

The Holocaust and Isaiah 53

The term “holocaust” means **whole burnt offering**. The Talmud (not the Old Testament) predicted that it was necessary that 6 million Jews had to die (be offered) before God would allow the Jews to return to the land. Nowhere in the Torah does God demand 6 million Jewish deaths. In fact, *God did not even allow Isaac to be offered*. The figure of 6 million is repeatedly found in newspaper reports at least **20 years before** WW2 as is the word “holocaust”.

Moreover, Judaism promotes an interpretation of Isaiah 53 that understands the “suffering servant” as **the nation of Israel**. The interpretation offered by Judaism is completely unnuanced and biased and demonstrates either a complete lack of understanding of their own scriptures or a deliberately dishonest approach. The rabbis teach a Talmudic version of “prophecy” where the messiah is replaced by the “Jewish state”. The nation becomes its own saviour. This is typical of the type of commentary that can be found online:

The Jew suffered due to other people. He was the first victim, the eternal scapegoat for the faults and misfortunes of others. The Gentiles will admit that Judah was considered accursed, yet his affliction was due to our imposing upon him the results of our own calamities (Isaiah 53:4). The Jew was punished for the sins of others (53:5). The Jew often succeeded in dedicating himself to the Law when he could. When he was forced (by outsiders) or seduced to abandon it he applied his energies in other directions: in jurisprudence, trade, science, philosophy, philanthropy. The Messiah shall come from Judah. The Jew has a natural instinct to reform things, to rectify the world. When the Jew is deprived of Torah this instinct can be misdirected. Sometimes it does good and on occasion it can do damage. Either way the Jew is hated by many Gentiles merely because he is active, is different and stands out. The sins of others are transposed onto the Jew (53:11). In the Last Days Judah shall be rich and powerful and a great nation, among the greatest that exist. AND HE SHALL DIVIDE THE SPOIL WITH THE STRONG: Judah shall be a military might, an old lion who must be dealt with carefully and with respect. AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS; Jews were accused and still are of all the sins under the sun and still more and of being criminals and controlling all the crime and mischief of the world. AND HE BARE THE SIN OF MANY, Not only was Judah made responsible for the sins of others, but he also took upon himself to make retribution for the faults of others. AND MADE INTERCESSION FOR THE TRANSGRESSORS. Jews champion the oppressed and seek to help whoever needs help even when those who are in need were the cause of their own downfall (53:12).

This demonstrates how little the Jews understand of their own Scriptures. The scapegoat **does indeed** represent the nation. The scapegoat bears the **sins of the nation** and was released in the wilderness. As such the scapegoat represents **the nation sent into exile bearing its own sin** (not gentile sin). The story of Cain and Able is based on this ritual, with Cain sent away from the sanctuary into exile (scapegoat) and Abel (goat for Yahweh) slaughtered. Cain was “accursed” because he brought the **wrong offering** (grown by *sweaty labour* [Gen 3:19] from the *cursed ground*) and Cain slew his brother out of jealousy and

anger. Cain ought to have known that **God provided** animal skins as covering for his parent's nakedness, atonement was not solely dependent on human effort. Once again, the Jews revel in their self-imposed victimhood. Similar to Cain they complain that they are vagabonds and unable to bear the punishment that is the result of their own disobedience and intransigence. And yet God is merciful and protects Cain. God does not allow the scapegoat to be killed (an "innovation" later adopted by the Rabbis) because at some future point God will forgive and cleanse the scapegoat and bring it back home. However, forgiveness requires repentance (think here of the parable of the prodigal son) but how can you forgive someone who never, ever, ever admits that they have done any wrong? Everyman's hand is against them for no reason. They are the perpetual victim and bear no blame.

Debunking a bad interpretation

The following introduction to Isaiah 53 is from Rabbi Tovia Singer via the Outreach Judaism¹ website:

Despite strong objections from conservative Christian apologists, the prevailing rabbinic interpretation of Isaiah 53 ascribes the "servant" to the nation of Israel who silently endured unimaginable suffering at the hands of its gentile oppressors. The speakers, in this most-debated chapter, are the stunned kings of nations who will bear witness to the messianic age and the final vindication of the Jewish people following their long and bitter exile. "Who would have believed our report?," the astonished and contrite world leaders wonder aloud in dazed bewilderment (53:1).²

The stimulus for the world's baffled response contained in this famed cluster of chapters at the end of the Book of Isaiah is the unexpected salvation of Israel. The redemption of God's people is the central theme in the preceding verse (52:12) where the "you" signifies the Jewish people who are sheltered and delivered by God. Moreover, the "afflicted barren woman" in the following chapter is protected and saved by God, and is also universally recognized as the nation of Israel³ (54:1).

