

# Isaiah 53

## Introduction:

1. Tonight we keep the Lord's supper to remember His death until He comes. Let us do it with knowledge.
2. Isaiah is a prophetic collage of deliverance from Babylon, conversion of the Gentiles, and Jesus Christ.
3. We must begin with 52:13, for it is here the prophet by the Holy Spirit introduces our glorious Saviour.
4. There is no doubt to any child of God above a child that these fifteen verses describe Jesus Christ only.
5. The Jews think this a difficult prophecy, as they try to apply it to themselves; but let God alone be true!
6. Our Lord, Philip, and Peter confirm this passage of Christ (Matt 8:16-17; Acts 8:26-35; I Peter 2:24).
7. There are many phrases and clauses from this passage to please us, but they are too many to single out!
8. In these verses the prophet presents Israel as unbelieving and impenitent sinners. Only sinners here!
9. Our first parents stood shivering with terror as God declared their fearful doom and promised a Seed!

## VERSE 52:13

1. Let us *behold*, or see and view, this great matter, similar to a Messianic psalm (Psalm 45:1).
2. Isaiah introduced God's Servant already for our easy detection (Is 7:14; 9:6; 42:1-7; 50:4-9).
3. Prudence, which is the use of wisdom in choices, was preeminently in Jesus Christ (Col 2:3).
4. Jesus dealt prudently by being subject to His parents, confounding the Jewish doctors, dealing graciously with his home Nazareth, silencing His enemies, teaching righteousness far exceeding that of the Pharisees, caring for His disciples, relieving the oppressed, forgiving the sinful, maintaining integrity during trial, holding courage at death, forgiving His murderers, resisting temptation, and so forth and so on. Never man spake like this man!
5. No king has ever been prudent as Jesus Christ. David described Him at death (II Sam 23:1-5).
6. The great and holy God said He was well pleased with His Prince and Son (Matt 3:17; 17:5).
7. Jesus of Nazareth always did those things that pleased His Father, Who is over all (John 8:29).
8. When on trial for His life, there was found no fault in Him by any (Luke 23:14-15; Matt 27:4).
9. He was exalted at His ascension, and He was extolled greatly (Act 2:33,36; Revelation 5:1-14).
10. He is very high – above all powers in heaven and earth (Eph 1:20-22; Heb 2:7-9; Col 1:15-18).
11. He is higher than kings, as King of kings (Psalm 89:7; I Tim 6:15) and the heavens (Heb 7:26).
12. The first chapter of Hebrews is dedicated to showing His preeminent superiority to the angels.
13. God has highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name (Phil 2:9-11).

## VERSE 52:14

1. The "as ... so" construction with 52:15 shows just how He sprinkled many nations – by His stupendous humiliation and suffering, which caused the astonishing dismay of many.
2. Peter did not think it proper or possible for Jesus to suffer any harm (Matthew 16:21-23).
3. There were many women weeping and lamenting for Him at Calvary (Luke 23:26-31).
4. Two close and knowing friends were still dismayed after His resurrection (Luke 24:13-27).
5. Pilate marveled at the quiet humility and submission of Jesus during His trial (Mark 15:5).
6. He was a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to most all of Israel (Isaiah 8:14; I Peter 2:8).
7. The prophet describes deformity of features by grief in his life and the torture of crucifixion.
8. **Visage.** The face, the front part of the head, of a person (rarely of an animal). The face with reference to the form or proportions of the features. The face or features as expressive of feeling or temperament; the countenance.
9. The distortion of His visage and form at 30, from grief, fastings, travels, preaching, trouble, and the burden of our sins, brought estimates of His age near 50 from learned Jews (John 8:57).
10. His beard was pulled off His face; the soldiers hit His face; thorns were pounded into His head.
11. The switch in person of pronouns is common in the poetry and prose of psalms and prophets.

