

Before starting this lesson, read at least **Isaiah 7, 9, 11, 42, 49, 53, 61**. If possible read the whole book. You may find it helpful to read just the minimum chapters, go thru the lesson and then read the whole book. You will discover what works best for you.

The books of the prophets use a Jewish style called double meaning. There is an immediate meaning within the context of the entire chapter. Then from one or 2 verses within the chapter there is a future meaning.

In the previous lesson we looked at what Isaiah said within the context of whole chapters. Now we will go thru the book again, looking at the one or 2 verses within those chapters that also refer to Jesus. To make it easier to follow, I have put the lesson in chronological order.

### **BEFORE HIS HUMAN BIRTH** 6:1

*In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw the **Lord** seated on a throne, high and exalted.*

Reading this verse we automatically assume it is talking about God the Father. But when we go to the New Testament, we read something quite surprising. In John's gospel, chapter 12, the apostle says the majority of people in his day refused to believe in Jesus. He then adds that Isaiah had predicted this would happen. To explain how **that** could be, he continues in John 12:41,

*Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about Him. The word *glory* in this context means *holiness*.*

John tells us the person Isaiah saw was not God the Father - it was Jesus and what He was like **before** His human birth in Bethlehem. Jesus was in heaven, *seated on a throne, exalted and holy*. This was when Isaiah was called to be a prophet. He was told the people would understand his message, but year after year would deliberately refuse it. The result would be spiritual blindness and deafness, until finally nothing more could be done for them.

John the apostle says this is exactly how the people in his day have responded to Jesus' message. They understand, but do not want to believe.

So the first thing we discover about Jesus from the book of Isaiah, is **His existence in heaven**, before His human birth. He was on a throne in heaven, exalted and holy.

### **HIS HUMAN BIRTH** Isaiah 7

The **whole chapter** refers to events in Isaiah's day.

However **one verse** within the chapter has a **future** meaning about Jesus as well as in Isaiah's day 7:14

*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel.*

The meaning for the verse in Isaiah's day was about a child who was born to a young woman of marriageable age. That is the other meaning of the Hebrew word *virgin*.

But in the future meaning about Jesus, the translation of the Hebrew word is *virgin*.

We know **this** is the correct meaning because of Matthew's words in the New Testament.

Matthew tells us that Joseph and Mary are engaged. Jewish engagement was as binding as marriage. It could only be broken thru death or divorce. The punishment for pre-marital sex was death by stoning. With this context, let's read Matthew 1:19-23.

*Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man, he obeyed God's laws, and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, a public stoning, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.*

*But after Joseph had considered this, meaning he had made up his mind to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.'*

*All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel' - which means, 'God with us'.*

Isaiah predicts Jesus will be **born of a virgin**. Matthew says it happened; it was fulfilled.

## HIS PERSONHOOD Isaiah 9:6

For to us a child is **born**; to us a son is **given**.

The **birth** of a child means there is a beginning. It is referring to Jesus' humanity.

His **human** nature began when He was born in Bethlehem, so we have the phrase, *a child is born*.

But it also says, *a son is given*. You cannot give something unless it already exists.

This is referring to Jesus' **deity**.

Jesus as **deity**, the Son of God, never had a beginning, so He could not be born - He had to be given.

By using these 2 phrases, Isaiah is saying that Jesus will have 2 separate natures when He is born on this earth, **a human nature and a divine nature**.

## HIS CHARACTER Isaiah 9:6

These are not literal names by which Jesus was called, but names to show His character.

*The government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

Because each of these names has so much to tell us, I want to take them one by one.

**Wonderful Counselor** or *Wonder Counselor*, gives the idea He has amazing wisdom and knowledge in His words.

Other translations keep the 2 names separate. He will be called *Wonderful, Counselor*.

The Hebrew word *wonderful* means He will be a Person *beyond explanation*.

He is also a counselor. He says just the right things at the right time to the right people.

Either way, it is showing the humanity of Jesus as He responds and relates to others.

## Mighty God

Historic Christianity believes Jesus is not only humanity, but also deity - He is God. However when we say *Jesus is God*, many people think we mean Jesus is God the Father. But that is not true.

