

ISAIAH 52:13–53:12

THE SONG OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT

The song is comprised of 5 strophes with 3 verses in each

- 1 His humiliation and exaltation (Isa. 52:13-15)
2. His experience of rejection (53:1-3)
3. His vicarious suffering (53:4-6)
4. His sacrificial death (53:7-9)
5. His reconciling work and resurrection (53:10-12)

2. Second Strophe (Isaiah 53:1-3). The Servant would be rejected and despised by man.

1 “Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”

2 “For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.

3 “He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.”

Who has believed our report? = *the thing heard*

Romans 10:16-17: “But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed our report?’ 17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

“To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

“Arm of the Lord” is used to designate special actions in human affairs whereby God delivers His people and punishes His foes. Often it coupled with “mighty hand.”

Mighty hand and outstretched arm: (12 verses):

Deut. 4:34; 5:15; 7:19; 11:2; 26:8; 2 Chron. 6:32;
(cf. 1 Kings 8:42); Ezek. 20:33-34; Psa. 136:12;
Jer. 21:5; 32:21

Outstretched arm: Exod. 6:6; 2 Kings 17:36

Great power and outstretched arm: Jer. 27:5; 32:17

Isaiah earlier declared that this Arm would provide salvation for those who trust in it. Yet, he did not reveal who or what this Arm is. According to Isaiah 51:5 and Isa. 52:10, the Arm belongs to God and brings forth justice. It is a personality.

Isa. 51:5, “My righteousness is near, My salvation has gone forth, And My arms will judge the peoples; The coastlands will wait upon Me, And on My arm they will trust.”

Isa. 52:10, “The LORD has 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.”

The Arm of YHWH is not God the Father but God the Son, the Suffering Servant, who by means of His humiliation would bring about the salvation for Israel.

The arm of Yahweh is personified as the Messiah
(Isaiah 40:10; 51:5; 51:9; 52:10; 53:1; 63:5; 63:8-12)

John 12:37-38, “But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe 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?’ ”

Isa. 33:2, “O LORD, be gracious to us; We have waited for You. Be their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.”

Arm of the Lord here is a title for Messiah

Isaiah 40:10, “Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand, And **His arm** shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him.”

Isaiah 53:2, “For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.”

Tender plant = suckling branch = a sucker

Root out of dry ground = worthless, unproductive

He has no form nor comeliness

He has no **form** = no form – same word as 52:14, which says that His visage was marred more than any man, And His **form** more than the sons of men.

The Messiah was not outstanding in His form, His outward appearance.

He has no form nor **comeliness**

comeliness = majesty or splendor

and when we see him, there is no **beauty** =
appearance – same word translated “visage”
in Isaiah 52:14.

that we should **desire** him – desire, take
pleasure in

Isa. 53:3, “He is **despised** and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He
was despised, and we did not esteem Him.”

Despised — be considered worthless and unworthy
of attention

Isa. 53:3, “He is despised and **rejected** by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.”

and **rejected** of men — *lacking men*, literally (i.e., forsaken by them)

A Man of **sorrows** — pain or sorrow, physical or mental

In almost every instance of this word it refers to anguish of soul.

and **acquainted**: to know; to know by
experience; be acquainted with

with grief: sickness; disease, grief

We hid as it were our faces from Him.

He was **despised** = to despise, regard with contempt

and we did not **esteem** Him — to esteem, regard,
think valuable

3rd strophe (Isaiah 53:4-6) The vicarious Redeemer

4 “Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

5 “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

6 “All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

3rd strophe (Isaiah 53:4-6) The Servant as viewed by God would be the vicarious Redeemer

4 “Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.”

Verse 4 emphasizes His substitutionary suffering. When He suffered, He suffered for others, and not because of His own sin.

3rd strophe (Isaiah 53:4-6) The Servant as viewed by God would be the vicarious Redeemer

5 “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.”

Verse 5 emphasizes His substitutionary death. Not only did He suffer for others, He also died for others as their substitute.

3rd strophe (Isaiah 53:4-6) The Servant as viewed by God would be the vicarious Redeemer

6 “All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

Verse 6, Israel's condition is spelled out. They were like sheep that had gone astray, they had turned every one to his own way, so God laid upon the Messiah the iniquity of them all.

This re-emphasizes that both the suffering and death were substitutionary.

Isaiah 53:4, “**Surely** He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.”

Surely: The word expresses a note of surprise or faith in God (Psa. 31:22; 66:19; Isa. 45:15; 49:4; 53:4; Jer. 3:23)

Isaiah 53:4, “Surely He has **borne** our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.”

He has **borne** = carry, bear. In this context He is carrying what is rightfully ours in Himself.

Isaiah 53:4, “Surely He has borne our **griefs** and **carried** our **sorrows**; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.”

Griefs = sickness, disease, grief. Same word as in verse 3.

Carried — carry, bear as a burden

Our sorrows — pain or sorrow, physical or mental. In this passage it is anguish of soul. Same word as in verse 3.

The subject of Isaiah 53 is salvation from sin, not healing of physical illnesses.

Contextually, Isaiah 53 uses three different Hebrew words for sin—translated “sin,” “iniquity,” and “transgression”—at least nine times in Isaiah 53. This specifically identifies the intent of the passage.

Verse 4: bore griefs

Verse 12: bore sin

Verse 4: carry sorrows

Verse 11: Bear iniquities

The emphasis in Isaiah 53 is salvation from sin, not healing from disease.

Isaiah 53:4, “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we **esteemed** Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.”

Yet we **esteemed** Him — to think, esteem, make a judgment, imagine. Same word as in verse 3.

Isaiah 53:4, “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him **stricken**, **smitten** by God, and **afflicted**.”

Stricken — to touch, to strike

Smitten by God — to strike, smite, hit, beat, slay, kill, send judgment upon, punish, destroy

and **afflicted** — to be humbled, be afflicted

Isaiah 53:5, “But He was **wounded** for our **transgressions**, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.”

Wounded — to be polluted, be defiled, to wound (fatally), to be pierced, a term quite appropriate to crucifixion.

Transgressions — transgression, rebellion. From the root, “to rebel,” implying revolt against the sovereignty of God.

Isaiah 53:5, “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was **bruised** for our **iniquities**; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.”

Bruised — to be crushed, be shattered. More accurately, *utterly crushed*.

Iniquities — perversity, depravity, iniquity, guilt, or punishment of iniquity

Isaiah 53:5, “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The **chastisement** for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.”

The chastisement of our peace — discipline, chastening, correction, i.e., the punishment that brings about our peace—our right relationship with God.

Isaiah 53:5, “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His **stripes** we are **healed**.”

And by His stripes – bruise, stripe, wound, blow

We are healed — to heal, make healthful

Isaiah 53:6, “All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”