21, Ezekiel 36:25). Here, the promise is that the work of the Messiah will bring cleansing to many nations. The Messiah is certainly Israel's Messiah; yet He belongs to more than Israel. His saving, cleansing work will extend far beyond Israel to many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him: Though all will be astonished at His appearance, they will have nothing to say against Him. His glory and His great work will stop every word. When they spoke against Him before, it was in blindness, but now what had not been told them they shall see. (Enduring Word Bible Commentary– Isaiah)

**HCSB Study Bible note** - Much debate surrounds the meaning of the Servant sprinkling many nations. The main problem is that the verse does not specify what the Servant will use to sprinkle them. The best guess is that it refers to a ritual act like the sprinkling of blood (Lv 4:6,17; 16:14-15,19; Num 19:4) or oil (Lv 8:11). The effect of this sprinkling is either to purify or to dedicate to a holy status.

**ESV Study Bible note** - As the servant was rejected by many (in his passion, Jesus was beaten into a shockingly inhuman mass of wounded flesh), so he will sprinkle many nations to make them clean (see the ministry of sprinkling in Ex. 29:21; Lev. 4:1-21; 14:7; 16:14-19; Heb. 9:13-14, 19-22; 10:19-22; 12:22-24; 1 Pet. 1:2). Kings (representing the nations) shall shut their mouths, awed by his wretched humiliation and exalted glory (cf. Ro 15:21). that which has not been told them. I.e., until revealed uniquely in the gospel.

**Warren Wiersbe** - The people whose mouths dropped open with astonishment at His humiliation and exaltation will shut their mouths in guilt when they hear His proclamation....Now we see why people are astonished when they understand the message of the Gospel: This Man whom they condemned has declared that they are condemned unless they turn from sin and trust Him. You cannot rejoice in the Good News of salvation until first you face the bad news of condemnation. Jesus did not suffer and die because He was guilty, but because we were guilty. People are astonished at this fact; it shuts their mouths. The word translated "**sprinkle**" in **Isaiah 52:15** can be translated "**startle**," but most likely it refers to the **ceremonial cleansing that was an important part of the Mosaic sacrificial system** (Lev. 14:1-7, 16; 16:14-15; Nu. 8:7) (**ED: BUT SEE WIERSBE'S COMMENTS BELOW WRITTEN APPARENTLY ABOUT 4 YEARS LATER!**). While the sprinkling of blood, water, and oil did not take away sins, it did make the recipient ceremonially clean and accepted before God. Because of the sacrifice of Christ, we can tell all the nations that forgiveness and redemption are offered free to all who will receive Him (1 Pe 1:1-2). (Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Comforted Isaiah - first copyrighted in 1989). (Bolding Mine)

**Now here is another "interpretation" by the same highly respected commentator (I love Dr Wiersbe's work) which offers a different interpretation** - The prophecy begins with Isaiah 52:13–15. Verse 13 tells of Christ's exaltation, and the rest of the section deals with His humiliation. It is this strange "contradiction" that perplexed the OT prophets, as 1 Peter 1:10–11 informs us. They did not realize that there would be a long period between Messiah's **coming** as the Suffering Servant to die and then **returning** as the Exalted Sovereign to reign. Verse 14 informs us that Christ's physical sufferings made Him look inhuman, so much so that men were astonished at Him. **But when He returns the second time (v. 15), the whole world will be "startled, shocked" (the word should not be translated "sprinkle" but "startle").** See Zech. 12:9–10 and Rev. 1:7. **The first time He came, He astonished a few people in Palestine; the next time He comes, He will **startle** the whole world.** (Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament - copyright 1993 - Notice this edition is 4 years later than the resource above - Did Wiersbe change his mind? Interesting.). (Bolding mine)

John Martin - The Servant will **sprinkle** people in **many nations**. "**Sprinkle**" is associated with cleansing by the priest under the Mosaic Law (Lev. 4:6; 8:11; 14:7). This Servant, whom many have not considered important at all, will actually provide the most important thing for **nations** and their **kings**, namely, cleansing from sin (cf. John 1:29; Heb. 10:14). That is why they will **shut their mouths**. They will be appalled that they had miscalculated the situation so badly. Realizing their great mistake, they will have nothing to say. Eventually, when they see Him exalted in His Second Advent, they will finally understand and see clearly (**ED: MARTIN'S COMMENTS ARE A HYBRID IN A SENSE BECAUSE THEY MENTION THE SPRINKLING WHICH WOULD BE ASSOCIATED WITH FORGIVENESS AVAILABLE TO THE NATIONS AND THEN HE MENTIONS THE FACT THAT THE KINGS WILL NOT SEE AND UNDERSTAND UNTIL MESSIAH RETURNS AND IT IS THEN THAT THEY WILL SHUT THEIR MOUTHS**). (Bible Knowledge Commentary)

**Geoffrey Grogan** - The word "**sprinkle**" has priestly-sacrificial overtones (cf. Ex 29:20–21; Lev 16:14–15), preparing us for further sacrificial language later in the passage. In common with everything else in these three verses, "**sprinkle**" relates to the consequences of the Servant's sufferings rather than to the sufferings themselves. It also relates his sacrificial work to the world in general, not simply to Israel. His exaltation gives him complete supremacy over all; and kings will fall silent in his presence, astonished, over-awed, deeply respectful (cf. Job 29:7–10) (**ED: THAT COMMENT SOUNDS WONDERFUL BUT HAS THIS EVER TRANSPIRED IN WORLD HISTORY?**). (Expositor's Bible Commentary)

The **NET Note** comments on **naza** writing that "Some emend the text; others propose a homonymic root meaning "spring, leap," which in the Hiphil could mean "cause to leap, startle" and would fit the parallelism of the verse nicely."

It is interesting that a [Targum](#) note on "**sprinkle**" (**naza**) reads "so shall he **scatter** many nations." ([Ref](#))

**MacArthur** adds that the verb **naza** "can mean to spurt (and) metaphorically, to leap up. And there is evidence that could mean to leap up by excessive emotion. It can mean to startle metaphorically. And by the way, nations cannot be cleansed anyway (**ED: AS WOULD BE THE INTERPRETATION IF IT WERE TRANSLATED "SPRINKLE MANY NATIONS!"**). Individuals can. But the whole world can be startled and will be startled by the return of Christ. The day will come when the nations of the world will tremble with astonishment when He comes. They will be electrified. "

What is surprising is that very few commentaries make significant mention of the **Septuagint** translation of this verse. And before you say that this version is not "inspired" you need to realize that Paul quoted part of this very passage not from the Hebrew text but

from the Greek text (Septuagint) in his inspired letter to the Romans (Ro 15:21). That fact alone should establish the Septuagint rendering of Isaiah 52:15 as valid and can serve as an aid in interpretation of the passage.

That said, it is noteworthy that the **Septuagint** renders **naza** with the Greek verb **thaumazo** (future middle) which means to be extraordinarily impressed with, on one hand or extraordinarily disturbed by, on the other hand. **Thaumazo** is often used in the NT to express the human reaction to divine revelation (Mt 8:27; 9:33, 2 Th 1:10, Acts 3:12, etc). Clearly the Hebrew translators were fully aware of the distinctly different Greek verb **rhantizo** (used in Heb 9:13) which means to **sprinkle** but they passed on that verb and instead choose the verb **thaumazo**. That fact plus the context of the passage (the following phrase referring to the the shutting of the mouths of kings), would seem to favor that this passage is best translated "**He will startle many nations.**" In addition, verse 14 begins with "**just as**" (speaking of the astonishment of the Jews), verse 15 begins with "so" (ESV) or "thus" (Septuagint where the adverb is houtos which "with reference to what preceded in combination with a correlative to produce a comparison (means) (just) as . . . so." (Friberg). **JUST AS** they were astonished, **SO** the nations will be **sprinkled** makes far less sense as a comparison than "**JUST AS** they were astonished, **SO** the nations will be **startled**."

**S Lewis Johnson** adds "That word **sprinkle** as you can tell from the way I am rendering it may well be rendered **startled** and here I think it has that force because of the contrast with Isaiah 52:14 **JUST AS many were astonished at Thee**, the way that Thou didst look at Thy **first coming**, **SO** shalt Thou **startle** them at Thy **second coming**."

**Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him** - Startled nations and shut king's mouths signify an awesome event. What would cause this degree of reaction by men who are not easily shaken because they are normally in control (as are kings)? Some have proposed the kings are amazed when they realize Messiah brought atonement and forgiveness of sins. That hardly makes sense, for His proclamation of good news was rejected by the majority of people, including kings. Why would they suddenly have a "change of heart?" That does not make sense. It would be more reasonable to interpret the sudden return of the King of kings as an event which will shut the mouths of kings! Revelation 1:7 describes the global reaction to His return "BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen."

**Alec Motyer** comments that "The thought of the Servant's supreme exaltation (Isa 52:13) is elaborated by this picture of earth's rulers silent before him.... **We must think, therefore, of the kings as overwhelmed by the Servant, but the precise cause of their silence is not explained.** The ideas of see and understand/'discern' indicate that some truth about the Servant has dawned on them, but how and what we have yet to find out." (The Prophecy of Isaiah - Bolding mine) While I agree with **Motyer**, he leaves us with really no interpretation of the reason for the shutting of the **mouths of kings**. As alluded to in the previous paragraph, we know that such a reaction did not occur at His First Coming. The only alternative is that these great men will be startled when they see Him at His Second Coming and the result will be that their mouths are shut!

I agree with **John MacArthur's** comment on **shut their mouths** - At His exaltation, human leaders in the highest places will be speechless and in awe before the once-despised Servant (cf. Ps 2:1-12). When He takes His throne (**ED**: In His Messianic Kingdom), they will see the unfolding of power and glory such as they have never heard. Paul applied the principle in this verse to his apostolic mission of preaching the Gospel of Christ where Christ was yet unknown (Ro 15:21+). (Borrow [MacArthur Study Bible](#) - see expanded comment below from his sermon on this passage)

**F Duane Lindsey** is correct when he writes that "Only a pre-millennial understanding of Christ's Second Advent...catches the full significance of the Servant's exaltation." ([The Career of the Servant in Isaiah 52:13-53:12](#))

**John MacArthur** sums up the world's reaction to the return of Messiah as described by Isaiah in Isaiah 53:15 - "*But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.*" (Mt 24:29-30+), Messiah will come in that blazing glory....in the book of Revelation people will cry out (**ED**: "*Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; 16 and they \*said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"* - Rev 6:15-17+)..."every eye will see Him" (Revelation 1:7+) And why does He pick on the nations and the rulers? Because when He comes to establish His Kingdom, He will literally take over the world. He will replace rulers. Why are the nations in an uproar, Psalm 2? - "*Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, "Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!" He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury, saying, "But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain."* When God installs His King as King of the world, the nations will all see His glorious exaltation. They were stunned at His crucifixion, the



ones who saw it. The whole world will be stunned when He returns and appears in glory. The drama that will occur as the sky goes black and as Christ appears in glory will not be lost on anyone. **Kings will therefore shut their mouths on account of Him. Those who always have a right to speak will be speechless.** The involuntary effect of shock and amazement, extreme astonishment, intense emotion will render them silent. The world will be mute as He comes. Why? **"For what they hadn't been told they will see. What they hadn't heard, they will understand.** The world hasn't been told about the glorious return of Christ. But when He comes, they will all see it; they will all understand it, and they will be in stunned silence. They'll have their complete theological education about the Second Coming in a moment. So our Lord's inhuman disfigurement, astonish the first-century Jews who saw Him. His exaltation will astonish the globe; the whole world will see Him." ([Ibid](#))

**David Cooper** - In contrast to the astonishment which the spectators experience in looking at Messiah when He is executed, nations, according to Isaiah 52:15, will likewise experience a mighty shock when they see this same One, Who has been executed, seated upon a throne of glory and all nations bowing down in humble submission before Him. The prophet therefore said, "so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which has not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they understand." The word rendered "**sprinkle**" in the clause "so shall he sprinkle many nations," also means to **startle**, which fact is indicated in a footnote of the Revised Version. The primary meaning of this word is "**sprinkle**." This position no one who knows Hebrew can deny. The term also means, "startle," as our translators have rendered it in the footnote. If the primary meaning of a word does not fit the context, then we are to select that secondary or metaphorical meaning which does satisfy these demands. Since the prophet is drawing a parallel between the amazement of the spectators at the execution of Messiah and the great astonishment of kings when Messiah sits upon His throne of glory, we are forced to accept the meaning "**startle**" as the correct term expressing the idea of the Hebrew in this connection. We should therefore render the clause, "so shall he startle many nations." (**ED: AS DISCUSSED THIS IS EXACTLY HOW THE HEBREW TRANSLATORS OF THE SEPTUAGINT RENDERED "NAZA"! MANY COMMENTATORS GLOSS OVER THIS IMPORTANT PIECE OF INFORMATION!**) There is a comparatively small group (JEWS IN JERUSALEM) that witness the execution of King Messiah. They are shocked by what they see and what they cannot understand. In contrast with that, when Messiah comes the second time every eye shall see Him and even those who pierced Him shall look upon Him. **The nations of the world will be struck with astonishment when they behold Him in His glory:** "But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separated the sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:31,32). The kings of the earth who will not have been told of Messiah in His glory will be shocked by the splendor of that which they visibly and literally see at His Second Coming. In Isaiah 52:13-15 therefore **we see the entire redemptive career of King Messiah set forth which, as noted above, consists of His first coming, His rejection, His execution, His burial, His resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of the throne of God, His session on the throne with His Father during the present age, and His final return to establish His kingdom upon the earth and to reign here for a thousand years.** This passage does not tell that our Lord will reign a thousand years when He returns. This information is found in Revelation 20:1-5, which passage is parallel with this one. ([Commentary](#)) (Bolding mine)

**Allen Ross** on **nazah** - Here the main difficulty is the first verb, translated "startle" here, but "sprinkle" in some Bibles. The latter is the reading in the Vulgate and in Aquila and Theodotian, carrying the sense of purify by his life-blood, that is. But there are several things problematic with that view. The verb **nazah** is used throughout the Law for "spread, splatter, sprinkle"; but as Delitzsch shows in his commentary it always has the liquid as the object, and never the object of the sprinkling (see Lev. 16:19 and Num. 19:18). Moreover, that rendering is competing against the context which describes the amazement of leaders at the exaltation of the Lord. The reading "startle" is better (but note the Greek which has "many nations shall tremble"). With all due respect to Young's commentary, I do not think that the Greek translation can be easily discarded. The Hebrew term is difficult. The idea of the word, supported by the cognate in Arabic, is to "leap up"; then in the causative, "cause to leap, spurt, splatter." So here the idea may simply be "start (or startle) with astonishment." To see a sprinkling here in order to suggest Gentile conversions and purifications is out of harmony with the stanza, and certainly not well founded with such a problematic verb. ([Isaiah 52:13-53:12: The Suffering Servant](#))

**Ross** in his exposition adds "The exaltation is reported in v. 15. Kings are astonished that he, of all people, should be so exalted. The contrast is staggering—he will startle kings ("startle" is preferable to the translation "sprinkle"). When they see God's plan work out, when they look on him whom they pierced, they shall see what they had not been told, they shall understand what they had not heard. In that day, they shall realize what the wisdom of God teaches, that the suffering servant will be exalted." ([Isaiah 52:13-53:12: The Triumph of the Suffering Servant An Exposition](#))

**For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand** - This explains why the mouths of kings will be shut! They will finally one day see the One they rejected and ridiculed and reviled. They will then understand that He was indeed Who He had claimed to be, the Savior of the world, and Who His disciples proclaimed over the centuries that precede His Second Coming. But in that day their mouths will be shut because it will be too late to receive Him as Savior!

Paul took the truth of this passage and applied it to the present proclamation of the Gospel (to those who had no news and had not

heard), but with positive results of acceptance of the Gospel not rejection as with the great and mighty men (kings) of this world.

Paul quotes directly from the Septuagint version of Isaiah 52:15 in Romans 15:21+ writing

but as it is written, "THEY WHO HAD NO NEWS OF HIM SHALL SEE, AND THEY WHO HAVE NOT HEARD SHALL UNDERSTAND."

**MacArthur** comments on **Romans 15:21** - He quoted that, showing that the verse embraces not only the final exaltation and reign of Christ, but the preaching of the gospel that leads up to that. The world will be shocked when it happens because they will not expect it. They haven't been told. They haven't understood it. But all through history, even now, people are being told, people are coming to understanding. So Paul extends this which has its ultimate fulfillment in the return of Christ and the shock of the nations back to the period of the preaching of the gospel where we are telling people what they've never before seen, what they've never before understood about the glory of Christ. ([Ibid](#))

In his commentary on Romans MacArthur explains it this way - The context of that passage in Isaiah indicates that its primary reference is to Christ's Second Coming. But in its broadest application it refers to the process of evangelism that began in Paul's day and will continue throughout church history until its ultimate fulfillment at Christ's return. People who have had no news of Christ, who have not heard the Gospel, are found everywhere. They can be found in every country, every city and town, and in every community and neighborhood. God does not call every believer to be an evangelist, but He calls every believer to be a witness. It therefore should be the desire and prayer of all believers that the unsaved will be given spiritual sight to see Christ as their only hope of salvation and that they will be given spiritual hearing in order to understand the gospel and turn to Him to be saved. ([The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

#### Isaiah 53:1 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

KJV Isaiah 53:1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

CSB Isaiah 53:1 Who has believed what we have heard? And who has the arm of the LORD been revealed to?

- **Who has believed** John 1:7,12; 12:38; Ro 10:16,17
- **our message.** Isaiah 51:9; 52:10; 62:8; Ro 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18,24; Eph 1:18,19
- **And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed** Isaiah 40:5; Mt 11:25; 16:17; Ro 1:17,18
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE MISUNDERSTOOD MESSIAH

At the very outset of this great chapter we are presented with two questions which in turn raise the question of **WHO IS SPEAKING** and also **WHEN ARE THEY SPEAKING?**

Let's look at this another way - let's take these first 6 verses and examine the **pronouns**, especially the first person plural pronouns, **OUR - OURSELVES - WE - US - OWN**. Notice from the [highlighted passage below](#) that these pronouns appear 16 times in 6 verses. Now remember that Isaiah is a Jewish prophet addressing a Jewish audience. So the question is this - to whom do these pronouns refer? I have to admit that I have never seen this interpretation before and benefited from insights found in a number of commentaries that all said the same thing (I've [quoted several of them below](#)) -- they interpret these **pronouns** (THE SPEAKER OF THESE PASSAGES) to be Jews who have been saved in the future (believing Jewish remnant) and who are looking back (through the prophet Isaiah's eyes and voice, so to speak) at the **SUFFERING SERVANT**, the Messiah, Who their ancestors largely rejected. In support of this interpretation notice that the verbs are **not future tense**. For example in verses 2-3 it reads "He grew up" **NOT** "He **will** grow up" or "He was despised" **NOT** "He **will be** despised," [et cetera](#). You can observe the other verbs and you will discover that they are **past tense**, not future tense.

You may be saying "So what?" First of all is this Suffering Servant passage a prophecy of the future work of the Messiah to provide salvation for mankind? Of course it is a prophecy that was fulfilled in Messiah's First Coming. So in that sense the passage looks forward to Messiah's suffering and death on the Cross. But what I had never seen before is that these passages are more than a

prophecy looking forward to the first coming of the Messiah. They are also a lament of those Jews who are saved in the future and who look back on this prophecy that was missed by most of their Jewish ancestors. And so this section begins with a rhetorical question (Isa 53:1) that expects a negative answer - **"Who believed..."** The answer is that most of the Jews did NOT believe.

In summary, after studying the passage and reading the commentaries, I think interpreting the speaker as a future **saved Jewish remnant** looking back makes good sense (See [excursus](#)). It was hard for me to grasp because I as a Gentile believer have always personalized Isaiah 53 which is certainly a valid application (saying things like "He was pierced through for your and my transgressions"), but I had forgotten that the words were originally addressed to Jewish readers. I trust this extended explanation helps you understand this great passage better. And hopefully the comments below by those far more qualified than myself will make sense.

1 Who has believed **OUR** message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?  
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.  
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.  
4 Surely **OUR** griefs He Himself bore, And **OUR** sorrows He carried; Yet **WE OURSELVES** esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.  
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.  
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.

So below are a number of respected conservative sources that interpret the pronouns above as representative of a future saved Jewish remnant looking back and lamenting over the truth of Isaiah 53.

**Paul Apple** - The nation of Israel is speaking here – as the believing remnant ([diagram](#)) saved in the Day of the Lord that now looks back to confess their former spiritual blindness. ([Jehovah is Salvation - 1130 pages](#))

**S Lewis Johnson** expands on Apple's comment - Now, I want to say something as we begin Isaiah 53, something which is very important to help understand what the prophet is saying. In the original text of Isaiah 53:1-9 you will discover that almost all the verbs are in the **past tense**. In other words, the author is transporting himself into the future, and he has become a mouthpiece for a group of people (JEWS) who in the future will look back over the past and describe their reaction to the Suffering Servant when He appeared (AT HIS FIRST COMING). What we have here is a future redeemed group (OF JEWS), who lament for the whole of the people (OF ISRAEL), regarding their unbelief at the Servant's first coming, so they say, **"Who believed what we heard? To whom was the arm of the Lord revealed?"** In other words, what we have is Isaiah (by the Holy Spirit) transported (so to speak) into the future, and from the standpoint of the future he is given words inspired by the Spirit, words which belong to this group (of BELIEVING JEWISH REMNANT IN THE FUTURE - [diagram](#)), and he describes how they feel (IN THE FUTURE) over what they (ACTUALLY THEIR JEWISH ANCESTORS) did hundreds of years before to the Servant when He first appeared. ([The Misunderstood Messiah](#))

**David Baron** Messianic Jewish expositor - The second section (Isaiah 53:1ff), into which the whole prophecy divides itself, is, as stated above, primarily the sorrowful lament and confession of repentant Israel in the future. We are transplanted in these verses, by the spirit of prophecy, into that future solemn day of Israel's history which is described in the last chapters of Zechariah—when the spirit of grace and supplications shall be poured upon them, and their eyes shall be opened to look upon Him whom they have pierced (Zechariah 12:10-14+). It is then, in the great mourning and weeping which are there described, that they shall break out with this plaintive hymn, which is musical in its sadness and betrays the agony of a broken heart and contrite spirit. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Scott Grant:** Whose griefs and sorrows is he bearing and carrying? Isaiah, referring to them as "our" griefs and sorrows, is speaking at least for the believing Jewish community, who didn't at first believe the message concerning the Servant but later owned that message (Isaiah 53:1-3). . . So on the first level, when Isaiah speaks of "our" griefs and sorrows, he's speaking of Israel's griefs and sorrows. Yet the Apostle John says Jesus is the "propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). ([A strange wisdom](#))

**Gary Smith** says that "These verses were spoken by an unidentified **"we, us, our"** group of people mentioned repeatedly in Isaiah 53:1, 4–6. Commentators have suggested three different groups may be speaking the

“we” statements: **(a)** the nations mentioned in 52:14; **(b)** the prophet’s disciples, or **(c)** the believing people of Israel....the “**we**” statements seem to best fit with the believing people of Israel. They are the ones who observed what God revealed to them. F. Delitzsch also notes that the “**we**” speeches in Isa 16:6; 24:16a; 42:24; 64:5–6 all refer to Israelites. (New American Commentary - Luke)

**NET Note** - The speaker shifts here from God to an unidentified group (note the first person plural pronouns throughout Isa 53:1–6 - “**WE...OUR**”). The content of the speech suggests that the prophet speaks here as representative of the sinful nation Israel. The group acknowledges its sin and recognizes that the servant suffered on their behalf. ([Isaiah 53 Note](#))

**Moody Bible Commentary** - The speaker changes from God to Israel in 53:1, and the nation continues speaking through the three stanzas of the body of the poem (53:1–9). **Israel speaks from the perspective of finally understanding the identity of the Servant after many years of rejection.** This is penitential Israel, finally recognizing the long-rejected Messiah. In a parallel passage, Zechariah predicts that when Israel finally recognizes the Messiah, the nation will repent with great mourning (Zechariah 12:10-14+). **The words in this section aptly express that mourning and repentance.** (Bolding mine)

**John Martin** - This report on the death of the Servant will be given by enlightened Israel **AFTER** they realize the significance of His death on their behalf. Like the nations (**ED**: Described as “startled” in Isaiah 52:15 - [see previous comments](#)), they badly miscalculated the Servant’s importance to them. (Bible Knowledge Commentary) (Bolding and all caps mine)

Jewish commentator **Arnold Fruchtenbaum** - The second [strophe](#) (Isaiah 53:1-3) contains Israel’s confession for not recognizing the Servant in His person and calling. In verse 1, the faithful Remnant asks two questions.

**John MacArthur** has comments similar to S Lewis Johnson above - When they [the Jewish nation] do turn to Christ (IN THE FUTURE - E.G., SEE Romans 11:26+), this (ISAIAH 53) will be their confession. Notice as I read, that all the way down to Isaiah 53:10 the **verbs are in the past tense**. Most people think of this chapter as a future prophecy concerning Christ and it is that. It gives us many details about Christ and His death, burial, resurrection and exaltation, because it is unmistakably a prophecy of Him. But it is **not written in the future tense**. It is not a prophet prophesying what will happen to Jesus (AS MUCH AS) **it is a prophet prophesying the salvation of Israel in the future when they look back and say this (ISAIAH 53) about the Messiah they rejected and crucified. It is the lament of Israel when they look back on the Messiah that they have long rejected....**you have to understand that this chapter while it speaks of the Cross, speaks of it in retrospect from the vantage point of the time in the future when Israel repents of their long rejection of Jesus Christ. The Jews since the New Testament time have been profoundly disturbed by this chapter...while in a sense this looks forward to the event of the death and resurrection and even exaltation of Christ, and gives us details about those marvelous realities, in the purest sense it is a look beyond the Cross to the conversion of Israel and what they will say when they look back. There are astute students of Scripture, theologians, preachers, writers who don’t believe in the future salvation of Israel. They don’t believe that the Kingdom will be on earth. They are not pre-millennial and my judgment is that they cannot interpret this chapter because this is the confession of national Israel at the time of their future conversion. ([Isaiah 53:1-3 The Scorned Servant of Jehovah, Part 1](#))

**Roy Gingrich** - The confession of these verses is the confession that will be made by the Jewish remnant in Jerusalem when the returned Lord appears unto them and takes the veil of blindness from their eyes, Zechariah 12:10–14; 2 Corinthians 3:15–17; Revelation 1:7 (The Book of Isaiah)

## **EXCURSUS:**

### **ISRAEL'S FUTURE SALVATION**

Here are the passages most commentators refer to in speaking of that time in the future when a remnant of Jews ([diagram](#)) will have the veil removed from their heart and their spiritual eyes opened to the truth that Jesus of Nazareth was in truth their long expected Messiah, their King of kings...

(Jehovah speaking) **I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication**, so that **they will look on Me whom they have pierced**; and they will **mourn** for Him, as one **mourns** for an only son, and they will **weep bitterly** over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. 11 “In that day there will be **great mourning** in Jerusalem, like the **mourning** of Hadadrimmon in the

plain of Megiddo. 12 "The land will **mourn**, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves; 13 the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves; 14 all the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves. (Zechariah 12:10-14 - see in depth commentary notes)

"In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity. (Zechariah 13:1 - commentary)

(EVENT OF FIRST COMING) "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, And against the man, My Associate," Declares the LORD of hosts. "Strike the Shepherd (JESUS' CRUCIFIXION - CF Mt 26:31) that the sheep may be scattered; And I will turn My hand against the little ones. (EVENTS OF SECOND COMING) 8 "It will come about in all the land," Declares the LORD, "That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; But the third will be left in it. 9 "And **I will bring the third part through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'**"(Zechariah 13:7-9 - commentary)

**COMMENT** - There are about 14 million Jews in the world so this remnant would constitute about 4-5 million Jews if these events were to occur in the near future (Notes written June, 2018). **And what will the future saved Jewish remnant say when the mourn?** At least part of the answer is that they will mourn and lament using the words penned in Isaiah 53! This is Israel's penitential confession, which they shall make at the second coming of Jesus Christ to the earth when they realize what they have done.

Parallel the above passages with Paul's words in Romans...

and so **all Israel will be saved**; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB." 27 "THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, **WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.**" 28 From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; 29 for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. (Romans 11:26-29 - commentary)

Before we go further the question arises as to how we know Isaiah 53 is referring to the Messiah, Jesus Christ. As always, the Scripture is the best commentary on Scripture and below are three witnesses (WHICH CONFIRMED A MATTER - Dt 19:15) that testify that Isaiah 53 is a prophecy about Jesus.

So he (PHILLIP) got up and went; and there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah. 29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join this chariot." 30 Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" 31 And he said, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: **"HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER; AND AS A LAMB BEFORE ITS SHEARER IS SILENT, SO HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH. 33 "IN HUMILIATION HIS JUDGMENT WAS TAKEN AWAY; WHO WILL RELATE HIS GENERATION? FOR HIS LIFE IS REMOVED FROM THE EARTH."** 34 The eunuch answered Philip and said, "Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?" 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture **he preached Jesus** to him. 36 As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch \*said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" 37 [And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."] 38 And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him. (Acts 8:27-38)

On the very day Messiah entered Jerusalem on a donkey fulfilling Zechariah 9:9 (WHICH THE JEWS SHOULD HAVE RECOGNIZED! - Jn 12:14-15) apostle John quotes Isaiah 53:1 writing

"This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: **"LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? (cf Ro 10:16) AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?"** (Jn 12:38)

Comment: The tragic irony of John's statement is that while the Jews did not believe in Jesus, the Gentiles were present wishing to see Him (Jn 12:20-21)!

**John** goes on to record



"For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, 40 (**JOHN QUOTES Isaiah 6:10**) "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM." 41 These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him." (John 12:39-41, cf Jn 12:35-36, 37-38)

**Paul** in explaining Israel's spiritual blindness (Romans 9-11) quotes directly from Isaiah 53:1 in Romans writing

"However, they (THOSE WHO HAD THE GOOD NEWS PREACHED TO THEM - Ro 10:15) did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "**LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?**"." (Ro 10:16)

**Who has believed our message?** - This is a rhetorical question. The **NET** translation is "Who would have believed what we just heard?" The **ESV** marginal note has "Who has believed what we have heard?" Holman CSB has "Who has believed what we have heard?" Is this question referring to a "**message**" they announced or a "**message**" they heard? The context and the way the passage is quoted in John 12:37-38 (cf Romans 10:16) above would favor this being the **message** (of good news) the Jews had heard but which they refused to believe.

John speaks of the Jews failure to receive the message writing "He (MESSIAH) came to His own (JEWS), and those who were His own did not receive ([paralambano](#) = receive with favor) Him." (John 1:11+)

**NET Note** - The first half of Isa 53:1 is traditionally translated, "Who has believed our report?" or "Who has believed our message?" as if the group speaking is lamenting that no one will believe what they have to say. **But that doesn't seem to be the point in this context.** Here the group speaking does not cast itself in the role of a preacher or evangelist. **No, they are repentant sinners, who finally see the light.** The phrase "our report" can mean (1) the report which we deliver, or (2) the report which was delivered to us. The latter fits better here, where the report is most naturally taken as the announcement that has just been made in Isaiah 52:13-15. (Bolding mine) ([Isaiah 53 Notes](#))

Their rhetorical questions call for a negative answer and **Motyer** adds "The true reply to the first question, therefore, is **No-one**."

**David Thompson** adds that "The answer is to hardly anyone. John Calvin said, "Scarcely a hundredth person will be a believer" (Isaiah, Vol. 8, p. 111). Very few actually believed that Jesus Christ could save a nation and a person from sin. Very few believed it in Isaiah's day and very few believe it in our day. This is what Merwin Stone called the "tragedies of tragedies" (A Study of Isaiah 52:13- 53:12, Bib. Sac. 91:362, Apr. 1934, p. 224). God sent His special revelation, His own Servant who had the strength of God to save, and no one believed Him. The same tragedy exists today. Most (ED: NOT ONLY JEWS BUT ALSO GENTILES) do not and will not turn to Jesus Christ for salvation. ([Exposition](#))

**Oswalt** adds that "The two NT quotations of the passage understand it in this way: the people of God (THE JEWS) who have heard the news and seen the revelation have refused to believe it (John 12:38; Ro 10:16-see these below)." (NICOT-Isaiah)

**W E Vine** - The word rendered "report," means that which was heard, that which was declared, and the reference is to the Gospel preached at Pentecost and afterwards, which was persistently rejected by the nation. Witness Paul's protests and lament (Acts 13:46; 18:6; 28:28; Romans 9:1; 11:7, 8; 1 Thessalonians 2:14-18). (The Collected Writings of W. E. Vine)

**Believed** (0539) ([aman](#)) conveys the basic idea of firmness or certainty of that which provides stability and confidence, like a baby would find in the arms of a parent. Recall that the **first use** of a word in Scripture is often very significant as it establishes the primary or most significant meaning, and this general principle is true in the Spirit's inspired use of '**aman** in Genesis 15:6+ where "Abram **believed** in Jehovah" = Hebrew verb '**aman** = ) In both Ge 15:6 and here in Isa 53:1 **aman** is translated in the [Septuagint](#) with the verb [pisteuo](#) which means to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust. The point of this question in Isa 53:1 is that they did not believe the message (in context, the message about the Messiah), and both John and Paul quote Isa 53:1 in a similar context of unbelief. **Aman** is used in a similar sense in Isaiah 28:16 where God says "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone (MESSIAH), A costly cornerstone (MESSIAH) for the foundation, firmly placed. He who **believes** (Lxx = [pisteuo](#)) in it (MESSIAH) will not be disturbed (Lxx = ashamed)" which is quoted 3 times in the NT (Ro 9:33, Ro 10:11, 1 Pe 2:6).

**John** quotes Isaiah 53:1 (and this also says the fact that Isaiah 53 is a prophecy about the Messiah) to substantiate the fact that the Jews did not respond to the ministry of the Lord Jesus at His First Coming....

But though He had performed so many signs before them, **yet they were not believing in Him.** 38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "**LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?**" 39 For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, 40 "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM." (John 12:37-40)

Paul quotes Isaiah (again showing Isaiah 53 is about Jesus) also to explain why "they did not all heed the good news," the reason of course being that they did not believe it...

How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? 15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!" 16 However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "**LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?**" 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. (Romans 10:14-17)

## JEHOVAH'S POWER WAS REVEALED

**And to whom has the Arm of the LORD been revealed-** This is an interesting question which we might paraphrase as "To whom was the Messiah revealed?" Keeping in mind that Isaiah is addressing the Jews, the answer (from our modern perspective looking back) would be that in one sense the news of the Messiah had spread throughout Israel. For example in Matthew 9:31 after healing a demon-possessed man "they went out and spread the news about Him in all that land." (cf Luke 4:14). The problem was that although the Messiah "had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him." (John 12:37) Spiritual truth must be revealed by the Spirit, but their unbelief (their spiritual obduracy) short-circuited (so to speak) the regenerating work of the Spirit. And so the apostle John explained their unbelief by quoting Isaiah 53:1 "to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?" (Jn 12:38) John then goes on to quote those tragic words in Isaiah 6 explaining that now these unbelieving Jews could not believe for Isaiah said "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM." (John 12:39-40)

**Arm** is a metonymy for Jehovah's power in context of Isaiah 53 is manifest in the Person of the Messiah, the "Suffering Servant"! While the nation of Israel witnessed Jesus' miracles, they failed to recognize that He was **the Arm of the LORD** whom God had revealed. They refused to believe and then were spiritually blinded to see Jesus as the **Arm of the LORD**.

**Guzik** - In this context of the Messiah's suffering and agony, this line seems out of place. The arm of the Lord is a picture of His strength, power, and might. Yet we will see a Messiah weak and suffering. But the strength, power, and might of God will be expressed in the midst of this suffering, seemingly weak Messiah. ([Isaiah 53 Commentary](#))

We know that Messiah's message did not lack power for as Paul explained "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power (dunamis = inherent power) of God for salvation **to everyone who believes** (THEY WOULD NOT BELIEVE), **to the Jew first** and also to the Greek." (Ro 1:16+)

**Roy Gingrich** - Israel did not recognize Christ as "**the arm of Jehovah**" - The people of Israel found it impossible to believe that the lowly man of Nazareth was "the arm of Jehovah," the medium through which Jehovah executes His will in the universe, the medium through which His saving purposes are carried out. Christ's being "**the arm of Jehovah**" was **revealed** only to an elect few in Israel, Matthew 16:16, 17; John 6:68, 69. (Book of Isaiah)

**Oswalt**: Thus the revelation of the arm of the Lord that will deliver the Lord's people is met with shock, astonishment, distaste, dismissal, and avoidance. Such a one as this can hardly be the one who can set us free from that most pervasive of all human bondages: sin, and all its consequences. To a world blinded by selfishness and power, he does not even merit a second thought.

**Constable** comments that "When the Lord would bare His arm to save humankind (Isa 51:9-10; 52:10; 63:12), that manifestation of His strength was not at all impressive. We might say that when God rolled up His sleeve, the arm that He exposed was not the powerful arm of a weight lifter but a scrawny arm. Nevertheless that arm would prove to be stronger than any other arm. The Arm of the Lord appears here as a person distinct from the Lord Himself, even the Servant of the Lord." ([Isaiah 53 Commentary](#))

**F. C. Jennings** observes, "Israel has cried and repeated the cry of, 'Awake, awake, O arm of the Lord!'. (Isa 51:9) But when that Arm came, who recognized it? Can He—that son of the carpenter (as supposed)—can He be the **arm of Jehovah**? Can He, who dwells hidden, unknown in that humble home in despised Galilee, can He be the **arm of Jehovah**? Never a good thing comes out of Nazareth (Jn 1:46)".

**S Lewis Johnson** - Elizabeth Barrett Browning, in her Aurora Leigh, has written a stanza that has always impressed me. "Earth's crammed with heaven, and every common bush a fire with God, and only he who sees takes off his shoes. The rest sit round and pick blackberries." That's what the world's been doing, and when Jesus of Nazareth, the suffering servant of Jehovah was here, earth was crammed with heaven, but men picked blackberries. That's what they're doing in the 20th Century, and oftentimes

Christians are misled too by the blackberry pickers. Earth's crammed with heaven. Everywhere there is testimony to the fact the Jesus is the suffering servant of Jehovah, and it is through him that life comes, everywhere, but we are blind, and also did you notice, unto whom is the arm of the Lord revealed, revealed. Ah, that's a work of God to reveal. Belief is the work of man. Reveal is the work of God, and the work of God precedes the work of man. It is God who reveals. It is we who believe. God doesn't believe. Men believe, but men do not reveal. God reveals. ([Sermon](#))

**Revealed** (01540)(galah) means to uncover that which was heretofore hidden (as when God revealed Himself to Jacob at Bethel - Ge 35:7).

The Septuagint translates **galah** with **apokalupto** which literally means to remove the cover from something so that what was hidden can be seen. For example, Paul explains that "to us God **revealed** (the things in 1 Cor 2:9) through the Spirit." (1 Cor 2:10+).

**David Baron** comments on **revealed** writing that "to the second question (To whom has the Arm of the LORD been revealed)", that only such upon whom an operation of divine power has been performed, only those "over" or "upon" whom the **Arm of Jehovah** has been **revealed**, could believe it—so marvelous, so utterly incredible to mere human thought and imagination is the wonderful story which, in all its saving power and glory, is now made plain to us. Truly, the message, or "report," of a full and perfect salvation through a suffering Messiah, who through humiliation and death enters into glory, could not have been known or believed, and much less invented, by either Jew or Gentile; but all the more it bears upon it the seal of Divine wisdom and Divine power. "ut just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND which HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God." (1 Cor 2:9-10) ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

Jesus used **apokalupto** twice in Mt 11:25-27 "At that time Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have **revealed** them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight. All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to **reveal** Him." Clearly unless this spiritual truth regarding the Arm of the LORD, the Messiah, is not comprehended solely intellectually, but it must be spiritually revealed by God.

**Edward Young** writes that "The revelation of the Lord's strength and believing what we have proclaimed are two aspects of the same thing. The revelation of God's arm upon a person is one of power (cf. Jer. 17:5), and hence to believe the report proclaimed is evidence that the Lord's power has been manifested. It is the arm of the Lord that brought the nation out of Egypt (cf. Isa 51:9-10; 63:12), and this arm of power enables a man to believe. The passage clearly teaches that faith is a gift of God and not a work of man's unaided power. It also teaches that unless God manifests His power, men will not be converted. We must ever depend upon God to work that His kingdom may be extended." (The Book of Isaiah - Volume 3, Page 341)

**Wiersbe** - The unbelief of Israel is now announced: they saw Him, heard Him, but would not trust Him (John 1:11; 12:37-38). There was a three-fold rejection: they rejected His words, "report," and His works, "the arm of the Lord" See John 12:37-40 especially. The prophet had been warned of this hardness of heart in 6:9-10. The third focus of rejection was His person (v. 2).

One might ask "**Why was the message so difficult for the Jews to believe?**" The next verse begins to help us answer that question.

---

#### **James Smith - THE ARM OF THE LORD Isaiah 53:1**

The "arm" is here used as a figure of the true Christ as the Head of the Church. He is also the "Arm of the Lord." This metaphor is deeply suggestive. The—

I. Significance of It. "The arm of the Lord" (Jehovah). It is the symbol of almighty power. Christ is the power of God. This power is a living power, an arm that is vitally connected with the Personal and Eternal God. It is no dead force like hydraulic pressure, but a power that worketh by love. His arm is also the symbol of mercy. Though His arm be strong to smite, 'tis also strong to save. His arm hath brought salvation (Isa. 59:16).

II. Baring of It. "The Lord hath made bare His holy arm" (chap. 62:10). In making bare His arm (Christ) the Lord has revealed His great power both, to smite and to save. What mighty spiritual muscle there is unveiled in the life and death of Jesus Christ. It is the work of the Holy Spirit, and of every preacher of the Gospel, to make manifest the naked and almighty saving arm of God.

---

#### **Hymns Related to Isaiah 53:1:**

- [How Few Receive with Cordial Faith](#)
- [How Wonderful Jesus Is!](#)
- [I've Believed the True Report](#)
- [Now, Gracious Lord, Thine Arm Reveal](#)

- [Who Hath Believed the Tidings?](#)
- [Who of the Great, or Wise](#)
- [Zion's King Shall Reign Victorious](#)

**Isaiah 53:2 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.**

**KJV** Isaiah 53:2 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.

**NET** Isaiah 53:2 He sprouted up like a twig before God, like a root out of parched soil; he had no stately form or majesty that might catch our attention, no special appearance that we should want to follow him.

**Septuagint** - We brought a report as of a child before him; he is as a root in a thirsty land: he has no form nor comeliness; and we saw him, but he had no form nor beauty.

- **For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot** Isaiah 11:1; Jer 23:5; Ezek 17:22-24; Zech 6:12; Mark 6:3; Luke 2:7,39,40,51,52; Luke 9:58; Ro 8:3; Php 2:6,7
- **He has no stately form or majesty** Isaiah 52:14; Mark 9:12; John 1:10-14; 9:28,29; 18:40; 19:5,14,15; 1 Pet 2:14
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## REASONS FOR REJECTION OF THE SERVANT

**For** (NAS, KJV, ESV) in this context is a [term of explanation](#), specifically explaining why the Jews did not believe in Him at this first coming. Remember that the Jews in Jesus' day were looking for a Messiah, but One Who would be a conquering King and Jesus looked like anything but a conquering King. So here is the penitential confession the believing Jews will make in the future, as to why they rejected Jesus as the Messiah. They and all their reasons express their contempt for Him.

**Constable** - Instead of appearing as a mighty oak or a flourishing fruit tree, the Servant would grow up before the Lord as a sucker, a normally unwanted shoot that sprouts up from a root." ([Isaiah 53 Commentary](#))

**Brian Bell** - Triple rejection: [1] Rejected His Words(report) [2] Rejected His Works Works(the arm of the Lord) [3] Rejected His Person(vs.2) ([Isaiah 53 Notes](#))

**He grew up before Him like a tender shoot** ("My servant grew up in the LORD's presence like a tender green shoot" - NLT) - The idea is like a "suckling shoot". What is so demeaning about Jesus being compared (term of comparison) a "**tender shoot**?" The Hebrew word for **tender shoot** is [yoneq](#) which is a Hebrew noun describing a suckling shoot growing off of the main branch or main stalk, such suckling usually being [pruned](#) because they sucked life out of the tree or plant. This is an interesting picture of Messiah because in Isa 53:8 this is exactly what happened to Him ("**He was cut off out of the land of the living**"). Although the Hebrew word for **shoot** is different earlier Isaiah describes Messiah as "a **shoot** (Who) will spring from the stem of Jesse" (Isa 11:1+), so some commentators see this description as an allusion to Messiah's lineage from the house of David, but that interpretation is unlikely for it does not describe a Messiah's contemptible origin, His sufferings and His rejection as in Isaiah 53. In fact the Isaiah 11:1ff passage describes the glorious millennium and is associated more with Messiah's second coming than His first coming.

Jesus **grew up before** God and though He was unrecognized by the world, Jesus was observed carefully by His Father, Who ordered every minute circumstance of His life and Who was "well pleased" with Him (Lk 3:22+).

**James Culross on grew up** - "Jehovah's Servant," as has been well said by another, "does not burst upon the world all at once in sudden splendour of daring or achievement, dazzling all eyes and captivating all hearts. He conforms to God's slow, silent law of growth. This law holds in every province of God's empire. Great lives are built up under this law:—a babe on mother's lap, opening its fringed eyelids to look forth wonderingly on an unknown world; a child learning to prattle and play; a boy at school; a young man with bloom on his cheek and splendid purpose in his eye; and so onward throughout successive stages....Even so did 'Jehovah's Servant' grow by a natural human growth." (Quoted by David Baron [Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

Note the teaching conveyed by the phrase **He grew up before Him** - The point is that **He** and **Him** are distinct entities, alluding to the Son and the Father. Of course from a spiritual point, Jesus lived His whole life on earth as if continually in the presence of His Father (because He was)! What a pattern for His disciples to imitate! To always live our life (enabled by the Spirit of Jesus) [Coram Deo](#)! Jesus truly lived His life Coram Deo! It reminds me of Joe Stowell's story -

I'll never forget the time I had the privilege of sitting next to Billy Graham at a dinner. I was honored but also somewhat nervous about what would be appropriate to say. I thought it would be an interesting conversation starter to ask what he loved most about his years of ministry. Then I awkwardly started to suggest possible answers. Was it knowing presidents, kings, and queens? Or preaching the gospel to millions of people around the world? Before I had finished offering suggestions, Rev. Graham stopped me. Without hesitation he said, "**It has been my fellowship with Jesus. To sense His presence, to glean His wisdom, to have Him guide and direct me—that has been my greatest joy.**" I was instantly convicted and challenged. Convicted because I'm not sure that his answer would have been my answer, and challenged because I wanted it to be. ([Our Daily Bread](#))

**Before** (06440)([panim/paniym/paneh](#)) literally means face or countenance from the verbal root panah meaning to turn toward. The unusual meaning is before or in front of. Before the face of God! In the presence of God which is the meaning of Coram Deo.

