

## Forbidden Chapter of the Tanakh

**The Tanakh, (Old Testament)** is highly esteemed in Judaism as it contains the **Word of God**, the history of Israel, and God's prophecy for the future. **Yet, one chapter is IGNORED to the point of being considered FORBIDDEN by rabbis.** *This chapter used to be read in synagogues as part of the Haftarah, readings from the Prophets after the Torah reading in a Jewish service.*

**Highly respected Jewish writings view this single chapter as a prophecy of the coming Messiah, but it has been removed from the Haftarah.** *Why? When Israel is still waiting for their Messiah, why would a prominent chapter prophesying about Him be excised from the Jewish faith?*

### What is the Forbidden Chapter of the Tanakh?

#### Isaiah 53

One of the mistakes Believers make about Jewish people is presuming they have extensive knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures. However, the average Jewish person may know little more than what they hear in synagogue each Sabbath. Some, like many Christians, only attend services on the two major holidays in the year, which for **Jewish** people are **Passover** and **Yom Kippur**.

See what happens when **Jewish** people on the street hear the prophecies of **Isaiah 53** and come to understand that **the Messiah would suffer, be rejected, and killed.** The interviewer does a beautiful job of getting some interviewees to explain in their own words the meaning of **Isaiah 53's** passages. He goes on to present Scriptures from all over the Tanakh that reveal not only prophecies of the Messiah, but each person's individual need for what the Messiah offers.

You'll be surprised at the responses when people **are finally** asked, *"Do you know anyone in history who **FULFILLS** these prophecies?"*

Key passages mentioned in this video can help you share the Gospel through the Old Testament. Aside from Isaiah 53, some of them include: Ezekiel 18:4, Daniel 12:2, Daniel 9, Micah 5, and Isaiah 49.

## The Fulcrum (the support) of the Entire Universe

**Isaiah 53** The **Dead Sea Scrolls** were first discovered in late 1946 in caves along the **Dead Sea**. The ancient settlement of Khirbet Qumran held millennial old sealed clay jars which contained about **1200 manuscripts, including more than 300 Biblical texts**. Arguably the greatest discovery at Qumran is the Great Isaiah Scroll, a nearly complete scroll that was copied around 125 BC. It contains all 66 chapters of Isaiah.

In this book, we will focus on a particularly interesting passage in the second half of

In **Isaiah: chapter 53**, it has been called the Holy of Holies of the Old Testament. *These twelve verses offer a summary of the entire New Testament, written more than 700 years before Jesus Christ was born.* A number of passages in the Hebrew Scriptures describe the victory of the Messiah as the ruler of the world, and the Jews have focused on those. This chapter provides another unexpected purpose for the great King; it's an incredible prophecy that describes the Messiah as a servant who suffers and dies for His people.

### Isaiah's Writing

**The Book of Isaiah opens with a declaration of its authorship.** In verse 1:1, the prophet Isaiah, son of Amoz, states that he wrote his prophecy during the reigns of **"Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah."** Chapter 6 of Isaiah describes a vision that took place *"in the year that King Uzziah died,"* — about 740/739 BC.<sup>[1]</sup> Isaiah volunteers to be a prophet in this passage, and the LORD gives him a dismal task:

*The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.*  
*Isaiah 1:1 KJV*

Throughout Isaiah, the heart of God cries out to the hard-hearted people of **Judah**. He alternates back and forth between rebuke and comfort, rebuke and comfort. Meanwhile, **Isaiah offers some of the most profound prophetic passages in all of Scripture, describing the future sometimes years, centuries, and even millennia in advance.** In the section, where we find chapter 53. I'm calling it the **Fulcrum of the Entire Universe**. That might sound a bit heady, but this passage truly is the pivot point of all history. Here we find the Messiah as a sacrifice who suffers to pay for the sins of the people.