God the Father is one person -

Jesus is another person. He is separate from God the Father, but equal to Him in all His characteristics.

When Isaiah says Jesus is God, he is teaching the tri-unity of God.

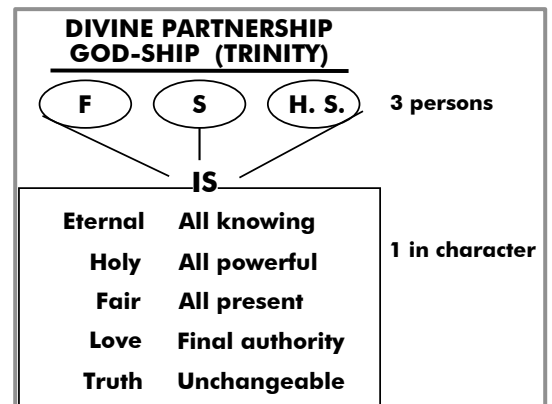
Our creeds, our profession or statement of faith says we believe there is **one** God in **3** persons.

This means there are **3** separate or distinct persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The **oneness** we talk about refers to what they are like - their attributes.

All 3 are exactly the same in their qualities.

The Father is every bit as holy as the Holy Spirit. Father, Son and Holy Spirit have exactly the same amount of power, knowledge, mercy and love. So there are 3 separate persons who are absolutely equal in their character.



Perhaps a common illustration can help us. If you have 3 people who join together to form a business and they all have equal authority, you have 3 persons, but one business. It is called a *partnership*.

So if you have 3 persons who join together to form one God-ship and they have equal authority, you have 3 persons, but one Tri-unity, a trinity - a Divine Partnership.

Two of these Persons are only in spirit form - God the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is different. While He is deity, in addition, He has a body of flesh and bones.

When we talk about God the Father and say Jesus is at His right hand, it is obvious we are talking about 2 different persons. In Scripture, the Holy Spirit is often pictured in front of the thrones.

But, if there are **3** persons, how can we say we worship *one* God?

The oneness in Scripture is never talking about their number, but their sameness. The way you describe the Father in His qualities is the way you would describe the Son or the Holy Spirit.

In addition, there are 2 Hebrew words for *one*.

When there is just **one single unit**, the Hebrew word for **one** is *yachid*.

But if you talk about one cluster of grapes – **one cluster with many parts**, the Hebrew word for **one** is *echad*. It means a compound or multi-part unity.

This is the word used when the Bible says there is one God. It is one God-ship made up of 3 separate persons who are exactly the same in quality and ability. This plurality is also seen in the name for God, *Elohim*. El means God; *Elohim* is plural – more than one, yet when it is referring to God, it is translated in the singular. It is another way to say in the one God-ship, there are 3 separate persons.

Isaiah tells us Jesus is one of the Tri-unity – One of the Divine Partnership.

As *mighty God*, He has the power of deity.

### **Possessor of Eternity**

The name *everlasting/eternal Father* in our English Bibles is not correct because the phrase is a Hebrew idiom.

The word *father* in this context means *possessor*.

Isaiah is telling us Jesus possess eternity as part of His divine nature.

Micah who was a contemporary of Isaiah confirms this concept about Jesus in Micah. 5:2

*But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for Me One who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.*

The phrase *ancient times* means *eternity*. Micah says the origin of Jesus is eternity.

Isaiah and Micah tell us that Jesus is eternal in order to prepare us for the New Testament.

From the Gospels we learn Jesus came to give eternal life. But **you cannot give what you do not have!**

In order for Jesus to be our Savior and **give** us eternal life, He had to possess it as part of Himself. (Jn. 10)

Isaiah assures us that He is possessor of eternity and therefore is qualified.

In contrast, altho we have eternal life as a gift, we cannot give it to anyone else because it is not part of our nature.

### **Prince of peace.**

Jesus is the only One who can give *inner* peace to us.

He is the only One who can give *lasting* peace to the world.

Isaiah has described the character of Jesus

In His humanity, he will be a wonderful counselor and will give peace.

In His Deity, He is eternal and has the power of deity.

