

Titles of Jesus Christ (#5)
The Man of Sorrows
Sermon by Pastor Sylvia Chan

Today we are going to study another title of the Lord Jesus Christ, a man of sorrows.

^{NASB} **Isaiah 53:1-4** ¹ Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD (Yahweh) been revealed? ² For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no *stately* form or majesty that we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. ³ He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. ⁴ Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.
(Isa 53:1-4 NASB)

This passage, Isaiah 53:1-4, describes a man of sorrows (v.3); he had no stately form or majesty, no attractive appearance; he was despised and forsaken of men. He was acquainted with grief; people didn't even want to look at him, and they hid their faces from him. He bore our griefs, he carried our sorrows, yet people thought he was stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

This passage is a prophecy by the prophet Isaiah, who was active from 740-681 BC. We can estimate roughly this passage was written around 700 BC, around 700 years before Christ.

Christians see Isaiah 53 as a prophecy of a suffering servant of Yahweh God, namely our Lord Jesus Christ. But the Jewish rabbis see Isaiah 53 as referring to the nation of Israel collectively as "Servant of Yahweh God".

If you are interested in the teaching of the Jewish rabbis, you can go to study their writings. I am not going to explain their teaching; here I am explaining the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 53:1 was quoted in John 12:38

First of all, Isaiah 53:1 was quoted in John 12:38; let's now look at John 12:37-38.

^{NASB} **John 12:37-38** ³⁷ But though He had performed so many signs before them, *yet* they were not believing in Him; ³⁸ that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, “LORD, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” (Joh 12:37 NASB)

The word “He” in this passage John 12:37 – 38 refers to the Lord Jesus Christ. It says that even though the Lord Jesus had performed many miracles before the people, yet they still were not believing in him. Isaiah 53:1 says exactly the same, “Lord, who has believed our message...” It grieves the Lord Jesus Christ because people did not believe in him.

Isaiah 53:5 – 6 was quoted in the gospel of John 19:34

Now let's continue to look at Isaiah 53:5-6:

^{NASB} **Isaiah 53:5-6** ⁵ But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. ⁶ All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD (Yahweh) has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. (Isa 53:5-6 NASB)

The word “He” again refers to the suffering servant. This passage talks about the suffering servant being pierced through for our transgressions. John 19:34 mentions exactly the same thing when the Lord was nailed on the cross:

^{NASB} **John 19:34** but one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water. (Joh 19:34 NASB)

This passage John 19:34 confirms that Isaiah 53:5 – 6 is a prophecy of the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 53:7 was confirmed by Matthew 26:59 – 63

We continue to look at the next verse Isaiah 53:7.

^{NASB} **Isaiah 53:7** He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. (Isa 53:7 NASB)

This verse says that the suffering servant did not open his mouth to defend himself. Indeed, in the gospel account, when the Lord Jesus was standing on trial, he was accused of all kinds of false accusations, yet he did not open his mouth to defend himself:

^{NASB} **Matthew 26:59 – 63** ⁵⁹ Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death. ⁶⁰ They did not find *any*, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward, ⁶¹ and said, “This man stated, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days.’” ⁶² The high priest stood up and said to Him, “Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?” ⁶³ But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, “I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.” (Mat 26:59-63 NASB)

This account in Matthew 26:59-63 is exactly like what was described in Isaiah 53:7.

Isaiah 53:10 – 12

^{NASB} **Isaiah 53:10 – 12** ¹⁰ But the LORD (Yahweh) was pleased to crush Him, putting *Him* to grief; If He would render Himself *as a guilt offering*, He will see *His* offspring, He will prolong *His* days, And the good pleasure of the LORD (Yahweh) will prosper in His hand. ¹¹ As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it* and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors. (Isa 53:10-12 NASB)

Isaiah 53:10 says, “But the LORD (Yahweh) was pleased to crush Him, putting *Him* to grief; If He would render Himself *as a guilt offering*” Here the term “guilt offering” is a seriously wrong translation.

The original Hebrew word is “אָשָׁם” (*asham*), which means “guilt”, not “guilt offering”; the word “offering” was added by the translator, and this translation is contrary to the Law in the Bible. According to the Law, there is no sin offering or guilt offering for adultery and murder; sin offering and guilt offering are only for lesser sins. When the Lord Jesus offered up himself, he was not just

a guilt offering for some minor sins, of course not! He offered up himself to become the guilt and the sin. This verse Isaiah 53:10 should be read in this way:

Isaiah 53:10 But the LORD (Yahweh) was pleased to crush Him, putting *Him* to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt (אָשָׁם) (*asham*)

All our guilt was put on him. This passage Isaiah 53:10 says Yahweh was pleased to crush the Lord Jesus, which means to render him as a guilt, not a guilt offering.

Let's look at another passage, 2 Corinthians 5:21.

^{NASB} **2 Corinthians 5:21** He (Yahweh) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin *to be sin* on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2Co 5:21 NASB)

This passage 2 Corinthians 5:21 says specifically that Yahweh God made the Lord Jesus to be sin, not sin offering. When the Lord was crucified on the cross, sin is destroyed with him so that we become the righteousness of God in Him.

When the guilt is destroyed, there is justification of many people. Because there was justification of many people, therefore the Lord Jesus was satisfied.

^{NAS} **Isaiah 53:11** As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it* and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. (Isa 53:11 NAS)

Man of sorrows

After we study the meaning of Isaiah 53:1-12, we see that our Lord Jesus is really the man of sorrows, a man despised by people. Indeed the New Testament never mentions that the Lord Jesus laughed; instead he sighed, he wept.

^{NASB} **Mark 8:12** And sighing deeply in His spirit, He said, "Why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation." (Mar 8:12 NASB)

^{NASB} **Luke 19:41** And when He approached, He saw the city and wept over it (Luk 19:41 NASB)

^{NASB} **John 11:33-35** ³³ When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her, *also* weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit, and was troubled, ³⁴ and said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.” ³⁵ Jesus wept. (Joh 11:33-35 NASB)

Today we often see a picture of the Lord being nailed on the cross, light shining out from him and a halo surrounding his head. It looks very glorious, that he was depicted as such a hero.

But that is not the real picture. In the eyes of the world at that time, he was a criminal, a blasphemer, who was punished by God for his sins. Yet he had satisfaction in his heart because he saw the result of his suffering is the salvation of mankind.

Imitating the Lord

We don't just study the titles of the Lord for enjoyment, nor do we simply want to show off our knowledge. The purpose of studying the titles of the Lord Jesus is to learn from him, to imitate him.

It is easy to aspire to the glorious version of the Son of God, the savior of mankind. Who doesn't want to be glorious? But do you want to imitate this man of sorrows who was despised by all the people?

As long as we follow the Lord's teaching totally, people of the world will despise us, even hate us. I have experienced so much anger and hatred from people, I don't even know why they hate me, I didn't do anything to harm them, but I would preach the word of the Lord as it is, I didn't water it down; that's enough to make people hate me.

The Lord suffers for mankind; are we willing to suffer for the sake of mankind? Are we willing to take the suffering so that blessing can come upon others? It is not suffering for our own benefit, but we suffer so that others can receive the blessing.