

119

GROUP STUDY GUIDE

The 4th and 7th Day – Part 1: Isaiah 53

TEACHING SUMMARY

This teaching begins a series examining the Brit Hadasha alongside ancient Jewish interpretations of Messianic prophecy. It focuses on the question of whether the Messiah was to come twice and compares ancient rabbinical interpretations with modern Jewish teaching.

Ancient Jewish writings are presented as distinguishing between Messiah ben Yoseph, associated with the suffering servant, and Messiah ben David, associated with the kingdom and reign. The teaching presents these as two roles separated by time and explains that 119 Ministries understands Yeshua's first coming in the suffering-servant role and his future return in the kingly role.

The teaching also addresses the objection that Yeshua changed the Law of God. It argues that the Messiah could not change the Torah because that would conflict with Deuteronomy 13 and 18 and with Messianic prophecy. The teaching presents Yeshua as leaving the Law intact.

Zechariah 12:10 is examined with the ancient rabbinical statement that Messiah ben Yoseph would be slain. The teaching connects this with John's account of Yeshua being pierced and with Psalm 34:20, which says that none of his bones would be broken.

The central discussion concerns Isaiah 52:13–53:12 and whether the servant is Israel or the Messiah. The teaching cites ancient, medieval, and later Jewish sources with Messianic interpretations. These witnesses differ: the quoted Nachmanides passage first favors Israel, then explains a Messianic alternative. The teaching uses these examples to show that a Messianic reading exists within Jewish interpretation.

The teaching concludes that Isaiah 53 cannot be limited to Israel because the servant is distinguished from Israel, bears the sins of others, is rejected and wounded, and is ultimately exalted. It argues that Rabbi Rashi's influential interpretation changed the dominant Messianic reading and that Isaiah 53 should be tested directly in its context.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The teaching examines ancient and modern interpretations of Messianic prophecy.
- Ancient Jewish writings distinguish Messiah ben Yoseph from Messiah ben David.
- Messiah ben Yoseph is associated with the suffering servant.
- Messiah ben David is associated with the kingdom and reign.
- The teaching argues that Yeshua did not change the Law of God.
- Zechariah 12:10 is connected with the pierced Messiah.
- Isaiah 53 is debated as either Israel or the Messiah.
- Numerous Jewish sources interpret Isaiah 53 in a Messianic way.
- The teaching says Isaiah 53 distinguishes the servant from Israel.
- The teaching concludes that Isaiah 53 is a Messianic prophecy.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK — BASIC

1. The teaching compares ancient and modern Jewish interpretations of _____ prophecy.
2. Messiah ben Yoseph is associated with the suffering _____.
3. Messiah ben David is associated with the _____.
4. The teaching says Yeshua left the Law of God completely _____.
5. Zechariah 12:10 speaks of the one who was _____.
6. The central chapter examined in this teaching is Isaiah _____.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK — CHALLENGING

1. The interpretation quoted from Sukkah 52a identifies the slain figure with Mashiach ben _____.
2. John connects Zechariah 12:10 with Yeshua being pierced and Psalm 34:20 with his bones not being _____.
3. Modern rabbis often interpret Isaiah 53 as referring to the nation of _____.
4. In the quotation on Isaiah 52:13, Targum Jonathan calls the servant the _____.
5. The teaching emphasizes the influence of Rabbi _____ on the national-Israel interpretation.
6. The teaching says Isaiah 53 presents the servant as distinct from _____.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does the teaching distinguish Messiah ben Yoseph from Messiah ben David?

2. How does the teaching use Deuteronomy 13 and 18 in discussing whether the Messiah could change the Torah?

3. What connection does the teaching make between Zechariah 12:10, John 19, and Psalm 34:20?

4. What are the main reasons the teaching gives for interpreting Isaiah 53 as Messianic?

5. How do the ancient Jewish sources cited in the teaching challenge the claim that Isaiah 53 is only about Israel?

6. Why does the teaching emphasize testing both Christian and Jewish traditions?

ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. Messianic — Teaching introduction
2. servant — Teaching's explanation of Messiah ben Yoseph
3. kingdom — Teaching's explanation of Messiah ben David
4. intact — Teaching's Torah position; Deuteronomy 13; 18
5. pierced — Zechariah 12:10
6. 53 — Isaiah 53

Challenging

1. Yoseph — Sukkah 52a, interpretation quoted in the teaching
2. broken — John 19:33–37; Psalm 34:20
3. Israel — Teaching's description of the national-Israel interpretation
4. Messiah — Targum Jonathan on Isaiah 52:13, as quoted
5. Rashi — Teaching's historical argument concerning Rashi
6. Israel — Teaching's reading of Isaiah 49:4–6; 53:1–12

FACILITATOR DISCUSSION NOTES

Suggested responses follow the teaching. Invite discussion and personal application; these are not additional required answers.

1. The source distinguishes suffering and royal expectations, acknowledges differing rabbinic accounts, and states 119's belief that Yeshua fulfills both roles at different times. Do not equate every two-messiah tradition with belief in one Messiah returning twice.
2. The teaching argues that a true prophet and Messiah must uphold God's instructions, appealing to Deuteronomy 13 and 18. Read those chapters and explain why the teaching rejects the claim that Yeshua abolished Torah.
3. John 19:33–37 describes unbroken legs and a pierced side and cites Scripture. Compare Zechariah 12:10 and Psalm 34:20. The teaching also quotes a Messianic interpretation from Sukkah 52a; distinguish the Gospel account from the rabbinic interpretation.
4. Read Isaiah 52:13–53:12 as a whole. Identify the teaching's arguments from the servant's innocence, distinction from those speaking, suffering for others, and exaltation. Discuss the surrounding context rather than relying only on isolated phrases.
5. The cited sources demonstrate a range of Messianic readings across different periods, not unanimous agreement with 119's interpretation or Yeshua's identity. Note that Nachmanides states an Israel reading before exploring the alternative. Ask what the evidence establishes and what further argument is needed.
6. The source urges testing inherited traditions from both backgrounds and acknowledges diversity within Judaism. Apply that standard to the teaching itself: read cited passages, distinguish interpretation from quotation, and discuss disagreements accurately and respectfully.