

# Concerning the Sufferings of the Messiah.

by John Gill

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*John Gill's sermon explores the prophetic scriptures that foretell the sufferings of the Messiah, culminating in their fulfillment in Jesus Christ.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 22:1, Isaiah 53:5, Zechariah 12:10, Matthew 26:31, Matthew 27:35, Luke 24:25-27, John 19:37, Acts 3:18, 1 Corinthians 15:3, 1 Peter 1:11

**Topics:** "Suffering Of Christ", "Messianic Prophecies"

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## Description

John Gill preaches on the sufferings of the Messiah, emphasizing the prophetic significance of Psalms 22 and Isaiah 53. He explains how these scriptures foreshadowed the trials and tribulations that Jesus would endure, including betrayal, rejection, and crucifixion, all of which were fulfilled in Christ's life. Gill highlights that the New Testament writers consistently referenced these prophecies to affirm Jesus as the Messiah, who suffered not for his own sins but for the transgressions of humanity. The sermon underscores the importance of recognizing these prophecies as integral to understanding the nature and purpose of Christ's suffering and the glory that follows.

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## Transcript

The Prophecies Respecting the Messiah

CHAPTER X.

Concerning the sufferings of the Messiah; wherein Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 are particularly considered: as also the several circumstances which were to attend these sufferings.

The writers of the New Testament, as they give an account of the sufferings of Jesus, so they appeal to the books of the Old Testament, as containing prophecies which speak of the Messiah's sufferings; from whence they reasoned with the Jews (Acts 17:2, 3), opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead; and that that Jesus whom they preached was Christ. They aver, that the divine Spirit in the prophets (1 Pet. 1:11) testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ unto them, as well as the glory that should follow; and that when they spoke of the sufferings of Jesus, they said (Acts 26:22, 23), none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say, should come to pass; and that, in what the Jews did to Jesus, was fulfilled, what (Acts 3:18) God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets.

Nay, Jesus himself, in reproving some of his disciples for their dullness and unbelief, said unto them (Luke 24:25-27), O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? therefore beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself; that is, those things which chiefly concerned his sufferings. Now, seeing there are such manifest appeals to the books of the Old Testament, as containing prophecies of a suffering Messiah, which had their fulfillment in Jesus, my business in this chapter will be, First, To consider those prophecies which speak of him as such, and attempt to approve that they belong to him, and him only.

Secondly, To point out the several parts of his sufferings according to these prophecies. And, Thirdly, Take a view of the several circumstances which were to attend those sufferings. First, I shall consider those prophecies which speak of the Messiah as suffering, and attempt to prove that they belong to him, and him only. Now the principal prophecies which speak of this affair, and are generally understood to belong thereunto, are contained in Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 which I shall particularly consider. 1st, The Twenty Second Psalm is commonly understood by Christian interpreters to be a prophecy of the Messiah as suffering; and indeed it cannot with any tolerable color or pretense be applied to any other.

That one single individual person is spoken of, throughout the Psalm, the whole series and connection thereof manifestly shew, and therefore the whole body of the Jewish nation, [1] or the congregation of Israel, cannot be intended. Besides, this person is not only distinguished from the viler sort of the people, by whom he was reproached and reviled, verse 6-8 but also from those who are called the brethren, the congregation of Israel, and those who fear the Lord, verse 22, 23 before whom he was to praise the Lord.

And as a single person, so a suffering person is certainly intended, as is manifest from his being represented as one forsaken of God, despised by men, encompassed by his enemies, by whom he is cruelly racked and tortured, his bones dislocated, his hands and feet pierced, and he even brought to the dust of death. Now this single and suffering person can be no other than the Messiah; some of the Jewish writers, [2] indeed, would have Esther to be the subject of this prophecy, to whom not one sentence, nor single word in the whole Psalm, can with any tolerable shew of reason be applied.