### **VERSE 52:15**

1. Our Lord Jesus sprinkled many nations with His blood and the attendant blessings of grace, which were all consequences and rewards of His willing humiliation and sufferings. Please note the powerful “as ... so” connection with 52:14, indicating precisely how it was done.
2. This prophecy is first fulfilled in the blood redemption of elect from every nation (Rev 5:9-10).
3. The greatest attendant blessing from the sprinkling of His blood is the Holy Spirit (Ezek 36:25-28; John 7:37-39; Acts 2:33-39; 5:32; 19:5-6; Eph 1:13-14; II Thess 2:13; Tit 3:5-6; I Pet 1:2).
4. The next greatest attendant blessing from the sprinkling of His blood is the gospel (Acts 1:8; Romans 10:13-15; 16:25; Ephesians 3:5-6; 4:11-16; II Thess 2:13; Hebrews 9:14; 10:22).
5. Based on His identity as the Son of God, He declared victory over the gates of hell, which had locked the nations in abject darkness under the prince of darkness (Matthew 16:18; Rev 20:3).
6. Based on His resurrection and exaltation, He sent His apostles to all nations (Matt 28:18-20).
7. God’s doctrine is described as dew, rain, and showers also (Deuteronomy 32:2; Is 55:10-11).
8. The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven have been preached everywhere (Romans 16:25-27).
9. Kings would be silenced by the glad tidings, and they would greatly desire to hear these things.
10. Many prophets and wise men had desired to hear such things before Jesus came (Matt 13:17).
11. Herod and Agrippa desired to hear Him or of Him, and many others have heard of Him often.
12. King George II of England, upon hearing one of the first performances of Handel’s “Messiah” in 1742, stood in honor for the “Hallelujah Chorus.” King of kings! Lord of lords! Hallelujah!
13. Consider His virgin birth, miracles, life, death, burial, resurrection, appearances, ascension, etc.
14. Kings and great men would desire to hear of His incarnation and resurrection. Glorious things!
15. The highest and most glorious – God Himself – would humiliate Himself for death for sins!
16. The gospel going to Gentiles fulfilled this prophecy beautifully (Romans 15:20-21; 16:25-27).

### **VERSE 53:1**

1. Our Lord Jesus Himself applied this verse to the unbelieving Jews of His day (John 12:37-43).
2. The apostle Paul also applied them to unbelieving Israelites of that generation (Romans 10:16).
3. “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not” (John 1:10-11). Incredible unbelief!
4. But for the sovereign grace and power of God, not one of us would see (John 3:3), come (John 6:44), hear (John 8:47), believe (John 10:26), or receive Him or His gospel (I Cor 2:14).
5. If you have any desire toward Him, it is only by the pure mercy and blessing of God (Matthew 11:25-27; 16:17; Acts 13:48; Romans 6:17; II Cor 4:3-6; II Thess 2:13; Ephesians 1:19).
6. The arm of the Lord is Jesus Christ, Who was and is the power of God; the called see Him as the power of God in the gospel (Isaiah 52:10; 63:1-5; John 12:37-38; I Cor 1:24; Rom 1:15-16).
7. The arm of the Lord, or the power of God in Christ unto salvation, must be revealed from heaven for men to see and believe it (John 1:11; 3:27; Gal 3:23; Eph 3:5; I Cor 2:10).
8. Many are called, but few are chosen; for the depraved hearts of men will always reject Him.

### **VERSE 53:2**

1. The Lord Jesus sprang from the tribe of Judah and house of David at a time when they were in disrepute and contemptible, for the nation was under Roman dominion without a Jewish ruler.
2. His origin is described as a weak and fragile *plant* and malnourished *root* without proper water.
3. He was born in the little obscure town of Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) and laid in a feeding trough for cattle (Luke 2:7), for there was no room in the inn for One of such lowly and humble status.
4. His parents were so poor that His virtuous mother brought the cheaper offering (Luke 2:22-24).
5. Even the Israelite indeed, Nathaniel, questioned our Lord’s origin from Nazareth (John 1:47).

6. There was nothing naturally appealing about the Lord Jesus, for the Jews sought a powerful monarch who would deliver them from Roman dominion – in the spirit and success of David.
7. He had no pedigree, education, inheritance, intelligence, appearance, strength, charisma, successes, or other desirable traits to cause natural men and blinded Jews to desire Him.
8. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and mighty in word and deed (Act 7:22), but Jesus of Nazareth did not have any of these accomplishments to attract the attention of men.
9. Solomon was endowed with natural intellectual capabilities that caused his fame to go far and wide (I Kings 4:29-34), but Jesus of Nazareth had little of this reputation for knowledge.
10. David slew Goliath at an early age in the ultimate national setting (I Sam 17:50-54; 18:6-7), but Jesus of Nazareth had only the youthful demonstration of spiritual understand with the doctors.
11. He was not a self-promoter, for He told those He healed to tell no man (Is 42:2; Luke 8:56).
12. Of course, to those who believed, He was precious (Luke 10:39; John 12:20-21; I Peter 2:7).
13. And of course, to the discerning eye, He was very wise (Matthew 7:28-29; 22:46; John 7:46).
14. And His miracles showed a glorious power never seen before (Mark 7:37; Luke 4:36; 8:25).

