

## THE GREATEST CHAPTERS IN THE BIBLE-09

### ISAIAH, CHAPTER 53

#### I. INTRODUCTION.

##### A. Scripture text: **Isaiah 52:13-15.**

Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up, and greatly exalted. [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. [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.

##### B. PPT sermon series slide.

##### C. The fact that these verses apply to JC is proved by Jn. 12:38, Mt. 8:17, Ac. 8:32-35, Mk. 15:28, Lk. 22:37, Rom. 10:16, and 1Pet. 2:24.

##### D. Isaiah 53 is quoted or referred to at least 85 times in the NT.

##### E. The prophecy begins with 52:13 (X's exaltation), and the rest of the section deals with His humiliation.

##### F. Verse 52:14 informs us that X's physical sufferings made Him look inhuman, so much so that men were astonished at Him. Now for the chapter before us. It traces the life and ministry of X.

#### II. THE SIN-BEARING SERVANT.

##### A. The main figure in this paragraph is the suffering servant. It clear that the "servant" is Messiah, not some great person in Israel's history, the prophet himself, Israel as a whole, or spiritual Israel. Only JC did what is proclaimed of the servant in this context. The description cannot be applied to a group.

##### B. Jehovah' says that although His servant was so disfigured that he hardly seemed human, he would astonish the nations when God exalted Him (see Isa. 52:13-15).

#### III. THE SERVANT'S REJECTION (Isa. 53:1-3).

##### A. Isaiah 53:1-3.

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.

The exiles respond, bemoaning, that very few had believed their message about the coming of the suffering servant. The exiles found him unattractive, and the rest of mankind despised him. But the terrible appearance was due to the suffering endured because the exiles had sinned and failed to be Jehovah's witnesses before the nations.

##### B. Thoughts:

1. The unbelief of Israel is announced: they saw Him, heard Him, but would not trust Him (Jn. 1:11).  
He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.
2. Theirs was a three-fold rejection:
  - a. His words, "report" (53:1).
  - b. His works, "the arm of the Lord" (53:1).
  - c. His person (53:2).
3. He was not born in a palace; He was born in a Bethlehem stable, and He grew up in the despised town of Nazareth (see Jn. 1:43-46). The words "tender plant" literally mean "a little bush" such as would spring from a low branch. In other words, X was not a great tree, but a humble bush.
4. His physical appearance was not unusual; there was no splendor or human attractiveness eye.
5. He was:
  - a. Despised (not wanted, looked down upon).
  - b. Rejected (forsaken by His disciples, His nation, and His world).
  - c. Lightly esteemed (not valued highly, not wanted).Yet He went about doing good and helping the helpless.

#### IV. THE SERVANT'S REDEMPTION (Isa. 53:4-6).

##### A. Isaiah 53:4-6.

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.

##### B. Thoughts:

1. Why should an innocent man such as JC die such a terrible death on the cross? These verses explain why: He was taking the place of sinners and bearing their judgment for them (1Pet. 2:24; 2Cor. 5:21).  
(1Pet 2:24) and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.  
(2Cor 5:21) He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
2. Note the physical price that He paid:
  - a. Wounded, or pierced, referring to His death on the cross, pierced by nails (Jn. 19:37).
  - b. Bruised, which means "crushed" as under a burden, the weight of sin which was laid on Him.
  - c. Chastised, or punished as though He had broken the law, with stripes from the scourging.
3. Note the spiritual sufferings. He bore:
  - a. Our transgressions (53:5,8), the rebellious and deliberate breaking of God's Law.
  - b. Our iniquities (53:5-6), the crookedness of our nature.
  - c. Our griefs and sorrows (53:4), our calamities and the unhappy results of our sins.
4. He died for us all. These verses are the very heart of the Gospel—"Christ died for *our* sins."

#### V. THE SERVANT'S RESIGNATION (Isa. 53:7-9).

##### A. Isaiah 53:7-9.

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. [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? [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.

Jehovah reinforces these thoughts. He praises His servant who, despite his own innocence was willing to suffer and die because of his people's sins.

##### B. Thoughts:

1. He was not treated justly; He was oppressed, harassed, treated roughly. Yet He did not complain or cry out. They mocked Him and pushed Him from one place to another, yet He was silent and meek as a lamb.
2. Verse 53:8 suggests that He was taken violently from prison and was not permitted to have justice. The trial was "rigged" and the whole thing was illegal. Yet His "generation" did not protest. His death was not a glorious one; He was "cut off" like an unclean leper cast out of the city. In spite of this illegal and inhuman treatment, Jesus Christ did not protest or argue. Why? Because He had come to die for the sins of the people.
3. Were it not for Nicodemus and Joseph, the body of Jesus would have been buried in a "potter's field" or thrown on a garbage heap (see Jn. 19:38-42). God had promised His Son a "grave in the garden," and this was fulfilled. What an example Christ is to us as He submitted completely to the will of God (1Pet. 2:18-25).

Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. [19] For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a man bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. [20] For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you

patiently endure it, this *finds* favor with God. [21] 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; [23] 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; [24] and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. [25] For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

4. When men treat us unjustly (as they will because we follow Christ), we must glorify Christ by being yielded to His will.

## VI. THE SERVANT'S REWARD (Isa. 53:10-12).

### A. Isaiah 53:10,11a.

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. [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.

The prophet praises Jehovah and his servant for being willing to make this sacrifice for the people's sin and declares that it will bear fruit in due time.

### B. Isaiah 53:11b,12.

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. [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.

Jehovah concludes the paragraph by proclaiming that, because His servant was willing to suffer and die, not only the Jews but also all men could be forgiven through the servant's intercession.

### C. Thoughts:

1. God's plan and the Savior's work was a complete success (52:13)!  
Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up, and greatly exalted.
2. These verses show us the God-ward side of the cross: His death "pleased the Lord." Does this mean that the Father rejoiced in His Son's suffering and death? No. But it pleased Him to see the work of salvation completed, the sacrifice accepted, and sin atoned for. Now a holy God could, in His grace, save undeserving sinners. Though X was slain by the evil hands of men, their deeds were overruled to accomplish the purpose of God (Ac. 2:22-24).  
"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know-- [23] this *Man*, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death. [24] "And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.  
Christ's death was not a "moral example"; it was an offering for sin (53:10). He died in our place.
3. What was X's reward, apart from the joy of having done His Father's will? He was raised from the dead ("He shall prolong His days") and given a spiritual family ("He shall see His seed"). See 53:10.
4. Verse 53:12 presents another reward of the faithful Servant: an inheritance from the Father. He has conquered sin and Satan; now He divides the spoils (Eph. 4:8).  
Therefore it says, "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN."
5. The closing statements take us back to the cross. Christ was numbered with transgressors—He was crucified between two thieves and treated like a criminal (Mt. 27:38). He made intercession for the transgressors, praying for them (Lk. 23:34,43).  
**(Mt 27:38)** At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.

(Lk 23:34,43) But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."  
And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves... [43] And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

VII. **CONCLUSION.**

- A. Isaiah 53 is truly one of the great chapters of the Bible.
- B. It tells us of the great plan of God to save the world. The suffering Messiah would come and die so that our sins could be forgiven.
- C. Who has not given their life to X?