There are so many things wrong with this interpretation that it is difficult to know where to commence. It portrays the nation of Israel as a "victim" silently enduring unmerited suffering at the hand of horrible gentiles. In the case of Isaiah, the gentiles are the Assyrians who were known for their cruelty and violence, but the interpretation conveniently leaves out the fact

that God himself brought the Assyrians against Israel because of the **nation's disobedience** and sinfulness.

"Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward" (Isa 1:4).

It is remarkable (or perhaps not) that the rabbi completely neglects the fact that the original context of Isaiah is the **near death of Hezekiah**. Hezekiah is the "suffering servant" of Isaiah 53 and he represents the faithful remnant. Answer me this rabbi.... why is the central portion of the book of Isaiah chapters 36-38 **all about the sickness and recovery of Hezekiah?**

Hezekiah was the "suffering servant" and his miraculous recovery from his death bed and the miraculous Passover deliverance of Jerusalem from Assyria are the initial subject of Isaiah 53. Hezekiah **represented the faithful remnant in the nation**. The rabbi says;

"Moreover, the "afflicted barren woman" in the following chapter is protected and saved by God, and is also universally recognized as the nation of Israel (54:1)".

The rabbi is correct. The barren woman is based on Rachel, one of the matriarchs who died in childbirth (Gen 35:16-19). But what is the saying in Isaiah 54:1 based on?

"And they said unto him, **Thus saith Hezekiah**, This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy: for the children **are come to the birth**, and *there is* not strength to bring forth". (2 Kings 19:3)

The saying comes from **the very mouth of Hezekiah** who portrays the nation as writhing in excruciating birth pangs like Rachel. The nation is about to die in childbirth. The promise to Eve was that deliverance (= the messiah) would come through childbirth (Gen 3:15) but now the nation **faced death**. How could the nation "bring forth the messiah" when the king was

about to **die childless**? How could the promise to Abraham be kept and the covenant with David if Hezekiah died?

And yet, Hezekiah willingly accepted and absorbed the divine punishment meted out against the disobedient nation. He endured the mocking and contempt of Sennacherib. He silently bore the plotting of Shebna and the pro-Assyrian party (and the drunken defeatism of the Ephraimites). **He kept faith in his God.**

Hezekiah was a faithful king and as such he represented **the faithful remnant in the nation**. The kings of Israel and Judah were believed to serve as divine agents to rule the nation. Therefore, the king held a unique position in that he was a **corporate representative** but also a **divine agent**.

In other words, the king **represented the nation to God**. Kingship had a corporate, representative function. However, the king was also meant to **represent God to the nation**. Agency was an important part of everyday life in the ancient world. Individuals such as prophets and angels mentioned in the Jewish Scriptures were thought of as ‘agents’ of God. And the key idea regarding agency in the ancient world appears to be summarized in the phrase from rabbinic literature so often quoted in these contexts: **“The one sent is like the one who sent him.”**⁴

“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, **and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it**”. (Isa 55:11)

How would this anthropomorphised prophetic “word” **prosper**?

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall **prolong his days**, and the pleasure of the LORD **shall prosper in his hand**”. (Isa 53:10)

Hezekiah was saved. On **the third day** he was raised from his death bed. The city was saved. Hezekiah was granted an extra 15 years of life. **He had a son and continued the Davidic line**. Like suffering Job, king Hezekiah kept the faith and God kept his covenant. As with Job, everyone except God had abandoned him.

So, Hezekiah proved to be the initial fulfilment of **the Emmanuel prophecy** (God with us) but the story does not end there. These are quite clearly **messianic prophecies** and **typical fulfilments**. In other words, they are repeat patterns pointing forward to an even greater deliverance.

That deliverance found its fulfilment in Jesus Christ, the true **King of the Jews** and **Son of God**. The ultimate intermediary between God and man.

