

The Prophecies of Isaiah ⁶⁷

Lesson 33

With verse 13 of Isaiah 52, the Lord begins the third part of the second section of Vision 22. In this part, the Lord presents His future as the Servant who will suffer and then be exalted. This part of the vision is perhaps the best-known selection from Isaiah because it is clearly fulfilled in each of the Gospels of the New Testament.⁶⁸

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Because the Jews reject the Servant, He takes salvation to the Gentiles. Isaiah 49-50	A remnant of the Jews will believe in the Servant and be exalted. Isaiah 51:1-52:12	The Servant will suffer and then He will be exalted. Isaiah 52:13-53:12	The Servant will bring salvation to the Jews and the Gentiles. Isaiah 54-57

Near Future

SERVANT - HIGH AND LIFTED UP

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

As in all of this section of vision 22, the Lord speaks of Himself as His Own future Servant and the future Servant of all the people of the world. He will soon make His appearance as a Child and then live out His earthly life to die, rise from the grave and ascend into heaven. Some believe that this verse refers to the Lord's hanging on the cross. That belief comes from the New Testament, which says in John 12:32 "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me." However, the word "men" is not in the original; therefore, the verse should read, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me." Who will be drawn? The passage is definitely speaking about His crucifixion because the context of both Isaiah and John is directed to all people. It does not mean that all people will believe in Him; however, it does mean that all will know Him when He is greatly exalted as the risen Savior. He will prosper, although He will be hung on the cross. How fitting it is that He tells His own future and describes what He will go through before He is exalted.

Near Future

SERVANT - MARRED APPEARANCE

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.

Just as many people are astonished at the survival of the nation of Israel, so too, many will be astonished at the appearance of the Lord. Other translations use the word appalled rather than astonished, and rightly so. By human standards, nothing about the form of Jesus will draw people to Him; nothing about Jesus will distinguish Him from all the other sons of Israel. Is the Lord's human body marred or full of blemishes? No. As will be seen in the context of this passage, His body will be beaten battered and marred by the time of His death more than any other Jew under the same circumstances.

⁶⁷ ALL SCRIPTURES IN THIS LESSON ENTITLED "THE Prophecies of Isaiah" ARE TAKEN FROM THE NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE, COPYRIGHT (C) 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1988, BY THE LOCKMAN FOUNDATION. USED BY PERMISSION.

⁶⁸ Isaiah 52:15 in Romans 15:21; Isaiah 53:1 in John 12:38 and Romans 10:16; Isaiah 53:4 in Matthew 8:17; Isaiah 53:7-8 in Acts 8:32-33; Isaiah 53:9 in 1 Peter 2:22; and Isaiah 53:12 in Luke 22:37

Near Future

SERVANT - SPRINKLE NATIONS

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.

The Lord's exaltation will overcome all the humiliation pressed upon Him by the nations. All the kings or presidents of the earth will quickly realize His power, seeing what they "had not been told" and understanding what they "had never heard."

Near Future

SERVANT - WHO BELIEVED/REVEALED

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

This vision is directed at the Gentiles and the Jews; therefore, they are not to stumble at this portion of this vision. The Lord will show His arm when He arrives as a child and then again as the King of kings. Nevertheless, who among those alive in Hezekiah's day will believe this message? What is the message? In this passage, the Lord presents details of the life He will live when He puts on the form of a man.

Near Future

SERVANT - EARTHLY LIFE

A Tender Root

Isaiah 53:2a For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground;