Others, and with much more appearance of truth, would have David intended; but yet there are some things in this Psalm, which, in their plain, obvious and literal sense, cannot be applied to him, as the shooting out of the lip, and shaking the head at him, by wicked persons, using at the same time that very form of words mentioned in verse 8 the dislocation of his joints, verse 14 the piercing of his hands and feet, verse 16 the parting of his garments and casting lots upon his vesture, verse 18 neither of which were true of David, but were to be accomplished in the Messiah, and had their full and literal completion in Jesus, as will be more particularly observed hereafter.

And that the Messiah is intended in this Psalm, may be collected from the title; upon, or concerning Aijeleta Shahaar, which respects the subject thereof, and may be rendered, the hind of the morning, which well agrees with the Messiah, and is expressive of his swiftness and readiness in appearing for the salvation of his people, and with our Jesus, who in the very morning of his infancy, was hunted after by Herod, and his agents, to take away his life; Others render it the morning star, [3] which is one of the titles of Jesus (Rev. 22:16).

The Targum expresses it by the daily morning sacrifice, which was typical of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, and is very justly taken notice of here, where the sufferings of the

Messiah are so particularly set forth, which were to be a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of men. Besides, the person treated of in this Psalm, is one in whom the happiness of God's people was much concerned; by whom the meek were to be satisfied, and enjoy eternal life, as the consequence of his sufferings, and therefore are called upon to praise the Lord on that account, verse 23-26 Moreover, the conversion of the Gentiles through the preaching of the gospel, which was peculiar to the days of the Messiah, was to follow upon the sufferings of this person.

Nay, even some Jewish writers [4] have been obliged to apply some parts of this Psalm to the Messiah, which they evidently saw could not in any tolerable sense be referred to any other. 2dly, The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is another prophecy, which is generally understood by Christian interpreters of the Messiah and his sufferings. The modern Jews, indeed, not being able to make it suit with their now generally received notions of the Messiah, have endeavored to substitute some other person as the subject thereof.

It would be both tedious and needless to reckon up the several different persons to whom they endeavor to apply this prophecy; all disagreeing with each other; which shews the wretched uncertainty they are under, since they have left the true, plain, obvious, and anciently received sense thereof; some referring it to Abraham, others to Moses, others to Ezra, others to Zerobabel, others to any righteous person in general; all which senses are weak, ridiculous and impertinent, there being no manner of foundation in the whole prophecy for an application of it to any of those persons, and therefore deserve not our consideration.

The principal opinions, and which seem mostly to prevail among them, are, that this prophecy is to be understood either of the body of the people of Israel in general, or of Josiah or Jeremiah, in particular; though in each of them they go contrary to their own Targum, [5] Talmud, [6] and other ancient writings of theirs; [7] there are some [8] who strenuously contend for the former, namely, that the whole body of the people of Israel, in captivity, is intended, which can never be the true sense of the prophecy; for one single individual person is spoken of from the beginning to the end thereof, who is manifestly distinguished in verses 4-8 from the people of Israel, whose sins and sorrows he was to bear, and for whose transgressions he was to be stricken and wounded.

Abarbinel would have king Josiah here intended, who was slain by Pharaoh Necho at Megiddo, and supposes that it is the report of his death which is complained of in verse 1. as what none would believe, by reason of his celebrated piety; he farther supposes that he is said in verse 2 to grow up as a tender plant, because of his early devotion, and the great progress he made therein; that he is said to be despised, verse 3 because he was killed by Necho, a contemptible man; that he was a man of sorrow, because often sick and troubled with the gout; [9] that it appears he bore the griefs of the people, verse 4 since the sins of the nation caused his death, verse 5 that it is a mistake that the people were much addicted to the law in his time, for he says, verse 6 all we, like sheep, have gone astray, and that God would revenge his death upon many nations.

