



Who is Yeshua the Messiah?
Part 25: The Metaphors, Part 4
“The Suffering Servant”
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Sabbath Sermon 4/4/2026

{NOTE: The actual oral sermon and video recording may vary significantly and even materially from these notes, but this “transcript” gives you a general idea of the direction of the message.}

{Title slide—1} Shabbat shalom, brothers and sisters. We’re in Week 25 of our sermon series, “Who is Yeshua the Messiah?,” and today’s message is going to highlight the “Servant” metaphor in a particular section of the Tanakh that unquestionably points forward to Messiah Yeshua. Before we begin, let’s briefly recap the “metaphors” section of our series so far. We’ve already covered Old Testament prophetic imagery of our Messiah Yeshua as the “Angel of God” who redeems us from our bondage to sin and death, the “Rock” from which living waters flow, the “Seed” promised to Eve that would crush the head of the serpent, and the “Bridegroom” who has made an everlasting covenant with His people who trust in Him and do His will. Earlier in the series, we also discussed Yeshua’s “I AM” metaphors He used to describe Himself in the Gospel of John and how those pointedly identify Him as one in being with the Father. Looking forward, we’ll have one more “metaphor” message focused on Yeshua as the “Arm,” “Hand,” or “Branch” of the LORD in the prophetic Scriptures before we finish the series by tying up some loose ends. That being said, on account of today’s significance as the High Sabbath during Passover, it seemed more than appropriate to focus on the “Servant” motif today, or more specifically, the “Suffering Servant” description used in Isaiah 52:13-53:12. This passage prophetically describes Yeshua’s advent perfectly—so much so that it’s often referred to as “The Gospel According to Isaiah.” In covering this section, we’re going to use a different approach than we’ve been using with the other metaphor messages in this series. Even though we can find the “Servant” metaphor all throughout the Tanakh, we’re really just going to hone in on this passage in Isaiah and its timeless significance. We’re going to start with the history of the passage as well as some historical interpretations of it and even some apologetics before we move into a high-level comparison with the Gospel account of

Yeshua's death and resurrection. As with many of the topics we've studied in this series, we only have time for an overview today, but you should know that entire books have been written on this passage, and I can't possibly cover every detail. Nevertheless, my prayer is that today's study gives you complete confidence that Yeshua of Nazareth is the promised Messiah, the Son of God who is one in being with the Father.

{Next slide—2} One of the things I want you to know right up front is that the devil is coming to steal away a proper interpretation of Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12 from you. He hates how clearly this passage describes Yeshua, and He wants to obscure this Truth to destroy your faith and prevent God's chosen people from taking hold of it. We cannot let this happen, and yet, we have to be careful in how we approach the battle. Sadly, the enemy uses people who are blind to the Truth of Yeshua to lead others toward blindness—a story as old as humanity itself. In this reality, it's not just important—it's critical—to recognize that these people are not our enemies; they are the victims of our enemy. It is our calling to love them, first by learning and adopting the Truth ourselves, and then by patiently and kindly explaining it to set the record straight. This is not easy to do. I can tell you from first-hand experience that the blasphemies some people bring against the LORD and His Word are designed to drive us to anger, and sometimes we may even fall victim to it. God forbid! One thing the Holy Spirit has been teaching me lately is how to "be still and know that [Yeshua] is God." The Sons of Korah wrote in Psalm 46:10 that He will be exalted among the nations and in all the earth. We may be tempted to "battle against flesh and blood," but according to Ephesians 6:12, we ought to understand that our enemies are "the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." When we stand in faith, "the LORD will fight for [us], and [we] shall hold our peace," just as He told Moses in Exodus 14:14. This isn't a call to a passive faith. On the other hand, we're called to take up the "sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Ephesians 6:17) and wield it against spiritual enemies in the interest of peace for our brethren. We ought to defend the Truth with a sincere hope that God might use us to reconcile unbelievers to a right relationship with Messiah Yeshua, and then we ought to wait on the LORD and trust Him to do the rest of the work. Sometimes, we might have to step away from a battle line that won't move and let the LORD take over. It's not our job to convict hearts—that is the role of the Holy Spirit. It's not our place to take offense, for that is the work of the enemy. Rather, we ought to stand firm in our position, and rest in our faith, knowing unequivocally who Yeshua is because we've studied and understood His Word and its context and adopted it within ourselves as our governing light and hope to lead us into God's eternal Kingdom. When we seek to defend the faith, as David wrote in Psalm 37:7-8,

we ought to “rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him.” He also exhorted: “Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; do not fret—it only causes harm.” When we truly know the LORD and have an authentic relationship with Him, there isn’t a single person alive or any evil spirit wandering around in torment who can possibly tear us away from the Truth of Yeshua’s identity. So let us hold fast in our confidence and wait on the LORD to provide us with the Words to wield against the true enemy of our faith.

