

# THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

## ISAIAH 52:13-54:17

It was Martin Luther who rightly wrote, “If you want to understand the Christian message you must start with the wounds of Christ.” The cross of Jesus is the crux of Christianity. In fact, the term *crux* is from *crucifixion*.

And outside of the four Christian Gospels there is no clearer account of Messiah’s crucifixion than Isaiah 53.

Realize the Hebrew prophet Isaiah was writing 700 years in advance of Calvary - 200 years before crucifixion was invented by the Persians - and 500 years before it was employed by Rome. Yet Isaiah paints an amazingly vivid and detailed prophetic account of all that Jesus endured to take away our sin.

To read this chapter with *a dry eye* is an indication of *a cold heart*. Isaiah 53 is some emotional footage.

In fact, this passage from the Jewish Scriptures is so obviously and authoritatively Christian in its message, later Jews conspired to eliminate it from their Bibles.

**Ashkenazi, or European Jews**, omitted Chapter 53 from their editions of Isaiah. **Sephardic, or Oriental Jews**, retained it, but tried to explain it away by relating it to the nation Israel rather than a personal Messiah.

Yet God refuses to let His people ignore Isaiah's testimony. Today, in the Givat Ram neighborhood of Jerusalem - at the heart of the city and the modern state - across the street from the Israeli Knesset - there is a unique building known as **The Shrine of the Book**.

It stands as part of the Israeli Museum.

It's white Dome is shaped like the lid of an ancient ceramic jar. Two-thirds of the building is below ground.

The Shrine of the Book holds probably THE most important archaeological discovery of all time - the Dead Sea Scrolls, and particularly the [Isaiah Scroll](#).

On display at the Shrine of the Book is the oldest OT manuscript in our possession - a complete copy of the prophecy of Isaiah dating back to 200 BC. It's proof that the Bible we read today has been passed down to us faithfully and reliably for at least the last 2000 years.

And right in the middle of the Isaiah Scroll you'll find Chapter 53 - it's there for all the world to see and read and study. Today, you can even access it online.

At the heart of Jerusalem, at the very center of the Jewish nation, God has implanted undeniable, biblical evidence that what Jesus did on the cross was Yahweh's timeless remedy for the sin of His people.

Last time, we ended in Isaiah 52:12. Tonight, we resume in verse 13, “Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.” On occasion in Isaiah God refers to Israel as “*His Servant,*” but the subject here is not the nation, but a person. He uses personal pronouns throughout.

God did intend for Israel to serve Him. He planned on Israel to take His salvation to the Gentiles. But the Jews rebelled, and God sent another Servant to take their place. In Isaiah 9 Jesus is called “*a light to the Gentiles.*” Jesus succeeded, where Israel had failed.

And Isaiah says He'll be *“exalted and extolled and be very high.”* The Hebrew word translated *“extolled”* means *“lifted up.”* It certainly means He'll be *“praised,”* but it could mean more. Remember Numbers 21...

The nation had sinned and God sent a plague.

Poisonous snakes slithered into the camp. Their bite was lethal. When the Jews repented of their sin, and cried out to God for help, he made a remedy. He told Moses to forge a bronze serpent and put it on a pole.

Brass is a metal that retains heat, but doesn't melt. It was a symbol for God's judgment. God gets angry, but His anger doesn't consume... The serpent was a symbol of sin. Thus, the bronze serpent spoke of God's judgment against sin... When Moses *“lifted up”* this bronze serpent and the people looked on it and believed they were healed of the poisonous venom.

And it was Jesus who used this OT analogy in John 3, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”

The bronze serpent was a picture of the cross of Christ. At the cross sin was judged. Just before He died, Jesus uttered, “It is finished.” The penalty for sin was paid in full. Now all we have to do to be saved is look on Jesus with the eye of faith and believe.

In the days of the westward wagon trains, one of the great dangers facing the pilgrims were the sudden prairie fires that would sweep across the landscape.

The fires were impossible to outrun.

But it didn't take long for settlers to learn how to combat them. They'd burn a circle near their camp; then move inside the circle. Since their new camp had already been burned, the wildfire

would rage around their circle, but there was nothing in it to catch fire. As long as they abided in their circle they were safe.

