

Reason 18: Isaiah 53: Jesus Ministry described 700 years before His Birth



Why should anyone believe in Jesus? What proof do we have that he lived? This is a charge skeptics, atheists and secularists often make about Jesus. How would you respond? What proof do we have that Jesus lived? Of course one response is we have a non-Christian witness to the life of Jesus, both Roman and Jewish historians wrote about him. Most of all, we have those who walked and talked with Jesus, they affirmed he exist in the New Testament era.

There is another witness about Jesus, it's the Old Testament, the Old Testament was written between 1450 to 425 B.C., yet it gives us detailed information that can only be fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ revealed in the New Testament. One of the most

powerful examples for any Christian to be armed with is Chapter 53 of Isaiah.

Background of Isaiah



Isaiah lived 700-years before the birth of Jesus, he was a prophet who lived in Israel and Judah during an unstable time in Israel's history. Israel was a divided nation with a *northern kingdom* made of 10-tribes *Israel*, and a *southern kingdom* made of 2-tribes called *Judah*. Assyria was a powerful empire conquering and subjecting all the surrounding nations including Israel and Judah. Isaiah the author of the book, prophesied from 740 B.C. until he was killed by Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, about 690 B.C. sawed him in two (Hebrews 11:37). He witnessed the destruction of Israel in the north and was in Jerusalem when Judah was almost destroyed by Sennacherib. God destroyed the Assyrian army, Judah and Jerusalem was

sparred (Isaiah 37-38). Isaiah wrote more details about the coming of the Messiah than any other book of the Old Testament.

Even though the situation in his day seemed dark and very bleak, Isaiah wrote about the coming redemption of his people, the Kingdom of God and the work of the Messiah in detail. It was in this context Isaiah wrote the 53rd Chapter.

Isaiah Chapter 53

The 53rd Chapter of Isaiah, written 700 years before the birth of Jesus describes in great detail the ministry of Jesus and his rejection by the nation of Israel. It also foretells the events and the response the nation would have to Him. The description of the "Righteous" Servant rejected by the nation begins in Isaiah 52:13-15.

<p>Isaiah 52:13-15</p>	<p>The Two Portraits of the Servant Vs. 13:The Servant is will be exalted; this means he will be well known, not someone who is unknown. "High and lifted up".</p>
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(13) Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted.
 (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—
 (15) so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they see, and that which they have not heard they understand.

Isaiah 53:1-12

(1) Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

(2) For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.

(3) He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

(4) Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

(5) But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

(6) 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.

Vs. 14 Before he is exalted he will be marred Hebrew means disfigured beyond recognition. He will have a severe beating. The beating endured by Jesus would have involved a Roman whip, which would have shredded his flesh as the whip was pulled away. (Matthew 27:29-30, 26:67)



Vs. 15: Even though he was severely beaten and disfigured, he would be over the nations. "Kings shall shut their mouths because of him". Because they will see the reality of his person, they will understand the one beaten and rejected is the Messiah of Israel. "Which they have not heard they understand".

His True identity was concealed as he was beaten and rejected, but this person was later to be exalted by the kings of the earth. This describes the dual nature of the Messiah.

Description of the Servant

Vs. 1: From the beginning the question is who would "Believe"... He is identified as the "Arm of the LORD" (Isa_51:9, Isa_52:10, Isa_62:8; Isa_59:16). An extension of God Himself.



Vs. 2: There was nothing amazing about him during the years of his youth, "No form or majesty...that we should desire him". The early years of Jesus were uneventful after the age of 2 to 30, the only exception being at the age of 12 (Luke 2:41) he was talking to the High Priests. (Luke Chapter 2)

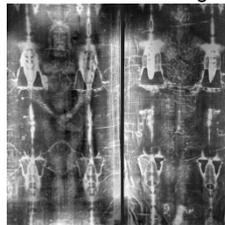
Vs. 3. He was rejected and despised by men. People did not want to be associated with him, Isaiah says "We" he includes himself in the description, meaning the nation rejected him. The leadership took the rejection of Jesus as their responsibility. (Matthew 27:20-26,

John 18:39-40, Luke 23:13-25). The terms describe the ministry of Jesus 700-years before his birth. He was not valued by the Jewish nation, not esteemed.

