

## **Dr. Marv Wilson, Prophets, Session 33, Isaiah 53**

### **Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

#### **1. Abstract of Wilson, Prophets, Session 33, Isaiah 53, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

**Dr. Marv Wilson's lecture on Isaiah 53 explores the suffering servant prophecy.** The session examines the renown and reasons for the servant's suffering, emphasizing vicarious atonement and its connection to Jesus Christ in the New Testament. **Wilson highlights the concept of God using the insignificant to reveal profound truths.** He discusses the resignation of the servant to His sufferings, drawing parallels between Isaiah's text and the events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion. **The lecture concludes with an analysis of the rewards of the servant's suffering, such as seeing his offspring and dividing the spoils of victory.** The lecture further explains how the idea of justification comes through death.

**2. 27 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Wilson, Prophets, Session 33 – Double click icon to play in  
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]  
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →  
Major Prophets → Prophetic Literature).**



**Wilson\_Prophets\_S  
ession33.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Wilson, Prophets, Session 33, Isaiah 53

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. Marv Wilson's lecture on Isaiah 53:

#### Briefing Document: Dr. Marv Wilson on Isaiah 53

##### Introduction:

Dr. Wilson's lecture focuses on Isaiah 53, a pivotal passage often referred to as the "Suffering Servant" song. He emphasizes its importance for understanding Christian theology, particularly the concepts of vicarious atonement, the nature of Jesus' ministry, and the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. The lecture also touches on some key theological themes and paradoxes within the text.

##### Key Themes and Ideas:

##### 1. The Obscurity and Humility of the Servant:

- The servant originates from humble beginnings, "a shoot out of dry ground," lacking worldly majesty or splendor. He is depicted as coming from an "obscure peasant family" in Nazareth.
- This highlights a recurring biblical theme of God choosing the insignificant to accomplish His purposes. Dr. Wilson notes how God used the "little guy" of Israel, a group of "shepherd farmers, slaves for 400 years" to be the source of great revelation.
- Quote: "One of the main themes from the Bible is God delights in working with the little guy, the obscure, the one who is insignificant by worldly standards."

##### 1. The "Man of Sorrows" and Objective Genitive:

- The servant is described as a "man of sorrows" familiar with suffering. This could refer to his own physical and mental burdens.
- Dr. Wilson introduces the concept of "objective genitive" to suggest that his suffering was also *for* the relief of others. He emphasizes that the servant's ministry involved teaching, preaching, and healing, and those he healed are also objects of his care in his suffering.
- Quote: "He also gave himself as the suffering servant toward the relief of these things... there is a sense in which that objective genitive, he gave his life for the relief of these things."

- This also connects with the idea that there may be healing in the atonement, not just freedom from sin, but from emotional and physical ailments as well.

#### 1. **The Turning of the Face (Hester Panim):**

- The idiom "turning of the face" is examined in the Hebrew Bible as typically used by Yahweh, in response to Israel's disobedience or sin.
- In this context, the turning of the face is applied to the servant, with one scholar suggesting this identifies the servant with God himself.
- Quote: "Here however it seems to be applied to the servant as its subject. Which as one scholar writing on Isaiah suggests, the suffering servant is here to be identified with God himself."

#### 1. **Vicarious Atonement:**

- A core theme of Isaiah 53 is vicarious atonement, where the servant suffers and dies for the sins of others. He takes up "our infirmities," carrying our sorrows, diseases and transgressions.
- Dr. Wilson points out the use of "our" and "we" in the text and their connection to Christian theology. He emphasizes the idea of the servant as a substitute, stepping up to take the sinner's place.
- Matthew 8:16-17 is cited as an example of the New Testament directly linking Jesus' ministry to Isaiah's prophecy.
- Quote: "Surely, he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows. And here is this idea of the servant who bears the sins, sicknesses, griefs, and pains of others."

#### 1. **The Suffering Servant and the Messiah:**

- Dr. Wilson acknowledges that there is no direct link in the Old Testament associating the Messiah with the suffering servant.
- The connection between the two emerges in Christian tradition, identifying Jesus as the suffering servant, who surprisingly comes to suffer and die, not to establish an earthly kingdom.
- Quote: "You have to wait till you come into the Christian tradition and to the New Testament to link those concepts together."

- The concept of the suffering servant is contrasted with the expectations of the time, where people wanted a political leader to meet their personal needs instead of someone who would suffer for them.

#### 1. **The "Lost Sheep" Metaphor:**

- The lecture explores the image of people as "sheep who have gone astray," emphasizing their helplessness and need for a shepherd.
- He makes a connection to Ezekiel 34, which speaks of neglected sheep and also to the "lost sheep" parable of Luke's gospel in the New Testament.
- Quote: "So, we, like sheep, are lost. We're helpless. We're in need of a shepherd."