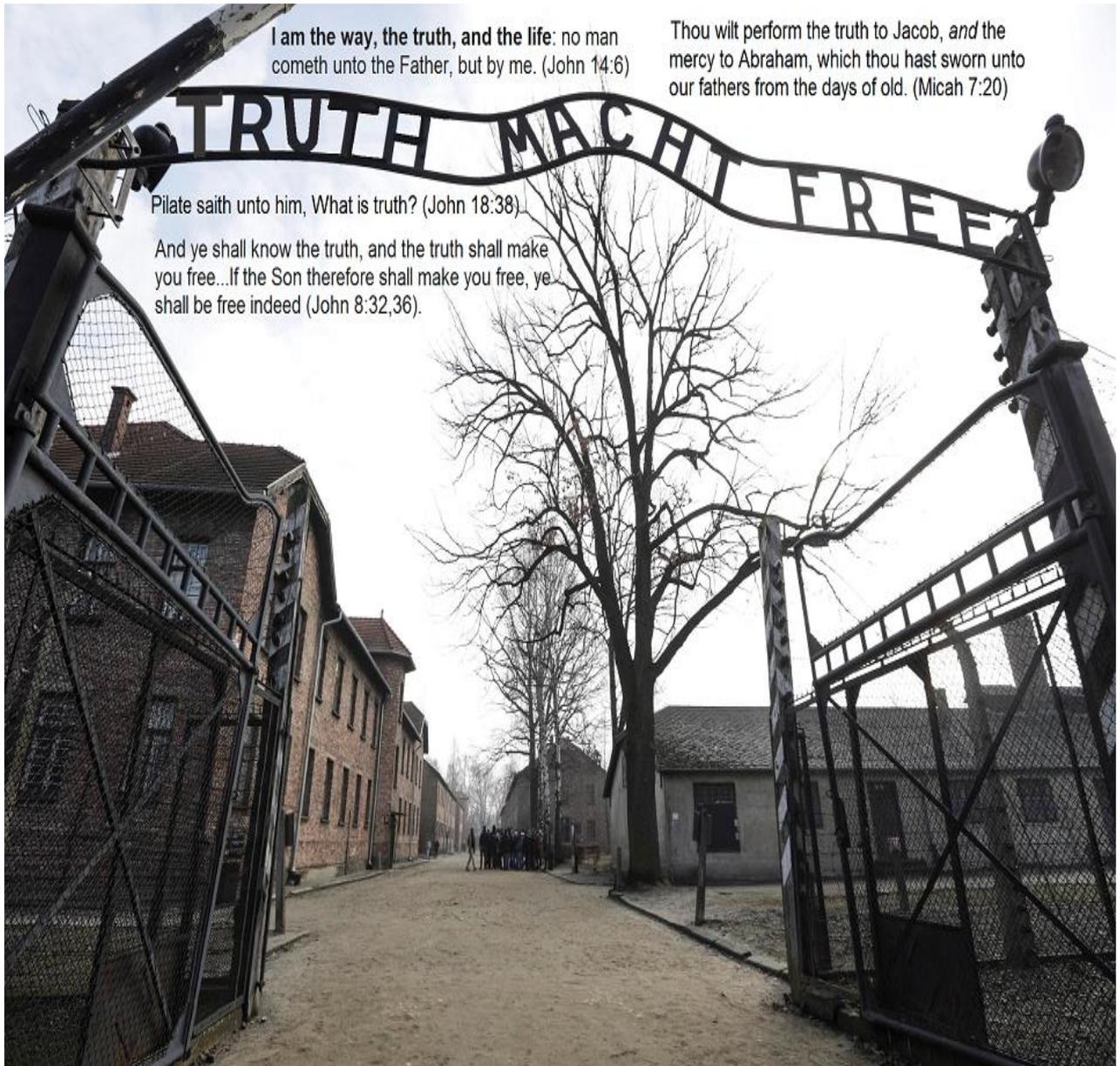
Conclusion

Isaiah 53 is initially based on Hezekiah but ultimately typical of Jesus Christ. All scripture points towards the messiah Jesus Christ. He was the perfect representative between God and man. **He was not equal to God and never claimed to be.**

The rabbis who portray the “nation of Israel” as the “suffering servant” are disingenuous and dishonest. They are presenting the Jews as perpetual victims of racist and cruel gentiles who for no apparent reason want to make them suffer. Apparently Jewish suffering has a unique vicarious quality that will “cleanse” the gentiles and herald the messianic age. Such suffering is (according to them) well pleasing to God. Of course, it is all nonsense. Any suffering that the Jews experience is a consequence of their bad behaviour and is divine punishment for disobedience. Such behaviour is not well pleasing to God. And their suffering does not expunge anyone’s guilt.

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him”. (Ezek 18:20)

Approximately 55 million people died as a consequence of WW2. Many of them were not Jews. The holocaust was not an “offering” to God. It was not a fulfilment of “Talmudic prophecy” and one does not even have to delve into the truth claims of the holocaust to understand that a historical tragedy has been fetishized and scripture has been manipulated and “spun” to propagandize for Zionism. You may be able to fool men, but you will not be able to fool God. God will not be mocked. Jacob the deceiver is about to meet his maker and he will be wrestled to a halt. I suggest that the rabbis read my commentary “Dark Sayings” and other articles on this website and brush up on their appalling lack of Old Testament understanding. <https://www.biblaridion.info/html/dark.html>



NOTES

¹ <https://outreachjudaism.org/gods-suffering-servant-isaiah-53/>

² Midrash Rabbah (Numbers XXIII.2), Zohar (Genesis & Leviticus), Talmud (Brochos 5a), Rashi, Joseph Kara, Ibn Ezra, Joseph Kimchi, David Kimchi, Nachmanadies, Abarbinbanel, et all

³ Ibn Ezra on Isaiah 53

⁴ James F. McGrath, *The Only True God: Early Christian Monotheism in its Jewish Context*, (University of Illinois Press, 2009) p. 14.