

Pentwater Bible Church

Isaiah Message 120

July 18, 2021



The Centurion Under The Cross by Derick Baegert Cir 1480

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

O Worship the King

Chords: G D G C D7 G D

1 O wor - ship the King all - glo - rious a - bove,
 2 O tell of his might and sing of his grace,
 3 Your boun - ti - ful care, what tongue can re - cite?
 4 Frail chil - dren of dust, and fee - ble as frail,
 5 O mea - sure - less Might, un - change - a - ble Love,

Chords: G D G C C D7 G

O grate - ful - ly sing his power and his love:
 whose robe is the light, whose can - o - py space.
 ▶ It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
 in you do we trust, nor find you to fail;
 whom an - gels de - light to wor - ship a - bove!

Chords: D D7 G D G D7

our shield and de - fend - er, the An - cient of Days,
 His char - iots of wrath the deep thun - der - clouds form,
 ▶ it streams from the hills, it de - scends to the plain,
 Your mer - cies, how ten - der, how firm to the end,
 Your ran - somed cre - a - tion, with glo - ry a - blaze,

Chords: G D G C G D7 G

pa - vil - ioned in splen - dor and gird - ed with praise.
 and dark is his path on the wings of the storm.
 ▶ and sweet - ly dis - tills in the dew and the rain.
 our Mak - er, De - fend - er, Re - deem - er, and Friend!
 in true ad - o - ra - tion shall sing to your praise!

Text: Robert Grant, 1833, alt.; based on Psalm 104
 Tune: W. Gardner's *Sacred Melodies*, 1815; attr. Haydn



10 10 11 11
 LYONS
www.hymnary.org/text/o_worship_the_king_all_glorious_above

Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Isaiah

One-Hundred-Twenty

THE SUFFERING SERVANT IS RECOGNIZED BY ISRAEL

July 18, 2021

Daniel E. Woodhead

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

¹³Behold, my servant shall deal wisely, he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. ¹⁴Like as many were astonished at thee (his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men), ¹⁵so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they understand.

⁵³ Who hath believed our message? and to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed? ²For he grew 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 see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. ³He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not.

⁴Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵But 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. ⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

⁷He 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 dumb, so he opened not his mouth. ⁸By 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? ⁹And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰Yet it pleased Jehovah 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 Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. ¹¹He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities. ¹²Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors (ASV, 1901).

THE UNIQUE SUFFERING MESSIAH

Isaiah 52:13-15

¹³*Behold, my servant shall deal wisely, he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. ¹⁴Like as many were astonished at thee (his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men), ¹⁵so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they understand (ASV, 1901).*

Here we have an introduction to new material regarding the Servant. Starting in chapter 52 we saw the end of the Tribulation and the national regeneration of the nation Israel. Building on the regeneration comes the most crucial passage in the whole Book of Isaiah. It is 52:13–53:12. The national confession of Israel’s sins are described in Hosea 6:1–3. However, the exact words used are found here in Isaiah 53:1–9. Chapter 52:13–15 introduces this discussion of their words of confession.

This long section of Isaiah is so clear in its description of the suffering Messiah that the apostles quoted it and most of Judaism’s teachers avoid it. The Jews say it is a difficult prophecy; and so it is to them, being contrary to their denial of Jesus as the Messiah, but it is plain and easy, describing the Messiah. They will typically say that this is Israel’s suffering in a Gentile world. In order to promote this view successfully they are entirely dependent on the ignorance of their listeners. However, many of the ancient Jewish writings—the *Mishnah*, the *Gemara*, (the *Talmud*), the *Midrashim* and many others—all regard this portion of Scripture as relating to the Messianic Person. It was not until one influential French rabbi Shlomo Yitzchak also known as Rashi began to see it as the nation Israel in the eleventh century AD that other Jewish writers began to deny the Messianic description found here.

