

20. Jesus in Isaiah – Part 4

May 12, 2016

In the remainder of the Book of Isaiah, we will see Jesus in the character of the Servant, the Redeemer, the First and the Last, the Suffering Servant, and the Second Coming.

A. JESUS IN THE CHARACTER OF THE SERVANT

Isaiah 42:1-3 “Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. 2 He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. 3 A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth.”

NKJV and NASB rightly capitalize the word ‘Servant,’ because the context demonstrates this is a clear reference to Jesus. Additionally, Matthew quotes Isaiah 42:1-5 and plainly says that it is a prophecy fulfilled in Jesus in Matthew 12. So in this, the Lord commands all peoples to put their focus on Jesus, not just Hebrew people.

What do we see when we uphold Jesus? Among many things, we see Him as the Lord’s Servant.

Matthew 20:25-28 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. 26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. 27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave-- 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

When Jesus said, “let him be your servant”, it means being a servant is a choice. When Jesus said, “let him be your slave,” it showed how deep service should go. When He said, “I did not come to be served, but to serve,” it shows the essential heart of a servant. When Jesus said, “to give His life a ransom for many,” it showed how far servants go.

But Jesus, the Servant, is more than an example to us. He is our Servant. He serves us; not only in what He did in the past, but also He serves us every day through His constant love, care, guidance, and intercession. Jesus did not stop serving when he went to heaven; He serves all His people more effectively than ever from heaven.

B. JESUS IN THE REDEEMER

Isaiah 43:1 But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.”

The famous statue Christ the Redeemer overlooks the city of Rio de Janeiro. The statue is a model of Christ with His arms extended so that His body forms the shape of a cross. Brazilian architect Heitor da Silva Costa designed it. He imagined that the city’s residents would see it as the first image to emerge from the darkness at dawn. At dusk, he hoped the city dwellers would view the setting sun as a halo behind the statue’s head.

During the period of the creation, when the Lord created all the animals and other living things, He didn’t give them spirits. Animals have minds, which is soul, not spirit. Only humans do. Having spirit allows humans to have freedom to follow God or their own choices. With freedom of choice, the original humans made a fatal choice

that doomed the entire human race. In case you think that you would be any different, I beg to differ. You wouldn't.

The definition of the word "redeem" is "to buy back". Adam was the caretaker of the earth and he had the right of this earth. But when he sinned against the Lord, he lost the right of the ownership of the earth and all the living beings of the earth to the devil. The only way to buy back the ownership was through the kinsman redeemer according to the Law of God – a family member who must be related to human Adam; who has a willingness to buy back the ownership of the earth and its belongings; and who has wealth to buy it back. Many good and godly people may want to do this "Buy back program." All the currencies and valuable things in the world from the beginning of the human history couldn't buy it back, because it was not in physical currency, rather spiritual. There was anything that a human could do for this redemption with the exception of Jesus the Nazarene. His riches were not from his human mama's side, rather from His own divine holiness and righteousness.

I love the way it was written – *"I have called you by your name; You are mine."* God twice owns His people. He has the right of ownership both as Creator and Redeemer. His ownership is personal, because He says, "I have called you by your name." His ownership is absolute, because He seals them with the Holy Spirit by saying, "You are mine."

John 10:28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

Knowing we belong to the Lord is a wonderful answer to fear. We can know that He holds us, protects us, guards us, and cares for us. We can know that He would not have created, redeemed, and called us unless He intended to finish His work in us. How can we be afraid when we know this God is for us, is looking out for our interests?

Romans 8:31b If God is for us, who can be against us?

C. JESUS IN THE FIRST AND THE LAST

Isaiah 44:6-8 "Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: 'I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God. 7 And who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me, Since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming and shall come, Let them show these to them. 8 Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.'"

I am sure that you've heard a similar Bible verse from the Book of Revelation:

Revelation 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

I love this verse like Isaiah 44:6, because they both show me that God is above the dimension of time and not created by someone greater.

An idol can never be the 'first,' because an idol needs someone to make it. An idol can never be the 'last,' because they wear out and break by the users. But the Lord God of Israel is both the First and the Last; He is completely unique, and besides Him there is no God.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi, a Japanese warlord who ruled over Japan in the late 1500s, commissioned a colossal statue of buddha for a shrine in Kyoto. It took 50,000 men

five years to build, but the work had scarcely been completed when the earthquake of 1596 brought the roof of the shrine crashing down and wrecked the statue. In a rage Hideyoshi shot an arrow at the fallen buddha statue. The warlord shouted at the destroyed idol, "I put you here at great expense, and you can't even look after your own temple." So much for men-made gods.

The Bible clearly tells us about making and worshipping idols:

Leviticus 26:1 'You shall not make idols for yourselves; neither a carved image nor a sacred pillar shall you rear up for yourselves; nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land, to bow down to it; for I am the Lord your God.

