

# ISAIAH 53

## GREAT CHAPTERS OF THE BIBLE

*A study at Faith Lutheran, Sharpsburg, Georgia, 2009 AD*



God's plan to save mankind from sin was simple, but deeply profound: God would send a substitute who would take the place of sinful man. This substitute had been promised since the Garden, and every generation found out more about the coming Messiah through the words of Scripture. In the garden, mankind heard that he would be born of woman; the patriarchs heard he would be a child of Israel; the kings of Israel heard he would come from David's line; the prophets foretold that he would not just be man, but God with us. Then, in the pinnacle of the great gospel preaching prophet's work, mankind found out this God made man would be a substitute, a sacrifice of atonement.

### THE AUTHOR

#### Name

Isaiah means "the LORD saves"

#### Dates

c. 740-680 BC

#### Family

Isaiah was the son of Amoz  
Married with children, two sons  
Shear-Jashub and Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz

#### Call

Isaiah 6:1ff.  
Caught up to the throne room of heaven;  
Sees the Lord seated among the cherubim;  
Coal to mouth, "Here am I! Send me!"

#### Place of work

Prophet to the land of Judah  
Lived most of his life in Jerusalem

#### Contemporaries

Prophets Amos, Hosea, Micah  
King Hezekiah

#### Books written by Isaiah

The Book of Isaiah  
History of King Uzziah (2 Chr 26:22)

#### Death

Tradition says sawed in half by King Manasseh

### THE TIMES

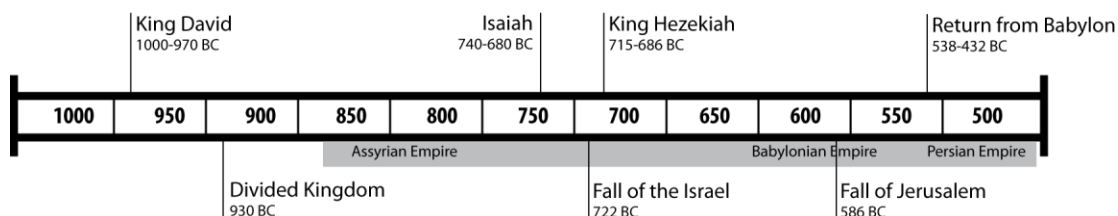
Isaiah prophesied for about 50 years during the reigns of Kings Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. His life occurred about 200 years after Kings David and Solomon and about 125 years before the Babylonian captivity.

**The Assyrian Empire** was expanding across the Near East; their king, Tiglath-Pileser III conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Then King Sennacherib threatened Jerusalem itself. At the prayer of good king Hezekiah, God intervened and saved his people. Yet Isaiah warned the people that their sins would result in a new empire conquering them. The **Babylonian Empire** eventually carried off the kingdom of Judah into exile.

### THE BOOK

Called the "Fifth Gospel" because of its clear proclamations of God's plan of salvation in Christ.

The Atonement Chapter of Isaiah, chapter 53, occupies the unique "middle" position in this section of Isaiah's poem. This chapter falls in the exact center of the second half of Isaiah. Cf. Psalm 23, Job.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Explain how verse 3 is a commentary on the life and Passion of our Lord.
2. Verse 4. What are our infirmities and how did Jesus take up our infirmities? (cf. Mt 8:17)
3. The first half of verse 5 is full of word pictures. What is each trying to communicate: (pierced, transgressions, crushed, iniquities).
4. How is verse 5 the perfect answer to God's dilemma in the Garden of Eden?
5. In verse 6, Isaiah compares us to straying sheep. How are you and I like straying sheep? "Each to his own way..." How does that condemn us individually?
6. Notice the names for God in vv 4-7. What insights might be found there? What comfort?
7. Read Lev 16:20ff. regarding the scapegoat. Read 1 Peter 2:24. How does Peter tie it all together?
8. Verse 7. In Matthew 26 and 27 we see this prophesy fulfilled to the letter. Why did the Messiah suffer silently, without protest?
9. Like a lamb to the slaughter. Why is the image of Christ as lamb so meaningful? (cf. Rev 7:9; John 1:29; Exodus 12)
10. Explain how verse 9 was fulfilled on Good Friday. (cf. Matthew 27:38 and 57ff.)
11. Look at verse 10. Agree or Disagree? God wanted the religious leaders to kill Jesus.
12. The Lord makes his life a guilt offering. Look at Lev 5:15ff. How did the guilt offering of the Old Testament point to Christ? See its fulfillment in Hebrews 9:11-15.
13. In verse 11, the Hebrew could be translated "by his knowledge" or "by knowledge of him." Which is better? Why?
14. Verse 12 describes a scene of victory when a conquering king divides up the booty. When did this happen for Christ? To see what it was like in the halls of heaven when the victorious Son of God returned, read the first 15 verses of Revelation 5.
15. What makes the final sentence of this chapter such a fitting end?

## CONCLUSION

The Old Testament sacrifices were designed by God to prepare his people for the blood-atonement sacrifice that would one day be made by the Messiah. The blood of animals pointed ahead to the day when God would sacrifice his son as the guilt offering for our offenses. Though we deserve nothing, God gives us pardon, peace, and forgiveness from all our sins. How can this be? We have a substitute who made atonement:

*God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

*-- 2 Cor 5:21*