

**Is. 53:1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?**

Whose report? It would seem that Isaiah is speaking as representative of the prophets or maybe even the Trinity in this verse and then as representative of the Jewish people in the next several verses.

What report? The report being given in the last chapter—Israel being restored in relationship to YHWH and occupying a place of blessing and prosperity. In particular, the message of the last three verses declaring that Messiah will be King of kings; but before that happens, He will be beaten beyond recognition and put to death for the atonement of the sins of the nations—including the Gentiles. This makes me think of verses from my recent study in 1Corinthians.

*1Corinthians 1:23-25* But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

The truth of this message is unbelievable according to man's way of thinking, but is the embodiment of wisdom in God's thoughts.

The answer to the second question in the verse is found in 52:10.

*Isaiah 52:10* The LORD hath made bare his holy arm **in the eyes of all the nations**; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.  
(See comments in previous chapter.)

**Is. 53:2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.**

"He," Jesus, will grow up before "Him," God the Father. Jesus came to earth as a baby; He had to grow into a man just as any other male child born on this earth.

"a root out of a dry ground" – I think this is a reference to the land of the people of Israel as a spiritual desert. He grew up spiritually healthy in spite of His environment.

Jesus was not an especially handsome man. People weren't drawn to Him because of His looks. The beauty of the man Jesus came from within—not from His outward appearance. This is not surprising in light of the truth declared in other scriptures.

*1Samuel 16:7b* ...for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

*1Peter 3:3-4* Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in

*that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*

**Is. 53:3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.**

Jesus began His years of ministry as a young man, and many were drawn to hear Him because of the miracles He performed. Many became true believers and followers of Jesus, but the majority of the people rejected Him—especially once He began to declare Himself the Son of God. They were completely blind to the truth of the scriptures and thought He was blasphemous for even suggesting such a thing. The spiritual leaders of the nation in particular despised Him. They were threatened by the popularity He attained through the working of miracles, and they resented the fact that He performed these miracles on the Sabbath. They were so tied in to legalism, that they had totally perverted the intent of the law. Because of the power these leaders exerted in society, many were afraid to step out in faith to follow Jesus; they were afraid of the repercussions.

“a man of sorrows...grief” – There are many incidents in the New Testament that speak about the Lord’s compassion for the people. He felt their pain, their grief. Most of His miracles were miracles of healing that relieved pain and suffering. Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus. Jesus was in agony in the garden of Gethsemane before His arrest. He didn’t want to endure the cross, yet He wanted more to do the Father’s will.

*Mark 14:35-36 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.*

“we hid...our faces” – I believe this has to be a reference to having to turn from the view of a man that was beaten beyond recognition.

“despised...esteemed him not” – Even Pilate could find no fault in Jesus. He yielded to the will of the crowd to protect his own position.

*Matthew 27:24-25 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.*

The people were determined to crucify the Savior, to the point of cursing their own children if they were wrong.

**Is. 53:4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.**

“borne” = lift, suffer, carry (away), forgive, pardon, wear

Webster: Carried; conveyed; supported; defrayed.

“defray” = 1. To pay or discharge; to serve in payment of; to provide for, as a charge, debt, expenses, costs, etc. 2. To avert or appease, as by paying off; to satisfy; as, to *defray* wrath.

“griefs” – anxiety, disease, sickness, weakness

I thought the definitions from the Hebrew and Webster were especially helpful. The word *borne* not only included the idea of carrying and suffering, but the idea of forgiveness and pardon. The word *defray* was particularly specific; Jesus averted God’s wrath from us by paying our sin debt and satisfying God’s justice. As I continued to think on this verse, I realized that our griefs, anxieties, diseases, sicknesses, weaknesses and sorrows are all a result of sin. This thought immediately led me to a verse in 1Peter.

*1Peter 2:24* 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.

By baring our sins in His body on the cross, He was also baring our griefs and sorrows. The main point being—Christ died in my stead. He sacrificed Himself to give me an abundant life.

Although I am making personal application (which I can’t help but), I am reminded that Isaiah is speaking to the Jewish people specifically. The Jewish leaders and all those that supported them in their determination to crucify the Savior felt justified in their actions. They assumed that He was getting His just punishment and judgment from God.

“esteem” = “to plait or interpenetrate, i.e. (literally) to weave or (gen.) to fabricate; figuratively, to plot or contrive (usually in a malicious sense); hence (from the mental effort) to think...”