### **VERSE 53:3**

1. Never was a good man so hated by his own people, as was Jesus of Nazareth. The Jews called Him merely a carpenter's son (Matt 13:55-57), a Samaritan (John 8:48), devil-possessed (John 8:48), a deceiver (Matt 27:63), and a blasphemer (Matt 26:65). They were offended by Him!
2. When with a choice, the Jews chose Barabbas, a seditious murderer, over Jesus (Mark 15:6-15).
3. His own nation turned him over to a foreign power and deserted Him in His great hour of need.
4. And for what cause? Because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth!
5. He was not popular, but despised and rejected; He was not successful – but familiar with grief.
6. When He told His friends of His coming suffering, they foolishly rebuked Him (Mat 16:21-23).
7. He was so afflicted in Gethsemane that He sweat as it were great drops of blood (Luke 22:44), yet at this very important time His closest friends ignored His requests and slept through it.
8. Even His companions of several years were ashamed of Him at a public confrontation and deserted Him after their most memorable evening together, and one denied he ever knew Him.
9. At His travesty of a trial, where were the thousands He had healed and fed? They were all in Jerusalem and close at hand, for it was the Passover! But they all turned their faces away!

### **VERSE 53:4**

1. The life of Jesus was to carry the griefs and sorrows of men, but they cared not for it. What gracious kindness He showed to an ungrateful nation with healings and exorcisms of all sorts!
2. This text was fulfilled by our Lord's many miracles to relieve physical suffering, for the inhumane treatment He received for His kindness was part of His humiliation (Matt 8:16-17).
3. No man has ever shown such great kindness toward the very nation that widely despised him.
4. In spite of total innocence of any charge and all He had done for the nation, the Jews' opinion was that Jesus was a blasphemer and judged by God for it (John 10:33; Matthew 26:65). They viewed the circumstances of his life and death as indications of God's wrath on Him for blasphemy, for He had claimed to be the Son of God and would rise again after three days.
5. They happily took responsibility for His blood from Pilate, to their destruction (Matt 27:25).
6. Esteem here in 4b is to count or consider, since the Jews counted Jesus under God's judgment.
7. **Esteem.** I. To estimate value; to value. II. To estimate generally; to deem, think.
8. The Jews considered His afflicted life and smiting death as God's judgment for His own sins, in spite of all He had done for them and that no fault could be found in Him at all.
9. The treacherous and traitorous spirit of man is here fully displayed for all to see and know.
10. Due to the negative view of Jesus by the Jews in 4b, we have God's explanation in verse 5.

11. The wounds, bruises, chastisement, and stripes were for OUR transgressions, iniquities, peace, and healing. They wickedly assumed He was dying for His sins, but He was dying for our sins!
12. This negative sense of 4b is easily seen by the disjunctive “yet” and “but,” the general tone or context of the prophecy, and the general definition and use of the word “esteem.”

### **VERSE 53:5**

1. His afflicted life and cruel death, clearly punishments from heaven, were not God’s judgments for blasphemy or any other sin by Him, but rather a substitutionary sacrifice for our own sins.
2. All that happened to Him – wounds, bruises, chastisement, and stripes – was for our own sins.
3. What He bore in His life and death was for our transgressions, iniquities, peace, and healing.
4. The punishment it took to make peace between God and sinners was the cause of His suffering.
5. We are legally healed in the sight of God by the stripes He received by scourging before death.
6. Peter quotes part of this verse as he explains the substitutionary aspect of His death (I Pet 2:24).
7. His horrible life and cruel death were only God’s judgments for the sins of others, not His own.
8. The ultimate and anti-typical sacrifice for sin was the death of Jesus of Nazareth (Heb 9:12).

### **VERSE 53:6**

1. Like sheep, ignorant and foolish, we chose our own way rather than the way of righteousness.
2. When the LORD looked upon the children of men, He found none in the right way (Ps 14:1-3).
3. He found man without any thought of Him and filled with thoughts of sin (Ps 10:4; Gen 6:5).
4. God had made man upright, but they had sought out many inventions, like Adam (Eccl 7:29).
5. The LORD made a deal with both Adams, which we call the doctrine of representation; and He charged Jesus Christ with all our many sins, just as He had charged us with Adam’s rebellion.
6. The LORD chose the mighty Son of David upon Whom to lay the work (Ps 89:19; Rev 5:5).
7. Sin and sins were laid upon the Lord Jesus in a divine legal transaction, whereby God would consider the substitution sufficient for His absolute justice and (a) absolve His elect from all their own sins and (b) consider them with the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah!
8. How do we know this? By reading (Rom 5:6-21; II Cor 5:18-21; Heb 10:1-14; I Peter 2:24)!

