

Isaiah

God's Servant Paid the Penalty for Sin
Isaiah 53:4-5

1



Introduction

52:12–53:12 is the last of our Servant Songs. In this passage we will see that Savior of the world is seen suffering for the sins of the human race. Our verses today speak of Jesus taking the punishment for our sin.

2



Introduction

Remember that this prophecy was given more than seven hundred years before Christ came to earth. Yet note the **guarantee** God gives concerning the coming of the Messiah. Although He was speaking about a future event, He spoke in the **past tense**, as though the event had already taken place. Being omniscient and eternal, God naturally saw into the future. Therefore He could speak in the past tense, guaranteeing that His prophecy would be fulfilled. His Servant, the Savior, would definitely come and He would pay the ultimate penalty for sin.

3



Isaiah 53:4-5

Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ 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.

4



Isaiah 53:4

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Note the word **surely**. A sharp contrast is being drawn between Jesus bearing our sins and the unbelief, hostility, and rejection of the Messiah mentioned in verse 3. The thought here is, “Surely He bore the grief and sorrow due our flesh, the penalty for our sins.” No matter what people may think or believe, the fact is that Christ suffered and paid the ultimate penalty for our sins.

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Many in Christ’s day felt that Jesus was justly **executed as a criminal**. They thought He was being executed for His own sins, for having broken the law of both God and man. Various religionists believed that **His sufferings in life** and on the cross were due to His sins and were proof that the hand of God’s judgment was upon Him. In their minds, Christ was being “stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.”

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He was “smitten by God, and afflicted,” but **not for His own sins**. God put His Son to death for the sins of the world, including the sins of His enemies, the very ones who were rejecting and crucifying Him.

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It was for our sins that God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. When Christ came to earth, He bore all of our grief (**sickness**) and sorrow (**pain**), our infirmities and weaknesses—not only on the cross, but also throughout His entire life. **Daily, Christ bore the penalty for our sin, suffering on our behalf, identifying with us, and experiencing all the trials and temptations of life that continually confront us.**

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The apostle Matthew even says that Christ's bearing our infirmities and sorrows applies to His healing ministry.

Matthew 8:16–17
When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, ¹⁷ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: **“He Himself took our infirmities and bore *our* sicknesses.”**

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Matthew 20:28 states that **“the Son of man came not to be served to, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many”**. This verse summed up the entire ministry of Christ.

1. **Christ came to minister to us**, identifying with our grief and sorrow, our infirmities and weaknesses. Throughout His life, He experienced the suffering, the trials, and the temptations that we face.

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2. He came to give His life as a ransom for us. He gave Himself up to pay for our sin so that we might be set free from sin and death and be given the wonderful privilege of worshipping and living with God eternally.

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Isaiah 53:5

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.

Jesus died for us all. **We deserve to pay the penalty for sin,** for we are the ones who have broken the law, both of man and of God. We have broken the spirit of the Ten Commandments. **We stand accused before God.** He has pronounced the guilty verdict and the sentence is spiritual death, eternal separation from Him. **But here is the Good News:** God has not executed judgment upon us. He executed His judgment upon Christ. It was Christ who died to pay the penalty for our sins.

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Note the emphasis throughout these verses: God's Servant, the Savior Jesus Christ, died for our **transgressions** and **iniquities**. **Transgressions** (*tesha*) are acts that cross over a line drawn by God. To transgress means to revolt, rebel, rise up against, reject God. It means violating or ignoring a posting of **No Trespassing** on a piece of property. A transgressor deliberately disregards the warning, and **chooses** to sin

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Iniquity (*adown*, or *awon*) means the perverse, crooked, moral evil that lies within the human heart and nature, which means that we are sinners *by nature*. We are sinners both **by choice** and **by nature**. Simply stated, Christ died for all our transgressions, for our *sinful nature* as well as for the sins we choose to commit day by day.

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Note the word **wounded**, it carries the idea of being **pierced**. Christ was wounded for us on the cross when His hands and feet were pierced by nails (Ps. 22:16; Lu. 24:39–40) and when a spear was thrust into His side (Jn. 19:31–37; Re. 1:7; Zec. 12:10). Also note the word **bruised**, which means **crushed**. It was the heavy weight of our sins that crushed the very life out of Christ.

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Jesus died to provide **peace** and **healing** for us. Sin contaminates God's presence and separates us from God. Because God is holy and perfect, He can have nothing to do with sin. Consequently, a great barrier or gulf separates sinful people from God. And no one can climb the barrier or bridge the gulf, for a sinner is unacceptable to God. God loves the sinner, but He hates the sin.

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God hates sin ...

⇒ because it is sin that has brought so much brutality, wickedness, and death into the world

⇒ because it is sin that alienates man from God, putting hostility between them and making them enemies. It is this *alienation* that causes some people to curse God and His Son Jesus Christ and others to deny or defy God.

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It was for this reason that God sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world. Christ came to **make peace** between God and man. By giving His Son to die for the sins of the world, God demonstrated **His great love** for people. By dying on the cross, Christ **provided the way** for people to be reconciled with God. Peace with God is possible. If people will turn from their sins and approach God through Christ, believing that Christ died for their sins, God will accept them.

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No longer does God have to seem far away, unconcerned, and out of touch. No longer does the barrier of separation have to exist between God and us. Through Christ we can be reconciled to God and have peace. Christ forgives our sin and saves us from the coming judgment that will fall upon all the enemies and rejecters of God. Rejoice in this statement “By His stripes we are healed”—spiritually healed.

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So What ...

What about you?

Have you accepted God’s Gift of Salvation?

For the believer, do not take God’s grace, mercy, and forgiveness for granted. It was purchased for us but at a great price. Since Jesus suffered so much for us, let us commit ourselves to live holy for Him.

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