

The Greatest Prophecy Ever Made (Part 3) – Is 52:13-53:12

Thanks for that you guys; What a great time of worship as we celebrate Christ's resurrection; And I'd love to continue doing so . . .

By looking at it from the perspective of a prophecy written 700+ years before it even happened; It's found in Is 53 – Is 53:7-12

This is a prophecy about a servant sent by God, who would rescue and redeem us from our bondage to sin and its consequences; That's the core of it
And that bondage is a problem every single one of us has
Every one of us has sinned, and therefore every one of us falls short of the glory of God – his standard of perfect holiness that's necessary to be in his presence
His high bar of righteousness that's required to be near him, to be in relationship w/ him

And when you combine the *detail* of this prophecy with the *problem* it addresses, it's . . .

Isaiah 53 is the **greatest** prophecy in the Bible

A prophecy comprised of 5 main parts, that were completely fulfilled by Jesus

And the purpose for it, is that we would embrace him; That we would follow him; That we would worship him with our entire lives; Not just on Easter, but everyday

And after looking at the first 3 prophecies in previous weeks, v7-9 bring us to . . .

Prophecy #4: God's servant would be mistreated and condemned (v7-9)

V7-9; Referring to the suffering servant, it says . . .

[7] He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth [he speaks of the future from the perspective of the past] 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.

This servant that God would send would be mistreated to the hilt – *oppressed, afflicted, and stricken*; And on top of that, condemned

By oppression and judgment he was taken away (8a) – condemnation; A formal ruling of guilt that led to his death; *Cut off out of the land of the living* (8b) . . .

- And the thing is, nobody gave it a second thought; V8b – *Who considered that he was cut off [and] stricken for the transgression of my people [God asks]?*
Those I will save? Anybody? Anybody give that a second thought?
Especially when he was like a lamb *led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent* (7b)? Willingly submitting himself to such treatment?
And silently going along with such a perversion of justice?
W/ *no deceit in his mouth*, and *no violence* from his hand (9)?
Did anybody pause long enough in the busyness of their life to think that something might be up here? That's the question

And the answer, is apparently not; At least not very many

And many still don't; Maybe even you

Have you considered that this suffering servant of whom Isaiah spoke, was cut off and killed for *you*? For *your* transgressions? *Your* sins? Have you thought about that?

If not, now's a good time; B/c it's true, and tomorrow may be too late; Either b/c your life is snuffed out, or your heart becomes hard and you don't *want* to consider it

This is a call for us to stop and think; To ask if we might be the ones for whom he was *condemned*, and thereby avoid our *own* condemnation; Now's a good time

Especially so, when you consider that *Jesus* fulfilled it; The one who . . .

Fulfillment: Jesus was innocent and falsely accused (1 Pet 2:22-23; Mt 26:59-60)

That's the fulfillment here; And the consistent testimony of those who were there

Like Matthew, who said that – *Jesus remained silent* (Mt 26:63), and *gave no answer* (Mt 27:12); And Philip, who explained to an Ethiopian reading this passage . . .

That it's talking about Jesus (Acts 8:32-35)

And Peter, who said in **1 Pet 2:22-23** . . .

[22] He [Jesus] committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth [sound familiar? he was innocent]. [23] When he was reviled [verbally attacked, insulted], he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

Even though the people in front of him judged him *unjustly*

Like the religious rulers in **Mt 26:59-60** – *Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, [60] but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward.*

They didn't even have good *false* testimony

But that didn't stop their false accusations and trumped up charges

Nor their dark-of-night oppression and kangaroo court judgments – just like Isaiah said
It's a direct fulfillment*****

- As are the circumstances of his death and burial

Is 53:9 says – *they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death*

Which is a bit difficult to figure out by itself, but when you put it next to the events of Jesus' death, it makes sense; B/c first of all . . .

Crucified criminals in Jesus' day were normally thrown in a common grave – *they made his grave with the wicked*

But he was *actually* buried by a *rich* man; In a rich man's *tomb* (Mt 27:57-60)

It fits; Including his innocence and the false accusations

All of which should evoke feelings of admiration, and a desire to persevere; That's our . . .

Response: Admiration and perseverance (Heb 12:3)

Admiration for *enduring* such things, and staying true

Much like a prisoner of war is admired for enduring brutal interrogations without breaking; We ought to admire Jesus like that; And worship him

And it ought to fuel our perseverance; Like **Heb 12:3** says – *Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted*. So that you too may persevere

That you too may keep on in the face of difficulty, or persecution, or loss, or heartache
That's *our* response to the fulfillment of this prophecy by Jesus – admiration and perseverance*****

Is that you? I hope so; And I hope all this fans it into flame even more
But if not, if that's not you, if that seems out of reach or out of touch – you may need to start with the *final* prophecy; That . . .

Prophecy #5: God's servant would **prolong** his days and **justify** many (v10-12)

That's where the response of admiration and perseverance *starts* – with Easter; The resurrection; V10-12; He was innocent . . .