And the same is true with Jesus. In Him sin has been judged. Thus, if we stay put in Christ there's nothing for God to judge. By faith in Him we stay safe and saved.

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...” The King James translators were godly men, devoted to the inerrancy of Scripture, but on occasion they soften the text to cater to more refined sensibilities. Here's a good example...

Hebrew scholars Keil-Delitzsch translate verse 14, “Just as many were astonished at thee: so disfigured, his appearance was not human, and his form not like that of the children of men.” Apparently, before and on the cross, Jesus was beaten beyond

recognition. And it wasn't that they didn't identify Him as Jesus, but on-lookers had a difficult time picking out human features.

The beatings and torture reduced His body to a quivering mass of bloody tissue. Like a boxer's face after 15 round slugfest, or the face of a passenger thrown through a car windshield in a head-on collision.

His face and body were torn and tethered. If there had been a funeral, it would've been closed casket.

As we noted from 50:6, Isaiah says the Romans ripped out Jesus' beard - a detail even the Gospels don't give us. This might be why some of His disciples were slow to recognize Jesus after His resurrection.

Not only did Jesus' feet and hands still retain the scars of crucifixion, but so did His face and brow.



It's interesting how John sees Jesus in Revelation 5:6. He writes, "A Lamb as though it had been slain."

You and I could be in for a shock one day. Our first look into Jesus' face may cause us to shutter in horror.

It reminds me of the little girl who's mom was severely disfigured. As she got older she hated her mom for the embarrassment her scars caused. Friends at school called her mom a monster, and made fun.

One day, her mom explained how she got her scars. The house had caught fire, and she raced through the flames to save her baby girl... From that moment on, that young lady was never again embarrassed by her mother's scars. In fact, they became a source of pride.

Our first look at the Savior may shock us, but once we process the meaning of His scars, they'll become tokens of His grace and reminders of His love for us.

“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.” There'll be universal surprised when we all see Jesus. No one will be prepared for that first look.

And notice, Jesus will *“sprinkle many nations.”*

When Israel accepted the old covenant, Moses sprinkled the people with sacrificial blood. This is also what Jesus does when we embrace the new covenant.

Hebrews 10:22 tells us that Christ sprinkles us and cleanses our evil conscience. Moses sprinkled only the Jews. The sprinkling of Jesus covers *“many nations.”*

Chapter 53, “Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

Psalm 19:1 says, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.” Look into a night sky - the galaxies and vast frontiers of space show off the glory of God. It’s His “*handiwork*” or literally His “*finger-work*.” He created it all on one hand.

As the old country preacher put it, “God created the heavens and earth, without half trying.” To us creation is great and glorious, but to God it’s mundane work. Placement of the stars is a small task to the Almighty.

But when God embarked on His work of salvation, He rolled up shirt-sleeves. This was not mere finger-work, but “*the arm of*

*Lord*” was revealed! What we're about to read - the cross of Christ - was no small task!

The Bible covers the creation of the heavens and the earth in just a few chapters, but the story of redemption fills the whole book and shows us God’s priority.

Realize, the Jews are not the only people who have attacked Isaiah’s credibility. Liberal scholars who want to cast doubt on the inerrancy and trustworthiness of Scripture are bothered by the miraculous nature of Isaiah’s prophecy. *How could anyone have spoken so vividly about Jesus, some 700 years beforehand?...*

Thus, to discredit the supernatural element of the book they've suggested there were two Isaiahs.

Chapter 1-39 was written by the historical Isaiah, while chapters 40-66 were written by a later Isaiah who lived after the time of

Jesus... There are a lot of ways to debunk this theory. The Dead Sea Scrolls are one.

But the easiest way is to point to John 12:38.

There Jesus quotes this verse, Isaiah 53:1, and an earlier verse, 6:9-10, and He links them together by saying, “Isaiah said again...” It’s clear that in the mind of Jesus it was the same Isaiah in control of the pen.

If you believe Jesus, you’ve got to believe there was one Isaiah... And of course, if you don’t believe Jesus, *you’ve got bigger problems than who wrote Isaiah!*

Verse 2, “For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground.” These pictures relate to 11:1 where Messiah is called “The Branch.” He’s a sprout from the family tree of David.

