

# CHURCH. SUPPLEMENT 1

[CHRIST]

## A PROPHECY ABOUT THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT (ISAIAH 52:13 – 53:12)

The prophet Isaiah recorded this prophecy more than 700 years B.C. Such a prophecy is not found in any other religion or in human history! The prophecy is divided into 5 stanzas of 3 verses each. It descends from *exaltation* to the depths of *suffering* and rises again to the height of *exaltation*. The verses are translated directly from the Hebrew.

### Emphasis.

*Jesus was crucified as a punishment for our sins* (Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12).

The New Testament revelation clearly teaches that this prophecy about the Servant of the LORD has been fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ “committed no sin and no deceit was found in his mouth” (compare Isaiah 53:5 with 1 Peter 2:22). Christ was the sheep led to the slaughter (compare Isaiah 53:7-8 with Acts 8:32-33). Christ gave his life as a ransom for many (compare Isaiah 53:10 with Mark 10:45). Christ was made to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (compare Isaiah 53:10-11 with 2 Corinthians 5:21). Christ was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification (compare Isaiah 53:11-12 with Romans 4:25). Christ suffered, died and was raised from the dead (compare Isaiah 53:5 with Mark 10:32-34). Christ had to suffer these things and then enter his glory (Luke 24:26).

### A. STANZA 1. ISAIAH 52:13-15.

#### JESUS CHRIST WOULD BE EXALTED (ELEVATED) ONLY THROUGH SUFFERING.

#### Prophecy.<sup>1</sup>

The first stanza introduces the theme of the prophecy. “The coming Messiah will be exalted only through suffering.” In this stanza, the LORD himself is speaking.

#### 1. Verse 13 describes his exaltation.

**52:13.** Translation: “See, My servant will be prosperous (Hebrew: shkl, Q), He will be raised (Hebrew: rum, Q) and lifted up (Hebrew: ns’, Pi), and exalted (Hebrew: gbh, Q) highly (Hebrews: me’od).”

Verse 13 describes his exaltation, that is, his resurrection, ascension and enthronement to the right hand of God (Acts 3:13; Philippians 2:9-11). His struggle will be crowned with victory, his labour will see results.

#### 2. Verse 14 describes his humiliation.

**52:14.** Translation: “Just as there were many who were appalled at him (Hebrew: shmm, Q), so disfigured (Hebrew: mishchat) beyond that of any man his appearance (Hebrew: mare’hu), and his form (Hebrew: to’ar) beyond other humans.”

Verse 14 describes his humiliation, that is, the maltreatment by people who made him almost unrecognisable (Mark 14:65; Mark 15:15,17,19; John 19:1-5).

#### 3. Verse 15 describes his glorification.

**52:15.** Translation: “so will he sprinkle/spray (cause them to jump up) (Hebrew: nzh, Hi) many nations, because of him kings will shut (Hebrew: qpts, Q) their mouths, what they were not told (Hebrew: spr, Pu), they will see, and what they have not heard, they will give attention to (investigate)(Hebrew: bin, Hitpol).

Verse 15 describes his glorification. It compares his humiliation in verse 14 with his future glorious exaltation above everyone. The word “sprinkle” may also be translated “jump up”. Nations and kings will jump up in utter bewilderment and silently marvel at beholding his impressive appearance (cf. Isaiah 49:7; cf. Job 29:9-10; Psalm 22:29). They will see, hear and understand things, which were never told to them before – namely, the gospel and the New Testament teachings. Many people will marvel at God’s revelation, when they will see the astonishing change in the lot of Jesus Christ (his death to his resurrection) at his first coming.

#### Fulfilment.

The New Testament revelation records the maltreatment of Jesus (John 19:1-3), but does not record how Jesus looked like after they had ill-treated him.

The New Testament revelation clearly teaches that he was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven and sat at the right hand of God as King of the universe. “The many” who were appalled at his suffering are surpassed by “the many”

<sup>1</sup> “Revelation 19:10 says, “The testimony of Jesus Christ (the testimony given by Jesus Christ) (1 Peter 1:9-12) (and Jesus Christ as the contents of this testimony) (Revelation 12:17) is the spirit (essence) of prophecy.” Prophecy is NOT making arbitrary predictions (Jeremiah 23:16-40).

who came to know him after his glorification – They are an uncountable number of people from every nation including their high ranking kings.