[10] *Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief* [agony]; *when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring* [his followers; the recipients of his sacrifice];

When? When he offers himself, his very soul, for *guilt*; When he dies for the universal condition of mankind

- Every single one of us is guilty – there's no avoiding it, and we feel it; Only a liar would say otherwise; And then feel even worse
But the guilt for which this servant would die is not just our painful awareness that we've blown it in life
It's also the formal responsibility we bear before a holy God, to *pay* for our sins; To make amends for them; To *clear* our debt; That's the guilt here

And it plagues us doesn't it? From the feelings of shame and regret, to the condemnation that's rightfully *ours* – it hangs over our head, and plagues our soul

Like it did Pete Rose, the legendary baseball player, who after finally admitting that he *bet* on baseball, said –

“I wish this would have never happened. But I can't change it. And sitting here in my position, you're just looking for a second chance.” His guilt plagued him

- Or how about Lady Macbeth in Shakespeare's famous play?
After conspiring with her husband to murder the king, she's beside herself with guilt And can't get rid of it no matter what she tries
And **Macbeth**, her husband, says to the doctor – “Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased, pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow, raze out the written troubles of the brain, and with some sweet oblivious antidote cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff which weighs upon the heart?”
IOW can't you just give her a pill to get rid of the guilt? Or some therapy? Or a diversion? Anything to give her a second chance before it kills her?

No; What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus
What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus
Nothing but the *soul* of God's righteous servant, offered for our *guilt******

- But as good as *that* is, there's more; And thank God for it; Check out the v10b

He shall prolong his days [which, in light of his death, foreshadows his resurrection; and ours too based on the NT]; *the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand* [he'll make the most of it].

[11] *Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied* [all the pain and sacrifice will be worth it]; *by his knowledge* [his experience with suffering, death, and resurrection] *shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous* [there it is, justified], *and he shall bear their iniquities* [he keeps coming back to it].

[12] *Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong* [the blessings of salvation will be extended to all those who receive him], *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.*

He was *counted* among the guilty, but he wasn't one of them; Instead, he bore their sin and *represents* them before God – securing their acceptance

The prophecy is that God's servant would prolong his days, and justify many – as in, remove their guilt; And it was fulfilled by Jesus, who . . .

Fulfillment: Jesus rose from the dead to count us **righteous** (Rom 4:24b-25)

That's the *fulfillment* of this 5th and final prophecy; Witnessed and proclaimed over and over again in the NT

Like the angel who said – “*He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.* (Mt 28:5-6; Lk 24:1-6a); Take a look, it's empty
And Peter, a few weeks later, who said – “*Men of Israel . . . this Jesus . . . you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.* [But] *God raised him up* (Acts 2:22-24)

And then there's the Apostle Paul several years later, who summed it by saying . . .
That Christ died for our sins . . . he was buried . . . he was raised on the third day . . .
[5] *and . . . he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.* [6] *Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time . . .* [7] *Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.* (1 Cor 15:3-7); IOW he rose from the dead

- And did so to count us righteous; To take our sin *from* us, and impute his righteousness to us; To credit it to our account
To stamp “paid in full” on our debt of guilt, and “fully funded” on our ledger of righteousness
That's what **Rom 4:24b-25** says – *It* [righteousness] *will be counted to us who believe To us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, [25] who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification* [our declaration of righteousness in God's eyes].
He was *delivered* up for our sins, and *raised* up for our righteousness; So we could get *over* the bar of perfection, and be in his presence
- You know what that is? That's the **G.O.S.P.E.L.** in one verse; The good news that Jesus *fulfilled* and Isaiah *prophesied*; It's one and the same
That **God** created us to be with him, but **Our** sins separate us from him; **Sins** that cannot be removed by good deeds
But **Paying** the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again
So that **Everyone** who trusts in him has eternal life; **Life** with Jesus that starts now and lasts forever

That's the gospel – proclaimed by Isaiah, fulfilled by Jesus, and intended for us
Take a look (**Video** – G.O.S.P.E.L. by Propaganda)

- That's the message of Is 53; That God sent his servant, his Son, to die in our place for our sins, and rose again that might have life forever and life to the full

But it doesn't apply to you and your guilt, unless you respond; Unless you . . .

Response: Believe, repent and receive (Acts 3:18-20)

Only then, will you be relieved of your guilt and forgiven of your sin

The Bible says – *If confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved* (Rom 10:9)

And Peter said in **Act 3:18-20** – *[18] What God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ [his servant] would suffer, he thus fulfilled. [19] Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out [forgiven], [20] that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus*

If you want that, if you want to *receive* the presence of the Lord in your life that times of refreshing may come . . .

If you want to be forgiven of your sin and relieved of your guilt, and you believe in Jesus to do it – you pray with me right now

Prayer – God, I *believe* – I believe that Jesus died in my place for my sin, so I wouldn't have to; And rose again so I could have life forever

And I *repent* – I'm sorry for my sins and ask your forgiveness; I commit to live your way from now on

And I *receive* you into my life and heart, to save me and keep me for all eternity

While we continue in prayer, if you just prayed with me will you raise your hand and look at me, and wait for me to acknowledge you?

I'm not going to embarrass you or call you out; I just want to rejoice with you and pray for you as we close; Is there anyone?

Lord, you are so good, and so great; Would you bless each and every person who responded? And sustain them in the trials and difficulties they'll face? Give them a hunger for your Word, a desire for fellowship, a heart to serve, and a passion for worship; Thank you for that

And thank you for the tithes we're able to give now on this Resurrection Sunday; Use them I pray, to the utmost