*“A root out of dry ground”* refers to the barrenness of Jesus’ upbringing. In the first century, the Romans had reduced the heirs of David to paupers, not princes.

In addition, the Jewish hierarchy was corrupt, and the religious establishment had become hypocritical.

It was a barren time in multiple ways. Thus, Jesus was a fresh sprout, a tender plant, out of dusty ground. The world’s prettiest flower came from its ugliest era.

*“He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.”*

*“Form”* refers to a person’s *“profile.”* *“Comeliness”* means *“beautiful, striking features.”* Apparently, Jesus was not what anyone would’ve called *“handsome.”*

Now, that doesn't mean Jesus was ugly. I personally believe He was average-looking, non-descript. Jesus had a face and features that blended in with the crowd.

I have a book at home called [The Archko Volume](#). It's a collection of manuscripts that were found in the Vatican Library. Supposedly, it is the official Sanhedrin records at the time of Christ. And in it there is a purported interview where the Jewish Rabbi Gamaliel speaks to Mary and Joseph. And there's an excerpt that gives a physical description of Jesus' appearance.

Let me qualify what I'm about to read by saying the Archko Volume is far from trustworthy. It's origins are spurious. A lot of it is mere conjecture, *but it's also fun*.

So here's its description of what Jesus looked like...

“He is the picture of His mother, only he has not her smooth, round face. His hair is a little more golden than hers, though it is as much from sunburn as anything else. He is tall, and his shoulders are a little drooped; his visage is thin and of a swarthy (dark, dusky) complexion, though this is from exposure. His eyes are large and a soft blue, and rather dull and heavy.

The lashes are long, and his eyebrows very large. His nose is that of a Jew. In fact, He reminds me of an old-fashioned Jew in every sense of the word.” And the last line fits with Isaiah’s prophecy. *He was ordinary.*

A more biblical portrait is the OT Tabernacle. Hebrews tells us it’s every feature spoke of Jesus.

It’s structure was of cedar, gold, and linen, but it was overlaid with badger skins - dark, ugly leather. Thus, when you approached it there was nothing about its appearance that



attracted or impressed you. It was only from the inside that you could see it's glory.

This was the case with Jesus. From the outside He was a common man. There was nothing spectacular about His visage, but when you watched His character and heard the truth He spoke you're attitude changed.

And the same is true of Christianity. It's foolish until you meet Christ. Once you discover Jesus - His love, grace, truth, beauty - then you're locked in forever.

Verse 3 tells us, “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.” John 1:11 picks up this theme, “He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.” Jesus was rejected by the Jews.

First century Jews were looking for political liberation, but Jesus forced them to look inward at the corruption in their own hearts. It was spiritual freedom they needed. He desired to forgive and set them free.

But they *grieved* Him. In Matthew 24, from on top of the Mount of Olives, Jesus looked out over the city and said how often He wanted to gather His people like a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but they were not willing. Not only while on earth, but in ages prior, He'd agonized over the rebellious plight of His people.

Jesus came into the world *“a Man of sorrows.”* From the outset He was a stranger in a strange land. He felt resistance and hostility from Day One. The prophet Haggai referred to the Messiah as *“the desire of all nations,”* yet His own people *“did not esteem Him.”*

“Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.” Here’s the most stunning phrase in the chapter, “*smitten by God.*” The Jews hit Jesus. He was beaten by the Romans. But “*smitten by God?*”

*The Father in heaven struck His only Son? Was this divine child abuse?* Yet on the cross God vented His wrath - His anger toward sin - on His only Son. Jesus stood in our place as sin’s punishment was meted out.

It was all necessary according to divine justice.

Often we sing the song, “I’m accepted because He was rejected.” That song is good theology. The OT Law said, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.” Jesus hanging on the cross was a sign of God’s rejection.

Verse 5 continues, “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.” Notice the words Isaiah uses...

“*Wounded*” means “pierced or perforated.” His body was punctured in seven places - His brow (the crown of thorns), his back, his two hands, two feet, his side.

In Scripture, the #7 is the number of completion. Even His scars prove our sin was paid in full. All that needed to be done for our salvation has been done!

“*Bruised*” means “beaten to pieces.” Remember, they struck His face with the palms of their hands.