{Next slide—3} With that being said, you should know that today’s unbelieving Jews and apostate “Christians” are going to tell you that Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is about the Nation of Israel as a whole and that it was only much later that Christians “twisted the Scriptures” to read Messiah Yeshua into the text. There are many facets of this attack on the Word of God that have been ongoing for the past thousand years. We can’t cover them all, but I am going to tell you right up front that the only revision to the text going on today has been orchestrated by Rabbinical Judaism, and this can be proven—it’s not a doubtful matter. It is unequivocally true that this passage is about the Messiah, and this was even a majority position of Rabbinical Jews up until the Middle Ages, when today’s anti-missionary position began to take hold. We’re going to take a look at some historical evidence so you can rest in this Truth along with me. First, let’s back up the Messiah-centered English translation of the text. Thanks to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the caves of Qumran in 1947, we can be certain that as early as 125 BC, Jews were copying the Book of Isaiah in the same way the text still reads in our Bibles today. The so-called “Great Isaiah Scroll” found in Qumran Cave 1 is a nearly complete copy of the Book of Isaiah. The scroll is 24 feet long and includes Scripture that is ostensibly the same as what we find today in any of our English translations. In the initial copies of Isaiah, the passage we’re studying was not divided by chapter numbers or verses. This section was grouped together into a literary pattern known as a chiasmic structure, meaning that it begins and ends with the same concept—let’s call it concept A. From there, it moves into concept B, which has a mirrored concept in the second passage from the end that adds to the initial concept. The central concept—concept C—calls attention to the point of the whole passage and ties everything together. From the Qumran scroll, translated literally into English, this is how that central concept reads: “Surely he has borne our sufferings, and carried our sorrows; yet we considered him stricken, and struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, and he was crushed for our iniquities, and the punishment that made us whole was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, each of us, to his own way; and the

LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” The grammar here is accurate. The passage refers to a single individual who would bear the sins of everyone, and through Him we would be healed. Because of the testimony of the Apostles and other historical documents, we know this individual in Isaiah’s writing to be Messiah Yeshua. There’s really no doubt about this. Let’s not get ahead of ourselves, though—we’ll explore this later. I’ve also put the New King James Version of this passage from Isaiah 53:4-6 up on the screen so you can see how similar it is to the ancient scroll. We read: “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. 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. 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.” I’m going to show you the rest of the passage later on. For now I simply want you to see that this text is consistent in both structure and meaning. The ancient Dead Sea Scrolls version of Isaiah matches the modern English translations we have in our Christian Bibles, which were derived from the Masoretic text. Both copies support an individual savior who would bear the sins of many upon Himself, and we ought to assert with faith that this savior is Yeshua!

{Next slide—4} The next piece of evidence comes from a text known as the Targum Jonathan, which is a Rabbinical translation of the Hebrew Masoretic text into Aramaic so that it could be used in synagogue teaching. Tradition holds that this Targum was written during the second temple period, sometime between the first century BC and the first century AD, but the most important consideration is that it was written as an interpretive text rather than a word-for-word translation. This was a time when most Jews, having lived in captivity in Babylon, no longer knew Hebrew fluently. Thus, the Rabbis who still knew Hebrew translated the original text into Aramaic and also interpreted it for the benefit of the masses. Now granted, if you study this further, I want to point out that there are problems with the interpretation, because these Rabbis couldn’t bring themselves to admit their Messiah was going to suffer. This is actually not relevant to the point, because other Rabbis did admit this about Messiah. The rabbis responsible for Targum Jonathan attributed the suffering to the people of Israel who would then be saved by the Messiah. Even with that said, and to the point we need to make here, this translation twice identified Messiah as the one being described in the text. And so, in the Targum Jonathan version of Isaiah 52:13, we read: “Behold, my servant, the Messiah, shall prosper, he shall be exalted and increase, and shall be very strong.” In the New King James Version equivalent, we read: “Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.” We can