#### 1. **The Scapegoat and the Imputation of Sin:**

- Dr. Wilson links the "laying on" of iniquity to the Yom Kippur ritual of the scapegoat, highlighting the concept of transferred sin.
- He notes how the High Priest would lay his hands on the head of the goat and confess the sins of the people which were then symbolically transferred to the goat.
- Quote: "The Lord has laid on him, God's suffering servant, the iniquity of us all. This is counterintuitive to how most people think... In Christianity, we are introduced to a concept of grace and love where somebody else steps up."

#### 1. **Shalom and Wholeness:**

- The concept of "shalom," often translated as "peace," is explained as encompassing well-being, harmony, completion, and health.
- He says we are not complete until God brings that wholeness.
- Quote: "You're not well until God brings that wellness. "

#### 1. **Resignation and Silence:**

- The servant's resignation to suffering is demonstrated by his silence in the face of accusations, a theme repeatedly echoed in the Gospels during Jesus' trials.
- He cites several passages in the Gospels such as Matthew 27, Mark 14, and John 19, which reference the silence of Jesus before those who accused him.

- Quote: "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He didn't open His mouth. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter as a sheep before His shearers' silence, so He did not open His mouth."

#### 1. **Burial with the Wicked and Rich:**

- Dr. Wilson discusses the burial prophecy, explaining the parallelism of "wicked" and "rich," noting that in the ancient Near East the rich were often believed to have acquired wealth through dishonest means. This is not a reference to Jesus' burial in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.
- He connects this theme to the biblical warning against serving "mammon" or riches instead of God.

#### 1. **God's Will and Paradox:**

- Dr. Wilson addresses the question of who killed Jesus, stating that while Romans physically carried out the execution, it was ultimately God's will for this to happen. This is based on the text of Isaiah 53 which emphasizes God's will (haphez) in the crushing of the servant.
- He notes a paradox, in that the people who put Jesus on the cross were murderers, but God used their sinful act to carry out His plan, drawing a parallel with the story of Joseph in Genesis 50.
- Quote: "From a human point of view, they should be tried as murderers. They unjustly put a person to death. But looking at it from God's eternal perspective, we do not always see through human tragedy."

#### 1. **Guilt Offering (Asham):**

- The servant's life is described as a "guilt offering," referencing a Levitical sacrifice for known sins requiring restitution. This connects the suffering servant to the Old Testament sacrificial system and the nature of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross.
- Quote: "When we talk of Jesus' work as God's sacrifice for man's sin, here's one of your main words used out of the Levitical world of sacrifices that is used for the suffering servant himself, as it were, a guilt offering."

#### 1. **Offspring and Resurrection:**

- The lecture transitions to the results of the servant's suffering which includes seeing his offspring and prolonging his days. This is linked to the concept of spiritual offspring (Christians).

- Dr. Wilson points out how the Dead Sea Scroll reading of verse 11, "He will see the light of life," anticipates the resurrection.
- Quote: "The light of life is there, obviously, in reference to the resurrection. The light symbolizes well-being, salvation, or life."

#### **1. Justification and Victory:**

- The servant "will justify many," which Dr. Wilson relates to Paul's concept of justification by faith, an act where God reckons righteousness to the sinner based on Christ's righteous work.
- He concludes by describing the victory that comes after suffering. The servant divides the spoils with his followers who have battled spiritually against evil. This points towards the resurrection and future return of Christ.
- Quote: "And now He is the champion. And those who go out to battle with Him as His warriors share in the enjoyment of the spoils of that victory."

#### **Conclusion:**

Dr. Wilson's lecture provides a detailed theological interpretation of Isaiah 53, emphasizing its crucial role in understanding the nature and purpose of Jesus Christ's work on the cross as the suffering servant. He connects the Old Testament prophecy to its fulfillment in the New Testament, highlighting themes of vicarious atonement, the role of grace, and the ultimate victory achieved through suffering.

**Next Steps:** Dr. Wilson mentioned that the next lectures will include further analysis of selected passages from Isaiah, with a focus on how readings from the Dead Sea Scrolls impact interpretation. He also states that he will touch on some of the key points regarding spirituality, theology and ethics in the book of Isaiah.

