

**Vicarious Sacrifice: Humiliation of Messiah, Isa 52:14; Physical Development of Messiah; His Rote Memorization of the Tanakh; Second Advent, v. 15; Nations Startled at His Majesty & Appearance; Isaiah's Inquiry: Isa. 53:1: The Rhetorical Question, v. 1a; The Military Metaphor, v. 1b**

16. Jesus' physical strength was built up assisting His father Joseph as a master carpenter. Dealing with the implements of the trade, the first-century carpenter had a diversity of skills. Several resources document the things our Lord learned to do and, following Joseph's death, continued to do:

Both Joseph and Jesus followed the ancient trade of carpenter (τέκτων (téktōn)). A skilled worker in wood undertook all the carpentry tasks required in building operations, making roof, door, window, and stair fittings. Of the furniture he constructed couches, beds, chairs, tables, and footstools. The same carpenter would manufacture agricultural implements, ploughs, yokes, threshing instruments, and irrigation machines. The carpenter's special tools included a marking tool, compass or dividers, an adze, plane, iron saw, files, bow-drill, wooden mallet, and hammer as well as the various chisels and awls.<sup>1</sup>

The chief work of the carpenter was making roofs, doors, window-shutters, lattice-squares, and divan frames for the houses; plows; and yokes. Hence, Jesus knew yokes, as well as the various aspects of farm life, and could say, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:30). In its broadest sense, carpentry included crafting in stone and metal, as well as in wood.<sup>2</sup>

It is supposed that after the death of Joseph, Jesus carried on the business and was known as the carpenter of Nazareth. Justin Martyr in *The Dialogue with Trypho*, presents Jesus "working as a carpenter when among men, making ploughs and yokes; by which He taught the symbols of righteousness and an active life...."

Jesus' labor as carpenter accentuates the wonder of His Incarnation. He became fully man. His example makes all productive labor honorable, and in His case it no doubt contributed to the support of the family.<sup>3</sup>

17. How long the Lord remained in Nazareth in the carpentry trade is not known, however, Luke 4:16 indicates that prior to His public ministry He had been away for a period of time.

**Luke 4:16** - And Jesus came to Nazareth, where He had been [imperfect passive indicative of the verb εἰμί (eimi)] brought up [perfect passive participle of the verb τρέφω (tréphō)]; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.

The imperfect *eimi* [had been] joined to the perfect passive participle of *tréphō* [brought up] is consummative [complete]. Jesus had lived in Nazareth during His early childhood and adolescent years. This was His home town, though not His birthplace. As a child and later in adolescent years He had made it a practice of attending synagogue services.<sup>4</sup> (See Isaiah 61:1-2a cf. Luke 4:17-19)

18. During the seventeen-year interim between his childhood and public ministry, it may be conjectured that He continued to work as a carpenter until His younger brothers were able to take over the business.

<sup>1</sup> D. J. Wieman, "Arts and Crafts: The Carpenter," in *The New Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962), 91.

<sup>2</sup> H. Paul Holdridge, "Occupations and Professions: Carpenter," in *New International Bible Dictionary*, eds. J. D. Douglas and Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 718.

<sup>3</sup> W. B. Wallis, "Carpenter," in *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, gen. ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 1:757.

<sup>4</sup> Randolph O. Yeager, *The Renaissance New Testament* (Woodbridge, Va.: Renaissance Press, 1979), 4:519-20.

19. At some point, He retired to begin intense preparation for His public ministry which included rote memorization of the **תַּנַּךְ (Tanakh)**, the Hebrew title for the Old Testament:

**Visual:**  
**Tanakh:**  
**Tripartite**  
**Hebrew**  
**Canon**

**Luke 24:27** - Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them [ **Cleopas & his friend** ] the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

**v. 44** - Now He said to them [ **His disciples** ], “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses [ **תּוֹרָה (Torah)** ], and the Prophets [ **נְבִיאִים (Nevi'im)** ], and the Psalms [ **כְּתוּבִים (Kethuvim): introductory book of the section** ]. (NASB)

- 20- Here is the corrected translation of our verse:

**Isaiah 52:14** - Just as many Jews were shocked at you (His face was caused to be disfigured more than any man and his body did not even appear human.) (CTL)

### 3. The Second Advent, v. 15

**Isaiah 52:15** - thus He will sprinkle [ **Hiphil imperfect of נָזַח (nazah)** ] many nations<sup>5</sup> [ **rabbim goyim: direct object** ]. Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; for what had not been told them they will see, and what they had not heard they will understand. (NASB)

1. There is a grammatical problem with the translation “sprinkle.” Such a translation indicates “priestly-sacrificial overtones preparing us for further sacrificial language later in the passage.”<sup>6</sup>
2. The translation “sprinkle” is based on the traditional understanding of the Hiphil being causative. However, there are syntactical reasons to dispute this translation:

