

By His Wounds, A study of Isaiah 53
The Lonely, Cast Off Jesus, Isaiah 53:9-10
Exegetical and Supplementary Notes
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Notes are gleaned from a number of sources, one most notably, Concordia Commentary, Isaiah 40-55, by Reed Lessing.

Introduction and text: Isaiah 53:9-10

Isaiah 53:9-10 describes The Suffering Servant as one who is lonely, cast off, and as one who grieves. The Suffering Servant is buried with the wicked and in a rich man's tomb (cf. Matthew 27:57ff, Mark 15:43, Luke 23:50ff, and John 19:38). It was God's divine will that Jesus, the Suffering Servant, would be crushed and *put* to grief. The Father ***socially distances*** Himself from His Son who is steeped in Sin. Jesus, the Suffering Servant, is the Guilt Offering for all people (cf. Leviticus 5 -6). And by His Wounds we are healed.

Isaiah 53:9-10 reads, **And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.**

The prophet Isaiah begins by saying, "They made His grave among the wicked."

Who is this "They?"

Is it the Roman Soldiers who pound the nails? Is it Caiaphas, the High Priest or Herod? Is it Pontius Pilate or Judas? Is it Peter or Thomas or one of the other disciples? Is it the angry crowd who cry out, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" – or some combination of all of them? Who is They?

Yet, The Suffering Servant is not just buried among the wicked. He is also buried in the grave of the rich.

Had he not been buried the Suffering Servant would have been exposed to the elements, the curse of people passing by, and the defilement and devouring of birds and animals.

Jeremiah 16:4 states, “⁴ They shall die of deadly diseases. They shall not be lamented, nor shall they be buried. They shall be as dung on the surface of the ground. They shall perish by the sword and by famine, and their dead bodies shall be food for the birds of the air and for the beasts of the earth” (cf. Jeremiah 25:33).

The Suffering Servant is buried among the cast off and alone. He is forsaken in death. He suffers every insult and indignation.

But here, in this subtle, kind fulfillment of Scripture, The Suffering Servant, **God’s Messiah**, is spared the greater insult. Birds and others will not defile His corpse. Jesus, God’s Son, will not be treated as ***dung upon the ground*** (emphasis added).

John 19:30 declares that the atoning work of Christ is complete and accomplished upon Calvary. The Suffering Servant breathes His last and whispers, ***tetelestai (Greek) – “It is finished!”*** The humiliation of Christ is now complete. God’s plan of atonement and redemption are fulfilled in the death of God’s Son, the Suffering Servant. When God the Father turns His back upon the Son, the debt of sin is paid in full. Atonement is complete. There is no further insult and dishonor demanded.

God, who in anger turns His back upon the Suffering Servant, will not tolerate the dishonor of His Son’s body. **Psalm 16, 9-10** says, “Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. ¹⁰ For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.”

For all that the Suffering Servant has suffered, His soul and entire being rejoices and is glad. His flesh, while destroyed, dwells secure. God, the Sovereign Judge Supreme, will not abandon the soul of His Son to **Sheol**, nor will the Holy One, Jesus, see corruption.

Jesus was **buried**. The Suffering Servant experiences every extreme of suffering and sin. But when mankind and custom would have dishonored the body of Jesus, God the Father ensures that the body of His Son is laid honorably to rest, even if it is among the wicked.

Where else would Jesus had been buried but with the wicked? All of mankind is wicked.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus go to Pontius Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus, the Suffering Servant. Scripture is fulfilled through these humble players in God's Divine Passion Play. And Jesus becomes poor for our sakes, as **2 Corinthians 8:9** states, "9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor."

The Suffering Servant is buried in the borrowed tomb of one who is rich. The entombment begins Jesus' state of Exaltation, which then continues with His victorious descent into hell, His bodily resurrection, and finally His ascension.

John 19:38-41 recounts, "**38** After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. **39** Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. **40** So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. **41** Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid [cf. Matthew 27:60, which reveals that this was Joseph of Arimathea's tomb].

We had begun by asking, “Who is the ‘They’ who made his grave with the wicked? We inquired if it was the Roman Soldiers, or Caiaphas, or Herod, or Pontius Pilate, or Judas and the other disciples, or the angry crowd? Or was it one of us? Or all of us?”

Each of us who sin play a role in the lonely death of the Suffering Servant. Peter, in **Acts 2:36**, exclaims, “³⁶ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

But also note the Hand of the Sovereign Lord and His place in the Suffering Servant’s crucifixion. Isaiah 53:10 states clearly, “**It was the Will of the Lord to crush Him. It is the Lord who puts Him to grief. When His soul makes an offering for guilt.**”

It is not by accident that the Suffering Servant is cast off. He is discarded. He is abandoned and alone. Yet, simultaneously, it is the sinful act of mankind and the pure will of God that contribute to the death of the sinless Lamb of God. As Abraham had once declared, “The Lord Himself will provide the Lamb for Sacrifice” (**Genesis 22:8**).

