

THREE FACTS ABOUT THE MESSIAH

TEXT: ISAIAH 52:13--53:12

Introduction:

1. This remarkable prophecy of the sufferings and exaltation of the Messiah was written 700 years before Christ. It reads more like an historical account of the death of Christ rather than a prophecy written seven centuries beforehand.
2. The great Baptist scholar, Kyle M. Yates, referred to this text as “the Mount Everest of Messianic prophecy.” Tonight we can only get a glimpse of this beautiful, majestic mountain peak.
3. The prophecy begins at 52:13. The Messiah is identified as “my servant,” i.e., God’s servant. Some have identified the nation Israel as the servant but that makes no sense at all.
4. For one thing the servant is a man, not a nation (52:13, 14, 15; 53:2, 3, 4, 5, etc.).
5. Secondly, Isaiah says in 53:9, “because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.” That could never be said about Israel, or any other nation on the face of the earth. But it certainly can be said about the Lord Jesus Christ.
6. Here is something else to consider. This suffering servant is a voluntary sufferer who willingly “poured out his soul unto death” (53:12). Could that be said about Israel?
7. And he is an unresisting sufferer who “opened not his mouth” (53:7). That could never be said about the nation of Israel! As they are being harassed on every side by their Muslim antagonists, they are certainly not keeping their mouths shut! They are fighting back and hitting hard.
8. I am not criticizing them for defending themselves, nor do I think they are wrong for trying to go after the terrorists that are bombing innocent people. All I am saying is that this prophecy could never be about Israel.
9. Seven hundred years after the prophet Isaiah wrote these words, there lived a eunuch who traveled all the way from Ethiopia to Jerusalem seeking after God. He was sitting in his chariot reading this very same passage. When he read these wonderful Scriptures, he turned to Philip and asked: “I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? Of himself, or of some other man?” (Acts 8:26-34).
10. Notice the eunuch recognized that the prophecy was about a “man” NOT A NATION. Philip answered him, and soon the eunuch was gloriously saved and baptized (Acts 8:34-40).
11. This is an amazing passage, one that should be studied carefully, read frequently, and preached over and over. Tonight we will concentrate on three important facts found here in this passage.

- I. HE IS DESPISED AND REJECTED OF MEN**
- II. HE WAS WOUNDED FOR OUR TRANSGRESSIONS**
- III. THE LORD HATH LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY OF US ALL**

I. HE IS DESPISED AND REJECTED OF MEN (53:3).

1. First of all, let me emphasize that our Lord was rejected by most of the religious leaders of His day (cf. John 7:40-53).
2. These religious leaders were wrong (John 7:52). Several prophets came out of Galilee, including Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Jonah, and perhaps Nahum.
3. Their hatred towards our Lord had blinded them to the truth. And so it is today. Today it can certainly be said of Jesus, “He is despised and rejected of men” (Isa. 53:3).
4. The mob cried out, “Let Him be crucified” (Matt. 27:22). People would do the same thing today if they could.
5. Our Lord is despised and rejected by this sin-loving, pleasure-crazy, materialistic world of sinners. He is despised by those who stay away from church and never read the Bible and who refuse to give up their wicked ways. Many of these worldly and insincere Christ-rejecters claim to love Jesus but Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15).
6. Most church members today are like the members of the church at Laodicea. Our Lord said to them, “So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth” (cf. Rev. 3:16).
7. Let me give a word of warning to any lost sinner who may be with us tonight. You may continue rejecting Christ at your peril but remember this: some day He will reject you. Our Lord said in Matthew 10:32, 33, “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.”
8. The Lord Jesus Christ is rejected by those who claim He was only some great teacher or some sort of prophet. The Bible says He is the Son of God. Isaiah says, “Who hath believed our report?” (53:1). Do you believe?