This certainly wasn’t what I expected when looking up the Hebrew for *esteem*. This seems to paint a very descriptive word picture of what was going on in the minds of the Pharisees in particular as they sought to get Jesus killed. They were weaving a fabricated story with malicious intent to bring about the death of an innocent man. They tried to justify their actions by arguing that they were defending the honor of God by judging the One they considered a blasphemer.

**Is. 53:5** But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

The wounding, bruising and stripes are all physical inflictions upon the body of Christ before He ever got to the cross. The Hebrew for *bruised* was very graphic—to beat to pieces, break in pieces, crush. *Transgressions* are acts of willful rebellion and disobedience to God; *iniquities* are a reference to the moral evil and wickedness that are a result of our sin nature.

*Chastisement* speaks of reproof, instruction, correction, and discipline; Webster goes on to add punishment through the inflicting of pain. I thought the second definition from Webster was very applicable—"To reduce to order or obedience; to correct or purify; to free from faults or excesses." Christ was punished to bring us to a position of obedience and purity—to make us righteous, free from faults. Because of His sacrifice, we can have *peace* (safety, happiness, health and prosperity). Because of His sacrifice, we are healed (spiritually). This again brings to mind the verse from 1Peter referenced above.

**Is. 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.**

"gone astray" = deceive, (cause to, make to) err, seduce, (make to) stagger, (cause to) wander, be out of the way.

As I look at the first two clauses in this verse I get a picture of two different kinds of sheep. The first one wanders off from where he should be because of deceit, or bad judgment, or seduction, or physical impairment. The second is making a deliberate choice to go off on his own and choose a path independent of the shepherd. These directly relate to the sinners and transgressors in the previous verse.

"laid" = to impinge, by accident or violence, or (figuratively) by importunity:—come (betwixt), cause to entreat, fall (upon), make intercession, intercessor, intreat, lay...

"impinge" = To fall or dash against; to touch upon; to strike; to hit; to clash with; — with on or *upon*.

More often than not, the Hebrew sends my mind spinning in many directions. YHWH, God the Father, laid our sin on Jesus, His Son. Paul declared this truth in his letter to the Corinthians. As I read through the different translations, I wasn't really satisfied with any of them. I think you need a couple of them to get the complete picture.

*CJB - 2Corinthians 5:21 God made this sinless man be a sin offering on our behalf, so that in union with him we might fully share in God's righteousness."*

*NIV - 2Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

In my mind it is important to recognize that in becoming our sin offering He became our sin. He was there in our stead. This is something the Jews that lived under the sacrificial system of the law understood much more completely than do we who live under grace.

By laying our sin on Jesus, God the Father effectively created a separation between Himself and His Son that had never before existed.

*Matthew 27:46* And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?* that is to say, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

I don't think we can truly understand how violent and terrible this was for Father or Son. Jesus didn't just suffer the judgment for my sin or your sin; He suffered judgment for the sins of every person who has ever lived or will ever live on planet earth. His sacrifice was for all.

*Romans 5:18* Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

*1Corinthians 15:22* For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

After willingly and obediently becoming our sacrifice, Jesus became our intercessor before the Father.

*Hebrews 7:25* Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

**Is. 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.**

*Oppressed* doesn't sound so bad; however, the Hebrew gives a clearer picture—He was driven like an animal and tyrannized. He was *afflicted*; the Hebrew included humbling oneself and submitting. No matter how unjust or cruel His treatment, He endured it without complaint or fighting back. He is pictured as a lamb being taken to slaughter and as a sheep being taken to have its wool shaved off—completely submissive.

**Is. 53:8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.**

I really liked the reading of the Complete Jewish Bible for this verse.

*After forcible arrest and sentencing, he was taken away; and none of his generation protested his being cut off from the land of the living for the crimes of my people, who deserved the punishment themselves.*

The Hebrew for *declare* includes speaking out in complaint. That is a very sad statement and fits in with the gospel accounts. They are clear that Peter made a point to deny Him several times. We know that His mother, John and some other faithful women followers were at the cross and grieving; but nowhere do we hear anyone speaking out on His behalf except Pilate.

The most important point being made in this verse is that Jesus was beaten and killed for our (Isaiah is specifically referencing the Jews) willful sins.

