

people are unrecognized and unheeded when he comes. (b) His character is out of harmony with his surroundings, and (c) out of harmony with the world's ideals. He is (d) despised and rejected by those who at first applauded him, and (e) his early exaltation is turned into sorrow and grief. (f) Even *ice* hid our faces from him.

III. The Saviour Dying (verses 4-9).

(a) The grief and sorrow which the Messiah bore were really ours, not his own; (b) we thought he was punished of God for his own sins, while really (c) he suffered and died for our salvation, (d) for we all need a Saviour. (e) He did not resist the injustice of his treatment. (f) The chastisement by Herod, the

stripes inflicted by Pilate, the silence before Caiaphas, the irregular trials, the death between two recognized criminals, the burial with the rich—all these are foreseen and described by the prophet.

IV. The Saviour Interceding (verses 10-12).

The Messiah's death, (a) an offering for sin, (b) is to be followed by the prolongation of his days (a hint of the resurrection?), (c) for the purpose of making perpetual atonement between God and man. (d) Bitter as his agony was, he derived holy satisfaction from his own self-sacrifice. (e) He not only bore the sins of the world, but makes intercession for the sinful in all lands, in all ages. (f) He is to be honored by the sons of men.

The Lesson Word Studies

NOTE.—These Word Studies for this lesson are based on the text of the Revised Version.

THE SERVANT OF JEHOVAH.—Our lesson passage for to-day is the last and greatest of four so-called "Servant passages" (comp. 42, 1, ff.; 49, 1-6; 50, 4-9). The reference to the Servant of Jehovah in these passages, and more especially the reference to the suffering servant in our lesson for to-day, has always been regarded by the Christian church as a direct conscious prophecy of the Christ. Against this prevalent view some have argued, explaining the Servant as a *collective* idea representing either the nation of Israel or some smaller community within the nation, as for example, the prophetic order, the faithful remnant, or the ideal Israel. Since in many portions of this same prophecy Israel is referred to as the Servant, it is argued that consistency of interpretation requires that the term "servant" shall in every case be taken to have the same meaning. Others think that the conception in the prophet's mind becomes more and more clear and definite as the prophecy advances from one stage to the next, beginning with the thought of the Servant nation, advancing to the conception of the ideal personal representative of that nation, and culminating in a clear and conscious conception of a personal Messiah. Possibly the latter view may not be far from representing the actual facts. We know that the prevalent view of the Christian church regarding this last and greatest of the Servant passages is indorsed in the New Testament (comp. Acts 8, 26-35), and cannot therefore have been incorrect. And certain it is that all Messianic prophecy of the Old Testament reaches its culmination in this fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. Written centuries before the advent of the Messiah whom it as certainly portrays, yet reading in every line as if written under the very shadow of Calvary, it must ever stand as the most wonderful instance of divinely inspired prophecy of a personal Messiah who was to be the Saviour of sinful men.

Verse 13. Shall deal wisely.—Literally, *shall prosper*. His career shall be crowned with complete success.

Exalted . . . lifted up . . . very high.—The coming exaltation of the Servant in contrast to his past abasement is set forth in this and the two succeeding verses (13-15), which verses are introductory in character, briefly stating the import of the entire passage.

14, 15. These verses are to be taken as a single compound sentence, as the punctuation of the Revision shows.

As many were astonished.—Amazed and horrified at the spectacle of unparalleled suffering. The parenthetical clause which follows explains more in detail the repugnance felt by those who beheld the Servant in his former abject condition.

Sprinkle.—The verb rendered "to sprinkle" means literally "to scatter (a liquid) in small drops," as in ceremonial act of cleansing (comp.

Lev. 4, 6). Thus shall the Servant, once shunned as unclean, make **clean many nations**.

1. Verses 1-9 of chapter 53 present a view of the Messiah's career as he appeared to his contemporaries at the time of his great humiliation—that is, the period of his life among men.

Our message.—Literally, *that which he have heard*. The things now spoken by the prophet, who, as one among his people, speaks of himself as receiving with them this message or report. A negative answer seems to be implied by the question. Too strange and wonderful to be believed has been the message concerning the humiliation and subsequent glory of the Messiah. It is not believed because to none has **the arm of Jehovah** (his power) been revealed.

2. He grew.—The Servant, the Messiah.

Before him.—Jehovah.

As a tender plant.—"I am the true vine, my Father is the husbandman" (John 15, 1).

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