As Christian evangelists began to make greater use of this passage, particularly from the early 1800’s onward, some rabbis found Rashi’s view an effective way of countering Christian teaching. Some Jews apply this prophecy to Abraham; others to Moses; others to Ezra; others to Zerubbabel; and others to any righteous person. The belief that it refers to the nation Israel can be identified to some of them which are; Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi; or of King Josiah, slain by Pharaoh Necho, as Abarbanel; or of Jeremiah, as Saadiah Gaon; all which are weak, avoiding the truth of Jesus and, they further disagree with each other. This causes confusion and results in many Jews simply avoiding this section of Scripture.

Christ's birth was predicted earlier (7:14; 49:1-7), the passage on Christ as the Suffering Servant of the Lord begins at this point. His humiliation in general was foretold in chapter 50. Quotations from it were used by our Lord and the New Testament writers. We can see that in the Servant passages the Servant is sometimes spoken of, sometimes times spoken to, and sometimes speaks Himself (52:14). It says here that He was and will be *exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high*. This has the meaning that because He was lifted up on the cross he will be exalted as the Savior of mankind.

The literal rendering of His physical description presents a startling picture: " *so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men* " i.e., not human. This was the effect of the brutalities described in Matthew 26:67-68; 27:27-30. Compare the literal fulfillment of this prediction with the apostle Peter's exhortation, where people of many nations are described as having been sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ.

I Peter 1:1–2

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ²according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied (ASV, 1901).

The word used here for sprinkle is commonly used in the Pentateuch to describe the cleansing of the Temple vessels when the priests sprinkled (Hebrew *yazeh*) blood or water upon them (Hebrews 10:22). Because Matthew quotes this passage and applies it to physical disease (Matthew 8:17) as sin since the Fall brought with it physical disease. Christ's atoning death will lead to the elimination of physical disease at the Resurrection of Church Age believers.

THE NATION ISRAEL BEGINS TO RECALL THEIR UNBELIEF

Isaiah 53:1–3

¹Who hath believed our message? and to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed? ²For he grew 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 see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. ³He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not (ASV, 1901).

Reading through the passage shows that there are several statements which could not possibly be applied to the nation of Israel. This passage is not read in synagogues; public readings of Isaiah will jump from Isaiah 52 to Isaiah 54. Jewish believers in Jesus will recall how they before conversion were instructed to avoid these passages. Many quotations from this section were used by our Lord and the New Testament writers. In these Servant passages the Servant is sometimes spoken of, sometimes times spoken to, and sometimes speaks Himself (52:14).

This section begins with an interrogative regarding the national unbelief of Israel. They simply did not believe the message that Jesus is the Messiah. Here He is also referred to as "*the Arm of Jehovah*" as he does previously and earlier, in 40:10, Isaiah declared that the Arm will rule for God. In chapter 51:5, Isaiah says that the Gentiles will trust in the Arm and in 51:9, the Arm will redeem, and finally in 52:10, the Arm will provide salvation. Now, in 53:1, Isaiah specifically says *the Arm is the Servant of Jehovah*, who is the Messiah.

The text continues to describe some of the reasons the leaders of Israel did not recognize Jesus when He came the first time. They say, "*he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.*" There was nothing about His First Coming which

seemed unusual or remarkable. He was born in poor circumstances and, did not have a royal birth into a prominent family. This is a reaffirmation of Isaiah 11:1. Furthermore, there was nothing in His outward appearance to draw men to Him. This makes it obvious that the paintings of Jesus so often seen depict Him as a handsome man of European descent are all inaccurate. Jesus was a Jewish man with a Jewish beard, dark eyes, swarthy skin, and probably not very tall. According to this verse He was not particularly good looking.

Finally, Isaiah says that His whole life was characterized by rejection and suffering. Men turned away from Him and at no time was He accorded the respect due to royalty. He was despised and rejected, and people in general did their best to avoid Him.

HE BORE THE PEOPLES GRIEFS

Isaiah 53:4–6

⁴Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵But 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. ⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all (ASV, 1901).