In Hebrew, idol is 'eliyl' and means a "nothing." That's good, don't you think? When people make their 'idol', they are making nothing, nothing worthy. Nada. Then they worship this "nothing." What a vivid picture for us! When we don't worship our God and replace Him with this "nothing," guess what? We get nothing.

D. JESUS IN THE SUFFERING SERVANT

Isaiah 52:13-15 Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. 14 Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men; 15 So shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider.

Chapter division was done by humans for our convenience. In a majority of the cases, they are spot on, but they were not inspired by the Lord. Consequently, some chapter divisions were not done properly. Chapter 52 is a case in point. From v13 through 15 should have been with chapter 53 to show the Suffering Servant Jesus.

There are two chapters in the whole Bible that depict the graphic account of Christ's suffering – Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. Yes, the Gospel writers give us the facts but not the details. By the time, the torturers were finished with our Savior, He didn't look like human. He was shedding His precious blood for us and taking our punishment for us.

I want you to pay attention to the word 'sprinkle' in v15. 'Sprinkling' is often associated with "cleansing from sin" in the OT:

Exodus 24:8 And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you according to all these words."

Here, the promise is that the work of the Messiah will bring cleansing to many nations.

Isaiah 53:1-3 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.

Nothing about His physical appearance made Him an Israel GQ Magazine model. Throughout the generations, artists tend to paint Jesus a good looking man, some even with blonde high light with a set of piercing blue eyes like a California surfer dude. No, Jesus had a look of an average Joseph Goldberg of Israel.

Once the people who thronged after Jesus during His earthly ministry realized what He expected of them to be His disciples, they despised Him and even put a cheap slave's price on Him. Jesus is rejected today for the same reasons. People don't mind being in the church, even calling themselves Christians. But they put Jesus outside of their hearts in a nice package, while they do whatever they choose to do in their hearts.

Isaiah 53:4-6 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.

This portion is the heart of chapter 53. And it presents the heart of the Gospel message: the innocent Messiah dying as the sacrifice on behalf of sin of mankind. This is nothing new, because throughout the first five Books of the OT, the Lord showed the Israelites about the innocent animal sacrifice dying as the sacrifice on behalf of sin of the Israel people, only in temporary occasions.

In v5, it says, "He was wounded for our transgressions". The Hebrew word for 'wounded' is "chalal" which means "pierced through." His hands and feet were pierced by nails and His side was pierced by a spear for our transgressions, not His, because He was without sins.

Isaiah 53:7-9 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. 9 And they made His grave with the wicked-- But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.

At His own crucifixion, Jesus had every possible power to remove the people who were causing pain and suffering to Him, but He didn't. He didn't fight back, nor did He even open His mouth to defend Himself. He knew that this was the only way to save lost sinners like us, He took the full blow onto Himself for us. Yes, Jesus was silent, but not helpless.

Jesus was compared to a lamb, which is one of the frequent symbols of Christ in Scripture. A lamb died for each Jewish household at Passover, and the Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world died for His people and the nation of Israel. For 28 times in the Book of Revelation, Jesus is referred to as the Lamb.

According to the custom of the Roman execution, the dead bodies of the executed criminals would be left unburied, but in Jesus' case, He had to be buried to assure His death. Besides, the Roman governor Pilate would not have released His body if He wasn't dead. Jesus died between the two thieves, but He was buried in the tomb of a rich man Joseph of Arimathea. The Lord fulfilled the prophecies of Isaiah even after He died. Do you know any religion leader who could pull this kind of thing off?

Isaiah 53:10-12 Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. 11 He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My

righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

The crucifixion by the Romans, the false accusations by the Jewish leaders, the desertion by His disciples were all in God's plan. It was not the plan B that God had to scramble to come up with after the fall of mankind like the heretic Bible teacher Kenneth Copeland once declared.

E. JESUS IN THE SECOND COMING

Isaiah 61:1-2 "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,

As we read these verses, some of you were thinking about the portion of the Scripture that Jesus read in the synagogue of Nazareth, His hometown as the inauguration of His earthly ministry. But He didn't read all the way through. He stopped at the first portion of v2. He applied these verses to Himself as it says in Luke 4.

Luke 4:21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

The background of this Scriptures is the "Year of Jubilee" which mentioned in Leviticus 25. During that year, all debts were canceled, all land was returned to the original owners, all the Hebrew slaves were freed, and everyone was given a fresh new beginning. It was the Lord's way to balance the ancient Israel economy so that the rich couldn't exploit the poor endlessly.

Don't you like that idea? Your credit card debts, student loans, mortgage payments... all would be canceled at the Year of Jubilee?!?! Don't get too excited. It only came every 50 years. In the meanwhile, you would be slaves to someone, kinda like now.

This was Jesus' job description as the Savior of the world to set the captive free and pay our spiritual debt with His sinless life, but from the portion where it says, "And the day of vengeance of our God" would come at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. In other words, the comma that is between "Lord" and "and" was almost 2000 years. Actually, in Hebrew language, there is not even a comma.