**Is. 53:9** **And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth.**

I wasn't really happy with any of the nine translations I read for this verse. It's wording is a bit confusing. The word *grave* is a reference to the tomb and the word *death* references Hades, the place of the dead. I think I got tripped up by equating "the rich" with Joseph of Arimathea (the rich man in whose grave Jesus was buried). The key seems to be that He was put to death with those who were wicked and deserving of death. When He went to Hades, He would have gone to the section we know as Abraham's Bosom.

*Luke 16:23* *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

Note that Hades is translated "hell" in Luke 16. Paul speaks of the Lord going to Hades in his letter to the Ephesians.

*Ephesians 4:9-10* *(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)*

Knowing that Abraham's Bosom was the section designated to people of faith, then we understand that Jesus indeed fellowshiped with those who were truly "rich" in Hades. These are they who would experience the joy of eternity with the Savior.

The last half of the verse emphasizes that Jesus was the spotless Lamb of God as John the Baptist had declared.

*John 1:29* *The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*

He had not done anything violent (or wrong or unjust) and had never spoken deceitfully (or falsely or fraudulently or treacherously).

**Is. 53:10** **Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his seed*, he shall prolong *his days*, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.**

"it pleased the LORD" – This is a hard phrase for me to digest. God the Father was pleased (desired and took delight) with the *bruising* (beating to pieces, crushing) and *grief* (pain, weakness, wounding) of His Son. I can hardly see through the tears even as I type this. It's easier for me to put the focus of His pleasure on the obedience of His Son—His Son's desire to do the will of His Father over His own will. The thing is—the Father would never have put such a plan into place were it not for **my** sin. I know my heart; I would never have

chosen such a selfless act of unconditional love and sacrifice involving my son. God's love is so amazing! The lengths to which He has gone to have a relationship with me as His child is totally beyond my understanding. I know how many times I have failed Him—sometimes ignorantly, but more often than not by willful choice. I am so unworthy, yet He considers me of great value, a special treasure. This is one truth I'm not sure I'll ever understand—even in heaven.

Jesus was both our complete sin and trespass offering (described in Leviticus 4-6). Again, the Jewish people understood this far better than we. The main difference being that the offering of Jesus was sufficient once for all.

“he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days” – I had to stop and think about this phrase quite a while. I finally realized that the word *his* was throwing me; it is not in the original. It doesn't matter so much with the first phrase as it does with the second. Jesus would see his seed, His offspring; that is a reference to His spiritual offspring—not physical. “He shall prolong days” I think is a reference to the time that the Father would allow for the offspring to be a great multitude. As I was reminded when reading through one commentary, to have many children was considered a special blessing to the Jews; and the Father wants to greatly honor His Son.

The last clause of this verse is a declaration of victory and success; there is no doubt of the Father's will being accomplished. No matter how deceptive Satan and his legions are and no matter that men choose to rebel against and deny Him, God's plan will be carried out in every detail. I thought it was interesting that the Hebrew for *prosper* stated “to push forward.” Jesus is the One Who will accomplish the plans of the Father through His workings with and among people on this earth.

**Is. 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.**

“my righteous servant” = Jesus, the Son of God

When Jesus sees what He has accomplished through His very painful and sorrowful obedience to the Father, He will be *satisfied* (to the full, satiated). It's only because the Savior was obedient in following the Father's will to truly “know” such pain and sorrow that many will be *justified* (made righteous—just as if I'd never sinned). How? By becoming the final sin offering. (See 2Corinthians 5:21 above)

**Is. 53:12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.**

Frankly, I didn't like any of the translations I read. Something doesn't set right with me in understanding that the Father is giving the Son a portion or division of the spoils of victory. When I looked at the Hebrew for *divide*, it included "separate self." No I don't know Hebrew, but it makes more sense to me for it to read something like, "Therefore I will separate Him to receive great (multiplied by the myriad) reward, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong."

Maybe I'm wrong, but I see Christ as the Victor and as the One Who will divide His kingdom with the strong (those who by faith are overcomers). This seems to be the truth stated in Revelation

*Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

The Father shared His throne with the Son, and the Son will share His throne with those who follow Him in faith. Why will the Father reward His Son so magnificently? Because of His obedience. He willingly laid down His life despite being unjustly condemned and treated like a common criminal. He became my sin, our sin, the final sufficient sin offering for all who would come to Him in faith. Even as He was suffering on the cross, he prayed for those who had rejected Him.

*Luke 23:34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*