Looking into the future, the Lord sees His earthly life up until He presents Himself at the age of 30 to be baptized which begins His ministry years. The climate of the nation of Israel in 4 BC is parched at best, being under the thumb of Rome. She does not own her own land and she is constantly threatened by the lunacy of the Edomite King of the Jews by the name of Herod the Great. Herod is sworn to protect the beliefs of the Jews, yet he can overrule any decision made by the Sanhedrin. By 4 BC, he had killed some of his sons and their mothers including the son that he proclaimed as his successor in his Last Will and Testament. The throne was not his to give to that son, which will prove out when he dies on April 4th, 4 BC and his government is divided between three others by Caesar Augustus. Nevertheless, the Jewish homeland and its people are in need of a Messiah. They are sinful. The Sanhedrin is theoretically intact at the time of this vision, formed during the days of Moses in the wilderness because of the suggestion of Moses' father-in-law and confirmed by the Lord to help with judging the people.⁶⁹ After entering the Promised Land, their duties subside to sitting at the gates to judge the disputes of the people.⁷⁰ With the crowning of King Saul, their duties expand to giving counsel to the king, which holds true until the death of King Solomon.⁷¹ With the division of the kingdom, the division of the representatives of the people ensues. The exile of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms allows the continuation of these representatives as judges of the Jewish people at the gates of the cities in Assyria and Babylon. Once Cyrus allows the release of the exiles in 536 BC, the Sanhedrin reforms in Israel under the Persian eye. With time, through the forthcoming Greek and subsequent Roman dominance, the Sanhedrin grows in power over the people; however, it also grows away from the Mosaic Law and the Lord. Between 536 BC and Jesus' birth, shortly before the death of Herod the Great, the Sanhedrin installs 613 laws that are loosely based on the Mosaic Law. Each of those laws pervert the true meaning of the Lord's

⁶⁹ Exodus 18:13-22; Numbers 11:16

⁷⁰ Deuteronomy 25:7

⁷¹ Ruth 4:11; 2 Samuel; 1st & 2nd Kings; Proverbs 31

words delivered to Israel while they are in the wilderness under the direction of Moses. The laws are so restrictive that, when coupled with the Roman laws and Herod's wrath, set the climate of Israel as a parched nation, truly in need of a Messiah. Born into this setting, the Lord grows for 30 years, a tender root, carefully nurtured and watered in an otherwise dry, parched, and dead land. His purpose is to bring forth life to the metaphorically dead nation of Israel.

Common Man

Isaiah 53:2ab He has no *stately* form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.

During the first 30 years of the Lord's life, will the nation of Israel look to Him as their leader? No. Nothing about His physical appearance attracts the attention of anyone in Israel. Does this mean that He is not noticed by the Sanhedrin during His formative years? No. He is known by the religious leaders in Jerusalem. The Gospel records that after the death of Herod in 4 BC, Joseph and Mary return from Egypt to present her for her required purification rites in the Temple on the thirty-third day after the birth of Jesus.⁷² As they approach the Temple, they are recognized by two elderly people, Anna and Simeon.⁷³ Two conversations occur in the site of the religious leaders which bless the Lord and clearly identify the babe as the salvation of Israel. The same Gospel records that Jesus visits the Temple in Jerusalem every year. Specifically, it records the events of the twelfth year when Jesus fails to leave the city with His family and is ultimately found teaching the teachers, members of the Sanhedrin, in the Temple.⁷⁴ Jesus is known by all the official leaders of Israel for His entire life and, although they were astounded by His great understanding of the Scripture, nothing about Him caused them to look to Him to be their Majestic Leader to free them from Roman rule and become the final sacrifice for their personal sins. To them, He will not look the part of the Messiah they are expecting.

Despised by Men

Isaiah 53:3a He was despised and forsaken of men,

At the end of the Lord's ministry on earth, the crowds that have followed Him from town to town for three years abandon Him in fear of the Sanhedrin. From the start of His ministry, the Jewish leaders seek to destroy Him.⁷⁵ Despite all the good He does for Israel, He is despised; His own nation turns its back on Him. Yet, in the greater picture, it is not the first time His people have despised Him and turned their backs on Him. They did it during the days of the wilderness and it caused them to have to spend 38 extra years wandering until all those over 20 years of age had died except Caleb and Joshua.⁷⁶ They despised Him and turned away from Him in the Northern Kingdom which resulted in their exile between 790 BC and 722 BC.⁷⁷ The Southern Kingdom will follow with the exaltation of Hezekiah's son to the throne in 697 BC. The sin that ruptures the relationship with the Lord under Manasseh's reign will ultimately cause the exile of the Southern Kingdom that will begin in 606 BC and end in 586 BC.⁷⁸ With the death of Herod the Great in April of 4 BC, the nation has once again grown to despise the Lord and turned its back on Him.