## **B. STANZA 2. ISAIAH 53:1-3. JESUS CHRIST WOULD BE DESPISED AND REJECTED BY MEN.**

### **Prophecy.**

The second stanza describes the humiliation of Jesus Christ. He will be treated with unbelief, contempt and mockery (abuse). Here, the prophet Isaiah is speaking as representative of the true people of God.

### **1. Verse 1 says that in the religious area he would be treated with unbelief.**

**53:1.** Translation: “Who has believed what we have heard? The arm (power) of the LORD to whom has this been revealed (Hebrew: glh, Hitp)?”

Verse 1 says that in the religious area he would be snubbed with unbelief. Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12 is a direct revelation from the LORD. No man would ever have been able to devise such a plan of salvation. It was God’s purpose that this revelation would be received by faith, but both the prophet Isaiah and the Messiah would encounter much unbelief – this was confirmed in the New Testament (John 12:37-38); Romans 10:16).

### **2. Verse 2 says that in the social area he would be despised.**

**53:2.** Translation: “He grew up (Hebrew: >lh) as a tender shoot (Hebrew: joneq) before his (the LORD’s) countenance, as a root (Hebrew: shresh) out of ground (Hebrew: >erets) dry (Hebrew: tsijah); no form (Hebrew: to<ar) he had and no decoration/beauty (Hebrew: hadar); as we looked at him (Hebrew: r<h, Ni), there was no figure/shape (Hebrew: mar<eh) that we should desire him (Hebrew: chmd, Ni).

Verse 2 says that in the social area he would be despised. It describes the low descent of the Messiah. He would be born from a generation that previously was a tree (the royal house of David), but later that would only be a stump covered with dirt (the insignificant house of Joseph and Mary) (Isaiah 11:1). His own family and nation did not give him any power or greatness. He had no particular physical beauty and his outward appearance did not cause people to feel naturally attracted to him. Nevertheless, from his conception (Isaiah 49:1) he would grow up before the LORD’s eyes. The LORD would watch over him and see to it that he would reach his destiny (cf. Luke 2:52)!

Physically he would have no outward beauty or attraction (see David, 1 Samuel 16:18).

### **3. Verse 3 says that in the physical area he would be abused.**

**53:3.** Translation: “He was despised (Hebrew: bzh, Ni), rejected (Hebrew: chdl, K) by people, a Man of sorrows /suffering/pain (Hebrew: mak<ob), familiar with (Hebrew: jd>, Pu) sickness (Hebrew: choli); and as One from whom men hide (Hebrew: str, Ni) the face. He was despised (Hebrew: bzh, Ni) and we did not count (Hebrew: chshb, Ni) him.

Verse 3 says that in the physical area he would be maltreated. Although he would identify himself with the oppressed and sick in the nation, he would be maltreated by people to the extent that people would hardly recognise him (Isaiah 52:14). The prophet Isaiah, as representative of his people, prophesies that Israel would not acknowledge or regard him.

### **Fulfilment.**

The ancestors of Jesus according to his human nature were no great saints: Judah committed adultery with Tamar, Salmon married the prostitute Rahab, Boaz married the Moabitess Ruth and king David committed adultery with Bathsheba (Matthew 1:3,5,6).

Jesus was raised in Nazareth in the despised province of Galilee (where Gentiles lived) (Mark 1:9; cf. John 1:46). God revealed himself through Jesus Christ and yet he was treated with much unbelief in Galilee (Luke 4:29), in Transjordan (Luke 8:37a) and in Judea (John 2:18; 5:16; 6:66; 7:12,20, etc.). His own hometown took offence at him (Mark 6:3). His own brothers did not believe in him (John 7:5). He lived in a time that Israel as God’s people was dry and dead (Matthew 21:43) and the house of David had not ruled for a very long time.

No one felt naturally attracted to him (Isaiah 53:1-3). The Jewish leaders of the Sanhedrin spat in his face and struck him with fists (Matthew 26:67). The Roman soldiers took his clothes off, spat on him, pressed a crown of thorns on his head and struck him on his head again and again with a staff (Matthew 27:27-30). He was so marred that people could not look on his disfigured face!