The two ethnic roots of Judaism are actually divided over Isaiah 53. *The Ashkenazi Jews were so disturbed by this chapter that they removed it from their Bible ALTOGETHER.* The Sephardic Jews *thankfully left it in.* *When the Dead Sea Scrolls were found, the Great Isaiah Scroll included Isaiah 53 with all its unhampered power. What's more, it dates to the second century BEFORE Christ was born, demonstrating the existence of these verses in the book of Isaiah long before Jesus entered history and died.*

The Israeli Museum has a special building dedicated to the **Great Isaiah Scroll, and Isaiah 53 cries out from it.** The original book of **Isaiah** was written over the course of **Isaiah's** adulthood between 740 and 686 BC, *long before many of the events it describes in advance occurred. This passage is so important that it is cited in all four Gospels as well as Acts, Romans and 1 Peter.*<sup>[3]</sup> What makes it so important? **THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS CHRIST.**

## Crucifixion

We know that **crucifixion** was not *invented* until the **Persian Empire**, after which it was widely adopted by the **Romans.**<sup>[4]</sup> The official form of **execution** in **Israel** was **stoning**. It's particularly startling, therefore, to find the **crucifixion** of the **Messiah** detailed in **Isaiah** centuries **before** this form of execution was invented.

**Psalm 22** is another important passage that describes **Jesus'** death from the viewpoint of **Christ hanging** on the **cross**. **His unbroken bones, His thirst, His pierced hands and feet, His humiliation and ridicule, and even the gambling done for His clothes** are all described by David in Psalm 22, nearly 1000 years before the crucifixion took place. Zechariah 12:10 adds to the picture, declaring, *"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced,"* offering a description by the LORD of those who will see Him at His return.

Here in Isaiah 53, we find the purpose of Christ's death written centuries in advance. Isaiah is a *supernatural* book, and this is a *supernatural* passage.

## Deutero-Isaiah

*Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?*

— *Isaiah 53:1*

It is popular these days to **split Isaiah into two parts, crediting the authorship of the first 39 chapters to Isaiah, son of Amoz, and chapters 40 to 66 to an entirely different person (Deutero-Isaiah)**, who lived hundreds of years later. The first part of the book is seen as a series of **warnings** and rebukes made by the original Isaiah, while the last part is seen as a series of **comforting** passages made by **Deutero-Isaiah** after the Babylonian captivity.

It is a fact that the Book of Isaiah describes events that took place **long after the death of Isaiah, son of Amoz**. *Secular historians and Bible critics have dismissed these prophetic passages as written **after the fact***. They do not recognize **Isaiah's divine inspiration**; they presume that somebody else wrote those prophetic verses **after** they took place.

Isaiah doesn't just prophesy to the families of Judah, and he doesn't just speak to the people of his day. He cries out the words of God to the many lands surrounding Judah — and unto the whole world.<sup>[6]</sup> He declares that he speaks to future generations:

*Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever. (Isaiah 30:8)*

Isaiah prophesied from about 740–686 BC. The Kingdom of Israel in the north was conquered by the *Assyrians* in 722 BC, and we find in Isaiah 36–37 that the Kingdom of Judah **nearly** suffered the same fate. God protected Judah from its enemies because faithful King Hezekiah of Judah trusted in the LORD. It would take several more generations for Judah and its capital at Jerusalem to fall to *Nebuchadnezzar* of Babylon in 586 BC.

Yet, Isaiah does not focus much on *Assyria*, the *enemy* of **his** day. He repeatedly speaks of the **future**, about the rise and fall of *Babylon*.<sup>[7]</sup> He describes long in **advance** the ascent of the **Persian, Cyrus the Great**, whom the LORD calls by name in **Isaiah 44:28–45:6**. *“That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd,... That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.”<sup>[8]</sup>*

**Isaiah 44:28-45:6 KJV**

*<sup>28</sup> That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.*

*<sup>45</sup> Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;*

***<sup>2</sup> I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:***

***<sup>3</sup> And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. <sup>4</sup> For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. <sup>5</sup> I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:***

***<sup>6</sup> That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else.***

Through His prophet **Isaiah**, the **LORD** constantly speaks of the **distant** future. He does this as a sign of His **eternal** power, because He knows the stubbornness of His hearers:

***I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I shewed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.***