⁷² Luke 2:22ff; Leviticus 12:4ff

⁷³ Luke 2:36; Luke 2:25-30

⁷⁴ Luke 2:42

⁷⁵ Luke 7:39

⁷⁶ Numbers 32:11

⁷⁷ 2nd Kings 18:10

⁷⁸ 2nd Kings 24:3

Man of Grief

Isaiah 53:3b A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;

In this passage, the Lord is directing His attention to His time on earth specifically; however, as the Creator, He has witnessed the many sins of the people throughout time that brought Him great grief and sorrow. The first such case is recorded during the life of Noah, when the Lord decided to bring an end to all human life except four couples.⁷⁹ Yet, as a man, specifically in the Lord's last three years of life on earth, He is acquainted with sorrows and grief. Needy people surround Him day after day. The Gospels record their constant presence, even to the point that He cannot slip off to the mountain to pray without the crowd panicking which ensues a frantic search for Him. He knows grief and sorrow on a personal level.

Rejected by Men

Isaiah 53:3a And like one from whom men hide their face,

During the Lord's ministry, He associates Himself with the unclean and outcast of the Jewish nation. Even the healthy Samaritans are never to be acquaintances with in Jewish life.⁸⁰ Lepers, poor, Gentiles, Samaritans and slaves were all shunned and those of means turn their faces away from them. The Gospels record that Jesus is categorized as one of these in His last days.⁸¹

No Esteem

Isaiah 53:3b He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

The Jewish leaders, during the Lord's life on earth, despise Him, even though He is of their nation. The people of Israel seek Him out during His ministry and place a high regard on Him, as long as He heals them and provides for their needs. The Gospels record that following the feeding of the 4,000, many of the people are repulsed at the Lord's message coupled with the threats of the Sanhedrin and they begin abandon Him.⁸² By the time of His final journey to Jerusalem, the crowds are miniscule compared to previous days. The last few remaining followers will shout joyfully at His triumphal entry to Jerusalem, but they too will turn on Him by the end of His last week.⁸³ Despised, they will esteem Him not when He stands before the Jewish leaders.

Bore Man's Greifs and Sorrows

Isaiah 53:4a Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried;

It is the Lord's purpose to bear the griefs and sorrows of the His people; therefore, 740 years after this vision is delivered to Hezekiah, the Lord will once and for all time bear the burdens of all people by dying as their final sacrifice.

Punished by God

Isaiah 53:4b Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.

In spite of all the good that the Lord will do during His ministry on earth, when the people turn their back on Him, they will firmly believe that His death on the cross is punishment for His sin against God; therefore, it is God that is afflicting Him and not Israel.

⁷⁹ Genesis 6:13

⁸⁰ Luke 10:33; John 8:48

⁸¹ John 8:47-49

⁸² John 7:11-13

⁸³ Matthew 27:40-49

Pierced for Sins

Isaiah 53:5a But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities;

Nevertheless, the reason for the Lord's death is not because of His sin but because of the sin of the people. Here the Lord clearly tell Hezekiah to tell his nation and all future descendants of that nation His own prophecy of His death and the surrounding circumstances. When He is crucified, the people will be without excuse for not accepting Him as their personal Messiah. Yet, He will also foretell that they will reject Him when He comes.

Chastened for Man

Isaiah 53:5b The chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him,

All the chastening that the Lord will experience will finally result in the best for the nation of Israel.

Scourged to Heal

Isaiah 53:5c And by His scourging we are healed.

Israel's healing is specifically provided in the death of the Lord on the cross; the healing of Israel will be rejected by the leaders of Israel.

Near Future

SERVANT – EARTHLY PURPOSE

Wayward Sheep

Isaiah 53:6a All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way;

The purpose of the Lord's earthly life and ministry is to provide a way of salvation for the wayward nation of Israel. Repeatedly, the nation has strayed from the Lord and at the time of His first coming, 740 years after this vision, it will be further from Him than it has ever been.

Sin Falls on Him

Isaiah 53:6b But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.

Amazingly, in this vision, the Lord reveals that He will willingly allow all the sin of His own chosen nation to fall upon Him that He might provide the only way of salvation for it.

Willingly Afflicted

Isaiah 53:7a 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.

The Lord's plan is in place and it is being delivered to Hezekiah to deliver to his nation. In the plan, the Lord will endure all that the Jewish leaders will inflict upon Him without a single reviling word against them.

