

The Doctrine of Christ

WHAT DID JESUS DO?

Clearly, the cross is what separates the Christ of Christianity from every other Jesus. In Judaism there is no precedent for a Messiah who dies, much less as a criminal as Jesus did. In Islam, the story of Jesus' death is rejected as an affront to Allah himself. Hindus can accept only a Jesus who passes into peaceful samadhi, a yogi who escapes the degradations of death. 'The figure of the crucified Christ,' says Buddhist Thich Nhat Hahn, 'is a very painful image to me. It does not contain joy or peace, and this does not do justice to Jesus.' There is, in short, no room in other religions for a Christ who experiences the full burden of mortal existence—and hence there is no reason to believe in him as the divine Son whom the Father resurrects from the dead. —Kenneth L. Woodward, "The Other Jesus," *Newsweek*, March 27, 2000

A REJECTED MESSIAH

On Palm Sunday, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, *Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.* The people were ecstatic, proclaiming over and over "Hosanna to the Son of David!" meaning "Save us now, Messiah!" (Matt. 21:1-11).

They were looking for political salvation. They were looking for freedom from the Romans. They wanted a military leader. They wanted better lives and they assumed that the defeat of the Romans would provide it. But they missed the purpose of His coming. They missed their greatest need. They mistook the Romans for their greatest enemy. And so five days later, many of the same people were shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" (Matt. 27:1-26).

Many today assume that political freedom, national security, economic prosperity, and personal comfort are our greatest needs. Many look to Jesus only for their own agendas or their own wants. He is no more than a means for selfish goals, a prop for political purposes, a tool to build their own kingdoms. To others, Jesus is a good teacher or even a "spiritual guru." He is a good example to follow but, for all practical purposes, he is irrelevant to daily life.

So who is this Man? And what did He come to do?

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is the last of four Servant Songs in Isaiah (cf. 42:1-9, 49:1-6, 50:4-9). It is a five-stanza song that teaches us about the person, the purpose, and the work of the Messiah:

The Lord Speaks: the Great Exaltation and Great Suffering of the Messiah (52:13-15)

The Lord Speaks: the Great Sacrifice and Great Victory of the Messiah (53:10-12)

Humanity Speaks: the Surprising Humility and Rejection of the Messiah (53:1-3)

Humanity Speaks: the Surprising Submission and Death of the Messiah (53:7-9)

Humanity Speaks: the Substitutionary Death of the Messiah for Us All (53:4-6)

Jesus is the Savior of the world, saving us from our greatest enemies, sin and death. He came to **SAVE** us through His...

1. **S** _____ **LIFE.**

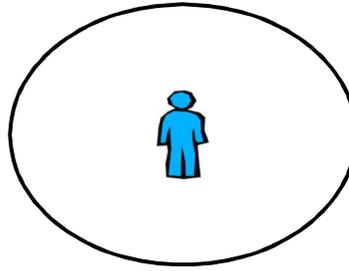
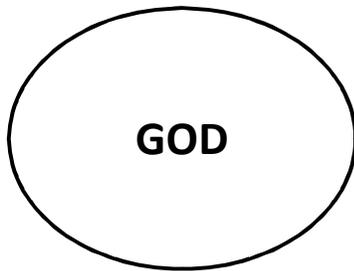
He opened not His mouth... (53:7)

He had done no violence nor was any deceit in His mouth (53:9)

My righteous Servant... (53:11)

Jesus is the *spotless* Lamb (1 Pet. 1:19)!

2. **A** _____ **DEATH.**



Jesus is the *substitutionary* Lamb (2 Cor. 5:21)!

3. **V** _____ **RESURRECTION.**

He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days... (53:10)

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

(1 Cor. 15:3-4; cf. Acts 2:24-36; 3:13-15; 4:10-12; 13:23-30; 17:2-3).

Jesus is the *risen* Lamb (1 Pet. 1:17-21)!

4. **E** _____ **RETURN.**

He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted... (52:13; cf. 6:1)

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing! (Rev. 5:12).

Jesus is the *reigning* Lamb (Isaiah 11:1-10)!

[Isaiah 53] is not a prophecy, it is a gospel. —Augustine

The fourth Servant song (Isa. 52:13-53:12) may without any exaggeration be called the most important text of the Old Testament. —F. Duane Lindsey

[Isaiah 53] is an example of the "prophetic perfect." The future is described as having already occurred because God's will inherently and ineluctably possesses the power of realization. —Nahum Sarna

The revelation of the arm of the Lord that will deliver the Lord's people is met with shock, astonishment, distaste, dismissal, and avoidance. Such a one as this can hardly be the one who can set us free from that most pervasive of all human bondages: sin, and all its consequences. To a world blinded by selfishness and power, he does not even merit a second thought. —John Oswalt

You do not understand Christ until you understand His cross. —P.T. Forsyth

Isaiah 53:4-6 is the heart of the passage, and it presents the heart of the Gospel message: the innocent Servant dying as the sacrifice for sin. This message was at the heart of Israel's religious system—the innocent animal sacrifice dying for the guilty sinner. —Warren Wiersbe

It's high, higher, highest. God is going to make Him high, then higher, and then highest. High, I believe, looks at His resurrection. Higher looks at His ascension. And highest looks at His coronation. —John MacArthur, Jr.