conclude that even these early Jewish Rabbis understood the Servant identified in Isaiah to be the Messiah. Toward the end of the passage, on the other side of the chiasmic structure, the Aramaic Targum Jonathan version of Isaiah 53:10 ends with another reference to Messiah. We read: “Yet before the LORD it was a pleasure to refine and to cleanse the remnant of his people, in order to purify their soul from sins; they shall see the kingdom of their Messiah...” Importantly, this interpretation is a bit of a stretch, considering the literal translation from the New King James Version reads: “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.” Nevertheless, we can still deduce that the one who will “see His seed” in the Masoretic text is the Messiah, according to the Jewish rabbis of antiquity. This metaphor means that He will see the fruit of His works, which as we know, were His death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. In doing this, Messiah made a way for His faithful disciples to enter His Kingdom to be together with Him. The passages are consistent. And even in Targum Jonathan, we find Rabbis identifying Messiah in this prophecy as the one who will bring His people into His Kingdom.

{Next slide—5} Let’s examine additional evidence before we land this point. This example comes right out of post-Yeshua Rabbinical teaching recorded in the Babylonian Talmud. For those who don’t know, the Babylonian Talmud is a compendium of Rabbinical interpretations recorded after Yeshua came. It is fair to say that many of the “oral traditions” of men that Yeshua criticized during His earthly ministry were later recorded in the Talmud. That being said, some of these recorded Rabbinical interpretations still give us historical interpretative context for what we read in Scripture. We have to be careful with such interpretations, because they are the insights of men rather than the wisdom of God, but even these insights help us to discern where Rabbinical Jews landed on the Isaiah passage and this is important for the point we’re making. Now, ... We know that Scripture must be consistent throughout, and any contradictions that we see in Scripture need to be reconciled, and with the Holy Spirit, they certainly will be reconciled. Unlike Scripture, however, the writings in the Babylonian Talmud are OFTEN contradictory because they are presented in the form of debate and even disagreement. Here is an example from the Babylonian Talmud in Sanhedrin 98b that demonstrates a Rabbinical understanding that the suffering servant in Isaiah 52-53 is the Messiah. At the same time, it’s clear from the text that the Rabbis continued to debate who Messiah would be on account of their dismissal of Yeshua, and they couldn’t synthesize these ideas together. Consider the debate recorded, where we read: “Rab said, ‘The world was created only for David.’”

And Samuel said, 'For Moses.' And Rabbi Yohanan said, 'For the Messiah.' What is his name? The house of Rabbi Shila said, 'His name is Shiloh, as it is said, 'Until Shiloh come' (Genesis 49:10).' The house of Rabbi Yannai said, 'His name is Yinnon, as it is written, 'His name shall endure forever; before the sun was, his name is Yinnon' (Psalm 72:17).' The house of Rabbi Haninah said, 'His name is Haninah, as it is written, 'Where I will not give you Haninah' (Jeremiah 16:13).' Others say, 'His name is Menahem son of Hezekiah, as it is written, 'Because the comforter [Menahem] that would relieve my soul is far from me' (Lamentations 1:16).' The Rabbis said, 'His name is 'the leper of the house of study,' as it is written, 'Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted' (Isaiah 53:4).'” That last point ought to be our aha moment. We’re not looking at this debate to get into each and every point. It may even be that each reference here points us to Messiah Yeshua, despite the Rabbis best attempt to obscure this Truth. But the main reason we’re reading this passage is to understand how rabbis in the early Christian world acknowledged Isaiah’s suffering servant to be Messiah. It wasn’t until much later that the Rabbis began to side with interpretations that rejected this point.