This does not absolve anyone of the responsibility and culpability of Christ’s suffering and death. But mankind is never in control. This “They” who make Jesus’ grave with the wicked are only doing what the Lord allows them to do.

Reed Lessing writes, “Yahweh formulated His plan even before the creation of the world. He foresaw the birth of Judas and his betrayal of the Servant. He created the iron ore that would be smelted into the nails that pierce the Servant’s flesh. He orchestrated the world empires and the government affairs that would lead to Pilate to Judea, Caiaphas to Jerusalem, and the crowds to cry out, “Crucify Him. Crucify Him” (John 19:6, 15). [Lessing, Isaiah 40-55, CPH, St. Louis, 2011, p. 620]

The Book of Leviticus details for us the Old Covenant Worship System and the sacrificial offerings that were to be made to appease God for the sins of

His people. There were five sacrifices, or offerings -- *the burnt offering, the grain offering, the peace offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering*. Three of these offerings relate in particular to sin and its effects. Jesus fulfills three types of the Old Testament covenant and the sin-sacrifices – *the burnt offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering*. We can give attention to the burnt offering and the sin offering in another study. But here, let us focus upon the guilt offering.

The guilt offering in **Leviticus 5:14-6:7** focuses upon the need for *payment*. This offering is sometimes referred to as the **reparation offering** because it highlights the need for payment when wrong has been done. Recall how in Luke 19:1-10 Zacchaeus the tax collector was forgiven of his sins by Jesus. Yet Zacchaeus still recognized the need to make restitution to those he had wronged.

In the Old Testament worship and sacrifice system, forgiveness was dependent upon the worshiper making amends, and the sacrificial animal was viewed as a restitution. The idea is that it's not just enough to be forgiven. We need to make things right with God—which try as we might, we cannot do; no one can.

Jesus, the Suffering Servant, is not only sacrificed for our forgiveness and cleansing (burnt offering and sin offering). Jesus is also sacrificed to satisfy our debt and obligation. Let us read **Leviticus 5:14-6:7**. It is lengthy, but clearly worth the read to understand the debt Jesus satisfies for us:

¹⁴ The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁵ "If anyone commits a breach of faith and sins unintentionally in any of the holy things of the LORD, he shall bring to the LORD as his compensation, a ram without blemish out of the flock, valued in silver shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, for a guilt offering. ¹⁶ He shall also make restitution for what he has done amiss in the holy thing and shall add a fifth to it and give it to the priest. And the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering, and he shall be forgiven. ¹⁷ "If anyone sins, doing any of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done, though he did not know it, then realizes his guilt, he shall bear his iniquity. ¹⁸ He shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish out of the flock, or its

equivalent, for a guilt offering, and the priest shall make atonement for him for the mistake that he made unintentionally, and he shall be forgiven. ¹⁹ It is a guilt offering; he has indeed incurred guilt before the LORD.” [ch. 6] The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “If anyone sins and commits a breach of faith against the LORD by deceiving his neighbor in a matter of deposit or security, or through robbery, or if he has oppressed his neighbor ³ or has found something lost and lied about it, swearing falsely—in any of all the things that people do and sin thereby— ⁴ if he has sinned and has realized his guilt and will restore what he took by robbery or what he got by oppression or the deposit that was committed to him or the lost thing that he found ⁵ or anything about which he has sworn falsely, he shall restore it in full and shall add a fifth to it, and give it to him to whom it belongs on the day he realizes his guilt. ⁶ And he shall bring to the priest as his compensation to the LORD a ram without blemish out of the flock, or its equivalent, for a guilt offering. ⁷ And the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD, and he shall be forgiven for any of the things that one may do and thereby become guilty.”

Ignorance is not Innocence. Even if a person does not know he sins, or sins unintentionally, the **effects of sin** are just the same and equally offensive to God. To say “I did not mean to do it” or “It happened by accident” does not provide satisfaction. We are guilty of sin and wrong. There is a debt that is owed to God.

God sent his Son to be not only our perfect burnt and sin offering, but also our perfect guilt offering. Isaiah the prophet said of Jesus, “Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; *when his soul makes an offering for guilt*, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days...”, **Isaiah 53:10**.

Jesus is cast off, forsaken, and alone for us. He is our sin offering and our burnt offering. Jesus is our guilt offering. He pays the debt we cannot. And by His wounds we are healed.