**MacArthur** explains the comparison with a **tender shoot** - This is simply a way to say His beginning was irrelevant. It was unimportant, it was insignificant, it didn't matter, He was a nobody from nobodies, from nowhere. We looked at Jesus, what did we see? An insignificant family, Joseph, Mary, an insignificant town, Nazareth (cp Jn 1:46), way off the beaten track. Born in an insignificant place in an inn, in a stable placed in a feed trough, and attending His birth were shepherds who were the lowest people on the social ladder. No royal birth, no social status, no family nobility, no formal education. Thirty years a carpenter in Nazareth. No connections with anybody who mattered with the elite, with the important. He is a sucker branch. He is irrelevant. ([The Scorned Servant of Jehovah - Part 2](#))

Since Messiah would arise from such humble beginnings, which none of the trappings of fame, riches or royalty, only those with eyes of faith could see His true identity and divine "Pedigree!" **Motyer** says it this way "Only those to whom truth was *revealed* could see that this was *the arm of the lord.*" (TNTC-Isaiah)

**Roy Gingrich** - Just as it is impossible to believe that a mighty oak can come out of utterly dry ground, even so it was humanly impossible to believe that "the arm of Jehovah" could come out of the Jesus' boyhood surroundings (He grew up in a despised province, John 7:52; He grew up in a mean little town, John 1:46; and He grew up in an humble home). The people of Israel knew that such adverse surroundings could not produce their Messiah. They failed to see that Jesus was nurtured from above ("He grew up before Him"). (Book of Isaiah)

**Scott Grant** - A tender shoot is a suckling on a trunk that sucks life from the tree. That's how Jesus was viewed—as leading a renegade movement that threatened the Jewish establishment. Parched ground is a place where you don't expect a root. Jesus came from what was deemed the "parched ground" of Nazareth (John 1:46), Galilee (John 7:52) and a carpenter (Matthew 13:55). ([Isaiah 53:1-3: Ordinary appearance, extraordinary love](#))

**David Thompson** - When He was born in Bethlehem, the leaders in Jerusalem would not even travel five to six miles to see Him. They wouldn't even look at Him. They could not imagine that their Messiah could come from such parched ground. ([Exposition](#))

**And like a root out of parched ground** - The intent of this simile is easy to discern. A **root in parched ground** is virtually useless. There was little promise in this simple Nazarene carpenter to amount to anything in the eyes of other men! Oh, how deceiving appearances can be!

Messiah is the "shoot of Jesse", and in Isaiah 11:10 as "the **root** ([seres](#)) of Jesse," the same word for **root** in this verse. Luke describes Jesus' growing up writing "And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." (Lk 2:52+) A root out of parched ground has little prospect of successful growth.

**Parched ground** can speak of spiritual dryness which would have been an appropriate description of the nation of Israel from which Jesus arose. Lot's of religious activity, but all dead works.

**Wiersbe** - Israel was not a paradise when Jesus was born; politically and spiritually, it was a wilderness of dry ground.

**Parched** (06723)([tsiyah](#)) dryness, drought, parched land, desert and in all the uses describes the parched landscape of the desert or the dryness of fields after a lengthy drought. It refers to a drought in (Job 24:19) pt to the dry ground that results from yjr drought (Job 30:3). David compares the thirsting of the dry ground for water to the longing of his soul for God (Ps. 63:1). In Ps. 78:17; 105:41 **tsiyah** refers to the desert wanderings of Israel after their Exodus from Egypt. The psalmist says that God "changes a wilderness into a pool of water And a dry land into springs of water. (Ps. 107:35, same picture in Isa 35:1). Tsiyah describes what God will do to Nineveh (make it "parched like the wilderness.") (Zeph. 2:13). In the Millennial Kingdom the wilderness and desert will appear joyful, decked with wildflowers (Isa. 35:1).

**Gilbrant** - The desert is also a picture of judgment. Hosea warned that his errant wife would be made like a desert if she persisted in



her sin (Hos. 2:3). The prophet Ezekiel pictured Israel as a vine planted in a dry wilderness, soon to be withered (Ezek. 19:13). Babylon would be judged and would become a parched desert (Jer. 50:12; 51:43). Zephaniah predicted that God would make Nineveh into a desolation, a desert (Zeph. 2:13). Tsîyâh is also used in a variety of comparisons. The grave swallows up sinners just as drought and heat turn snowmelt to dust (Job 24:19). And Job described the pitiful men who were driven to gnaw the dry ground, looking for moisture (Job 30:3). ([Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary](#))

**Tsiyah** - 19x in 16v - desert(3), drought(2), dry(5), dry places(1), parched(4), parched land(1).

Job 24:19; Job 30:3; Ps. 63:1; Ps. 78:17; Ps. 105:41; Ps. 107:35; Isa. 35:1; Isa. 41:18; Isa. 53:2; Jer. 2:6; Jer. 50:12; Jer. 51:43; Ezek. 19:13; Hos. 2:3; Joel 2:20; Zeph. 2:13

**Spurgeon** - "Do not say, 'It is useless to preach down there, or to send missionaries to that uncivilized country.' How do you know? Is it very dry ground? Ah, well, that is hopeful soil; Christ is a 'root out of a dry ground,' and the more there is to discourage the more you should be encouraged. Read it the other way. Is it dark? Then all is fair for a grand show of light; the light will never seem so bright as when the night is very very dark."

**Ortlund** - When he traveled with his disciples, it wasn't like the movies. Jesus didn't have a holy glow about him. The woman at the well had no idea whom she was talking to (John 4:25, 26). Even John the Baptist became uncertain about him (Luke 7:18–23; John 1:29–34). Our Lord just wasn't special in ways that count with us. In fact, he became hideous in his sufferings, so that people shunned him: "... as one from whom men hide their faces." (Preaching the Word-Isaiah)

**Wiersbe** - He was not born in a palace; He was born in a Bethlehem stable, and He grew up in the despised town of Nazareth (John 1:43–46). The words "tender plant" literally mean "a little bush" such as would spring from a low branch. In other words, Christ was not a great tree, but a humble bush. See Isa. 11:1. When He appeared, the nation was barren and dry spiritually. They had a form of religion, but they had no life, and because He brought life, they rejected Him. What a remarkable Man, human ("He shall grow up") yet divine. This offended the Jews who could not believe that God would come in the form of a Servant (Mark 6:1–3). His physical appearance was not unusual; there was no splendor or special human attractiveness to the human eye. Of course, to those who know Him, He is the fairest of the fair (Ps. 45:1ff).

Jesus' outward appearance was not striking. This does not mean that Jesus was ugly. As one man put it, this description simply meant that Jesus was not the "Prince charming" the Jews were anticipating in their Messiah! Of course their problem was they failed to see His incredible inner beauty! This one Who did not look like a royal prince would one day be the reigning Prince of Peace!

**He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him**(cf Isa 52:14+)([He had no stately form or majesty that might catch our attention](#) - NET; "There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him" - NLT) - This statement is in past tense "**He had** no stately form..." (S Lewis Johnson [Ref](#)) It is notable that there is no description of Jesus' outward appearance the four gospels. But here the Jewish remnant look back ([diagram](#)) and see that His bearing was unremarkable. He was not charismatic. His appearance was not majestic.

**Form** ([08389](#))(**toar**) refers to form, appearance or beauty, a visual appearance that is pleasing to the eyes, especially in the contours and outward appearance (Rachel = "beautiful of **form**" - Ge 29:17, "Joseph was handsome in **form**" - Ge 39:6; David "a **handsome** man" - 1 Sa 16:18; Abigail "beautiful in **appearance**" - 1 Sa 25:3). This same noun is used in Isa 52:14+ to describe the Servant's "**form**" as marred more than any man. **Toar** is used of the **form** of the son of a king, a royal-looking person, a person with dignity (Jdg. 8:18) and can refer to the shape of trees, plants, etc. (Jer. 11:16).

**Toar** - 12x in 12v - appearance(2), form(7), handsome(1), handsome\*(1), resembling(1).

Gen. 29:17; Gen. 39:6; Jdg. 8:18; 1 Sam. 16:18; 1 Sa 25:3; 1 Sa 28:14; 1 Ki. 1:6; Est. 2:7; Isa. 52:14; Isa. 53:2; Jer. 11:16; Lam. 4:8

**Majesty** ([01926](#))(**hadar**) is a noun meaning glory, splendor, majesty, ornament, honor. It is the quality of a person or thing which inspires awe or reverence in the beholder and can be related to size, strength, power or authority. To the Jews in Israel (and sadly still most Jews today) Jesus lacked those attributes which normally evoke a response of reverence!

**Hadar** is used frequently to describe the impressive character of God (Ps 29:4 = God's "voice"; Ps 90:16; Ps 96:6 1 Chr 16:27; Ps 104:1; Ps 111:3; Ps 145:5, 12) Isaiah describes God's judgment partially fulfilled in Judah's Babylonian captivity but fully developed in the coming Day of the Lord when sinners flee from the **hadar** of the Lord (Isa. 2:10, 19+). **Hadar** refers to God's creation of man whom He crowns "with glory and **majesty**!" (Ps 8:5)

**Gilbrant** - It is used with reference to nature, people, cities and God. Trees are noted for their beauty (Lev 23:40). Indeed, the entire creation is said to reflect the glorious handiwork of the Lord (Ps 110:3). Zion is promised to radiate splendor in the future messianic kingdom (Isa. 35:2). Humankind is also crowned with honor when appropriate (Ps 8:5). The gray hair of the elderly is their splendor

(Pr 20:29), and the ideal wife is clothed with honor (Pr 31:25). Glory once characterized Jerusalem (Isa 5:14) and such places as Persia, Lydia and Libya were known for their splendor (Ezek 27:10). God is known for his majesty (1 Chr 16:27), resplendent in holiness (Ps 104:1), and clothed in glory (Ps 145:12). (Ibid)

**Hadar** - 30x in 29v - array(1), beautiful(1), dignity(1), honor(2), majestic(2), majesty(15), splendor(8).

Lev. 23:40; Deut. 33:17; 1 Chr. 16:27; Job 40:10; Ps. 8:5; Ps. 21:5; Ps. 29:4; Ps. 45:3; Ps. 45:4; Ps. 90:16; Ps. 96:6; Ps. 104:1; Ps. 110:3; Ps. 111:3; Ps. 145:5; Ps. 145:12; Ps. 149:9; Prov. 20:29; Prov. 31:25; Isa. 2:10; Isa. 2:19; Isa. 2:21; Isa. 5:14; Isa. 35:2; Isa. 53:2; Lam. 1:6; Ezek. 16:14; Ezek. 27:10; Mic. 2:9

The Lxx translates this phrase as "He has no form or **glory**." First would be the Cross and then would be **great glory** (Mt 24:30+).

**Culross** - Having misread the prophecies, having imagined another Deliverer than God had promised, being blind to the heavenly, while their souls lay open to the carnal and earthly, they found nothing worth gazing upon in Jehovah's Servant when He came. They would have welcomed a plumed and mail clad warrior, riding forth to battle against the oppressor, would have shouted before him, 'Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and with thy majesty!' They have no admiration and no welcome for One who comes, meek and lowly, to make His soul an offering for sin, and to be God's salvation to the end of the earth. It was not sin that troubled them: how should a Saviour from sin delight them? What was there in a Bringerin of righteousness to inspire such hearts?" (Quoted by David Baron [Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Should look on Him** - Won't it be incredible beloved disciple of Christ that one day we shall look on Him on Whom men would not care to look at His first coming! We shall behold the One Who had no stately form or majesty who will then have great glory when He returns as the majestic King of kings. John describes what happens when we see Him...

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. (1 John 3:2+)

**Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him**(NET = "no special appearance that we should want to follow Him." **ESV** = "no beauty that we should desire Him." **NLT** = "nothing to attract us to Him") - **Appearance** is the Hebrew noun **mar'eh** ([04758](#)) meaning a sight, an appearance or a vision, and in this context means Messiah had no visual appearance that was pleasing to the eyes of the Jews. **Attracted** is the Hebrew verb **hamad** ([02530](#)) which means they took no pleasure in Messiah's appearance, they had no desire for Him. In Isaiah 1:29 this same verb hamad describes what they did desire - "Surely you will be ashamed of the oaks which you have **desired**, And you will be embarrassed at the gardens which you have chosen." describing where they practiced idolatrous and adulterous heathen worship! If we do not desire Jesus, that void ("God shaped vacuum") in our soul will be filled by desire for idols of various types, shapes and sizes!

This is an amazing passage, for Jesus is the Creator of the entire world, the Creator of everything beautiful and magnificent and also the Sustainer of it all (Col 1:17, Heb 1:3), and yet He Himself came to earth with an unremarkable appearance, certainly not one that would draw the attention of others! He Who was the most special of all mankind, simply did not look "special." Although Messiah was of the lineage of the line of David, even He was unlike David who was described as "a skillful musician, a mighty man of valor, a warrior, one prudent in speech, and a handsome man; and the LORD is with him." (1 Sa 16:18)

**Oswalt** had an excellent summary - The real issue is not whether this person was good-looking, but that the way in which he set about delivering his people was just as shocking and as off-putting as it would be to have the ugliest man in a group chosen "best-looking." Deliverers are dominating, forceful, attractive people, who by their personal magnetism draw people to themselves and convince people to do what they want them to do. People who refuse to follow that leadership frequently find themselves crushed and tossed aside. This man does not fit that picture at all. We are not drawn to him and his plans; rather, we are repulsed by him and them. Instead of bursting on the scene like a mighty oak or a fruit tree in full bloom, he appears as a sprout or "sucker," the normally unwanted shoot that springs up from an exposed root of a tree. It is a matter of seconds for the gardener to snip it off. Or he is like a little plant struggling for life in unwatered ground. Far from forcing its way on all around it, its survival is in doubt....As a result, our eyes flicker across him in a crowd and we do not even see him. His splendor is not on the surface, and those who have no inclination to look beyond the surface will never even see him, much less pay him any attention. (NICOT-Isaiah).

**Wikipedia** on His **appearance** - The Church Fathers Justin (d.165) and Tertullian (d.220) believed, following Isaiah:53:2, that Christ's appearance was unremarkable:[16] "he had no form nor comeliness, that we should look upon him, nor beauty that we should delight in him." But when the pagan Celsus ridiculed the Christian religion for having an ugly God in about 180, Origen (d. 248) cited Psalm 45:3: "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, mighty one, with thy beauty and fairness"[17] Later the emphasis of leading Christian thinkers changed; Jerome (d. 420) and Augustine of Hippo (d. 430) argued that Jesus must have been ideally beautiful in face and body. For Augustine he was "beautiful as a child, beautiful on earth, beautiful in heaven." ([Depiction of Jesus](#))

---

**David Thompson** - Most did not even look at Him. 53:2 In verse 2, there are three reasons why most did not even look at Jesus

Christ and even consider the fact that He could be the Savior of Israel and the Savior of the world:

(Reason #1) - Most would not look at Him being the Savior because of His unimpressive . youth. 53:2a

(Reason #2) - Most would not look at Him because of His lowly and obscure origin . 53:2b

(Reason #3) - Most would not look at Him because of His lowly physical appearance . 53:2c

He didn't have the charisma most successful people of this world have. He did not look like some winner. When you looked at Jesus Christ, you did not say - there is our King, you can see it. There was nothing spectacular about Jesus' physique and nothing kingly about His look. He did not have some proud countenance or great honorable look. When He walked down the street, you wouldn't turn your head in awe of the fact that you just walked by the King of kings and Savior of the world. Here was the only sinless, perfect Person to walk on this earth and hardly any would even look at Him. Isaiah says because He didn't have the right look about Him, most didn't look at Him at all. God was in Person on this earth in the Person of Jesus Christ and most who saw Him couldn't see it and didn't get it. ([Exposition](#))

---

**Rod Mattoon** - Nothing big or bombastic that would grab someone's attention would characterize Jesus. That is "opposite" to the thinking of this world that places so much importance on outward appearance, power, success, and money.

Howard Hendricks said, "There was no identity crisis in the life of Jesus Christ. He knew who He was. He knew where He had come from, and why He was here. And He knew where He was going. When you are that liberated, then you can serve."

That is what our Lord did.

God's plan was that Christ's arrival be of a humble fashion. The Scriptures teach that exaltation comes from humility.

James 4:10—Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

He was lifted up and glorified.

Jesus painted no pictures; yet some of the finest paintings of Raphael, Michelangelo, and Leonardo da Vinci received their inspiration from Him.

Jesus wrote no poetry; but Dante, Milton, and scores of the world's greatest poets were inspired by Him.

Jesus composed no music; still Haydn, Handel, Beethoven, Bach, and Mendelssohn reached their highest perfection of melody in the hymns, symphonies, and oratorios they composed in His praise. Every sphere of human greatness has been enriched by this humble carpenter of Nazareth.

When our Lord was born, He who never began to be, but eternally existed, and who continued to be what He eternally was, began to be what He eternally was not..(Mattoon's Treasures – Treasures from Isaiah, Volume 3)

---

### **Alan Carr: The Real Beauty of Jesus**

There is, however, an old saying that goes, "You can't judge a book by its cover." This was certainly the case with Jesus Christ. It was not what men saw, but what they could not see that made Him extra-ordinary.

- Born to peasant parents.
- Born in a manger, not a palace.
- Poverty His constant companion.
- His Disciples were just common fishermen.
- Common peasants were His most devoted followers.
- His death was among the condemned and wretched.
- His church, for the most part, is made up of the lowly.

Many might think that such a man is not worthy of our love, devotion and worship. However, with Jesus, His real beauty lies not in what men can see, but in what He has done. It is in the things which Jesus accomplished for you and me that His real beauty lies. So, dismiss from your mind every artist's rendering on Jesus you have ever seen. Forget all illusions you may have conjured up concerning Him and today, just look beyond the Man. Look instead to what He did. For it is in the work of Jesus that His real beauty is seen. ([Isaiah 53:1-3 The Real Beauty Of Jesus](#))

---

**David Guzik** has an interesting application is this description of Messiah - This means that when we try to attract people to Jesus through form or comeliness, or beauty, we are using methods that run counter to the nature of Jesus. "These days it appears that we

must dress up the gospel to make it attractive. We have to use the methods of technique which must be smart, well-presented, streamlined. There must be something about the presentation of the gospel that will appeal to people . . . to what is called 'the modern mind.' I wonder if we stop to think that in our efforts to make the gospel message 'attractive' we are drawing a curtain across the face of Jesus in His humiliation? The only one who can make Him attractive is the Holy Spirit." (Redpath)

---

**Warren Wiersbe** adds - Because of His words and works, Jesus attracted great crowds, but nothing about His physical appearance made Him different from any other Jewish man. While few people deliberately try to be unattractive, modern society has made a religion out of physical beauty. It is good to remember that Jesus succeeded without it. (Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Comforted - Isaiah).

---

## Seeing Jesus

Read: Isaiah 53:1-6 |

He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. —Isaiah 53:2

When I was young, I thought I knew exactly what Jesus looked like. After all, I saw Him every day whenever I looked at some pictures in my bedroom. One showed Jesus knocking at a door and the other depicted Him as a Shepherd with His sheep.

What I didn't know was that a mere decade before I was born, those pictures of Jesus didn't exist. Warner Sallman painted the well-known "Head of Christ" and other portraits of Jesus in the 1940s. Those images were just one man's idea of what Jesus might have looked like.

The Bible never gives a physical description of Jesus. Even the men who saw Him every day didn't tell us what He looked like. In fact, the only clue we have is a passage in Isaiah that says: "There is no beauty that we should desire Him" (53:2). It seems that Jesus' human form was deliberately de-emphasized. He looked like an ordinary man. People weren't drawn to Him because of a regal appearance but because of what He said and did and because of the message of love He came to give (John 3:16).

But the next time Jesus comes to earth, it will be different. When our Savior returns, we will recognize Him as the sovereign King of kings and Lord of lords! (1 Tim. 6:14-15).

The more I see His beauty,  
The more I know His grace,  
The more I long, unhindered,  
To gaze upon His face. —Anon.

To see Jesus will be heaven's greatest joy.

By Cindy Hess Kasper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

## J Oswald Sanders - Moral Perfection Isaiah 53:2

In a letter published after his death, the poet Robert Browning cited several statements of men of learning concerning the Christian faith, and among them was this one from Charles Lamb: "In trying to predict with some friends as to how they would react if some of the great persons of past ages were to appear suddenly in the flesh once more, one of the friends said, 'And if Christ entered this room?' Lamb changed his attitude at once and said, 'You see if Shakespeare entered we should all rise; if He appeared, we must kneel.'" This was his view of the glory of Christ.

A brilliant Hindu scholar drew a similar conclusion. Disturbed by the progress of the Christian faith among his own people, he determined to do all in his power to arrest it. His plan was to prepare a book for widespread distribution highlighting the weaknesses and failings of Christ and exposing the fallacy of believing in Him.

For eleven years he diligently studied the New Testament, searching for inconsistencies in Christ's character and teaching. Not only did he fail to discover any, but he became convinced that the One he sought to discredit was who He claimed to be—the Son of God. The scholar then boldly confessed his faith in Christ.

The moral perfection of Christ impresses itself on the serious reader of the Gospels. The evangelists present the portrait of a real man who displays perfection at every stage of His development and in every circumstance of His life. This is all the more remarkable as He did not lock Himself in some secluded cloister but mixed freely and naturally with the imperfect people of His own generation. He became so deeply involved in the life of the ordinary people that His tendency to mix with sinners drew the most bitter criticism of the sanctimonious Pharisees.

And yet He seemed so ordinary that many of His contemporaries saw Him only as "the carpenter's son," a lowly Nazarene. With

eyes blinded by sin and selfishness, they saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him (Isaiah 53:2). To all except those whose eyes were enlightened by love and faith, His moral grandeur and divine glory passed unnoticed. (31 Days)

---

### **Inner Beauty By David H. Roper**

We beheld His glory. —John 1:14

The tabernacle in the wilderness was a tent where the glory of God dwelt. The structure was made of badger skins and was plain on the outside. But inside it was exquisitely beautiful (Exodus 25–27).

We can compare the tabernacle with Jesus' human form. John said, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). The word dwelt means He "pitched His tent with us," the same word that ancient Greek versions of the Old Testament used for the tabernacle.

Jesus looked like an ordinary man: He had "no beauty that we should desire Him" (Isaiah 53:2). No one gave Him a second look. Yet John "beheld His glory," the glory of God Himself. Occasionally, the tent flap was lifted and he caught a glimpse of Jesus' inner beauty and majesty.

We are tabernacles too, made of skin, made to contain God's Spirit. Most of us are very plain, not like the made-up actors we see in the movies or the air-brushed models we view in the ads. But God is even now—at this moment—in the process of making us radiantly beautiful within.

We may be very plain and ordinary on the outside—but as we allow God's Spirit to work within us, the beauty of God's indwelling presence will shine from our faces.

So, is the world seeing Jesus in you?

Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me,  
All His wonderful passion and purity;  
O Thou Spirit divine, all my nature refine  
Till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me. —Orsborn

A righteous heart is the fountain of beauty.

---

### **Henry Blackaby - A Tender Plant**

He grew up before Him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground.—Isaiah 53:2

The coming of Jesus was like a tender plant in the midst of a parched ground. Parched ground offers little hope for survival; it is dry and too hardened to allow most plants to penetrate its crust. Yet Jesus was prophesied as a tender plant that would break through the hostile soil and overcome the dry and lifeless environment in order to bring life.

When Jesus was born, His people were hardened to God's Word. There is no written record of God's having spoken to His people for four hundred years. The religious leaders of Jesus' day had studied and memorized the Scriptures, but the words were lifeless to them. So hostile had they become to the truth that when God's Son came to them, they killed Him. Nevertheless, despite the enmity of the people, Jesus brought life to all who believed in Him.

Jesus is capable of bringing life to any person, society, or culture no matter how hardened or hostile they have become to the gospel. Even the most calloused sinner will discover that Jesus knows how to penetrate the heart and bring life where there was only bitterness. The work of Jesus in a person's life may seem fragile at first, but like the mustard seed, it will eventually grow into something strong.

As you pray for someone you care about, don't be discouraged if this person has not responded to Jesus. Just as a tender plant finds a way to grow in a hard and unreceptive environment, so the love of Jesus has the ability to emerge in a life that seems completely unresponsive.

---

**Billy Graham** - It has always been interesting to me that—outside of the hints given in Isaiah 53—the Bible does not tell us what Jesus looked like, nor were paintings or drawings made of Him during His lifetime. Artists throughout the centuries have tried to imagine what He must have looked like, but the truth is, we don't know.

And I believe there is a very good reason for this: God knew that if we had an accurate portrait of Jesus, we would be tempted to worship it instead of worshipping Jesus Himself. We could even lapse into a type of idolatry, and that would be wrong.

But someday we will know what the risen Christ looks like, for someday we will enter into His presence forever. And when we do, the Bible says, "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2). Then we will share in His resurrection glory, and we will share in His sinless perfection.

Are you ready for that glorious day? You can be, by committing yourself to Christ and opening your heart and life to Him.



**Isaiah 53:3 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.**

KJV Isaiah 53:3 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.

- **He was despised and forsaken of men** Isaiah 49:7; 50:6; Ps 22:6-8; 69:10-12,19,20; Micah 5:1; Zech 11:8,12,13; Mt 26:67; 27:39-44,63; Mark 9:12; 15:19; Luke 8:53; 9:22; 16:14; Luke 23:18-25; John 8:48; Heb 12:2,3
- **A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief** Isaiah 53:4,10; Ps 69:29; Mt 26:37,38; Mark 14:34; Luke 19:41; John 11:35; Heb 2:15-18; 4:15; 5:7
- **And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.** Deut 32:15; Zech 11:13; Mt 27:9,10; John 1:10,11; Acts 3:13-15
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JEHOVAH'S SERVANT SHUNNED!

Messianic Jew **David Baron** comments that "The penitential confession (OF [THE SAVED JEWS](#) IN THE LAST DAYS) ([diagram](#)) proceeds in the third verse to set forth the positive aversion and hostility which the nation in its former ignorance manifested towards Jehovah's righteous Servant." ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**He was despised and forsaken of men** - Considering His unremarkable origin and appearance described in the previous passage, Jesus was still shunned by the Jews, especially the ruling and religious class.

**Despised** (0959)(**bazah** is from a root meaning to accord little worth) means they disdained Jesus, and held Him in contempt. In Malachi the Jews despised Jehovah's Name, His table and His food (Mal 1:6, 7, 12+) and as a consequence Jehovah made them despised before all the people! (Mal 2:9+). Remember that the speakers here are the redeemed Jewish remnant ([diagram](#)) looking back and confessing (and undoubtedly mourning - cf Zech 12:10, 11+) that they (their ancestors) treated Jesus as insignificant or worthless! They raised their heads loftily and disdainfully and looked down their noses at Him! It is worth noting that the opposite of **bazah** is **kabed/kabad** meaning to honor. And to be sure, He Who was greatly **despised** at His first coming will be greatly **honored** at His Second Coming!

The verb **bazah** is translated in the Septuagint here with the relatively uncommon NT adjective **atimos** used by Jesus Himself in Mt 13:57+ where we read "And they (PEOPLE OF NAZARETH - THE NAZARENES DESPISE THE NAZARENE!) **took offense** ([skandalizo](#)) (SINNERS SCANDALIZED BY SINLESS SAVIOR - TALK ABOUT TRAGIC IRONY!) at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not **without honor (atimos)** except in his hometown and in his own household." (THEY SHOULD HAVE HAD SIGNS UP "HOMETOWN BOY MAKES GOOD!" BUT INSTEAD SAW THE HOMETOWN BOY AS BAD! UNBELIEF IS A HORRIBLE SIN!)

**Oswalt** on **despised** - despised picks up the thought of the previous verse directly, but it is important to understand the word in its Hebrew sense, not the English one. The English word has a heavy emotive content with a consequent connotation of belittling and contempt. The Hebrew lacks the strength of emotion. It means to consider something or someone to be worthless, unworthy of attention. (NICOT-Isaiah)

**Bazoh**, an adjective related to the verb **bazah**, is used in Isaiah 49:7 -

Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One, To the **despised One**, To the One abhorred by the nation, To the Servant of rulers, "Kings will see and arise, Princes will also bow down, Because of the LORD who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You."

**John MacArthur** explains that "This speaks to the humiliating treatment of the **Servant** at His first advent, a theme emphasized by Isaiah (Isa 50:6-9; 52:14, 15; 53:3). The "nation" is used collectively for all who reject Him, particularly Gentiles, who are the rulers, kings, and princes referred to as someday giving exalted treatment to the Servant at His Second Coming. Former oppressors will bow down to Him as in Isa 52:15+, because of the salvation of Israel." (Borrow [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Bazah** is used in the Messianic passage in Psalm 22:6 where Messiah Himself says...

I am a worm and not a man, A reproach of men and **despised** (bazah; Lxx = exoudenema = object of contempt! ) by the people.

**Comment:** See the incredible picture inherent in Messiah saying "[I Am a Worm](#)."

**David Thompson** - They disdained Him showing a lack of respect which was accompanied by a feeling of intense dislike! They did that to Him when He walked among them and the Jews still (in general) treat Jesus with great disdain! This word is never used in a positive context. For example, Esau despised his birthright (Ge 25:34); Saul was despised as king (1 Sa 10:27); Michal despised David (2 Sa 6:16); various kings were despised (Jer 22:28; Da 11:21). This is more than just not liking; this is holding something in contempt. It is interesting that both participles "**despised**" are in the [Niphal stem](#), which means each person was involved in the emotional action and the results of the action (**ED**: see [reflexive verb](#)). In other words, when Jesus Christ came into this world, almost every person, in and of himself, emotionally despised Him and held Him in contempt. ([Exposition](#))

Play **Robin Mark's** worshipful song [Highly Exalted](#)

#### **You were despised**

#### **You were rejected Lord**

Those who passed by  
Even averted their gaze from Your sight  
Such was the suffering You bore for us

Led like a lamb, lamb to the slaughter  
You spoke not a word  
Chose to be silent Lord  
You did no wrong  
Nor was deceitfulness found in You  
Yet by Your wounds our salvation has come  
Yet by Your suffering our freedom is won

#### **Chorus**

For God has highly exalted Your name  
He has enthroned You on high  
Jesus, the name above all names – 2times

Led like a lamb, lamb to the slaughter  
You spoke not a word  
Chose to be silent, Lord  
You did no wrong  
Nor was deceitfulness found in You  
Yet by Your wounds our salvation has come  
Yet by Your suffering our freedom is won

Messianic Jewish writer **David Baron** rightly says that

"No person in the history of the Jews has provoked such deepseated abhorrence as He who came only to bless them, and who even on the cross prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." When on earth, at the end of His threeandahalf years of blessed ministry among them, they finally rejected Him. Their hatred was intense and mysterious. "Away with this man; release unto us Barabbas...Crucify Him, crucify Him!" was their cry (Lk 23:18, 21+). And all through the centuries no Name has provoked such intense abhorrence among the Jews as the name of Jesus. I have known personally the most amiable and lovable characters among the Jews; but immediately the name "**Jesus**" was mentioned, a change came over their countenances, and they would fall into a passion of anger. In the course of my missionary experiences these past thirty five or forty years, how often has it been my lot to witness some of my people almost mad with rage—clenching their fists, gnashing their teeth, and spitting on the ground at the very mention of the Name which to the believer "is as ointment poured forth"! Israel's attitude to our Lord Jesus may be gathered also from their literature. In the filthy legends about Him in the Talmud and more modern productions, the very names by which He is called are blasphemous. The precious name Yeshua ("Jesus," Saviour) has been changed into "[Yeshu](#)," made up of initial letters which mean, "*Let His name and His memory be blotted out.*" The Holy One who knew no sin nor was guile found in His mouth, is often styled "**the Transgressor**"; and another term frequently in the mouth of the Jews is "**Tolui**" ("[the hanged one](#)"), which is equivalent to "the accursed one."

There are also other hateful designations, such as "Ben Stada," or "[Ben Pandera](#)," which imply blasphemies not only against Him, but against her who is "blessed among women." And Israel's blind hatred to the Messiah does not stop short at His person, or His virgin mother, but extends to His words and works, and particularly to those of their nation who are ready to take upon them His reproach and to follow Him. Thus His works are still ascribed to witchcraft and Beelzebub; His gospel (the Evangelium) is called Aven or Avongillajon, "*the sinful or mischievous writing*"; while Rabbinic hatred to His followers (especially from among the Jews) was not satisfied with classing them as "apostates" and "worse than heathen," but rose to the height of instituting a daily public prayer in the most solemn part of their liturgy, that "the Nazarenes" may, together with all apostates, "be suddenly destroyed," without hope, and be "blotted out of the book of life"! This may be painful reading to some Christians, and the Lord knows it is far from my thoughts to write anything which might tend to foster unchristian prejudice against my people, but it is necessary to show how literally the prophetic forecast has been verified, and how deep seated and mysterious Jewish hatred has been to Him who, according to His human nature, is flesh of their flesh, and bone of their bone, and in whom is bound up all their hope and salvation. Let it be remembered also that Jewish hatred to Christ and His followers, at any rate in more modern times, is partly to be traced to the sufferings which they have endured at the hands of so called Christians, and also that it is not our Lord Jesus as we know Him, that Israel in ignorance thus blasphemes, but the caricature of Him as presented to them by apostate persecuting Christendom in the dark ages and since. Often the only way left to the Jews to avenge their terrible sufferings and massacres was to write blasphemously of Him in whose name they were ignorantly perpetrated. Neither is it to be forgotten that if Christ has been, and alas! to a large extent still is, "abhorred of the nation," there has always been a remnant in the nation to whom He has been "the fairest of ten thousand and altogether lovely," and who, for the love of Him, counted not even their lives dear unto them. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**John MacArthur** adds that "you will see in rabbinic writings **Yeshu** the contemporary way of saying, "**We will not have this man to reign over us,**" (Lk 19:14+) which is what they said when they screamed for His crucifixion."

**NET Note** - The servant is likened to a seriously ill person who is shunned by others because of his horrible disease.

Jesus was indeed **forsaken** more than any other man has been forsaken - by his family sarcasm on part of brothers (John 7:1-4,5) and His own people thought he had lost His senses (Mk 3:21); by his countrymen (John 1:11); by the world - People think Jesus has no significance for their life; he is just not relevant for them (John 1:10); and worst of all forsaken by His own Father (Mt 27:46).

**Forsaken** ([02310](#)) (**hadel** from the verb **chadhal** = to cease) is an adjective used only here, Ps 39:4 and Ezek 3:27 and meaning transient, rejected, fleeting. The idea here in Isa 53:3 is being abandoned by others. The word **hadel** carries with it the idea of ceasing or desisting from something or leaving something before it reaches its end or conclusion. What Isaiah is saying is that when Jesus Christ came into the world, there would be many who would seem to have somewhat of an interest in Him for a while, but their interest was transient (and for what they could get out of it for themselves - as in Jn 6:66) and they would all eventually leave Him and abandon Him before He completed His assignment. Indeed, in His trial and crucifixion He would even be forsaken by His own disciples!

**Hadel** also means the opposite of hearing, that is, deliberately refusing to hear or respond positively (Ezek. 3:27 = "Let the hearing-one hear, and let the ceasing-one cease [i.e., from hearing]."). It describes the Servant of Isaiah as a person rejected, refused by people.

**Hadel** takes on the idea of fleeting or transitoriness with respect to the impermanence of human existence on earth and is translated "transient" in Ps. 39:4. "The marginal reading of the KJV is, "that I may know what time I have here." So understood, the word is not referring to the lack of ability that causes the ceasing, but to the "fleeting" time frame over which the ceasing occurs, expressed in the next verse, "Each person's life is but a breath." See related resource - Redeeming the Time.

**Edwin Yamauchi** - In Isaiah 53:3 the Messiah is described as "rejected of men" (KJV, RSV, JH, NIV), avoided by men" (NAB). (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

**Gilbrant** on **hadel** in Isaiah 53:3 - Since the term means "ceasing," the statement refers to the rulers' ceasing from having anything to do with him, that is, forsaking him. Forsaking people involves rejecting them, hence, the translation "rejected." An Arabic cognate means "avoiding." (Ibid)

## MAN OF SORROWS

**A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief** - (Yahweh put Him to "grief" - Isa 53:10) - The NET Bible renders it "one who experienced pain and was acquainted with illness." Jesus 3 year public ministry was one of constant **sorrows** (pain) and **grief**

(sickness, disease). Acquainted is the Hebrew verb yada' which means to know relationally and experientially. In short, Messiah had intimate knowledge of grief and suffering.

**Baron** on the meaning of the phrase **man of sorrows** - As Delitzsch explains, it is not that He had by nature a sickly body, falling from one disease into another (as some would explain), but that "the wrath instigated by sin, and the zeal of self-sacrifice, burnt like the fire of a fever in His soul and body." The point emphasised is that sorrow and grief were the very characteristics of the Servant of Jehovah, "the tokens we know Him by." And the chief causes of His sorrows and grief were not personal ills, or physical pain, though these were great enough. It was heart sorrow and grief of soul. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Gingrich** - His public ministry was one of constant sorrow (pain) and grief (sickness, disease). He was constantly sorrowful because He constantly bore the spiritual pains of those around Him. He was constantly grieved because He constantly bore the physical diseases of those around Him. Could such a sorrowful and grief-stricken man be Israel's Messiah? (Book of Isaiah)

**Sorrows** (pains)([04341](#))(**makob** from verb **kaab** = to be in pain) refers to pain, suffering, sorrow. It can refer to physical pain or emotional pain. Gilbrant adds it "means "pain," such as physical pain from disease (Job 33:19), and "**sorrows**" which could include physical as well as emotional pain that are due to the wicked, but "mercy" surrounds the person who trusts in God (Ps. 32:10). These **sorrows** were experienced by the Lord Jesus in our stead to pay the penalty for our sin (Isa. 53:3). The concept of spiritual or emotional suffering of the soul appears as early as God's call to Moses. God saw the oppression of his people and knew their resultant "sorrows"; hence, He sent Moses to deliver them (Exo. 3:7). The deep suffering of the soul also appears in Jeremiah's lament over the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the people of God (Lam. 1:12, 18)." (Ibid)

**Makob** - 15v - pain(10), painful(1), sorrow(1), sorrows(3), sufferings(1).

Exod. 3:7 = "I am aware of their **sufferings**"; 2 Chr. 6:29 = "his own **pain**"; Job 33:19 = "man is chastened with **pain** on his bed"; Ps. 32:10 = "**sorrows** of the wicked"; Ps. 38:17 = "my **sorrow** is continually before me"; Ps. 69:26 = "they tell of the **pain** of those whom You have wounded"; Eccl. 1:18 = "and increasing knowledge results in increasing pain" (~heartache"); Eccl. 2:23 = "his task is painful and grievous"; Isa. 53:3; Isa. 53:4; Jer. 30:15; Jer. 45:3; Jer. 51:8; Lam. 1:12; Lam. 1:18

**Grief** ([02383](#))(**choli** from **chalah** = to become sick, weak, grieved) is a masculine noun which refers to various ailments, pain, suffering, sorrow. It describes misery resulting from affliction. Some of the afflictions are external in origin, such as the fall of Ahaziah through the lattice of his chamber. The common denominator of the ailments referred to by **chōlî** is either that the problem is chronic (e.g., Ahaziah died; "when Elisha had fallen sick with the illness of which he was to die," 2 Ki. 13:14) or that the sufferer is in constant pain (cf. Ecc. 6:2; Jer. 6:7; 2 Chr. 16:12). Choli describes suffering as a result of loss of wealth (Eccl 6:2). **Choli** is an appropriate metaphor for the Northern Kingdom as the sickness which was to kill Israel had befallen it (Hos. 5:13), an account of its oppression of the weak (v. 11). The verb is used in the sense of "sick of heart" or "mind," as a girl sick with love (Song 2:5; 5:8). Saul complained that nobody was "sick," i.e. "felt sorry" for him (1 Sa 22:8).

The **suffering Servant** bore chronic, painful sicknesses that were the results of human sin (Isa 53:3ff). The imagery carries a double meaning. The sickness which should have been fatal to us instead was fatal to the Servant because Isaiah 53:4 says "our **griefs** (choli) He Himself bore." (ON HIMSELF, ON THE CROSS). This imagery serves as a poignant reminder of the tremendous sacrifice Jesus gave for our salvation.

**Choli** is used figuratively of the ever-present evil of Jerusalem (Isa. 1:5; Jer. 6:7) that could not be healed by seeking out foreign powers for healing (Hos. 5:13). Idolatry was an especially heinous sickness of Israel before the exile (Jer. 10:19).

The Septuagint translates **choli** in Isa 53:3 with the noun **malakia** which can describe a condition of bodily weakness (Mt 4:23) but in Isaiah 53 refers to a condition of inner weakness in the sense of despondency. The Septuagint translates **choli** in Isa 53:4 with [hamartia](#) which describes our sins which He bore.

**Choli** - 24x in 22v - affliction(1), disease(2), grief(1), griefs(1), illness(3), sick(1), sickness(14), sicknesses(1).

Deut. 7:15 = sickness; Deut. 28:59 = chronic sicknesses; Deut. 28:61; 1 Ki. 17:17; 2 Ki. 1:2; 2 Ki. 8:8; 2 Ki. 8:9; 2 Ki. 13:14; 2 Chr. 16:12; 2 Chr. 21:15; 2 Chr. 21:18; 2 Chr. 21:19; Ps. 41:3; Eccl. 5:17; Eccl. 6:2; Isa. 1:5; Isa. 38:9; Isa. 53:3; Isa. 53:4; Jer. 6:7; Jer. 10:19; Hos. 5:13

**Scott Grant** - In the fourth Servant Song, Isaiah uses several different words for sin, probably to show the different forms it takes and effects it has. The first two of these words are "**sorrows**" and "**grief**." The Servant was "**a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief**." This does not mean that the Servant was a sinner but that sin affected him deeply. The word **sorrow**, though used in connection with sin in Isaiah 53, was usually used to convey mental and emotional anguish. He was a "**man of sorrows**"—to some extent he was characterized by mental and emotional anguish. **Because of sin, the Servant suffered mental and emotional anguish**. The word "**grief**," also used here in connection with sin, was usually used to convey illness or weakness. Because of sin,

the Servant was "**acquainted with grief**"—it's as if he's had so much experience with illness and weakness that he knows them personally.

**Gary Smith** - Some day the godly remnant of Israel ([diagram](#)) will be sorry for this rejection; some day they will turn in real repentance to Him (Zechariah 12:10-14+).

**David Thompson** - The word "**sorrow**" comes from the Hebrew root that often means to have terrible emotional and mental pain because of great sorrow. The word "**grief**" is one that refers to an internal sadness and affliction that just wears you down. As Jesus walked on this earth as the Savior of Israel and the world, and He continually saw all the sin and wickedness, and as He saw that He was rejected, and that no one even looked to Him for the salvation He could give, it just wore Him down. It grieved Him and made Him sad. There were things that happened to Him that caused Him to weep. Think about this - Jesus Christ had to endure animosity His entire life. Satan hated Him, demons hated Him, Israel rejected Him, His own disciples abandoned Him, and His own Father had to turn against Him and pour out His entire wrath on Him. His whole existence in this sin-cursed world was that of sorrow and grief. ([Isaiah 53:1-3 Commentary](#))

**Paul Apple** - Why was the Servant a **man of sorrows** and **acquainted with grief**? Certainly, it has something to do with the way he was treated. If you're despised, you're likely to experience sorrow and grief. But if you're despised and you love the people who despise you, you will grieve for them. The Pharisees despised Jesus, but he was "grieved at their hardness of heart" (Mark 3:5). And somehow, the Servant also bore the griefs and carried the sorrows of others (Isaiah 53:4). That's just what Jesus did on the cross (2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24). Sin causes sorrow and grief for the sinner and the victim. In his life, and particularly in his death, Jesus felt that grief and sorrow. And if in the end you feel that you are on the verge of being forsaken by God himself, you might say what Jesus said in the Garden of Gethsemane, just before he was abandoned by God as he suffered for sins (Mark 15:34): "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death..." (Mark 14:34). [Jehovah is Salvation - 1130 pages](#)

**C H Spurgeon** was a man who did not hide his face from Jesus, but on his glorious, God appointed "DAY OF SALVATION" "looked unto Jesus" as recorded in his own testimony of how God used a passage from Isaiah to save his soul from Hell. Here it is in the old King James version Spurgeon heard one stormy winter morning in London...

**Look unto Me**, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. (Isaiah 45:22KJV)

Dear reader, **Spurgeon's testimony** begs the question, have you "Looked unto Jesus?" or are you still like the majority of mankind, hiding your face from Jesus? Remember today could be the best day of your life, the first day of eternal life, "THE DAY OF SALVATION". (2 Cor 6:2).

**And like one from whom men hide their face** - The Septuagint translates "**hide their face**" with [apostrepho](#) and [prosopon](#) (face) which means they turned away their faces from Jesus and the perfect tense signifies this was their fixed condition! They turned away their faces and remained in that position! Woe!

**David Baron** - "As one from whom men hide their face" "i.e. like one whose repulsive face it is impossible to endure, so that men turn away their face or cover it with their dress" (Delitzsch); or, as another expresses it: "Instead of meeting Him with a joyful gleam in their eyes responding to His grace and help, men turned away from Him—as one looks the other way to avoid the eye of a person whom he dislikes, or as one shrinks from an object of loathing" (Culross). ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

"He would not be welcomed and received . Isaiah 53:3d Instead of people running to Him, welcoming Him, and receiving and believing in Him, they hid from Him. They considered Jesus Christ to be so detestable that they would not even look at Him; they hid their faces from Him. Men would actually hide their faces from Jesus Christ. They would not look to Him as Savior and all He ever did to them was come to save them from their sins so He could give them God's Kingdom. Not only wouldn't people look at Him for this, they actually hid from Him. (David Thompson)

**David Thompson** - Again it is brought out that He would be **despised**. This was God walking on this earth and He was not esteemed; He was demeaned and held in contempt. Israel saw Jesus Christ, Israel thought about Jesus Christ, and she despised Jesus Christ. Do not be fooled for one second; **this is a Christ-rejecting, not Christ-exalting world**. You try to get people today to **look only to Jesus Christ** for salvation and you will see the same thing Isaiah saw. Hardly any will believe your message and most won't even look at Jesus Christ. Sinful men do not honor Jesus Christ. Sinful men do not exalt God. Sinful men do not esteem God. Sinful men hide from God. They would rather rely on themselves than on the only Savior. What Israel did to Jesus Christ when He was here on earth, is the same thing the world does to Jesus Christ since He has gone back up into heaven. He is despised and rejected by men. ([Isaiah 53:1-3 Commentary](#))

**He was despised and we did not esteem Him** - **We** (the [future redeemed Jewish remnant](#) - [diagram](#)) **did not esteem Him** where **esteem** is the Hebrew verb [chasab/hasab](#) which conveys the basic idea of employing of the mind in a thinking activity. He was not



valued or wanted by His own people! (Jn 1:11) The Septuagint translated **chasab** with [logizomai](#) which means to think about, consider or let their mind dwell on Him. They absolutely did not give Messiah any serious thought! They did not regard Him highly or think much of Him. Amazing! Yes, they were amazed at His speech and His supernatural displays but did not think much of Him and certainly did not consider Him to be the expected Messiah.

**Motyer on did not esteem Him - Esteemed** is an 'accounting' word, a reckoning up of value. They saw ordinariness (Isa 53:2), the world would call him an 'unfortunate' (Isa 53:3b), so they did not choose to follow him (Isa 53:3a) but turned from him (Isa 53:3c). They appraised what they saw and it added up to nothing (Isa 53:3d). (TOTC-Isaiah) "When all that the human eye saw and the human mind apprehended was added up the result was zero."

