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Isaiah 53:1-12

1. “Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
2. For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.
3. He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face. He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.
4. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.
5. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.
6. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.
7. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not

open His mouth.

8. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?

9. His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death, because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

10. But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.

11. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities.

12. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors.”

What is incredible about this chapter of Scripture is that it was written about 700 years before Jesus went to the cross to bear our sins and so intercede before God for transgressors.

Many worldly critics through the ages have sought to down-play the fact that this Scripture was written many

centuries before Christ came to earth, because it is so clear that only God could have known so many details beforehand. Their main argument was that it had been orally handed down through the ages, so the text was slowly changed over the centuries until just recently.

In the first half of the 1900's, the secular humanist critics of the Bible claimed that Isaiah, or at least this portion of Isaiah, was written after Jesus died on the cross.

God silenced all such criticism with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947. These scrolls were written down beginning about 100 years before Christ, by a group of Jews known as "the essenes".

These people left Jerusalem about 100 B.C.-- disassociating themselves from the rest of the Jews and lived in seclusion near the Dead Sea. The essenes were very zealous for the word of God and produced copies of all the books of the Old Testament except Esther. They hid their settlement of Qumran before the Roman army wiped them all out in 80-100 A.D. There the scrolls lay undisturbed for 2000 years.

When accidentally discovered in 1947, the scrolls revealed that our copies of the Old Testament Scriptures are over 99.8 % accurate! They are some of the oldest copies of the Scriptures in the original Hebrew, and the Isaiah scrolls were amongst the best preserved of all the parchments. Isaiah chapter 53 was undoubtedly written as we have it today word for word--before Christ was

even born.

Jesus going to the cross to redeem mankind was the design of God before the foundation of the world. And God had written down irrefutable evidence of His pre-conceived plan in great detail for us long before Jesus went to the cross. This is referred to in Hebrews 9:26 as the “consummation of the ages”. Hallelujah, what a Savior.