## 4. Study Guide: Wilson, Prophets, Session 33, Isaiah 53

### Isaiah 53: A Study Guide

#### Quiz

**Instructions:** Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. How does Isaiah describe the physical appearance of the suffering servant?
2. What is the significance of the phrase "man of sorrows" in relation to the servant?
3. What does "vicarious atonement" mean in the context of Isaiah 53?
4. How does Matthew's Gospel connect Isaiah 53:4 to Jesus' ministry?
5. According to the text, what are the "transgressions and iniquities" that the servant bears?
6. What is the significance of the sheep imagery in Isaiah 53?
7. What role does the concept of the "scapegoat" from Leviticus 16 play in understanding the suffering servant?
8. What is the meaning of "shalom" in the context of Isaiah 53:5?
9. How does the suffering servant's silence relate to the events of Jesus' trial?
10. How does the idea of "justification by faith" relate to the work of the suffering servant?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. Isaiah describes the servant as lacking majesty or splendor, not being rich, famous, or powerful, and coming from an obscure peasant family. There is nothing in his physical appearance that would make others desire him.
2. The phrase "man of sorrows" refers to the servant being familiar with suffering. While it could refer to his own burdens, it more likely suggests that he is given to experiencing the sorrows and burdens of others.
3. Vicarious atonement means that the suffering servant takes the place of the sinner, enduring the consequences of sin on their behalf. The concept is highlighted in the text through its emphasis that the servant dies for the sins of others.

4. Matthew's Gospel cites Isaiah 53:4 in Matthew 8:16-17 when recounting Jesus' healing ministry. Matthew connects Jesus' healing of the sick to the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, highlighting the servant's bearing of infirmities and diseases.
5. The "transgressions and iniquities" that the servant bears are the sins of others. He suffers not for his own sins, but to take the punishment for the wrongdoing of those who have strayed.
6. The sheep imagery depicts humanity as helpless, lost, and in need of a shepherd, just as sheep are prone to wander. This reflects our tendency to stray from God's path and our need for guidance and redemption.
7. The concept of the "scapegoat" from Leviticus 16 provides a symbolic image of the servant bearing the sins of the people. As the sins were confessed and laid on the goat, they are likewise placed on the suffering servant in Isaiah, thus transferring guilt and allowing for atonement.
8. "Shalom" in Isaiah 53:5 goes beyond simple peace; it signifies well-being, harmony, health, welfare, friendship, and flourishing. It represents the complete and integrated state of wellness that comes through God's restoration, emphasizing not just the absence of conflict, but the wholeness of creation.
9. The suffering servant's silence mirrors Jesus' silence during his trial, when he refused to defend himself against false accusations. This silence demonstrates a willingness to accept suffering and fulfill the will of God, further connecting to the servant image.
10. "Justification by faith" is connected to the work of the suffering servant, in that through his death, God declares sinners righteous. This is a gift offered through faith, where God views believers as if they had not sinned because of the work of the servant, even if in their experience, they are still sinners.

## Essay Questions

**Instructions:** Answer each of the following questions with a well-developed essay.

1. Discuss the significance of the servant's dual role as both a personal sufferer and a vicarious substitute within the context of Isaiah 53, and analyze how this duality is further interpreted in the New Testament.
2. Explore the concept of divine paradox as it relates to God's will in the crushing of the suffering servant in Isaiah 53. Consider both the human and divine perspectives on this event, and evaluate the challenges of reconciling them.
3. Analyze the role of imagery in Isaiah 53, particularly the use of sheep, lambs, and a guilt offering, and explain how these images enhance the understanding of the servant's suffering and redemptive work.
4. Examine the relationship between Isaiah 53 and the concept of shalom, considering how the servant's suffering and death ultimately bring about this state of well-being and harmony. How does this connect to the theme of restoration in the Old Testament?
5. Trace the development of the suffering servant concept from the Old Testament to the New Testament, focusing on the connections and interpretations made by the gospel writers in relation to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Vicarious Atonement:** The act of someone taking the place of another, bearing their punishment, usually referring to Christ taking the punishment for humanity's sin.
- **Subjective Genitive:** A grammatical construction where the noun in the genitive case acts as the subject that performs the action, such as, the love of God, meaning God's own love.
- **Objective Genitive:** A grammatical construction where the noun in the genitive case receives the action, such as, the love of God, meaning the love others feel for God.
- **Hester Panim:** Hebrew for "turning of the face," an idiom used to describe God's turning away from someone, often due to sin or disobedience.