**Paul Apple** - Martin Luther: "We estimated Him at nothing." We counted Him a zero. We didn't give Him a second thought. That is how much we valued Him. Ps. 118:22 "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes." Quoted by Peter in 1 Pet. 2:6-8. Quite a downer note to stop on for today -- UNKNOWN, UNREMARKABLE, UNPOPULAR - This will be the lament of Israel in the last days – looking back on the Messiah they had rejected. Don't let this be your lament today. [Jehovah is Salvation - 1130 pages](#)

**Baron** - Instead of counting Him dear and worthy, we formed a very low estimate of Him, or rather we did not estimate Him at all, or, as Luther forcibly expresses it: "we estimated Him at nothing." This, dear Christian reader, will be Israel's brokenhearted confession on the day when the Spirit of grace and supplications is poured upon them, and their eyes are opened at last to the fearful error which they committed as a nation in the rejection of their Messiah. But, as we read these sad and solemn words, "He was despised, and we esteemed Him not," may we not pause for a moment to ask ourselves if this is not true also in professing Christendom today? And what about ourselves, who by the grace of God do believe on Him? Do we estimate our Lord Jesus at His true worth? Is He indeed to us the chiefest of ten thousand and altogether lovely? (Song 5:16) Are we prepared for His dear sake to forsake all and to follow Him outside the camp (Heb 13:22), esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt? (Heb 11:25) ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

The apostle of John elaborates on **did not esteem Him** -

He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own (ISRAEL), and those who were His own did not receive Him. (John 1:10-11+)

---

**Acquaintance With Grief** - "A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Isaiah 53:3

We are not acquainted with grief in the way in which Our Lord was acquainted with it; we endure it, we get through it, but we do not become intimate with it. At the beginning of life we do not reconcile ourselves to the fact of sin. We take a rational view of life and say that a man by controlling his instincts, and by educating himself, can produce a life which will slowly evolve into the life of God. But as we go on, we find the presence of something which we have not taken into consideration, viz., sin, and it upsets all our calculations. Sin has made the basis of things wild and not rational. We have to recognize that sin is a fact, not a defect; sin is red-handed mutiny against God. Either God or sin must die in my life. The New Testament brings us right down to this one issue. If sin rules in me, God's life in me will be killed; if God rules in me, sin in me will be killed. There is no possible ultimate but that. The climax of sin is that it crucified Jesus Christ, and what was true in the history of God on earth will be true in your history and in mine. In our mental outlook we have to reconcile ourselves to the fact of sin as the only explanation as to why Jesus Christ came, and as the explanation of the grief and sorrow in life. (Oswald Chambers)

---

## HE HATH BORNE OUR GRIEFS

Acquainted with grief.... Isaiah 53:3.

Never forget that Christianity began with a Man of sorrows acquainted with grief. Joel called on God's ministers to weep between the porch and the altar. Paul warned everyone day and night with tears. The joy of the Lord is not to be confused with the religious levity that has no root or depth. Churches have become second-class theaters as though the Gospel were a form of entertainment. The joy of the Lord is not a "happyness" that depends on what happens. It smiles through tears and rejoices in spite of what happens. (Vance Havner)

---

## J R Miller - "He was despised and rejected by men." Isaiah 53:3

The saddest thing about the life of Christ—was the rejection he met among those he had come to bless. He came with a great love in his heart. He wanted to do them good, to draw them away from their sins, to make them love God, to lead them to heaven. "He came unto his own—and his own received him not." He went to their doors and knocked, and they kept their doors shut upon him; and he had to go away with his gifts and blessings unbestowed, leaving "his own" in their sin and sorrow.

It is the same yet. Christ comes with treasures of life and glory, which he offers to all; but men and women pay no heed to his

knocking and his calls, and he has to pass on. "He is despised and rejected." He never forces his blessings on any. He knocks, but we must open the door. He will never open it himself.

In Holman Hunt's picture, "The Light of the World," the door has no knob on the outside; it can be opened only from within. You can keep the omnipotent Christ outside your heart if you will; you do keep him out by simply not rising to open to him. It does not need dishonoring sins, nor any violent rejection of the Savior, to make one a lost sinner; the mildest and gentlest indifference to his knocking and call—will do it just as effectually.

---

HALLELUJAH WHAT A SAVIOUR! - Written in 1876, shortly before his death, this was the last hymn I heard Mr. Bliss sing. It was at a meeting in Farwell Hall in Chicago, conducted by Henry Moorehouse. A few weeks before his death Mr. Bliss visited the State prison at Jackson, Michigan, where, after a very touching address on "The Man of Sorrows," he sang this hymn with great effect. **Many of the prisoners dated their conversion from that day.** When Mr. Moody and I were in Paris, holding meetings in the old church which Napoleon had granted to the Evangelicals, I frequently sang this hymn as a solo, asking the congregation to join in the single phrase, "Hallelujah, what a Saviour," which they did with splendid effect. It is said that the word "Hallelujah" is the same in all languages. It seems as though God had prepared it for the great jubilee of heaven, when all his children shall have been gathered home to sing "Hallelujah to the Lamb!" (Story of Gospel Hymns - Ira Sankey)

#### [Man of Sorrows! What a name](#)

For the Son of God, who came  
Ruined sinners to reclaim;  
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,  
In my place condemned he stood,  
Sealed my pardon with his blood.  
Hallelujah! What a Savior!  
Guilty, vile, and helpless, we;  
Spotless Lamb of God was he;  
Full atonement! Can it be?  
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Lifted up was he to die,  
"It is finished!" was his cry:  
Now in heaven exalted high:  
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

When he comes, our glorious King,  
All his ransomed home to bring;  
Then anew this song we'll sing:  
Hallelujah! What a Savior!  
—Philip P. Bliss (1838–1876)

---

**Spurgeon - Motto for Life** - WHILST thou livest let this be thy motto—"All for Jesus, all for Jesus; all for the man of sorrows, all for the man of sorrows!" O ye that love him, and fight for him, you are summoned to the front. Hasten to the conflict, I pray you, and charge home for the "man of sorrows!" Make this the battle-cry to-day! Slink not back like cowards! Hie not to your homes as lovers of ease! but press to the front for the "man of sorrows," like good men and true. By the cross which bore him, and by the heavy cross he bore, by his deadly agony, and by the agony of his life, I cry, "forward, for the man of sorrows!" Write this word, "for the man of sorrows," on your own bodies, wherein ye bear the marks of the Lord Jesus; brand it, if not in your flesh, yet in your souls, for henceforth ye are servants to the man of sorrows! Write this on your wealth, bind this inscription on all your possessions—"This belongs to the man of sorrows." Give your children to the "man of sorrows," as men of old consecrated their sons to patriotism, and to battle with their country's foes. Give up each hour to the "man of sorrows!" Learn even to eat and drink and sleep for the "man of sorrows," doing all in his name. Live for him, and be ready to die for him, and the Lord accept you for the "man of sorrows' " sake. Amen. (Flashes of Thought)

---

**A MAN OF SORROWS** 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. (Isaiah 53:3)

He who was the source of all joy, the giver of all peace, He before whom angels and archangels bow in adoration, is also called a Man of Sorrows. Grief broke His heart, crushed out His life. Shall we through disobedience, rebellion, or lack of love or service or

worship, add to the sorrows which He bore? Shall we murmur if we too shall be permitted to partake of His sorrows or to share His grief? He sorrowed all alone, except perhaps as angels ministered to Him in Gethsemane's deep shadow. But He shares your grief, He carries all your sorrow and comforts those who trust in Him. Shall we not worship and adore the "Man of Sorrows"? O Suffering Servant, Your sorrows have brought us infinite joy. Yet we pray that You would also bear the light sorrow and pain of this present life that come from our fallen nature. Amen. (Names of Christ - T C Horton)

---

### THE MAN OF SORROWS 'A Man of sorrows.' ISAIAH 53:3

I. His own personal life was a sorrowful one.—He was away from home, from His Father's presence. He was a Stranger in a strange land. From His childhood He was full of thoughts which He could not utter, because, if uttered, they were not understood. He was a lonely Man. His sympathy with others by no means implied their sympathy with Him.

II. But His sorrows, like His labours, were for others.—(1) Jesus Christ sorrowed over bodily suffering; (2) He sorrowed over mental suffering; (3) He sorrowed over spiritual suffering.

III. He was a Man of sorrows also, and chiefly, in relation to sin.—(1) He had to see sin; (2) He had to bear sin.

IV. The subject teaches (1) that if it is as a Man of sorrows that Jesus Christ comes to us, it must be, first of all, as a memento of the fitness of sorrow to our condition as sinful men. (2) Again, only a Man of sorrows could be a Saviour for all men, and for the whole of life. (3) Sorrow, however deep, has its solaces and its compensations. (a) Whatever it be, it is of the nature of sorrow to bring a man nearer to truth, nearer to the reality, nearer therefore to hope. (b) Sorrow makes a man more useful. It gives him a new experience and a new sympathy. —Dean VAUGHAN

---

### Find a Verse and Put Your Name in It

Educating missionary children is exciting and exacting. On one hand, few people are more fortunate than missionary kids. They grow up as internationals with the world their home. They roam across Europe or explore Africa as easily as other children go around the block. On the other hand, many missions settings do not offer adequate schooling or needed interaction with other youth. Ruth Bell Graham vividly remembers September 2, 1933. She was 13. Her father, a missionary surgeon in China, and her mother were sending her to boarding school in what is now Pyongyang, North Korea. For Ruth it was a brutal parting, and she earnestly prayed she would die before morning. But dawn came, her prayers unanswered, she gripped her bags and trudged toward the riverfront. She was leaving all that was loved and familiar: her parents, her Chinese friends, the missionaries, her home, her memories. The Nagasaki Maru carried her down the Whangpoo River into the Yangtze River and on to the East China Sea. A week later waves of homesickness pounded her like a churning surf. Ruth kept busy by day, but evenings were harder, and she would bury her head in her pillow and cry herself to sleep, night after night, week after week. She fell ill, and in the infirmary she read through the Psalms, finding comfort in Psalm 27:10—Even if my father and mother should desert me, you will take care of me. Still, the hurt and fear and doubt persisted. Finally, she went to her sister Rosa, also enrolled in Pyongyang. "I don't know what to tell you to do," Rosa replied matter-of-factly, "unless you take some verse and put your own name in it. See if that helps." Ruth picked up her Bible and turned to a favorite chapter, Isaiah 53, and put her name in it: "He was wounded and crushed because of Ruth's sins; by taking Ruth's punishment, he made Ruth completely well." Her heart leaped, and the healing began. (Robert Morgan - On this Day)

Has anyone believed us or seen the mighty power  
Of the LORD in action?  
Like a young plant or a root that sprouts in dry ground,  
The servant grew up obeying the Lord.  
By taking our punishment, he made us completely well.  
Isaiah 53:1,2a,5b

---

Two friends are said to come into Vulcan's shop, and to beg a [boon](#) of him: it was granted. What was it? that he would either beat them on his anvil, or melt them in his furnace, both into one. But without fiction, here is a far greater love in Christ; for He would be melted in the furnace of wrath, and beaten on the anvil of death, to be made one with us. And to declare the exceeding love, here were not both to be beaten on the anvil, or melted in the furnace; but without us He alone would be beaten on the anvil, He alone melted that we might be spared. THOMAS ADAMS.

---

**Spurgeon - A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief** - With grief he had an intimate acquaintance. He did not know merely what it was in others, but it came home to himself. We have read of grief, we have sympathised with grief, we have sometimes felt grief: but the Lord felt it more intensely than other men in his innermost soul; he, beyond us all, was conversant with its dark depths. He knew the secret of the heart which refuses to be comforted. He had sat at grief's table, eaten of grief's black bread, and dipped his morsel in her vinegar. By the bitter waters of Marah he dwelt. He and grief were close friends. It was a continuous acquaintance. He did not call at grief's house sometimes to take a tonic by the way, neither did he sip now and then of the wormwood and the gall,

but the bitter cup was always in his hand, and ashes were always mingled with his bread. Not only forty days in the wilderness did Jesus fast; the world was ever a wilderness to him, and his life was one long Lent. I do not say that he was not, after all, a happy man, for deep down in his soul benevolence always supplied a living spring of joy to him. There was a joy into which we are one day to enter, 'the joy of the Lord', 'the joy that was set before him' for which he 'endured the cross, despising the shame'; but that does not at all take away from the fact that his acquaintance with grief was continuous and intimate beyond that of any man who ever lived. It was indeed a growing acquaintance with grief, for each step took him deeper down into the grim shades of sorrow. As there is a progress in the teaching of Christ and in the life of Christ, so there is also in the griefs of Christ. The tempest loomed darker and darker. His sun rose in a cloud, but it set in congregated horrors of heaped-up night, till in a moment the clouds were suddenly rent in sunder and, as a loud voice proclaimed, 'It is finished', a glorious morning dawned where all expected an eternal night.

---

## The Upside Of Sorrow

Sorrow can be good for the soul. It can uncover hidden depths in ourselves and in God.

Sorrow causes us to think earnestly about ourselves. It makes us ponder our motives, our intentions, our interests. We get to know ourselves as never before.

Sorrow also helps us to see God as we've never seen Him. Job said, out of his terrible grief, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You" (Job 42:5).

Jesus, the perfect man, is described as "a man of sorrows," intimately acquainted with grief (Isaiah 53:3). It is hard to fathom, but even the incarnate Son of God learned and grew through the heartaches He suffered (Hebrews 5:8). As we think about His sorrow and His concern for our sorrow, we gain a better appreciation for what God is trying to accomplish in us through the grief we bear.

The author of Ecclesiastes wrote, "Sorrow is better than laughter, for by a sad countenance the heart is made better" (7:3). Those who don't let sorrow do its work, who deny it, trivialize it, or try to explain it away, remain shallow and indifferent. They never understand themselves or others very well. In fact, I think that before God can use us very much, we must first learn to mourn. - David H. Roper

When God leads through valleys of trouble,  
His omnipotent hand we can trace;  
For the trials and sorrows He sends us  
Are valuable lessons of grace. -Anon.

We can learn more from sorrow than from laughter.

---

Modern worship chorus - [Man of Sorrows](#)

---

## Hymns Related to Isaiah 53:3:

- [Ah, Holy Jesus](#)
- [Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus](#)
- [Hallelujah! What a Savior](#)
- [It Is Finished! Man of Sorrows](#)
- [Lord Is Come!, The](#)
- [My Crucified Savior](#)
- [O Dearest Jesus](#)
- [See Him in the Garden Lone](#)
- [What Grace, O Lord, and Beauty Shone](#)

**Isaiah 53:4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.**

KJV Isaiah 53:4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

NET Isaiah 53:4 But he lifted up our illnesses, he carried our pain; even though we thought he was being punished, attacked by God, and afflicted for something he had done.

- **Surely our griefs He Himself bore** Isaiah 53:5,6,11,12; Mt 8:17; Gal 3:13; Heb 9:28; 1 Pet 2:24; 3:18; 1 John 2:2
- **Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken** Mt 26:37; John 19:7
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JEHOVAH'S SERVANT SUBSTITUTES FOR SINNERS

**David Thompson** comments that "The general consensus of serious Bible expositors is that when we come to Isaiah 53 we better tread lightly, kneel reverently, and speak softly because "the Lord is here." Never is that reality truer than when you come to Isaiah 53:4-6."

Recall we are in Stanza 3 of a total of 5 Stanzas of 3 verses each and it is only fitting that it is the middle of the five stanzas. As **Warren Wiersbe** says Isaiah 53:4-6 "is the heart of the passage, and it presents the heart of the Gospel message: the innocent Servant dying as the sacrifice for sin. This message was at the heart of Israel's religious system—the innocent animal sacrifice dying for the guilty sinner (Lev. 16+ = Day of Atonement)." (Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Comforted - Isaiah).

**Surely** ([aken](#)) means truly or certainly and describes something that is unexpected. The redeemed Jewish remnant ([diagram](#)) recognize the error of the perception of their forefathers (and themselves before they received Jesus as their Savior). Their eyes are now opened to see what the Messiah did for them! The One they had esteemed as nobody is the Somebody Who stepped in to be their Substitute on the Cross! The Jews thought Jesus died because God killed Him for what they misinterpreted as His many blasphemies such as claiming to be the Son of God (Lk 22:70, 71+, Mt 26:65, Mk 14:61-64), claiming to be "I Am", i.e., alive before Abraham (Jn 8:58-59), claiming to be equal with God (Jn 5:18, cp Jn 10:33), etc. And now, they recognize that these were not blasphemies but were all true words spoken by their Messiah! And here they are making an "about face," complete turn around from their previous opinion about Jesus! They have come to understand that the Servant's suffering on the Cross was not because of sins He committed but because of their sins which He bore on the Cross!

Messianic Jewish writer **David Baron** says "The veil lifted from their eyes, Israel sees the true cause of Messiah's sufferings, and, "bearing witness against himself, laments his former blindness to the mediatorial vicarious character of the sufferings both of soul and body that were endured by Him." Oh, it was for us—they now say—that He endured all the shame and agony. To translate the 4th verse literally: "Verily they were our griefs (or 'sicknesses') which He bore, and our sorrows (or, 'pains') with which He burdened Himself, but we regarded Him as one stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." No plainer or stronger words could be used to express the thought of vicarious suffering than those employed in the original of this verse. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

It is important to note that Matthew quotes from this passage in his Gospel, but he does so in the context of Jesus' physical healing while on earth. Of course, Jesus' physical healing was a preview of the spiritual healing made possible by His atoning work on the Cross. Jesus provided a solution for mankind's spiritual death, far more serious (and eternal) than temporal physical healing. Here is Matthew's quote from Isaiah 53:4

When Jesus came into Peter's home, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever. (SO THE CONTEXT = PHYSICAL NOT SPIRITUAL ILLNESS) 15 He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she got up and waited on Him. 16 When evening came, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill (WHILE IN A SENSE DEMON POSSESSION WAS "SPIRITUAL" JESUS' HEALING DID NOT PROVIDE A CURE FROM THEIR SPIRITUAL DEATH DUE TO SIN UNLESS OF COURSE THEY PLACED THEIR FAITH IN HIM). 17 This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: "**HE HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES AND CARRIED AWAY OUR DISEASES.**" (Mt 8:14-17)

**MacArthur** on Mt 8:17 - Both physical healing and ultimate victory over death are guaranteed by Christ's atoning work (**ED**: IT'S CALLED "[GLORIFICATION](#)!"), but these will not be fully realized until the very end (1Co 15:26). (MacArthur Study Bible)

**Wiersbe** adds that "Every blessing we have in the Christian life comes because of the Cross, but this verse does not teach that there is "healing in the atonement" and that every believer therefore has the "right" to be healed. The prophecy was fulfilled during our Lord's life, not His death." (Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Comforted - Isaiah).

**Gingrich** has an interesting note - Upon the cross, Jesus bore not only our sins (the penal consequences of our sins) but also our physical imperfections (which are a part of the natural consequences of our ancestors' and our own sins). He began to bear these physical imperfections during His public ministry,



Matthew 8:16, 17, but full satisfaction for the body imperfections of all men was made only upon the cross. When will the benefits of this part of the atonement be applied? It will be applied to the church, God's heavenly people, at the rapture, 1 Corinthians 15:42, 43. It will be applied to Israel, God's earthly people, during the Millennium, Isaiah 33:24; 35:5, 6. (Book of Isaiah)

**Our griefs He Himself bore** - **Our griefs** is the confession in the future when the **Jewish remnant** ([diagram](#)) is saved (cf Zech 13:1+, Zech 13:8-9+). Of course the truth of this passage has a much wider application, so that Messiah's work of bearing **our griefs** encompassed all who believe on Him for their salvation. Has He borne your griefs? I am not asking if you know about Jesus, but do you truly know Him intimately, in your heart, as you Substitutionary Sacrifice, the One Who died in your place on the Cross? There are many today who know about Him, but they are deceived and on their way to eternal separation from Him because they know Him *religiously* but do not know Him *relationally*. In some of the most frightening verses in the Bible, Jesus made a statement that speaks to the danger of *religion* and His demand for a *relationship*. **Profession** of Jesus saves no one. It is only **possession** of Jesus saves.

Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' (THAT IS **APROFESSION**!) will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does (present tense - not perfection but direction only possible by the power of the indwelling Spirit - this is clear evidence that one is truly Born again) the will of My Father Who is in heaven (THAT IS **POSSESSION**!) will enter. 22 **"Many** (NOTE THE QUANTIFYING ADJECTIVE!) will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; **DEPART** FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE (present tense = proving they had never truly repented, believed and experienced a supernatural change in their heart) **LAWLESSNESS**.' (Mt 7:21-23+)

**Griefs** is the same word [choli](#) in the previous passage, but here the Septuagint translates it with [hamartia](#) (in the plural) the Greek word for **sins**. And so we see that their confession acknowledges that Messiah was their (and our) Sin-Bearer. **Sin** is deceptive (Heb 3:13+, Ro 7:11+) promising "**good**" but always resulting in **grief**, and so the description as grief is an appropriate description of sin!

**He Himself** - Jesus Himself did this. He had no stand in or substitute. He Himself WAS the Substitute! He voluntarily submitted Himself to the horrors of the Cross. In John Jesus declared "For this reason the Father loves Me, because **I lay down My life** so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but **I lay it down on My own initiative**. I have authority to **lay it down**, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father." (Jn 10:17-18).

**Thomas Constable** on Jesus' bearing of the griefs **Himself** - Since sin is against a holy God it does not just require physical suffering, which Israel had experienced in abundance, but spiritual suffering, separation from God. Animal sacrifices covered human sin only temporarily, but a perfect sinless human sacrifice was necessary to remove the sin of humanity. ([Isaiah 53 Commentary](#))

#### THE PROPHETIC PERFECT ILLUSTRATED

**MacArthur** has a note on the verb tenses which we have stated earlier are almost all in the past tense in Hebrew - Even though the verbs are past tense, they predict happenings future to Isaiah's time, i.e., "[prophetic perfects](#)" (SEE ILLUSTRATION) in Hebrew here and elsewhere in this Servant-song. Isaiah was saying that the Messiah would bear the consequences of the sins of men, namely the griefs and sorrows of life, though incredibly the Jews who watched Him die thought He was being punished by God for His own sins. Matthew found an [analogical](#) fulfillment of these words in Jesus' healing ministry (Mt 8:16, 17), because sickness results from sin for which the Servant paid with His life (Isa 53:7, 8; cf. 1Pe 2:24). In eternity, all sickness will be removed, so ultimately it is included in the benefits of the atonement. (Borrow [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Wiersbe** adds that "The emphasis in verses 4-6 is on the plural pronouns: **our** griefs and sorrows, **our** iniquities, **our** transgressions. **We** have gone astray, **we** have turned to **our own** way. He did not die because of anything He had done, but because of what **we** had done." (Ibid)

**Bore** is the verb **nasa'** which means to carry or to take away. It means to endure something unpleasant and/or difficult, in this case on the behalf of others (i.e., [substitution](#)). **Nasa'** is the same verb used in the description of the **Day of Atonement** in Lev 16:22+ describing the goat that **bore** "on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land." (cf [penal substitution](#)) Jesus bearing their griefs on Himself was the fulfillment of the shadow of the "[scapegoat](#)" ([picture](#)) in Leviticus. Jesus bore **our griefs** (sins) on Himself on the Cross. **Nasa'** is used again in Isa 53:12+ in the remnant's confession/declaration that "**He Himself bore (nasa'**; Lxx = **anaphero** used in Heb 7:27+ = "He **offered up** Himself" and 1 Pe 2:24+ = "He Himself **bore** our sins") **the sin of many**." John does not use this verb but it does express the idea of the Passover Lamb bearing our sins, John the Baptist exclaiming ""Behold, the Lamb of God Who **takes away the sin of the world!**" (Jn 1:29)

**Baron** - Delitzsch properly explains, " '**nasa'** signifies to take the debt of sin upon oneself, and carry it as one's own, i.e. to look at it

and feel it as one's own (e.g., Lev. 5:1, 17), or more frequently to bear the punishment occasioned by sin, i.e. to make expiation for it (Lev. xx. 19, 20; xxiv. 15), and in any case in which the person bearing it is not himself the guilty person ('nasa' signifies to bear sin in a mediatorial capacity for the purpose of making expiation for it. It is evident that both the verbs used in this verse, 'He hath borne,' and 'He carried,' are to be understood in the sense of an expiatory bearing, and not merely of taking away, as has been recently maintained in opposition to the satisfactio vicaria, as we may see clearly enough from Ezek. 4:48, where *seth 'avon* ('bearing iniquity') is represented by the prophet in a symbolical action. But in the case before us, where it is not the sins, but 'our diseases' and 'our pains' that are the object, this mediatorial sense remains essentially the same. The meaning is not merely that the Servant of God entered into the fellowship of our sufferings, but that He took upon Himself the sufferings which we had to bear, and deserved to bear, and therefore not only took them away, but bore them in His own person, that He might deliver us from them. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

Paul writes about the reality of the Suffering Servant bearing our sins declaring...

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf ([SUBSTITUTION](#)), so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor 5:21+)

[O Christ, what burdens bowed Thy head!](#)

Our load was laid on Thee;  
Thou stoodest in the sinner's stead,  
Didst bear all ill for me.  
A Victim led, Thy blood was shed;  
Now there's no load for me.  
A R Cousins

**Griefs** and **sorrows** (cf Isa 53:3 = "A man of **sorrows** and acquainted with **grief**") - **Grief** is intense sorrow caused by loss of something or someone. **Sorrow** is an emotion of great sadness associated with loss or bereavement. Clearly in the context, both of these emotions are metaphors for sin, the effect of which is to result in loss (of something, sometimes someone!) and great sadness at loss and the associated consequences (Sadly we are all painfully aware of these twin effects of our sins, past and present!) In Ps 32:10 **David** laments (from experience) that "Many are the **sorrows** of the wicked." In Ps 38:18 **David** says "I confess my iniquity; I am full of anxiety ([da'ag](#) describes describes his uneasiness of mind as a result of the consequences of sin) because of my sin."

Jesus was a **man of sorrows** not because of His own intrinsic sorrows -- the sorrows were not His but ours! He substituted Himself, taking on Himself on the Cross what really belonged to us -- our **sorrows** (and better the effects of our sins producing sorrows) were placed on Him!

**And our sorrows He carried** - This is the [Jewish redeemed remnant's](#) confession ("our sorrows") now that their eyes have been opened for "whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away." (cf 2 Cor 3:16, 14, 15). **Sorrows** (pains)([04341](#)) is the same word [makob](#) used in Isa 53:3 and it describes that which causes great unhappiness! Sin always ends up causing unhappiness! If you were saved late in life (I was age 39 - my testimony), you have more time to commit sins, which can cause great sorrows. Jesus can heal us of those sorrows, even though the memories may remain.

**Carried** ([05445](#))(**sabal**) means literally to bear or transport a load (Ge 49:15). **Patterson** says that "In contrast to the synonymous **nāsā'** (USED ABOVE) "bear/carry (away)," **sābal** lays stress on the process of bearing or transporting a load (Isa 46:7), hence, it becomes a figure of **servitude** (Ge 49:15)." (TWOT) How fitting is this particular meaning of **sabal** given the fact that this is the song of the **Suffering Servant**!

**Sabal** is used twice in Isaiah 53 (Isa 53:4, 11) to figuratively describe the Suffering Servant bearing "**our sorrows**". As Patterson says "Here the coming Servant, Messiah, lifts up and takes upon Himself man's sicknesses and bears the weight of his worrisome sorrows. **Nothing could more graphically portray the vicarious sacrificial work of Christ** Who bore the penalty for man's sin so that man may receive God's righteousness and stand justified before Him." (TWOT) (Bolding mine)

**Sabal** is used twice in Isaiah 46:4 recording Jehovah's promise to Israel that "Even to your old age I will be the same, And even to your graying years I will bear (**sabal**) you! I have done it, and I will carry you; And I will bear (**sabal**) you and I will deliver you." What a great promise. Can we not as believers partake of this promise, personalizing it, especially those of us who are old and graying. Methinks so!!! Thank You God! Amen.

**Jeremiah** writes "Our fathers sinned, and are no more; It is **we who have borne (sabal)** their iniquities." Clearly the bearing of their iniquities indicates that the the breaking of the Mosaic Covenant by their fathers had consequences (destruction and exile from Judah and Jerusalem) which fell on their heads (so to speak).

**Sabal** - 9x in 8v - bear(5), borne(1), carried(1), carry(1), drags(1).

Gen. 49:15; Ps. 144:14 = Let our cattle **bear** without mishap; Eccl. 12:5 = the grasshopper **drags** himself along; Isa. 46:4; Isa. 46:7; Isa. 53:4; Isa. 53:11; Lam. 5:7

**Yet** - This is a term of contrast and in this case contrasts what they had come to realize was true about Jesus with what they previously and erroneously thought was true about Him.

**We ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted** - NET Bible has "even though we thought He was being punished, attacked by God, and afflicted for something He had done." NET Note adds that "The words **"for something He had done"** are supplied in the translation for clarification. The group (**ED: FUTURE BELIEVING JEWISH REMNANT**) now realizes He suffered because of His identification with them (**ED: SINFUL MANKIND**), not simply because He was a special target of divine anger."

**Esteemed** is the same Hebrew verb [chasab/hasab](#) used in Isaiah 53:3+ and which conveys the idea of utilizing one's mind in thinking about some subject or in this case Someone, the Messiah. As in Isa 53:3, the Septuagint translates **chasab** with [logizomai](#) which means they thought about Jesus and considered Him to be deserving of death at the hands of God.

**Stricken** ([05060](#)) is the verb [naga](#) which means to touch and then to strike. It conveys the idea of one person physically contacting another and ranges from a simple touch (Ge 3:3+) to striking someone as here in Isaiah 53:4 of striking the **Suffering Servant**. The Septuagint translates **stricken** with the noun **ponos** which describes work that involves much exertion or toil and then the consequences of that toil including pain, distress, suffering and affliction, all of which would be a very appropriate description of Jesus' suffering on the Cross (and even before as He agonized in prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, cf Lk 22:44+). **Ponos** is used again in the Septuagint translation of Isaiah 53:11 to describe "the **anguish** (Heb - [amal](#); Lxx - **ponos**) of His soul."

**MacArthur** adds that "The word **"stricken"** is to strike violently, a very violent word used in Exodus 11:1 of the plagues." (**ED: Compare Daniel's prophecy in Daniel 9:26+ "Then after the sixty-two weeks [+ the 7 weeks] the Messiah will be cut off [crucifixion] and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined."**)

**Constable** has an interesting note on **stricken** - Because the Hebrew word for **stricken** ([naga](#)) refers to smiting with leprosy in 2 Kings 15:5 (**ED: REFERRING TO KING [AZARIAH = UZZIAH](#)**), a tradition arose among the Jews that Messiah would be a leper! ([Isaiah 53 Commentary](#)) S Lewis Johnson comments that "That's the way we (**SPEAKING OF THE [FUTURE JEWISH REMNANT'S CONFESSION](#)**) regarded him. We wouldn't have anything to do with him because we figured that the curse of God was upon him. Cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree, and he hung upon a tree.

**Smitten** ([05221](#)) is the verb [nakah](#) means to beat, strike or wound. It is used of God striking down all the firstborn in Egypt (Ex 12:12) and God is often the subject of [nakah](#) as here in Isa 53:4 (cf 2 Ki 6:18, Dt 28:22, Lev 26:24, 2 Sa 6:7). The word "smitten" means basically to beat someone even to death.

The Septuagint translates **smitten** with the noun **plege** which describes a sudden hard blow with some instrument (thus producing a stripe or wound). **Plege** describes the beating of the man who was helped by the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:30), the inflicting of "many blows upon" Paul and Silas in Philippi (Acts 16:23,33) and beatings (2 Cor 6:5, 11:23).

[Nakah](#) is also used in another prophetic description of Messiah's suffering prior to His Crucifixion, Messiah Himself speaking - "I gave My back to those who **strike** ([nakah](#); Lxx translates with **mastix** = whip for scourging) Me (cf Mt 27:26, Mk 15:15, Jn 19:1; as Jesus prophesied = Lk 18:33+), and My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting (Mk 15:19, as Jesus prophesied = Lk 18:32+)." (Isa 50:6).

**Afflicted** ([06031](#)) is the verb ['anah](#) which means to inflict oppression as did the Egyptians on the Hebrews (Ex 1:11,12). **Anah** is used again in Isaiah 53:7 describing Messiah as "afflicted yet He did not open His mouth."

Let's look at it another way -- **What is the Jewish redeemed remnant saying as they look back at Messiah?** In simple terms they are saying **"we"** (when **we** were still unbelieving) considered this Man Jesus' many blasphemous claims which resulted in God Himself striking, smiting and afflicting His Son! They reason that Jesus received what He deserved for blaspheming God! God killed Him because of His blasphemy (which of course is erroneous). On the other hand God Himself did in fact strike His Son on the Cross, for when Jesus was made sin for us and bore the sin of the world, He incurred the full, unfettered wrath of God on Himself, which is vividly portrayed by the three hours of darkness from 12-3 PM (Lk 23:44+) as Jesus hung on the Cross as the sacrificial offering, the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29, 1 Cor 5:7, cf 1 Pe 1:18-19+).

**Baron** addresses how unbelieving Jews still **esteem** Jesus as the One **stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted** - This, alas is what spiritually blinded Israel has thought for all these centuries, and what most of the Jews still do think. Thus our Lord Jesus, the only sinless Man Who trod this earth, is called the Poshe (**ED: PROBABLY SHOULD READ ["PASHA"](#)**)—**The Transgressor**—Who,

according to such illustrious exponents of the spirit of Rabbinic Judaism as Moses Maimonides, well deserved the violent death which He suffered; while in the Talmud Jesus of Nazareth is placed in Hell alongside of Titus and Balaam, and as undergoing not only the severest but the most degrading form of punishment! We can well imagine, therefore, the deep contrition and heart brokenness of repentant Israel when their eyes are at last opened by the Spirit of God to the true character of this holy Sufferer, and when they perceive that it was for them and in their stead that He endured it all. "In that day" of weeping and mourning (Zech 12:11+) over Him Whom they have pierced (Zech 12:10+), we can hear, as it were, the sob which will accompany their confession: How base was our ingratitude! How intense was our ignorance! How thick our darkness! How profound our blasphemy against that Holy One, who in His love and compassion condescended to bear our griefs and to be laden with our sorrows! "Yet we regarded Him as plagued, smitten of God, and afflicted. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**S Lewis Johnson** adds that "down to this present day, the great majority of Judaism still regards him as under the judgment of God. Talui, "the hanged one," and unfortunately the great majority of the Gentiles do to, if they ever bother to think about him at all." ([Sermon](#))

---

**David Thompson:** Most people in the world think something about Jesus Christ and about what happened to Jesus Christ. Most people make some kind of mental calculation (SOME ESTIMATION OR ESTEEMING) concerning Jesus Christ. But what most THINK is not sound or right. Instead of esteeming Him and loving Him and believing in Him, MOST have come up with their own pathetic views and philosophies and opinions. In fact, in the history of theology there have been many faulty notions concerning the value of the death of Jesus Christ:

- 1) [Origen](#) (A.D. 185-254) said he thought Christ died to pay a ransom price to Satan to purchase men.
  - 2) [Pelagius](#) (A.D. 354-420) said Christ died as a moral example to us all so we will be obedient even to God even when we suffer, to show that God loves us.
  - 3) [Faustus Socinus](#) (A.D. 1539-1604) said that Christ's death was so that He might morally influence sinful men to follow Him.
  - 4) [Peter Abelard](#) (A.D. 1079-1142) said that Christ's death was designed to show us God loved us.
  - 5) [Thomas Aquinas](#) (A.D. 1225-1274) said that Christ's death was not required by God to satisfy our sin problem with God, but it did allow a type of satisfaction. In other words, man can in some ways take care of his own sin problem without Christ's death.
  - 6) [Hugo Grotius](#) (A.D. 1583-1645) said Christ's death demonstrates to all of us that the justice of God demand we suffer.
  - 7) Some invented the idea that Jesus Christ died as a martyr to demonstrate His sincerity to His doctrine.
  - 8) Some said that Christ died so He could identify with any person who dies.
- 

#### Hymns Related to Isaiah 53:4

- [O, the Blessèd Promise](#)
  - [Only Jesus Feels and Knows](#)
  - [Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted](#)
  - [When the Burden Bearer Came](#)
- 

#### A Place For Sorrows

Read: Isaiah 53:1-12

He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. —Isaiah 53:4

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in 1982. In the first 15 years, 54,000 items were left at the Wall. It still takes almost an hour every night, and much longer on Memorial Day, to collect the mementos—a teddy bear, a photo of a soldier's grandchild, a letter from a daughter who never knew her dad.

Every item is labeled and taken to a warehouse. No one knows quite how to deal with it all. "No one ever expected this to happen," a park ranger says. "It's so personal. It caught everyone by surprise."

Loss comes to us all, and we often carry our grief for many years. We struggle with our emotions. Is there a place where we can

leave our sorrows and find healing for the wounds of life?

Isaiah 53 speaks of the Messiah as the One who “has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows . . . By His stripes we are healed” (vv.4-5). When we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior from sin, we also come to know Him as the One who can lift the weight of sadness from our shoulders.

We can bring our grief to the Man of sorrows. There is help and healing and closure at the cross for the deepest pain of our hearts.

When trials come, and storms arise,  
When tempests darken earth and skies  
And everything my spirit tries,  
I'll hide myself in Jesus. —Anon.

Leave your sorrows with the "Man of Sorrows."

By David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

### **J H Jowett - “ON HIM!”**

“The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”—Isaiah 53:4, 5, 6.

LET me tell a dream which was given by night to one of my dearest friends. He beheld a stupendous range of glorious sun-lit mountains, with their lower slopes enfolded in white mist. “Lord,” he cried, “I pray that I may dwell upon those heights!” “Thou must first descend into the vale,” a voice replied.

Into the vale he went. And down there he found himself surrounded with all manner of fierce, ugly, loathsome things. As he looked upon them he saw that they were the incarnations of his own sins! There they were, sins long ago committed, showing their threatening teeth before him!

Then he heard some One approaching, and instinctively he knew it was the Lord! And he felt so ashamed that he drew a cloak over his face, and stood in silence. And the Presence came nearer and nearer, until He, too, stood silent. After a while my friend mastered sufficient courage to lift the corner of his cloak and look out upon the Presence: and lo! all the loathsome things were on Him!

“The Lord had laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

---

### **A Portrait of Jesus**

Read: Isaiah 53:4-12

We have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6

In Portraits of Famous American Women, Robert Henkes writes, “A portrait is not a photograph, nor is it a mirror image.” A portrait goes beyond the outer appearance to probe the emotional depth of the human soul. In a portrait, a true artist tries “to capture what the person is really about.”

Over the centuries, many portraits have been painted of Jesus. Perhaps you’ve seen them in a church or museum of art or even have one in your home. Not one of these is a true portrait, of course, because we have no photograph or mirror image of our Lord’s physical appearance. We do, however, have a magnificent word portrait of Him in Isaiah 53. This God-inspired description captures in vivid detail what He is all about: “Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering . . . But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; . . . and by his wounds we are healed” (vv. 4-5 niv).

This passage enables us to see love and sorrow, anguish and pain on Jesus’ face. But His lips do not accuse or condemn. He has no sins of His own to grieve; only ours to bear. And deep inside, He knows that “He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied” (v. 11).

What a portrait of our Savior!

What amazing love You have for us, Jesus! As I think of how awesome You are, I bow in silence before You.

Love was when God became a man.

By David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))



## Pack Up Your Sorrows

Read: Isaiah 53:1-6

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. —Isaiah 53:4

During the turbulent years of the 1960s, popular music in America was a strange mixture of protest and patriotism. Some songs lashed out against war, greed, and injustice in society, while others affirmed duty to country and traditional values. But “Pack Up Your Sorrows,” written by Richard Farina and Pauline Baez Marden, seemed to fit all of the categories with its focus on the quest for personal peace. The refrain said the following:

Well, if somehow you could pack up your sorrows,  
And give them all to me  
You would lose them, I know how to use them,  
Give them all to me.

Perhaps everyone hoped that someone really could bring them peace.

The good news is that there is Someone who can! Isaiah 53 is a prophetic picture of Israel’s promised Messiah. Christians see its fulfillment in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows . . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed” (vv.4-5).

Jesus took our sins and sorrows on Himself so that we could be forgiven and have peace with God. Will you give Him your sorrows today?

No sorrow is too heavy for our Savior to bear.

By David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

### J R Miller - "Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." Isaiah 53:4

Whatever the cause of grief may be, there is rich comfort in the remembrance of the sorrows of Christ. It assures us that Christ understands our pain. In the garden he went a stone's cast farther than any of his disciples went. The picture is a parable to us. It is always so. Wherever you bow in the deep shadows of grief, you have but to lift up your eyes, and you will see Jesus in still deeper shadows—a stone's cast beyond you. His sorrow was sorer than yours.

There is comfort also in the remembrance that blessing comes out of suffering patiently endured. All the world's peace and hope, and all heaven's joy and glory—are fruits of a great sorrow—the sorrow of Christ. Blessing will come always out of sorrow, if we but accept it submissively and reverently.

While we think of the sufferings of Christ, we must remember also that he came from them allunharmd, his life shining in divine radiance, lifted to glory, too, as a fruit of his suffering. This reminds sorrowing believers, that they too shall pass through their time of tribulation, that no scars and no manner of hurt shall be upon their souls because of their sufferings—but that they shall shine in fairer beauty and diviner glory, and shall be lifted up to higher honor, because of what they have suffered with Christ.

**Isaiah 53:5 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.**

KJV Isaiah 53:5 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.

NLT Isaiah 53:5 But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.

- **But He was pierced through** Isaiah 53:6-8,11,12; Daniel 9:24; Zech 13:7; Mt 20:28; Ro 3:24-26; 4:25; Ro 5:6-10,15-21; 1 Cor 15:3; 2 Cor 5:21; Eph 5:2; Heb 9:12-15; Heb 10:10,14; 1 Pet 3:18
- **for our transgressions** Isaiah 53:10; Genesis 3:15
- **The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him** 1 Pet 2:24

- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE GREAT REVERSAL

This title is taken from **Dr S Lewis Johnson's** sermon on Isaiah 53:4-6. Here are his introductory remarks...

The passage that we have read for our Scripture reading this morning might well be called **The Great Reversal**. You will remember that when Jesus was here upon the earth, that Israel, ignorantly and self confidently assumed responsibility for Messiah's death by shouting, "His blood be upon us, and upon our children." (Mt 27:25, cf Acts 5:28) [Israel of the future \(diagram\)](#), according to our text, then enlightened shall humbly accept guilt by crying out, "*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.*" Now, that surely is the great reversal. His blood be upon us and upon our children." And then Israel of the future, "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." The passage is also one of the greatest of the Old Testament passages on the atonement, and it illustrates that whatever theory we may hold of the atonement, it must include the idea of **substitution**. For that is one of the great ideas of this section...In one the expositions of Isaiah chapter 53, I ran across a statement by Professor Edward Young, and he said this, "So prominent is the idea of substitution that one scholar, by no means a conservative felt compelled to write, substitutionary suffering is expressed in this divine oracle, in not less than five sentences. It is as though God could not do enough to make this clear." ([The Great Reversal](#))

**But He** - Most versions begin with this **term of contrast**, so it begs the question, what is being contrasted? In Isa 53:4 the NET has "**WE** thought he was being punished, attacked by God, and afflicted for something he had done." "**We**" (the believing remnant) in our former blindness and ignorance regarded Him as plagued and smitten of God for His own sin and guilt. Instead of the Suffering Servant suffering for His Own sin, the contrasting truth is that He was suffering for "**our transgressions**." The Jews thought He was guilty, but it was they (and we) who were guilty. The redeemed remnant will see this truth clearly in that future day of salvation for the nation of Israel. Their contrasting attitude toward Messiah's sacrificial work reminds me of Paul's words on the [Old Rugged Cross](#).

For the word of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power ([dunamis](#)) of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18)

**Moyter** observes that the "**HE** is again emphatic, so as to bring the Servant sharply before us—'He (and no other)'. (TOTC-Isaiah)

**He was pierced through for** (because of) **our transgressions** (rebellious deeds) - KJV has "He was wounded" but pierced through is a better translation for it accurately predicts the five piercings He received on the Cross when He was crucified.

Ps 22:16 = "For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me;**They pierced my hands and my feet.**",

Lk 24:39-40+ See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." 40 And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

Jn 19:31-36, 37 - 34But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. 35And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. 36For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, "NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN." 37) And again another Scripture says, "THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED."

Recalls the hymn "[Rock of Ages](#)" = "*Rock of ages cleft for me. Let me hide myself in Thee. Let the water and the blood from Thy ribbon side, which flowed. Be of sin the double cure. Save from wrath, and make me pure*").

This detail underscores the prophetic accuracy of the Word of God, for the normal Jewish practice for blasphemy (of which they accused Jesus) was stoning (Lev 24:14+, Nu 15:35, 36), not crucifixion which alone would fulfill this prophecy (cf Jn 12:32,33, Jn 18:31, 32). If they wanted to further humiliate the victim, they could publicly expose the corpse (Dt. 21:22-23), a practice that Peter related to the Crucifixion (Acts 5:30; 10:39; 1 Peter 2:24).

**Pierced** (wounded) ([02490](#)) ([chalal](#)) in this context means to pierce or wound (cf Job 26:13, Ps 109:22, Isa 51:9, 53:5, Ezek 28:9, 32:26). Pierced through" usually meant being pierced fatally. Two other means (play the pipe - Ps 87:7) and profane (Da 11:31, Ex 31:14, Lev 18:21, et al) are not in play in this passage. The Septuagint translates **chalal** with the verb **traumatizo** (English - traumatize, trauma, traumatic; used only in Lk 20:12, Acts 19:16 in NT) which means to wound. Jesus was "[traumatized](#)" for us!

**Motyer** on **pierced** (chalal) - **Pierced**: as in Isa 51:9; when they called on the Arm of the Lord who dealt the monster Rahab a death blow, they did not know they were calling the Arm to his own death. (Ibid)

**Delitzsch** adds that "Pierced through" and "crushed" describe extreme distress resulting in death (cf. Isa 51:9 piercing the dragon; Job 26:13 pierced the fleeing serpent; Ps. 109:22; Lam. 3:34). The Hebrew words behind these terms are the strongest ones in that language for violent and excruciating death."

**Constable** reminds us that "It was God who was behind the piercing and crushing of the Servant (Isa 53:6, 10). It was as though the Servant took the whipping that we deserved for being rebellious children (cf. Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:3; Heb. 5:8; 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:24-25)."

#### **God's justice and mercy met at the cross.**

As emphasized repeatedly, the words in Isaiah 53 will be the mournful confession of the [future believing Jewish remnant](#) for as John says "every eye will see Him, **even those who pierced Him**; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him." (Rev 1:7+) Jehovah says "they will look on Me **Whom they have pierced**; (note chalal but a different verb [daqar](#) for pierce - still clearly the same context) and they will mourn" (Zech 12:10+). The Gospel of John quotes Zechariah "And again another Scripture says, **THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED.**"

**Transgressions** (06588) (**pesha'** from **pasha** = to rebel, transgress) means willful rebellion or revolt against authority (rising up in clear defiance of authority), guilt (incurred by transgressing). (cf Isa 1:2, 28; 43:25; 44:22; 46:8; 50:1). The fundamental idea of the root is a breach of relationships, civil or religious, between two parties (cf Jer 5:6). The same noun is used in Isaiah 53:8 explaining that the Suffering Servant "was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people." The picture is of God drawing a line in the sand and of us daring to cross that line! **Pesha'** is also used in Isaiah 53:8 "He was cut off out of the land of the living for the **transgression** of my people."

**Paul Apple** on **pesha'** - Sin pictured as revolt, rebellion against the God of the universe; we cannot say the [devil made me do it](#); we revolt all by ourselves; we don't need the devil's help to be rebels! [Jehovah is Salvation - 1130 pages](#)

In Isaiah 43:25 God says "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your **transgressions (pesha')** for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins." And in Isaiah 44:22 "I have wiped out your **transgressions (pesha')** like a thick cloud And your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you." And here in Isaiah 53:6 we see how it was possible for a holy God to wipe out the rebellious acts of an unholy people. How? The Holy God was pierced through for their unholy transgressions, in effect wiping them away for all who would accept His free gift by grace through faith. Isaiah 59:20 was another glorious prophetic promise to rebellious Israel that "A Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those who turn from **transgressions (pesha')** in Jacob," declares the LORD."

**Pesha'** is used also in Ezekiel 18:31 which is a prophecy of the New Covenant - Cast away from you all your **transgressions (pesha')** which you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! **SEE** Ezek 36:24-27+, Jer 31:31-34+) For why will you die, O house of Israel?"

Notice the repeated use of the pronoun **"OUR"** in this passage - **"OUR** transgressions," **"OUR** iniquities," **"OUR** well being." This is why the Suffering Servant gave Himself to piercing and crushing and chastening. As David Baron says "What else, we ask again, can these words mean than that He suffered vicariously? Not merely with, but for others? By no exegesis is it possible to escape this conclusion. And there is nothing in the conclusion that need surprise us." **Vicarious means done in place of or instead of someone else.** What Messiah accomplished was done in our place! [Gotquestions](#) observes that "So, in literal terms, the Christian concept of "vicarious atonement" is that Jesus was substituted for humanity and punished for our faults in order to pay for the sins we had committed and reconcile us to God. Vicarious atonement is also referred to as ["substitutionary atonement"](#) or ["penal substitution."](#) ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**David Baron** quotes Culross on vicarious suffering...