The essence of this passage is the substitutionary suffering of the Servant, and therefore His ability to deliver His people. He does not suffer merely as a result of the sins of the people, but in the place of the people. He suffers for them, and because of that, they do not need to experience the Divine punishment for their sins. He suffers physically and spiritually for His people as they suffer. He because of the people's sins, He will suffer as a substitute receiving the punishment of God to pay for the sins of the world. John the Baptist spoke for this when he cried out, "*Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*" (John 1:29). A lamb cannot die in a human's place, but a perfect human could; and if that human is also God, He could die for every human's sin (Hebrews 9:11–14). Israel had suffered through multiple invasions for its sins, but that did not mean that it was automatically restored to fellowship with God. For that to happen, Israel to be enabled to be the servants of God, and for that Divine atonement was necessary.

The nation confesses that the substitutionary sufferings resulted in reconciliation and spiritual healing for He was *the chastisement of our peace was upon him*. Messiah was not suffering for His own sins but, in verse 6, "*Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*" Messiah was suffering for the sins of Israel. Israel here confesses that it was they who sinned and went astray, and God laid the iniquity of Israel upon the Servant and therefore He suffered. Isaiah was not a Gentile. He was a Jew, talking to a Jewish nation. Furthermore, none of the things happening to this individual could be said to apply to the nation of Israel. Isaiah is clearly talking of one person.

HE SUFFERED SILENTLY

Isaiah 53:7–9

⁷He 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 dumb, so he opened not his mouth. ⁸By 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? ⁹And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth (ASV, 1901).

He was treated terribly by the Jewish leaders and the Roman lictors. They all abused Him both in body and mind, with their blows and with their vehement criticisms of Him. He was afflicted, indeed, both by God and men. God's justice used men to afflict Him. This punishment was laid on Him by imputation, and voluntarily received by Him. Knowing that He must do this for the salvation of the world He did not answer, and gave no the satisfaction to the chief priests and scribes and elders (Matthew 27:41–42) as well as the lictors which they demanded. This clearly expresses the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction: *yet he opened not his mouth*; against the oppressor that did him the injury, nor murmured at the physical affliction that was heavy upon Him: or, *and he opened not his mouth*; against the justice of God, and the demand that was made upon Him, as the surety of his people; he owned the obligation He had laid Himself under; He paid the debt, and bore the punishment without any dispute or hesitation: *he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb*; or, *as a sheep to the slaughter, and as an ewe before her shearer*. These figurative phrases are expressive, not only of the harmlessness and innocence of Christ, as considered in Himself, but of His meekness and patience in suffering, and of His readiness and willingness to be sacrificed instead of His people. He went to the cross without any reluctance. Christ went as willingly to be sacrificed as a lamb goes to the slaughter-house, and was as silent under his sufferings as a sheep while under the hands of its shearers, He was willing to be stripped of all He had.

This is how Jesus appeared through all of His Jewish and Roman trials (Matthew 26:63, 27:12–14; Luke 23:9). He said nothing in His defense against all the accusations brought against Him. This is hardly true of the nation Israel. Israel has not been is silent in her sufferings. Many books and newspapers describing her suffering and accusations against those responsible have been written. The modern state of Israel has not remained silent in the face of Arab attack. She has bombed Iraqi nuclear installations and Palestinian and Hamas' military encampments. She has prevailed in many wars against Arab invaders. This verse about suffering in silence cannot possibly be applied to the nation of Israel past or present. But it does fit the Messianic Person, our Lord Jesus.

After biased judicial trials and judgment, the Servant was taken away for execution and the Israeli leaders at that time did not realize that He was dying for the sins of the people. This text ends speaking about the burial of Messiah. Having been executed as a criminal, He should have had a criminal's grave. God intervenes, however, and, though treated with injustice and dishonor in execution, He is justly laid in a place of honor, which was in a rich man's tomb. Jesus was taken

down from the cross and laid in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57–60). God ordained this because “*neither was any deceit in his mouth*,” “His death was purely substitutionary.

GOD IS RESPONSIBLE FOR JESUS’ DEATH

Isaiah 53:10–12

¹⁰Yet it pleased Jehovah 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 Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. ¹¹He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities. ¹²Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors (ASV, 1901).