But Abarbinel here contradicts himself, for he at other times, with other Jews, would have the prophecy understood of the people of Israel, and therefore not of Josiah; besides, here are several things said relating to Josiah, of which some are true, others notoriously false, and destitute of all manner of proof; it is true indeed that he was a very pious prince, and devoted himself very early to religion, but then it is notoriously false that the people were not much addicted to the law in his time; for it was in his time that the book of the law was found, the covenant between God and the people renewed, a general reformation

obtained, and such a passover kept as never had been since the times of the judges: it is also false, that the sins of the people were the occasion of Josiah's death, but rather his own rashness, vanity, and ambition, in meddling in an affair to which he did not seem to have any real call; and it is equally as false, that God revenged his death upon many nations; nor was Pharaoh Necho, by whom he was slain, a contemptible person, but a very potent and considerable prince; his saying that none would believe the report of Josiah's death, wants proof, as well as his representing him as a sickly person, and subject to the gout.

But to let pass these things, as not worthy of consideration, it may easily be observed, that there are many things in this prophecy which can by no means agree with him; as that he did no violence, the contrary is evident in the case of Pharaoh-Necho; that he bore the sins of others, and died for them, and made his soul an offering for sin; that his days were prolonged, that the pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hand; much less could it be said of him, Who shall declare his generation?

Others [10] would have Jeremiah intended, in which they are followed by Grotius, and this the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy seems to incline to: But the characters given of the person, who is the subject of this prophecy, by no means agree without Jeremiah, for this person is represented as one without guilt, entirely free from sin, and who had never gone astray, like other men; as one that was to suffer for the sins of others, which sufferings he was to bear with the utmost patience; nay, even to intercede for those transgressors who were the cause of them; and though he was to be cut off, or die, yet he was to live again, have a large number of disciples and followers, and be very much exalted and dignified; which cannot be said of Jeremiah, who was subject to the same sinful infirmities as other men are, was not wounded nor bruised, nor did he die for the sins of his people; and as for the sufferings which he underwent for them, he was far from bearing them with patience; for he even cursed the day wherein he was born, [11] on the account thereof; he prayed that he might see the vengeance of God upon them; that God would pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter; neither had he a large number of disciples, nor was he exalted and extolled, as this person is represented to be.

But all and every part of this prophecy exactly agrees with the Messiah Jesus, whose first appearance was mean and abject, on the account of which he was despised by men, by whom he suffered many things, which he bore with inexpressible patience, and at last death itself, which was an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of all his people, which being laid on him, he bore in his own body on the tree, and being raised from the dead, is now exalted, extolled, and made very high, at his Father's right hand, where he ever lives to intercede for transgressors; and has ever since had a large number of disciples, who have embraced his doctrines, and espoused his cause; a seed which have served him, and will continue to do so, till time shall be no more.

Secondly, Having considered those two remarkable prophecies which speak of the Messiah as suffering; I proceed to consider the several parts of his sufferings, as they are pointed out in those prophecies, and observe their fulfillment in Jesus. 1st, He was to undergo much reproach from men, to be despised, (Isa. 53:3; Ps. 22:6) and rejected by them; nay, to be accounted a worm and no man. How much Jesus was slighted and disesteemed by the men of his generation, on the account of his mean parentage, education, outward poverty, the despicableness of his followers, etc. is notorious enough; as well as how he was flouted, jeered, and scoffed at, when upon the cross, by his enemies, who used the very words in Psalm 22:8 wagging their heads at him. 2dly, He was to be smote and buffeted; this judge of Israel was to be smote with a rod upon the cheek, (Micah 5:1.) as Jesus was, both by the Jewish and Roman soldiers,

which he very patiently endured; and, as was prophesied of him (Isa. 1:6), gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame and spitting. 3dly, He was to suffer death for the sins of his people; he was not only to be wounded (Isa. 53:5, 8, 12; Ps. 22:15) and bruised for their transgressions, but to be cut off out of the land of the living, his soul was to be poured out unto death, and he brought into the dust thereof; accordingly Jesus died for our sins; (1 Cor. 15:3) according to these scriptures. 4thly, As he was to die, so he was to die the death of the cross, which might be collected from the piercing of his hands and feet, the disjuncting of his bones, and the prodigious fever which was to seize him, and dry up his strength like a potsherd, and cause his tongue to cleave to his jaws, all which circumstances, usually attending the crucifixion of persons, were prophesied of in the twenty-second Psalm.