"Among the Jews, the idea of vicarious suffering was far from strange; their sacrificial system distinctly expressed it. Sin (said the sacrificial system) is an offence unspeakably odious to God, which He cannot look upon, but must punish. Death is the due punishment of sin. But God has no pleasure in the sinner's death. He is full of mercy, and has Himself opened up a channel, through sacrifice, whereby sin may be expiated, and pardon granted in righteousness. The sacrifices under the law had no intrinsic efficacy to put away sin; but only symbolized substitution—the substitution of Jehovah's righteous Servant in place of the guilty. Men may indeed exclaim against the propriety of one suffering for others, and may insist that every man be wounded for his own transgressions and bruised for his own iniquities. But there is no moral reason, so far as I can see, to forbid love from voluntarily stepping in and suffering for others, to save them from badness and misery. Now in this prophecy, here is One suffering for sins which He never committed—enduring what others deserved—

standing in the transgressor's place, as if Himself the transgressor. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

Close your eyes a moment and imagine the incomprehensibly "heavy burden" of all of our horrible sins, coming down full force upon the sinless Suffering Servant, as He experiences the full weight of His Father's wrath! Absolutely beyond my imagination! Such infinite love! I seriously doubt that even eternity will give much insight into what really transpired on the [Old Rugged Cross](#)!

**Sin** is a heavy burden to begin with but one that grows ever heavier the longer we resist God. **David** understood this principle

For my iniquities are gone over my head; As a heavy burden they weigh too much for me. (Ps. 38:4)

**He was crushed for** (because of) **our iniquities** - This sentence does not tell us who did the crushing, but in context this is clearly God the Father crushing His Son, for in Isa 53:10 this same verb for crushed (daka) states "the LORD was pleased to **crush** Him."

SALVATION: God thought it; Christ bought it; the devil fought it; have you got it?

**Crushed** is [daka](#) which means to crush, beat down, bruise, oppress. **Daka** is used of cruel agonies ending in death in Lam. 3:34. It describes the fine dust created in the mortar by crushing something or breaking it into pieces. What a picture of our Suffering Servant's sacrificial substitution - crushed, broken for us, who deserved Hell, so that we might receive Heaven. Broken and spilled out...oh my! Play Steve Green's song [Broken and Spilled Out](#)...One word in the lyrics below that needs explanation is "**wasted**" which of course Jesus was NOT, but to those who did not have eyes to see, it appeared as if His life was wasted!

[Lord You were God's precious Treasure](#)

His loved and His own perfect Son  
Sent here to show me  
The love of the Father  
Just for love it was done  
And though You were perfect and holy  
You gave up Yourself willingly  
You spared no expense for my pardon  
You were used up and "wasted" for me

Broken and spilled out  
Just for love of me Jesus  
God's most precious treasure  
Lavished on me  
You were broken and spilled out  
And poured at my feet  
In sweet abandon Lord  
You were spilled out and used up for Me

In the Messianic passage in Psalm 22:6 where Messiah says "**I am a worm and not a man**," there is an incredible picture which relates to the phrase "**He was crushed for our iniquities**"

See the longer discussion of "[I Am a Worm](#)."

**Rod Mattoon** gives a shorter version of the picture presented when Messiah said **I Am A Worm** - What is the meaning of "I am a worm"? The word "worm" is from the Hebrew word towla {to-law'} which refers to the crimson crocus grub. This worm was crushed for the purpose of making a scarlet red dye that was used for making royal robes. When it was crushed, it became unrecognizable. This worm attains the size and form of a pea, and is of a violet-black color. It is covered with a whitish powder, adhering to plants, chiefly various species of oak. The worm reproduces only once in its lifetime. When this worm reproduces, it climbs to a branch of a tree or a wooden post. It rigidly attaches itself to the tree in such a way that it can never be removed without tearing its body apart. The tola then lays its eggs on the tree. When the young ones arrive, they feed upon the living body of their mother. It is a very painful sacrifice for the mother to make. In essence, the mother becomes a living sacrifice. When the young are able to survive apart from the mother, the mother dies on the tree. As she dies, she exudes a scarlet dye, which not only stains the tree, but her young ones as well. They are completely covered by the mother's scarlet dye and remain so for the remainder of their lives. When the worm dies, it also leaves a crimson spot on the branch of the tree, but after three days, it dries out and changes color that is as white as snow. It then falls off, and flakes away. What a reminder of the atonement of Christ, His work on the cross, and our sins being made white as snow. Jesus was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. He was chastened for our well-being. He was beaten

so we might be whole and complete. His punishment resulted in our peace. He is the Prince of Peace and by His stripes, by His wounds, we are healed. (Mattoon's Treasures from Isaiah, Volume 3)

**Motyer** draws attention to the use of **for...for** - the preposition *min* means 'from', hence it is used of one thing arising from another, a relationship of cause and effect. Our transgressions were the cause, his suffering to death the effect. Like Isa 53:4, this verse cannot be understood without the idea of substitution to which, here, the adjective 'penal' must be attached. (TOTC-Isaiah)

**Iniquities** (05771) ('**avon** from **awah** = to bend, twist, distort) describes sins power to twist or distort something good so that the result, effect or consequence is bad (e.g., sex outside of marriage). 'Avon describes the pervertedness, 'bentness', crookedness of our fallen human nature and is used repeatedly in Isaiah (Isaiah 1:4; 5:18; 6:7; 40:2; 43:24; 50:1). Messiah was crushed because of our sins (avon) which is such a stark contrast with the hatred and distortion of truth by the rabbis who referred to the Servant's good news (the Evangelium) as "*Aven*" or "*Avongillajon*" which means "*the sinful or mischievous writing*". Praise God for those Jews whose eyes have been opened to the truth of the Gospel which is not sin but instead remedies sin!

**John MacArthur** says that **iniquities** ('avon) is essentially "a word that means to bend double, twisted like a pretzel, to bend double. It's perversions."

**He was CRUSHED for our iniquities** recalls the **Protoevangelium** in Genesis 3:15+

And I (GOD) will put enmity Between you (SATAN) and the woman,  
And between your seed and her seed (MESSIAH);  
He (MESSIAH) **shall bruise** (**shuph**) you on the head,  
And you (SATAN) shall bruise (**shuph**) him on the heel."

### SHALOM WITH GOD: WHOLENESS, RESTORED RELATIONSHIP

**The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him** (**NET** = "He endured punishment that made us well" **RSV** = "The chastisement that made us whole"; **NIV** = "the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him" **NLT** = "He was beaten so we could be whole") - **Well being** is **peace** (**shalom**) and is a genitive of result which means His punishment resulted in our peace or well-being, giving redeemed sinners a sense of wholeness and restoration of a relationship with the Holy God which we all lacked while still in Adam (Ro 5:12+, 1 Cor 15:22, 45) and which we could never achieve had not the Messiah been chastened in our place, as our Substitute.

**Paul** describes the peace that is now available to us in Christ -

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, **we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ, (Ro 5:1+).

**Wiersbe** - The only way a lawbreaker can be at peace with the law is to suffer the punishment that the law demands. Jesus kept the Law perfectly, yet He suffered the whipping that belonged to us. Because He took our place, we now have peace with God and cannot be condemned by God's law (Ro 5:1; Ro 8:1+). (Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Comforted - Isaiah).

We were rebels at war with God, at enmity with Him, hating Him, but here because of what transpired in our Substitute on the Cross, we now are forever at peace with God. The peace OF God is another issue and can be disturbed by our disobedience (sin) (cf "peace of God" in Php 4:6-7+).

**Chastening** (04148) (**musar**) describes the imposition of painful consequences (or severe punishment) upon the Suffering Servant, consequences which we deserved for our disobedience! This is the supreme demonstration of Jesus' infinite love for us willingly taking the chastening rod of His Father for sins not His own! Amazing love!

**Motyer** adds this note on **musar** - Just as 'covenant of peace' (Isa 54:10) means 'covenant which pledges and secures peace' so (lit.) 'punishment of our peace' means punishment which secured peace with God for us. This peace was lost (Isa 48:18) by disobedience, and, since it cannot be enjoyed by the wicked (Isa 48:22), the Servant stepped forward (Isa 49:1) to bring us back to God (Isa 49:6). This is what He achieved by his substitutionary, penal sufferings.

**Fell upon Him** - "**Fell**" is added by the translators. **Young's Literal** has 'The chastisement of our peace [is] on him," adding the "is" to make good English. The Hebrew preposition for "**upon**" is '**al**', (used almost 5000x in the OT) which means up on something, on something. This same preposition '**al**' is used four times in Leviticus 16:21-22+ describing the **scapegoat** (**picture**) carrying away Israel's sins for the previous year, foreshadowing of course Messiah's work on the cross.

"Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands **on** ('**al**) the head of the live goat, and confess **over** ('**al**) it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them **on** ('**al**) the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who stands in readiness.



22 "The goat shall bear **on** ('**al**) itself all their iniquities to a solitary land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.

**Allen Ross** - .Many have seen this passage not only as a prophecy of the suffering of Jesus, but the national confession of sin by Israel on the Day of Atonement—to be fulfilled at the end of the age when all Israel will be saved. ([Ref](#))

Jehovah lifted up His rod;  
O Christ, it fell on Thee!  
Thou wast sore stricken of Thy God—  
There's not one stroke for me.  
Thy tears, Thy blood, beneath it flowed;  
Thy bruising healeth me  
--A. R. Cousin

Because of the punishment that our Suffering Servant Substitute endured on our behalf, we who rebelled against God even from birth can now be restored to a state of friendship and harmony. This is the essence of **reconciliation**, where in His Suffering, the Messiah took upon Himself our sin and became a [substitutionary atonement](#), thereby making possible a relationship of peace with God which was heretofore prevented by the demands of God's justice and His abhorrence of sin.

**Paul** explains it this way

"Now all these things are from **God, Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ (AS EXPLAINED IN ISAIAH 53:5)** and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation." (2 Cor 5:18-19+)

[Gotquestions](#) explains...

Imagine two friends who have a fight or argument. The good relationship they once enjoyed is strained to the point of breaking. They cease speaking to each other; communication is deemed too awkward. The friends gradually become strangers. Such estrangement can only be reversed by reconciliation. To be reconciled is to be restored to friendship or harmony. When old friends resolve their differences and restore their relationship, reconciliation has occurred....The Bible says that Christ reconciled us to God

And through Him (**THE SUFFERING SERVANT OF ISAIAH 53**) to **reconcile** all things to Himself, **having made peace through the blood of His cross**; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. 21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, **yet He has now reconciled you** in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach (Colossians 1:20-22+).

The fact that we needed **reconciliation** means that our relationship with God was broken. Since God is holy, we were the ones to blame. Our sin alienated us from Him. Romans 5:10-11+ says that **we were enemies of God**:

For if (SINCE) **while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son** much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **through Whom we have now received the reconciliation**.

When Christ died on the cross, He satisfied ([PROPITIATION](#)) God's judgment and made it possible for God's enemies, us, to **find peace with Him**. (ED: THE "WELL-BEING" OF ISAIAH 53:5) Our "**reconciliation**" to God, then, involves the exercise of His grace and the forgiveness of our sin. The result of Jesus' sacrifice is that **our relationship has changed from enmity to friendship**. "I no longer call you servants ... Instead, I have called you friends" (John 15:15). **Christian reconciliation is a glorious truth!**

- **We were God's enemies, but are now His friends.**
  - **We were in a state of condemnation because of our sins, but we are now forgiven.**
  - **We were at war with God, but now have the peace that transcends all understanding(Phil 4:7+).**
- (Bolding Added)

**Related Resources:**

- [What is the ministry of reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5:18?](#)
- [What does it mean to have peace with God?](#)
- [What is alienation? What does it mean that we are alienated from God?](#)
- [Messiah's Ministry of Reconciliation](#) - John MacArthur
- [Reconciled to God](#) - Colossians 1:20-23 - John MacArthur
- [The Reconciling Gospel](#) - 2 Corinthians 5:11-20 - John MacArthur

**And by His scourging** (wounds, bruises, stripes) **we are healed** - Several modern versions translate **scourging** as **wounds** (NET, ESV, HCSB, NIV). He is speaking primarily of spiritual healing from the deadly effects of the "sin virus" which we all inherited from Adam (Ro 5:12+).

As **Oswalt** says "This is not a matter of a raging tyrant who demands violence on someone to satisfy His fury. It is a God who wants a whole relationship with his people, but is prevented from having it until incomplete justice is satisfied. In the Servant He has found a way to gratify His love and satisfy His justice." (NICOT-Isaiah) (**ED**: CF Ro 3:26 = God "would be just and the Justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.")

**Scourging (Wounds)** is the Hebrew word [chabburah](#) which refers to bruises, wounds, injuries, "the tumor raised by scourging" (cf [welt](#)). Thus one has translated it "*By reason of His contusions we were healed.*". The KJV renders it "**stripes**" in the famous phrase "*with his stripes we are healed.*" Baron says this passage "may well lead our thoughts to the cruel scourging endured by our Saviour on our behalf." (cf Mt 20:19; 27:26; Mk 10:34; 15:15; Lk 18:33; Jn 19:1) ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

This same Hebrew noun ([chabburah](#)) is used by Isaiah in the beginning of his prophecy to describe the miserable, seemingly hopeless condition of the nation of Israel "From the sole of the foot even to the head There is nothing sound in it, Only bruises, **welts** ([chabburah](#)) and raw wounds, Not pressed out or bandaged, Nor softened with oil." (Isaiah 1:6+) What looked to be irreparable, can now be "**healed**" because of the vicarious wounds (scourging) of God's Servant!

The Septuagint translates **chabburah** with the noun [molops](#) which means welts (as from whipping), bruises, wounds. It is the same word used by Peter as he alludes to Isaiah 53:5 writing...

He Himself (**THE SUFFERING SERVANT**) bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die ([JUSTIFICATION](#)) to sin and live to righteousness ([SANCTIFICATION](#)); for by His **wounds** ([molops](#)) you were healed. (1 Pe 2:24+)

**John MacArthur comments** - Through the wounds of Christ at the cross, believers are healed spiritually from the deadly disease of sin. **Physical healing** comes at glorification only, when there is no more physical pain, illness, or death (Rev 21:4+). (MacArthur Study Bible).

**Gotquestions** - Isaiah 53:5, which is then quoted in 1 Peter 2:24, is a key verse on healing, but it is often misunderstood and misapplied....The word translated "**healed**" can mean either spiritual or physical healing. However, the contexts of Isaiah 53 and 1 Peter 2 make it clear that it is speaking of **spiritual healing**....The verse (1 Peter 2:24) is talking about sin and righteousness, not sickness and disease. Therefore, being "**healed**" in both these verses is speaking of being forgiven and saved, not physically healed.

**S Lewis Johnson** - healing is in the atonement because it is by virtue of that which Jesus Christ did when he died on the cross that I'm to have a resurrection body, like his own glorious body, but Paul tells us that we do not expect to have that healing now. It comes at the resurrection, so healing is in the atonement for sin, suffering, ill. ([Sermon](#))

**We are healed** ([07495](#)) ([rapha/rophe](#)) means to be made healthy, to be cured. Sin gave us a mortal blow, but the scourging of our Suffering Servant reversed the curse and gave us an eternal cure.

**Rapha/rophe** has the basic idea of restoring something to its original condition, its original wholeness. Adam originally was perfect ("whole") but his sin left a "hole" ("God shaped vacuum") in his soul (and our soul, cf Ro 5:12+, cf 1 Cor 15:22), one which the Redeemer will repair to its original wholeness for all who by faith receive the miraculous, regenerating treatment from the Great Physician. In fact, all who receive Messiah's "healing" touch shall be healed even more than Adam even in his original sinless condition (when apparently he walked with God in the Garden in perfect fellowship - cf Ge 3:8+), for John says "We know that when He (MESSIAH) appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is." (1 Jn 3:2+, cf 1 Cor 15:42-45, 51, 52, 53, 54). Glorified in immortal, imperishable bodies and forever like our Suffering Servant! Hallelujah!

**S Lewis Johnson** has an interesting comment that may catch you a bit off guard -- "**With his stripes we are healed**" Did you notice it says, "With his stripes we are healed." NOT with his stripes, PLUS our faith. Not with his stripes PLUS our repentance, with

his stripes we are healed. Men are not saved because of their faith. Men are saved because of Jesus Christ and His saving work. It is our Lord Who saves us, not our faith. It is not our repentance that saves us. It is our Lord's work. That is the saving work that becomes ours through the instrumentality of faith. Becomes ours through the instrumentality of a God produced faith and repentance, but the salvation is of the Lord, it is of the Lord from beginning to end. It is his salvation. "With his stripes we are healed." Not with our faith, with his stripes. ([The Vicarious Messiah](#))

**David Thompson** addresses the question "*Is physical healing promised in the Atonement?*" writing that "It is true that Jesus Christ, while on earth, did physically heal people, but that is not what this text in Isaiah is talking about. This text is talking about Him being lifted up on the cross so that He could remove the sorrow and sadness from us that has been brought on by the disease of sin. He saw all of the consequences of sin and He went to the cross to settle the sin issue. This is precisely how the **Apostle Peter** interpreted this text when he said, "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross ... for by His wounds you were healed" (1 Peter 2:24-25). As **John Calvin** said, this is not talking about the fact that Jesus Christ was appointed to be the physician of bodies, but the Great Physician of souls (Isaiah, p. 115)."

**D A Carson** on physical versus spiritual healing - All blessings and all benefits that God's children experience come through the atoning work of Christ; Are there times when God heals His children in temporal sense? Yes What is purchased for us in the cross is not temporal healing but the ultimate healing of the body = resurrection and glorification of the body. Physical healing is not the main focus of the text or even central to our redemption; you don't need to experience physical healing to be saved. We cannot and should not demand temporal healing as if it were our right due to the atonement. Still we pray for healing God uses sickness as a sanctifying influence in our lives (cf. [David Brainerd](#) who died at 29). Talking about a far greater healing than God helping you to get over whooping cough. Sickness won't send you to hell but your sins will. (Quoted by Paul Apple in [Jehovah is Salvation - 1130 pages](#))

**Spurgeon** echoes the remarks of Johnson - "**With his stripes we are healed.**" Will you notice that fact? The healing of a sinner does not lie in himself, nor in what he is, nor in what he feels, nor in what he does, nor in what he vows, nor in what he promises. It is not in himself at all; but there, at Gabbatha, where the pavement is stained with the blood of the Son of God, and there, at Golgotha, where the place of a skull beholds the agonies of Christ. It is in his stripes that the healing lies. I beseech thee, do not scourge thyself: 'With his stripes we are healed.'"

**David Baron - Peace and healing**—two most blessed results which accrue to us from the vicarious suffering and atoning death of our Saviour. Peace with God because of His justifying grace on the ground of what Messiah bore and did for us; and peace in our own conscience, which can never be at peace until sin is expiated—and "healing." ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

[Jehovah lifted up His rod:](#)

O Christ, it fell on Thee!

Thou wast sore stricken of Thy God;

There's not one stroke for me.

Thy tears, Thy blood, beneath it flowed;

Thy bruising healeth me.

-- A R Cousins

---

**Jack Arnold** on **miraculous healing today** - This raises the question, "**Does Christ heal today?**" The answer is obviously, "**Yes.**" The evidence is overwhelming that Christ does heal today. There are many recorded instances of sudden, complete and permanent healings which came to Christians and there is no known medical explanation for the cure. If we say there is no supernatural healing today, we are adopting a very unscientific attitude, for the facts prove otherwise. God does heal today through believing prayer of Christians individually and collectively and through the prayers of the elders of the church.

"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him" (James 5:14-15).

God, however, is not obligated to heal everyone or anyone. God heals whom and when and where He will. He is sovereign. He sometimes heals miraculously but most of the time He heals through the use of medicine and skillful doctors. There have been many good and sincere Christian ministers who were sincerely wrong in their theology about healing. Every Christian and every Christian minister has blind spots and holds to some wrong theology. No one man has all the truth but obviously some men have more truth than others. Men such as the late [S. D. Gordon](#), a Presbyterian, and [A. B. Simpson](#), the founder of the [Christian Missionary Alliance Church](#), taught that **healing is in the atonement of Christ**. They based their thinking on two verses.

"Surely our griefs (sickness) He Himself bore, And our sorrows (pains) He carried . . . And by His scourging we are healed" (Isa. 53:4-5+).

"And when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill in order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled saying, 'HE HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES, AND CARRIED AWAY OUR DISEASES'" (Mt. 8:16-17).

[Gotquestions](#) has a succinct explanation referencing also 1 Peter 2:24 which Arnold for some reason does not mention - Isaiah 53:5+, which is then quoted in 1 Peter 2:24, is a key verse on healing, but it is often misunderstood and misapplied. "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed." The word translated "healed" can mean either spiritual or physical healing. However, the contexts (**ED: Context should always be kept "king"** to avoid the trap of misinterpretation and then as with Gordon and Simpson misapplication) of Isaiah 53 and 1 Peter 2 make it clear that it is speaking of spiritual healing. "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24). The verse is talking about sin and righteousness, not sickness and disease. Therefore, being "healed" in both these verses is speaking of being forgiven and saved, not physically healed. (See also [What does it mean that "by His stripes we are healed"?](#))

**Spurgeon** comments on 1 Peter 2:24 - By His sufferings, you were **cured of sin**. His death not only removed from you the penalty of sin; but what is far better, **it also removed from you the dread disease itself**. ([1 Peter 2 Commentary](#))

**They argue that since Christ bore our sicknesses, healing is in the atonement** and just as our sins are forgiven completely by Christ so, too, we can claim freedom from sickness. They admitted that everyone must die, but no Christian had to die of an illness. They felt for anyone to die of sickness was to die out of the perfect will of God, for it was God's will to cure sickness as well as sin. They further argued that the only reason a person is not healed of sickness was because he did not exercise strong faith. If a man was not healed when he claimed a healing, the problem was not in the atonement but in the man's weak faith. This position was held by the late Kathryn Kuhlman and is presently held by Earnest Angley. Most Methodists, holiness pentecostals and modern day charismatics hold this view as well. The simple answer to the belief that healing is in the atonement of Christ is that Isaiah 53:4 refers in context to spiritual healing and Matthew 8:16-17 refer to the earthly ministry of Christ, not his atoning work. Furthermore, Paul prayed three times for God to deliver him from some illness but was refused his request.

"... there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me--to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me" (2 Cor. 12:7b-8).

Lastly, Christ moved among multitudes of sick and only healed a few. Logically, if we believe that the atonement is effective or efficacious (actually works), then no Christian should ever be sick or die, for the atonement must remove sickness or be powerless. The final key, however, is understanding that healing is a sovereign act of God and He heals whom and when and where He pleases. It is also interesting to note that **S. D. Gordon and A. B. Simpson**, who both taught a Christian does not have to die of illness, **both died of a drawn out, terminal sickness**. Because they thought they could claim freedom from this sickness, they died under a sense of having had God turn His back on them, and they were disappointed with their own failure to muster enough faith to be healed. **The theology that says healing is in the atonement is not only false teaching but it leads to despair and frustration for most people who hold it.**

**Are there then faith healers today? Men who have the spiritual gift of miracles?** The sign gifts passed away with the Apostles and there are no people today who can claim the power of God to heal men. There is faith healing but no faith healers. What about people who claim to be healers and people seem to get healed in their meetings? My answer to that is the Devil also has the power to heal and does heal, and so convincing are these demonstrations that many Christians are led astray, but the Bible predicts this will happen, especially towards the end of the age. "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect" (Matt. 24:24). **We must test all healing by the ultimate criteria of the Bible and not by visible results.** ([Acts 9:32-43 The Miracle Worker](#))

---

#### Related Resources:

- [What does it mean that "by His stripes we are healed"?](#)

**Excerpt** - Although these two verses are central to the topic of healing, they are often misunderstood and misapplied. The word "healed" as translated from both Hebrew and Greek, can mean either spiritual or physical healing. However, the contexts of Isaiah 53 and 1 Peter 2 make it clear that they are referring to spiritual healing, not physical. "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24).

The verse is referring to sin and righteousness, not sickness and disease. Therefore, being "healed" in both these verses is speaking of being forgiven and saved, not being physically healed.

- [What does the Bible say about healing?](#)

**Excerpt** - The Bible does not specifically link physical healing with spiritual healing. Sometimes people are physically healed when they place their faith in Christ, but this is not always the case. Sometimes it is God's will to heal, but sometimes it is not. The apostle John gives us the proper perspective: "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of Him" (1 John 5:14-15). God still performs miracles. God still heals people. Sickness, disease, pain, and death are still realities in this world. Unless the Lord returns, everyone who is alive today will die, and the vast majority of them (Christians included) will die as the result of a physical problem (disease, sickness, injury). It is not always God's will to heal us physically. Ultimately, our full physical healing awaits us in heaven. In heaven, there will be no more pain, sickness, disease, suffering, or death (Revelation 21). We all need to be less preoccupied with our physical condition in this world and a lot more concerned with our spiritual condition (Romans 12:1-2). Then we can focus our hearts on heaven where we will no longer have to deal with physical problems. Revelation 21:4 describes the true healing we should all be longing for: "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

---

### "WHERE THE FIRE HAS BEEN"

But he was wounded for our transgressions ... and with his stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53:5

The great Bible teacher H. A. Ironside often told the story of a group of pioneers who were traveling westward by covered wagon. One day they were horrified to see in the distance a long line of smoke and flame stretching for miles across the prairie. The dry grass was on fire, and the inferno was advancing upon them rapidly. The river they had crossed the day before would be of no help as they would not be able to return to it in time. One man, however, knew what to do. He gave the command to set fire to the grass behind them. Then, when the ground had cooled, the whole company moved back upon it. The people watched apprehensively as the blaze roared toward them. A little girl cried out in terror, "Are you sure we won't be burned up?" The leader replied, "My child, we are absolutely safe, nothing can harm us here, for we are standing on the scorched area where the flames have already done their work."

The fire of God's holy wrath against sin came down upon Jesus Christ the day He died on the cross. His own words "It is finished" and His resurrection from the tomb furnish us with infallible proof that He paid the price for our sin in full. Christian friend, do not be afraid of death and the judgment that will follow. Positionally you are now safely seated "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6), because by faith you have taken refuge in the "burned-over place" of Calvary. The fire of God's wrath cannot touch you there for He will not demand payment for your sins twice. Let this be your comfort: you are standing in safety "where the fire has been."

On Him almighty vengeance fell,  
Which would have sunk a world to Hell.  
He bore it for a chosen race,  
And thus becomes our Hiding Place. —Anon.

To escape God's justice, flee to His love!

---

### J C Philpot - With His stripes we are healed

Sin has thoroughly diseased us, and poisoned our very blood. Sin has diseased our understanding, so as to disable it from receiving the truth. Sin has diseased our conscience, so as to make it dull and heavy, and undiscerning of right and wrong. Sin has diseased our imagination, polluting it with every idle, foolish, and licentious fancy. Sin has diseased our memory, making it swift to retain what is evil, slow to retain what is good. Sin has diseased our affections, perverting them from all that is heavenly and holy, and fixing them on all that is earthly and vile. "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." Isaiah 53:5

---

**James Smith - Pierced!** WHO pierced Him? WE did — and pierced Him to the heart! Nor were we satisfied with piercing Him once — for we have pierced Him often, and pierced Him through and through!

Our unbelief pierces Him;  
our ingratitude pierces Him;  
the coldness of our love pierces Him;  
our forgetfulness pierces Him;  
our preferring the world to Him pierces Him;  
our disobedience to His Word pierces Him;



and our doubting of His love pierces Him!

It was WE who pierced Him on Calvary!

We put the nails and the hammer into the hands of the executioners!

We put the spear into the hand of the Roman soldier!

Yes, it was we who . . .

gathered the thorns,

picked out the sharpest,

formed them into a mock crown,

thrust it on His head, and

with the staff beat the thorns into His temples!

See, see, there He hangs! Pierced in His head, hands, feet, and side — pierced for us — pierced by us!

Look, my soul, at the pierced One!

God's holy Son hangs on that cross!

O my soul, look at Jesus!

He is your Substitute.

He is there for you!

He is suffering death for you!

He is bearing the desert of your sins in His body on the tree!

He is enduring your curse, being made accursed for you!

He is revealing . . .

what is in man's nature,

what is in God's heart, and

what He is willing to do and suffer — rather than I should perish!

Yes, Jesus is there for me!

He represents my person!

He answers for my crimes!

He dies in my stead!

O Savior, was ever any love, was ever any agony, was ever any death — like Yours!

Look, my soul, look to Jesus, the pierced One!

Look, and mourn — because your sins degraded, disgraced, and put Him to grief!

Look, and rejoice, for you shall have . . .

dignity by His degradation,

honor by His disgrace, and

life by His death!

Look, and be sorry that you have ever sinned, and so caused Jesus to suffer!

Look, and rejoice that you shall live forever to glorify and praise His name!

O my soul, Jesus was wounded for your transgressions, and bruised for your iniquities!

His blood has made your peace with God,

His righteousness gives you a title to eternal life,

and His death delivers you from dying!

I fix my eye intently on Jesus on the Hill Calvary, and marking all His tears, wounds, and agonies — I feel that I was the cause of all. I myself did it! Yes, I MYSELF . . .

bruised Him,

scourged Him,

spit on Him,

crowned Him with thorns,

smote Him with the fist, and

nailed Him to the cursed tree!

I inflicted it all.

Yet, O wonder of wonders! I derive pardon, holiness, and eternal life from it!

---

Spurgeon **Morning and Evening** - "With his stripes we are healed." —Isaiah 53:5

Pilate delivered our Lord to the lictors to be scourged. The Roman scourge was a most dreadful instrument of torture. It was made of the sinews of oxen, and sharp bones were inter-twisted every here and there among the sinews; so that every time the lash came down these pieces of bone inflicted fearful laceration, and tore off the flesh from the bone. The Saviour was, no doubt, bound to the column, and thus beaten. He had been beaten before; but this of the Roman lictors was probably the most severe of his flagellations. My soul, stand here and weep over his poor stricken body.

Believer in Jesus, can you gaze upon him without tears, as he stands before you the mirror of agonizing love? He is at once fair as the lily for innocence, and red as the rose with the crimson of his own blood. As we feel the sure and blessed healing which his stripes have wrought in us, does not our heart melt at once with love and grief? If ever we have loved our Lord Jesus, surely we must feel that affection glowing now within our bosoms.

"See how the patient Jesus stands,  
Insulted in his lowest case!  
Sinners have bound the Almighty's hands,  
And spit in their Creator's face.

With thorns his temples gor'd and gash'd  
Send streams of blood from every part;  
His back's with knotted scourges lash'd.  
But sharper scourges tear his heart."

We would fain go to our chambers and weep; but since our business calls us away, we will first pray our Beloved to print the image of his bleeding self upon the tablets of our hearts all the day, and at nightfall we will return to commune with him, and sorrow that our sin should have cost him so dear.

---

Dave Roper - One cold, windy afternoon we were sitting at the kitchen table in his tiny apartment reading Isaiah 53. As I began to read the text, I looked into the good doctor's eyes, saw them glisten and tears begin to flow. He was weeping, not over my translation (which doubtlessly grieved him), but over the text.

"David," I said to myself, "you've read these words many times, but not once have you wept over them. You have much to learn from this man."

---

**Spurgeon - "With his stripes we are healed."**

No sprinkling can wash out sin. No confirmation can confer grace. No masses can propitiate God. Your hope must be in Jesus, Jesus smitten, Jesus bruised, Jesus slain, Jesus the substitute for sinners. Whoever believes in him is healed, but all other hopes are a lie from top to bottom.

Do not scourge yourself. "With his stripes we are healed." I beg you, do not think that by some kind of spiritual mortification or terror or horror into which you force yourself you shall be healed. Your healing is in his stripes, not in your own, in his griefs, not in your griefs. I implore you, do not make your repentance into a rival of the stripes of Jesus, for so it would become an antichrist. When your eye is full of tears, look through them to Christ whom you may see, whether your eye be wet or dry. In the Christ on the cross there are five wounds, but you have not to add even another one of your own to them. In him, and in him alone, is all your healing; in him who, from head to foot, becomes a mass of suffering, that you, diseased from head to foot, might from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot be made perfectly whole.

-----

The remedy for your sins and mine is found in the substitutionary sufferings of the Lord Jesus and in these only. These 'stripes' of the Lord Jesus Christ were on our behalf. Do you enquire, 'Is there anything for us to do, to remove the guilt of sin?' I answer: There is nothing whatever for you to do. By the stripes of Jesus we are healed. All those stripes he has endured, and left not one of them for us to bear. 'But must we not believe on him?' Yes, certainly. If I say of a certain ointment that it heals, I do not deny that you need a bandage with which to apply it to the wound. Faith is the linen which binds the plaster of Christ's reconciliation to the sore of our sin. The linen does not heal; that is the work of the ointment. So faith does not heal; that is the work of the atonement of Christ.

Does an enquirer reply, 'But surely I must do something, or suffer something?' I answer: You must put nothing with Jesus Christ, or you greatly dishonour him. For your salvation, you must rely upon the wounds of Jesus Christ, and nothing else; for the text does not say, 'his stripes help to heal us', but, 'with his stripes we are healed.' 'But we must repent,' cries another. Assuredly we must, and shall, for repentance is the first sign of healing; but the stripes of Jesus heal us, and not our repentance. These stripes, when applied to the heart, work repentance in us: we hate sin because it made Jesus suffer.

---

There are some saints who have numbness of soul: the stripes of Christ can best quicken them; deadness dies in the presence of his death, and rocks break when the Rock of Ages is seen as cleft for us.

'Who can think, without admiring?  
Who can hear, and nothing feel?  
See the Lord of life expiring,  
Yet retain a heart of steel?'

Many are subject to the fever of pride, but a sight of Jesus in his humiliation, contradicted of sinners, will tend to make them humble. Pride drops her plumes when she hears the cry, 'Behold the man!' In the society of one so great, enduring so much scorn, there is no room for vanity. Some are covered with the leprosy of selfishness, but if anything can forbid a man to lead a selfish life, it is the life of Jesus, who saved others—himself he could not save. Misers, gluttons and self-seekers love not the Saviour, for his whole conduct upbraids them. Upon some the fit of anger often comes; but what can give gentleness of spirit like the sight of him who was as a lamb dumb before her shearers, and who opened not his mouth under blasphemy and rebuke? If any of you feel the fretting consumption of worldliness, or the cancer of covetousness—for such rank diseases as these are common in Zion—still the groans and griefs of the Man of sorrows, the acquaintance of grief, will prove a cure. All evils fly before the Lord Jesus, even as darkness vanishes before the sun. Lash us, Master, to thy cross; no fatal shipwreck shall we fear if fastened there. Bind us with cords to the horns of the altar; no disease can come there: the sacrifice purifies the air. ([The Universal Remedy](#))

---

### That's Jesus!

Read: Isaiah 53:4-12

Subscribe to iTunes

He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. —Isaiah 53:5

As a Jewish kid growing up in New York, Michael Brown had no interest in spiritual things. His life revolved around being a drummer for a band, and he got mixed up with drugs. But then some friends invited him to church, where he found the love and prayers of the people to be irresistible. After a short spiritual struggle, Michael trusted Jesus as Savior.

This was a monumental change for a wayward Jewish teen. One day he told his dad he had heard about Old Testament texts describing Jesus. His dad, incredulous, asked, "Where?" When Michael opened his Bible, it fell to Isaiah 53. They read it, and Michael exclaimed, "That's Him! That's Jesus!"

Indeed, it is Jesus. Through the help of Christians and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Brown (today a Bible scholar and an author) came to recognize the Messiah of Isaiah 53. He experienced the salvation that changes lives, forgives sin, and gives abundant life to all who trust the "Man of sorrows" (v.3). Jesus is the One who was "wounded for our transgressions" and who died for us on the cross (v.5).

The Bible reveals Jesus, who alone has the power to change lives.

God, I struggle with this idea of Jesus as Savior.  
I know He's a good man, but I need to see that He is  
more than that. Please show me—through others or  
through the Bible—how I can know for sure who Jesus is.

The Spirit of God uses the Word of God to change hearts.

By Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

**R Kent Hughes** has the following story regarding the conversion of the great 19th century preacher **Charles Simeon** - Charles Simeon, one of the greatest preachers of the Church of England, explained his coming to Christ like this: "As I was reading Bishop Wilson on the Lord's supper, I met with an expression to this effect—"That the Jews knew what they did, when they transferred their

sin to the head of their offering." The thought came into my mind, "What, may I transfer all my guilt to another? Has God provided an Offering for me, that I may lay my sins on His head? Then, God willing, I will not bear them on my own soul one moment longer." Accordingly I sought to lay my sins upon the sacred head of Jesus". (From Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul)

---

### **C H Spurgeon - By his wounds we are healed. —Isaiah 53:5**

There is only One who can heal a crushed spirit. If you would be healed of the bleeding wounds of your heart, flee to Christ. You did so once; do it again. Go to Christ now, though you may have gone to him a hundred times before.

One thing, however, I would say to one who has a really crushed heart. Remember Christ's sympathy with you. O you who are tossed with tempest and not comforted, your Lord's vessel is in the storm with you. Yes, he is in the vessel with you. There is not a pang that rends the believer's heart but he has felt it first. He drinks out of the cup with you. Is it very bitter? He had a cup full of it for every drop that you taste. This ought to comfort you. I know of no better remedy for the heart's trouble in a Christian than to feel, My Master himself takes no better portion than that which he gives to me.

Also let me recommend, as a choice remedy for a crushed spirit, an enlarged view of the love of God. I wish that some of you who have a crushed spirit would give God credit for being as kind as you are yourself. You would not permit your child to endure a needless pain if you could remove it; neither does God willingly bring affliction or grief to his children. He would not allow you to be cast down but would cheer and comfort you, if it was good for you. His delight is that you should be happy and joyful. Take the comfort that he has set before you in his Word; he has put it there on purpose for you. Dare to take it, and think well of God, and it will be well with your soul.

If this does not cure the evil, remember the great brevity of all your afflictions, after all. What if you are a child of God who even has to go to bed in the dark? You will wake up in the eternal daylight. What if, for the time being, you are in grief? You have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials, and you will come out of it. You are not the first child of God who has been depressed or troubled. Yes, among the noblest men and women who ever lived there has been much of this kind of thing. Do not, therefore, think that you are quite alone in your sorrow. Bow your head and bear it, if it cannot be removed, for only a little while, and every cloud will be swept away, and you, in the cloudless sunlight, will behold your God. Meanwhile, his strength is sufficient for you. The Lord grant his comforts to you, for his Son Jesus Christ's sake!

---

### **Wounded For Me**

Read: Isaiah 53:4-12

He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. —Isaiah 53:5

When you study the painting of the crucifixion by the famous Dutch artist Rembrandt, your attention is first drawn to the cross and to Jesus. Then, as you look at the crowd around the cross, you are drawn to the faces of the people involved in the awful crime of crucifying the Son of God. Finally, your eyes drift to the edge of the picture and catch sight of another figure—almost hidden in the shadows. This, we are told, was a self-portrait of Rembrandt, for he recognized that by his sins he helped nail Jesus there!

Someone has aptly said, "It is a simple thing to say that Christ died for the sin of the world. It is quite another thing to say that Christ died for my sin! It may be an interesting pastime to point fingers at those who crucified Jesus, but it is a shocking thought that I can be as indifferent as Pilate, as scheming as Caiaphas, as calloused as the soldiers, as ruthless as the mob, or as cowardly as the disciples. It isn't just what they did—it was I who nailed Him to the tree. I crucified the Christ of God. I joined the mockery!"

Think again of Rembrandt's painting. If you look closely, you will see that in the shadows you too are standing with bloodied hands, for Christ bore the penalty of your sin! And you will say, "He was wounded for me."

Wounded for me, wounded for me,  
There on the cross He was wounded for me;  
Gone my transgressions, and now I am free,  
All because Jesus was wounded for me. —Ovens

Calvary's cross reveals man's hatred for God and God's love for man.

By Henry G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

### **A Better Explanation**

[Solomon Ginsburg](#) was one of the most colorful and effective of missionaries. His adventures are the stuff of movies. Solomon was born in Poland in 1867 to a Jewish rabbi who named him after the most glorious of all the kings of Israel. Rabbi Ginsburg wanted his

boy growing up in his footsteps, a spiritual leader for the Jews of Eastern Europe.

One day Solomon and his father were celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles by staying overnight in a small tent near their home. The boy picked up a copy of the Prophets and turned haphazardly to Isaiah 53. As he read the opening verses, his curiosity was stirred. "To whom does the prophet refer in this chapter?" he asked. When his father answered with "profound silence," Solomon repeated the question. This time his father snatched the book from his hand and slapped him across the face.

Years later Solomon traveled to London. Passing down Whitechapel Street, he met a Jewish friend who invited him to Mildmay Mission. "I am going to speak on the 53rd chapter of Isaiah," said the friend. "Won't you come?" Solomon attended, curious "to see if he had a better explanation than the one my father had given."

As he listened, he grew troubled. Christ seemed to have perfectly fulfilled Isaiah's prophecies in chapter 53. Solomon purchased a copy of the New Testament and was soon convinced that Christ was the Messiah, and for three months a terrible war raged within him. What would his father think? His uncles? His family?

At last, he heard Rev. John Wilkinson preach a powerful sermon on the text, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." Returning home, Solomon paced the floor till midnight, finally surrendering his life to Christ in the wee hours.

He was abandoned by his family, beaten and nearly killed by angry friends. But I knew I was forgiven and accepted. I felt my load was lifted. I knew that my sins were washed away by the precious blood of Jesus. (Robert Morgan - From this Verse)

---

## Wounded For Me

Read: Isaiah 53

He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. —Isaiah 53:5

A man who was deeply troubled by his sins was having a vivid dream in which he saw Jesus being savagely whipped by a soldier. As the cruel scourge came down upon Christ's back, the onlooker shuddered, for the terrible cords left ugly, gaping wounds upon His bleeding, swollen body. When the one wielding the lash raised his arm to strike the Lord again, the man rushed forward to stop him. As he did, the soldier turned, and the dreamer was startled to see his own face!

He awoke in a cold sweat, conscious that his sin had inflicted this grievous punishment upon the Savior. As he thought of Christ's suffering, he remembered these words in Isaiah 53:5, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed."

How wonderful that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered and died to redeem a sinful and lost world! He was wounded for our transgressions. "All we like sheep have gone astray," but praise God, "the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6).

In one sense, Good Friday was the darkest day in human history. But because of Jesus' sacrifice for us, the cross was actually the greatest victory of all the ages!

Wounded for me, wounded for me,  
There on the cross He was wounded for me;  
Gone my transgressions, and now I am free,  
All because Jesus was wounded for me. —Ovens

Christ was delivered for our sins that we might be delivered from our sins.

By Henry G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

## The Agony Of The Cross

Read: Isaiah 53

[Jesus] humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. —Philippians 2:8

As Christians, we understand the spiritual significance of Christ's sacrifice at Calvary, but it's easy to forget about the tremendous agony He endured there. The worst aspect was separation from the Father, but the physical suffering was also horrible beyond comprehension.

In his book *Dare To Believe*, Dan Baumann shares some thoughts that can deepen our gratitude for what the Savior did for us. He wrote, "We have perhaps unwisely and sometimes unconsciously glamorized the cross. Jewelry and steeples alike are often ornamental and attractive but carry nothing of the real story of crucifixion. It was the most painful method of public death in the first century. The victim was placed on a wooden cross. Nails . . . were driven into the hands and feet of the victim, and then the cross was lifted and jarred into the ground, tearing the flesh of the crucified and racking his body with excruciating pain. Historians remind



us that even the soldiers could not get used to the horrible sight, and often took strong drink to numb their senses.”

With a fresh awareness of our Savior’s physical agony, let’s thank Him anew for His sacrifice at Calvary. He loved us so much that He was willing to die for us—even the painful death of the cross.

Was it for crimes that I have done  
He groaned upon the tree?  
Amazing pity! Grace unknown!  
And love beyond degree! —Watts

We can never sacrifice enough for the One who sacrificed His all for us.

By Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

### ISAIAH 53

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5).

Underscore this truth: The death of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary was substitutionary—He died in our place, the Just for the unjust, and He is our only hope for eternity. A Christian woman visiting a mortally wounded soldier had just finished praying when a nurse entered and said to him, "You have no need to worry over your sins; anyone who willingly gives his life for his country is all right." The soldier smiled weakly, but shook his head and said, "That is a mistake. When I lay out there on the battlefield, I knew I had given my all. I hadn't failed my country. But that didn't help me to face God. I wasn't fit to die, and I knew it, and it has troubled me every day since. But just now, as I heard this woman's prayer, I realized that the Lord Jesus was punished for all my sins, and a great peace has come into my soul. I'm not afraid to die now, because He has forgiven me."

Although that nurse meant well, she spoke in tragic ignorance. But the soldier grasped the foundation of the gospel—that Jesus died for our sins.

A poet wrote:

O Christ, what burdens bowed Your head,  
My sins You had to face;  
You took my load, died in my stead  
Gave Your life in my place,  
A sacrifice—Your blood was shed!  
You saved me by Your grace."

We need to pause frequently and thank the Lord Jesus for dying on the cross and paying for our sins. He alone did it, and He did it alone. —P.R.V.

The only valid passport to heaven is signed in Jesus' blood. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

The story is told of a man who was brought into court for trial and found guilty. The judge happened to be a close boyhood friend of the accused, although they had not seen each other for many years. Remaining impartial, the judge sentenced the man and levied a penalty appropriate to his crime. It was a fine so large that the accused could not pay it. A jail sentence, therefore, seemed to be the only alternative. The judge then did a very unusual thing. Leaving the bench, he approached the convicted man, shook his hand, and announced, "I'm paying the fine for you."

As we contemplate the great salvation God has provided, we must remember that He is both loving and just. Therefore, as much as He loves us, He could not simply overlook our sins. The penalty for violating His law had to be exacted. But by Jesus' death on the cross, God's love and justice were satisfied so that there is "no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). Sin's penalty has been paid in full! —R. W D.

SALVATION IS FREE, BUT IT COST OUR SAVIOR AN ENORMOUS PRICE

---

### Hymns Related to Isaiah 53:5

- [For Me](#)
- [Great Healer, The](#)
- [He Was Nailed to the Cross for Me](#)

- [Heal Us, Emmanuel](#)
- [How Beauteous Were the Marks Divine](#)
- [I Lay My Sins on Jesus](#)
- [Jesus, I Will Ponder Now](#)
- [Jesus, Blessèd Lord and Savior](#)
- [More Marred Than Any Man's](#)
- [My Sins Laid Open to the Rod](#)
- [Now, My Soul, Thy Voice Upraising](#)
- [O Christ, What Burdens Bowed Thy Head](#)
- [O Holy Dove, Assist My Love](#)
- [O Thou Through Suffering Perfect Made](#)
- [Take Me as I Am, O Savior](#)
- [Thou, Whom Their Maker Heav'n and Earth](#)
- [Where the Blood Can Heal!](#)
- [Wounded for Me](#)
- [Wounded for Our Transgressions](#)

**Isaiah 53:6 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.**

KJV Isaiah 53:6 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.