The meaning of (*nazah*) in Isaiah 52:15 is unclear. The syntax of the clause, however, with *goyim rabbim* [many nations] as the direct object of the verb, precludes the translation “he will sprinkle many nations,” since this meaning would require the preposition *al*. Some scholars have proposed ... interpreting *nazah* with a direct object as “scatter, overcome.” Others emend the text or connect the form with the Arabic *naza*, “jump, hop,” and translate “cause to jump, startle.” None of these explanations is convincing. The last is the most satisfying, since it preserves the text and fits the context best.<sup>7</sup>

3. The Messiah will “cause many nations to be startled”: this indicates how impressive the Lord’s appearance will be at the Second Advent. In resurrection body, His physical beauty will startle those who observe Him.
4. “Kings will shut their mouths” indicates that world leaders, military and political, will be struck speechless at the Lord’s appearance.
5. None of these officials has been made aware of His advent nor had they paid any attention to any of the teachings by Jewish and angelic evangelists during the Tribulation.

<sup>5</sup> This statement completes the sentence begun in v. 14a, “Just as many were astonished at You ...” which the parenthesis in v. 14b interrupts.

<sup>6</sup> Geoffrey W. Grogan, “Isaiah,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 6:301.

<sup>7</sup> J. Milgrom and D. P. Wright, “נָזַח,” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David E. Green (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 9:303.

6. In Romans, Paul speaks of his ministry to the Gentiles. He writes that his efforts do not infringe on the work of others, but that his missionary thrust is directed toward those who have not heard the gospel:

**Romans 15:20** - I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, so that I might not build on another man's foundation;

7. Instead, Paul borrows from Isaiah to make the point that his mission field is where Christ has not been named and the gospel has not been heard:

**Romans 15:21** - but as it has been written [ in **Isaiah 52:15** ], "They who had no news of Him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand."

8. Here is the expanded translation of the three introductory verses:

**Isaiah 52:13** - Behold, My servant will be caused to prosper in His true humanity. He shall be raised up by means of the resurrection. He shall be authorized to lift himself up at the ascension, and be very highly exalted at His session at the right hand of the Father.

**v. 14** - Just as many were astonished at You ... (His face was caused to be disfigured more than any man and His body more than any other man; He did not even appear human.)

**v. 15** - thus He will cause many nations be startled, kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; for what had not been told them [ **Second Advent** ] they will see, and what they had not heard [ **prophetic doctrines** ] they will understand.

## II. Isaiah's Inquiry

### B. Isaiah 53:1

#### 1. The Rhetorical Question

**Isaiah 53:1a** - Who has believed our message?

1. Isaiah speaks for himself and the other prophets that have revealed the details of the coming Messiah: His birth, passion, sacrifice, resurrection, and Second Advent.
2. There were some that responded, but most did not. As a result, the people of the Southern Kingdom entered into the cycles of national discipline.
3. The interrogative focuses on the free will of the people of the Judah: the few who believed the reports of the prophets provide the preserving power of the pivot.
4. Isaiah's negative experiences with the people of the Judah suggest that his rhetorical question assumes a negative answer.
5. This question is quoted in the New Testament by both John and Paul:

**John 12:37** - Though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.

**v. 38a** - This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report?"

**Romans 10:16** - They did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"

#### 2. The Military Metaphor

**Isaiah 53:1b** - And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? (NASB)

1. In order for objectivity to be acquired by those negative to the gospel or believers in reversionism, it often requires the imposition of dire circumstances.
2. The Southern Kingdom's national discipline had advanced to the fourth cycle: foreign occupation by Sennacherib, king of Assyria, who attacked in 701 B.C.:

**Visual:**  
**Five Cycles of**  
**Discipline to**  
**Client Nations**

In 701 B.C. Sennacherib laid siege to Lachish, which guarded access to Jerusalem and its rebellious king. Hezekiah paid a heavy tribute at this time and released Padi,<sup>8</sup> the pro-Assyrian king of Ekron, from prison in Jerusalem, while Sennacherib gave some cities of western Judah to loyal Philistine kings. Nevertheless Sennacherib sent forces to besiege Jerusalem, demoralize its people and try to persuade them to hand over their king.

The prophet Isaiah encouraged Hezekiah by prophesying the deliverance of Jerusalem and the return of Sennacherib to his own land. The angel of the Lord [ Jesus Christ ] entered the Assyrian camp, slaying 185,000 soldiers.<sup>9</sup> (Isaiah 37:36)

3. The "arm of the Lord" metaphor refers to His interventions into human history to deliver His people from danger.
4. The ultimate example of His "arm's" intervention was the most critical moment in the Angelic Conflict—the cross, where He graciously endured sacrificial spiritual death on behalf of the entire world.
5. The victory of the cross provided salvation to any who would believe in Him.

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<sup>8</sup> "From Assyrian records we learn that (Ekron) revolted against Sennacherib and expelled Padi, the governor he had placed over it, and sent him to Hezekiah, at Jerusalem, for safe keeping" (H. Porter, "Ekron," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, gen. ed., James Orr [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956], 2:916.  
<sup>9</sup> "Hezekiah against the Assyrians," in *Archaeological Study Bible: An Illustrated Walk through Biblical History and Culture* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 1118.