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## Selected Scriptures

# The Miracle of Old Testament Prophecies

## Miracle #7 - The Prophetic Word of God

### Introduction

It would be impossible to exhaust the list of prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament. Two times in Luke 24 the Bible tells us of the extensive list of prophecies in the Old Testament concerning all aspects of Jesus' life. Two disciples on the road to Emmaus were on their way home talking about the exciting and amazing events of the first Easter. Suddenly Jesus appeared and walked with them. They invited him to come to their home to eat with them. As He took the bread, blessed it and broke it their eyes were opened and they recognized who He was and He vanished from them, Lk 24:30-31. They returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven remaining disciples who had been with Jesus. They told them the story and Jesus appeared to the eleven plus the two disciples of Emmaus, 24:33-36. It is John who tells us that they were in a locked room meeting to discuss the events of the first Easter, John 20:19-23.

Below you will find a list of twenty representative examples of Old Testament prophecies related to the betrayal and the events leading up to the crucifixion. The two most remarkable prophecies are Psalm 22, the Psalm of the Cross and Isaiah's song of the Suffering Servant. It is incredible when you think of it. David, 1000 years before Christ so clearly and specifically presents the events of the cross of Calvary in Psalm 22. Isaiah, more than 700 years before Christ, described the character of the Suffering Servant. So clear is this dramatic and moving chapter that orthodox Jews will not read it. They place a black marker on the chapter and won't look at it because it so obviously applies to Jesus.

### Selected Old Testament Scriptures

1. Betrayed by Judas, Ps 41:9; Ps 55:12-14 - fulfilled in Matt 26:47-56; Jn 13:18, 21.
2. Sold for Thirty Pieces of Silver, Zech 11:12-13 - fulfilled in Matt 26:15-16; 27:3-10.

3. Forsaken by His Disciples, Zech 13:7 - fulfilled in Matt 26:56.
4. Accused by False Witnesses, Ps 35:11; 109:2 - fulfilled in Matt 26:59-60
5. Jesus silent before His Accusers, Ps 38:13; 39:2; Isa 53:7 - fulfilled in Matt 27:14; 1 Pet 2:23
6. Beaten and Mocked by the Masses, Micah 5:1; Isa 50:6; Isa 52:14; 53:35 - fulfilled in Matt 26:67-68; Lk 22:64
7. Ridiculed by Those Passing, Ps 22:7-8, 13; 109:25; Isa 52:13-14 - fulfilled in Matt 27:39; Lk 23:35
8. His Hands and Feet Pierced, Ps 22:16 - fulfilled in Jn 20:25-29
9. Crucified between Two Thieves, Isa 53:9,12 - fulfilled in Mk 15:27-28; Lk 22:37; 23:39-43
10. He Prayed for His Executioners, Ps 109:4; Isa 53:12 - fulfilled in Lk 23:34
11. Lots Cast for His Garments, Ps 22:18 - fulfilled in Jn 19:23-24
12. Forsaken by God the Father Ps 22:1 - fulfilled in Matt 27:46
13. Cried out in Thirst for Water, Ps 22:15; Ps 69:3, 21 - fulfilled in Jn 19:28; Matt 27:34, 48
14. Commended His Spirit to God, Ps 22:20; 31:5 - fulfilled in Matt 27:43; Lk 23:46
15. Disciples Witnessed Cross from Afar, Ps 38:11; 88:8; Isa 63:3 - fulfilled in Lk 23:49
16. No Bones of Jesus Broken, Exod 12:6; Num 9:12; Ps 34:8; 51:8 - fulfilled in John 19:36.
17. Jesus' Side Was Pierced, Ps 22:16; Zech 12:10; 13:6-7 - fulfilled in Jn 19:34; 20:25-27; Rev 1:7
18. Jesus Was Covered in Darkness, Ps 22:2; Amos 8:9 - fulfilled in Matt 27:45
19. He Was Buried with the Rich, Isa 53:9 - fulfilled in Matt 27:57-61

20. He Died as Our Substitute, Isa 53:5-6, 10 – fulfilled in Matt 27:45-50, 54; Heb 9:11-14, 28; 10:9-10

**Psalm 22 The Psalm of the Cross** – God promised to save the Messianic king in Psalm 20:1-9. God provided assurance Messiah of a victory over His enemies in Psalm 21:1-13. He presented the Messiah as the suffering Savior on the cross in Psalm 22:1-31. Psalm 22 is highly prophetic and many of the words in it echo from the lips of Jesus on the cross. Psalm 22:1 is found in Mt 27:46; 22:7 in Mt 27:39; 22:8 in Mt. 27:43; 22:15 in Jn 19:28; 22:16 in Mt 27:35; Jn 19:23-25, 37; 22:17 in Mt 27:39; 22:18 in Lk 23:34; 22:21 in 2 Tim 4:17; 22:22 in Heb 2:12; 22:24 in Heb 5:7; 22:31 in Mt 28:18-20. Psalm 22 presents the unparalleled suffering of Christ on the cross and his final triumph over death and the grave.