- **All of us like sheep have gone astray** Ps 119:176; Mt 18:12-14; Luke 15:3-7; Ro 3:10-19; 1 Pet 2:25
- **Each of us has turned to his own way** Isaiah 55:7; 56:11; Ezek 3:18; Ro 4:25; James 5:20; 1 Pet 3:18
- **But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.** Ps 69:4
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE SINNER'S "SHEEP-LIKE" NATURE [Play this video!](#)

**Motyer** has an interesting note introducing his comments on this verse - What the Servant did, the Lord did. After the concentration on the Servant in Isa 53:4–5, the change of subject here is very striking, as is also the precedence given to us and our self-will as compared with the precedence of the Servant's saving work in Isa 53:4–5. Coupled with the new subject, this has the force of saying with astonishment, '***To think that he would do that for people like us***' (TOTC-Isaiah)

**All of us like sheep have gone astray** (All of us had wandered off like sheep = NET) - Note this [future saved Jewish remnant](#) confesses it is **all** with no exceptions who have strayed from the Great Shepherd. This explains the Jews many centuries of being a scatted flock, like sheep without a shepherd (See [MacArthur's sermon for a background leading up to Israel's future salvation](#)). They rejected the Shepherd! Sheep are not very smart and have a built in tendency to wander away from the security, safety and provision provided by the flock under the shepherd's watchful eye. In that sense a dumb sheep has less culpability. We are like sheep in that we too are born with a propensity to wander! But when men wander, they do so out of choice to not submit to the Shepherd. And of course this passage describes not just the Christ rejecting nation of Israel, but every person born in the image of Adam -- ALL OF US have gone astray! ALL OF US are guilty and deserving eternal death. Sin is a choice, and always a bad choice!

Jesus used this same metaphorical description in Matthew -- "Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd." (Mt 9:36) Like sheep they followed the sinful path of their fleshly, fallen hearts. So just as sheep wander, sinners (all of us) wander from God's way, "they way, the truth and the life," which is the only way to the Father (Jn 14:6). So in the confession of the saved Jewish remnant, they acknowledge their sin and sinful nature, which is the beginning of the road to repentance.

**Constable** - Sheep are notoriously shortsighted; they go after the next clump of grass without regard to where their feet may lead them. They are also self-centered; their only thought is how they can satisfy themselves with no concern for the welfare of other sheep. Consequently sheep often get lost. Humans are the same. ([Isaiah 53 Commentary](#))(ED: cf Pr 16:25, Jdg 21:25)

**Motyer** says **all of us like sheep** describes "the folly and thoughtlessness of sin leading to the danger inherent in being sheep

without a shepherd." (Ibid)

**Warren Wiersbe** - Under the Law of Moses, the sheep died for the shepherd; but under grace, the Good Shepherd died for the sheep (John 10:1-18).

- **Devotional** ["God's Remedy for Man's Sin"](#) (discusses dumb sheep!)

Even the psalmist (who Spurgeon thinks was David) confessed

"I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek Your servant, For I do not forget Your commandments." (Ps 119:176)

[I was a wandering sheep.](#)

I did not love the fold;

I did not love my Shepherd's voice,

I would not be controlled.

I was a wayward child,

I did not love my home;

I did not love my Father's voice,

I loved afar to roam.

--Horatius Bonar

**Gone astray** ((08582)([ta'ah](#)) means literally to wander, to wander off, to stagger, to roam about, to travel about without any specific goal (e.g., physical roaming = Ex 23:4). Figuratively **ta'ah** means to err or go astray (active) or in passive sense, to be led astray or to be deceived) as when false prophets led the people astray by their false words and false gods (idols) (Jer 23:13, 32, Mic 3:5; false shepherds in Jer 50:6). In short, figuratively taah refers to mental, moral, or spiritual wandering (Ps 95:10) or ethical wandering (Ezek 44:10). The picture is wandering off spiritually (or being lead away from) the correct path, the godly path (eg see the "Highway of Holiness" Isa 35:8). (Ps 95:10; 119:110; Pr 7:25; 14:22; 21:16; Isa 29:24; 35:8; 47:15; 53:6; Ezek 14:11; 44:10,15; 48:11). In Ezekiel Jehovah gives a prophetic promise "that the house of Israel may no longer stray from Me and no longer defile themselves with all their transgressions. Thus they will be My people, and I shall be their God." (Ezek 14:11). **Ta'ah** is used 13x in Isaiah - Isa. 3:12; Isa. 9:16; Isa. 16:8; Isa. 19:13; Isa. 19:14; Isa. 21:4; Isa. 28:7; Isa. 29:24; Isa. 30:28; Isa. 35:8; Isa. 47:15; Isa. 53:6; Isa. 63:17.

The Septuagint translates **ta'ah** in Isaiah 53:6 with [planao](#) meaning to be led astray, misled, caused to wander. **Planao** can also describe those who are deceived and indeed our hearts are more deceptive (Jer 17:9) and sin itself is deceptive (Heb 3:13+).

**Peter** picks up this theme in the NT writing to believers "For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls." (1 Peter 2:25+)

**S Lewis Johnson** - You know, a sheep has a wonderful way of finding the way to get away from the Lord or it's master, it's shepherd. The sheep will wonder over to the fence, and find a way through that fence when no one else could possibly see it, and it will get outside, and it will never be able to find it's way back. It's amazing about sheep, and I've noticed that about Christians too. They can find ways to get away from the Lord, and it seems also that they can never find their way back, and so he has to go out as the Great Shepherd and bring us back. " ([The Vicarious Messiah](#))

Jewish believer **David Baron** - "Any one taking a view of the state of the Jewish nation, both spiritual and temporal, since they rejected their Messiah," writes a Hebrew Christian brother, "cannot fail to be struck with the graphic description in this concise inspired sentence. 'We have each one of us turned to his own way,' We have all gone in the path which we chose. There was no union in the service of God; no common bond to unite us; we have not entered into the thoughts of God, nor endeavoured to follow His ways, but we went on the broad way of our own. We were like sheep which are scattered; which have no shepherd, which wander where they please, with no one to collect, defend, or guide them. One would wander in one direction, and another in another; and of course solitary and unprotected, they would be exposed to the more danger. Such has been the state of the Jewish nation since they have rejected the Lord of Glory; they have been sifted among all nations like as corn is sifted, and everywhere they turn to their own way; they have neither king, nor prince, nor sacrifice, nor Ephod." Disunion among themselves as well as corporate wandering from God has marked their history in dispersion. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Spurgeon** - "All we like sheep have gone astray." - Man is here compared to a beast, for sin brings out the animal part of us, and while holiness allies us to angels, sin degrades us to brutes. We are not likened to one of the more noble and intelligent animals, but to a silly sheep. All sin is folly; all sinners are fools.

**Motyer** astutely observes that **"all"** and **"each"** speak of "common culpability, individual responsibility." (Ibid)

[Like sheep we went astray.](#)

And broke the fold of God,  
Each wandering in a different way,  
But all the downward road.  
Isaac Watts

**Each of us has turned to his own way** - **Each of us** signifies this was a personal choice we made. Yes it is **'all of us'** but we can not blame the crowd because **"each of us"** indicates we have a personal responsibility for our wayward wanderings. We deliberately choose the path of sin! **His own way** is the opposite of God's desired way!

**But** - This is one of the more glorious **terms of contrast** in Scripture, contrasting our rebellious ways with Jehovah's righteous response, a response motivated by His great mercy, love and grace to fallen mankind.

**Culross** - The picture is that of the scattered flock, all wandering from the pasture and the protection and care of the shepherd. It is not, as in the parable, the wandering of one sheep out of a hundred, ninetyandnine being left, but the scattering of the whole flock. Under this figure is represented our iniquity, the word implying both the sinful act and its guilt. Sheep are not to blame for wandering; they know no better; but in men, with reason, conscience, and heavenly light, wandering means sin.

**Motyer on the LORD caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him**- With this emphatic subject (AND THE LORD) Isaiah corrects the misunderstanding involved in 'stricken by God' (Isa 53:5 -- **ED**: WHERE THEY ERRONEOUSLY REASONED THAT HE DESERVED THE PUNISHMENT FOR HIS OWN SIN OF BLASPHEMY)—**revelation** corrects **incomprehension**: he was indeed stricken by God, but with the astonishing purpose of laying our sin on Him. (**ED**: THE [REDEEMED JEWISH REMNANT](#) IN THE LAST DAYS WILL HAVE THEIR BLIND EYES OPENED BY DIVINE REVELATION WHICH CORRECTS THEIR ERRANT INTERPRETATION OF THE REASON FOR JESUS' DEATH ON THE CROSS!)

**The LORD has caused the iniquity** (see ['avon](#)) **of us all to fall on Him** (ESV = "the LORD has laid on him," NET = "the LORD caused the sin of all of us to attack Him") - This passage also clearly refutes the assertion by more modern Jewish scholars that this description refers to the nation of Israel. Does the nation of Israel bear the iniquity of all? Of course not. The argument makes no sense. So once again we see the emphasis of the Suffering Servant's substitutionary sacrifice, taking our iniquity onto Himself.

The Septuagint has "The LORD gave Him up for our sins ([hamartia](#))" where "gave (Him) up" is [paradidomi](#) meaning to give one over to the power of another.

Notice it is Jehovah who caused the multitude of sins, mass of guilt and weight of punishment to fall on the Suffering Servant. Jehovah Himself choose the sacrificial Lamb for the sacrifice. The provision of His Servant as substitute is God's doing, not man's deserving! As **Baron** says Jehovah's Servant "was the object on which all the rays collected on the focal point, fell. These fiery rays which would have fallen on all mankind diverged from divine justice to the east, west, north, and south, were deflected from them and converged in Him. So the Lord caused to meet in Him the punishment due to the iniquity of all. How wonderful are God's judgments!"

**Iniquity** is ['avon](#) which denotes "not only the transgression itself, but also the guilt incurred thereby, and the punishment to which it gives rise." (Baron [Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

Notice how the Spirit inspires a beautiful balance of our **need** and God's **remedy** - The verse begins with **"we all"** (transliterated *kullanu*) and ends with the same Hebrew word (*kullanu*) for **"us all."** **"We all"** fell were under the guilt and condemnation of our sin, but now **"we all"** are under the grace that covers that guilt and sin! Can I hear a "Hallelujah! Amen?"

[No more a wandering sheep.](#)

I love to be controlled;  
I love my tender Shepherd's voice,  
I love the peaceful fold.  
No more a wayward child,  
I seek no more to roam;  
I love my heavenly Father's voice,  
I love, I love His home!  
--Horatius Bonar

This description recalls those three horrible hours when the Father's wrath for our iniquities fell on the Suffering Servant...

Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY

HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?" (Mt 27:45-46, Lk 23:44+)

**Comment** - The "ninth hour" was the time of the evening oblation, the time of sacrifice and prayer. The Passover lambs were sacrificed in the Temple grounds, while the Passover Lamb of God was sacrificed as our iniquity fell on Him.

**David Thompson:** He hung on that old rugged cross from 9 in the morning until 3 in the afternoon. For the first three hours, men did everything they could do to Jesus Christ to make things miserable. Men laughed at him, insulted him, spit on Him, sat down by His cross just to watch Him die. But then at noon, **God turned the world dark, shutting off from human vision the transactions that were actually taking place between God the Father and God the Son.** At this point, Jesus Christ, Who knew no sin was made sin for us and He took on Him the full wrath of God. (**ED: WOE!**)...If you can walk away from this passage and reject Jesus Christ, you deserve to go to hell, because this text informs us that Jesus Christ paid the total price for your sin so you do not have to go there! (**ED: DOUBLE WOE!**)

## THE SHEPHERD VIOLENTLY STRUCK

**Caused to fall** (06293)([paga/pagha](#)) means to meet, encounter, reach. To cause anything to strike or fall on a person. Thus the KJV "laid on Him" is too weak, for this Hebrew verb in this context conveys the nuance of a violent strike. For example in 2 Sa 1:15 **paga** means "cut him down," or kill him! **B W Newton** writes "In other passages our iniquity is spoken of as resting on the Holy One, and He bearing it. Here (Isa 53:6) it is spoken of as coming upon Him like a destroying foe and overwhelming Him with the wrath that it brought with it" So it was not our sin that killed the Servant of Jehovah but Jehovah Who killed His Servant to pay the sin debt we could never have paid -- paying for it with His precious blood (1 Pe 1:18-19+). Some have objected to such a harsh picture of God as Judge killing His own Son and so they have suggested a number of "theories" regarding Christ's substitutionary death. For more on this important subject see [What are the various theories on the atonement?](#) The death of Christ is best understood as [the doctrine of penal substitution](#) which in short sees Christ as our substitute to take the penalty for our sins, to satisfy the justice of God which is exactly what Paul says in 2 Cor 5:21 writing "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." Peter says it this way "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed." (1 Pe 2:24)

**Motyer** says **caused to fall** is "descriptive of the divine act of gathering into one place, on to one substitutionary Victim, the sins of all the sinners whom the Lord purposed to save. The Servant is the solution of the LORD to the needs of sinners." (Ibid)

**Allen Ross** on **paga** - The verb "has laid" on him is the verb **paga'** (hipgia'); this verb will be an important one to study because it will be repeated at the end of the song as the summation-"he made intercession" for the transgressors. It is a word that means "to intercede, interpose." In places in the Bible it is used to describe prayer, an intercession that is burdensome. But here it is substitutionary suffering that will divert the punishment-interposed.

**Paga** - 45x in 43v - approach(1), attack(2), attacked(1), came(1), cut him down(1), entreat(2), fall(7), fell(4), happen(1), intercede(2), interceded(1), kill(1), make supplication(1), meet(3), meets(3), met(2), pleaded(1), reached(6), spare(1), strike the mark(1), touched(1), touched and reached(1), urge(1)

Gen. 23:8; Gen. 28:11; Gen. 32:1; Exod. 5:3; Exod. 5:20; Exod. 23:4; Num. 35:19; Num. 35:21; Jos. 2:16; Jos. 16:7; Jos. 17:10; Jos. 19:11; Jos. 19:22; Jos. 19:26; Jos. 19:27; Jos. 19:34; Jdg. 8:21; Jdg. 15:12; Jdg. 18:25; Ruth 1:16; Ruth 2:22; 1 Sam. 10:5; 1 Sam. 22:17; 1 Sam. 22:18; 2 Sam. 1:15; 1 Ki. 2:25; 1 Ki. 2:29; 1 Ki. 2:31; 1 Ki. 2:32; 1 Ki. 2:34; 1 Ki. 2:46; Job 21:15; Job 36:32; Isa. 47:3; Isa. 53:6; Isa. 53:12; Isa. 59:16; Isa. 64:5; Jer. 7:16; Jer. 15:11; Jer. 27:18; Jer. 36:25; Amos 5:19

**MacArthur:** In Leviticus 16:1-34+ when atonement was made, one animal was killed and one animal was kept alive. And the priests would lay their hands on that one animal, the [scapegoat](#) ([picture](#)), as if to place all the sins of the people on the scapegoat and he would be sent out into the wilderness, never to return again, never. Jesus is the scapegoat. He picks up all our sin, pays the penalty in full. He's the sacrificial animal as well, and He's the scapegoat and carries them all away.

In summary when God caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Jesus on the Cross, e was not overlooking our sins but was punishing the Son Who took our sins upon Himself. This is amazing grace, amazing love!

How dreadful was the hour  
When God our wanderings laid  
And did at once His vengeance pour,  
Upon the Shepherd's head!



How glorious was the grace  
When Christ sustained the stroke!  
His life and blood the Shepherd pays  
A ransom for the flock.  
Isaac Watts

As **John MacArthur** says "This will be the confession that [Israel makes in the future](#). But this is the confession that any sinner can make now, and you can make it today."

**NET Note** justifying the translation of **paga** as "**attack**" - Elsewhere the Hiphil of paga' means "to intercede verbally" (Jer 15:11; 36:25) or "to intervene militarily" (Isa 59:16), but neither nuance fits here. Apparently here the Hiphil is the causative of the normal Qal meaning, "encounter, meet, touch." The Qal sometimes refers to a hostile encounter or attack; when used in this way the object is normally introduced by the preposition -B. (bet, see Josh 2:16; Judg 8:21; 15:12, etc.). Here the causative Hiphil has a double object – the Lord makes "sin" attack "him" (note that the object attacked is introduced by the preposition -B.. In their sin the group was like sheep who had wandered from God's path. They were vulnerable to attack; the guilt of their sin was ready to attack and destroy them. But then the servant stepped in and took the full force of the attack.

**Spurgeon** - "The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." - Sin I may compare to the rays of some evil sun. Sin was scattered throughout this world as abundantly as light, and Christ is made to suffer the full effect of the baleful rays which stream from the sun of sin. God as it were holds up a burning glass and concentrates all the scattered rays in a focus upon Christ. That seems to be the thought of the text, "The Lord hath focused upon him the iniquity of us all." That which was scattered abroad everywhere is here brought into terrible concentration.

---

**Our Troubles** - Half our troubles come from wanting our own way. The other half comes by having it. The hymnwriter Philip P. Bliss described Jesus' atoning work on the cross as follows:

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,  
In my place condemned He stood—  
Sealed my pardon with His blood:  
Hallelujah, what a Savior!

Yes, only Christ could be our sin bearer! Source unknown

---

### **H A Ironside - Isaiah 53:6**

Here we have the entire story of the Bible epitomized: man's ruin both by nature and practice, and God's marvelous and all-sufficient remedy. The verse begins with all and ends with all. An anxious soul was directed to this passage and found peace. Afterward he said, "I bent low down and went in at the first all. I stood up straight and came out at the last." The first is the acknowledgment of our deep need. The second shows how fully that need has been met in the cross of Christ. We are happy to be numbered among those who have put in their claim and found salvation through the atoning work which there took place!

I was lost, but Jesus found me,  
Found the sheep that went astray;  
Threw His loving arms around me,  
Brought me back into His way.  
—Francis Harold Rowley

---

### **F B Meyer - The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**

The Lord did it, because He was the Lord, and He took on Himself the iniquity of us all. "Made to meet" is the marginal reading; as though many confluent streams poured their black substances into one foaming maelstrom which filled the heart of the dying Savior. Well may the apostle Peter recapitulate his work in the matchless, almost monosyllabic sentence, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree."

This verse begins and ends with all. We are all alike in having "gone astray." We have not all gone in the same direction, nor all to the same extent. We are not equally far from the fold. But we are all away from it. They say that if sheep can stray, they will; and there is no kind of animal more hopeless and helpless than sheep which have got out of the pen. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass its master's crib; the dog and cat will make their way home, but the sheep wanders on in small and ever smaller companies, until it is entrapped in the rocks, or devoured by wolves, or harried to death by dogs. Such were we. Panting, driven, chased, weary; but Jesus sought us, and brought us back to the fold, and gave us a name and place among his own. We are returned unto the

Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.

But ah, how can we forget the cost we have been to the Shepherd! See ye not the wounds in his hands and feet? Know ye not that his heart was lacerated and broken by the burden of our sins? "Our own way," that has been the curse of our lives, and the agony of our Shepherd. Would that it might be for ever blocked against us, and that we might be led in his own way for his Name's sake! (Our Daily Homily)

---

### **J C Philpot - The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6**

What heart can conceive, what tongue express what the holy soul of Christ endured when "the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all?" In the garden of Gethsemane, what a load of guilt, what a weight of sin, what an intolerable burden of the wrath of God did that sacred humanity endure, until the pressure of sorrow and woe forced the drops of blood to fall as sweat from his brow. The human nature in its weakness recoiled, as it were, from the cup of anguish put into his hand. His body could scarcely bear the load that pressed him down; his soul, under the waves and billows of God's wrath, sank in deep mire where there was no standing, and came into deep waters where the floods overflowed him (Ps. 69:1, 2).

And how could it be otherwise when that sacred humanity was enduring all the wrath of God, suffering the very pangs of hell, and wading in all the depths of guilt and terror? When the blessed Lord was made sin (or a sin-offering) for us, he endured in his holy soul all the pangs of distress, horror, alarm, misery, and guilt that the elect would have felt in hell forever; and not only as any one of them would have felt, but as the collective whole would have experienced under the outpouring of the everlasting wrath of God. The anguish, the distress, the darkness, the condemnation, the shame, the guilt, the unutterable horror, that any or all of his quickened family have ever experienced under a sense of God's wrath, the curse of the law, and the terrors of hell, are only faint, feeble reflections of what the Lord felt in the garden and on the cross; for there were attendant circumstances in his case which are not, and indeed cannot be in theirs, and which made the distress and agony of his holy soul, both in nature and degree, such as none but he could feel or know.

He as the eternal Son of God, who had lain in his bosom before all worlds, had known all the blessedness and happiness of the love and favor of the Father, his own Father, shining upon him, for he was "by him as one brought up with him, and was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him" (Prov. 8:30). When, then, instead of love he felt his displeasure, instead of the beams of his favor he experienced the frowns and terrors of his wrath, instead of the light of his countenance he tasted the darkness and gloom of desertion--what heart can conceive, what tongue express the bitter anguish which must have wrung the soul of our suffering Surety under this agonizing experience?

---

**Spurgeon - Isaiah 53:6** - Here a confession of sin common to all the elect people of God. They have all fallen, and therefore, in common chorus, they all say, from the first who entered heaven to the last who shall enter there, "All we like sheep have gone astray." The confession, while thus unanimous, is also special and particular: "We have turned every one to his own way." There is a peculiar sinfulness about every one of the individuals; all are sinful, but each one with some special aggravation not found in his fellow. It is the mark of genuine repentance that while it naturally associates itself with other penitents, it also takes up a position of loneliness. "We have turned every one to his own way," is a confession that each man had sinned against light peculiar to himself, or sinned with an aggravation which he could not perceive in others. This confession is unreserved; there is not a word to detract from its force, nor a syllable by way of excuse. The confession is a giving up of all pleas of self-righteousness. It is the declaration of men who are consciously guilty—guilty with aggravations, guilty without excuse: they stand with their weapons of rebellion broken in pieces, and cry, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." Yet we hear no dolorous wailings attending this confession of sin; for the next sentence makes it almost a song. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." It is the most grievous sentence of the three, but it overflows with comfort. Strange is it that where misery was concentrated mercy reigned; where sorrow reached her climax weary souls find rest. The Saviour bruised is the healing of bruised hearts. See how the lowliest penitence gives place to assured confidence through simply gazing at Christ on the cross!

---

**C H Spurgeon - Isaiah 53:6** - This thought has charmed me beyond measure. Here were Lot's sins, scandalous sins, I cannot mention them; they were very different from David's sins. Black sins, scarlet sins were those of David, but David's sins are not at all like those of Manasseh; the sins of Manasseh were not the same as those of Peter—Peter sinned in quite a different track; and the woman that was a sinner, you could not liken her to Peter, neither if you look to her character could you set her side by side with Lydia; nor if you think of Lydia, can you see her without discovering a great divergence between her and the Philippian jailer. They are all alike—they have all 'gone astray'; but they are all different—they 'have turned every one to his own way'. But here is the blessed gathering up of them all—the Lord has caused to meet on the Redeemer, as in a common focus, the iniquity of them all; and up yonder Manasseh's song joins sweetly with that of the woman who was a sinner, and Lydia, chaste but yet needing pardon, sings side by side with Bathsheba and Rahab; while David takes up the strain with Samson and Gideon, and these with Abraham and Isaac, all differently sinners. The atonement meets every case. We always think that man a quack who advertises a medicine as healing every disease, but when you come to the great gospel medicine, the precious blood of Jesus Christ, you have there in very deed what the old doctors used to call a catholicon, a universal medicine which meets every case in its distinctness, and puts away

sin in all its separateness of guilt as if it were made for that sin, and for that sin alone. ([Individual Sin Laid on Jesus](#))

---

### He Is Here Present

John Marrant, a 14-year-old black in colonial Charleston, was converted through the preaching of George Whitefield, but his family disapproved of his new faith. John, dispirited, left home with only a small Bible and a little hymnbook in his pocket. He wandered through the wilderness several days, eating little and sleeping in trees for fear of beasts.

At length, he was seized by a Cherokee hunter. He asked me how I did live. I said I was supported by the Lord. He asked me how I slept. I answered the Lord provided. He inquired what preserved me from being devoured by wild beasts? I replied, the Lord Jesus kept me from them. He stood astonished, and said, "You say the Lord Jesus Christ does this, and does that, and does everything for you; He must be a fine man; where is He?" I replied, "He is here present." To this he made no answer.

Back in the hunter's village, John was promptly condemned to death. The executioner showed me a basket of turpentine wood stuck full of small skewers. He told me I was to be stripped naked and laid down in the basket, and these sharp pegs were to be stuck into me, then set on fire, and when they burnt to my body, I was to be thrown into the flame, which was to finish my execution.

John immediately burst into prayer, and his pitiful words so moved the executioners they took him to the chief. Opening his little Bible to Isaiah 53, John read: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Turning here and there in the Bible, John preached the gospel, converting among others the chief himself. For the next two years, the teenager remained among the Cherokees, preaching and teaching and making disciples. (Robert Morgan - From This Verse)

---

### Condemnation Certain

After World War 1, 900 German soldiers who had violated international law were summoned to appear before the World Court. Their condemnation was certain. In a dramatic move, however, the former crown prince of Germany volunteered to be their substitute. His offer included taking upon himself both the accusation against them and their penalty. This act, though most noble, was impractical. Although he was royalty, he did not have in his own person the value of the 900.

There is another Prince who took upon Himself the judgment due the entire human race. Unlike that German leader, He is not implicated in any evil. Because of His sinless humanity, He could be "delivered for our offenses." Because of His deity, He could be "raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). He was able to pay in full the ransom demanded by God's holy law, because in Him was the intrinsic worth needed to provide salvation. Yes, the Father laid upon His sinless Son the iniquity of us all.

Our redemption has been purchased by Heaven's Crown Prince. So don't depreciate the cross. Don't underrate Christ's great sacrifice. It will cost you your soul. It will shut you out from God. It will darken your eternity.

Thank God for a royal Substitute! ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

### Hymns Related to Isaiah 53:6:

- [I Was a Wandering Sheep](#)
- [Like Sheep We Went Astray](#)
- [Our Messiah Came](#)
- [Our Sins, Our Sorrows, Lord](#)
- [Tell Out the Wonderful Story](#)
- [Thou Awful God, Whose Righteous Ire](#)

**Isaiah 53:7 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.**

KJV Isaiah 53:7 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.

- **Yet He did not open His mouth** Mt 26:63; 27:12-14; Mk 14:61; 15:5; Lk 23:9; Jn 19:9; 1 Pe 2:23
- **Like a lamb that is led to slaughter**, Acts 8:32,33
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE SILENT, SLAUGHTERED SERVANT OF JEHOVAH

Now I realize this following has been mentioned several times but it is worth reiterating because this is not a teaching most evangelicals have heard before but it is clearly the correct interpretation of Isaiah 53. That said, here is John MacArthur's summary introduction from his sermon on Isaiah 53:7 -

Now remember, though this chapter looks forward to the death of Christ, it also looks backward from the conversion of Israel at the end of human history, and that is why the **verbs are in the past tense**. He **was** oppressed. He **was** afflicted. He **did not** open His mouth. It is **past-tense perspective** because all that is said here about the death of Jesus Christ is said not looking forward from Isaiah's viewpoint but looking backward from the future conversion of Israel when they look on the One whom they have pierced, as Zechariah 12:10-14+ says, and mourn for Him as an only Son. It is the perspective of the [future redeemed nation of Israel](#), yet to happen in human history when they look back and realize that He was oppressed and afflicted, He was led as a lamb to slaughter, He was silent, and He did it all for their transgressions, as Isaiah 53:8 puts it. So you have a most marvelous perspective in this chapter. While it is a prophecy of the Cross, it is only secondly a prophecy of the Cross. Primarily it is a prophecy of the future conversion of Israel, and this is what they will say when they make a true confession and repent of their rejection of Jesus Christ and affirm their faith in Him as their Savior and Redeemer. This is what they will say. These words in Isaiah 53 are their confession. So it is an amazing prophecy that looks beyond the cross and then back to the cross ([SEE DIAGRAM](#)), describing not only the future confession of Israel, the future salvation of Israel and the very words they will say, but secondarily, giving us details about the Cross which they will confess and which for all of us who are believers we have already come to confess. That which Israel will one day affirm as a true perspective on Christ, we who are believers in this generation, both Jew and Gentile, have already affirmed. We are saved because we believe He was pierced for our transgressions, Isa 53:5. We are saved because we believe He was crushed for our iniquities, that the punishment that came on Him was for our well-being and that by His scourging, we are healed. We are saved because in Isa 53:6 we believe the Lord caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. We are saved because of Isa 53:8. We believe He was cut off for our transgressions. We believe, verse 10, that the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief so that He would become a guilt offering for our sins. We believe, in Isa 53:11, that He justified many by bearing their iniquities. At the end of Isa 53:12, we believe that He bore the sins of many and interceded for the transgressors. To become a Christian, one must believe in the vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice of Christ on our behalf on the cross. But some day the whole nation of Israel will believe. Zechariah tells us that there will be two-thirds of the nation purged in unbelief, judged by God, and a remaining one-third of Israel will have a national conversion by a sovereign act of God. If we take the current number of about fifteen million Jews in the world, five million Jews in one moment of time will come to faith in Jesus Christ under the sovereign power of God. ([The Silent Servant Part 1](#))

These three verses are specific looks at events in the life of Christ. Verse 7 looks at His trial. Verse 8 looks at His death. And verse 9 looks at His burial. ([The Silent Servant Part 2](#))

**Delitzsch** translates **He was oppressed and He was afflicted** "He was ill-treated, whilst He bowed Himself," i.e. "suffered voluntarily". Von Orelli, "He was used violently, though He humbled Himself."

Messianic Jewish commentator **David Baron** ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#)) "He was rigorously demanded to pay the debt, and He submitted Himself, and did not open His mouth." **Baron** then goes on to comment "That the Messiah in His love and compassion for man became our [surety](#) and took upon Himself our great moral debt, paying the ransom with His own life, is a truth set forth in the whole of this great prophecy, even if it be not fully expressed in this particular sentence. What this passage does emphasize is that He **"bowed Himself"** under this heavy burden, which He took upon our account voluntarily. "He was oppressed," "He was used violently," "He was treated tyrannically" (which is yet another suggested meaning of the word *niggas*), and He—which is the emphatic word in the verse—"He Himself" it was who "bowed," or "humbled," or "submitted" Himself, and opened not His mouth.

**He was oppressed** - The Hebrew is more emphatic for literally it says "He Himself was oppressed." As discussed below **nagas** speaks of brutal treatment, even enslavement. In context it describes the brutal, unjust treatment of Jesus which astonished the Jews of Jesus day because "His appearance was marred more than any man And His form more than the sons of men." (Isa 52:14+) This mistreatment was described in the Gospels in His illegal arrest, trials, beatings, mockings, etc that preceded His crucifixion.

**Oppressed** (05065) (**nagas**) "connotes the exertion of demanding oppressive pressure for payment or labor" (TWOT). Thus it means to press hard, distress, exert demanding (oppressive) pressure (for payment or labor). **Nagas** describes the Egyptian

taskmasters who afflicted Israel, even ceasing to give straw to make bricks (Ex 3:7, 5:6, 10, 13, 14). In the seventh year law directed creditors not to demand payment during that year (Dt 15:2-3). Isaiah used **nagas** in Isa 3:5 to describe the people of Judah who will be **oppressed** because of their sin against God (cf Isa 3:12). Isaiah sees God breaking the yoke of Israel's oppressors in the future when they will even "rule over their **oppressors**." In Zechariah 10:4 **nagas** is actually applied to the "Cornerstone" Messiah Who will have authority over all **rulers** (**nagas**).

**Parunak** on "**Oppressed**" – what a lender does to a debtor (Deut. 15); (Ex. 3:7; 5 -- Pharaoh's taskmasters) what a slave owner does to a slave; what a tyrant like Assyria does to a subject nation (Is. 14:4 "How the oppressor has ceased") = puts you at the bottom of the pile; this man was always at the bottom of the pile; other people were always lording it over him; How did he respond? Did he try to complain and take them to court? Did he mount a protest? ([Isaiah 53 Commentary Notes](#))

**Gesenius** - The word "**oppress**" is one that means He was pressed or harassed to the point of being totally weary and fatigued.

In Zechariah 9:8 God promises

"But I will camp around My house because of an army, Because of him who passes by and returns; And no **oppressor** (**nagas**) will pass over them anymore, For now I have seen with My eyes."

**MacArthur Study Bible** - This is the pledge of God's protection of Jerusalem from Alexander. It came true when, on his way South, Alexander treated Jerusalem with kindness. After having subjugated Egypt, he returned through Palestine again without doing Israel harm. The supernatural and lasting protection here promised must anticipate the Second Advent of Messiah, Whose coming is the subject through the rest of this message. The transition from Alexander to Christ can be understood in this way: If God can use a pagan king to judge the nations and save Israel, how much more will He use His righteous Messiah? So Zech 9:8 bridges to the final judgment and deliverance of Messiah.

**Nagas** - 23x in 23v - drive hard(1), driver(1), exact(2), exacted(1), hard-pressed(2), oppressed(2), oppressor(4), oppressors(2), overseers(1), ruler(1), taskmaster(1), taskmasters(5).

Exod. 3:7; Exod. 5:6; Exod. 5:10; Exod. 5:13; Exod. 5:14; Deut. 15:2; Deut. 15:3; 1 Sam. 13:6; 1 Sam. 14:24; 2 Ki. 23:35; Job 3:18; Job 39:7; Isa. 3:5; Isa. 3:12; Isa. 9:4; Isa. 14:2; Isa. 14:4; Isa. 53:7; Isa. 58:3; Isa. 60:17; Dan. 11:20; Zech. 9:8; Zech. 10:4

**He was afflicted** - The verb is in the Niphal which is often passive. The significance of the passive voice is that the subject is acted on from a force outside the subject. One could translate it the Messiah "being afflicted," allowing Himself to be afflicted (cf Jn 10:17,18). The implication is that Jesus allowed Himself to be afflicted. **Motyer** favors giving the Niphal a reflexive sense which would be rendered "but He for His part submitted Himself." The Servant of Jehovah deliberately self-submitted to the torture and torment, so to speak. The Hebrew word '**anah**' can also convey the idea of one humbling themselves, so that this description could be interpreted as Jesus humbled Himself, allowing Himself to be afflicted. Paul certainly alludes to this attitude of Jesus in Philippians when he writes "He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." (Php 2:8+) And Jesus did this even though He was declared innocent by both Herod and three times by Pilate.

**Newton** - "The object of the whole passage is to mark the meek and quiet subjection of our Redeemer in His prolonged suffering. He was the subject of cruel and unjust oppression, yet His persecutors were not crushed. God allowed them to pursue their course and to accumulate sorrows on the head of the Holy One; and He patiently and meekly bowed His head to the infliction, and opened not His mouth." ([Exposition](#))

**Afflicted** (Humbled) ([06031](#)) ('**anah**') means to be afflicted, be bowed down, be humbled, be meek. '**Anah**' frequently expresses the idea God sends affliction to discipline ([Dt 8:2-3](#)). '**Anah**' was used in Isaiah 53:4 in the confession of the future remnant that "we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and **afflicted** ('**anah**')." As discussed, in that passage, they look back at how they misinterpreted Messiah's death on the Cross as God's judgment on Him for the sin of blasphemy in claiming to be God!

The Septuagint translates the Hebrew verb for **afflicted** (**anah**) with the verb **kakoo** which means to physically harm, mistreat or distress (e.g., Israel in Egypt in Acts 7:6, 19). Clearly this prophetically pictures Messiah's gross mistreatment at the hands of the religious leaders, Pilate and the Roman soldiers during His six illegal trials culminating in His crucifixion.

**Yet He did not open His mouth** - Consider the context of His illegal trials, harsh treatment and total innocence and yet He does not say a word. Jehovah's Servant suffers in silence! He gave NO verbal resistance. Think of how our flesh responds to even the most minor irritation against us (which we sometimes may even deserve!) Messiah was treated unjustly and yet refused to defend Himself (this amazed Pilate as noted below)! Do you not see the irony here? The Sovereign of the universe, in full control of all the events, willingly tread this path for you and for me! (cf Acts 2:23, 4:27-28). We see the Servant's submission to the unjust affliction in both Old and New Testament passages...



Isa 42:2-3; He will not cry out or raise His voice, Nor make His voice heard in the street. 3 "A bruised reed He will not break And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice.

Isa 50:5-7; 5 The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not disobedient Nor did I turn back. 6 I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting. 7 For the Lord GOD helps Me, Therefore, I am not disgraced; Therefore, I have set My face like flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

(Mt 26:62-63) The high priest stood up and said to Him, "Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" But **Jesus kept silent**. And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God."

(Mt 27:12-14) And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, **He did not answer**. 13 Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" 14 And **He did not answer him with regard to even a single charge**, so the governor was quite amazed.

(Mk 14:60-61) The high priest stood up and came forward and questioned Jesus, saying, "Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" But **He kept silent and did not answer**. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"

(Mk 15:5) But **Jesus made no further answer**; so Pilate was amazed.

(Lk 23:8-9+) Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him. And he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing.

(John 19:9) and he entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But **Jesus gave him no answer**.

Acts 8:32-33 Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: "HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER; AND AS A LAMB BEFORE ITS SHEARER IS SILENT, SO HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH. 33 "IN HUMILIATION HIS JUDGMENT WAS TAKEN AWAY; WHO WILL RELATE HIS GENERATION? FOR HIS LIFE IS REMOVED FROM THE EARTH."

(1 Pe 2:21-23+) For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; and **while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously**;

Isaiah 53:7-8 is the passage the Ethiopian eunuch was reading and about which he queried Philip asking "Please, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or someone else?" (Acts 8:32) And you have to love the reply recorded by Luke "Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him." (Acts 8:35) And of course the Holy Spirit took this Holy Word and swept the Ethiopian eunuch into the Kingdom of God! Hallelujah!

**Delitzsch** goes so far as to observe that "All the references in the New Testament to the Lamb of God (with which the corresponding allusions to the Passover are interwoven) spring from this passage in the book of Isaiah."

**Culross** - "When we suffer," writes one, "how hard we find it to be still! The flames of resentment—how they leap up in our bosom, and flush our cheek with angry red! What impatience there often is, what murmuring, what outcry, what publishing of our sorrow! Or if there is silence, it is at times akin to stoicism, the proud determination not to let men see how we feel. But the spirit of the Servant is loftier and grander unutterably. In sublime and magnanimous silence He endures to the uttermost, sustained by His mighty purpose and by the conviction, Jehovah wills it. I see the temper of His mind in this silence; I see His strength; I see His rest in God; and I look down into the unfathomed mystery of Love. He came to do what only Love was equal to—that is abundantly clear—and He shrank from no suffering; raised not His arm, opened not His mouth, in His own defence, wearied not, fainted not, but was dumb with silence." ([Exposition](#))

**Spurgeon** - Isaiah 53:7 "He openeth not his mouth." - In his questioning our Lord Jesus said not a word in self-defense. He knew that it availed not for a lamb to plead with wolves. He was well-aware that whatever he said would be misconstrued and made a fresh source of accusation. What power he thus exerted in remaining silent! Perhaps nothing displays more fully the omnipotence of Christ than this power of self-control.

**Baron** - In this wonderful patience and silence of the Servant—which in the history of fulfilment was exhibited in the silence of our Lord Jesus before the Jewish Sanhedrin and before the Roman Procurator, Pontius Pilate—we see not only His lamblike meekness

and "His love for man, which made Him content to suffer for our redemption," but His acquiescence in the justice of God in the punishment of sin, the whole burden of which He bore. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Paul Apple** - We are familiar with the OT background of prescribed animal sacrifices. What was different about the sacrifice of Christ? We know from the book of Hebrews that it was very different in terms of its effect – look at Hebrews 10. “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” The sacrifice of Jesus was the sacrifice of a man, not an animal. But not just a man, but a perfect man who had lived his life fulfilling all righteousness – so by His active obedience, God could impute to redeemed sinners such as us His righteousness. Not just a perfect man, but the very Son of God who could experience the eternal wrath of God for all of those whom He intended to save. But what really stands out in our passage this morning that makes the sacrifice of Christ so unique is his willing, voluntary, silent submission to that act of sacrifice – knowing full well the entirety of what was involved. The slaughtered lamb did not choose its death. The slaughtered lamb did not understand what lay ahead of it as it blindly followed the rest of the flock to the butcher’s knife. But our Lord Jesus, the precious Lamb of God, set his face resolutely to go to Jerusalem, fully understanding what lay ahead on the cross. Not just the experience of a violent, barbaric, grotesque, publicly humiliating death ... but the unleashing of the full wrath of God against him because he died in our place to pay the penalty for sins that we deserved to pay. He would cry out, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me” ([Jehovah is Salvation - 1130 pages](#))

**Motyer:** though he did not deserve to die he was willing to do so. In a word, the fatal flaw in existing substitutionary procedures was exposed and met in one stroke. For the point where animal substitution failed was also the point where sin is most serious. . . sin as willfulness is the thing God cannot overlook. It is the very heart of our sinfulness that we sin because we want to. We do not want “this man to reign over us” (Luke 19:14). Because of this, no animal can do more than picture substitution: only a person can substitute for a person; only a consenting will can substitute for a rebellious will.

## **THE SERVANT'S SILENCE ILLUSTRATED**

**Like a lamb that is led to slaughter** - John the Baptist who was sent to clear the way for Messiah, could not have stated it any clearer to the nation of Israel then when he said **“Behold, the LAMB of God who takes away the sin of the world!”** (Jn 1:29) and then again **“Behold, the Lamb of God!”** (Jn 1:36) Peter speaks of his in his epistle **“knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a LAMB unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.”** (1 Pe 1:18-19+)

**And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers** - What is the comparison with sheep? Sheep follow other sheep and are very docile, letting themselves be sheared without a whimper. And as sheep go to be slaughtered, they go without “verbal protest,” which of course makes sense as they do not have an understanding of what their fate will soon be. That is not true with Messiah, Who John says knew “all the things that were coming upon Him” and still went forth (to allow Himself to be arrested in the context of this verse). And so His “silence before” His “shearers” (so to speak) describes the Messiah’s voluntary giving over of Himself to be the sacrificial Lamb of God. Messiah submitted in perfect obedience to His Father’s will and willingly gave up His life without complaint or protests. In fact, it is worthy noting that Messiah Himself does not speak in Isaiah 53, being the silent Suffering Servant throughout the entire chapter.

The comparison of Servant with a sheep is apt because lambs were used as sacrificial animals to cover sins, a truth understood by Abraham and Isaac and then in their Passover out of Egypt and thereafter to be Israel’s memorial of God’s deliverance (cf Jn 1:29, 1 Cor 5:7).

Genesis 22:7-8 Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” And he said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” 8 Abraham said, “God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” So the two of them walked on together.

Exodus 12:3 “Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household.

Exodus 12:5 ‘Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

Leviticus 5:7 ‘But if he cannot afford a lamb, then he shall bring to the LORD his guilt offering for that in which he has sinned, two turtledoves or two young pigeons, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering.

**Motyer** on the change from **like a lamb** to **like a sheep** - The former was used in the sacrifices (Ge 22:7-8, etc.), though not the latter, but this is of no significance. Isa 53:4-6 have already established that we are to think of the Servant’s death in terms laid down in the levitical sacrifices. The point here is the contrast between the silence of ignorance and the silence of deliberate self-submission. Yet a great principle of the sacrificial system is involved. Isa 53:4-6 first established our sinfulness (Isa 53:4-5), and then

revealed it as our common folly (Isa 53:6a) and our individual culpable choice (Isa 53:6b). This is to say, sin involves the will. But this is precisely the point at which animals can only picture the substitute we require and cannot actually be that substitute: they have no consciousness of what is afoot nor of any deliberate, personal, self-submissive consent to it. Ultimately only a Person can substitute for people. This is the importance of the stress in Isa 53:7 on the Servant's voluntariness expressed in the acceptance of humiliation and the deliberately maintained silence. (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries – Isaiah)

**MacArthur** comments that "He not only accepted the unrighteous judgment of men, but He accepted the righteous judgment of God on behalf of unrighteous sinners in order to make them righteous. No sacrifice was ever so perfect; no sacrifice ever so pure. Here is the sinless, spotless Lamb of God, acceptable to God, chosen by God and elect, dying for sinners. It is here, dear friends, that Old Testament [soteriology](#) reaches its apex. This is the high point of the Old Testament. The Messiah is the sacrifice, slaughtered by God for us. He is the Servant of Jehovah; He is the Slave of Jehovah; and His service requires that He die, that He be punished for our well-being, that He be scourged for our healing, that He be crushed for our iniquities, that He be pierced through for our transgressions....The suffering, silent, submissive, slaughtered, scorned Servant of Jehovah takes on Himself the punishment of God for the enormous moral debt of the elect of all human history and pays the ransom price with His life. ([The Silent Servant Part 1](#))

**So He did not open His mouth** - MacArthur says "He accepted the unrighteous judgment of man in order to accept the righteous judgment of God to make unrighteous sinners the recipients of that very same righteousness." ([The Silent Servant Part 2](#))

A Lamb goes uncomplaining forth,  
The guilt of all men bearing;  
And laden with the sins of earth,  
None else the burden sharing!  
Goes patient on, grow weak and faint,  
To slaughter led without complaint,  
That spotless life to offer;  
Bears shame and stripes, and wounds and death,  
Anguish and mockery, and saith,  
"Willing all this I suffer."

---

#### Hymns Related to Isaiah 53:7

- [Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth, A](#)
- [Lamb of God, We Follow Thee](#)

---

#### Spurgeon - Isaiah 53:7

Our Lord was dumb and opened not his mouth against his adversaries, and did not accuse one of them of cruelty or injustice. They slandered him, but he replied not; false witnesses arose, but he answered them not. He did not say, like Paul, 'God shall smite thee, thou whited wall.' I am not going to condemn Paul, but I am not going to commend him. In contrast with the Master how differently he behaves! Jesus does not let fall a word against anybody, though they are doing everything that malice can invent against him. For Pilate he even makes a half apology; 'he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.' One would have thought he must have spoken when they spat in his face. Might he not have said, 'Friend, why are you doing this? For which of all my works do you insult me?' But the time for such protests was over. When they smote him on the face with the palms of their hands, it would not have been wonderful if he had said, 'Why do you smite me so?' But no, he does not speak. He brings no accusation to his Father. He had only to lift his eye to heaven, or to feel a wrathful wish, and legions of angels would have chased out the ribald soldiery; one flash of a seraph's wing and Herod would have been eaten by worms, and Pilate would have died the death he well deserved as an unjust judge. The hill of the cross might have become a volcano's mouth to swallow up the multitude who stood there jesting and jeering at him: but there was no display of power, or rather there was so great a display of power over himself that he did not use his might against his bitterest foes; he restrained Omnipotence itself with a strength which can never be measured, for his mighty love availed even to restrain divine wrath. ([The Sheep Before the Shearers](#))

#### THE "LAMB-LIFE"

...accused . . . he answered nothing. Mark 15:3

... as a sheep ... dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. Isaiah 53:7

Recently I was blessed and convicted in my own soul by the penetrating comments of Mrs. Penn-Lewis, on these and other verses

dealing with the amazing silences of Jesus. She began by calling attention to the fact that the "lamb-life" is characterized by silence! That is, the sanctified Christian who is living close to his God will manifest humility and supreme self-control under the most adverse and trying circumstances. Says Mrs. Lewis: "We will be silent in our lowly service among others, not seeking to be 'seen of men.' Silent over the glory of the hours on the mount lest others think of us above that which they ought. Silent while we stoop to serve the very ones who betrayed us. Silent when forced by others to some position where apparent rivalry with another much-used servant of God seems imminent, only to be hushed by utter self-effacement in our silent withdrawal without explanation, irrespective of our 'rights.' Silent when our words are misquoted." After additional suggestions on the silences of consecration and humility, Mrs. Lewis concludes her article with this impassioned prayer: "O Thou anointed Christ, the Lamb of God, Thou alone canst live this life of silent self-effacement in a world of self-assertion and self-love. Live Thou this life in me!"

Are you set on always "getting your rights"? Will you argue for hours to make others understand your "reasonable position"? Then you still have much to learn from the silences of Jesus! Oh, may it be said of us as it is of that blessed company in Revelation 14: "These are they who follow the Lamb wherever he goeth" (Rev. 14:4)!

"Hold Thou my tongue" — for oh, I cannot guard it, Unless Thou teach me to control each word.