- **Shalom:** A Hebrew word that encompasses peace, well-being, harmony, health, wholeness, and completeness.
- **Yom Kippur:** The holiest day of the year in Judaism, the Day of Atonement, involving confession of sins and a scapegoat ritual.
- **Azazel:** The scapegoat in the Yom Kippur ritual, upon whose head the sins of the people were symbolically placed and then sent into the wilderness.
- **Smicha:** Hebrew for "laying on of hands," an act used to confer authority, ordination, or transfer some kind of symbolism.
- **Rugged Individualism:** The idea that individuals are responsible for their own actions and should not rely on others to make their lives better or fix their problems.
- **Hesed:** Hebrew for loyal, constant, steadfast love, which endures forever, often referring to God's love for His people.
- **Asham:** Hebrew for guilt offering, one of the five basic offerings in the Old Testament, used to atone for known sins and required restitution.
- **Mashiach:** Hebrew for "anointed one," traditionally referring to the Messiah, and linked to the Greek word *Christos*.
- **Christus Victor:** A theological model of atonement that emphasizes Christ's victory over sin, death, and evil, often depicted as a cosmic battle.
- **Holism:** The view that the whole of something is greater than the sum of its parts, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all things, particularly in God's divine plan.
- **Haphez:** Hebrew for desire, plan, pleasure, or will, often referring to God's will or delight.
- **Justification by Faith:** The Christian theological concept where one is declared righteous in God's eyes because of faith in the atoning work of Christ.

## 5. FAQs on Wilson, Prophets, Session 33, Isaiah 53, Biblelearning.org (BeL)

### FAQ on Isaiah 53 and the Suffering Servant

1. **Who is the "suffering servant" described in Isaiah 53, and what is significant about his background?** The suffering servant in Isaiah 53 is depicted as someone who comes from a humble background, described as a "shoot from dry ground" lacking worldly majesty or splendor. He is not from a position of power or royalty, but rather from an ordinary peasant family, much like the people of Nazareth. This emphasizes the theme that God often works through the insignificant and the obscure rather than the powerful or famous.
2. **What is the significance of the phrase "man of sorrows" in reference to the servant?** The phrase "man of sorrows" can be interpreted in two ways: first, it could refer to the servant's own physical and mental burdens, highlighting his personal suffering. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, it signifies his voluntary assumption of the sorrows, pains, and illnesses of others. This relates to the concept of objective genitive—where the servant gives himself for the relief of others. This idea is seen in Christ's healing and deliverance ministry.
3. **What does it mean when Isaiah 53 describes the servant as being despised and rejected, with people hiding their faces from him?** The description of the servant as despised, rejected, and someone from whom people hide their faces, connects to the idea of "Hester Panim" in Hebrew which means "turning of the face." This is commonly associated with God's response to Israel's sin but here it applies to the servant. It implies a profound rejection and lack of esteem for the servant, and suggests that the suffering servant is to be identified with God Himself.
4. **What is vicarious atonement, and how does it relate to the suffering servant in Isaiah 53?** Vicarious atonement is the theological concept where someone takes the place of another to suffer the consequences of their actions. In Isaiah 53, the suffering servant takes upon himself the infirmities, sorrows, transgressions, and iniquities of others. This is seen as a substitutionary act, where the servant's suffering and death are for the sake of others, especially in Matthew's gospel, where Jesus' ministry of healing is directly linked to the Isaiah prophecy.

5. **How is the imagery of sheep and a shepherd used in relation to the suffering servant and the people?** The imagery of sheep gone astray emphasizes the people's helplessness, vulnerability, and tendency to get lost. Like sheep, people are described as turning to their own way, preferring their own paths rather than God's. The suffering servant is then portrayed as the shepherd, whose role it is to guide and seek out the lost. This also resonates with the Yom Kippur scapegoat, where sins were transferred, and the shepherd in 1 Peter as a shepherd of souls.
6. **How does the concept of the scapegoat in Leviticus connect to the suffering servant of Isaiah 53?** In Leviticus 16, during Yom Kippur, the high priest would lay hands on a goat, symbolically transferring the sins of the nation onto it. This goat, the "scapegoat," was then sent away into the desert. This imagery connects to Isaiah 53 where the Lord lays the iniquity of all on the suffering servant and the servant is bearing the consequences, similar to the scapegoat. The concept emphasizes the transfer of sins and the burden being taken away.
7. **What is the significance of the idea that "it was the Lord's will to crush him" and how does this relate to the notion of God's sovereignty?** The phrase "it was the Lord's will to crush him" signifies God's sovereign plan and purpose behind the servant's suffering. While human actions may appear evil or unjust, God can still work through these events to accomplish His larger purposes. It highlights the paradox where human actions led to the suffering of an innocent individual, yet God intended it for a greater good. This illustrates God's holism and providential control over history.
8. **What are some of the positive outcomes that result from the suffering of the servant, and what does it mean to be part of his "offspring"?** The suffering servant's death leads to several positive outcomes. He sees his offspring, which includes all who have become believers or disciples through his sacrifice. He will prolong his days through the resurrection, and his suffering ultimately justifies many, meaning they are declared righteous through faith in his work. This results in the "spoils" of a great victory through the servant's death and resurrection, where the followers of Christ share in the rewards of that victory.