{Next slide—6} Why are we spending time on this? Again, there are modern Rabbis and both Jewish and Gentile unbelievers they have convinced who interpret Isaiah 52-53 as a passage referring to the Nation of Israel and not to Messiah Yeshua, and we need to be aware of this. They make a claim that the passage has always been interpreted this way, but we are now exploring how significant historical evidence shows otherwise. There may be only one clear reference before the Middle Ages that suggests some Rabbis held to a Nation of Israel interpretation for the passage, but what’s significant about the reference is that it is recorded by the second-century Christian scholar Origen in his work “Contra Celsus,” and not even within any Rabbinical literature. He wrote: “Now I remember that, on one occasion, at a disputation held with certain Jews, who were reckoned wise men, I quoted these prophecies; to which my Jewish opponent replied, that these predictions bore reference to the whole people, regarded as one individual...” Any actual Jewish reference to this idea prior to the Middle Ages is actually quite ambiguous. In his apologetic work, “Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus: Messianic Prophecy Objections, Volume 3,” scholar Michael Brown devoted many pages to this question, which you might consider studying on your own. I want to cite two of his observations to provide additional substance for our discussion. In section 4.8 of his third of five apologetic books, Brown explained: “Aside from one passing reference in Midrash Rabbah (where part of one verse is interpreted with reference to the righteous), a

specific identification of Isaiah 53 with Israel is not found in any Rabbinic literature until almost one thousand years after Jesus. (In other words, it is not found in the Talmuds, the Targums, or in the midrashim.) Therefore, the view that Isaiah 53 spoke of Israel can hardly be considered a standard (or ancient) Rabbinic interpretation, and for the traditional Jew, that's what really matters." This is definitely what matters. The modern Jewish objection to Yeshua in Isaiah 52-53 simply does not stand up to the evidence.

{Next slide—7} Earlier, in section 4.6 of the same book, Brown added detail concerning the Middle Age Rabbinical scholars who promoted this modern Rabbinical position. Even in the middle ages, the modern Jewish interpretation was not preeminent. Brown explained that it was nearly one thousand years before any rabbis consistently argued Isaiah 52-53 was referring to the Nation of Israel, and even then there wasn't consensus on this position. Those prominent Rabbis who held fast to a Messianic interpretation even in the Middle Ages also explained that the Messianic understanding in Isaiah 52-53 was ancient and dominant. Brown wrote: "While it is true that Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and Radak all interpreted the passage with reference to Israel, other equally prominent leaders, such as Moses ben Nachman (called Nachmanides or the Ramban), felt compelled to follow the weight of ancient tradition and embrace the individual, Messianic interpretation of the Talmudic rabbis (found in the Midrash, despite his belief that the plain sense of the text supported the national interpretation). Noteworthy also is the oft-quoted comment of Rabbi Moshe Alshech, writing in the sixteenth century, "Our rabbis with one voice accept and affirm the opinion that the prophet is speaking of the Messiah, and we shall ourselves also adhere to the same view." And so, it's quite clear that Isaiah 52-53 was held to be Messianic in nature. Moreover, many interpretations also understood the "suffering servant" noted in the text to be this very same Messiah. We could speculate concerning the reasons they rejected Yeshua as this Messianic figure another time. The point that I want you to grasp is this: The ancient text of Isaiah, found in copies of the Dead Sea Scrolls, referred to the suffering servant as an individual who would be killed and then raised up. The Aramaic Targums—interpretations of the same text—identified the redeemer noted in the passage as the Messiah. The Talmudic rabbis, even after Yeshua died and rose from the dead, explained that Isaiah's suffering servant was referring to the Messiah in one form or another. Even much later commentaries on the Scriptures held fast to this view. I could cite several more examples from other rabbinic literature, including the Midrashim, which is to say, later Jewish commentaries; these also reflect a Messianic reading of Isaiah 52-53. In the interest of time, here is one such example from Pesikta Rabbati, Piska 36, compiled in its final form around the ninth century AD. There we read: "The Messiah... said to the Holy One, blessed be He: 'Master of the

universe, with gladness I accept upon myself these sufferings...' ...as it is written: 'Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows' (Isaiah 53:4)." If this weren't written by non-believing Rabbis, we might think it came right out of the Apostolic Scriptures. Even in the Middle Ages, once the "nation of Israel" view of Isaiah 52-53 began to take hold, it's safe to say that many prominent Rabbis still held fast to the idea that the text was about Messiah. Again, there are books written about this topic {Brown's "Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus" Volume 3 of 5 is just one example}. For today's purposes, I hope that I've demonstrated from a critical position that modern objections to a Messianic interpretation of Isaiah 52-53 are unfounded.