Guard Thou my thoughts, lest haply I should whisper Something to grieve my Savior and my Lord!— Gladys Roberts

Though the human tongue weighs practically nothing, it is surprising how few persons are able to hold it!— Wm. A. Ward

---

**SINLESS AND SILENT** Isaiah 53:7 speaks of Jesus' silence under suffering and verse 8 of His silence when illegally tried and condemned to death. In today's courts, a person can be found guilty of terrible crimes; but if it can be proved that something in the trial was illegal, the case must be tried again. Everything about Jesus' trials was illegal, but He did not appeal for another trial. The servant is compared to a lamb, which is one of the frequent symbols of the Savior in Scripture. A lamb died for each Jewish household at Passover, and the servant died for His people, the nation of Israel. Jesus is "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29); and twenty-eight times in the Book of Revelation, Jesus is referred to as "the Lamb." Since Jesus Christ was crucified with criminals as a criminal, it was logical that His dead body would be left unburied, but God had other plans. The burial of Jesus Christ is as much a part of the Gospel as is His death, for the burial is proof that He actually died. The Roman authorities would not have released the body to Joseph and Nicodemus if the victim were not dead. A wealthy man like Joseph would never carve out a tomb for himself so near to a place of execution, particularly when his home was miles away. He prepared it for Jesus and had the spices and graveclothes ready for the burial. How wonderfully God fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy! (Warren Wiersbe - Pause for Power)

---

## **The Lamb of God in Scripture - Ian Paisley - A Text A Day**

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." I Peter 1:19

The Bible gives us seven pictures of the Lamb of God.

### **I. The Lamb Specified**

"And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together." (Genesis 22:8).

"Where is the Lamb," cried Isaac. Abraham replied "God shall provide himself a lamb for the burnt offering." Note three things about the specified lamb. 1, Of God's provision; 2, For God Himself; 3, For the fire of sacrifice—a burnt offering.

### **II. The Lamb Typified**

"Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house." (Exodus 12:3).

Christ is the Passover Lamb sacrificed for us.

### **III. The Lamb Personified**

"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." (Isaiah 53:7)

The Person of the Son of God is the Lamb of God.

### **IV. The Lamb Identified**

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world... And I

knew him not: but he that sent me to baptise with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptiseth with the Holy Ghost... And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God." (John 1:29, 33, 34).

Here is the dearest possible identification of the Lamb of God.

#### V. The Lamb Crucified

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (I Peter 1:19)

O the Bleeding Lamb! O the Bleeding Lamb! He was found worthy!

#### VI. The Lamb Glorified

"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." (Revelation 5:6).

A Slain lamb standing in the midst of God's Everlasting Throne. What glory is this. Ah, the Lamb is all the glory of Emmanuel's Land,

#### VII. The Lamb Satisfied

"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Revelation 21:27).

The Lamb will bring every son of God to heaven and satisfy them and Himself in the Paradise of God. Those in the Lamb's book of life will partake forever of the Lamb's water of life.

---

### The Clue Of Silence

Read: Isaiah 53

The chief priests accused Him of many things, but He answered nothing. —Mark 15:3

The story Silver Blaze by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle centers around a clue of silence. Detective Sherlock Holmes investigates the theft of a prized racehorse, which had been guarded by a watchdog. In gathering evidence, Holmes learns that the dog didn't bark during the intrusion. The detective deduces that the dog knew the culprit, and this leads to solving the crime.

For anyone investigating the identity of Jesus, the Bible holds many clues. One of them is His silence. Centuries before Jesus lived, the prophet Isaiah wrote of Him: "As a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth" (53:7). The significance of this remained obscure until Jesus was brought before His accusers and "answered nothing" (Mark 15:3).

It's a small but important piece of evidence, especially when combined with other clues: His birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Luke 2:4), His Davidic lineage (Isaiah 11:10; Luke 3:31), and the casting of lots for His clothes (Psalm 22:18; John 19:23-24). These and more than 200 other fulfilled prophecies provide overwhelming evidence of the identity of Jesus.

He is the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of all who put their faith in Him.

#### THINK ABOUT IT

Are you convinced that Jesus is the promised Savior?,

Have you accepted the forgiveness and eternal life He offers?

If you have doubts, read the gospel of John.

Believing Christ died—that's history; believing Christ died for me—that's salvation.

By David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

### A W Tozer - "Unfair! Unfair!"

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth ... neither was any deceit in his mouth. (Isaiah 53:7, 9)

Christians who understand the true meaning of Christ's cross will never whine about being treated unfairly. Whether or not they are given fair treatment will never enter their heads. They know they have been called to follow Christ, and certainly the Savior did not receive anything approaching fair treatment from mankind.

In language the word "unfair" seems altogether innocent but it indicates an inner attitude that has no place among Christians.

The man who cries "Unfair!" is not a victorious man. He is inwardly defeated and in self-defense appeals to the referee to note that he has been fouled. This gives him an alibi when they carry him out on a stretcher and saves his face while his bruises heal.

It is a certainty that Christians will suffer wrongs; but if they take them in good spirit and without complaint, they have conquered their enemy. They remember that Jesus was reviled—but any thought of His shouting for fair play simply cannot be entertained by the reverent heart!



**Isaiah 53:8 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?**

KJV Isaiah 53:8 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.

Amplified Isaiah 53:8 After oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation [His contemporaries], who [among them] concerned himself with the fact That He was cut off from the land of the living [by His death] For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke [of death] was due?

Amplified (classic - old version) By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who among them considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living [stricken to His death] for the transgression of my [Isaiah's] people, to whom the stroke was due?

CSB Isaiah 53:8 He was taken away because of oppression and judgment; and who considered His fate? For He was cut off from the land of the living; He was struck because of my people's rebellion.

ESV Isaiah 53:8 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, stricken for the transgression of my people?

NAB Isaiah 53:8 Oppressed and condemned, he was taken away, and who would have thought any more of his destiny? When he was cut off from the land of the living, and smitten for the sin of his people,

NET Isaiah 53:8 He was led away after an unjust trial— but who even cared? Indeed, he was cut off from the land of the living; because of the rebellion of his own people he was wounded.

NIV Isaiah 53:8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken.

NJB Isaiah 53:8 Forcibly, after sentence, he was taken. Which of his contemporaries was concerned at his having been cut off from the land of the living, at his having been struck dead for his people's rebellion?

NLT Isaiah 53:8 Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people.

- **By oppression and judgment He was taken away.** Ps 22:12-21; 69:12; Mt 26:65,66; Jn 19:7
- **And as for His generation, who considered** Mt 1:1; Acts 8:33; Ro 1:4
- **That He was cut off out of the land of the living** Da 9:26; Jn 11:49-52
- **For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due-** 1 Pe 3:18
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE SACRIFICIAL DEATH OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT

**David Baron** writes that "We now come to perhaps the most difficult verse in this great prophecy, the main purport of which is to describe the closing portion of the life of the Servant of Jehovah and the manner of death that He should die." As testimony to this see the renderings of this passage above. Baron goes on to add "On the whole, I prefer the reading given by Delitzsch, Von Orelli, and others: **"He was taken away from prison and from judgment,"** which is almost, though not quite, the same as that in the Authorized Version. The principal emphasis (in the sentence) is not laid upon the fact that He was taken away from suffering, but that it was out of the midst of suffering that He was carried off." ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**NET Note** - The precise meaning of this line is uncertain. The present translation assumes that [min](#) here has an instrumental sense ("by, through") and understands 'otser umimmishpat "coercion and legal decision" as a [hendiadys](#) meaning "coercive legal decision," thus "an unjust trial." Other interpretive options include: (1) "without [for this sense of [min](#) see BDB 578 s.v. 1.b] hindrance and proper judicial process," i.e., "unfairly and with no one to defend him," (2) "from [in the sense of "after,"] arrest and judgment."

**MacArthur** - The final triumph of the Messiah, the Servant, will be the salvation of His people. And that is what it says in verse 8....The point of this chapter is God will save His people. And, in particular, His people Israel. This is a prophecy of the future salvation of Israel. That's what the whole section of Isaiah is about, salvation for Israel in the future. Zechariah says it's the time when they look on Him whom they've pierced and mourn for Him as an only Son. When they look back in history, which they

haven't done yet, but they one day will, and they look at the One they pierced and realize that He was the Son of God, and they completely will understand what they have not as yet understood except for a remnant of Jews who have come to faith in Christ. "So all Israel will be saved" (Ro 11:26). When they are in the future, they will make the confession of verses 1 through 11.

**By oppression and judgment** - Although there is a different Hebrew word here for **oppression**, this passage picks up the description of Isaiah 53:7 that "He Himself was oppressed and afflicted." This speaks especially of Messiah's unjust trials (six of them), false witnesses, the breaking of many rules by the Jews regarding the trying of someone, especially for a capital offense when the death penalty was at stake! The **NET** version translates it "He was led away after an unjust trial." The stress in this passage is on the injustice done to Jesus.

Constable - Oppressive legal treatment and twisted justice would result in His being taken away to suffer and die (cf. Matt. 26:59-61; Luke 23:2-4, 13-16). This was not the case in Israel's suffering in captivity. That suffering was in harmony with what justice prescribed. However, it was for the transgressions of the prophet's people that the Servant would suffer a fatal blow (cf. Ge 9:11; Ex 12:15; Dan. 9:26; Phil. 2:5-8; Col. 1:13-14, 19-20). This does not rule out His dying for Gentiles as well.

**Oppression** (06115) (**oster** from **astar** = to restrain, retain, hold back, to keep from, to rule in 1 Sa 9:17) primarily means a violent constraint. It has another distinct nuance in Pr 30:16 meaning barrenness of womb (i.e., a closed womb) which is one of four things that will never be satisfied. Oster is used only here, and in Ps 107:39 (= oppression, Lxx = [thlipsis](#)) and Pr 30:16.

**Judgment** (04941) (**mishpat/mispat**) refers to the judicial proceedings, in which Messiah was put on trial, accused and convicted as worthy of death. Thus this refers to His unjust judgment.

As **MacArthur** says "there was no crime committed; there was no evidence presented. There were declarations repeatedly of His innocence. He was physically abused, spit on, hit with fists in the face, beaten in the head with sticks, crown of thorns crushed into His head." ([The Silent Servant, Part 2](#))

**Delitzsch** explains that "Hostile oppression and judicial persecution were the circumstances out of which He was carried away by death."

**He was taken away** - This is the same Hebrew verb used in Isaiah 52:5 when God says "My people **have been taken away** without cause" describing how the Babylonians took Judah into exile. This Hebrew verb conveys the picture of being snatched or hurried away (cf Ezek 33:4 = "a sword comes and **takes** him **away**").

**MacArthur** paraphrases **as for His generation, who considered** - Who even had an idea that He was receiving a stroke of judgment from God, not for His own transgression but for the transgression of My people. No one even thought of it, and they still don't....The Jews know the man Jesus was struck dead. They believe He was struck dead by God, but for His own blasphemies. Such a blasphemer that He wasn't worthy for anyone to step up to His defense. The truth is, He was struck by God for the transgressions of His people, including Jews and Gentiles and one day the nation of Israel.

**And as for His generation, who considered** - This is a difficult verse to translate. The **NET** translation has "but who even cared?" which conveys the sense that "to his sufferings was added the pain of total lack of sympathetic understanding from those around." (Motyer) Who stepped up and protested?

**David Baron** suggests this translation - "As for His generation—who (among them) poureth out a complaint?" (i.e. at His treatment); or, "who among them uttereth a prayer?" (i.e. on His behalf). In either case there may be, as suggested already by Bishop Lowth, a prophetic allusion to the custom which prevailed among the Jews in the case of trials for life to call upon all who had anything to say in favour of the accused, to come and "declare it," or "plead" on his behalf. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**MacArthur** has an interesting note that adds some weight to Baron's interpretation -

Here we find in the prophecy 700 years before it ever happened, the pronouncement that no one will defend Him, no one will defend Him....A custom prevailed among the Jews in the case of a trial that could lead to execution. It was required that there be a 40 day period of time once the verdict was given for people to step up and speak to the innocence of the one who had been set for execution....Forty days were to pass between the declaration of death and the execution itself, a period of time in which someone could speak in favor of the accused and plead His innocence...The Jews did not do that. (They tried Him) in the middle of the night (and) as the dawn broke, they sent Him (to Pilate) in a process that resulted in His death that next afternoon. Where were the 40 days? Why did the Jews violate that rule? The Sanhedrin put together a statement now in the Jewish Talmud which says (these are the Sanhedrin's words) "There is a tradition there on the eve of the Sabbath and the Passover they hung Jesus.

The herald went forth before Him for 40 days crying, "Jesus goes to be executed because He has practiced

sorcery and seduced Israel and estranged them from God. Let anyone who can bring forth any justifying plea for Him come and give information concerning it' but no justifying plea was found for Him and so He was hung on the eve of the Sabbath and the Passover." That is in the Talmud, a blatant lie that they sentenced Jesus and waited 40 days before they executed Him for somebody to show up, and nobody showed up.

(ED: HERE IS A SIMILAR NOTE FROM MESSIANIC JEWISH COMMENTATOR DAVID BARON - "There is a tradition: On the eve of the Sabbath and the Passover they hung Jesus. And the herald went forth before him for forty days crying, 'Jesus goeth to be executed, because he has practised sorcery and seduced Israel and estranged them from God. Let any one who can bring forward any justifying plea for him come and give information concerning it; but no justifying plea was found for him, and so he was hung on the eve of the Sabbath and the Passover. Ulla said, 'But doest thou think that he belongs to those for whom a justifying plea is to be sought? He was a very seducer, and the All merciful has said, Thou shalt not spare him, nor conceal him.' But the case of Jesus stood differently because he stood near to the Kingdom": or as others translate, "for his place was near those in power)

One rabbi commenting said "But do you think that He belongs to those for whom a justifying plea is to be sought?"

In other words, He doesn't even belong to the category of people that you would want to seek a justifying plea for. He was a very seducer, and the all-merciful God has said, "Thou shalt not spare Him or conceal Him," (end quote). The rabbi said He isn't even worthy of a plea for innocence! So when Isaiah 53 begins, "Who believed our message, and who responded to the revelation of the arm of the Lord?" We did not. And how extreme was their rejection? So extreme that even after they had (tried Jesus illegally), even after He had risen from the dead, and even after the church had been born and begun to grow, they concocted a lie to put in the Talmud to say that they gave 40 days and nobody showed up. But then again, why would anybody show up? He didn't belong to the category of people who were worthy for someone to make a plea!...And what they're saying in that Talmudic passage that I read was how dare anyone step up and try to defend this vile seducer. No one cared. And that's exactly what Isaiah says will happen. (Quoted with some minor alterations in wording - [Sermon](#))

**David Baron** comments on the passage in the Talmud writing "there is this much truth in this Talmudic passage, that none dared to appear in His favour; and that in the great crisis when the Christ of God stood on His trial before the corrupt hostile Jewish hierarchy and the representatives of the then great Gentile world power, no one came forward with a justifying plea "on His behalf" for fear of the Jews. Yea, at that solemn moment, when the sword awoke to smite the Shepherd, the sheep were all scattered; and even His own disciples, who later on when convinced of His resurrection became as bold as lions, and willingly laid down their lives for Him, became demoralized with fear and forsook Him and fled. And in a sense our Lord Jesus is still on His trial. Are we, His professed disciples, ready now to take our stand as His witnesses in the face of a hostile Jewish and Gentile world, and make our "justifying plea" on His behalf not only in word but by showing forth the power of His gospel over our own hearts and lives?" ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Paul Apple** adds "Where were His disciples? Well, they were living out Zechariah 13:7 "strike the shepherd and the sheep will be – " What? – "scattered." They were long gone. They had fled. Matthew says that they fled and Mark says the same thing that the Shepherd was struck and the sheep were scattered. Who was there to speak in His behalf?" [Jehovah is Salvation - 1130 pages](#)

**That He was cut off out of the land of the living**- The Hebrew verb **cut off** (see below) is violent verb which was used by King Solomon to suggest they "divide (gazar) the living child in two" which brought forth the truth of who was the actual mother of the child. Clearly in this context, the picture is that the Suffering Servant would be cut off from life itself by being killed, executed as a criminal even though He was innocent. The meaning of this passage is clear - Jesus was cut off, killed.

**Cut off (01504)(gazar)** means to cut, to divide or separate (see example of King Solomon above). Cutting down trees (2 Ki 6:4). God "divided the Red Sea asunder." (Ps 136:13). "Slice off" (chew up) in Isa 9:20. Of the flock being cut off from the fold (Hab 3:17). Of the nation of Israel being viewed as bones and thus being "completely cut off." (Ezek 37:11). In Ps 88:5 "**cut off** from Your hand" speaks of the unrighteous dead as cut off from God's care. Hezekiah was **cut off from** entering the Temple (2 Chr 26:21). When **gazar** is followed by the preposition min ("out of" here in Isaiah 53:8) "it connotes a violent severance from a former way of life." (TWOT) Jeremiah recounted the time he was placed in a pit and the waters covered his head. He thought he would be cut off, but the Lord heard his cry for help (Lam 3:54).

**Gilbrant** - "Ezekiel saw the vision of the valley of dry bones which represented the whole house of Israel. The people were dried up, without hope and cut off. He explains this to show Israel was spiritually dead and in exile, but the Spirit of the Lord was about to breathe upon them, raise them as a nation from their graves, and restore them to the land (Ezek. 37:11). Finally, the word is used to

connote making a decision. There is probably some idea of figuratively cutting between, cutting away, or separating options and choosing one of them. Our English word, "decide," comes from a Latin word meaning "to cut off from." Eliphaz encouraged Job to submit himself to God, then his life situation would change, and whatever he decided would be done (Job 22:28). After King Xerxes's anger subsided, he regretted his decision and decree which expelled Queen Vashti from his presence (Est. 2:1). Here the word is translated "decree" because the decision of the Persian king automatically became royal law. ([Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary](#))

**Gazar** - 13x in 13v - cut down(1), cut off(6), decree(1), decreed(1), divide(2), divided(1), slice off(1).

1 Ki. 3:25; 1 Ki. 3:26; 2 Ki. 6:4; 2 Chr. 26:21; Est. 2:1; Job 22:28; Ps. 88:5; Ps. 136:13; Isa. 9:20; Isa. 53:8; Lam. 3:54; Ezek. 37:11; Hab. 3:17

**From the land of the living:** This phrase occurs 15x in the NAS = Job 28:13; Ps. 27:13; Ps. 52:5; Ps. 116:9; Ps. 142:5; Isa. 38:11; Isa. 53:8; Jer. 11:19; Ezek. 26:20; Ezek. 32:23; Ezek. 32:24; Ezek. 32:25; Ezek. 32:26; Ezek. 32:27; Ezek. 32:32

**NET Note** - The "land of the living" is an idiom for the sphere where people live, in contrast to the underworld realm of the dead. See, for example, Ezek 32:23–27.

**For** - This strategic preposition ([min](#)) in this context means because of and helps us understand why the Suffering Servant was cut off or killed. This same preposition is used in a similar sense in Isaiah 53:5 where "He was pierced through **FOR** ([min](#)) our transgressions."

**The transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was<sup>[due]</sup> - My people** (Hebrew - ammi) is a term which indicates the Jews or Israel (e.g., Isa 40:1, Isa 47:6, Isa 51:4, 51:16, Isa 52:4, 5, 6, etc). This statement corrects the erroneous understanding the Jews had in Isaiah 53:3 (He was despised, and we did not esteem Him). The reason Jesus was cut off out of the land of the living is because of the transgression ([pesha'](#) = rebellious acts) of the Jews (of course by extension His death was ultimately for the transgressions of the Jews AND the Gentiles). The Jews (and we Gentiles by application) deserved the **stroke** (Hebrew = nega) that fell on the Servant of Jehovah.

**Stroke was due** - The **Septuagint** translates it "He was led to death."

**Stroke** ([01504](#)) (**nega** from **naga** = to touch or strike) in first use in Ge 12:17 refers to the divine **plagues** on Pharaoh (cf another Pharaoh in Ex 11:1). God is usually the one who metes out punishment and/or disease. In Leviticus 13-14 **nega** is used over 60x to refer to an **infection** or **mark** (like leprosy or skin disease) and refers to a blemish that has been created by touching or striking. Nega can refer to a physical injury inflicted by another person (Dt. 17:8; 21:5; Isa 53:8); or by God Himself ("stripes" in Ps. 89:32) Nega can also describe a nonphysical blemish (1 Ki 8:38; 2 Chr 6:29; Pr 6:33 = "wounds" to adulterers).

**NIDOTTE** - In some passages the verb (naga - root of nega) specifically denotes the idea of striking someone with the intention to harm or kill, or to inflict a disastrous blow upon that person.

**Gilbrant** - The notions of affliction are semantic extensions of the act of being touched. Plague and other illness were considered to be the result of a touch of the gods to ancient Near Easterners, and the result of a touch of Yahweh's hand to Israelites. Indeed, as Solomon dedicated the Temple, he called upon Yahweh to relent of any type of plague, famine, mildew or pestilence upon the land on account of the Temple and his worship there (1 Ki. 8:37f). Skin diseases likewise were thought to come from this sort of divine touching (Lev. 13; the noun occurs forty-seven times in this chapter, and fourteen times in the next, which also covers mildew). The concept is simple. When someone died or displayed bodily disease (an early stage of death) prior to normal life span expectations, he was considered by many ancient Near Eastern peoples to have lacked divine favor. The semantic concept of being violently hit is a human manifestation of touching. The noun appears as a technical term to convey the sense of violent crime such as assault (Deut. 17:8; 21:5). In the course of Yahweh's revealing the Davidic covenant, He asserted that He would never destroy the lineage of David, though He would use violent force of humans to chastise a wayward descendant (2 Sam. 7:14; cf. Gen. 12:17) ([Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary](#))

**Nega** -78x in 62v - affliction(2), another(1), assault(2), infection(30), mark(32), plague(6), plagues(1), stripes(1), stroke(1), strokes(1), wounds(1).

Gen. 12:17; Exod. 11:1; Lev. 13:2; Lev. 13:3; Lev. 13:4; Lev. 13:5; Lev. 13:6; Lev. 13:9; Lev. 13:12; Lev. 13:13; Lev. 13:17; Lev. 13:20; Lev. 13:22; Lev. 13:25; Lev. 13:27; Lev. 13:29; Lev. 13:30; Lev. 13:31; Lev. 13:32; Lev. 13:42; Lev. 13:43; Lev. 13:44; Lev. 13:45; Lev. 13:46; Lev. 13:47; Lev. 13:49; Lev. 13:50; Lev. 13:51; Lev. 13:52; Lev. 13:53; Lev. 13:54; Lev. 13:55; Lev. 13:56; Lev. 13:57; Lev. 13:58; Lev. 13:59; Lev. 14:3; Lev. 14:32; Lev. 14:34; Lev. 14:35; Lev. 14:36; Lev. 14:37; Lev. 14:39; Lev. 14:40; Lev. 14:43; Lev. 14:44; Lev. 14:48; Lev. 14:54; Deut. 17:8; Deut. 21:5; Deut. 24:8; 2 Sam. 7:14; 1 Ki. 8:37; 1 Ki. 8:38; 2 Chr. 6:28; 2 Chr. 6:29; Ps. 38:11; Ps. 39:10; Ps. 89:32; Ps. 91:10; Prov. 6:33; Isa. 53:8

**David Baron** writes that "in repudiation once again of their previous false notion that it was for His own sin that He was "stricken and smitten of God" (Isaiah 53:4<sup>+</sup>), the vicarious atoning character of His sufferings and death is yet again emphasized: "For the transgression of My people the stroke fell upon Him." ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**NET Note on my people** - The Hebrew text reads "my people," a reading followed by most English versions, but this is problematic in a context where the **first person plural predominates**, and where God does not appear to speak again until Isa 53:11b. Therefore, it is preferable to read with the Qumran scroll 1QIsaa עַמּוֹ ("his people"). In this case, the group speaking in these verses is identified as the **servant's people** (compare פְּשָׁעֵינוּ [[pesha](#)] enu, "our rebellious deeds"] in Isa 53:5 with פְּשָׁע עַמִּי [[pesha](#)] 'ammi, "the rebellion of his people"] in Isa 53:8).

Some Jews contend Isaiah 52:13-53:13 speaks of the nation of Israel, but this is absurd for how could Israel die for the sins of Israel (my people...to whom the stroke was due)?

**David Baron** adds "the term אַמִּי , Ammi ("My people"), can only apply to Israel, and is one of the many internal marks which make it impossible to interpret the prophecy of the Jews as a nation, for the servant suffers and dies for the people, and therefore cannot be confounded with the people. Yes, the Good Shepherd laid down His life in the first instance for "My people"—the people which in a special sense He calls "His own," and that is the chief ground of our hope and confidence for Israel as a nation, but, blessed be God! He died, not for the nation only, but that "He might also gather into one the children of God that were scattered abroad"; (Jn 11:51, 52) and since Christ came, in whom this prophecy received its minute fulfilment, millions from among all the Gentile nations, "who in time past were no people," are now the people of God.: ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

---

### **Martin Luther - For the transgression of my people he was stricken. —Isaiah 53:8**

Those who meditate aright on the suffering of Christ become terror stricken in heart, and their consciences at once sink in despair. This terror should spring forth so that you see the severe wrath and the unchangeable earnestness of God in regard to sin and sinners, in that he was unwilling that his only and dearly loved Son should set sinners free unless he paid the costly ransom for them—an earnestness so inexpressible and unbearable that a person so immeasurably great goes to meet and suffers and dies for it. If you reflect on it deeply, that God's Son, the eternal wisdom of the Father, himself suffers, you will indeed be terror stricken, and the more you reflect the deeper will be the impression.

You meditate on the suffering of Christ aright if you deeply believe and never doubt the least that you are the one who thus martyred Christ. For your sins most surely did it. Thus Saint Peter struck and terrified the Jews as with a thunderbolt in Acts 2:36–37, when he spoke to them all in common: "Jesus, whom you crucified," so that three thousand were terror stricken the same day and tremblingly cried to the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Therefore, when you view the nails piercing through his hands, firmly believe it is your work. Do you see his crown of thorns? Believe the thorns are your wicked thoughts and your other sins.

Now see where one thorn pierces Christ, there more than a thousand thorns should pierce you, yes, eternally should they thus and even more painfully pierce you. Where one nail is driven through his hands and feet, you should eternally suffer such and even more painful nails—as will be also visited on those who let Christ's sufferings be lost and fruitless as far as they are concerned. For this earnest mirror, Christ, will neither lie nor mock; whatever he says must be fully realized.

Saint Bernard was so terror stricken by Christ's sufferings that he said, "I imagined I was secure and I knew nothing of the eternal judgment passed on me in heaven, until I saw that the eternal Son of God took mercy on me, stepped forward and offered himself on my behalf in the same judgment. Ah, it does not become me still to play and remain secure when such earnestness is behind those sufferings."

—Martin Luther

---

### **Martin Luther - For the transgression of my people he was stricken.—Isaiah 53:8**

The benefit of Christ's sufferings depends almost entirely on people coming to a true knowledge of themselves. Where people do not come to this point, the sufferings of Christ have no benefit to them. For the characteristic, natural work of Christ's sufferings is that they make all people equal and alike, so that as Christ was horribly martyred, we must also be martyred in our consciences by our sins. This does not take place by means of words but by means of deep thoughts and a profound realization of our sins.

Take an illustration: If an evildoer were judged because he or she had murdered the child of a monarch, and someone convinced you that you had enabled the wicked person to do the act—then you would be in the greatest straits, especially if your conscience also revolted against you. Much more anxious than this you should be when you consider Christ's sufferings. For you are truly the one who strangled and crucified the Son of God through your sins.

Whoever perceive themselves to be so hard that they are not terror stricken by Christ's sufferings and led to a knowledge of him, they should fear and tremble. For it cannot be otherwise; you must become like the picture and sufferings of Christ, whether in life or in hell. You must at the time of death, if not sooner, fall into terror, tremble, quake, and experience all Christ suffered on the cross. It



is truly terrible to attend to this on your deathbed; therefore you should pray God to soften your heart and permit you fruitfully to meditate on Christ's suffering. For it is impossible for us profoundly to meditate on the sufferings of Christ of ourselves unless God sink them into our hearts. But first you are to seek and long for the grace of God, that you may accomplish it through God's grace and not through your own power. Some people never treat the sufferings of Christ aright, for they never call on God for that purpose but devise out of their own ability their own way and treat those sufferings entirely in a human and an unfruitful manner.

Such a meditation changes a person's character, and almost as in baptism he or she is born anew. Then Christ's suffering accomplishes its true and noble work; it slays the old Adam, banishes all lust, pleasure, and security that one may obtain from God's creatures, just like Christ was forsaken by all, even by God.

---

#### **Martin Luther - For the transgression of my people he was stricken. —Isaiah 53:8**

When you are completely terror stricken in conscience, you must be on your guard that your sins do not thus remain in your conscience and nothing but pure doubt certainly come out of it.

Then cast your sins from yourself on Christ. Believe that your sins are his wounds and sufferings, that he carries them and makes satisfaction for them, as Saint Peter says in his first epistle: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree" (2:24). On these and like passages you must rely with all your weight, and so much the more the harder your conscience martyrs you. For if you do not take this course but miss the opportunity of stilling your heart, then you will never secure peace and must finally despair in doubt. For if we deal with our sins in our consciences and let them continue in us and be cherished in our hearts, they become much too strong for us to manage, and they will live forever. But when we see that they are laid on Christ and he has triumphed over them by his resurrection, and we believe it, then they are dead and have become as nothing. Thus Saint Paul speaks, in Romans 4:25, that Christ was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification; that is, by his resurrection he makes us righteous and free from all sin, even if we believe differently.

Now if you are not able to believe, then you should pray to God for faith. For this is a matter in the hands of God that is entirely free and is also bestowed alike at times knowingly, at times secretly.

Look on Christ's sufferings no longer, for they have already done their work and terrified you, but press through all difficulties and see how full of love is his heart toward you—love that compelled him to bear the heavy load of your conscience and your sin. Thus will your heart be loving and sweet toward him and the assurance of your faith be strengthened. Then ascend higher through the heart of Christ to the heart of God, and see that Christ would not have been able to love you if God had not willed it. Be thus drawn to the Father through Christ. That means to know God aright, if we understand him by his goodness and love, there our faith and confidence can then stand unmovable. A person is truly thus born anew in God.

---

#### **Martin Luther For the transgression of my people he was stricken.—Isaiah 53:8**

When your heart is thus established in Christ and you are an enemy of sin—out of love and not out of fear of punishment—Christ's sufferings should also be an example for your whole life, and you should meditate on them in a different way. For until now we have considered Christ's passion as a sacrament that works in us and we suffer; now we consider that we also work, namely thus: if a day of sorrow or sickness weighs you down, think how trifling that is compared with the thorns and nails of Christ. If you must do or leave undone what is distasteful to you, think how Christ was led here and there, bound and a captive. Does pride attack you? See how your Lord was mocked and disgraced with murderers. Do unchastity and lust thrust themselves against you? Think how bitter it was for Christ to have his tender flesh torn, pierced, and beaten again and again. Do hatred and envy war against you, or do you seek vengeance? Remember how Christ, with many tears and cries, prayed for you and all his enemies—he who indeed had more reason to seek revenge. If trouble or whatever adversity of body or soul afflict you, strengthen your heart and say, "Ah, why then shouldn't I also suffer a little since my Lord sweat blood in the garden because of anxiety and grief?" That would be a lazy, disgraceful servant who would wish to lie in bed while the Lord was compelled to battle with the pangs of death.

See, you can thus find in Christ strength and comfort against all vice and bad habits. That is the right observance of Christ's suffering, and that is the fruit of his suffering. And they are called true Christians who incorporate the life and name of Christ into their own lives, as Saint Paul says in Galatians 5:24: "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires." For Christ's suffering must be dealt with not in words and a show but in our lives and in truth. Thus Hebrews 12:3: "Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart"; and 1 Peter 4:1: "Since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude."

---

**Isaiah 53:9 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.**

---

no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

- **His grave was assigned with wicked men et He was with a rich man in His death** Mt 27:57-60; Mk 15:43-46; Lk 23:50-53; Jn 19:38-42; 1 Cor 15:4
- **Nor was there any deceit in His mouth** 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pe 2:22; 1 Jn 3:5
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SERVANT BURIED IN RICH MAN'S TOMB

**Baron** - The prophetic story of the Servant of Jehovah unfolded in this penitential confession moves on. From His life of vicarious suffering and atoning death we come to His burial...."In all countries, I suppose, it has been the rule that persons put to death as criminals have had ignominious sepulture," writes one. "Even after death shame has followed them, though after ages have oftentimes reversed the award and built monuments to them." But this was especially the case among the Jews. This was the law of the time, as stated by Josephus. "He that blasphemeth God let him be stoned, and let him hang upon a tree all that day, and let him be buried in an ignominious and obscure manner." Now, it was as a blasphemer that they condemned Him in their ignorance and blindness, and what more likely than that as He died with criminals He should also be buried with them? But—"with a rich man (He was) in His death. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**His grave was assigned with wicked men** - What does this mean? Who died next to Jesus on the Cross? Wicked men, criminals deserving of their death (Lk 23:33+, Mt 27:38). And in first century Israel when a person died and ignominious death and would not receive an honorable burial. In fact sometimes the corpses would be left on the Cross and allowed to be decomposed and/or devoured as carrion by birds of prey! Other times the bodies would be thrown into the fire to burn. A passage in Jeremiah alludes to this recording that "Those slain by the LORD on that day will be from one end of the earth to the other. They will not be lamented, gathered or buried; they will be like dung on the face of the ground." (Jer 25:33, see context in Jer 25:31, 32)

**MacArthur** adds that at crucifixion Jesus and the two criminals "would die on the cross of asphyxiation, and they would leave Him there dead and rotting, for the birds to pluck out their faces. And they would leave them there like road kill for animals that could climb up the cross to chew their flesh. They would leave them there for the purpose of warning everybody who was watching of what happens to people who violate the Roman power and the Roman law. That's what was planned for Him. Eventually they would have taken the rotted corpses down and thrown them in a dump. The Jerusalem city dump was in the [Valley of Hinnom](#) on the southeast side of Jerusalem (which had) a fire that never went out."

Of course Jesus' body would never see corruption for Psalm 16:10 said

For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

**Spurgeon** commented - Into the outer prison of the grave his body might go, but into the inner prison of corruption he could not enter. He who in soul and body was preeminently God's "Holy One," was loosed from the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. This is noble encouragement to all the saints; die they must, but rise they shall, and though in their case they shall see corruption, yet they shall rise to everlasting life. Christ's resurrection is the cause, the earnest, the guarantee, and the emblem of the rising of all his people. Let them, therefore, go to their graves as to their beds, resting their flesh among the clods as they now do upon their couches.

**David Thompson:** Man had his plan but God overruled. God wanted His Son to have more honor than being burned or devoured by vultures. So God raised up a man named Joseph to take care of His son's body. The Romans authorities would grant the body of Jesus to Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57). God would not allow His Son to be buried in some shameful place. He would not allow His son's body to be burned or eaten.

**Yet He was with a rich man in His death**- This would be a strange prophecy if we did not find such an incredible fulfillment in the NT! This prophecy was fulfilled by Joseph of Arimathea a rich man who provided his own unused tomb in which to lay the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. How can people not believe the Bible is fully inspired and inerrant?

**Motyer:** Like the other enigmas of this Song, this too is written so that when the turn of events provides the explanation we shall know for certain that we stand in the presence of the Servant of the Lord."

The Septuagint translates the Hebrew for **rich** ([ashir](#)) with the Greek adjective [plousios](#) which means literally in a material sense wealthy, well to do. I emphasize this because some modern "scholars" have sought to explain ashir as being synonymous parallel with the word for wicked (rasha) in the previous phrase. So try as they might to twist the original wording of Isaiah 53:9, "The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever." (Isaiah 40:8)!

**Luke** recorded...

And a man named Joseph, who was a member of the Council, a good and righteous man 51 (he had not consented to their plan and action), a man from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who was waiting for the kingdom of God; 52 this man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 53 And he took it down and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb cut into the rock, where no one had ever lain. (Lk 23:50-53-see notes, also in Mt 27:57-60; Mk 15:43-46; Jn 19:38-42)

**Because** - This **term of explanation** (in this case the Hebrew preposition ['al](#)) clearly explains why the Servant having suffered would now receive an honorable burial not a **ignominious** one!

**He had done no violence** - God's Word attests to the fact that the Messiah was guilty of no wrong. The Septuagint translates "violence" (chamas) with the noun [anomia](#) which means lawlessness and which the apostle John defines as "sin" writing "Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness." (1 Jn 3:4). The translators of the Septuagint understood that violence was actually "violence" against God's Holy Law. So what is this passage affirming, but that Jesus was SINLESS! **MacArthur** says this description of Jesus and the one that follows (no deceit) is "a way of saying He was holy on the inside and the outside!" In the Greek translation the noun anomia or lawlessness (sin) is modified by an absolute negation (ouk); i.e., Messiah absolutely committed no sin! A very clear statement of His sinlessness which qualified Him to be the blemish-free Passover Lamb of God.

**David Baron** writes **no violence...nor...deceit** is but "yet another reiteration of the absolute innocence of His outward actions and of the inward purity and gentleness of His character. It was vicarious sufferings that He endured; it was a death of atonement for others that He died; but immediately those sufferings were ended and that death accomplished, His humiliation was ended, and no further indignity to His blessed person." ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Violence** ([02555](#))([chamas/hamas](#)) means wrong, violence (to God's law = Ezek 22:26, Zeph 3:4, "violent hatred" = Ps 25:19), malicious (witness - Ex 23:1, Dt 19:16), , and is used almost always in connection with sinful violence, not with the violence of natural catastrophes. **Chamas** signifies extreme wickedness and the first two uses are very instructive (Ge 6:11,13).

**Nor was there any deceit in His mouth** - As Jesus taught in Mt 12:34b "the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart," so the point is that there was no deceit out of Jesus' mouth because there was none in His heart, unlike all of Adam's children (every person born other than Jesus) about which Jeremiah says our "heart is more **deceitful** than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?" (Jer 17:9) Jeremiah's description did not fit Jesus, but Isaiah's description in this verse did fit Jesus perfectly!

**John MacArthur** - It is a small testimony to His...listen...sinless perfection by His Father and the first small step of His exaltation, the first small step. Even before His resurrection the Father is saying, "I will not allow any further humiliation." There can be no more humiliation. It's as low as He can go, to give Himself to death, even the death of the cross, and that's where the humiliation ends. And this is the first small step up. God honors Jesus in His burial because there was no sin inside, no sin outside. And in a few hours on the third day, He comes out of the grave, and, eventually, in His ascension all the way up. A sweet testimony of the fact that the humiliation was over.

This passage is another clear refutation of the contention of many Jews that Isaiah 52:13-53:13 speaks of the nation of Israel, but how could the guilty nation possibly claim to be innocent as in this passage? Without any doubt whatsoever, it is crystal clear that Isaiah is describing an individual who died for sins that the guilty might go free.

**David Baron** quotes Jewish scholar and believer in Messiah [Moses Margoliouth](#) -- "The predictions concerning Christ in this chapter, are so numerous and so minute that they could not possibly have been dictated by any but by Him to whom all things are naked and open, and who worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will. The most insignificant circumstances connected with our Lord's death are set forth with as much accuracy as those which are most important. If we reflect but for a moment on the peculiar circumstances which attended our Saviour's last hours, we shall see reason to exclaim with Moses, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God"; or with Paul, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" What could be more unlikely than that the Messiah should be crucified when crucifixion was not a Jewish but a Roman punishment? And yet David (in Ps. xxii.) predicted that such would be the case centuries before Rome was founded. Again, the fulfilment of David's prediction was brought about by the Jews themselves contrary to their own law and tradition. The law expressly forbade to choose a heathen for their king, for the following are the words of Moses, whose disciples they averred they were: "Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee whom the Lord thy God shall choose; and from among thy brethren shalt thou set a king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother." Their Rabbinic law pronounced the most severe anathema against any one who should deliver a Jew to a heathen magistrate. But in this case—that the word of God may come to pass—they regard neither their law nor their tradition, but deliver Jesus to the judgment of the Roman Procurator and call upon him to pronounce sentence. And when Pilate, half in remonstrance and half in mockery, said: "Shall I crucify your King?" they replied, "We have no king but Cæsar." ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

---

**WHY** - On February 15, 1947 Glenn Chambers boarded a plane bound for Quito, Ecuador to begin his ministry in missionary broadcasting. But he never arrived. In a horrible moment, the plane carrying Chambers crashed into a mountain peak and spiraled downward. Later it was learned that before leaving the Miami airport, Chambers wanted to write his mother a letter. All he could find for stationery was a page of advertising on which was written the single word "WHY?" Around that word he hastily scribbled a final note. After Chambers' mother learned of her son's death, his letter arrived. She opened the envelope, took out the paper, and unfolded it. Staring her in the face was the question "WHY?"

**No doubt this was the questions Jesus' disciples asked when He was arrested, tried, and crucified. And it was probably the questions Joseph of Arimathea asked himself as he approached Pilate and requested the Lord's body (Lk 23:52+).** It must have nagged at him as he wrapped the body in a linen cloth, carried it to his own freshly hewn tomb, and rolled the massive stone into its groove over the tomb's mouth. In the face of his grief, Joseph carried on. He did what he knew he had to do. None of Jesus' relatives were in a position to claim His body for burial, for they were all Galileans and none of them possessed a tomb in Jerusalem. The disciples weren't around to help either.

But there was another reason for Joseph's act of love. **In Isaiah 53:9, God directed the prophet to record an important detail about the death of His Messiah.** The One who had no place to lay his head would be buried in a rich man's tomb. Joseph probably didn't realize that his act fulfilled prophecy. The full answer to the why of Jesus' death was also several days away for Joseph and the others. All he knew was that he was now a disciple of Jesus -- and that was enough to motivate his gift of love. (Today in the Word, April 18, 19920

**Isaiah 53:10 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.**

KJV Isaiah 53:10 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.

NET Isaiah 53:10 Though the LORD desired to crush him and make him ill, once restitution is made, he will see descendants and enjoy long life, and the LORD's purpose will be accomplished through him.

NLT Isaiah 53:10 But it was the LORD's good plan to crush him and cause him grief. Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, he will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the LORD's good plan will prosper in his hands.

ESV Isaiah 53:10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

CSB Isaiah 53:10 Yet the LORD was pleased to crush Him severely. When You make Him a restitution offering, He will see His seed, He will prolong His days, and by His hand, the LORD's pleasure will be accomplished.

NIV Isaiah 53:10 Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

- **But the LORD was pleased To crush Him** Isaiah 42:1; Mt 3:17; 17:5
- **putting Him to grief** Ps 69:26; Zech 13:7; Ro 8:32; Gal 3:13; 1 Jn 4:9,10
- **If He would render Himself as a guilt offering.** Dal 9:24; Ro 8:8; 2 Cor 5:21; Eph 5:2; Heb 7:27; 9:14,25,26; 10:6-12; Heb 13:10-12; 1 Pet 2:24
- **He will see His offspring** see Ps 22:30; 45:16,17; 110:3; John 12:24; Heb 2:13
- **He will prolong His days** Isaiah 9:7; Ps 16:9-11; 21:4; 72:17; 89:29,36; Ezek 37:25; Da 7:13,14; Lk 1:33; Acts 2:24-28; Ro 6:9; Rev 1:18
- **And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand** Isaiah 55:11-13; 62:3-5; Ps 72:7; 85:10-12; 147:11; 149:4; Jer 32:41; Ezek 33:11; Mic 7:18; Zeph 3:17; Lk 15:5-7,23,24; Jn 6:37-40; Eph 1:5,9; 2 Th 1:11
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE REWARD OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT

Let's review these 15 marvelous passages that speak about the Messiah who does not speak in words in this section but with His actions and accomplishments:

1. Stanza #1 - Jesus Christ was God's shocking Servant. Isaiah 52:13-15
2. Stanza #2 - Jesus Christ was rejected as God's suffering Servant. Isaiah 53:1-3
3. Stanza #3 - Jesus Christ was our substitute to be God's saving Servant. Isaiah 53:4-6
4. Stanza #4 - Jesus Christ was totally submissive as God's silent Servant. Isaiah 53:7-9
5. Stanza #5 - Jesus Christ satisfies God as His Sovereign Servant Isaiah 53:10-12

Isaiah 53:10 begins the account of Messiah's exaltation and glory which were previewed in the "prologue" in Isaiah 52:13 "Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted." So like "bookends" this high water mark of the Old Testament begins and ends fittingly with the exaltation of our great Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Glory to Him in the highest.

And as you read this verse remember that it is the [penitent Jewish remnant](#) looking back at the Cross from their salvation [in the future in the Last Days](#) giving their confession which goes from Isaiah 53:1 to the middle of Isaiah 53:11 which marks the change in speaker to God the Father Who finishes out the chapter.

As **David Baron** says "Here is not only the mystery of suffering innocence"; but of innocence suffering at the hands of righteousness and perfect love." Yes, mystery of mysteries; and apart from the explanation He Himself gives of it, it is the most inexplicable thing in God's moral government." ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**But (yet)** - What does this **term of contrast** signify? What have the [redeemed remnant](#) just said was true of the Servant of Jehovah? **No violence...nor...deceit** indicates His internal and external holiness. But in spite of that blameless state, Jehovah was **pleased to crush Him**. If this statement is all we knew, it would sound like God was being unfair to His Son. But of course, that's not all of the story, and in fact is the very reason for which God sent His Son John writing "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (Jn 3:16).

**The LORD was pleased to crush Him putting Him to grief** - The word **LORD** is emphatic. As **Baron** says "it is once more reiterated and emphasized that they were not mere chance experiences which the Servant of Jehovah passed through. Nor was it merely that wicked men were allowed to work out the evil of their hearts in the sufferings and humiliations which they were permitted to heap upon Him, and thus make manifest by their treatment of "the Holy One" their enmity towards God. No; "the supreme [causa efficiens](#)," (defined by Aristotle) as Delitzsch expresses it, was God, "who made the sin of men subservient to His pleasure, His will, and predetermined counsel." These martyrs died heroic deaths praising God, singing and testifying of the presence and help of God. But it was not that way with Jesus Christ. When Jesus died, something very mysterious was happening, because He did not speak of the presence of God but the abandonment of God. He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" He spoke of being forsaken by God. Jesus had been perfect, so why is He dying so miserably. No man has ever died like Jesus Christ died. No man could die like Jesus Christ died. What was happening here? What was this all about? It was all God's judicial Sovereign plan to save sinners. God the Father working in perfect harmony with God the Son and both had Sovereignly planned and executed everything. This death was the Father's work and it was the Son's work and the end result is glorious. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**S Lewis Johnson** has a good word on **pleased to crush** explaining that "if not carefully interpreted might imply that the Father was cruel and the servant's death repulsive to one's moral sensibilities. The Hebrew word translated pleased is not a word suggesting pleasure in the sense of human enjoyment. It's a word of purpose; it says that God purposed the servant's death, a death making possible an offering for sin or divine forgiveness. His death is no mere martyr's death; it was an expiatory sacrifice, a satisfaction to the law of God. ([The Righteous Servant Bruised by Exalted](#))

**Thompson** - When Jesus Christ died, it wasn't a normal death. We have records of martyrs who died joyously. Many martyrs sang hymns on their way to their own death, and we have accounts of many who said that God stood by them and with them every step of the way. According to Eusebius, when Polycarp was about to be burned at the stake, he prayed a prayer that actually thanked God that he was considered worthy enough to be martyred. Then many eyewitnesses said that when the flames were first lit, the fire was like a wall around Polycarp and his body wasn't even burning and, finally, someone came with a spear and killed Polycarp (Eusebius, The History of the Church, p. 173). ([Exposition](#))

**Pleased** means Jehovah delighted or took pleasure in His Son's willing sacrifice. It was the Father's **will** (ESV = "it was the will of the LORD") for His Servant to suffer and die (Mt 26:39; Lk 22:42; Jn 12:27; Ac 2:23). It was through His Servant's suffering that He accomplished His will. It would be easy to misread what this verse is saying - clearly the Father did not enjoy seeing His Son suffer, but



He was pleased because the Servants sufferings accomplished the greatest good, provision of redemption for sinful mankind.

**Thompson on pleased** - "please" is a word that means God found favor and delight in this plan because this became a solution as to how God could be just and still justify sinners.