Now it is manifest enough that Jesus was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; though it was very unlikely that he ever should have died in that manner, that not only being a Roman punishment, but also what was not usually inflicted on persons guilty of the crime with which he was charged, and for which he was condemned; but so it was, that these prophecies might be fulfilled, as well as his own predictions be verified. 5thly, He was to be buried and laid in the grave, which was the finishing part of his humiliation.

Isaiah says of the Messiah, (Isa. 53:9) that he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, which words may be rendered thus, he put, or placed his grave with the wicked, but, his tombstone, wytnb [12] or sepulchral monument, was with the rich; which was literally fulfilled in Jesus, whose grave, though it was put under the care and custody of the wicked soldiers, who were placed there to watch, lest the disciples should remove the body, and say he was risen from the dead, which circumstance attending his interment, might seem somewhat dishonorable, yet, there being a famous tomb erected over it, at the charge of Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, rendered his burial honorable, which honor was done him, because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Hereby another prophecy appears to be fulfilled, which speaks of the Messiah's burial, in Isaiah 11:10 and his rest shall be glorious, this may very well be understood of the grave, which is a place of rest, where, as Job says, Job 3:17 The wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest. The Vulgate renders the words thus, erit sepulchrum ejus gloriosum," his grave shall be glorious." I have already proved, that this prophecy belongs to the Messiah. Abarbinel owns it, [13] and not only so, but also acknowledges, that this clause may be expounded of the Messiah's honorable burial.

The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy ought to take this as a full answer to his exception, out of Grotius and White, against the prophecy in Isaiah. To conclude this head; the occasion, nature, efficacy, and intent of the Messiah's sufferings, as delivered in those prophecies, appear to be the very same as those of the sufferings of Jesus, delivered in the New Testament. The occasion of the Messiah's sufferings was not to be for any sin of his own, but for the sins of others, for which his death was to be a propitiatory sacrifice, whereby sin was to be abolished and done away, peace and pardon procured, and an everlasting righteousness brought in, and this upon the account of all the people of God; for he was to bear the sins of many, and be stricken for the transgressions of his people; all which perfectly agrees with those doctrines respecting the occasion, nature, efficacy, intent, and extent of the sufferings of Jesus, which the New Testament abounds with.

But I proceed, Thirdly, To consider the several circumstances which were to attend the death and sufferings of the Messiah. And I shall begin, 1st, With the hypocrisy and treachery of one of his familiar friends; that Jesus was betrayed by Judas, one of his disciples, not only the evangelists affirm, but the

Jews themselves acknowledge in the account which they themselves. gave of the life and actions of Jesus. [14] Now this, Jesus says, was to come to pass, (John 13:18) that the scripture might be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lift up his heel against me.

The scripture referred to is Psalm 41:9 which Psalm, in its literal, and obvious sense, wholly belongs to the Messiah. In verse 1-3, the happiness of those persons is set forth, who should consider the poor, that is, the Messiah in his low estate, one of whose characters is lowly or poor, Zechariah 9:9 in verse 5, his enemies are represented wishing for his death, saying, When shall he die and his name perish? which was the thing the Jews so earnestly desired, and so much longed for, with respect to Jesus, and never left plotting till they had effected it; which hypocrisy, perfidy, treachery, and vile designs of theirs, are very aptly described in verses 6, 7 where the true complexion and actions of the Jews, in the times of Jesus, are expressed to the life; see Matthew 22:15-18 and chapter 26:3, 4 and this thing which they so much desired, they brought about by suborning false witnesses, and bringing a wrong charge, and false accusation against him, which is signified in verse 8 an evil disease, l[y]lb rbd a word of Belial, a wicked word, or false accusation, say they, cleaveth fast unto him, which was that of making himself a king, forbidding to give tribute to Caesar (Luke 23:2), which succeeded according to their wishes, to the taking away of his life; and therefore, in an exulting and triumphing manner, they say, And now that he lieth, that is, in the grave, as the word bkç is sometimes used; see 2 Samuel 7:12, he shall rise up no more, that is, from the dead, though that was a mistake of theirs, for he was raised from the dead, for which he prays, verse 10 that he might requite these his enemies, as he did, by destroying their city, temple, and nation.