It is extremely important to realize the source of and responsibility of Jesus’ death. Some anti-Semitic early Gentile church leaders played a key role in this significant shift from the original understanding of the Scriptures regarding the reasons Christ was sacrificed to that which accused the Jews as Christ killers. Isaiah says here that *Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath put him to grief*. In response to Jewish attacks against Christian beliefs, some resorted to new methods of Biblical interpretation and wrote rebuttals with varying degrees of anti-Semitic content.

For example:

Justin Martyr (AD 100–165), who defended Christianity against a Jewish enemy, claimed Christians “are the true Israelite race,” and asserted that the Biblical expression “the seed of Jacob,” when properly understood, now refers to the Christians, not the Jews.

Tertullian (AD 145–220), prominent church theologian from North Africa, interpreted God’s statements to Rebekah concerning the twins (Esau and Jacob) in her womb (Genesis 25:23) in the following manner: Esau, the older brother, represents the Jews; and Jacob, the younger brother, represents the Christians. He indicated that God thereby revealed that the Christians would overcome the Jews and that the Jews would serve the Christians.

Origen (AD 185–253), the president of the school of theology in Alexandria, Egypt, greatly influenced the church’s acceptance of the allegorical, or spiritualizing, method of interpreting the Bible in contrast to the literal, historical-grammatical method. This method allowed him to claim that the word “Israel” in the Bible can mean the church, not national Israel.

Cyprian (195-258) wrote *Three Books of Testimonies against the Jews*. He stated that in this work, he ‘endeavored to show that the Jews, according to what had before been foretold, had departed from God, and had lost God’s favour, which had been given them in past time, and had been promised them for the future; while the Christians had succeeded to their place. Like Tertullian, he interpreted God’s statements to Rebekah concerning the twins in her womb (Genesis 25:23) allegorically Esau representing the Jews and Jacob representing the Christians. The implication is that the Christians have inherited the birthright that the Jewish people have

forfeited. He declared, ‘The Gentiles rather than the Jews attain to the kingdom of heaven.’

Constantine (272-337), the first Roman emperor to declare himself a Christian, became sole ruler of the entire empire in AD 323. He began an increasingly ‘hostile policy toward the Jews.’ In 329 ‘the death penalty was ordained for those who embraced the Jewish faith, as well as for Jews versed in the Law who aided them.’

John Chrysostom (347-407) delivered messages *Against the Jews*.

Ambrose (340-397) used the Jewish people as ‘a type of the infidel.’ He regarded the Jewish soul to be ‘irrevocably perverse and incapable of any good thought’ and asserted that ‘burning a Jewish synagogue was not a crime.’

Augustine (AD 354–430), bishop of Hippo, published the influential *Tract against the Jews*. The influence of anti-Semitic views and Greek philosophy upon his thinking prompted him to reject Chiliasm. Augustine applied the allegorical method of interpretation to the prophets and *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, avoiding the implications of some of the millennial passages in the Bible.

God was pleased to allow the Servant to suffer and die, because this was the means by which God was going to make atonement for the people; though He dies, He will see His posterity, and His days will be prolonged. Also, in verse 11, the Messiah who has died will be able to see the results of His sufferings. By His self-knowledge, as the Messiah who died for sin, He will be able to bring justification to many. While He died for all, His death is applied only to those who believe. For those who believe, “*and he shall bear their iniquities.*” God will be satisfied with the work of His Servant, for He dies a substitutionary death for His people and by His death justifies many, as He bears their iniquity.

The passage ends by saying that He finally fulfilled His salvific work “*he poured out his soul unto death.*” He was reckoned as a sinner although He was not, but rather He bore the sins of others and has, by His death and resurrection, made intercession for others’ transgressions. Therefore, the Servant will be greatly blessed in the end above all others because He died on behalf of others and thus bore their sin, and now intercedes for them.

Next message: THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL AS THE WIFE OF JEHOVAH
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