**Baron on pleased** - "Not only did the Lord bruise Him, but it was the 'good pleasure of His will' to do so. He who has no pleasure in the death of the wicked was pleased to put His righteous Servant to grief **not**, of course, because the death agony was a pleasure to look upon, but as means to the fulfilment of a great purpose. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Riddle** - It "**pleased the Lord**" to bruise (crush) His sinless, spotless Son! Clearly, the word "pleased" is not used in its accepted sense today, but to denote the "good pleasure of His will" (Eph 1:5). This describes "the determinate counsel of Jehovah in causing man's sin to be subservient to the actings of His grace, in the suffering of His sinless Servant on the cross" (W. E. Vine). It must be stressed again that His sufferings here were divinely-inflicted. It was God's love for poor sinful man that caused Him to "bruise" His Son. (What the Bible Teaches – Isaiah)

**Parunak:** He is faced with the moral dilemma of undeserved suffering that the Lord not only tolerates, but actually takes pleasure in bringing about! How can this paradox be resolved? Lord, I'm confused. Here is a righteous man, suffering at the hands of wicked men, yet suffering patiently. He is not guilty. They are. And you, who should defend the righteous and punish the wicked, not only allow this to happen, but are bringing it about! How can this make any sense? Hmm—it would make sense, if you were trying to provide a guilt-offering. That would then bring great blessing to your Servant, in compensation for the suffering he has borne. . . The rest of this paragraph consists of the consequences that will result if the Lord provides the Servant's soul as the reparation offering that his people need to make amends for their offenses against the Lord. ([Isaiah 53 Commentary Notes](#))

**David Thompson** - The will of God for Jesus Christ was filled with sorrow and grief. The will of God meant that He would come to this earth and be mocked, brutalized, and executed. God's will meant that Jesus Christ would physically die in the prime of His life. It meant that He wouldn't appear to be successful at all. It meant He would be deprived of a good long life. It meant that He would be very lonely, even deprived of most normal family and friends. It also meant He would be deprived of justice. But in spite of how nightmarish His assignment was, the one thing Jesus Christ could say that none of us will ever be able to say is, "I always did My Father's will." ([Isaiah 53:10-12 Commentary](#))

**Him** of course is the Servant of Jehovah, Who has come to accomplish His Father's will (Mt 26:42, Mark 14:36). And in this context Who does the crushing? Clearly it is Jehovah, God the Father Who crushes His Own, only Son! We sometimes think the Jews and Romans killed Jesus, and on one hand there is truth in that line of reasoning, but the more complete truth is that God the Father put His Son to death as a sacrifice for sin!

To **crush** speaks of the crushing blow (broken in pieces) that fell on Jesus on the Cross when He was made sin for us and suffered the full force of the blow from the hand of His Father as God poured out the full force of His unfettered wrath on His sinless Son Who bore our sin! Isaiah 53:5+ uses the same word ([daka](#)) describing how Jehovah's Servant was "**crushed for our iniquities.**" The same idea is conveyed in this passage. The Servant was crushed by His Father just as in Isaiah 53:5. This is amazing - that the Father would love us so much He would willingly give His Son as a sacrifice, even crushing His Son, and that the Son would love us so much that He would willingly become the sacrificial Lamb. (cf Ro 5:8+) Amazing Grace indeed!

As **John Piper** says "You know someone's heart when you know their deep desires and what satisfies them. That's what this text is about—knowing the heart of God and his Servant, the Messiah, Jesus Christ."

**MacArthur** explains it this way - In other words, the **LORD** is doing something to **Him** that is horrific. Men, of course, are unjustly crushing Him. Men are doing the worst that they can do with an unjust trial, brutality, abuse, harassment, punching, slapping, hitting with sticks, crowning with thorns and nailing and piercing. Men are doing the worst that they can do, the worst that sinners can do, and they are pleased to do that. But here, God is **pleased** and God is delighted to **crush Him**. While men are doing the worst that they can do, at the very same time God is doing the best that He can do. Men are doing the worst that they can do for the sinless One, and God is doing the best that He can do for sinners. His death is God's work. He is God's Lamb, chosen by God, chosen by the determinate counsel of God; the purpose and counsel of God has determined that He will die (Acts 2:23, Acts 4:28). It is God who laid on Him the iniquity of us all. It is God who crushes Him. It is God who cuts Him off out of the land of the living. God, who finds no pleasure in the death of the wicked, as Ezekiel 18:32 says, finds full pleasure in the death of the Righteous One (Isa 53:11) **God, Who finds no pleasure in the death of sinners, finds full pleasure in the death of the sinless One.**...God's delight and God's pleasure in crushing His Son in this way was **not in His pain, but in His purpose** It was **not in His agony; it was in His accomplishment**. It was **not in His suffering; it was in His salvation**...It was the outcome that pleased God, not the pain. But the pain and the agony was necessary." ([The Sovereign Servant - Part 1](#)) (Bolding Added)

**Spurgeon** - "It pleased the LORD to bruise him." - God were to lay his finger on any one of us, only his finger, we should be struck with sickness, paralysis, and death. Then think of God smiting! God must smite sin wherever he sees it. So when he saw our sin laid



on his Son, he smote him with the blows of a cruel One, till beneath that smiting his Son cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46).

**Putting Him to grief** - Literally "He made Him sick." While [chalah](#) is usually translated to be made ill or sick, in 2 Chr 35:23 (also 1 Ki 22:34) the archers shot King Josiah who declared "I am badly **wounded**." The word **wounded** is the same verb [chalah](#). MacArthur explains it says "**putting Him to grief**," because it has the idea of making Him sick...not sick with an illness or sick with a disease...but, literally, such an excruciating experience as to completely debilitate His entire being. God not only crushes Him in the sense that kills Him, but He makes it as excruciating and painful as conceivable or inconceivable. He is crushed agonizingly, painfully, excruciatingly. And God is doing the crushing."

**MacArthur on crush Him**, etc - This is what the Lord has done to His Servant. They have a full soteriological understanding of the cross of Christ. These Jews in the future generation who make this confession, they get the whole picture. There's nothing missing in their soteriology. Their gospel is a complete gospel. This is amazing because remember now, this is 700 years before Christ even comes, and this is words coming from Jews thousands of years after that and indicating a complete understanding of the cross. They know now what the reality is. Verse 10, they know the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief if He would render Himself as a guilt offering....They understand the vicarious, substitutionary, sacrificial atonement of Christ in the place of sinners....Now this is not the death, as some have suggested, of a martyr; this is not the death of a martyr. Martyrs don't die like this. I mean physical difficulties are present, whether they are burned at a stake, killed another way; but if you study the history of martyrs, you find something quite interesting. You can go all the way back to the *Fox's Book of Martyrs* and read the thousands of accounts of martyrs there. You can study martyrs through the history of the church. And you will find that martyrs die with songs on their lips. Martyrs die singing. Martyrs die testifying to faith in the Lord. Martyrs die with hope in their hearts. Martyrs die, amazing, over the measure of joy because martyrs die...listen...under the sweet comforts of grace. Martyrs die under the sweet comforts of grace. Martyrs die with the Holy Spirit coming around. Martyrs die with God's presence palpable. Martyrs die under the sweet comforts of grace. Martyrs die, and in dying begin to taste heaven because that's grace. Our Lord's death was not like that. No hymns were sung after they left the Passover. No Scriptures were cited, no comfort, no Holy Spirit, no Father, no source of comfort. Why? Because Jesus didn't die under the sweet comforts of grace. Jesus died under the relentless and unrelieved terrors of Law. Jesus died under divine wrath unmitigated. **No comfort, only divine fury. Jesus died tasting hell. "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (ED: THIS IS SURELY "PUTTING HIM TO GRIEF!")** No believer ever died like that. And every unbeliever dies like that. Every believer dies tasting heaven. Every unbeliever dies tasting hell. Jesus died tasting hell. He died the death of an unbeliever with no comforts and no grace and no mercy. ([Isaiah 53:10-12 The Sovereign Servant, Part 1](#)) (Bolding Added)

**Paul Apple** summarizes this section - **Results of the Crushing of the Righteous Servant**

1. Benefits to God the Father -- Reparations Satisfied by the Guilt Offering "If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,"
2. Benefits to God the Son -- Results of the Voluntary Sacrificial Death
  - a. Result #1 – Spiritual Offspring
  - b. Result #2 – Resurrected Life
  - c. Result #3 – Worthwhile Mission ("And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.") [Jehovah is Salvation - 1130 pages](#)

**If He would render Himself as a guilt offering** - Literally in Hebrew it reads "Because He would render Himself as a guilt offering. Because He would give His life to save sinners." For Messiah to be a **guilt offering** meant He had to die just as did the animals in the Levitical guilt offering (cf Lev 5:7+). **Himself** is [nephesh](#) so that it is even more poignantly rendered Messiah "would render His **soul**." Oh my. Not just His body but His very soul for you and for me. How unfathomable is this act of His love!

The **NET Bible** renders it "once restitution is made, he will see descendants and enjoy long life." As MacArthur explains below **restitution** was part of the **guilt offering**. Look at this pattern in Leviticus

"If a person acts unfaithfully and sins unintentionally against the LORD'S holy things, then he shall bring his **guilt offering** to the LORD: a ram without defect from the flock, according to your valuation in silver by shekels, in terms of the shekel of the sanctuary, for a guilt offering. 16 "He shall **make restitution** for that which he has sinned against the holy thing, and shall add to it a fifth part of it and give it to the priest. The priest shall then make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering, and it will be forgiven him. (Lev 5:15-16)

**ESV Study** note - The Septuagint translates "**offering for guilt**" as "**offering for sin**," which explains why Paul could say that Christ's death "for our sins" was "in accordance with the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3).

**Riddle** - As E. J. Young observes, the words "his soul" are "not a mere substitution for *himself*, but show that the very life is to be the oblation". Whilst both the sin-offering and the trespass-offering had guilt in view, the latter was offered in respect of specific transgressions of the law. The distinctive feature of the trespass-offering is the satisfaction that it offered. It involved "reparation or compensation" (J. A. Motyer). The results accruing from His death follow (What the Bible Teaches – Isaiah)

**MacArthur** has an interesting explanation on why the Spirit chooses [guilt offering](#) and not [sin offering](#) or burnt offering, stating that the **guilt offering** "added the dimension of restitution, or satisfaction or propitiation, which is a verb that means to be satisfied. It is the last of the offerings in Leviticus in the first seven chapters. It is an advance from the others. The sin offering and the guilt offering were offered every day in the morning and evening sacrifices. The guilt offering advanced the ideas in the sin offering. In the sin offering you had repentance communicated. In the sin offering you had the recognition of sin bringing death and the hope of a substitute. But in the [guilt offering](#), because the whole animal was put on the altar, there was the picture of completion or complete satisfaction. And the Jews ([future remnant](#)) will see that the offering of Christ was the **guilt offering** in the sense that it was the most complete offering. It provided full satisfaction, full restitution, full propitiation. The satisfaction of God's justice is demonstrated in the wholeness of that sacrifice. The debt is fully paid and the sinner free. How rich is this understanding that He is not the burnt offering and He's not the sin offering. He's the [guilt offering](#), which covers everything the other two cover and adds the marvelous dimension of complete, divine satisfaction, the sacrifice of the Servant as the full, compensatory payment given to God to satisfy His holy justice and to pay in full the penalty for all the sins of all who would ever believe. Those then whose sins are paid will be forgiven forever. And John says, "He's the propitiation for our sins" the [guilt offering](#), (aka the trespass offering "that satisfies God and not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world." (1 Jn 2:2) This is understanding the gospel that Christ is the complete satisfaction, the complete sacrifice to which nothing can be added; God is satisfied. That's why God is pleased. Pleased to crush Him, not because He delighted in the agony, but He delighted in the atonement. Pleased because He was the guilt offering for all believers from Adam to the end, who paid in full divine justice.

**S Lewis Johnson** - Many Bible teachers think the trespass offering represents typically what Adam did to the race in the fall and what Christ did in repairing the trespass. Adam robbed God of the obedience he deserved from men and men of the life that they might have had if Adam had not fallen. So Christ's offering, being a trespass offering restored that which Adam lost. He offered God representative obedience for God's people, he made restitution of life for them, and he added a fifth part ("**add to it a fifth part of it**" - Lev 5:16+). That is he not only gave God's people life, physical life that Adam had lost, he gave them eternal life, it was a fifth part. Paul's statement in Romans 5:20+ may allude to it where Paul writes, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." As a result of the death of Christ, we have more than Adam ever lost. ([The Righteous Servant Bruised by Exalted](#))

**Guilt Offering** ([0817](#)) ([asam](#)) is also called guilt, reparation, trespass or compensation offering, and emphasizes the fact that the rights of both God and man had been violated, and that both sacrifice (to God) and restitution (to fellowman) were necessary. The **guilt offering** was commanded in instances when another party had suffered some deprivation.

**Franz Delitzsch** gives a nice summary of the five major offerings in Leviticus - "Every species of sacrifice had its own primary idea. The fundamental idea of the 'olah (**burnt offering**) was oblatio, or the offering of worship; that of the sh'lamin (**peace offering**) conciliatio, or the knitting of fellowship; that of the minchah (**meat offering**) donatio, or sanctifying consecration; that of the chattath (**sin offering**) expiatio, or atonement; that of the asham (**trespass offering**) mulkta (satisfactio), or a compensatory payment. The self sacrifice of the Servant of Jehovah may be presented under all these points of view. It is the complete [antitype](#), the truth, the object, and the end of all the sacrifices" (Franz Delitzsch). (Related Resource - see Chart at top of this page for Summary of the Five Offerings).

**Baron** on the **guilt offering** - just as the word טוֹאֲתָהּ chattath, which is used for "sin offering," "denotes first the sin, then the punishment of the sin, and the expiation of the sin, and hence the sacrifice which cancels the sin; so asham signifies first the guilt or debt, then the compensation or penance, and hence the sacrifice which discharges the debt or guilt and sets the man free." There was much in common between the trespass offering and the "sin offering." Both are called kodesh kadashim, "most holy," (Lev 6:17, Lev 14:13) and as regards the manner in which the sacrifice was to be slain, and as to which portions were to be burnt on the altar, and what parts assigned to the priests, there was "one law for them both."<sup>4</sup> Yet there were differences between the chattath (sin offering) and asham (trespass offering), and in their moral and typical significance each one of the sacrifices set forth a distinctive aspect of the great work of atonement which was to be accomplished by the Messiah<sup>5</sup> and the blessed results accruing therefrom to sinful men. On the whole, it is correct to say with Dr. Culross, that while the sin offering looked to the sinful state of the offerer, the trespass offering was appointed to meet actual transgressions, the fruit of the sinful state. The sin offering set forth propitiation, the trespass offering set forth satisfaction. It was brought by the transgressor "to make amends for the harm that he hath done." "It symbolized rights violated and compensation rendered, debt contracted and satisfaction made." But whether it be a sin offering or a trespass offering it had to be slain, and its blood shed before it could become a sacrifice. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Related Resources:**

- [What is a trespass offering / guilt offering?](#)
- [What is a burnt offering?](#)
- [What is a sin offering?](#)
- [What is a peace offering?](#)
- [What is a grain offering?](#)
- [What is a free will offering / freewill offering?](#)
- [What was the firstfruits offering? Should Christians give a firstfruits offering today?](#)
- [What is a wave offering?](#)
- [What is a heave offering?](#)

The **NET Bible** reading is considerably different from the others and is rendered "once restitution is made" - The NET Note explains "The meaning of this line is uncertain. It reads literally, "if you/she makes, a reparation offering, his life." The verb תָּשִׁים (tasim) could be second masculine singular, in which case it would have to be addressed to the servant or to God. However, the servant is only addressed once in this servant song (see Isa 52:14a), and God either speaks or is spoken about in this servant song; he is never addressed. Furthermore, the idea of God himself making a reparation offering is odd. If the verb is taken as third feminine singular, then the feminine noun נֶפֶשׁ (nefesh) at the end of the line is the likely subject. In this case one can take the suffixed form of the noun as equivalent to a pronoun and translate, "if he [literally, "his life"] makes a reparation offering."

## FIRST BLESSED REWARD FOR JEHOVAH'S SUFFERING SERVANT

God's pattern is ever first the cross, then the crown. First the suffering then the exaltation.

**He will see His offspring** ("He will see descendants" = NET) - I am 71 yo and have grandchildren but the chances that I will see my great-grandchildren (my "offspring") are very low (all 8 grandchildren are less than 10 yo). Why? Because I will probably fall asleep in Jesus. This verse says Jesus will see His offspring, even though He died. How is that possible? What is the clear implication?

The preceding passages clearly describe Messiah's death as a "guilt offering" but for Him to see His offspring implies He had to come to life after death or to be resurrected from the dead. This progeny is not natural progeny for of course He had no earthly children, but they are supernatural progeny, which is millions upon millions of souls, both Jew and Gentile, who placed their faith and eternal fate in the hands of Messiah. Messiah's "**bringing many sons to glory**" (Heb 2:10+), was surely the reward, **the joy set before Him** (Heb 12:2+). Let us not miss this miraculous paradox - out of His one temporal death, comes countless eternal lives!

The Hebrew verb **see** is in "the **imperfect tense** meaning that Jesus Christ would continually be able to see His offspring come into His family because of His sacrifice. He would see millions and millions of people come into the family of God. Who of us does not want to see our offspring? Not only do most grandparents want to see their offspring, but they want you to see them too. They pull out their pictures and take you on a journey so you can see their pedigree. What is actually amazing is that the thing that would enable Him to see His offspring would be His death. This is such an odd thing because most people who die cannot see their offspring. But in this case, His death would lead to Him seeing all of His offspring." (Thompson)

**Offspring** is [zera](#) (Lxx = sperma) which is literally a seed. **Zera** is used in the protoevangelium in Genesis 3:15+ to describe the enmity between Satan's "**seed**" and the woman's "**seed**," the coming Messiah. **Zera** is also used in the Abrahamic Covenant, Paul explaining "Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed (sperma) (**zera** used in Ge 12:7; 13:15; 17:7; 24:7). He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed (sperma)," that is, Christ." (Gal 3:16+).

**David** prophesies of this great reward of a future offspring, His disciples Messiah "purchased for God with (His) blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (Rev 5:9+)

**Posterity** (zera = seed) will serve Him; It will be told of the Lord to the coming generation. (Ps 22:30)

**ESV Study** note on **His offspring** - Those who strayed like sheep (Isa. 53:6) return as children.

**Motyer** adds on **His offspring** "we strayed as sheep, we return as sons. The Servant's work is successful in 'bringing many sons to glory' (Heb. 2:10) (TOTC-Isaiah)

And who are His **offspring**, His "descendants"? These are those Jews and Gentiles who were saved by believing in His substitutionary sacrifice. In Isaiah 53 the offspring who are speaking are the [redeemed remnant of Jews](#) in the last days. There are some who say that God is finished with Israel and that Israel (including OT promises given to the literal nation) been replaced by the Church ([Replacement Theology](#)). However they are sadly, tragically wrong in such an aberrant, non-Scriptural interpretation. In fact even renowned reformers like **John Calvin** held the belief that God was not finished with Israel writing "When the Gentiles shall

come in, the Jews also shall return from their defection to the obedience of faith and thus shall be completed the salvation of the whole Israel of God, in such a way that the Jews shall obtain the first place according to His eternal purpose. He loved that nation and this He confirms by the remarkable declaration and the grace of divine calling cannot be made void." In the notes on Romans 11 in the [Geneva Bible](#) (influenced by Calvin and puritans) we read "The blindness of the Jews is neither so universal that the Lord has no elect in that nation, neither will it be continual for there will be a time in which they also as the prophets have foretold will effectually embrace that which they now so stubbornly for the most part reject and refuse." [Puritan John Owen](#) said "Days of prayer and humiliation are kept in Scotland. One particular object being that the promised conversion of God's ancient people of the Jews may be hastened." [Puritan Thomas Boston](#), wrote, "There is a day coming when there shall be a national conversion of the Jews. The now blinded and rejected Jews shall at length be converted into the faith of Christ."

**John MacArthur** adds that "Jonathan Edwards, 18th century in America, affirms the salvation of national Israel. **All who are faithful students of Scripture find it impossible to escape that.** So, when that happens, as I have been telling you, this is what they are going to say -- The very words or words very like them from Isaiah 53....They go through this confession, all the way down to the midpoint of verse 11, and then the final word is left for God. And from the middle of verse 11 through verse 12, God affirms their confession. God affirms that this confession is the true confession. And it is God Himself who says in the middle of verse 11, "Yes, My Servant will justify the many, He will bear their iniquities -- " verse 12 -- "He poured out Himself to death, was numbered with the transgressors, bore the sin of many, interceded for the transgressors." That is God's final affirmation that the confession that the Jews have made is indeed an accurate confession." ([The Sovereign Servant - Part 1](#))

## SECOND BLESSED REWARD FOR JEHOVAH'S SUFFERING SERVANT

**He will prolong His days** ("He will...enjoy long life" = NET) - Clearly death was not the end of the Servant's life. As above the only way the Servant would be able to **prolong His days** is because He was resurrected from the dead, thus Paul could write "that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures (resurrection being implicit here in Isaiah 53:10)." (1 Cor 15:3).

**Will prolong** is [arak](#) which means to be long and here is in the **imperfect tense** signifying that the Servant's days would continually be prolonged. Of course the only way to prolong a dead person's days is to resurrect them from the dead. **Thompson** notes that "in the case of the Lord Jesus Christ, He died and came back to life three days later. His days were prolonged after His death. One of the results of Christ paying the price for our sins is that God would not allow His body to be in that grave very long. He did prolong His days and Jesus came out alive."

This reward of prolonged days is in accord with the promise in Ps 16:10

For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

And again in Psalm 21:4 David pens a messianic prophecy which speaks of David himself only in a secondary sense, the primary fulfillment being the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings, never to die again...

He asked life of Thee, Thou didst give it to him, Length of days forever and ever.

**Comment** - Jonathan in his Targum, and Kimchi in his Commentary, themselves explain that the expression orekh yamim, "**length of days,**" refers to "the life of the world to come," and so in fact it must be, since it is for ever and ever.

Notice the [remnant](#) now shifts to the future tense. When will the Servant see His offspring and when will He prolong His days? Clearly in the forever future. And so this looks forward to future generations. Prolong His days is the way the Hebrews would describe a long life. Indeed, the Suffering Servant is the Sovereign Servant, alive now at the right hand of His Father in Heaven. And He will see His posterity, all those who came to faith in Him. One has to see in this truth at least part of the joy expressed in Hebrews 12 :2 which describes "Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." Seeing His offspring will bring great joy!

And so the future Jewish remnant in essence is giving the same testimony Paul described in Romans 10:9-10+

that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead (cf Isaiah 53:10), you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

**NET Note** on **offspring...prolong His days** - The idiomatic and stereotypical language emphasizes the servant's restoration to divine favor. Having numerous descendants and living a long life are standard signs of divine blessing. See Job 42:13-16.

**Riddle on prolong His days** - The expression is used approximately twenty times in the Old Testament but its "use here, referring to one who died, is unparalleled" (J. A. Motyer). It has been pointed out that men see "their seed" whilst they are still alive, but He would see them after he had "poured out his soul unto death" (v. 12). In resurrection He declares, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me" (Heb 2:13). He is "alive for evermore" (Rev 1:18) and "death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom 6:9). (Ibid)

### THIRD BLESSED REWARD FOR JEHOVAH'S SUFFERING SERVANT

**And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand** - Thompson explains "Everything Jesus Christ would do would please the Lord and prosper the Lord's work. That word "prosper" is one that means everything Jesus Christ would do would continually cause the work of God to succeed and flourish (Ibid., pp. 709-710). The entire program of God will come to complete success through Jesus Christ."

**David Baron** adds "This then, in brief, is the pleasure of Jehovah which shall prosper in His hand, or be brought to a triumphant accomplishment through His mediation, namely, the regathering of Israel, the bringing back of Jacob, not only to his land but into new covenant relationship with God, of which He Himself will be the bond; the illumination of the Gentile world with the light of the knowledge of the true and living God; the establishing of judgment and justice in the earth; the deliverance of men from spiritual blindness and the bondage of sin, and the bringing near of God's salvation to all men throughout the whole world, even "unto the end of the earth." And to this we must add words from the New Testament which open up yet more illimitable vistas of this "good pleasure" of Jehovah which is to be realized in and through the mediation of the Messiah. "For it was the good pleasure of the Father," writes the Apostle Paul, "that in Him should all the fulness dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of the cross . . . whether things upon the earth or things in heaven." (Col 1:19,20) And again, "Making known unto us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Him unto a dispensation of the fulness of times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth . . . according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will." (Eph 1:9-11) ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

The NET picks up the idea rendering it "the LORD's purpose will be accomplished through him." The NLT says "the LORD's good plan will prosper in his hands." Recall that in Isaiah 52:13 God was speaking and He declared "Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted." So in this present passage what is the good pleasure of the LORD? God's good pleasure is to save sinners. "And to satisfy His pleasure in saving sinners, He had to slaughter His Son. But He delights in crushing His Son so that He can delight in saving sinners who will forever and ever praise and glorify Him." (MacArthur) In the LORD crushing His Servant, He made a way for salvation for sinners. So not only would the Servant see His offspring, He would make possible His offspring. Jesus alludes to this in John declaring

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. 38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. 40 "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day." (John 6:37-40)

**Good pleasure** ([02656](#))([Hepes/chepes/chephets](#)) is translated by the ESV as "the will of the LORD".

**Riddle** explains that "**The pleasure of the Lord**" refers to all that God has predetermined to do, and this will be accomplished because in the first place "it pleased the Lord to bruise him". God's purposes will all be secured because His Son died at Calvary. It is not a case, however, of mere accomplishment: the purposes of God will flourish. Whereas, "No weapon that is formed against thee (Israel) shall prosper" (54:17), His people will enjoy the plenitude of divine blessing through Him. "The phrase 'in his hand' points to His mediatorial and high priestly work, as well as to the exercise of His authority and power in His kingdom" (W. E. Vine). (Ibid)

---

**Spurgeon - Morning and Evening - Isaiah 53:10** - Plead for the speedy fulfilment of this promise, all ye who love the Lord. It is easy work to pray when we are grounded and bottomed, as to our desires, upon God's own promise. How can he that gave the word refuse to keep it? Immutable veracity cannot demean itself by a lie, and eternal faithfulness cannot degrade itself by neglect. God must bless his Son, his covenant binds him to it. That which the Spirit prompts us to ask for Jesus, is that which God decrees to give him. Whenever you are praying for the kingdom of Christ, let your eyes behold the dawning of the blessed day which draweth near, when the Crucified shall receive his coronation in the place where men rejected him. Courage, you that prayerfully work and toil for Christ with success of the very smallest kind, it shall not be so always; better times are before you. Your eyes cannot see the blissful future: borrow the telescope of faith; wipe the misty breath of your doubts from the glass; look through it and behold the coming glory. Reader, let us ask, do you make this your constant prayer? Remember that the same Christ who tells us to say, "Give



us this day our daily bread," had first given us this petition, "Hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Let not your prayers be all concerning your own sins, your own wants, your own imperfections, your own trials, but let them climb the starry ladder, and get up to Christ himself, and then, as you draw nigh to the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat, offer this prayer continually, "Lord, extend the kingdom of thy dear Son." Such a petition, fervently presented, will elevate the spirit of all your devotions. Mind that you prove the sincerity of your prayer by laboring to promote the Lord's glory.

---

#### **Ian Paisley - What About the Cost to the Father?**

In giving His only begotten Son, in the giving of His beloved Son, in the giving of His Bosom Son, in the giving of His other Self. What human mind can conceive the depth of this thought or attempt to scale its unscalable height, that God loved so much that He gave all that He could give? He gave His Son gladly to the curse of the Cross.

There is a verse in Isaiah 53 which staggers me every time I read that great chapter, 'It pleased the Lord to bruise Him.'

The cost to the Father when the Son said, 'Farewell' to Him in the ivory palaces of the Eternal Throne Room of the Shekinah Glory of the Everlasting Palace of the Eternal God.

He left His Father's Throne on High,  
So free, so infinite His grace,  
And bled for Adam's guilty race.

The cost to the Father! (Sermons on Special Occasions)

---

**Spurgeon - Isaiah 53:10-12** - In no sense is he ever a guilty man, but always is he an accepted and a holy one. What, then, is the meaning of that very forcible expression of my text? We must interpret Scriptural modes of expression by the words of the speakers. We know that our Master once said himself, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood;" he did not mean that the cup was the covenant. He said, "Take, eat, this is my body"—none of us conceives that the bread is the literal flesh and blood of Christ. We take that bread as if it were the body, and it actually represents it. Now, we are to read a passage like this, according to the analogy of faith. Jesus Christ was made by his Father sin for us, that is, he was treated as if he had himself been sin. He was not sin; he was not sinful; he was not guilty; but, he was treated by his Father, as if he had not only been sinful, but as if he had been sin itself. That is a strong expression used here. Not only has he made him to be the substitute for sin, but to be sin. God looked on Christ as if Christ had been sin; not as if he had taken up the sins of his people, or as if they were laid on him, though that were true, but as if he himself had positively been that noxious—that God-hating—that soul-damning thing, called sin. When the judge of all the earth said, "Where is sin?" Christ presented himself. He stood before his Father as if he had been the accumulation of all human guilt; as if he himself were that thing which God cannot endure, but which he must drive from his presence for ever. ([CHRIST—OUR SUBSTITUTE](#) - 2 Cor 5:21)

---

**Spurgeon - Isaiah 53:10** - The great arms of the eternal Father are ready to save you as you are, because the great work of Christ has effected all that is wanted before God for the acceptance of the vilest sinner. How is it that the Father can embrace the prodigal? He is fresh from the swine-trough: look at him; look at his rags; how foul they are! We would not touch them with a pair of tongs! Take him to the fire and burn the filth! Take him to the bath and wash him! That lip is not fit to kiss; those filthy lips cannot be permitted to touch that holy cheek of the glorious Father. But it is not so. While he was yet a great way off, his father saw him—rags, and poverty, and sin, and filth, and all—and he did not wait till he was clean, but ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him, just as he was. How could he do that? Why, the parable does not tell us; for it did not run on with the subject to introduce the atonement; but this explains it: when God accepts a sinner, he is in fact only accepting Christ. He looks into the sinner's eyes, and he sees his own dear Son's image there, and he takes him in. As we have heard of a good woman, who, whenever a poor sailor came to her door, whoever he might be, would always make him welcome, because she said, 'I think I see my own dear son who has been these many years away, and I have never heard of him; but whenever I see a sailor, I think of him, and treat the stranger kindly for my son's sake.' So, my God, when he sees a sinner long for pardon and desirous of being accepted, thinks he sees his Son in him, and accepts him for his Son's sake. ([Expiation](#))

---

#### **Hymns Related to Isaiah 53:10**

- [Lord Jesu! May Thy Grief](#)
  - [Thou Man of Sorrows, Hail!](#)
- 

#### **Spurgeon - Faith's Checkbook - Christ and His Children**

"When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed."—Isaiah 53:10

OUR Lord Jesus has not died in vain. His death was sacrificial: He died as our substitute because death was the penalty of our sins;



and because his substitution was accepted of God, He has saved those for whom He made His soul a sacrifice. By death, He became like the corn of wheat which bringeth forth much fruit. There must be a succession of children unto Jesus; He is "the Father of the everlasting age." He shall say, "Behold, I and the children whom thou hast given me."

A man is honored in his sons, and Jesus hath His quiver full of these arrows of the mighty. A man is represented in his children, and so is the Christ in Christians. In his seed, a man's life seems to be prolonged and extended; and so is the life of Jesus continued in believers.

Jesus lives, for He sees His seed. He fixes His eye on us; He delights in us; He recognizes us as the fruit of His soul travail. Let us be glad that our Lord does not fail to enjoy the result of His dread sacrifice, and that He will never cease to feast His eyes upon the harvest of His death. Those eyes which once wept for us are now viewing us with pleasure. Yes, He looks upon those who are looking unto Him. Our eyes meet! What a joy is this!

---

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief (Isaiah 53:10).

When I saw my pastor's sermon title, "You Can't Drink Grapes," I wondered what his message was going to be about. His communion meditation centered on the two symbols Jesus used at the Lord's Supper: bread and wine. The bread symbolizes Christ's body; the wine His shed blood. The wine came from grapes, luscious and ripe, harvested from the vine. But before they became liquid, they had to be crushed so that all of the juice would flow out of them.

The same was true in the life of the Lord Jesus. To fulfill His purpose for coming to this earth, He too needed to be crushed. He came to pay the penalty for our sin. That price was death, a sacrifice He paid when He died on the cross. Even though Roman soldiers carried out the execution, the penalty was exacted by God the Father Himself. Isaiah wrote, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise [crush] Him."

It's true. We can't drink grapes. They must be crushed to give forth juice. And that is exactly what happened to Christ on our behalf on Calvary's cross. He poured out His physical life so that we might have spiritual life. When we drink the juice of communion, we are to remember the One who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. —D.C.E.

Natural life came by God's breath; eternal life comes by Christ's death.

---

**Spurgeon - Daily Help** - When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed.—Isaiah 53:10

Our Lord Jesus has not died in vain. His death was sacrificial; He died as our substitute because death was the penalty of our sins and because His substitution was accepted by God. He has saved those for whom He made His soul a sacrifice. By death He became like the corn of wheat which brings forth much fruit. There must be a succession of children to Jesus; He is the Father of the everlasting age. He will say, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me" (Heb. 2:13).

---

Play **Alan Jackson's** beautiful rendition of the "[Old Rugged Cross](#)" (and try to keep a dry eye as you ponder the words of Isaiah 53!)

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross  
The emblem of suffering and shame  
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best  
For a world of lost sinners was slain

So I'll cherish the old rugged cross  
Till my trophies at last I lay down  
And I will cling to the old rugged cross  
And exchange it some day for a crown

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true  
It's shame and reproach gladly bear  
Then he'll call me someday to my home far away  
Where his glory forever I'll share

And I'll cherish the old rugged cross  
Till my trophies at last I lay down  
And I will cling to the old rugged cross

And exchange it some day for a crown

I will cling to the old rugged cross

And exchange it some day for a crown\

**Isaiah 53:11 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.**

KJV Isaiah 53:11 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.

- **As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied** Luke 22:44; John 12:24,27-32; 16:21; Galatians 4:19; Heb 12:2; Rev 5:9,10; Rev 7:9-17
- **By His knowledge** John 17:3; 2 Cor 4:6; Php 3:8-10; 2 Pet 1:2,3; 3:18
- **the Righteous One My Servant** Isaiah 42:1; 49:3; 1 John 2:1; 2 John 1:1,3
- **will justify the many** Isaiah 45:25; Ro 3:22-24; 4:24,25; 5:1,9,18,19; 1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:6,7
- **As He will bear their iniquities** Isaiah 53:4-6,8,12; Mt 20:28; Heb 9:28; 1 Pet 2:24; 3:18
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JEHOVAH SATISFIED WITH HIS SERVANT'S SACRIFICE

**As a result of** (because of or in consequence of) **the anguish of His soul He will see it and be satisfied** - Whose **soul**? The Suffering Servant. And as an aside while we cannot begin to comprehend the full meaning of **anguish of His soul**, clearly His suffering was not just in His body, but in His deepest inner being. The Servant paid a high price (the highest) in a moment of time (the Cross), but the joy of His soul will be eternal as He sees His spiritual offspring, including the redeemed remnant of Israel.

**Anguish of His soul** - In English **anguish** means extreme mental distress. That would characterize our Lord Jesus' sufferings in His trials culminating in His crucifixion. I doubt if we as benefactors of His soul suffering will ever understand fully the divine transaction that took place in our Lord's innermost being. Surely this suffering was even greater than the physical suffering He was forced to endure.

**David Baron on anguish of His soul** - This "travail of soul" includes, as has been well observed, "all the toil, suffering, and sorrow through which He came, and has been outlined, if not unfolded, in the previous part of the prophecy. It culminated when He was cut off out of the land of the living, and His soul was made an offering for sin, accomplishing what the Levitical sacrifices only symbolized. No accumulation of mere bodily sufferings could satisfy these expressions. The 'travail' is that of the soul; it has its seat within, and is such as might find voice in those words reported from Gethsemane, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,' or in those other words reported from the cross, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' It is what the Greek litany calls 'unknown agonies.' " ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Soul** is **nephesh** (Lxx = **psuche**) meaning breath, the inner being with its thoughts and emotions. It is the part of a person that thinks, feels, wills, and desires. This is the part of Jesus that suffered deep anguish, affliction and pain. In most translations it is easy to miss the fact that this word **nephesh** (soul) is found once in each of these last three verses - Isaiah 53:10 "He would render **Himself**" or He would render His soul because **"Himself"** is actually **nephesh**; Isaiah 53:11 "anguish of His soul (**nephesh**); and Isaiah 53:12 "He poured out Himself (**nephesh**)" or poured out His soul! These are surely "deep waters" which we will undoubtedly never fully comprehend!

**Spurgeon** - He hath poured out his soul unto death.' I will say no more about it, except that you see how complete it was. Jesus gave poor sinners everything. His every faculty was laid out for them. To his last rag he was stripped upon the cross. No part of his body or of his soul was kept back from being made a sacrifice. The last drop, as I said before, was poured out till the cup was drained. He made no reserve: he kept not back even his innermost self: 'He hath poured out his soul unto death.'" Thank You Jesus!

**Henry Morris** - Once **"His soul"** was offered for sin, then the whole theme changes from suffering to triumph just as in Psalm 22:30 (WHICH DESCRIBES THE CRUCIFIXION) - "Posterity will serve Him; It will be told of the Lord to the coming generation."

**Beall**: Note that the Servant voluntarily sets His **soul** as a trespass offering; no one forces Him. The voluntary obedience of the Servant to the will of the Father in offering up Himself as an offering for our sins is again emphasized here (see also 50:5, 7).

John describes Jehovah's **satisfaction** with His son's sacrifice writing that

He Himself (Messiah) is the [propitiation](#) for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. (1 John 2:2+)

**Comment:** The word *propitiation* carries the basic idea of appeasement or satisfaction, specifically toward God. Propitiation is a two-part act that involves appeasing the wrath of an offended person and being reconciled to him. (see full discussion of [What is propitiation?](#))

**ESV Study Bible** on **He will see it and be satisfied** - The outcome of the servant's sufferings is not regret but the satisfaction of obvious accomplishment.

**MacArthur** on **He will see it and be satisfied**- The Servant's full joy and satisfaction comes from providing righteousness, redemption, forgiveness and eternal heaven for His children. What a day that will be.

**David Thompson** poses an interesting question - One question that comes to mind is who is actually satisfied - God the Father or God the Son? The answer is both. God the Father is completely satisfied with the judicial work of God the Son, and God the Son is completely satisfied with the work as well....That work meant that Jesus Christ would have "anguish" in His soul. The word "anguish" means to be weary and troubled in your soul (Ibid., p. 639). Not only did this work of Jesus Christ require that He suffer physically, but also that He would suffer internally, mentally, and emotionally. In order to save our soul, He had to have anguish in His own. As we said, when He cried, "My God, My God why hast Thou forsaken Me?," (Mt 27:46) there were things happening you and I know nothing about. As **G. Campbell Morgan** said, "Jesus Christ took our hell so we could take His heaven."

**Be satisfied** is the Hebrew verb [saba/sabea](#) which means to be satisfied, to have enough, to be filled, abundantly supplied. It stands for the fullest realization of expectation, or gratification of any particular desire. **Be satisfied** is in the imperfect tense signifying Jehovah is continually satisfied with the work of His Servant's sacrificial work to the fullest possible degree. The irony is that this same word ([saba/sabea](#)) is used in Isaiah 1:11 where Jehovah speaks of the sacrifices of the nation of Israel declaring "I [have had enough](#) of burnt offerings... I take no pleasure....". David uses this verb ([saba/sabea](#)) in Psalm 17:15 writing "As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness; I **will be satisfied** with Your likeness when I awake," giving a strong Old Testament testimony to the resurrection (cf Job 19:25-27, Da 12:2) and the future life, even anticipating the glorious promise of 1 John 3:2+, "that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is."

The Dead Sea Scrolls add that He will see the light of life, which was indeed fulfilled in his resurrection. In addition the Septuagint refers to light. Here is the English translation of Isaiah 53:11 - "the Lord also is pleased to take away from the travail of his soul, **to shew him light**, and to form him with understanding; to justify the just one who serves many well; and he shall bear their sins."

**Anguish** ([05999](#)) (**amal** from verb **amal** = to labor especially the dark side of labor, the grievous and unfulfilling aspects of work) means trouble, labor, toil. **Gilbrant** - This is the noun that describes the labor that Qoheleth, the Preacher of Ecclesiastes, considered vanity, because the laborer could never enjoy the fruit of the labor (Ecc. 1:3; 2:11). The term is used figuratively to describe the heaviness of certain painful thoughts, particularly the psalmist's concern over the prosperity of the wicked (Ps. 73:16). 'āmāl can also refer to the fruit or produce of labor (Ps. 105:44; Ecc. 2:19) and the notion of trouble or vexation (general weariness or weariness of situations and circumstances). Joseph named his firstborn son Manasseh since God had made him forget all his toil (Gen. 41:51). The Lord heard the affliction and toil of his people in Egypt and sent Moses to deliver them (Deut. 26:7). Job's so-called friends are called "troublesome comforters" (Job 3:10; 16:2). The Suffering Servant, Jesus Christ, experienced for our sakes "the anguish of his soul" (Isa. 53:11). 'āmāl may also be translated "wickedness" (cf. Num. 23:21; Isa. 10:1), which conveys the emotion of vexation and anguish associated with sinful behavior, especially by those who are the recipients of such evil acts. (Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary)

The Septuagint translates **amal** in Isaiah 53:11 with the noun [ponos](#) (see [Liddell-Scott](#)) means hard labor or toil (Col 4:13) or distress caused by hard, difficult circumstances which in turn bring pain, affliction or anguish (Rev 16:10-11, Rev 21:4).

**Amal** - 54x in 53v - anguish(1), fruit of his labor(1), fruit of my labor(3), labor(16), mischief(9), misery(1), sorry(1), toil(3), toils(1), trouble(13), troublesome(1), unjust decisions(1), wickedness(2), work(1).

Gen. 41:51; Num. 23:21; Deut. 26:7; Jdg. 10:16; Job 3:10; Job 4:8; Job 5:6; Job 5:7; Job 7:3; Job 11:16; Job 15:35; Job 16:2; Ps. 7:14; Ps. 7:16; Ps. 10:7; Ps. 10:14; Ps. 25:18; Ps. 55:10; Ps. 73:5; Ps. 73:16; Ps. 90:10; Ps. 94:20; Ps. 105:44; Ps. 107:12; Ps. 140:9; Prov. 24:2; Prov. 31:7; Eccl. 1:3; Eccl. 2:10; Eccl. 2:11; Eccl. 2:18; Eccl. 2:19; Eccl. 2:20; Eccl. 2:22; Eccl. 2:24; Eccl. 3:13; Eccl. 4:4; Eccl. 4:6; Eccl. 4:8; Eccl. 4:9; Eccl. 5:15; Eccl. 5:18; Eccl. 5:19; Eccl. 6:7; Eccl. 8:15; Eccl. 9:9; Eccl. 10:15; Isa. 10:1; Isa. 53:11; Isa. 59:4; Jer. 20:18; Hab. 1:3; Hab. 1:13

## "MANIFOLD" JUSTIFICATION

**Manifold** means many and varied, like John describes "a great multitude (**MANY**) which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues (**VARIED**), standing before the throne and before the Lamb." (Rev 7:9<sup>±</sup>)

Here we encounter a major shift in the speaker. From Isaiah 53:1-11a it is first person plural, the redeemed Jewish remnant of the last days looking back at how their Messiah fulfilled this detailed prophecy. Now the passage shifts from all plural pronouns to the first person singular and God Himself gives testimony. So from the redeemed remnant of Israel who have been looking back to the cross from their day of salvation in the last days, it shifts to Jehovah speaking and looking forward to the Cross from Isaiah's day.

**By His knowledge the Righteous One My Servant, will justify the many**- Jesus was perfectly righteous in all His ways and therefore was fully qualified to provide righteousness for all who would believe in Him and have His perfect righteousness placed on their otherwise defunct spiritual "bank account."

**Gilbrant on knowledge** - The Servant's "knowledge" means He knew the Father, He knew what He was doing in his sacrifice of himself for us, and He knew who He was and is.

**David Baron** on the difficult phrase **by His knowledge** - It cannot be positively stated whether בְּדַעַתּוֹ *beda'to* (**by His knowledge**), is to be understood in a subjective sense of the Servant of Jehovah, i.e. "*according to His knowledge*," or objectively, "*by the knowledge of Him*." Grammatically it might be rendered either way, but it is correct to say with Delitzsch (who himself favors the subjective view) that nearly all the commentators who understand by the Servant of Jehovah the divine Redeemer, give preference to the latter of the two explanations, namely, **by the knowledge of Him on the part of others**. And this, it seems to me, is the more satisfactory view. The kind of "knowledge" expressed in the word is not only that which has reference to understanding with the mind, but a practical, experimental knowledge a spiritual heart acquaintance with Him, a personal appropriation by a living faith of His redeeming work for sinners such a "knowledge," for instance, as is implied in the words of Christ, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou didst send," (Jn 17:3) or, in the prayer of the Apostle, "That I might know Him and the power of His resurrection." (Php 3:10) ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

The **NET Bible** (as does HCSB, NRSV) links the phrase **by His knowledge** with His satisfaction rendering it "He will be satisfied when He understands what He has done."

Below are some other thoughts on **by His knowledge**...

**Piper**: It means that the Servant was not taken off guard by the will of the Lord to crush him. He knew it. And he agreed with it.

**Parunak**: How about the subjective sense, "by the knowledge that he has"? This clause lies between two others, the first emphasizing what the Servant knows, and the second pointing out what he does. The second half of the clause summarizes what he does, so it makes sense to understand the first half as summarizing what he knows.

**Beall**: [takes the other view] "knowledge of him" is probably to be construed in this way [knowledge that people have regarding Jesus Christ], rather than the Servant's knowledge, though both are possible grammatically

**Motyer**: the knowledge which he alone possesses regarding what God requires in relation to sin and what to do about it

On the other hand the NAS, ESV, NIV, NKJV associate **by His knowledge** with the next phrase (the Righteous one My Servant will justify the many). For example, the **NIV** has "**by his knowledge** my righteous servant will justify many." The **ESV** has "by his knowledge shall the righteous one, My Servant, make many to be accounted righteous." When the verse is read this way the idea is that the Servant knew exactly what He needed to do to remedy the problem of man's sin and separation from God.

**A W Pink** - The Father's declaration concerning His Son "By His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many" (Isaiah 53:11) certainly has a double force: the "knowledge" He possesses and the knowledge which He imparts. As Manton pointed out, "it may be taken either way: actively, for the knowledge which He shall give out; passively, for our apprehension of Christ," for the former without the latter cannot justify us. "By His knowledge" can be regarded both subjectively and objectively. First, by His own personal knowledge of the Father (John 17:25), which was the ground of what He imparted unto men (John 3:11) for their salvation. Second, for our saving knowledge of Him— received from Him. Instead of quibbling as to whether or not Isaiah intended to include each of those meanings, let us be thankful that he was guided to use language which included both senses. ([Resource](#))

The **NET Note** observes that "The song ends as it began (cf. Isaiah 52:13–15), with the Lord announcing the servant's vindication and exaltation."

**The Righteous One** - This is Jesus Christ, no man is righteous before God except the Man Christ Jesus. **David Baron** observes that the unique way this is phrased in Hebrew (see [his exposition for more detail](#)) is done so that "Our minds...rest on the

righteousness of the Righteous One as the procuring cause of the blessing spoken of in this verse. In virtue of having been the Righteous One, He becomes the causer, or bringer of righteousness to His believing people." ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**William Cunningham** - "God's righteousness is the righteousness which God's righteousness requires Him to require." T

Jesus Thy Blood and righteousness  
My beauty are, my glorious dress;  
'Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,  
With joy shall I lift up my head. ([Play](#))

**B W Newton** - The righteousness by which we are constituted righteous is a service, and obedience which He became man in order to render, and which He commenced and finished in the earth. It commenced when He said, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." It terminated when He had become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and said, "It is finished." It is true, indeed, that unless He had been one to whom righteousness essentially belonged, He could not have wrought out the righteousness which He did work out as the Servant. The service of that Servant had in it a superhuman excellency, for that Servant was Immanuel God manifest in the flesh." ([exposition](#))

This descriptive name of Messiah is found in both testaments...