**Psalm 118:1-29** – In this Messianic Psalm the Messiah who puts His trust in God, 118:1-9. He is delivered by God, 118:10-21; and He survives death to become the chief cornerstone (cf. 1 Pet 2:6-8; Mt 21:42-44; Acts 4:11).

### **Isaiah 52:12 to 53:13 – The Suffering Servant**

God promised that His Servant would suffer and die for the sins of others and that He ultimately would be triumphant. If you would have been a Jew in Jesus day you probably would have been disappointed to learn that He was the Messiah. This was because the expectation of the Jewish world was not one of a suffering servant, but a powerful military genius. The Jews wanted a political messiah who would free them from the bondage of Rome. They hoped for a strong leader who would rally everyone to throw off the yoke of Roman imperialism.

Jesus came from a humble family whose only claim to fame was that they were of the house and lineage of David. They were distant ancestors of King David who had no wealth, fame, or power. Jesus had no military or political aspirations. He sought neither fame nor fortune and apparently was of ordinary physical appearance.

Isaiah presented the Suffering Servant by introducing several servant themes in this wonderful passage called the Song of the Suffering Servant. Its context in Isaiah 52:1-12 speaks of the coming redemption of Jerusalem. It opens with a picture of Jerusalem coming forth from their bondage, 52:1-6. God will rescue them out of Babylon and He uses the reminder of the release from Egypt. Second, their release from Egypt and Babylon is a foretaste of the ultimate release from bondage of sin, 52:7-12. With this as his background God

introduces the Suffering Servant who will accomplish this release from sin's bondage. There are four themes in this passage from 52:13-53:12.

1. **The Servant's Humility, and Willingness to Suffer, 52:13-53:3.**

"Who has believed our report..." The statement anticipates a negative answer for no one would believe the message. Because the secular world is so charisma conscious it usually fails to recognize spiritual qualities as the most dynamic trait for producing success. The servant was a model of humility and because of that He shall "prosper." The word translated "deal prudently" literally means "to prosper," v. 13. That prosperity will come through His suffering; suffering so severe that his "visage" or appearance was hardly recognizable, v. 14. Just as His appearance will startle those who see it, so He shall "startle" many nations, v. 15a. The word translated "sprinkle," literally is "to startle." His life will be a revelation that will "shut" the mouths of Kings, v. 15b. He will reveal things that they have never heard and consider His words, v. 15c.

The "shoot" and "root" images echo the Servant's identity as the branch of the Lord which was the subject of the lesson on 11:1-10 where He was a "shoot" of the royal house of David. As used here the "shoot" and "root" also suggest the idea that the Servant will rise, as did David, from insignificance. Even David's father seemed surprised when Samuel chose him as king (1 Sam. 16:11). Likewise, no one would have suspected that the son of Joseph the simple carpenter of Nazareth was in fact the savior of all people (Matt. 13:53-58, esp. v. 55).

Lepers and diseased people were outcast from the community who lived in isolation from family, friends and associates. "Sorrow" is a word that includes physical and mental distress. The phrase could be translated "a man of pains." "Familiar with suffering," literally means "one who knows disease and suffering by personal experience." The suffering of the Servant isolated him from the community. People hid their faces from him so they would not see his repulsive condition. He was despised, and we esteemed him not- This is the second use of the word "despised" in this verse. It adds emphasis to the alienation of the servant. Because he was despised "we" meaning the community, the Jewish nation rejected him. The phrase "esteemed him not" literally means they "held him of no account."

2. **The Servant's Compassion and Substitutionary Atonement, 53:4-6.**

"Surely" is a strong adversative which means "but in fact." The Servant was despised and rejected, "but in fact" he was indeed the savior of all people.

He bore no guilt or penalty of his own but bore our "infirmities," a word that is used to describe a wide variety of ailments. Perhaps for this reason Matthew 8:17 quoted Isaiah 53:4 and applied it to Jesus healing of many who were sick, including the mother-in-law of Peter (Matt. 8:14-17).

Jesus experienced the depth of human suffering. He was the object of human cruelty at its worst. But He wasn't punished for His own wrong but for ours. He was "wounded for **our** transgression," and "bruised for **our** iniquities," and chastened for **our** sins, vv. 5-6. The word "bruised" in verse 5 also is found in verse 10 and it literally means "crushed." The last part of verse 3 through the end of verse 6 contains ten plural pronouns that refer what Jesus did for "us," "our sin," because of sins "we" done. These emphasize the truth of Jesus substitutionary atonement for us. All of the suffering of the cross of Calvary was on "our" behalf.