### **HIS FAMILY BACKGROUND** Isaiah 7:7

*Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.*

In His humanity, Jesus will come from the royal family or **line of David**.

This gives Him the right to be King and have a Kingdom on this earth.

### **HIS MINISTRY – Offering God's grace of salvation** Isaiah 61:1-2.

*The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release for the prisoners. To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance, judgment, of our God, to comfort all who mourn.*

Looking at the chapter as a whole, Isaiah is talking about himself. He has written the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of his book to comfort his generation in the underground and a future generation in exile in Babylon. He explains how he can give exact details of people and events 100 years in the future. The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on Him. He has this ability from God the Holy Spirit. This is the **immediate meaning**.

The New Testament in Luke 4, shows us Isaiah's **future meaning**.

In the Jewish synagogue of Jesus' day, the worship included assigned readings from the Old Testament. If there was a visiting teacher, he was invited to do the reading - to be the lector.

The teacher was also invited to explain one of the readings. Everyone stood up for the reading to show respect for the word of God. They sat down afterwards, including the one who did the teaching. With this background, let's read Luke 4:16-21.

*He (Jesus) went to Nazareth, where He had been brought up and on the Sabbath day He went into the synagogue, as was His custom. And He stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. Unrolling it, He found the place where it was written, 'the Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. Then He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on Him and He said to them, **today** this scripture **is** fulfilled in your hearing.*

Notice these last words, *today this **is** fulfilled*. The New Testament tells us that verses 1-2 in Isaiah 61 refer not just to Isaiah, but also to Jesus' ministry while He was here on earth. But look how Jesus ended the quote in Luke 4:19. He stops with the phrase, *to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor - the Lord's grace*.

Looking back at Isaiah 61:2, you can see that Jesus did not finish reading the verse. The rest of the verse says, *and the day of vengeance, judgment, of our God, to comfort all who mourn*.

In other words, Jesus stopped reading in the middle of a sentence. The part that He read described His ministry as **He proclaimed God's grace**. In order to say, *today this **is** fulfilled*, He could not read the rest of the verse. That describes what He will do when He comes the second time as King.

This is a perfect example to show another difference between Jewish writing and our writing.

In Jewish writing, one verse or even one sentence, can describe 2 events that are separated by hundreds or thousands of years.

In English that is not possible. So as we read the Bible, we assume everything mentioned in a verse or everything in a single sentence will happen at the same time. But that is not always true. We have to study what the rest of the Bible says about the topic before we can know if a verse is describing one event or several events at different times.

In Isaiah 61, we have the first part of verse 2 about Jesus' first coming as Savior while the last part is about Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> coming as King to this earth.

## **HIS SUFFERING** Isaiah 52:14 – 53:12

Isaiah starts with the physical suffering of Jesus at His trial.

*Just as there were many who were appalled at Him - His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and His form marred beyond human likeness. 52:14*

From the New Testament, we know that Jesus was beaten with a leather whip with pieces of metal at the ends. A crown of thorns was pushed down over His forehead. When they finished, He hardly looked human. It was almost impossible to recognize Him.

The years of Jesus' childhood,

*He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, a young plant or sapling. 53:2*

When a person plants a seed and then sees a tender green shoot spring up and develop, there is pleasure, joy and satisfaction. This is what Isaiah is saying about Jesus. As He grew and developed in His humanity, He gave His Father pleasure, joy and satisfaction. In the New Testament, God the Father said, *This is my Son whom I love, with Him I well-pleased - with Him I have contentment.* Matt. 3:17

Jesus' years of adulthood.

*He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him; nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him. Isa. 53:2b*

Jesus came to this earth when the Roman empire was in power. It was known for its power, glamor and glory. Jewish people assumed if their Messiah came during this time, He would come with greater power and glory. But Isaiah had said, *There is no majesty to attract us to Him*.

The Jews also expected there would be something unusual in His physical appearance. But Isaiah had said He would have **no** unusual appearance. As He walked down the street there was no special look in His eye - no glow on His face - nothing physical to attract the average person.