In Isa 24:16 we read that "from the ends of the earth we hear songs, "Glory to the **Righteous One**."" John Martin comments that "The believing remnant will view the earth's desolation as a righteous act by the righteous God." (BKC)

Jeremiah 23:5 "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I shall raise up for David a **righteous Branch**; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land."

Jeremiah 33:15 'In those days (THE LAST DAYS - TOWARD THE END OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION) and at that time I will cause a **righteous Branch of David** to spring forth; and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth.

John writes "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, **Jesus Christ the righteous**." (1 John 2:1)

Acts 3:14 "But you disowned the Holy and **Righteous One** and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,

Acts 7:52 "Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the **Righteous One**, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become;

Acts 22:14 "And he said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will and to see the **Righteous One** and to hear an utterance from His mouth.

**Will justify the many** - Notice it is **many** not all! "**Justified**" means to be declared righteous as a judicial act and so to be treated as if one is not sinful, but holy. God sees this one "IN" His Son, Paul explaining that "But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, Who became to us wisdom from God, and **righteousness** and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor 1:30)

When Jesus died upon the cross  
He took our sin and shame;  
He offers us His righteousness,  
A gift that we must claim.  
—Sper

How can **the many** be justified? Only one Way by grace through faith and the application (imputation, reckoning) of Christ's righteousness to the credit side of the "account" of the one who believes in Jesus (cf Ro 3:22+, 2 Co 5:21+). We owed a debt we could not pay. Christ paid a debt He did not owe. We enter into this glorious state of justification the same way Abraham did in Genesis 15:6+ = BY FAITH - "Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned (imputed, accounted) it to him as righteousness."

Earlier Isaiah had given a "preview prophecy" writing "In the LORD all the offspring of Israel **will be justified** and will glory." (Isa 45:25)

There is a play on words in the Septuagint translation - "**Righteous One...will justify**" is "dikaioo...dikaio" translated into English - "my righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous"

#### Related Resources:

- [Three Tenses of Salvation](#) - We have been justified, We are being sanctified, We will be glorified.



- [Why does Christ's righteousness need to be imputed to us?](#)
- [Why is justification by faith such an important doctrine?](#)
- [What is justification? What does it mean to be justified?](#)
- [Is salvation by faith alone, or by faith plus works?](#)
- [What is righteousness?](#)
- [What is impartation?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about self-righteousness?](#)
- [What is the substitutionary atonement?](#)

**John MacArthur** on **the many** - **Many** is a word picked up by the New Testament writers, as well. Both Matthew and Mark refer to Christ as having given His life a ransom for **many**. (ED: Mt 20:28, cf Mt 26:28; Mk 10:45, cf Mk 14:24) Paul in Romans 5:15+ speaks of the sacrifice of Christ for **many** (ED: SEE ALSO Ro 5:19+). The writer of Hebrews in Hebrews 9:28+ refers again to the fact that Christ gave His life for **many**. And the idea there is many in contrast to one. And all those writers, Matthew, Mark, Paul, and the writer of Hebrews are reaching back to Isaiah 53, without necessarily quoting it, where you have the contrast between the One in verse 11 who is righteous and the many who are sinners. And many are guilty, but only One is righteous. ([Sermon](#))

I would add that they phrase "**the many**" is used in the OT to refer specifically to the Jewish people (Da 9:27+, Da 12:3+) And that could well be the primary meaning here since Isaiah is addressed first of all to the Jews. But of course **the many** is all who believe for as Paul writes "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." (Ro 1:16+).

Messianic Jewish writer **David Baron** says "**The** בְּיָמָיו , rabbim ("**many**")", to whom He thus brings righteousness, or constitutes righteous, is the mass of mankind, or all not only in Israel, but amongst the nations also who shall respond to His call, and by a living faith enter into an acquaintance with Him." ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**Brian Bell** - There is no place in the OT where we are nearer to the heart of the gospel than here! One of the "more important" things I learned as a youth, was to spin a Frisbee. (spent hours doing that the summer of 1979) The art of it was to keep your finger centered! Our whole art of Christianity?...to be Centered on the Cross! Jesus didn't die a martyr's death; or only as a supreme act of love; or even as an act of bravery. He died as our substitute, in our place, for our sins! You must trust in His atoning death, realizing "He died for me!" ([Sermon Notes](#))

**David Thompson** gives an illustration related to righteousness (ours versus His) - Donald Grey Barnhouse told the story of a man who had grown up in the ghetto of New York and became a tremendous success. He wrote plays and became very wealthy. He bought his own yacht and he also went out and bought himself a captain's uniform to wear. It was a beautiful uniform. It had all of the gold and braid of a captain's uniform in the United States Navy. One day he went and picked up his mother and told her that he wanted to take her to his yacht so she could see it. She went onto his boat and he slipped downstairs and put on his beautiful captain's uniform. He went back up to where his mother was and said, "Look, Mom, I am a captain." His mom said, "Son, by my calculation you are a captain and by your calculation you are a captain, but by a real Navy captain's calculation you are not a captain." What we are up against in our eternal case before a holy God is His righteousness. We may look nice when we compare ourselves to others, but when we compare ourselves to His standards and His calculations, we do not come close to His glory. God says, our plan was that My Righteous Servant come into this world to justify you. one who believes on Him, He will bear your iniquities and give you justification in your status with God.

## WE RECEIVE HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS BECAUSE HE BEARS OUR INIQUITIES

**As He will bear their iniquities** ("for he carried their sins" = NET) - As ("**for**" in NET) is a term of explanation. He explains how justification will be made possible. Jehovah prophesies that His Righteous Servant's death will be a sin bearing death, in short a fulfillment of thousands of sin bearing animal sacrifices that for centuries had been pointing toward His ultimate sacrifice, but which could not "make perfect those who draw near" (Heb 10:1), because "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." (Heb 10:4) In a word, this section is a clear description of the doctrine of vicarious, substitutionary atonement and by implication, justification by imputation.

**Oswalt**: The reason the Servant has the power to make people righteous before God is that he himself bears their iniquities – the entire book has been about the persistent sin and unbelief of the chosen people, not to mention the world at large. This man will change all that in a sentence. (NICOT-Isaiah)

**He will bear** (05445) ([sabal](#)) is used twice in Isaiah 53 (Isa 53:4, 11) to figuratively describe the Suffering Servant bearing "**our sorrows**" in verse 4 and our iniquities in verse 11. As Patterson says "Here (REFERRING TO Isa 53:4) the coming Servant,



Messiah, lifts up and takes upon Himself man's sicknesses and bears the weight of his worrisome sorrows. **Nothing could more graphically portray the vicarious sacrificial work of Christ** Who bore the penalty for man's sin so that man may receive God's righteousness and stand justified before Him." (TWOT) (Bolding mine)

The Septuagint translates **sabal** in Isa 53:11 with the verb anaphero which means literally to bring or take up and was a technical term for offering sacrifices (offer up or bring up to the altar, Heb 7:27+). The writer of Hebrews uses anaphero in the phrase "Christ also, **having been offered** once to bear the sins of many." (Heb 9:28+), which clearly depicts Christ's taking sins on Himself (as our vicarious substitute) in order to atone for them. Anaphero is also found in the Septuagint in Leviticus 16 (the Day of Atonement - Yom Kippur) in Lev 16:25+ describing the work of the high priest who "shall offer up (Lxx = anaphero) in smoke the fat of the sin offering on the altar." And finally anaphero is used in Peter's great passage on the Servant's Substitutionary Sacrifice...

He Himself **bore** (anaphero) our sins in His body on the cross, so that (PURPOSE CLAUSE) we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. (1 Peter 2:24+)

But back to our passage and the phrase **He will bear their iniquities** - What is fascinating is that according to Thompson this verb "**will bear**" (**sabal**) is in the "**future imperfect tense** which means that after we are justified, Jesus Christ continues to carry out an advocacy work on our behalf for the perverse and depraved things that we do. The assumption is that when Jesus Christ saves us, we do not become some perfect holy person in practice. In fact, there will be moments when we will sin, and if we say differently, we are a liar (1 John 1:8, 10). What this verse says is that when we sin, God continually dispenses the merits of His cross-work on our behalf as our great High Priest. He distributes necessary grace as our continual advocate. When we do something sinful, evil, depraved and we confess it, God looks at that cross-work of Jesus Christ and is fully satisfied that the case is settled." ([Exposition](#))

**Delitzsch** agrees with this analysis writing "This yisbol (He shall bear), which stands along with future verbs, and being also future itself, refers to something to be done by the Servant of Jehovah **after the completion of the work to which He is called in this life**, and **denotes the continued operation of His 'bearing,' or 'carrying'**(Isa 53:4) through His own active mediation. His continued loading of our trespasses upon Himself is merely the constant pressure and presentation of His atonement which has been offered once for all. The dead yet living One, because of His one self sacrifice, is an eternal Priest, who now lives to distribute the blessings that He has acquired."

**Iniquities** (Same noun in Isaiah 53:6, 6, 11)([05771](#))(**'avon** from **awah** = to bend, twist, distort) describes sin's power to twist or distort something good so that the result, effect or consequence is bad (e.g., sex outside of marriage). 'Avon describes the pervertedness, 'bentness', crookedness of our fallen human nature and is used repeatedly in Isaiah (Isaiah 1:4; 5:18; 6:7; 40:2; 43:24; 50:1).

---

**Paul Apple** takes this final stanza and substitutes Jesus for many of the personal pronouns which makes a very interesting reading...

Reading of Text – substituting the personal pronouns

But the Lord was pleased  
To crush Jesus Christ, putting Jesus Christ to grief;  
If Jesus Christ would render Himself as a guilt offering,  
Jesus Christ will see His offspring,  
Jesus Christ will prolong His days,  
And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.  
As a result of the anguish of Jesus Christ's soul,  
He will see it and be satisfied;  
By his knowledge the Righteous One,  
My Servant, will justify the many,  
As Jesus will bear their iniquities.  
Therefore, I will allot Jesus Christ a portion with the great,  
And Jesus Christ will divide the booty with the strong;  
Because Jesus Christ poured out Himself to death,  
And was numbered with the transgressors;  
Yet Jesus Christ Himself bore the sin of many,  
And interceded for the transgressors.

## Why Did Jesus Die?

Read: Isaiah 53:1-12

God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. —Romans 5:8

The atoning death of Christ is a truth so profound that scholars have been unable to fully plumb its depths. Think of it—Jesus, God's Son, died to pay the penalty for our sins! Various theories have been advanced to explain what happened, but Scripture teaches that substitution lies closest to the heart of this great mystery. One innocent man bore the sins of all humanity.

Cliff Barrows tells of the time his two young children did something wrong. Although they were gently warned, they repeated the offense and needed to be disciplined. Cliff's tender heart was pained at the thought of having to punish the ones he loved. So he called Bobby and Bettie into his room, removed his belt and shirt, and with bare back he knelt by his bed. He told each child to whip him 10 times. Oh, how they cried! But the penalty had to be paid. The children sobbed as they lashed their daddy's back. Then Cliff hugged and kissed them, and they prayed together. "It hurt," he recalls, "but I never had to spank them again."

Are you haunted by the memory of some cowardly, selfish, or shameful acts? Jesus took the lashes for all our sins. Now He invites us to accept His forgiveness and devote the rest of our lives to Him. He wants us to know the greatness of His Father's love. That's why He died!

The Lamb of God was crucified,  
The penalty for sin was paid,  
God's holiness was satisfied,  
For all our sins on Christ were laid. —Sper

God the judge not only declared us guilty but also paid our penalty.

By Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

## He Died For Me!

Read: Isaiah 53

If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. —Matthew 27:42

William and Mary Tanner were crossing the railroad tracks when it happened. Mary's foot slipped and wedged itself between the rail and the wooden crosswalk. She tried frantically to pull her foot free as the sound of an approaching train was heard. There were but seconds left as the express came rushing toward her around a curve. Will Tanner pulled on her foot, desperately trying to free her.

As the train came closer and its whistle screamed and brakes shrieked, Will held her in his arms. While people shuddered in horror, the train thundered over them. One witness said that just before the engine hit them, he heard the brave man cry, "I'll stay with you, Mary!" That is great love!

This story reminds me of our Savior, who loved us with a love that can save us (John 3:16). Death came hurtling at Him as He hung on a cross and took the full penalty we deserved. He heard people cry out to Him to save Himself and come down from the cross (Matthew 27:40). But to save others He chose not to save Himself (v.42).

With divine, sacrificial love, Jesus refused to spare His own life. He died so that He could provide forgiveness of sins for us. Our Savior stayed on the cross—for you and for me!

Oh, can it be, upon a tree  
The Savior died for me?  
My soul is thrilled, my heart is filled,  
To think He died for me! —Newton

Nails could not have kept Jesus on the cross if His love for us had not held Him there.

By Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

**Isaiah 53:12 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.**

KJV Isaiah 53:12 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.

NET Isaiah 53:12 So I will assign him a portion with the multitudes, he will divide the spoils of victory with the powerful, because he willingly submitted to death and was numbered with the rebels, when he lifted up the sin of many and intervened on behalf of the rebels."

- **Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great** Isaiah 49:24,25; 52:15; Ge 3:15; Ps 2:8; Da 2:45; Mt 12:28,29; Acts 26:18; Php 2:8-11; Col 1:13,14; 2:15; Heb 2:14,15
- **Because He poured out Himself to death** Ps 22:14; Php 2:17; \*marg.; Heb 12:2
- **And was numbered with the transgressors** Mark 15:28; Luke 22:37; 23:25,32,33
- **Yet He Himself bore the sin of many,** Isaiah 53:11; 1 Timothy 2:5,6; Titus 2:14; Heb 9:26,28
- **And interceded for the transgressors** Lk 23:34; Ro 8:34; Heb 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1,12
- [Isaiah 53 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Lk 22:37+ (QUOTED BY JESUS HIMSELF) "For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, '**AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS**'; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment."

### THE SUFFERING SERVANT'S EXALTATION

**Therefore** - The term of conclusion. He has just described the substitutionary sacrificial death of the Servant and now Jehovah describes the rewards for His sacrifice.

**I will allot ([chalaq](#)) Him [a portion] with the [great](#)** - NAS is probably not the best translation (e.g., "great" is the same word translated "many" in the previous verse and "many" at the end of this verse.). The **HCSB** renders it "Therefore I will give Him the many as a portion." "I" of course is Jehovah Who will Himself bestow the reward on Messiah.

**Oswalt**: far from being despised and rejected, an unknown, the Servant will be given a place at the very forefront, dividing spoil with the victors.(NICOT-Isaiah)

**David Baron** amplifies what is bestowed writing that "the prize is glorious beyond conception, for the [rabbim](#), "[many](#)," who form His portion include not only "His own" nation, whom He saves and blesses, and who shall yet render Him such loyal devotion and service as the world has not known, but extends beyond the bounds of Israel to the Gentile nations. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

The verb **allot** is ([chalaq](#)) which means to divide or share and is translated in the Lxx with the verb [kleronomeo](#) which means to be an heir.

**Delitzsch** says "What is meant by His having His portion among the rabbim (the 'many,' or 'great') is clearly seen from such passages as Isaiah 52:15 and Isaiah 49:7, according to which the great ones of the earth will be brought to do homage to Him, or, at all events, to submit to Him."

**Baron** however adds this description "is only a mere outline. For the full extent of His **portion**" as the Son of David and Son of Man, who, in order to carry out the pleasure of Jehovah in the redemption of the world, took upon Himself the form of a servant, we have to go to a Scripture like the Psalm 2:8 "Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession."; or Psalm 72 "May he also rule from sea to sea And from the River to the ends of the earth. 9 Let the nomads of the desert bow before him, And his enemies lick the dust. 10 Let the kings of Tarshish and of the islands bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts. 11 And let all kings bow down before him, All nations serve him." (Ps 72:8-11) But while His portion is "divided" or allotted to Him of God, He Himself "divides spoil" (**will divide the booty**) "**with**" or "**among**" the [strong](#). These ([atsumim](#), "strong" or "mighty ones") are those who flock to His banner and go forth with Him to the conflict against the powers of darkness. They are those of whom we read in Psalm 110:3: "Thy people offer themselves willingly (or 'are all willingness,' or 'thorough devotion') in the day of Thy power." They are those whom the beloved John beheld in vision as "the armies of heaven," following in His train as He rides forth in glorious majesty, conquering and to conquer, "riding upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure." (Revelation 19:14<sup>+</sup> - This refers to ALL believers in Heaven!) With these He condescends to share His triumph and

to divide the spoil taken from the enemy by making them partners with Himself in His kingdom and glory, even as they were sharers in His sufferings (cf Rev 5:10+ = "*You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.*"""). And truly He and no one else is worthy to be thus exalted (Rev 5:12+), and deserves the glorious award which God bestows upon Him. This is emphasized in the recapitulation of His peerless merit in the last words of this wonderful prophecy." ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

**And He will divide the booty with the strong** - **ESV** says "He shall divide the spoil with the strong. Messiah will "divide the spoils" like the conquering King He is. The Hebrew verb divide is in the imperfect tense indicating a Messiah will continue to divide the spoils. But with whom will He divide the spoils? This may sound incredible but dear believer He will divide the spoils with YOU. And of course you and I are only "**strong**" in Him not in our own strength (cf 2 Cor 12:9, 10+).

**NET Note** says "The servant is compared here to a warrior who will be richly rewarded for his effort and success in battle."

This statement reminds one of Paul's words in Romans 8:16-17+ "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, **heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ**, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him."

[But God shall raise His head](#)

O'er all the sons of men,  
And make Him see a numerous seed,  
To recompense His pain.

"I'll give Him," saith the Lord,  
"A portion with the strong;  
He shall possess a large reward;  
And hold His honors long."  
--Isaac Watts"

**Because** - This is a term of explanation which should always prompt the question "What is being explained?" What do you think? Check the context.

**Baron** on **because** - The phrase שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁר , tahath asher, expresses more distinctly than the English rendering "**because**" the idea of compensation or reward. It has been translated by some "instead of," or "in return for that, i.e. the glorious portion or allotment which is divided to Him by the Father is 'in return' for the great Redemption which He has accomplished with His own life's blood. ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

Jehovah now gives four specific sacrificial works that explain why the Servant was greatly exalted in the previous section of this passage

1. He was poured out to death . 53:12a He was God's offering poured out for us.
2. He was numbered with the transgressors . 53:12b He who knew no sin became sin for us.
3. He Himself bore the sin of many. 53:12c All sin is washed away for those who believe in Him.
4. He interceded for transgressors. 53:12d

**He poured out Himself to death** - The Servant of Jehovah, the Righteous One (Isa 53:11). This is a prophecy of the death of Messiah and gives the reason He will be exalted. **Poured out** is the Hebrew verb [arah](#) which can mean to make naked (while not the primary sense in this passage, Jesus was virtually made naked on the Cross). The other mean of [arah](#) is to pour out which is the clear meaning here, where "**Himself**" is actually the word **nephesh** or **soul**, so that He poured out His soul to death. The Septuagint says "His soul was delivered (paradidomi) to death." The point is that He poured out His "life blood" completely emptying Himself unto death. **Poured out** is perfect tense signifying this is a completed act, which is in keeping with the teaching in the Epistle to the Hebrews which says "Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many." (Hebrews 9:28+). His sacrificial death once and for all time "Paid in full" mankind's sin debt and has no need to ever be repeated. The writer of Hebrews adds "we have been sanctified (perfect tense = past completed act with ongoing effect) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Heb 10:10+)

Note that **poured out...numbered...bore** are all in the perfect tense, expressing completed action. The fourth verb **interceded** is imperfect tense.

**Note:** Biblical Hebrew only has two tenses - **perfect** and **imperfect**. While the three verb tenses in English are related to time, Biblical Hebrew verb tenses are related to action. The perfect tense is a completed action while the imperfect tense is an incomplete action. ([Resource](#))

**Poured out** reminds us of Paul's testimony "For I am already **being poured out** as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come (2 Ti 4:6+, cf Php 2:17+)

He was not willing that any should perish;  
Jesus enthroned in the glory above,  
Saw our poor fallen world, pitied our sorrows,  
**Poured out His life for us, wonderful love!**  
L R Meyer

And although the Servant's pouring out unto death was the predetermined plan of the Father (Acts 2:23, Acts 4:28), the Servant submitted willingly and voluntarily, John recording "For this reason (cf Jn 10:16) the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but **I lay it down on My own initiative**. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father." (John 10:17, 18).

O blood of Christ so precious,  
**Poured out on Calvary!**  
I feel its cleansing power,  
And that's enough for me!  
And that's enough for me!  
And that's enough for me!  
I feel its cleansing power,  
And that's enough for me!  
Elisha Hoffman

**And was numbered with the transgressors** ([pasha](#) = rebels; Lxx = [anomos](#) = as having no law, wicked, lawless) -

**David Baron on transgressors** - "not only ordinary sinners, such as all men are, but criminals open transgressors of the laws of God and of man, with whom to be associated would be a great humiliation for ordinary men, and how much more to the "Holy One." To the believer it is precious and interesting to remember that this clause formed one of the direct quotations from this chapter made by our Lord Jesus Himself just before His betrayal and crucifixion....It was, indeed, as another writer observes, "one of those remarkable coincidences which were brought about by Providence between the prophecies and the circumstances of our Saviour's passion" that the Christ should have been crucified between "two thieves" (or, more literally, "robbers"), but this one striking incident did not exhaust the scope of the prophetic word. He suffered Himself also to be reckoned with transgressors "in the judgment of His countrymen, and in the unjust judgment (or 'sentence') by which He was delivered up to death as a wicked apostate and transgressor of the law." ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

#### [His honor and His breath](#)

Were taken both away,  
Joined with the wicked in His death,  
And made as vile as they.  
Isaac Watts

Luke's Gospel quotes Jesus

"For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, **AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS**'; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment." (Lk 22:37+)

**Comment** - The point is that Jesus is using this prophetic passage to explain to the disciples that though He was innocent, His enemies would treat Him as a criminal ("transgressor") and crucify Him as a criminal. The disciples would have a difficult time accepting or understanding what the Jewish leaders would soon treat Jesus as a criminal. So Jesus tells them this has to happen to fulfill what was prophesied about Him in Isaiah 53:12.

**Leon Morris** points out that "This (JESUS' QUOTE FROM Isa 53:12) is noteworthy as one of the few places in the New Testament in which that chapter (ISAIAH 53) is explicitly applied to Jesus. Jesus sees his death as one in which he will be one with sinners. This surely points to that death as substitutionary: Jesus will take the place of sinful people."

**Yet He Himself bore the sin of many** - The pronoun **He** is emphatic! **He** and none other! His substitutionary death is again emphasized. This recalls Peter's words in 1 Peter 2:24+ that "*He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.*" Because He died in a moment in time bearing the sins of

**many, many** will live for with Him forever in eternity.

There is an allusion to the truth in this section in the the Epistle to the Hebrews -

Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to **put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself**. 27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, **having been offered once to bear the sins of many**, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him. (Hebrews 9:26-28+)

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,  
In my place condemned He stood;  
Sealed my pardon with His blood;  
Hallelujah! What a Saviour!  
—Philip P. Bliss

**And interceded for the transgressors** ([pasha](#) = rebels) - **Johnson** feels that "the intercession is most likely that referred to in Luke 23:34 where Jesus prayed for those who put him to death both Romans and Jews, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." While I certainly agree with Dr Johnson, I think there is also a reference to His current intercession. That may be why the ESV translates it as **"makes** intercession for the transgressors." The verb [interceded](#) is in the Hebrew verb [paga/pagha](#) translated "fall" in Isaiah 53:6. **Paga** is in the **imperfect tense** suggesting Messiah's continuing intercession.

**David Baron** agrees commenting that "The verb יָפַחְגִּיאַ , yaph'gia' ("made intercession"), is an instance of the **imperfect or indefinite future**, and expresses **a work begun, but not yet ended**. Its most striking fulfillment, as **Delitzsch** observes, was the prayer of the crucified Saviour, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34 ) But this work of intercession which He began on the Cross, He still continues as "the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acs 5:31). ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

The writer of Hebrews adds "Therefore He is able (HAS THE POWER) also to save forever ("save to the uttermost") those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to **make intercession** ([entugchano](#) in the present tense = continually) for them." (Hebrews 7:25+)

Jesus is now in Heaven at the right hand of the Father, and is continually interceding for **transgressors**. All of us as believers sadly still possess the fallen (rebellious) flesh and so it is not surprising that we still rebel or transgress. We still have need for a Great High Priest to make intercession for us!

Paul writes "Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also **intercedes** ([entugchano](#) in the present tense = continually) for us." (Ro 8:34+)

In Hebrews 9:24+ he emphasizes Messiah's role as our Great High Priests writing that "Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now **to appear in the presence of God** (AS OUR HIGH PRIEST) for ([HUPER](#) = **ON OUR BEHALF**) us."

The apostle John encourages us writing "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And **if anyone sins**, we have (present tense = continually) an Advocate ([parakletos](#) - used elsewhere only of the Spirit of Christ) with the Father, Jesus Christ the **righteous**; (cf " the Righteous One" = Isa 53:11)" (1 John 2:1+)

In Isaiah the Lord speaks and His promise sounds very much like One Who is continually making intercession for His rebellious Chosen People Israel when He says

For Zion's sake **I will not keep silent**, And for Jerusalem's sake **I will not keep quiet**, Until her righteousness goes forth like brightness, And her salvation like a torch that is burning. (Isaiah 62:1)

**A Motyer** writes of this passage that "The Anointed One commits himself to ceaseless action, just as to **ceaseless prayer**." (TOTC-Isaiah)

**David Guzik comments** - Isaiah prophesied in a time when Jerusalem was still a functioning city, but was spiritually corrupt. Here, he looks forward to the time when Jerusalem is desolate because she has been conquered by the Babylonians, and prophetically speaks comfort and assurance to her discouraged and downcast citizens. The Lord assures them that He will not rest until Jerusalem is restored in a shining righteousness. This prophecy is directed towards Zion and Jerusalem. Although God is concerned with that area as an actual material place, it also stands as a representation of Israel, and in an even more



general sense, as a representation of all God's people. (Enduring Word Bible Commentary – Isaiah)

**Messianic Jew David Baron** adds this comment and plea - And now at God's right hand He still pleads for them, "For Zion's sake will I not hold My peace," He says, "and for Jerusalem's sake will I not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness and her salvation as a lamp that burneth" because it is not till then that the glory of Jehovah shall fill this earth as the waters cover the sea, and our Lord Jesus Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Will you not for love of Him share in this ministry of intercession for the people which, in spite of all their sins and apostasies, are still beloved for the fathers' sakes, and whose receiving again into God's favour will be as life from the dead to the whole world? "I have set **watchmen** upon thy walls, O Jerusalem; **they shall never hold their peace day nor night**. Ye that are Jehovah's remembrancers ("You who remind the LORD" -NAS77), take ye no rest, and give Him no rest till He establish and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." (Isaiah 62:6KJV). ([Isaiah 53 Exposition](#))

---

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the purpose of Jesus interceding for us in Heaven?](#)
- [What does it mean that Jesus is our Advocate?](#)
- [What does it mean that Jesus is our mediator?](#)
- C H Spurgeon - [Isaiah 53:12 Jesus Interceding for Transgressors](#)

---

#### Riddle summarizes Isaiah 53:12...

The chapter concludes with four reasons for the exaltation of the Servant and the reward which He will enjoy. "The rewards are no more than is due to the death He died" (J. A. Motyer).

(1) "Because he hath poured out his soul unto death". This emphasises the voluntary character of His sacrifice. He said, "I lay down my life for the sheep ... I lay down my life ... I lay it down of myself" (Jn 10:15, 17, 18). The words "poured out" mean "to make naked, bare, empty" (Young's Concordance).

(2) "And he was numbered with the transgressors". The Lord Jesus anticipated the fulfilment of these words, "For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors" (Lk 22:37). According to J. A. Motyer this can be rendered "he let himself be numbered with the transgressors", and thus He "was content to suffer loss, not only of His life, but also of His good name and to be considered by the onlooker as a rebel".

(3) "And he bare the sin of many", or "yet he bare the sin of many" (RV). Men accounted Him as a transgressor, but He was there for transgressors. "Little did they realise that in what He endured on the cross He was Himself the sin-bearer" (W. E. Vine)

(4) "And made intercession for the transgressors". This refers to His intercessory prayer, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk 23:34). He was not only upon the cross as the sin-bearer, He was there with deep desires for those whose sins He bore. As E. J. Young observes, "Here ... there is reflection upon the priestly work of the Servant, who pleads before God the merit and virtue of His atoning work as the only ground of acceptance of the transgressors for whom He dies". (What the Bible Teaches – Isaiah)

---

**Max Lucado** - You can't go to the cross with just your head and not your heart. It doesn't work that way. Calvary is not a mental trip. It's not an intellectual exercise....

It's a heart-splitting hour of emotion....

That's God on that cross. It's us who put him there.

---

#### Sin Hurts

He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many. —Isaiah 53:12

Read: Hebrews 2:10-18 | Bible in a Year: 2 Samuel 14-15; Luke 17:1-19

Sooner or later we all feel the painful effects of sin. Sometimes it's the weight of our own sin and the shame and embarrassment of having failed miserably. At other times, it's the load of someone else's sin that weighs us down—someone who betrayed, deceived, abandoned, ridiculed, cheated, or made a fool of us.

Think about a time when the weight of that guilt or pain was so heavy that you couldn't pull yourself out of bed. Now try to imagine

the heaviness of the combined grief that everyone's sin has caused your family, your church, your neighborhood. Add to that all the suffering sin has caused everyone in your city, state, nation, and the world. Now try to imagine the accumulated grief that sin has caused throughout the centuries since creation.

Is it any wonder that the weight of all this sin began squeezing the life out of Jesus on the night He was called to bear it? (Matt. 26:36-44). The next day, even His beloved Father would forsake Him. No other suffering can compare.

Sin put Jesus to the ultimate test. But His love endured it, His strength bore it, and His power overcame it. Thanks to Jesus' death and resurrection, we know beyond a doubt that sin will not and cannot win.

Is God aloof from human pain  
That ravages our mortal frame?  
Oh, no, Christ felt our agony  
When sin and death He overcame!  
—D. De Haan

Christ's empty tomb guarantees our victory over sin and death. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

---

#### **Spurgeon's Morning and Evening** - "He was numbered with the transgressors." Isaiah 53:12

Why did Jesus suffer himself to be enrolled amongst sinners? This wonderful condescension was justified by many powerful reasons. In such a character he could the better become their advocate. In some trials there is an identification of the counsellor with the client, nor can they be looked upon in the eye of the law as apart from one another. Now, when the sinner is brought to the bar, Jesus appears there himself. He stands to answer the accusation. He points to his side, his hands, his feet, and challenges Justice to bring anything against the sinners whom he represents; he pleads his blood, and pleads so triumphantly, being numbered with them and having a part with them, that the Judge proclaims, "Let them go their way; deliver them from going down into the pit, for he hath found a ransom." Our Lord Jesus was numbered with the transgressors in order that they might feel their hearts drawn towards him. Who can be afraid of one who is written in the same list with us? Surely we may come boldly to him, and confess our guilt. He who is numbered with us cannot condemn us. Was he not put down in the transgressor's list that we might be written in the red roll of the saints? He was holy, and written among the holy; we were guilty, and numbered among the guilty; he transfers his name from yonder list to this black indictment, and our names are taken from the indictment and written in the roll of acceptance, for there is a complete transfer made between Jesus and his people. All our estate of misery and sin Jesus has taken; and all that Jesus has comes to us. His righteousness, his blood, and everything that he hath he gives us as our dowry. Rejoice, believer, in your union to him who was numbered among the transgressors; and prove that you are truly saved by being manifestly numbered with those who are new creatures in him.

---

#### **Spurgeon** - Isaiah 53:12

'Jesus Christ died as an exhibition of divine love.' This is true in a certain sense, but from another point of view, of all the things I have ever heard, this does seem to me to be the most monstrous statement that could be made. That Jesus Christ, dying because of our sins, is a wonderful example of divine love, I do know, admit, and glory in, but that Christ's dying was an instance of divine love, if he did not die because he bare our sins, I entirely deny. There is no exhibition of divine love in the death of Christ if it be not for our sins, but an exhibition of a very different sort. The death of the perfect Son of God, per se, and without its great object, does not exhibit love, but the reverse. What? Does God put to death his only begotten Son, the perfectly pure and holy being? Is this the finale of a life of obedience? Well, then, I see no love in God at all. It seems to me to be the reverse of love that it should be so. Apart from sin-bearing the statement that Jesus must die the death of the cross to show us that his Father is full of love is sheer nonsense; but if he died in our room and stead, then the gift of Jesus Christ by the Father is undoubtedly a glorious instance of divine love. Behold, and wonder, that 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' This is love, if you please, but not the mere fact that the Son of God should be put to death. That would be a thing altogether unaccountable, not to be justified, but to be looked upon as a horrible mystery never to be explained, that the blessed Son of God should die, if we did not receive this full and complete explanation, 'he bare the sin of many'.

---

**Spurgeon - Isaiah 53:12** - Trust Christ and you are saved. Outside in the street there is a drinking-fountain. When you get there, if you are thirsty go to it; you will find no policeman there to send you away. No one will cry, 'You must not drink because you do not wear a satin dress.' 'You must not drink because you wear a corduroy jacket.' No, go and drink; and when you have hold of the ladle and are putting it to your lips, if there should come a doubt—'I do not feel my thirst enough,' still take a drink whether you do or not. So I say to you, Jesus Christ stands like a great flowing fountain in the corners of the street, and he invites every thirsty soul to come and drink. You need not stop and say, 'Am I thirsty enough? Am I dirty enough?' You do need it whether you think you do or not.

Come as you are. Every fitness is legality; every preparation is a lie; every getting ready for Christ is coming the wrong way. You are only making yourselves worse while you think you are making yourselves better. You are like a boy at school who has made a little blot, and he gets out his knife to scratch it out, and makes it ten times worse than before. Leave the blots alone. Come as you are. If you are the dirtiest soul out of hell, trust Christ, and that act of trust shall make you clean. This seems a simple thing, and yet it is the hardest thing in the world to bring you to it; so hard a thing that all the preachers that ever preached cannot make a man believe in Christ. ([CHRIST'S CONNECTION WITH SINNERS THE SOURCE OF HIS GLORY](#))

---

### **J R Miller - The Suffering Savior Isaiah 53**

One picked up an old book—and found it fragrant. The secret was that a sweet flower had been put in among the leaves by someone, and its fragrance had permeated the whole volume. So the fragrance of Jesus has perfumed the Bible from beginning to end. We do not find the name Jesus until we reach the beginning of the New Testament—but the sweetness of the name is everywhere. We find it even in the earliest pages of the Old Testament. No sooner were the gates of Eden closed on our first parents—than the gospel was given. True, the language was dim, not like the clear sentences of the Gospels; yet the promise is there in Eden—as the bud of a very lovely flower which, by and by, opens out under the increasing warmth of progressing revelation; until in the later prophets, especially in Isaiah, it appears in rare beauty.

No other chapter in the Old Testament has been a greater revealer of Christ, than has the fifty-third of Isaiah. Its words are almost as familiar as those of the Twenty-third Psalm. They are repeated at Communion services in thousands of churches, and are read in secret by countless devout believers, who love to sit in the shadow of the cross.

The best that can be done in brief space with the fifty-third chapter, is merely to indicate a few of its truths. The first verse has a tone of discouragement. "Who has believed our message?" That has always been the discouragement of the bearers of spiritual good tidings. If news comes that gold has been discovered in some far-away place, people believe it and flock by thousands to the spot. But when God's messengers deliver their messages, although they tell of the most glorious things, people are slow to believe.

The second verse reminds us that Christ's earthly beginnings were unpromising. "He grew up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground." These figures are striking—a tender plant shooting up from a dry stem which seems dead, a root growing in a desert place. The field was not promising. But the root was not dry or dead—but living, and it grew into rich beauty. It became a great tree whose branches reach now over all the earth, with cool shade in which the weary rest, and rich fruits for men's hunger.

The description goes on. "He was despised, and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." The saddest thing about the life of Christ—was that men despised and rejected Him. He came with a great love in His heart. He came to do men good, and save them, to draw them away from their sins, to make them love God, to lead them to heaven. He came in love—and yet men despised and rejected Him. It is the same still.

Men do not like to look upon suffering. They can see no beauty in it. Pain is ugly to the human sense. Anciently it was thought that sickness was a mark of divine disfavor. The weak were looked at with scorn. Even yet we have not learned to see blessing hidden in suffering. The Servant of the Lord came in weakness, and He was rejected. He came to the needy and the sinful, with treasures of life and glory, which He offered to all. But men paid no heed to His knocking and His calls, and He had to pass on with His blessings.

We learn the object of the sufferings of Christ. The ancients thought that when a man suffered he was being punished for sin. We have this thought here in the words, "We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." That is the way Job's friends judged him. But here it is taught, that not for His own sin—but for ours, was the Messiah suffering. "Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

A Japanese Christian illustrated what Jesus did for sinners, by this story: A mother was crossing a great prairie with her baby in her arms. She saw flames coming in the dry grass. She could not escape by flight, so swiftly were the fiery billows rolling on towards her. So with her hands she speedily dug a hole in the soft ground, laid her baby in it, and then covered it with her own body. She was burned to death in the wave of fire that rolled over her—but the child was safe, unhurt. The Christian explained, "Just so did give Christ Himself—to save us."

We have a picture, also, of those whom Jesus seeks to save. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." This verse tells us that all are sinners. Of course, we all believe this, or admit it in a general way. But do we really admit it as a close, personal matter? "Like sheep!" Sheep are miserably foolish. They are always straying away, going wherever they can find a tuft of grass to nibble at, until at last they are far from the fold and do not know how to find the way back again. Like sheep, we have all gone astray. Every one has turned to his own way instead of going in God's way, the way of truth and holiness.

The Servant of the Lord was a silent sufferer. It is not common for men to remain silent in pain. But here it is said: "He was oppressed—yet when He was afflicted, He opened not His mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is silent—so He opened not His mouth." One of the highest qualities in him who is called to suffer—is silence in endurance.

Another quality in the suffering of the Servant of the Lord, is its injustice. "By oppression and judgment He was taken away, and as for His generation, who among them 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?" The forms of law were not observed. "By a forced and tyrannous judgment He was taken." Then they gave Him a convict's grave. They made His grave with the wicked, although He had done no violence, neither was deceit in His mouth.

Such perversion of justice seems so terrible, that men might ask, "Where is God, that this cruel wrong is permitted?" But the answer is, "It pleased Jehovah to bruise Him!" In the Hebrew, the word has not the harshness it seems to have in the English. God did not delight in the bruising—but His purpose was in it. "Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief: when You shall make His soul an offering for sin—He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand."

Then we have a vision of the glorious outcome of the sufferings of the Messiah. "He shall see of the travail of His soul—and shall be satisfied." He is not sorry now that He endured the cross and all its shame. He does not regret His sufferings and sacrifices on the earth. The blessings which have come from His humiliation, have more than satisfied Him. He sees countless millions of souls saved, which must have perished forever, if He had not gone to the cross to redeem them. The life of the Son of God seemed a tremendous price to pay for the ransom of the lost—but it will appear in the end that the price was not too great. We do not know the worth of human souls, nor can we begin to estimate it until we try to understand how much Christ paid to redeem us.

You say that a certain professed Christian is a very unworthy one, with scarcely a line of spiritual beauty in him. "Christ will never have any comfort from him," you say. "He will never make a saint." "But wait!" says the patient Master. "My work on this man—is not yet finished. He is very imperfect now, and I am not satisfied with him. But wait until My work on his life has been completed. By and by he shall wear the full image of My face, and I shall be satisfied as I see in him—the blessed prints of all My sorrows and My love."

---

## **James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose**

### **The Golden Passional of the Old Testament**

Isaiah 53.

No subject more important than the substitutionary death of Christ. Burdened with that thought, the author prepared for "Threshed Wheat" a series of studies in defence of the old interpretation of Isaiah 53, and as an exposition of that Golden Passional. Conscious of the timeliness of these studies, by the courtesy of the Editor, they are here reproduced.

The Hall-mark of Our Saviour. Dr. J. R. Miller tells a story of a Scottish mother who once accidentally wounded her child's wrist with a knife. To comfort him in his grief, she said: "Never mind, my bonnie bairn; your mither will ken you by that when you are a man." They had been separated for years, and when one day a fine-looking man called on the old woman and announced himself as her son, she was sceptical until he drew up his sleeve, and cried, "Mither, mither, dinna ye ken that?" In a moment the old woman had her boy in her arms. She knew him by the scar.

The scars are the hall-mark of Christ. So though we have never seen Him as we see each other, some day we shall, and then

"We shall know Him By the print of the nails in His hands."

We fail to recognise in much of the preaching of to-day the true Saviour of sinners. Men paint sometimes very sweet and winning pictures of the Christ. They picture the poetry of His actions, the unsullied whiteness of His thoughts, the moral stainlessness of His conduct, the sweetness of His words; but in all their portraits there is no trace of His sacred wounds, no vision of His atoning death. There cannot be a Saviour without the Cross. We fail to recognise the kind of Saviour for the lost many modern preachers proclaim. Eulogies.

1. Ever since this wonderful chapter we know of as the 53rd of Isaiah was written, it has been considered as peculiarly sacred and pregnant with meaning.
2. "It looks as if it had been written beneath the Cross of Golgotha," writes a great German scholar.
3. As far back as Apostolic days we find it was treasured. Polycarp, the disciple of John, called it "the Golden Passional of the Old Testament."
4. Luther said that every Christian ought to be able to repeat it by heart. (Can the reader do this? If not, will the reader set about to memorise it?)
5. Augustine considered the whole of Isaiah, and, of course, particularly the 53rd chapter, as "not a prophecy but a Gospel."

6. Dr. Culross has suggestively written: "It is a prelude to much that is most distinctive in New Testament doctrine, and is the root from which not a little of the thinking of Christian ages has grown. Its phraseology has entered largely into Christian speech, and it has supplied more texts to the Gospel preacher than any other portion of the Old Testament. There are individual phrases in it resembling peaks, from which we faintly descry vast realms of truth which we cannot yet explore, but which shine with a mystic light whose summit is Divine."

Heart of Consolation.

1. The Rabbis call this second section of Isaiah "The wonderful book of consolations," and

2. Isaiah 53 forms the very centre of that second section, and of course

3. Is the very heart of all true consolation.

History. So realistic is it that, as my old and valued friend, the late David Baron says "Instead of a prophecy uttered centuries in advance, it reads like an historic summary of the Gospel narrative of the sufferings of the Christ and the glory that should follow."

I. ITS JEWISH CRITICS.

Torture. This has been called "The Torture Chamber of the Rabbis," and "the bad conscience of the Synagogue," and no Jew is allowed, on pain of severe penalties, to study it until of age.

Conversion. The fact is that no portion of Scripture has been used more than this in the conversion of Jews.

Puzzle. It certainly was a puzzling chapter to all Jews before and since Christ. The portrait it gives of a suffering Messiah was utterly at variance with the popular conception.

Fact. Yet until nearly in the eleventh century the Messianic interpretation of this chapter was almost universally accepted and adopted by the Jews.

A Sample. Here is a sample of Jewish interpretation as evidence of this. Jonathan ben Uzziel (first century) begins his Targum (i.e., paraphrase or commentary) with, "Behold My Servant Messiah shall prosper" (Isa. 52:13).

An Important Date. Rabbi Solomon Yirchaki (or Rashi) 1040-1105, was the first to apply it to the Jewish nation. Right up to his time it was almost universally adopted by Jews that this had to do with the Messiah.

Synagogue. In the Jewish Synagogue on the Day of Atonement, in the Liturgy for that day is the following sentence: "We are shrunk up in our misery, even until now, our Rock hath not come nigh us; Messiah our Righteousness has departed from us. Horror hath seized upon us, and we have none to justify us. He hath borne the yoke of our iniquities and our transgressions, and is wounded because of our transgression. He beareth our sins on His shoulders, that He may find pardon for our iniquities. We shall be healed of our wounds at the time the Eternal will create Him (Messiah) as a new creature."

Other Jewish Interpretations. Several other interpretations and identifications have been given of the Servant, such as Jeremiah; others say Isaiah was meant; and Hezekiah, Joshua, or Job have also been suggested.

II. ITS GENTILE CRITICS.

Past. If for seventeen hundred years the Jews beheld the Messiah in Isaiah's portrait, so also the Christian Church for eighteen centuries has identified this portrait with Christ.

Present. To the amazement and disgust of loyal Bible students there has arisen a school of Gentile modern thinkers who deny that Isaiah 53 has anything to do with Christ. To our sorrow hosts of ministers of religion take that view. This is alarming!

Seriousness.

1. We see in this modern attack on Isaiah 53 an attempt against the Atonement.

2. Of course the truth of the Atonement does not depend completely on Isaiah 53.

III. WHY WE HOLD TO THE ORTHODOX VIEW.

1. Our Lord Himself recognised and taught that Isaiah 53 was a prophecy concerning Himself (see Luke 22:37. Note "In Me," "Concerning Me).

2. Paul recognised the message of the Servant sent to ignorant nations as the good news concerning Christ. (See how Paul refers to Isaiah 52:15 in Romans 15:21.)

3. John finds in Israel's refusal of Jesus the direct fulfilment of the prophet's heart-broken cry concerning unbelief. (John quotes Isaiah 53:1, in John 12:38.)

4. Matthew recognised in Christ's healing miracles the Servant who was to carry our sicknesses and to exhaust Himself with our healing. (He quotes Isaiah 53:4, in Matthew 8:17.)

5. Mark recognises in the two robbers the transgressors with whom Isaiah's Servant was to be catalogued. (Isaiah 53:12 in Mark 15:28.)

6. Philip, when filled with the Holy Spirit, and speaking under His command, answers the Eunuch's question on the identity of the Servant by preaching to him Jesus (Acts 8:2).

7. Israel is sometimes called the Servant of Jehovah, but never as here in 53:11, "My Righteous Servant" (41:8; 43:10; 44:1).

8. Note "For the transgression of My people was He stricken"—one Person suffering for a people.

9. This 53rd chapter portrays an innocent Servant suffering for others (verse 9). "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth." Was this true of the Nation? Were they innocent? What has the first chapter of Isaiah to say about this?

10. The suffering Servant portrayed here in Isaiah 53 is a voluntary sufferer. Read verse 12: "He hath poured out His soul unto death." Did the Jews go voluntarily into captivity? Were they not dragged into it by force?



11. The suffering Servant portrayed in Isaiah 53 is an unresisting Sufferer. "He opened not His mouth." "He is brought as a lamb." "He opened not His mouth" (53:7). Was that Jewish Nation an unresisting one? A very hasty glance at their history is quite sufficient to convince us of this.
12. The sufferings of the Servant ended in death Verse 8, "cut off" (see 9). Have the sufferings of the Jewish nation ended in the death of that nation? The nation, in spite of centuries of persecution, is very much alive.
13. "Oh," says the critics, "nowhere else in Scripture have we suffering associated with the Messiah, hence this chapter is out of harmony with all previous conceptions of the Messiah, and cannot be accepted as applicable to Christ. An individual with such features has no analogy in Hebrew prophecy" But that is not true. What about Genesis and Psalms.
14. "Is it not impossible," says some, "or at least improbably inconsistent, for the same prophet first to have identified the servant with the Nation, and then to present Him to us as an individual?" Our reply is "No."
15. The Experimental Argument. We know the orthodox view is the correct one because it has brought salvation to us. We found the Atoning Saviour here, and that brought salvation to us. Now we can say: "Surely He hath borne my griefs, and carried my sorrows. He was wounded for my transgressions; He was bruised for my iniquities. With His stripes I am healed. Alleluia!