Verse 6 begins and ends with the same Hebrew word translated "we all" and "us all." Between the two words is a fourfold description of what sin has done to the human family.

First, sin is universal, "all we" have sinned. This is the Romans 3:23 of the Old Testament. Second, sin is senseless. We sinners have behaved "like sheep" without a shepherd. Sheep are notoriously inept without external watch care (see Jesus' parable of the lost sheep, Lk. 15:3-7). People are like sheep; they easily wander from the will of God and stray into sin. Third, sin brings separation, "have gone astray." It separates a person from God and places them in enmity with other people. Fourth, sin is stubbornness. "Each of us has turned to his own way." Sin is self will over ruling God's will in our lives.

### **3. The Servant's Silent Agony, 53:7-9**

These verses continue the description of His suffering, His death, and His burial. He suffered in silence, like a lamb taken to the slaughter. He refused to answer his accusers, Pilate, and Herod, Matt 27:12-14; Lk 23:9. Think of it, the superintendent of creation, Col 1:15-18, suffered cruelty beyond our comprehension at the hands of human adversaries and He did it all for you and for me! He was offered "once for all" for all humanity, for all time, Heb 9:28; 10:9-10. He did it without murmur, complaint, blame, or spirit of retribution. Peter in writing his epistle, 1 Peter 2:22, quotes 53:9 to encourage believers not to complain when called upon to suffer at the hands of persecutors.

A sheep headed for slaughter or shearing never complains because it does not comprehend its doom. Just so Jesus, the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29, 36) suffered without complaint, even though he knew that what lay ahead would

bring salvation to all people. In Acts 8:32-35, Philip used Isaiah 53:7-8 to witness to the Ethiopian eunuch. He applied the passage to Jesus and shared how salvation was made available to all people through His atoning death.

#### **4. The Servants Successful Acclaim, 53:10-12**

He gave everything in order to accomplish His assignment. His life was "poured out" like an offering or sacrifice (v.12). Likewise, he was "numbered with the transgressors." Since he was numbered or counted as one of them He was qualified to intercede for them. The last two lines of verse 12 offer a summary of everything the Servant has done. He was numbered with the transgressors and forfeited His life. "Yet he bore the sin..." and thus worked the vicarious atonement for all people. He also made intercession for the transgressors. The word "intercession" is translated "laid" in verse 6 and suggests violent killing. The same word also means "to make entreaty" (Jer. 36:25), "to intervene" (Isa. 59:16). Because He was "killed" (v 6) as our sacrifice, He was numbered with transgressors and he lives forever to make intercession for sinners (Heb. 7:25).

But the sufferings of Jesus are not the last chapter and not the last word. Because of the death of Christ many people have been and will be justified and placed in right standing before God. "By His knowledge," means that He knew what He was doing and what it would take to solve the human problem of sin by "bearing" our iniquities. He knew what He had to do and was committed to do it, John 3:16. In his sermon at Pentecost Peter said, "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," Acts 2:23-24. Thus Jesus achieved a great victory and established His name and the name of His heavenly Father forever, 53:12.

Herbert M. Wolfe in his wonderful commentary entitled, *Interpreting Isaiah*, closes his discussion of 52:13 to 53:12 this way:

In verse 12 the work of the Servant is explained as a great victory. When Christ prevailed in death, He triumphed over Satan and earned the spoils of a victor. What seemed like a pitiful display of weakness turned out to be a victory of massive proportions. The penalty for sin was paid, and transgressors could be at peace with God. The term "made intercession" is a translation of the same Hebrew word that is rendered "laid on Him" in verse 6. The most effective way of interceding for sinners was to be their substitute. Because of

His vicarious death, Christ always lives to intercede for believers (Heb 7:25).

### **Conclusion**

It is hard to believe that anyone would be willing to pay for the sins of another. Yet the good news of the Gospel is that Jesus did just that. He voluntarily suffered and died to be our sin offering.

1. Things are not always what they appear to be. Jesus the Servant was lowly and subservient. He had no popular acclaim, yet He accomplished God's redemptive purpose for all people, 53:1-3; 1 Pet. 2:4.
2. Jesus was our substitutionary sacrifice. He took our punishment and provided spiritual healing by His physical wounds, 53:4-6; 1 Pet. 2:22-24.
3. Jesus suffered without complaint or protest. He voluntarily chose to die for all people everywhere, 53:7; Matt. 27:12-14.
4. Jesus was vindicated by the resurrection. Because of His victory all those who commit their lives to Him by faith are justified. The faithful will also one day be exalted with Him, 53:11-12; Rom. 3:21-26.