His “*chastisement*” was the formal scourging. The Romans used a leather strap embedded with bits of metal, or ivory, or bone. Every time the whip was cracked, the jagged chunks of metal dug into His skin, tearing the flesh - eventually churning up the muscle.

The Roman scourging was known as “the half-way death.” Some victims never made it to the cross.

Whenever we take communion I make myself chew and grind the bread between my teeth. It causes me to remember the crushing the body of Jesus endured.

It’s been said, “What God's justice demanded God's love provided.” The Son of God could’ve been born in the era of the guillotine, or firing squad or lethal injection, but He was subjected to crucifixion - the most torturous execution ever devised. For that’s what our sin deserved. *Why did His Father choose the cross?*

There were two reasons... First, it was to show *the severity of mankind’s sin*. But second, it was *to demonstrate the extremes of God’s love*. It’s been said, “In the cross of Christ excess in men is

met by excess in God; excess of evil is mastered by excess in love."

Notice one more word in verse 5, "*stripes*" - the lacerations that occurred from the scourging. What caused Jesus terrible pain, has become our healing.

1 Peter 2:24 states, "Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness - by His stripes you were healed." Both physical and spiritual healing was paid for on the cross. His stripes purchased great treasure.

But this doesn't mean bodily healing is as accessible as the forgiveness of sin. Just ask and you'll be healed.

On the cross Jesus also paid for streets of gold, a redeemed world, and healing for the nations - but when we cash in on these

blessings is a matter of *God's timing*. Likewise with our healing. Today is the day of salvation, but God may or may not chose to heal today.

He may not heal until heaven, but when it happens we'll know it was paid for by the stripes on His Son.

Verse 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.” Here's a verse that says it all!... It begins and end with the word “*all.*”

“*All we like sheep...*” Sheep are notoriously stupid. They tend to wander and stray from the fold.

Realize, you don't have to be blatant and rowdy to be sinner. Like a dumb sheep you can just wander off - be curiosity and venture out on your own. Before you know it you're trapped and in need of your Shepherd.

But verse 6 mentions two sheep - the one who goes astray, but Isaiah also speaks of **the scapegoat**. This was part of the ritual practiced on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, when the sin of the nation was forgiven.

Leviticus 16 instructs the High Priest to select two goats. One is offered as a sacrifice, and the other is taken to the edge of the camp. The priest lays his hand on his head and confesses the sins of the people.

Then he turns it loose to wander away in the desert.

It was called the **“scapegoat.”** Today the word is used as a cliché. It's the person who takes the blame. This is what Jesus did for us. He took the blame for our sin.



This is what we mean when we talk of the *vicarious* or *substitutionary atonement*. Our sin was laid upon Jesus. He died in our place. He became our proxy.

As the poet writes, “Upon a life I have not lived. Upon a death I have not died. Another's life, Another's death. I stake my whole eternity.” This is our salvation.

Verse 7, “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.” It’s interesting this text appears in Acts 8.

This was the passage the Ethiopian on the road to Gaza was reading when Philip was instructed by the Holy Spirit to approach him and preach Jesus to him.

This African dignitary had been to Jerusalem in search of salvation. He desired to know the true God.

And God's providence had him reading Isaiah 53. It was a tremendous lead-in for Philip to preach Jesus.

**“He opened not His mouth...”** Before the Sanhedrin Jesus kept silent - like a sheep before its shearers.

When the Jews accused Jesus falsely in front of Pilate, the Roman governor asked Him, **“Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?”**

Matthew 27:14 tells us, **“And He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.”**

Jesus didn't attempt to defend Himself or elude the cross. This was His mission. He was born to die. His crucifixion had not only been predicted by prophets like Isaiah, but decreed before the foundations of the world.

“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.” Hebrews 7:26 calls Jesus, “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” Judas said that His blood was innocent.

Thus, though Jesus suffered a criminal's death, He was placed in a rich man's tomb. And the rich man was a Jewish aristocrat named Joseph of Arimathea.

Of course there's a great joke... When Joseph asked Pilate for the body, Pilate was surprised, *“Why would you give your new*

*tomb to bury a criminal?”* Joseph responded, “Ah, He only needs it for the weekend.”