{Next slide—8} Now, from a faith-based position, we ought to look at Isaiah 52-53, and really at all of the Book of Isaiah, as the Word of God seeking to reveal Yahweh's eternal plan for His chosen people. And according to Isaiah 1:1, the entire book was authored by "Isaiah, the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah." The traditional view of Scripture dates the Book of Isaiah sometime between the years 740 and 680 BC. This in itself presents a powerful image of Isaiah as a prophet who saw the coming captivity of Judah in Babylon, the later freedom they would receive, and then the Messiah Who would come afterward to redeem His people from their sins. The modern liberal tradition gives Isaiah credit for chapters 1-39, but then places the authorship of Isaiah chapters 40-55 sometime between 550 and 539 BC, when Judah was living in captivity yet again, stripping any prophetic significance from the writing. This liberal tradition also considers chapters 56-66 to be a third book written by later prophets, largely because the content of the prophecies refers to a time after the captivity. We ought to reject such ideas, for they are rooted in disbelief in God's power and authority to speak through His prophets. We know that the entire Book of Isaiah was treated as a single unit in the copy of the book dated to 125 BC found at Qumran, and the book uses a similar writing style and similar metaphors throughout, pointing to a single author. Moreover, the Apostle John, when referencing prophecies in the Book of Isaiah, attributed early and late prophecies to Isaiah. He wasn't the only one. The entire testimony of the inspired Apostolic writings cite Isaiah consistently as a singular source. Moreover, there is evidence, most of it outside of Scripture, that Isaiah was actually martyred for his faith during the reign of Hezekiah's son, the evil King Manasseh. If Isaiah was a true prophet of God who revealed the Messiah's mission to die for our sins and then rise from the dead to reign in His eternal Kingdom, it is actually no wonder that those who sought to oppose God and pursue evil would see him as their enemy and seek to kill him. Yeshua said this would happen to all who stand firm in their faith against the darkness. There is a Pseudepigraphic work called

“The Ascension of Isaiah,” translated by R.H. Charles, that references this event. The Pseudepigrapha are non-Biblical historic religious documents from just before or soon after the advent of Yeshua, and while we can’t treat them equally to Scriptural Truth, there is some Scriptural basis to accept this particular account, which I’ll show you in a moment. In The Ascension of Isaiah 5:11-14, we find a description of what might have happened to the prophet. There we read: “And they seized Isaiah the son of Amoz, and sawed him in half with a wood saw. And Manasseh and Belkira and the false prophets and the princes and the people stood by, looking on.” This idea is also corroborated in the Babylonian Talmud—specifically in Yevamot 49b, where we read: “Manasseh killed Isaiah... He said to him: Moses your master said, ‘For man shall not see Me and live’ (Exodus 33:20), yet you said, ‘I saw the LORD sitting upon a throne’ (Isaiah 6:1)... He brought a cedar tree and sawed him in it.” Now, I wouldn’t give much stock to this idea if it wasn’t also supported in Scripture. In Hebrews 11, known colloquially as the “Hall of Faith,” the writer provided a list of persecutions that faithful prophets who trusted in God and put Him first in their lives had to endure. We read in Hebrews 11:37: “They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy.” Was the one “sawn in two” a reference to Isaiah? The evidence from Talmud and the Pseudepigrapha seems to support the idea. Whether or not this is true, we can be sure that the world was not worthy of Isaiah’s prophecies, which record the Word of God, but those who are not of the world will receive them for their salvation. Scripture overwhelmingly demonstrates and supports the idea that true prophets and servants of Yeshua are persecuted and even killed for their faith. The testimony begins in Genesis and carries through all the way to the end of Revelation. For the purpose of our subject matter today, Isaiah’s martyrdom lends credibility to His authorship of this powerful section of Scripture. According to the Ascension of Isaiah, Manasseh executed Isaiah because he spoke against Jerusalem and the king’s lawlessness while standing firm that He had seen a vision of the One True God who would redeem the faithful and destroy the guilty. No man or woman caught up in sin wants to hear such a message, and so they deny it. When the authority of the message carries enough weight, sinners seek to discredit the message, and if they can’t do that, then they destroy the messenger. Thus, it is my assertion and deeply held belief that Isaiah saw and prophesied about Yeshua, without fear, and this is the reason he was executed. As I noted earlier, Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is often called “The Gospel According to Isaiah.” As we move into our exploration of the text, especially amidst the backdrop that we’ve so-far reviewed, you will see that it is a true and accurate account of the Gospel, and it is AWESOME that Yeshua gave Isaiah this vision roughly 700 years before the events actually took place.