Willingly Taken

Isaiah 53:8a By oppression and judgment He was taken away;

The oppression and judgment against the Lord was planned before the foundation of the earth was created; nevertheless, it is being revealed in 710 BC and will culminate in the

events of April 6th, 30 BC.⁸⁴ After midnight, in the garden of Gethsemane, the Jewish leaders will be able to take Jesus into custody. Throughout the rest of the night, He is oppressed and judged according to the desires of the wayward leaders of His own chosen nation. He does not run from them in the garden. All His followers will run, but He will willingly go with the guards and leaders to the mock trials that will lead to His crucifixion that day.

Considered Dead

Isaiah 53:8b 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*?

Upon the Lord's death at 3:00 PM, Israel's leaders consider that He has rightfully been cut off from the world and His future and ultimate punishment is in the hands of Almighty God. The grave is the next stop for His earthly body.

Wicked Grave

Isaiah 53:9a His grave was assigned with wicked men,

Where is the Lord to be buried? At the time of Jesus' death on the cross, the bodies of the crucified are handled in one of two ways. First, they can be claimed by the family for a private burial; however, when criminals are crucified, the claiming of the body by the family also transferred the stigma of the criminal upon the family for all time. In most cases, the body is disposed by the government in the trash heap. In Jerusalem, that place is the same place that Judas Iscariot's body is thrown after he hangs himself, just outside the Dung Gate to the south of the city in the Valley of Gehenna which contained the potter's field purchased with the blood money given him by the priests.

Wealthy Grave

Isaiah 53:9b Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

In spite of the traditional disposition of the body of a criminal crucified by the Roman government, the trash heap will not be final resting place of the Lord. Rather, a rich man by the name of Joseph of Aramathea will petition Pilate for the Lord's body. It will be placed in his own newly dug tomb in a garden near the crucifixion area.

God's Guilt Offering

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.

The entire plan for the Lord's future, when He takes on human flesh, is His own strategy. The whole story provides a way of salvation for the Lord's chosen people, their future, and His desire for them. When will it occur? The time has to be right for His appearing and His arrival will be prolonged until that appropriate time. Today, we know that He waited 740 years from the time of this vision.

Justification of Many

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.

The purpose of the Lord in providing for Israel and the Gentiles "the Righteous One, the Servant" that, through His death and the offer to provide the ability to enter into a right relationship with Him, is indicated in this verse by the word justify. When the Lord justifies a

⁸⁴ 1st Peter 1:18-23

person, He willingly takes upon Himself all the sin of that person. Herein is the purpose of the Lord's coming to earth as a Man to die for the sins of all the people who have ever lived or will ever live.

Portion with the Great

Isaiah 53:12a Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong;

Only a portion of the people will accept the Lord's offer of justification; however, those who choose Him will become the greatest of all people and live eternally in His presence. Eventually, after His Second Coming, He will divide all the spoils of the world with those who have sought Him as their Lord. It seems so minor to those who will experience His majesty through the portal of death on this earth, experiencing all the glories of heaven and the rewards for being faithful to Him during their life on earth. When the chosen nation chooses Him just before His Second return, they will continue to live as humans on earth and they will need the spoils of the world to provide for their needs and because they belong to the Lord, He will provide them to all who love and belong to Him.

Poured Out to Death

Isaiah 53:12b 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.

In the Lord's plan, those who accept His offer of justification will be considered the greatest portion of all the people that have ever lived. That justification is facilitated through the means of the Lord's death on the cross, taking upon Himself the sins of all of humanity. Just dying on the cross is only part of the Lord's plan, He must also become the intercessor for those who will believe in Him. As the intercessor, He will act as the satisfaction or the final sacrifice for their sins. When God the Father looks toward the sinner, the Lord will be standing in between the two. Soon in this vision we will see what God the Father sees at that time. At the beginning of Isaiah's ministry, the Lord reveal through him that though the persons sins may drenched his body in bloody scarlet garments, God the Father will see him dressed in robes as pure white as snow.⁸⁵

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 52:13-53:12	<i>Near Future</i> The Lord will become the Servant to offer salvation through His birth, life and death.	Fulfilled between 4 BC and 30 AD

⁸⁵ Isaiah 1:18