The Suffering Servant
Isaiah 52:13-53:13
in the New Testament

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The Great Isaiah Scroll

The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsaa) is one of the original seven Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in Qumran in 1947. It is the largest (734 cm) and best preserved of all the biblical scrolls, and the only one that is almost complete. The 54 columns contain all 66 chapters of the Hebrew version of the biblical Book of Isaiah. Dating from ca. 125 BCE, it is also one of the oldest of the Dead Sea Scrolls, some one thousand years older than the oldest manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible known to us before the scrolls’ discovery.

... Around twenty additional copies of the Book of Isaiah were also found at Qumran (one more copy was discovered further south at Wadi Muraba’at), as well as six pesharim (commentaries) based on the book; Isaiah is also frequently quoted in other scrolls (a literary and religious phenomenon also present in New Testament writings).

The Digital Dead Sea Scrolls
http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/isaiah#52.13
The Servant Songs

1. Isaiah 42:1-9
   - Servant Israel (41:8-14; 44:1; 44:2,21, 45:4)
     - Righteous servant? Israel is unfaithful, rebel (Isaiah 1).
     - In need of a redeemer (41:14). Who is the redeemer?
     - Blind and deaf (42:18-25; 48:20); does not know God (45:4,5)

2. Isaiah 49:1-7
   - Servant Israel (49:3) is to be brought back (49:5) by YHWY's servant.
   - Does Israel redeem himself? Israel is redeemed by the Righteous Servant (53:11)

3. Isaiah 50:4-10
   - The sin of Israel vs the obedience of the Servant (image of Cross 50:6)


The redemption of Israel from Egypt was a picture of our redemption paid for on The Cross and Israel's future redemption at Christ's return. Israel was the unfaithful servant in the wilderness, whereas Christ was faithful and remained sinless.
Lifted Up and Exalted

Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted.

As many were astonished at you—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind—

so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they see, and that which they have not heard they understand.

Isaiah 52:13-15

- Lifted up on a cross
  - John 3:14, 8:28, 12:32,34
- Suffering and shame
- Beaten beyond recognition
- Triumph Colossians 2:15
- Exaltation!
  - Philippians 2:5-11
- Worshipped by all!

John 12:32-36 allusion to Isaiah 52:13
John 12:36-38 fulfills Isaiah 53:1
And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."
He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. … So
Jesus said to them, “The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk
while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks
in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the
light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”
When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from
them. Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not
believe in him, so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be
fulfilled:
“Lord, who has believed what he heard from us,
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”
what he has heard from us?
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

John 12:41 Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him.
1 Corinthians 2:8 None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
Belief
Romans 10:14-17

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Then Isaiah is so bold as to say,
“I have been found by those who did not seek me;
I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.” (Romans 10:20, Isaiah 65:1)
Humble Form
Isaiah 53:2,3

For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
and no beauty that we should desire him.
He was despised and rejected by men;
a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Isaiah 11 (young plant -> branch of Jesse)
Philippians 2:7,8
poor, homeless, rejected, “not pretty”, …, publicly shamed on the cross.
Physically Healing
Matthew 8:14-17, Isaiah 53:4

And when Jesus entered Peter’s house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: “He took our illnesses and bore our diseases.”
He Bore our Sorrows and Sins
Isaiah 53:4-6

Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
another him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.
1 Peter 2:22-25

He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Isaiah 53:9 — no deceit His mouth.
He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, 
yet he opened not his mouth; 
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, 
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, 
so he opened not his mouth.

Jesus was (mostly) silent before Pilate 
(Matthew 27:12-14), 
and completely silent before Herod 
(Luke 23:6-12)
Isaiah 53:8,9

By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Jesus was born poor, but was buried with the rich (Matthew 27:57)
And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter
and like a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he opens not his mouth.
In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth."

And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.
Isaiah 53:10-12

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him;
    he has put him to grief;
when his soul makes an offering for guilt,
    he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;
the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.
Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;
    by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
    make many to be accounted righteous,
    and he shall bear their iniquities.
Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,
    and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,
because he poured out his soul to death
    and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
    and makes intercession for the transgressors.
...was numbered with the transgressors Isaiah 53:12, Luke 22:37

- Mark 15:28 Crucified with two robbers (not in some MSS)
- Luke 22:35-38 The disciples pack two swords to fulfill this prophecy?
  - Jesus clearly does not want them to defend Himself (rebukes Peter 22:47-51; Jesus followers are not fighting since His kingdom “is not of this world” John 18:36; “he who lives by the sword dies by the sword” Matt 26:52).
  - Luke 22:52 “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs?”
  - Is the money bag and sword symbolic of the divided “spoil” with the “strong”?
  - Perhaps this was a cue to the disciples, who would know Isaiah’s prophecies, that everything is going according to plan.