Now all these things must needs be very afflicting to the Messiah, and he mentions them here by way of complaint; but yet what was an aggravation of them, and made them still more heavy, was the deceitfulness and treachery of one of his disciples, who betrayed him into the hands of his enemies; and he complains of it as such in verse 9. Yea mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against me Though he concludes the Psalm with joy and thankfulness for God's raising him from the dead, exalting him with his own right hand, and setting him before his face for ever, verse 11-13.

There is indeed one thing which may seem to render this Psalm inapplicable to the Messiah, and so to Jesus, and that is, this person confesses himself to be a sinner in verse 4 I said, Lord be merciful unto me, and heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee. The words may be rendered thus, heal my soul, that is, delivered me out of my sorrows and afflictions, [15] dl ytafj yk because I have made an offering for sin unto thee; the word afj in Pihel, is frequently used to expiate, atone, or make an offering for sin; (see Exodus 29:36; Leviticus 6:20; 9:15; Ps.2:7.

And in Hithpahel, to purify, or cleanse, oneself from sin; see Numbers 19:12, 13, 20 and though the word is not so frequently used in Kal, in the sense of making an offering for sin; yet some instances may be produced, where it seems to require such a translation; thus in Leviticus 5:7, If he be not able to bring a lamb, then shall he bring wfça ta his trespass-offering, afj rça which he shall, or is to offer for sin, two turtledoves, etc. Again in verse 11, If he be not able to bring two turtle doves -- then shall he bring his offering afj which he shall offer for sin, offeret pro peccato suo, Vulg.

Lat. the tenth part of an ephah etc. besides, tafj is frequently used for a sin offering; (see Ex. 29:14; Lev. 4:3, 8, 21, 24, 29, 33, 34), which well agrees with the Messiah, who was to make his soul an offering for sin (Isa. 53:10), and with Jesus, who was made sin (2 Cor. 5:21), that is, an offering for sin, for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. From the whole it appears, that this

Psalm is a literal prophecy of the Messiah, and that Judas's betraying of Jesus, was a literal accomplishment of the passage referred to in it.

I proceed, 2dly, To consider another circumstance which was to attend the Messiah as suffering, and that is his being sold, by the same person that betrayed him, for thirty pieces of silver. That Jesus was sold at such a price, cannot well be denied, neither is it: Judas agreed with the chief priests to deliver him into their hands, on this consideration, who, having done his work, receives his wages; but his conscience afterwards accusing him for this vile and barbarous action, he returned them the money, acknowledging his guilt; but they not judging it lawful put this money into the treasury, because it was the price of blood, bought the potter's field with it, to bury strangers in; all which was exactly according to the prophecies of the Old Testament, for the evangelist, when he had given the historical narration of these things, observes, That (Matthew 27:9, 10) then was fulfilled, that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value: and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

This prophecy not appearing in any of the writings which bear the name of Jeremy, but being in the prophecy of Zechariah, chapter 11:12, 13 creates some difficulty; which, in order to remove, let it be observed, that the sacred writings were divided by the Jews into three parts; the first is called the law, which contains the five books of Moses; the second the prophets, which contain the former and the latter prophets; the former prophets began at Joshua, [16] the latter at Jeremy; the third was called Cetubim, the Hagiographa, or holy writings, which began with the book of Psalms.

Now, as this whole third and last part is called the Psalms, Luke 24:44 because it began with that book, so all that part which contained the latter prophets, beginning at Jeremy, for the same reason, might be called by his name: hence a passage standing in the prophecy of Zechariah, who was one of the latter prophets, might be justly cited under the name of Jeremy. Moreover, the learned Mr. Mede has proved, [17] by many arguments, that the four last chapters of the book of Zechary were wrote by Jeremy, and if so, the difficulty is at once removed; therefore the next thing to be enquired into, is the justness of the application of this prophecy.