***Isaiah 48:3-5***

There are a variety of *external* and *internal* facts about **Isaiah** that point to a **single author**.<sup>[9]</sup> Jewish tradition has always attributed the book to **Isaiah** alone, and in the **Dead Sea Scrolls** we find the **Great Isaiah Scroll** has no division at all after chapter 39. **It is a single large scroll, completely credited to Isaiah, son of Amoz.** In his book **The Unity of Isaiah**, Oswald Allis jokes, “**Obviously the scribe was not conscious of the alleged fact that an important change of situation, involving an entire change of authorship, begins with chapter 40.**”<sup>[10]</sup>

**The writing of Isaiah is among the best, most beautiful and skilled poetry in all the ancient world. This excellent writing skill continues from chapter 1 to chapter 66. What’s more, we see no Babylonian influence in his vocabulary. In the post-exilic books of Esther, Ezra or Nehemiah, we find a range of Babylonian vocabulary and idioms, but Isaiah contains only pure pre-exilic Hebrew.**

The subject matter in both halves of **Isaiah** is **rebellion** and **idolatry**, problems that had passed away after the **Babylonian** exile. The land of **Israel** described in **Isaiah** is the rocky, mountainous land of Israel and not the wide, flat land of the Fertile Crescent.

***And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.***

— ***Isaiah 2:19***

***Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, slaying the children in the valleys under the cliffs of the rocks?***

— ***Isaiah 57:5***

**Isaiah** constantly calls **God**, “***The Holy One of Israel***” throughout his entire book. It’s a name used in only **six** verses by other Bible writers. **Isaiah** uses it **repeatedly**, 12 times in chapters 1–39 and 14 times in chapters 40–66.

There are only a couple of reasons to split up **Isaiah** between two or more writers. The **first** is a distinct bias against **predictive prophecy**. Those who *doubt* God’s existence and *deny* His power will not accept the reality that **God is the First and the Last, “Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.”**<sup>[11]</sup> They *refuse* to believe that **God** spoke to **Isaiah** and told him things in advance. They therefore attribute the prophetic passages to other writers.

A misunderstanding of the **purposes** of prophecy might be a **second** reason to split up **Isaiah**. There are those like A.B. Davidson who force the prophet into a narrow box, relegating his words to the small groups of people around him. *These critics will not accept that **Isaiah** wrote to distant peoples and future times, and they will feel obliged to credit **other writers** with **Isaiah’s** words to broader audiences.*

*Taken at face value, however, the internal and external evidence point to a single **Isaiah** who saw the throne room of the LORD and spoke to all of us from the heart of the eternal **Godhead**. We should not be surprised that **Isaiah** sometimes offers stern rebuke and then turns and speaks with comfort. His words are communicating to us from **God**, who hates the sins of His wayward people, but who loves them and longs to heal them just the same.*

Bible critics invented “**Deutero-Isaiah**” for their own purposes, **without solid evidence**. It’s frankly irrational to suggest that one of the greatest, most skilled writers of all time just **vanished** from history. There was never even a hint of any other writer until modern scholars declared they knew better. **Well before the time of the New Testament, all understood that Isaiah had written the entire book.**

***Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?***

**— Isaiah 53:1**

**The Isaiah who wrote Isaiah 53 and the Isaiah who wrote Isaiah 6 *are the same Isaiah*. John is telling us — and the entire Bible is telling us — that there is only one Isaiah.**

***And yet, Jesus accomplished on the Cross what God set out in eternity past to do, and that was to atone for sins, so that those stained with sin could be cleansed, washed clean, made holy and righteous in God's eyes.***

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## **RESOURCES**

**Forbidden Chapter of the Tanakh**

<https://www.jewishvoice.org/read/blog/forbidden-chapter-tanakh>

**The Fulcrum of the Entire Universe**

<https://khouse.org/articles/2017/1295/>

For J.T.P. - The Forbidden Chapter in the Tanakh... (Includes a video)

<http://www.solasisters.com/2015/04/for-jtp-forbidden-chapter-in-tanakh.html#:~:text=The%2053rd%20chapter%20in%20Isaiah%20is%20referred%20to,from%20the%20regular%20readings%20in%20the%20synagogues%20today>