

God's PLAN of Salvation



"¹⁰ But it was the Lord's good plan to crush him and cause him grief. Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, he will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the Lord's good plan will prosper in his hands." Isaiah 53:10 NLT

Who is the Suffering Servant—Israel or the Messiah, people or a person? Bible teacher Warren Wiersbe points out that Jewish rabbis, up to the twelfth century, interpreted Isaiah 53 as referring to the Messiah. After that, they started interpreting the passage as a description of Israel's suffering. The question is, *who* is the suffering servant—Israel or the Messiah, people or a person? The Hebrew text indicates it is a person. Throughout the chapter, we see the masculine third-person singular used, *not* the third-person plural.

The Importance of Isaiah 53—When people are asked who Isaiah 53 describes without being told it is from the Old Testament, they will invariably respond, "Jesus!" If they are Jewish, they often respond that it is Jesus, but they do not accept the New Testament. They are very surprised to hear that it is Isaiah 53 from the Old Testament. Isaiah 53 (and Daniel 9) have convinced many people that Jesus is the Messiah.

"The Lord's good plan" - In the key verse, Isaiah 53:10, the New Living Translation uses the word "good plan." Other translations use a different word—"will" (NIV, ESV), "pleased" & "pleasure" (KJV, CSB), "desired" & "good pleasure" (NASV). The Hebrew word *יָחַן* (khaw-fates') has the meanings of "to incline to, to bend, to be pleased with, desire." The idea that God was "inclined to" and "desired to" is compatible with "The Lord's good plan."

Central Lesson:

God has a plan of salvation through the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. Accept Him, Live for Him!

Characteristics of the Suffering Servant—Isaiah 53 describes the Messiah, the suffering Servant, in many different ways throughout the chapter. Instead of commenting on every phrase and verse, this Bible study will list the major characteristics and show the supporting verses and phrases.

1. **REJECTED** by His Own People (53:1-3. cf. John 1:10-12).

"³ He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care" (53:1-3).

Fulfilled in Jesus: *"¹⁰ He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹ He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. ¹² But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:10-12).*

2. **SUBSTITUTE** Who Atones for Sin (53:4-6, 11-12. cf. 1 Peter 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:21).

"⁴ Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! ⁵ But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. ⁶ All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all" (53:4-6).

Fulfilled in Jesus: *"¹⁰ He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed" (1 Peter 2:24).*

3. **SUFFERED** and Died for the Sins of People (53:7-9. cf. 1 Peter 3:18).

"⁷ He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. ⁸ Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. ⁹ He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave" (53:7-9).

Fulfilled in Jesus: *"¹⁸ Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the Spirit" (1 Peter 3:18).*

4. **SINLESS** — Necessary to Pay for the Sins of Others (53:9. cf. 1 John 3:5; 1 Peter 2:22; Heb. 4:15; 2 Tim. 1:9).

"⁹ He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone..." (53:9).

Fulfilled in Jesus: *"⁵ And you know that Jesus came to take away our sins, and there is no sin in him" (1 John 3:5).*

5. **PLANNED** by God (53:10. cf. Galatians 1:4; Acts 2:22-23).

"¹⁰ But it was the Lord's good plan to crush him and cause him grief. Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, he will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the Lord's good plan will prosper in his hands" (53:10).

Fulfilled in Jesus: *"⁴ Jesus gave his life for our sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live" (Gal. 1:4).*

6. **RESURRECTED** from the Dead (53:10; Psalm 16:10. cf. Acts 2:32; 3:15; 10:38-42; 13:30-32, 34-38; 1 Cor. 15:3-8).

"¹⁰ ...He will enjoy a long life, and the Lord's good plan will prosper in his hands" (53:10). "...or [not] allow your holy one [The Messiah] to rot in the grave." (Ps.16:10).

Fulfilled in Jesus: *"³² God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this" (Acts 2:32).*

Central Lesson: God has a plan of salvation through the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. Accept Him, Live for Him!

- ▶ Accept Christ as your Savior.
- ▶ As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ.
- ▶ Invite someone to next Sunday's study.
- ▶ Attend a small group.
- ▶ Read the Bible.
- ▶ Pray for friends that need Jesus.