II. HE WAS WOUNDED FOR OUR TRANSGRESSIONS (53:5).

1. Both the OT and NT teaches this important fundamental doctrine – the substitutionary (vicarious) death of Christ. Seven hundred years before the cross Isaiah the prophet wrote, “But He was wounded for our transgressions...” (53:5).
 - “When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin” (53:10).
 - “For He shall bear their iniquities” (53:11b).
 - “Because He hath poured out His soul unto death...and He bare the sin of many” (53:12).

2. As we see here, the outstanding emphasis of this chapter is the vicarious, substitutionary sufferings of the Messiah. A.T. Pierson called Isaiah 53 a “marvelous chapter containing only twelve verses, yet fourteen times announcing the doctrine of the vicarious sacrifice for all human sin.”
3. In Isaiah 53:7 the suffering servant is referred to as a “lamb.” John the Baptist referred to Christ as “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).
4. In I Cor. 5:7, Christ is referred to as the Passover lamb.
5. And Christ is called “the Lamb” 28 times in the book of Revelation.
6. About 150 years after Isaiah’s prophecy, Daniel referred to Christ’s substitutionary death when he said, the Messiah shall “be cut off, but not for Himself” (Daniel 9:26a).
7. Our Lord Himself said the same thing on many different occasions (cf. Matt. 20:18, 19, 28).
8. All throughout the NT this great doctrine is emphasized: Christ died for our sins.
 - “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).
 - “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures” (I Cor. 15:3).
 - “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (I Peter 2:24).
 - “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit” (I Peter 3:18).
9. The Bible says Christ had to die on the cross for our sins because without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Spurgeon used to say, “Morality may keep you out of jail, but it takes the blood of Jesus Christ to keep you out of hell.”

III. THE LORD HATH LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY OF US ALL (ISA. 53:6).

1. What an incredible statement! Harry Ironside referred to Isaiah 53:6 as the most wonderful verse in the whole Bible. It was the first text he ever preached. He was 14 years old and was preaching on the street corner in Los Angeles. After preaching this Scripture for a half an hour, one of the older preachers said to him, “It’s time to go. You’ll have to tell the rest some other time.” Many years later, Dr. Ironside said, “I have been trying to tell the rest all through the years since, but it is a text I never get beyond.”

2. For 2,000 years people have debated the question, “Who was responsible for the death of Christ – the Jewish religious leaders or the Roman soldiers?” The Bible says they were all responsible but more importantly, it also says, “And the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Isa. 53:6b). Isaiah 53:10 says, “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him.”
3. Isaiah 53:6b says our Lord was “smitten of God, and afflicted.” This points out the judicial character of Christ’s death. His death was not some tragic accident. He did not die as a martyr. No – He died as our Substitute. “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (I John 4:10).
4. “The LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (53:6b). The expression “laid on Him” literally means, “to cause to strike with great force.” One of my favorite commentaries on the book of Isaiah was written by a Dutch preacher named Harry Bultema. He wrote, “Just as the angry North Sea pounds the dikes of the Netherlands and the gray waves with their white crests come rolling on like huge serpents, so the waves and billows of God’s fury over our sins came pounding upon the Rock of Ages.”
5. The Bible says, “All we like sheep have gone astray...” (53:6). “Gone astray” means turning away from God, going in the wrong direction – “We have turned every one to his own way” (53:6).
6. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). “They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Rom. 3:12).
7. Sinners think they are free but the Bible says they are lost! Roaming here and there, to and fro, seeking after this world’s thrills and pleasures, sinners are like lost sheep heading towards death, the grave, and then eternal torment in hell.
8. But there is hope. “And the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (53:6).

CONCLUSION:

The great evangelist D.L. Moody was getting off a train one time and the man he was witnessing to asked him, “Quickly, Mr. Moody! How can I be saved?” As the train started to move, and the man stuck his head out the window, D.L. Moody said, “Turn to Isaiah 53:6. Get in at the first ‘All’ and get off at the last ‘all.’”