

Deutero-Isaiah

Chapters 52 & 53

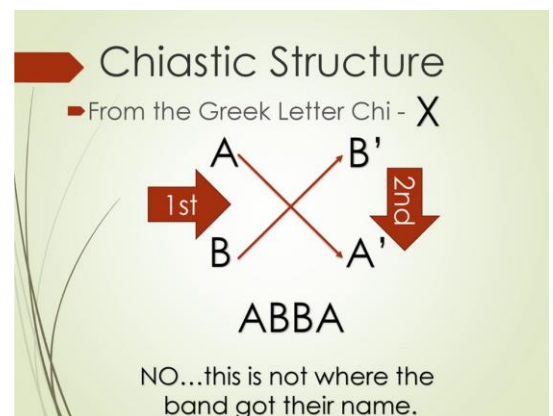
August 2023

Learning objectives

- Outline: Deutero-Isaiah 52:13–53:12
- Identify: 'My Servant'
- Describe: The Servant's suffering
- Affirm : Substitutionary atonement
- Relate: To Jesus & the New Testament

2 Isaiah 52 & 53 (chiastic) Structure

- A. My servant shall prosper. 52:13-14
- B. Who has believed our report? 53:1
- C. He grew up. 2-3
- D. He was wounded. 4-5
- E. We have gone astray. 6a
- E' The Lord laid on him. 6b
- D' He was oppressed. 7
- C' He was taken away. 8-9
- B' It was the will of the Lord. 10-11
- A' I will allot him a portion. 12-13



Who is this Servant?

1. (Deutero) Isaiah or a contemporary?
2. A former prophet: Moses? Jeremiah?
3. The nation of Israel?
4. Some righteous minority in Israel?
5. Ideal (not real) Israel?
6. A Messianic figure?
7. The New Testament Jesus?

52:15 'so he shall startle many nations'

Hebrew: (ritually) 'sprinkle'.

LXX: 'many nations will be amazed at him'. Parallel with verse 14a?

'so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance'

"During the Babylonian Akitu festival (at the New Year), the king was required to "take the hand of Bel" [Ba'al=Marduk] and proclaim his innocence as a righteous monarch. On the fifth day of the eleven-day festival the king was taken before the high priest, who stripped the monarch of his royal insignias (mace, loop and scepter) and struck him on the cheeks. The priest then dragged the king by his ears and forced him to bow to the ground before Marduk, again proclaiming his innocence." *IVP Bible Backgrounds Commentary* (OT), John H. Walton , Victor H. Matthews, et al., 2000

Deutero-Isaiah Chapters 53 & 53

53:1 Who has believed what we have heard?

John 12:37 But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him. 38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

Romans 10: 15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!" 16 However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

The healing of diseases

The Ugaritic myth of the struggle of Baal and Mot contains the story of the Rapiuma (saviors or healers), led by Baal, who had risen from the dead. These venerated ancestors were believed to intervene on behalf of the living. They healed mortals' diseases, helped in matters of fertility and protected them against the evils of society. The Rapiuma, however, did not take the infirmities of the mortals on themselves. IVP BBC (OT)

Substitutionary atonement

When evil omens (especially an eclipse) suggested the life of the king was in danger ... the king was replaced by a substitute on whom the evil fate could fall... During this time the real king was kept in relative isolation (a virtual exile) and participated in numerous purification rituals. Meanwhile the substitute was going through the motions of being king and sitting on the throne... At the end of the period the substitute was put to death. IVP BBC (OT)

53:4 Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases.

Matthew 8:16 He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill. 17 This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: "He Himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases."

Sheep silent before shearers

Ancient Near Eastern texts often describe the shearing of sheep, who underwent their lot in silence. Shearing was done annually in the spring, using shears, which were invented about 1000 B.C. An individual could shear twenty to thirty sheep a day. IVP BBC (OT)

53:5 by his bruises we are healed.

1 Peter 2:24 He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

53:7-8 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. 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.

Acts 8:32 Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: "He was led as a sheep to slaughter; And as a lamb before its shearer is silent, So He does not open His mouth. 33 "In humiliation His judgment was taken away; Who will relate His generation? For His life is removed from the earth."

53:8b textual variant

^{8b} 'stricken for the transgression of my people.'

MT: 'my ng' l-mw = 'my-people an affliction for him (them)'

1QIsa^a: Corrected ng' to nwg' = 'afflicted'.