Verse 10, “*Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.*” Again, this is astonishing. In light of the crucifixion, “*it pleased the Lord to bruise Him...*”

The crucifixion of Jesus was not a tragic outcome, or a shock, or a good idea spoiled, or a defeat at the hands of Satan. The crucifixion was ordained by God!

It sounds strange, but “*It pleased Him...*”

“*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.*”

Why did Jesus endure the crucifixion? Hebrew 12:2 tells us, “For the joy that was set before Him (He) endured the cross.” Here we’re told what was that joy?

First, it was “*His seed*” or the fruit of His sacrifice - the offspring of His salvation. That means you and I.

Second, the “*prolonging of His days.*” Death did not defeat Jesus. Three days later He rose from the grave.

And third, “*the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.*” After His resurrection Jesus was raised to God’s right hand. He has been vindicated and exalted.

“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.” Notice, how Isaiah speaks of the cross. Of Jesus it’s said, “*His soul (was) an offering for sin.*” He saw “*the labor of His soul*”

Jesus not only offered up His body on the cross, but also His soul. He died not just physically, but spiritually.

Remember Jesus' agonizing cry, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?" Jesus was separated from His Father. In a mysterious way God broke fellowship with God. Jesus never ceased being God, but somehow a separation in the Godhead occurred.

When my son, Zach, was two years old, he came down with a major infection. We had to admit him into the hospital and give some antibiotics him by IV.

Just before they installed the tube, the nurse told me I should go back to our room and wait until they were done. Kathy knew what was coming and complied, but I stayed by the door. I wanted to be next to my buddy.

And I'll never forget the moment. Zach started screaming, "Daddy, daddy, I want my Daddy." I could have clawed through that door - jerked it off its hinges.

But I stayed outside the door. I knew what was best. That's when God spoke to me as clearly as He ever has, "*Now Sandy, you know what I endured for you. I heard the cries of My Son, yet I stayed beyond the door, so that you could be saved.*" It is amazing grace.

The earth shook, the sun stopped shining, the day became dark - as God the Father forsook God the Son just long enough for you and I to be pardoned and accepted. Now we know how much God loves us.

Verse 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...**” The Gospels point out that Jesus was crucified between two thieves, or as Isaiah puts it, **“numbered with the transgressors.”**

It reminds me of the preacher who was dying. He asked his nurse if she would invite his Congressman and Senator to visit, so he could die in peace. She made the arrangements. But later asked him why...

Why would having a Senator and Congressman on hand bring a person peace? The preacher said, **“Now I can die like my Lord Jesus, between two thieves.”**

**“And He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”** And this is Jesus’ ministry today. He ever lives to make intercession for us. He knows what we need, and is praying for us!



As we leave Isaiah 53, hopefully there's a tear in your eye. How can there not be when you stand at the cross and realize what God endured to see us saved?

But the tone changes in Chapter 54. Isaiah tells us to dry our eyes and moisten our lips. *His suffering* is reason for *our singing*. Our weeping gives way to joy!

Chapter 54 begins, “Sing, O barren, you who have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, you who have not labored with child! For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman,” says the Lord.” In Galatians 4:27 Paul quotes this passage, but gives it an interesting interpretation.

He compares God's people to a married woman.

Israel was married to the Old Covenant - the Law of Moses - the dos and don'ts - rules and rituals. While the Church is married to a New Covenant in Christ.

The OC required Israel to labor and labor and labor some more - yet the Jews remained barren to God. She had few followers. No one could sustain the pace.

Whereas, the Church rests in Christ. We've gotten off the religious treadmill of trying to measure up.

We've admitted our barrenness - we labor not - yet we have more offspring, we're more fruitful, than the Jews ever dreamed. It's because Jesus does the work in us. The NC takes the pressure off us to perform and puts it on Jesus to fulfill His promises as we trust Him.

“Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; do not spare; lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes.

For you shall expand to the right and to the left, and your descendants will inherit the nations, and make the desolate cities **inhabited.**” For last 1900 years Israel has seen an isolated, barren, and dwindling population.

Even today the Jews possess a fraction of the land God promised them. Yet, one day when Messiah rules in Israel, she will ***“inherit the nations.”*** He’ll rebuild desolate cities and Israel will expand its territory.