### **VERSE 53:7**

1. Though enduring great oppression and affliction, Jesus did not revile those who reviled Him; and He did not call for twelve legions of angels or otherwise threaten those who abused Him (Matt 26:53; I Peter 2:23). Consider the song, “He Could Have Called Ten Thousand Angels.”
2. As the lies and false charges were brought, He said nothing at all, causing marvel (Matt 27:14).
3. They mocked, dared, challenged, and ridiculed Him, which He took meekly and submissively.
4. How easily He could have told a few intimate details of their lives and described hell for them!
5. When they dared Him to identify His tormentors, He knew every detail of their lives, ancestors, physical bodies, fears, hopes, and circumstances. He could have verbally destroyed them!
6. When they challenged Him as the Son of God, He was the Son of God! Yet He meekly died!
7. When challenged by the thieving criminals beside Him, He did not retort about His own righteousness and their wickedness!
8. When begged for mercy by a repenting thief, He only gave Him the greatest promise in life!
9. As sheep at shearing or slaughter, Jesus did not open His mouth but meekly submitted to death.
10. What an example He gave us, which we fail to fulfill with the least irritations (I Peter 2:20-24)!

### **VERSE 53:8**

1. He was not given a proper and fair trial, where governors and kings were ordained to protect Him; but rather He was taken from their protection and turned over to the demands of angry enemies. Neither Pilate nor Herod would protect Him (Matthew 27:24-26).

2. Though faultless and charged out of envy, the justice of government was overthrown to punish him fatally while simultaneously freeing a man truly guilty of murder and worthy of death.
3. The priests, who were given God's precious law and the responsibility of leading the nation in righteousness and equity, did all they could to finally foment His crucifixion.
4. There is no reason to make His grave the prison and His sacrificial death the judgment and introduce positive deliverance in the midst of continued negative clauses of His humiliation.
5. Who could declare or describe His *generation*, for naturally He had none, since He was killed in the prime of life before marriage or descendants. His biography was cut short by murder!
6. This is not a positive statement as to His future glorified generation, as some have said; for the general context, the specific verse, and the conjunction "for" do not show it.
7. For similar uses of the word "generation" see Psalm 49:19; 109:13; Proverbs 27:24; Matt 1:1.
8. The spiritual seed or generation of Jesus is very great, but not seen blinded Jews (Psalm 22:30; 45:16-17; Hebrews 2:13; Revelation 7:9). And we are part of it! Hallelujah!
9. And this travesty of a trial and torturous death were not chance or fate, but by God's glorious design for the payment of our sins.

### **VERSE 53:9**

1. He made His grave with the wicked by submitting to the horrible crucifixion death of common criminals and dying between two thieves, though He was not strictly buried in the same place.
2. He made His grave by death with the rich by being laid in Joseph's tomb (Matthew 27:57-60).
3. The metonyms here are presenting His death, not the precise burial place or adjoining caskets.
4. Why did the Jews murder Jesus? For the same reason Cain killed Abel, because their works were evil and our Lord's righteous (I John 3:12; John 15:22-25).
5. They hated Him without a cause, just as their law prophesied they would (Psalm 35:19; 69:4).
6. The reward in Israel for living a perfect life of holiness was to be cruelly abused and murdered.
7. Pilate knew the Jews had brought Jesus on capital charges out of wicked envy (Mark 15:10).
8. Even Judas knew, when seeing He was condemned, that he had betrayed the innocent blood.
9. Things have not changed in human nature, for godliness still brings persecution (II Tim 3:12).