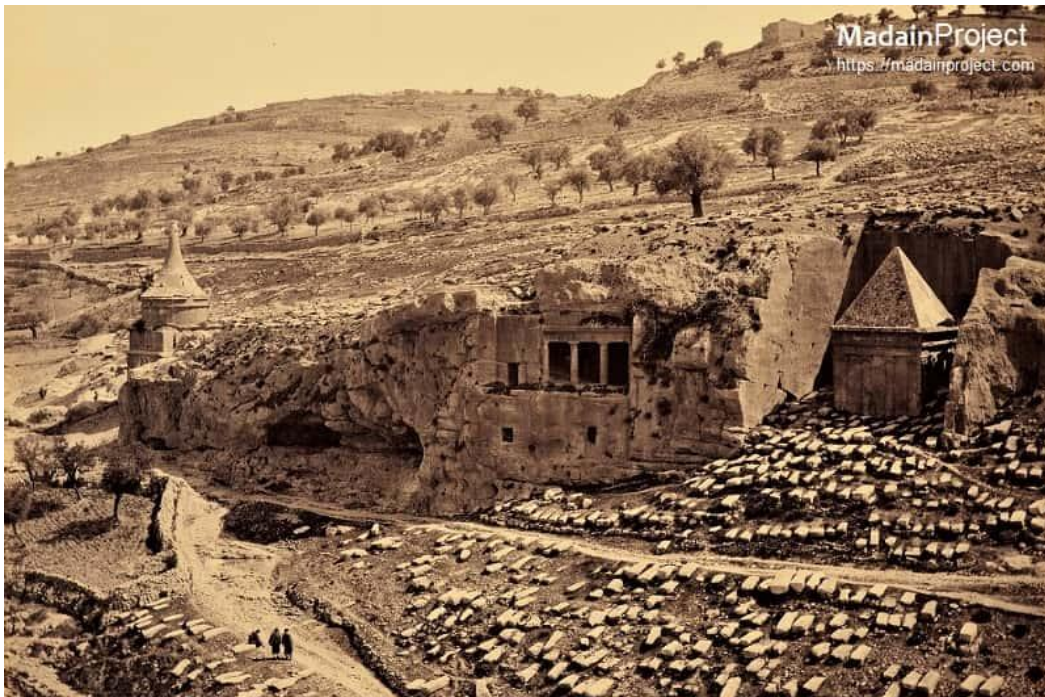
LXX: 'he was led to death' from a lost Hebrew ms reading l-mwt = 'to death'.

When the NT differs from the OT

- It may be an allusion or a paraphrase.
- It may be due to an OT ms variant.
- It may be quoted from the LXX.
- It may be quoted from a non-biblical, Jewish source.
- It may be a NT ms copyist's mistake.
- It may be an English translator's style or conjecture.

53:9 He had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

1 Peter 2:21 Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth.



"They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich" (53:9).

53:9a textual variant

^{9a} They made his grave with the wicked.

MT & Targum: 'his deaths' (plural).

1QIsa^a: 'his (burial) mound'.

LXX & Vulgate: 'his death' (singular).

Apparently, ancient scribes mistook 'his mound' (bmh) for 'his death' (bmt).

53:10 textual variant

¹⁰ with affliction.

MT: 'made him sick'

LXX: 'with plague.'

Acq: 'with the illness'.

1QIsa^a: 'and wounded him'.

Guilt (purification) offerings

Reparation offerings functioned to 'reset' relations following violation of terms of a covenant. Bloody sacrifices served to 'purify sacred space,' that is, wherever Yahweh met with his people: altars, tabernacle, temple, community. These were a temporary measure required until Messiah died for us. Thenceforth, the way into the Holy places is cleaned by his blood.

Leviticus 4.1-3

"When anyone sins unintentionally in any of the LORD's commandments about things not to be done and does any one of them..."

53:12 He ... was numbered with the transgressors.

Mark 15: 27 They crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left. [28 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with transgressors." From 9th century CE.]

Luke 22:37 "For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, 'And He was numbered with transgressors'; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment."

53:12 Textual variant

^{11a} he shall see

MT and most versions: 'he shall see'.

1QIsa^{a,b,d} & LXX: 'he shall see light'.

The verb 'to see' requires an object, and 'light' is in pre-MT mss.

Proposed rendering: 'he shall see [life's] light'.

53:12 Textual variant

¹² 'for the transgressors.'

MT and most versions: 'for the transgressors.'

1QIsa^{a,b,d}: 'for their transgressions'.

LXX: 'because of their transgressions'.

The more ancient manuscripts and different 'text types' argue for 'transgressions'.

The least that we can say

- The LORD's servant is the highest title he bestows on earthly beings.
- The LORD had several servants: Israel, patriarchs, kings, priests, prophets, righteous folk, and Messiah. ('my servant(s)', 113X in the Tanach, 11X in the NT)
- His servant Israel failed in every way.
- Jesus has fulfilled all that the LORD foretold about his Servant by Isaiah.