{Next slide—9} With this lengthy but necessary set up, let's get into the text itself and examine what it says about the coming Messiah. We're going to go through each of the five sections of this vision. As we do this, I want you to remember that the first and fifth section are meant to mirror one another, the second and fourth section are meant to mirror one another, and the third section is the principle point of this prophesy. I'll leave it to you to examine the chiastic structure later on your own—we don't have time for that level of analysis today. For the rest of today's message, I want to show you line-by-line how this prophesy points to Yeshua as God's suffering servant, using the Apostolic Scriptures as the testimony of this truth. It's a matter of faith; the veil that keeps us from understanding the Old Testament can only be removed when we surrender our lives to Messiah. When we commit ourselves to Him, He reveals Himself to us. If you don't have Yeshua in you, the only way to understand these words is to ask for His Holy Spirit to reveal it to you and then surrender to God's power. If you have the Holy Spirit, then everything I'm going to show you will make perfect sense. God is not an author of confusion. He's the author of goodness and peace. And so, the passage begins in Isaiah 52, verses 13-15, where we read: "Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. 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; 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." (Isaiah 52:13–15)

{Fill in} Exalted! See Philippians 2:8-10, for example:

"And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Yeshua every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth," (Philippians 2:8–10)

{Next slide—10} {Fill in} Focusing in on Isaiah 52, verse 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;

{Fill in}

Here's three examples: Matthew 26:67:

“Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands,

Matthew 27:30:

Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head.”

See also John 19:1-3:

“So then Pilate took Yeshua and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Then they said, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ And they struck Him with their hands.” (John 19:1–3)

Journal of the American Medical Association article, March 24, 1986, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ.”

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Take a look at this underlined statement in Isaiah 52:15: “so shall He sprinkle many nations”

Consistent with prophecy in Ezekiel 36:24-27, New Covenant, etc.

“For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.” (Ez 36:24–27)

The writer of Hebrews likewise calls us to draw near to God because we have been sprinkled by His blood and washed clean with the pure water of His Holy Spirit:

“let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” (Hebrews 10:22)

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Continuing in Isaiah 52:15:

About this Servant, Messiah Yeshua: we also read: “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.” (Isaiah 52:13–15)

Paul interpreted this in Romans 15:20–21, where we read:

“And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Messiah was named, lest I should build on another man’s foundation, but as it is written: ‘To whom He was not announced, they shall see; and those who have not heard shall understand.’” He means to bring the Truth to those who had never heard it before, so they might believe. As we all know, the Messiah would also be a light to the Gentiles.

And in Ephesians 3:3-6, we read:

“how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Messiah), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Messiah through the gospel,”

Just a few verses earlier in Isaiah 52:7, we read: “How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!””

This is the calling for each and ever one of us—to announce the good news; our God came in the flesh to die for our sins, but then rose in victory, because death could not hold Him. Our God reigns now and forever on the throne as the risen King!

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Moving into the second section of the structure, we read in Isaiah 53:1-3: “Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 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. 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.” (Isaiah 53:1–3)

This is related to the ideas from which we started today's message. The Apostle John referenced verse 1 directly in John 12:37-40, where we read:

“But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, 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?” Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with their eyes, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.”” (John 12:37–40)

Despite the many prophecies about the suffering servant, He wasn't what they expected. He had no beauty or comeliness in Him. They wanted a Messiah who would rule the Earth, but our Messiah rules the New Heavens and the New Earth, and He is building that Kingdom now. These are even better promises than what was expected.

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Continuing in verse 3, and we've already looked at this: “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.”

Yeshua Himself prophesied:

“Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, ‘Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.’” (Luke 18:31–33)

If you read the Passion of Messiah Yeshua in any of the Gospels, this horrific reality is spelled out quite clearly for all to see, and it aligns perfectly with Isaiah's prophecy.

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Moving on to Isaiah 53:4-6, we read:

“Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 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. 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.”
(Isaiah 53:4–6)

Among so many other passages, this reminds me of Hebrews 9:27-28, where we read:

“And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Messiah was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.”