- Despised and rejected by men
- A man of sorrows
- Acquainted with grief
- Men hide their faces (ashamed of him)
- We esteemed him not

Vs. 4. 700-years before the New Testament, Jesus clearly said he came to die for the sins of humanity. Despite the fact it was written here 700-years before his birth, no one could see the picture of the suffering servant. People viewed Jesus being smitten and afflicted by God, The Jews mocked him, the Romans and one of the thieves on the cross, he was taking our pains with him while he was being rejected.

- Borne our greifs
- Carried our sorrows



Vs. 5. The New Testament describes the crucifixion, Jesus was pierced 5 times, through his two feet, his two hands and his side. Here in 53:5, we are told 700-years before the event, he was:

- Pierced for our transgressions
- Crushed for our iniquities
- Chastisement that brought us peace
- With his wounds we are healed

The Gospel describes the death of Jesus as punishment for our sins, 700-years before the event Isaiah describes just such a future event. Our "Peace" comes through his Chastisement

Vs. 6: Describes the fallen nature of humanity. It clearly indicts all people, except for this one individual. All the sins from Adam and Eve forward are placed on one individual this "rejected" Servant. This confirms the Gospel message of the New Testament, all have sinned "(Romans 3:10-19,23)

- All we...have gone astray
- Laid on him
- The iniquity of us all

(7) He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not 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, stricken for the transgression of my people?

(9) And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

(10) Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; 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.

(11) Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

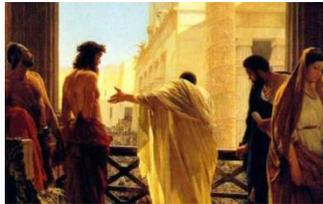
(12) Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.



Vs. 7 700-years before Jesus, we are told the person rejected by the nation, while dying for their sins, will intentionally allow Himself to be killed. Like a lamb for slaughter. (Mat_26:63, Mat_27:12-14; Mar_14:61, Mar_15:5; Luk_23:9; Joh_19:9; 1Pe_2:23)

- Oppressed, afflicted
- Yet he opened not his mouth
- Like a lamb to the slaughter

When Jesus was being delivered over to the priests for death, at the same time the sheep in Israel were being delivered for the Passover slaughter. (John 19:14)



Vs. 8 The Servant, who is rejected by the nation, carries the sins of all humanity, is also going to be killed. He was unjustly punished...by "Oppression" and "Judgment"....so it was an unlawful court. This describes the events leading to the crucifixion of Jesus 700-years before the event. The High Priest, Jewish leaders and Romans created a mock trail to crucify Jesus. He was:

- Cut off out of the land of the living ...Killed in the judgment
- Stricken for the transgression of my people

Isaiah identifies his judgment as substitution for the sins of "My people" the Jewish nation, and all mankind as verse 7 identified. (Mat_26:65-66; Joh_19:7)

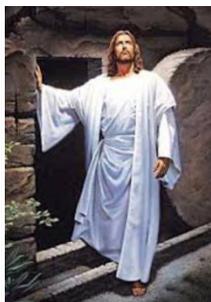


Vs. 9: Jesus died next to two thieves who were deserving of death, "making his grave with the wicked" (Luke 23:39-43). He was buried in a tomb of Joseph of Arimathea a wealthy merchant, who had just had a freshly carved grave prepared for himself. "A rich man in his death" (Mat_27:57-60; Mar_15:43-46; Luk_23:50-53; Joh_19:38-42)

Despite his murder and wicked judgment the servant was without sin.. This verse separates this person from everybody else on the earth, including Isaiah himself who includes himself as the "We". The Messiah sinless nature is in the New Testament (2Co_5:21; Heb_4:15, Heb_7:26; 1Pe_2:22; 1Jo_3:5)

Vs. 10: The death of this "Servant" was a sacrifice for the guilt of all. This one person would pay for the sins of all humanity. Including the author Isaiah. His death was from the LORD...God allowed His death as payment for sins. This is exactly what the New Testament describes as the purpose for the death of Jesus. (Mat_3:17, Mat_17:5)

Vs. 11: The death of this person will satisfy the requirement for the payment of all humanities sins.



- He shall see and be satisfied
The servant had no sins, He was the only one earth born since Adam who was righteous...he is called
- The righteous one
His righteousness will be transferred to others accounts as described in the New Testament. This one person will
- Bear their iniquities

transgressors.

- Numbered with the transgressors
- Bore the sin of many
- Makes intercession for the transgressors

Vs. 12 This "Righteous..Servant" will be killed and resurrected ... Because he poured out his soul to death...yet after his death he shall "Divide the spoil with the strong"..His appearance was that of a sinner..yet he was bearing the sins of the law breakers, the