

International Bible Lessons Commentary

Isaiah 53:1-8

International Bible Lessons

Sunday, April 27, 2014

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, April 27, 2014**, is from **Isaiah 53:1-8**. Please Note: Some churches will only study **Isaiah 53:3-8**. This commentary is the first part of a two part Bible Lesson that includes Luke 24:25-31; 44-53 (some will only study Luke 24:25-27; 44-47). **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary* below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further**, a study guide for teachers, discusses the five questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion; these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website. The weekly *International Bible Lesson* is posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

Isaiah 53:1-8

(Isaiah 53:1) Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

God inspired the prophet Isaiah to foretell that Jesus the Messiah would first come into the world as a Suffering Servant Messiah. No one would believe that Jesus came as a Suffering Servant until after Jesus had suffered crucifixion and death, and then rose from the dead to explain once again what He had taught His disciples. The Apostles would not believe the report of the women who came from Jesus' tomb with the angelic message that Jesus had risen from the dead as He had told them when they were in Galilee. The arm (which means "the power") of God the Father and the power of Jesus was revealed to the Apostles when Jesus appeared to the Apostles at various times in His resurrected glory. Today, Isaiah could ask the same questions of believers and unbelievers.

(Isaiah 53:2) For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

Jesus grew up as a normal boy; however, we see a small measure of His wisdom when He talked to the priests in the temple when He was only twelve years old. He grew up in what many Jews would have considered the "dry ground" of Nazareth in Galilee, where many thought nothing good could come from such a spiritually desolate place. Isaiah

prophesied that the Suffering Servant Messiah would not attract people by kingly majesty or personal appearance. Certainly, as Jesus hanged and suffered on the cross, there was nothing in His physical appearance that would attract believers to Him. Only one Roman soldier called Jesus the Son of God, but his conclusion was based on the way Jesus died.

(Isaiah 53:3) He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.

The efforts by many religious leaders to murder Jesus indicate they despised and rejected Jesus as a prophet of God, the Messiah, and the Son of God. When Jesus could barely carry His cross, we know He suffered infirmity, but He may have had other physical infirmities that moved Jesus to say, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!'" (Luke 4:23). As He was arrested, tried, condemned, suffered, and died, He was held "of no account."

(Isaiah 53:4) Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted.

Jesus was condemned to die on the cross in humiliation before mockers who thought God had struck Him down because of His sins, especially the sin of claiming to be the Son of God. They thought God afflicted Him because He deserved to die. But, as Isaiah foretold, His Apostles learned and taught that Jesus carried our sins, our infirmities, and our diseases to the cross; He suffered in our place to grant us eternal life.

(Isaiah 53:5) But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.

Isaiah went on to prophesy that Jesus was wounded and died because of our sins and evil deeds, not because of any sins He had committed or any claims He had made. Isaiah left no doubt about why Jesus suffered: we deserve punishment for our sins. God sent Jesus to suffer our punishment in our place, and Jesus' sacrificial death makes believers whole and puts them in a holy and right relationship with God. Even today in this life, because of Jesus' death, many are healed physically, mentally, and spiritually, and all believers will be made completely whole when God raises them from the dead.

(Isaiah 53:6) All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah continued to emphasize the nature of our sin and iniquity. We have not followed the LORD as our Shepherd. We have gone our own way instead of God's way, the way of Jesus, Who is the Way. We have not obeyed God. We have not loved God or our neighbors or ourselves. We have been self-centered instead of God-centered. Jesus took upon himself the consequences we deserve for our iniquities when He died on the cross.

(Isaiah 53:7) He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

When Jesus was flogged and hanged on the cross “he did not open his mouth;” which means, He did not complain against God or curse His oppressors. As He died, He asked God to forgive His enemies because they did not know what they were doing. He did not fight His enemies or try to flee from the way of the cross, but went quietly as a lamb is led to slaughter. Jesus knew where He was going, whereas a lamb might not; He knew He was going to die for us. Jesus also knew that He would be raised from the dead on the third day and ascend into heaven, which helped Him face His suffering and death.

(Isaiah 53:8) By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people.

We know from the Bible that justice was perverted at Jesus’ trial, because false witnesses were called and Pilate declared there was no case against Jesus. When Jesus died, He “was cut off from the land of the living.” Jesus died for a good reason; He died for the transgressions of God’s people. Isaiah prophesied exactly the suffering and death of Jesus and why Jesus came and died. From prophecy and the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, we have many good reasons to believe that Jesus came into the world as the Messiah and He is the Son of God, Who reigns at the right hand of God.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

Since this is the first of a two part lesson series, only 2 of the 5 Study Questions will be asked below.

1. How have sinners like sheep gone astray? How was Jesus like a sheep?
2. Why did Jesus suffer and die?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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