## **C. STANZA 3. ISAIAH 53:4-6. JESUS CHRIST WOULD BE CRUCIFIED FOR OUR SINS.**

### **Prophecy.**

The third stanza describes the gospel of salvation. The Messiah would suffer and die in the place of his people, that is, he would become a substitute sacrifice of atonement. It compares “our sins” with “his suffering” and “his suffering” with “our healing”. The “we” can only refer to God’s true people. They are the people who believed and to whom the arm of the LORD has been revealed (verse 1).

### **1. Verse 4 says he will carry our sicknesses and sorrows.**

**53:4.** Translation: “Nevertheless (Hebrew: <aken) our sicknesses he took on himself/took or carried away (Hebrew: ns<a), and our sorrows (Hebrew: mak<ob) he carried as a burden (Hebrew: sbal); and we, we considered /regarded him (Hebrew: chshb) as one plagued (Hebrew: nagu>a), stricken (Hebrew: mkh, Pu) by God and humiliated (Hebrew: m>n).

Verse 4 says that the Messiah would carry our sicknesses and sorrows. The words “sicknesses” and “sorrows” summarise all human suffering, which was the consequence of the fall into sin. It summarises all kinds of physical and psychological sicknesses and deficiencies, all human suffering. He would willingly take these on himself and carry them, thus in the sense of a substitution. He would carry some of these sicknesses and sorrows before his second coming, but certainly remove all sickness and sorrow at his second coming, when he will resurrect the dead and make everything new.

But Israel’s attitude of contempt contrasts sharply with this. People would regard his suffering as a plague from God for his own sins! One plagued is someone violently struck by God’s hand, so that suffering and calamity hits him (1 Samuel 6:9; Job 1:11; 19:21).

### **2. Verse 5 says he will be crucified for our sins.**

**53:5.** Translation: “But he (emphasized against “we”) was pierced (Hebrew: chll) for our transgressions (Hebrew: peshah), crushed (Hebrew: dk<a, Pu) for our iniquities (Hebrew: >on), the punishment (Hebrew: musar) of peace (that is, that brought us peace) (Hebrew: shlm) was upon him, and his lashes (Hebrew: cheburah) became our healing (Hebrew: rp<a, Ni).

Verse 5 says that the Messiah would be crucified for our sins. He would be crushed by oppression and violence and finally pierced (killed) with nails. This prophecy is remarkable, because crucifixion as a punishment for criminals was introduced by the Romans 600 years after the time of Isaiah.

The prophecy is also remarkable, because it explained a very long time before why the Messiah had to die. The main thought is that bitter suffering became his lot due to our “transgressions” and “iniquities”. It is a clear prediction of the cause and result of the death of the Messiah. He would be crucified for the transgressions and iniquities of his people, including of Isaiah and the Old Testament believers! He would be punished in their place (cf. Romans 3:25). The punishment is a retaliation (Jeremiah 2:19). The punishment that brings peace (complete wholeness) and the lashes that bring healing are the secret of suffering as a substitution! What no man expected, became God’s pleasant surprise!

### **3. Verse 6 says he will be punished for our wilful independence.**

**53:6.** Translation: “We all like sheep (Hebrew: ts<on) have gone astray (Hebrew: t>ah), each of us has turned to his own way (Hebrew: pnh), but the LORD has dropped on/struck (Hebrew: pg>a) him the iniquity of us all.”

Verse 6 says that the Messiah would be punished for our deliberate turning away from him. The sin of man is deliberate, stubborn and obstinate independence from God. That is why the sin of man is guilty and punishable. All people chose the direction of their own life apart from God and refused to follow after the Shepherd on the way of God. “It has become necessary “to return to the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls” (1 Peter 2:25)!

#### **Fulfilment.**

Jesus Christ delivered many people possessed by evil spirits and healed many sick people as the fulfilment of this prophecy (Matthew 8:16-17). Although Jesus Christ took the suffering of people on himself, people thought that he was plagued by God due to his own sins! They thought he deserved this punishment from God (Matthew 26:65-66). The Israelites regarded “suffering” as a punishment for sin, and the Pharisees regarded the suffering of Jesus as a punishment of his own sin and not as a punishment for their sins! To think this is blasphemy!

At his crucifixion the soldiers hammered long iron nails through his hands and feet into the cross, heaved the cross upright and let it drop into a hole with a thump. Then they let him hang in the burning sun as a cursed man (cf. Galatians 3:13)! This is an extreme way of making criminals to suffer. This violent way of suffering finally crushed his human life and he died.