And this notion also applies to the Church in a spiritual way. If we trust in the Gospel of Grace, God will **enlarge our tent** and **strengthen our stakes.** Expansion and stability will become our trademarks.

“Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed; neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and will not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore.

For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth.”

The ancients usually worshipped local deities. But the one true God is *“the God of the whole earth.”*

Also notice, *“your Maker is your husband...”*

This is a beautiful thought. The Creator wants an intimate, love relationship with the people He’s created.

“For the Lord has called you like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, like a youthful wife when you were refused,” says your

God. “For a mere moment I have forsaken you, but with great mercies I will gather you.

With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you,” says the Lord, your Redeemer.”

God had forsaken Israel for “*a mere moment,*” “*with a little wrath (He) hid (His) face...*” There were times in the OT when Israel needed to be punished for her sin. Whenever a wake-up call was needed, God provided.

But it was always for a “*mere moment*” - Israel endured a “*little wrath*” - lest she be abandoned forever and be forced to endure an eternity full of God’s wrath.

This could also be said of the years since 70 AD.

God has again forsaken Israel for a little while - with “*a little wrath*” - to turn them back to Him forever. Compared to eternity

and hellfire even 2000 years and two millenniums of suffering is viewed as *“a moment.”*

And in 2 Corinthians 4:17 this is how Paul says we as Christians should view the sufferings of this life.

*“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding weight of glory.”*

Whenever I read that passage I think of Paul’s *“light affliction”* - *5 times beaten by Jews, 3 times by the Romans, once stoned, 3 times shipwrecked, etc, etc.*

Yet Paul calls it all *“light”* and *“momentary”* - it’s similar to what God says here in Isaiah. It was *“a little wrath”* that lasted for a *“mere moment.”* Yet Paul’s *“light affliction”* produced *“an eternal weight of glory.”* The eternal reward caused the temporal inconvenience to pale in comparison. And the same is true in Isaiah...

God's people, Israel, were forsaken for *"a moment"* but will be gathered with *"great mercies."* She tasted *"a little wrath"* but she'll be compensated with *"everlasting kindness."* When God calls us to suffer, we won't lose heart, if we can look on it from an eternal perspective.

*"For this is like the waters of Noah to Me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you."* After God flooded the world in Noah's day, He set a rainbow in the sky. It was a token of His promise to never flood the Earth again.

And Isaiah says God has set the same precedent with Israel - all His judgements will be tempered with mercy. His plagues are to purify not punish forever.

*And here's a side note...* Don't let anyone tell you Noah's Flood was a local catastrophe. Here God makes it clear that the flood covered the whole earth.

Verse 10, “For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed,” says the Lord, who has mercy on you. “O you afflicted one, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay your stones with colorful gems, and lay your foundations with sapphires. I will make your pinnacles of rubies, your gates of crystal, and all your walls of precious stones. All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children.”

Israel is referred to as “*you afflicted one*” - yet she sits on a foundation of precious, solid stones. She has a “*covenant of peace*” with God, that He promises will not be removed. For a



time the nation was “*tossed by a tempest*” of trouble, but God would be faithful to Israel.

*And here’s another side note...* When the storms have past and Israel is solid on its foundation - *we can assume sometime in the Kingdom Age* - the Lord will leave the affairs of state to us, and teach the children.

What a wonderful thought, “*all your children shall be taught by the Lord.*” And if children’s ministry will be the Lord’s priority in the Kingdom, it should certainly be our priority in the Church. If you teach Sunday School then know for sure you are following in the Lord’s footsteps.

Verse 14, “*In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you.*”

Indeed they shall surely assemble, but not because of Me. Whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake. Behold, I have created the blacksmith who blows the coals in the fire, who brings forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the spoiler to destroy.” Again, God is speaking of the age when Jesus will return and reign over Israel. Her enemies will not prosper. God will create weapons for her defense.

And “No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from Me,” says the Lord.” For Israel today, threatened on every side, this would be a comfort, if the Jews just trusted in God.

But what applies to Israel physically, usually has a spiritual parallel to the Church. Here is no exception.

Jesus said, “I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” No weapon formed against us will prosper. No judgment will stick. As God protected Israel in former times - and as He will in the future - He also promises to protect us in the present.