The Jewish religious leaders had said about Jesus, *We know His family. He is just the carpenter's son*. Jesus looked like any other Jewish man. In the New Testament, people responded to Jesus, not on the basis of His physical attraction, but on the basis of who He was and what He said.

## **HIS SUFFERING** Isaiah 52:14 – 53:12 **continued**

*He was despised and rejected by men* 53:3

In John 1:11, the apostle John says about Jesus, *He came to His own land and His own people (the Jews) did not receive Him*. This rejection was also seen when the people tried to stone Him, when they tried to throw Him over a cliff, or as they shouted at His trial, *Not this man; we want Barabbas - the murderer - and crucify Jesus*.

*A man of sorrows* 53:3b

The word *sorrows* means pains. Not physical but emotional pain. Think of Jesus as He wept over Jerusalem, saying, *I wanted so much to help you, but you would have nothing to do with Me*. Or as He tried to teach the people and hundreds turned away, so that He asks the apostles, *will you also go away?* In His humanity, Jesus felt deep emotional pain.

*He was pierced for our transgressions.* 53:5

Some Bibles say *wounded*, but the Hebrew word is *pierced*. In the New Testament we read that while Jesus was still on the cross, the soldiers pierced His side.

*He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth.* 53:7

During His trial, Jesus did not respond to the taunts and mockery.

*By oppression and judgment, He was taken away.* 53:8

Jesus was taken from the garden of Gethsemane and given an illegal trial; there were false witnesses; it was held at night; He was made to testify against Himself - everything about His trial was illegal.

*For He was cut off from the land of the living.* 53:8b

Jesus died prematurely. He died in the prime of life.

*He was assigned a grave with the wicked* 53:9

The Jews intended to bury Jesus as a criminal with the other criminals. But then Isaiah says,

*And with the rich in His death*

God the Father overruled the plans of the Jews. Instead of being buried as a criminal, Jesus was buried in the tomb of a rich man - Joseph of Arimathea. As Isaiah predicted, Jesus **was** connected with the rich in His death.

*For He bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.* 53:12b

While on the cross, Jesus prayed, *Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do*.

To this point, all the verses are about His death, but then,

*He will see His offspring and prolong His days.* 53:10b

In order to do this, He has to be living. Since the previous verses have been talking about His death and burial, the implication is that now it is talking about His resurrection. The result of Jesus' death and resurrection is the Church. We believers, as the Body of Christ, are His offspring and from His throne in heaven Jesus sees us today.

Instead of 1-2 verses, all of chapter 53 is telling us about the death and resurrection of Jesus, 700 years before it happened.

People's reaction when they hear of Jesus' death. 53:4

They will either think He was suffering for His own sin or that God the Father did it to Him. But either way, they will think it has nothing to do with them.

This is why verse 5 begins with the word BUT or YET. Isaiah wants us to understand why this **really** happened. To understand it even better, I'm going to read verse 5, making the pronouns personal.

*BUT He was pierced for **my** transgressions, He was crushed for **my** iniquities; the punishment that brought **me** peace was upon Him and by His wound I am spiritually healed.*

It was His spiritual wound of separation, that spiritually healed us.

You and I put Jesus on the cross. Yes, God the Father allowed it, Pilate gave the order, the Jewish leaders of that day planned it, the Romans carried it out. But the reason **all** of it happened is because of my sin and yours, our spiritual sickness.

Verse 6 explains what this sickness is. *Each of us has turned to his own way.*

We, as humans, are determined to have our way - to run our own life. It is precisely this attitude of rebellion that separates us from God. Lucifer could not live in heaven with his rebellious attitude. So we can never live in God's presence with our rebellious nature. This is **why** Jesus came.

In His humanity, Jesus had no rebellion. He came to make payment for **our** rebellion. While on the cross, all the rebellion of everyone thruout history was dumped on Jesus. God the Father, who is holy, then had to separate Himself from His Son. He turned away and Jesus cried out, *My God, My God why have You forsaken Me.* The payment Jesus made was separation from God the Father. He made the payment for everyone. But it is not ours until we reach out and accept it.