The Old Testament revelation prophesied that Jesus Christ had to suffer for the transgressions and iniquities of his people. “Transgression” is rebellion in the heart that is expressed in deliberate disobedience to God’s teaching and commands. “Iniquity” is the twisting of God’s truths into half truths or lies. Jesus Christ died, not to improve people, but rather to pay for their sins. He not only died for us, but in our place! “He bore our sins in his body on the tree” (1 Peter 2:24). He was “made sin”, so that whoever believed in him, would be “made the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21). He thus exchanged places with us! Whoever believes in Jesus Christ, will never be condemned (John 5:24), but is by God’s grace declared righteous in God’s and thereafter regarded and treated as perfectly righteous (Romans 3:24,28). Whoever believes that Jesus Christ died on the cross in his place, is reconciled to God (1 Peter 3:18). God makes peace with the believer (Romans 5:9-10) and therefore the believer can make peace with God (Romans 5:1) and with other people (Ephesians 2:14-15). “God’s peace” brings God’s complete and perfect salvation, blessings and joy along. “God’s healing” brings God’s salvation from all kinds of distress, misery, trouble and suffering.

The root and essence of sin is “independence from God” or “self-sufficiency”, in which a person deliberately turns away from the Shepherd by living his life outside God’s goal for his life, by open rebellion and transgression of God’s Word and by malicious twisting of God’s Word in order to justify himself.

The fruit of sin is “to do what God forbids” or “not do what God commands”. The LORD has laid all “our” sins on Jesus Christ! He took our guilt, our punishment, our misery on himself so that we might receive his perfect righteousness and holiness by grace!

#### **D. STANZA 4. ISAIAH 53:7-9. JESUS CHRIST WOULD SUBMIT TO HIS SUFFERING.**

##### **Prophecy.**

The fourth stanza describes the complete submission of the Messiah (Jesus Christ) to God’s plan: “salvation through “substitution suffering”. In verse 7 to 10 the prophet no longer speaks as the representative of believers in the nation (that is, as a priest), but rather as one who proclaims God’s plan of salvation (that is, as a prophet)!

##### **1. Verse 7 describes his suffering as a lamb.**

**53:7.** Translation: “He was maltreated (oppressed, tyrannised) (Hebrew: ngs), but he allowed himself to be humiliated (Hebrew: >anah Pu) and did not open (Hebrew: ptch, Pi) his mouth (Hebrew: peh); like a lamb (Hebrew: seh) to slaughter (Hebrew: tebach) is led (Hebrew: jbl, Hi), and as a sheep/ewe (Hebrew: rahel) before its shearers (Hebrew: gazaz) is dumb (Hebrew: <alam, Ni), so he did not open (Hebrew: ptch) his mouth.”

Verse 7 describes how the Messiah (Jesus Christ) would suffer. He was maltreated, just like the slaves under their Egyptian slave drivers (Exodus 3:7; Isaiah 9:3). He allowed himself to be humiliated without resistance, without requiting the injustice (1 Peter 2:23). He would be led to be slaughtered just as a sheep without opening his mouth. He would submit himself to the false accusations, public ridicule and naked crucifixion without defending himself. Precisely through his suffering he would bring God’s plan of salvation to fulfilment.

##### **2. Verse 8 describes his death as a criminal.**

**53:8.** Translation: “By oppression/anxiety/force (Hebrew: >otser) and judgement/execution (Hebrew: mishpat) he was taken away (Hebrew: lqch), and his dwelling place (Hebrew: dor) who would search/find/ (discover)? For he was cut off (Hebrew: gzz, Ni) from the land of the living. For the transgression of my people, the plague (Hebrew: neg>a) was on him.

Verse 8 describes how the Messiah would die. He would not die in a peaceful way (in old age), but as a convicted criminal, sentenced by an unrighteous religion and a worldly court (the Jewish Sanhedrin together with Annas and Caiaphas and the Roman procurator, Pilate. He would be taken from the anxiety in Gethsemane, the trials and maltreatment by people in order to be crucified. The deeper background is the trial of God in which Jesus Christ appears as Guarantee for sinners. Israel disowned him and now he has been taken away. Israel has been robbed of his saving presence.