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Even more significant, take a look at what Peter wrote in 1st Peter 2:21-25, where we read:

“For to this you were called, because Messiah also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” (1 Peter 2:21–25)

These are consistent revelations of Truth from New Covenant Apostles.... And while we remember our Messiah Yeshua, who fulfilled this prophesy in Isaiah, we also ought to follow His example....

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Continuing into Isaiah 53, verses 7-9, we read:

“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. 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. 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.”
(Isaiah 53:7–9)

There are plenty of examples of these prophesies also in Gospel of our LORD. Here's two that show Yeshua fulfilled this prophesy when confronted with both Jews and Gentiles who were leading Him to the slaughter:

Matthew 26:62-63:

And the high priest arose and said to Him, 'Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?' But Jesus kept silent...." (Matthew 26:62–63a)

Matthew 27:12-14:

"And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly."

These are consequential fulfillments of prophesy.

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Note also in this same section from our passage in Isaiah:

He was led as a lamb to the slaughter.

In John 1:36, John the Baptist witnessed to this Truth, saying: "Behold the Lamb of God."

When we read: "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."

I think of Luke 23:1, where we can see that "the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate."

I can't help but point out the prophesy of Messiah in Daniel 9:26, as we've studied in past messages, for when we read, "after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself." It must be this Suffering servant referred to here. And, if you recall, Messiah would be cut off before the destruction of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem. There isn't anyone else besides Yeshua who could possibly fulfill the role of this Messiah, that both Daniel and Isaiah reference.

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Finishing off verses 8-9, we read again that when He was cut off from the land of the living, : “they made His grave with the wicked—“

In Luke 23:32-33, we read: “There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left.”

And we also read: “But with the rich at His death,”

Read, Luke 23:50-53, and take a look at this: “Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before.”

This was a rich man. He had his own tomb and He gave it to Yeshua—temporarily, of course...

{Next slide 20} If we peak just ever so slightly into the next section of Isaiah 53, there’s a link at beginning of verse 10 to what we read {red} at the end of verse 9.

“Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.”

This is the testimony of 1st John 3, verses 5-6, where we read:

“And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.”

Even better is Paul’s statement in 2nd Corinthians 5:21:

“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

There's yet another witness in Hebrews 4:15, where we read:

“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.”

This is powerful imagery. How could anything else be intended than the complete fulfillment of prophesy that we see recorded by the Apostles?

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Importantly, Isaiah 53 is not only about the suffering servant, but also about the conquering King. The Jews weren't wrong to see the Kingdom prophesied in the text. It's just not the Kingdom on earth they were expecting.

Take a look at how Isaiah 53 finishes off in verses 10-12: "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. 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. 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."

This explains the whole thing; His death and resurrection.

Peter explained in Acts 2:23-34: "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it."

{emphasize resurrection}

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Continuing to look at verse 10-11, where it says: "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. 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.

Paul explained in Acts 13:38-39:

"Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts 13:38–39)

All these passages align. So many more to show you. Not enough time.

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In the final verse of Isaiah 53, verse 12, we can clearly see the glory of God that is revealed in Messiah Yeshua:

“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.” (Isaiah 53:12)

Paul explained in Romans 3:21-26:

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Messiah Yeshua, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Messiah Yeshua, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Yeshua.” (Romans 3:21–26)

Witnessed by law and the prophets. Faith > Action. Focus in on Him.

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How did the Jews miss this? Pride. Yeshua explained in lengthy rebuke of Matthew 23. here's verses 6-12:

“They [the Scribes and the Pharisees] love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi.’ But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Messiah, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Messiah. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” (Mt 23:6–12)

Our suffering servant, Messiah Yeshua, humbled Himself and took the form of a man, and He even subjected Himself to death on the cross so that our sins could be forgiven, but then God also highly exalted Him and raised Him up. We need to follow this example. Let us not be wise in our own eyes, prideful and boasting about the Word of God, thinking that we might find our own salvation in it, for the words of Scripture are those that testify about our Messiah Yeshua, who is the only salvation available to anyone who is still alive. I pray this gives you a sense of urgency to stand fast on the Truth of God's Word, to speak it with confidence to all who need to hear it, while recognizing that God has to do the work in the hearts of other people. This is our calling. This is the ministry that we've been given. We too must become a living sacrifice for our God, pouring out our entire souls for the glory of God in His Kingdom. Let us remember the LORD's example and follow it as we seek to do this today and always. Shabbat shalom.