### **VERSE 53:10**

1. Our Lord's death was by the secret will of God and pleased Him well (Acts 2:22-23; 4:28), for the great work of salvation was according to the everlasting covenant (Acts 15:18; Heb 13:20).
2. Though the great God ordained the events and arranged the circumstances of our Lord's crucifixion, it was with wicked hearts and hands they did it (Acts 2:23; Luk 22:22; Matt 26:24).
3. Jesus came to do the will of God, which was to be a sacrifice for sins (Ps 40:6-8; Heb 10:7-14).
4. It would have been easy for God to deliver Him, but He purposed His crucifixion for our sins.
5. And the Lord's gracious purpose of salvation would prosper with Him (Ps 16:9-11; 89:19-37).
6. Is it the LORD or Jesus Himself seeing His seed? It is Jesus, by keeping the third person from the previous clause. Jesus was conscious of why He died and for whom (John 12:24; 19:30).
7. When God our Father sent His Son to the cross, our Lord Jesus saw the joy that was set before Him in redeeming His numerous seed by the will of God (Hebrews 12:2; 2:9; Rev 5:1-9).
8. Is it the LORD or Jesus Himself prolonging His days? It is Jesus, by virtue of keeping the third person from the originating clause and His own prophecy and claim (John 2:19; 10:18).
9. His days were prolonged – He is alive forever (Rom 6:9; Rev 1:18; Heb 7:16,25; Deut 32:40).
10. God's pleasure was to redeem His elect from their sins, which Jesus prosperously accomplished (John 6:38-39; 17:2-3; Romans 9:10-24; Ephesians 1:5,9; Hebrews 10:1-10).

### **VERSE 53:11**

1. The satisfaction for sin was completed when the Holy God was reconciled by Christ's death, for He made peace with divine justice by His cross (Col 1:20-22; II Cor 5:18-21; Rom 5:10).
2. God the Father saw the travail of Christ's soul, and God the Father was satisfied. The sense is not that Jesus saw the travail of His own soul, for such a sense does not fit the flow of the context, nor is it strictly correct for understanding the doctrine of satisfaction (II Cor 5:18-21).
3. The satisfaction that Jesus made for us to divine justice is in the Scriptures represented as reconciliation, justification, propitiation, making peace, slaying enmity, etc., etc.
4. Jesus is here called God's righteous Servant, to exonerate Him from any sins of His own.
5. Jesus is not the object of the knowledge, making it our knowledge; but rather He is the subject and possessor of the knowledge, for our justification is by His perfect knowledge of God's will.
6. What a travesty that some will interject man's faith and knowledge into our legal justification.
7. The knowledge Jesus Christ possessed was that faith and confidence in God that led Him all His life; which took Him through Gethsemane, His horrible trial, and His miserable crucifixion, until He could finally commit His spirit to His Father; and that perfect knowledge of His will.
8. He had great in faith and trust in God, as His enemies admitted (Ps 16:8; Heb 2:13; Mat 27:43).
9. Justification is by the obedience of One, and He obeyed in both life and death (Rom 5:15-19).
10. Jesus Christ bore our sins – as a substitutionary sacrifice – in His own body on the tree – the cross of Calvary (I Peter 2:24; II Cor 5:21; Heb 9:28; Gal 3:13).

### **VERSE 53:12**

1. Immediately observe the glorious switch of the LORD God to the first person in this verse!
2. The great God, Jehovah, would give Jesus honor, glory, and rewards for His wonderful work, similar to mighty monarchs and victorious potentates of the earth receiving rewards for success.
3. He told Him to sit at His right hand until He makes all of His enemies His footstool (Heb 1:13).
4. He gave Him a rod of iron to rule over the nations and share it with His children (Rev 2:26-27).
5. Being exalted at the right hand of God, He was given the Holy Spirit to pour out (Acts 2:33); which included giving gifts to His servants in His churches (Psalm 68:18; Ephesians 4:8-11).
6. This honor and these rewards were for His willing submission to death, being numbered with transgressors, bearing the sin of many, and making intercession for the transgressors.
7. Notice that it declares He poured out His soul unto death, indicating His willing choice to go to the cross and the horrible and slow manner of His death.
8. He was *numbered with the transgressors* when he was condemned as a criminal and died between two of them, according to the inspired record (Mark 15:27-28).
9. He made *intercession for the transgressors* when He prayed for His murderers (Luke 23:34), which He yet performs for all His elect with His perpetual life (Romans 5:10; 8:34; Heb 7:25).
10. Here is where you should want to sing, "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!"

### **Conclusion:**

1. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha (I Cor 16:22).
2. If there is love in your heart of this Christ and a desire to live for Him, then you should be baptized as was the eunuch after hearing the same message from Philip (Acts 8:26-39).
3. If you are already baptized, then you should remember His death with a church of saints (I Cor 11:26).
4. If you are already part of a church of saints, you want to seek the full dimensions of Him (Eph 3:14-19).
5. To participate in this glorious prophecy yourself and worship the Lord from your heart, either sing "Ah, Dearest Jesus" by Johann Heerman (1630) or the common meter version of Isaiah 53 by your pastor.