His “dwelling place” or place after his death and burial (Isaiah 38:12)(verse 9) is unknown. The prophet Isaiah complains that the people of Israel have rejected their Messiah, had condemned and killed him and that the Messiah had been removed to a place no one knew (Luke 23:43,46). In the Old Testament period until the time the disciples of Jesus mourned the death of Jesus, there was but little knowledge about life after death. During the Old Testament period people were raised from the dead (in order to later die again), but never was someone resurrected from the dead (in order never to die again)! The emphasis is on the fact that after his death he was removed from Israel’s sight. He became like a felled tree (2 Kings 6:4) “cut off” from the land of the living.

##### **3. Verse 9 describes his burial as a rich man.**

**53:9.** Translation: “And people assigned (Hebrew: ntn, Ni) with the criminals/godless (Hebrew: rasa) his grave (Hebrew: qeber), [*this is the turning point of the prophecy: the description changes at this point to his justification and exaltation*] but with the rich (Hebrew: >asir) he was in his death (Hebrew: maut), because no wrong /injustice (Hebrew: chamas) he had done, nor deceit (Hebrew: mirmah) in his mouth (there was)(cf. 1 Peter 2:22-23).

Verse 9 describes how the Messiah would be buried. The unjust rulers had planned to give the Messiah a dishonourable burial, as was done with convicted criminals. A dishonourable burial was in Israel something terrible (Isaiah 14:18-20; Jeremiah 8:1-2; Jeremiah 36:30). But God set their evil plan aside and gave him an honourable burial in a tomb of a rich man, hewn out of rock (cf. Isaiah 22:16). God accorded him honour instead of the dishonour his enemies had planned.

##### **Fulfilment.**

During his life Jesus Christ was called names as being a deceiver, a demon-possessed and mad (John 7:12,20; John 8:48; John 10:19-20). Yet he did not return abuse. During his trial he was falsely accused and maltreated. But he never

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 53:8 (jeshocheach)? RSV “Who in his generation considered?” LB “But who of the people in that day realised? ESV “As for his generation, who considered?”

threatened those who persecuted him with revenge (1 Peter 2:22-23)! In meekness he submitted himself to the maltreatment that disfigured him. He submitted to the humiliation to be crucified naked in public, ridiculed and rejected. Not once did he try to defend himself! The Passover lamb (Exodus 12:3) and the lamb in Isaiah 53 formed the foundation in the New Testament to call Christ “the Lamb of God” (John 1:19; 1 Peter 1:19).

After his anxious suffering in Gethsemane, the maltreatment by people and his condemnation by unjust judges, Jesus Christ was crucified together with two criminals, so that everyone would think that Jesus too was a criminal. He really died, because he was cut off out of the land of the living.

Jesus was buried in the tomb of a rich man, Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57-60). That was a great honour! His honourable burial was the first sign the LORD regarded his Servant, Jesus Christ, to be blameless! He had done no wrong, he had committed no violence and he had spoken no lie. He was completely innocent and blameless in word and deed!

Although Jesus Christ was in himself blameless and innocent, he willingly submitted himself to his suffering in our place (substitution suffering) (cf. John 10:17-18)!

## **E. STANZA 5. ISAIAH 53:10-12. JESUS CHRIST WILL RECEIVE A GLORIOUS INHERITANCE.**

### **Prophecy.**

The fifth stanza describes God’s reward for the Messiah and his ultimate glory. In verse 10 the prophet speaks, not as the representative of the believers in the nation (as a priest), but as one who proclaims God’s plan of salvation (as a prophet). In verse 11 and 12 the LORD himself speaks.

### **1. Verse 10 describes his suffering as a substitution and his resurrection as part of God’s plan.**

**53:10.** Translation: “Yet it pleased (Hebrew: chpts, Q) the LORD to crush him (Hebrew: dk<, Ni); He made him sick (Hebrew: chlh, Hi); when he (the Messiah) has made (Hebrew: sim, Q) his soul (Hebrew: nefesh) (to be) a guilt offering (Hebrew: <asham), he will see (Hebrew: r<ah, Q) seed/offspring (Hebrew: zer>a); he will lengthen (Hebrew: <arak, Hi) days; and the delight/pleasure/desire /wish (Hebrew: chefets) of the LORD will prosper in his hand (Hebrew: tsleh, Q).”

Verse 10 describes the completed salvation work of the Messiah. His death and resurrection were a part of God’s eternal plan.

