

Isaiah 53:6

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/isa/isa-53/isaiah-536/>

Isaiah prophesies that all of us like sheep have gone astray in our sin, but instead of punishing us, the LORD caused the sin of the world to fall on the Messiah

This Messianic prophecy is commonly known as the Suffering Servant prophecy.

Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12 is commonly referred to as “The Suffering Servant” prophecy. This description is derived from the suffering the passage foretells will fall upon the Messiah, who is described by the LORD as “My Servant” (Isaiah 52:13; 53:11).

Isaiah prophesies these things by a prophetic-past tense which speaks of future events as though they have already occurred, indicating the certainty that they will come to pass.

The opening verses of this chapter primarily describe the Messiah and His suffering at the hands of His own people.

Next, Isaiah describes the Messiah’s people (Israel) with an unflattering description. He compares them to wandering *sheep*:

*All of us like sheep have gone astray,
Each of us has turned to his own way.*

Sheep are herd animals. They are helpless creatures, especially when they are lost and alone, *astray* from the safety of the herd (Ezekiel 34:25-31).

Interestingly, Isaiah considers himself among the *astray sheep* of Israel. He says that *all of us* are *like* helpless *sheep* that have wandered away from *God’s* loving protection.

We went astray when *we* disobeyed *His* good commands. Isaiah reiterates that *each of us has turned to his own way* instead of following *God’s way*. This is the prophet’s metaphorical way to express what Paul teaches in Romans 3:23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Astray from the Good Shepherd (Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34; John 10:14), as lost *sheep*, *we* are in danger of being devoured by the prowling lion—the devil (1 Peter 5:8).

Isaiah 53 is likely what Peter had in mind when he wrote:

“...He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.”
(1 Peter 2:24-25)

In the passage from Peter, he refers to Jesus bearing our sins “in His body,” for “by His wounds you were healed” (Isaiah 53:5). Peter asserts that Jesus has fully paid for our sins, to the end that we now have the possibility of living righteously. Because of Jesus’s death, we now have been granted Jesus’s resurrection power to live apart from sin. We have the power to choose life, and its consequences, which have great reward.

Jesus the Messiah is “the Good Shepherd [who] lays down His life for the sheep” (John 10:11). And it is this passage in Isaiah that prophetically describes the way in which the Messiah/Good Shepherd will lay down His life for His *sheep*.

Consider the things the Messiah underwent to rescue and find us.

- He bore our griefs (Isaiah 53:4)
- He carried our sorrows (Isaiah 53:4)
- He was pierced for our transgressions (Isaiah 53:5)
- He was crushed for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5)
- He was chastened for our well-being (Isaiah 53:5)
- He was scourged for our healing (Isaiah 53:5)
- He was cut off from the land of the living (Isaiah 53:8)
- He was considered to be a wicked criminal (Isaiah 53:9)
- He bore the sin of the many (Isaiah 53:12)

And *He* did all this for us while being misunderstood, forsaken, and despised (Isaiah 53:3).

He came looking for each and *all of us* when *we* were *astray* (Ezekiel 34:11-15; Matthew 18:11; Luke 15:3-5).

As mentioned above, Peter cites this prophecy about *sheep gone astray* to remind believers that we have been found and belong to the Messiah:

“For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.”
(1 Peter 2:25)

After describing the people as *sheep*, Isaiah then summarizes why all the terrible sufferings mentioned in this prophecy will happen to the Messiah:

*But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all
To fall on Him.*

Isaiah explicitly states that *the LORD has caused* the Messiah’s suffering to happen. This expression—*the LORD has caused*—indicates that the Messiah’s suffering was not a mistake. It was not merely happenstance, nor was it even part of what some describe as God’s “permissive will.” The Messiah’s suffering was by God’s good design.

It was part of God's mysterious plan to redeem the world, even before its creation (Ephesians 1:4-7; Revelation 13:8). The final verse of this prophecy expresses that the Messiah's suffering is ultimately for His glory and our good (Isaiah 53:12).

What *the LORD has caused* was for *the iniquity of us all to fall on Him*. In other words, *the LORD* imputed the guilt and penalty *for all of our* sins to be reassigned to the Messiah.

This was true of Jesus, the Messiah:

“You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.”
(1 John 3:5)

John the Baptizer testified of Jesus: “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).

The Apostle Paul wrote of Jesus's death: “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). Paul also stated that every sin was nailed to the cross with Jesus (Colossians 2:14). Every sin has been paid for, it only remains for us to believe, and receive forgiveness (John 3:14-16).

Peter wrote: “For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18).

And John, the apostle, wrote: “He Himself is the propitiation [payment] for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world” (1 John 2:2).

Biblical Text

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Each of us has turned to his own way;
But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all
To fall on Him.**