This means each of us have to make a choice. I can be independent and decide to make my own payment. Then **I** will be separated from God forever. Or I can tell Jesus, *I deserve to be separated, but I accept the payment **You** made for me.*

To put it simply, Jesus was separated from the Father so if we accept **His** payment, we never have to be separated. Guaranteed, we can spend eternity with Him forever.

Isaiah chapter 53, written in the 700's BC, has so much meaning.

There is **future meaning about Jesus** in His suffering and the reason for it.

There is **future meaning about our lives** and why **we** need Jesus' payment.

And there is a **future meaning for the Jews**.

In the future, Jewish rabbis, living at the time, will use the beginning verses of this chapter to lead Israel in a national prayer of repentance. Notice how perfectly it fits with the plural pronouns of *us* and *our*. Isaiah 53, starting with verse 3.

*Like one from whom men hide their faces He was despised, and we, the Jewish people, esteemed Him not. Surely He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered Him stricken by God, smitten by Him, and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions as a people, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wound we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all, as the Jewish people.*

This, along with the prayer in Hosea 14, *O Lord, take away our sins. Be gracious to us and receive us...* is what the Jews as a people will pray when they accept Jesus as their Messiah. In response, Jesus will return to set up His kingdom.

Because Isaiah 53 is a direct presentation about Jesus, many wonder why the Jews do not respond - why they have not responded up to this present time. There are four reasons.

- In the past they said chapter 53 was added to the book by Christians, so it was not valid.  
But then the Dead Sea Isaiah Scroll from 150 BC was found. Isaiah 53 was in it, so that reason was removed.
- Some have said the chapter was about Jeremiah the weeping prophet.
- Others have said the chapter is about the nation of Israel. But neither Jeremiah nor Israel made payment for sin.
- A final reason, the one most often used, is that their rabbis do not accept it, so they do not accept that it is about Jesus.

This is why it is so significant, that in the future, it will be the Jewish rabbis that lead the nation to accept Jesus as their Messiah.

**JESUS' KINGDOM** – still in the future. There are details given in many of the chapters

For example, 11:2, is talking about Jesus in His humanity as King in His kingdom

*The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him - the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.*

11:6 *The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.*

11:9 *They will neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.*

This obviously did not happen when Jesus was here on earth 1900 years ago. It definitely is not true today. It will happen when Jesus returns as King to set up HIS kingdom.



Jesus and the Holy Spirit will work together so there is absolute justice and fairness in His kingdom. All the effects of sin will be removed; illness and health limitations will be gone; there will be peace and harmony between people and nations, between animals and between animals and people.

It will happen because everyone in the kingdom will accept Jesus as King and obey Him. This will be the answer to our prayers, ***Thy** kingdom come; **Thy** will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

The book of Isaiah tells us so many wonderful things about Jesus. As we read these predictions and see how they happened, our faith in God and what He says can be strengthened. It then becomes easier to believe His promises for our lives today. One of the most encouraging promises involves the culture of that day. Isaiah 42:3

*A bruised reed He will not break and a faintly burning wick He will not put out.*

Papyrus reeds were commercially grown in those days for making paper, boats, sandals and rope. There was always a person responsible to take care of the reeds as they were growing. If one was bruised or damaged, the reed was broken off and thrown away because it was unusable.



Lamps in those days were made of clay and filled with oil. A wick, like is used in our candles, was laid in the oil and lit. But after burning awhile, the wick would give off more smoke than light. It either had to be cut off a little, or if people lacked patience, they would extinguish the flame, throw out the wick and replace it with a new one.



These are pictures of us as believers. We can be bruised from past failures, bad choices, unfairness or bruised with limited health and abilities. God wants us to know *He does not break a bruised reed*. He does not push us away as tho we are unusable. He never gives up on us.

As with a wick, He will cut off from our life an action or an attitude which is getting in the way. Sometimes it is unresolved sin. But more often, our bruises have produced attitudes of complaining, self-pity, bitterness, resentment – or attitudes of failure, worthlessness, self-doubt and insecurity. These attitudes can take over our lives until there is hardly any evidence of God's life or light within us. But if we let Him cut off these attitudes, those around us will once again be able to see God's light brightly shining thru us.

*A bruised reed **He** will not break and a faintly burning wick **He** will not put out.*