### **The question why the Messiah had to suffer.**

The question is why did the Messiah have to suffer when he was innocent? The answer is that God’s extraordinary plan of salvation would be fulfilled in this way! The suffering of the Messiah was an integral part of God’s salvation plan (1 Peter 1:19-20). Jesus Christ *had* to die (Luke 24:26; Matthew 26:54), because this was the only way in which atonement for sins could be made and because the revelation in the Scriptures about this had to be fulfilled! “It pleased the LORD to crush him”. Behind human injustice (in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ) lies God’s hidden plan of salvation (see also verse 5-6)! The guilt offering is the substitution punishment for sin (Leviticus 4:2,4,15,24,29). “The Messiah must first make his soul (his person, himself, his life) a guilt offering”. The guilt offering brings satisfaction to God’s violated justice (Leviticus 5:15-17; Leviticus 6:2-3). The Old Testament substitution offerings were compulsory, but the personal guilt offering of the Messiah was completely voluntary. This was unthinkable among people!

- On the level of human history Jesus Christ died due to the unjust condemnation of worldly judges.
- But on the level of God’s history of salvation he died due to the perfectly just condemnation of the sin of the world by the Judge, God himself!

His sacrifice of atonement had three results:

- First, he (the Messiah) would see seed/offspring, that is, “spiritual offspring”, “the many people he would justify” (verse 11) and bless (see Genesis 12:3).
- Second, “He would lengthen his days”, that is, he would live forever after his resurrection from the dead (see Revelation 1:18)! This is remarkable, because very little is written in the Old Testament about the resurrection of the dead (cf. Isaiah 26:19).
- Third, the Messiah would have a great task after his death and resurrection. “The LORD’s pleasure/wish would prosper in his hand.” “The pleasure/wish of the LORD is the deepest reason for his suffering (verse 10a), but at the same time the deepest reason for his marvellous future (verse 10b)! This future is described in verse 11. In his hand, that is, through his means (sovereign power, wisdom and love) God’s plan of salvation would progress continually! Through his death and resurrection Jesus Christ would multiply his spiritual offspring/descendants destined for eternal life (see John 12:32).

### **2. Verse 11 describes his work as God’s High Priest justifying the many after his resurrection.**

**53:11.** Translation: “Due to the exertion/suffering (Hebrew: >amal) of his soul he will see (Qumran adds: the light of life) and be satisfied (Hebrew: sabe>a, Q); by the knowledge of him (Hebrew: da>at) he (that is) my Righteous Servant (Hebrew: tsadiq abdo) will justify (Hebrew: tsdq, Pi) the many (Hebrew: rabim); and their iniquities he will bear (Hebrew: sbl, Q).

Verse 11 describes the continuing work of salvation of the Messiah. The LORD is the One speaking in verse 11-12. The suffering of the Messiah would not only affect his body, but also his soul (entire being) (He would be crushed and made sick). The Messiah would see the fruit of his suffering and work of salvation and that would satisfy and refresh him.

The text does not speak about “the knowledge *about* the Messiah”, but rather about “the knowledge *of* the Messiah” By means of his spiritual “knowledge” of God and God’s revelation (plan of salvation) (cf. Hosea 4:6; Malachi 2:7; Isaiah 11:2; Isaiah 50:4, his prophetic office) the Messiah would justify many people.

The Messiah would be the Servant of the LORD (“My Servant”) and through his life, words and deeds he would carry out the will of God. Although the unrighteous judges in the world would judge him to be “unrighteous”, the LORD calls him explicitly “the Righteous One”. He would sentence “the godless” in the land of Israel and on the whole earth with perfect righteousness, but “do what is right” to “the poor in spirit” (Isaiah 11:4-5)!

The righteousness of the Messiah would be the ground why he would justify “the many”, that is, “the great mass or number of people, God’s people (cf. Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:33; Daniel 12:3; Romans 5:19)! “The many” is to be understood as a comparison: in contrast to the One (the Messiah) there is the many, (a great crowd which no one can count) (Revelation 7:9). “Just as through the disobedience of the one man (Adam), the many (all people) were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man (Jesus Christ) the many (all believers in Christ) will be made righteous” (Romans 5:19).

Because “he will bear their iniquities”. Only the Messiah would bear the iniquities of “the many”! The deepest ground for the justification of the many is the substitution suffering of the Messiah (the Servant of the LORD). Outside Jesus Christ there is no salvation and also no Way back to God (Luke 10:16; John 14:6; Acts 4:12)!

- Verse 11 speaks about his prophetic office (the knowledge of the Messiah that God reveals)
- and his priestly office (the sacrifice of the Messiah that carries away iniquities).
- Verse 12 speaks about his royal office (the spoils consists of an uncountable crowd of believers in Christ).

### **3. Verse 12 describes his reward from God for his substitution suffering, namely: “the many” people he would justify.**

**53:12.** Translation: “Therefore (Hebrew: laken) I will give him a portion (Hebrew: chlq) of the many/the great/the powerful (Hebrew: >atsum); and the numerous/ the mighty ones (Hebrew: <atsum) as spoils (booty, loot) (Hebrew: shalal) he will receive as his share (Hebrew: chlq), because (Hebrew: tachat <asher) he poured out (Hebrew: >rah, Ni) his soul/life in death and with transgressors (criminals) he was numbered (Hebrew: mnh, Ni), and the sins (Hebrew: chet<a) of many he bore (Hebrew: ns<a, Pi) and for the transgressors he prayed (Hebrew: pg>, Hi).”

Verse 12 describes the inheritance of the Messiah that consists of the many saved people.

The texts does not say that he would divide/share the spoils with the many (the powerful/ mighty ones), because he cannot be put on a par with “the mighty ones” (in the world). The object is “the many” and the verb in the Qal form means “to receive as his share” (as in Job 27:17). The text does not intend to say that the Messiah would only receive a part of the many as his inheritance, but on the contrary that he would receive “the many” as a whole as his inheritance (see Romans 5:19)! Because the Messiah would bear the iniquities of “the many” and in this way justify “the many” (verse 11), the LORD would give him “the many” as spoils (bounty, loot) as his possession (inheritance, reward)!

His substitution suffering would be the reason of his exaltation! He would pour out his ‘soul’ (life and life blood) (Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:11), he would be numbered among the transgressors (criminals) (Luke 22:37) and he would even pray for these “transgressors”, the people who would kill him (Luke 23:34).

#### **Fulfilment.**

Through his death and resurrection Jesus Christ began to multiply his spiritual offspring (John 12:24,32).

- Although Jesus Christ according to his divine nature lives forever and never dies: “I am the living One forever” (Revelation 1:18),
- according to his human nature he died and was resurrected. After his resurrection from the dead, his human nature now also lives forever.

Through Jesus Christ God fulfils his eternal plan in creation and in the recreation or renewal of all things (Ephesians 1:9-10).

- Because only Jesus Christ is “the Righteous One” who has fulfilled the whole law (the righteous requirement) of God (cf. Matthew 5:17; Romans 10:4),
- only he can justify “the many” who “have received God’s abundant provision of grace and the gift of righteousness” (Romans 5:17-19)!

The Messiah, Jesus Christ was numbered among the transgressors (criminals) (Luke 22:37) en voluntarily poured out his life (John 10:11,18). He has become the Great Patriarch who really inherits all God’s promises (cf. 2 Corinthians 1:20)! He is “the root” (“the seed” of the patriarchs) (Genesis 22:17-18; Galatians 3:16) of “the olive tree” (the people of God who consists of believers from all nations) (Romans 11:17-18). He has become the strong King, who justified “the many” who are now the citizens of his kingdom (cf. Revelation 1:5-6; 5:9-10). All people, whom he justifies,

belong to him. He has become the Great Mediator and High Priest who not only prays for the ones who killed him (Luke 22:34), but also prays for us (his children, his citizens) (John 17:20; Hebrews 7:25).

Isaiah 53 is most clearly quoted in the New Testament in Acts 8:28-35 and 1 Peter 2:22-25. But also compare Matthew 20:28 with Isaiah 53:10 and John 1:29 with Isaiah 53:4,7. The Messiah, Jesus Christ, had to enter into his glory through suffering (Luke 18:31-33; Luke 24:25-27). Although in Isaiah 49:3 “the servant of the LORD” is pictured as “the true Israel” (as if the prophet is speaking about the suffering of the nation of Israel), it cannot literally refer to the nation of Israel, the Servant of the LORD is constantly contrasted with the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel is godless. It despised and rejected the Messiah, even though he is perfectly innocent! The figure of the Servant of the LORD surpasses everything that was ever witnessed within Israel! He is the One who would save Israel from sin and guilt, the Mediator of God’s plan of salvation!