Now that it is a prophecy of the Messiah, which was fulfilled in Jesus, manifestly appears from the context, as well as the text itself; the person here spoken of, is, in verse 4 called to feed the flock of slaughter, which being in a very poor condition, verse 5, 6 the state of the Jews therefore, at the time of Christ's coming, is hereby very aptly represented; he agrees to do it, verse 7 and accordingly furnishes himself for it; but he is rejected, despised, and abhorred, by the shepherds, the principal men in church and state, because he severely inveighed against their doctrines and practices, verse 8 whereupon he rejects them, and dissolves both their civil and church state, which can suit with no other times than the times of Jesus, verse 9-11, 14 and lest it should be thought that he used them with too much severity, he gives one single instance of their wretched ingratitude to him, which shews how little they esteemed of him, and that is their valuing of him at no greater a price than thirty pieces of silver, verse 12, 13 which were afterwards cast unto the potter.

It may perhaps be objected to the application of this prophecy to Judas's betraying of Jesus, that, supposing Messiah is here intended, the money is said to be given into his hands, and not into the hands of him that was to betray him, and I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. To which I answer, that the words yrbç wbj should not be rendered give me my price, but give my price, that is, give what you think fit to value me at, into the hand of him that is to betray me, and accordingly

they did so; so they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver; which is the very sum the chief priests covenanted with Judas for, and which he received, according to Matthew 26:15.

Again, if it should be objected to the citation of St. Matthew, that it is considerably different from the words of the prophet; for whereas it is said in the prophet, I took the thirty pieces, and cast them, etc. the evangelist says, they took the thirty pieces, etc. and they gave, etc. It may be replied, that *elabon* in St. Matthew [18] may be very well rendered I took, as *edwkan* may very reasonably be supposed to be put for *edwka*; and so the Syriac seems to have read it, seeing it renders the word by *tbhy* I gave; but all this cannot be better expressed than in the words of the learned Mede, [19] "*Elabon* here in St.

Matthew (says he) is the first person singular, and not the third plural, as we are wont to translate it, for it answers to *tbhy* in the Hebrew. The same person and number must also *edwkan* be, whether the *n* be paragogical, or an ancient slip of the scribe; for the Syriac translates it *dedi*, and in the Hebrew it answers to *hjqaw*, all this to be so, the words following evince; namely, *kaqa sunetaxe moi Kuriov*, how will it cohere else? they gave, etc. as the Lord commanded me; must it not needs be, I gave, etc"?

But if it should be still objected that the Messiah, and not the betrayer, is said to cast this money to the potter, And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter, in the house of the Lord; it may be replied, that Jesus may be said to do that which Judas and the chief priest did, because, by his almighty power and providence, he over-ruled those things for good, which in themselves were evil. Judas thought to have converted the money to his own use, and the priests would have been glad to have taken it again to themselves, but Christ obliged Judas to carry back the money to the priests, and cast it into the temple; and worked upon the minds of the priests not to put it into the treasury, but to buy the potter's field therewith, whereby the prophecy in its literal sense, was fully accomplished. 3dly, Another circumstance which was to attend the Messiah's sufferings, is, his being forsaken by the rest of his disciples.

That the disciples of Jesus forsook him and fled, when he was apprehended by his enemies, not only the evangelist, but the Jews themselves affirm. [20] Now this was foretold by Jesus, who declares that so it should be, because it is written (Matthew 26:31, 56), I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. The place referred to, where these words are written, is Zechariah 13:7, Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; which prophecy is a manifest prophecy of the Messiah, as appears not only from the character of a shepherd, which is frequently given to the Messiah in the Old Testament, and is what Jesus bears in the New; but also from his being God's fellow, which cannot be said of any other, and is justly applicable to him, who, (Philippians 2:6), being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with him.

Many Jewish writers [21] refer those words of Zechariah to the days of the Messiah, even to Messiah the son of Joseph. 4thly, The Messiah was not only to be forsaken by his disciples, but also by his God; this dereliction is prophesied of in Psalm 22 which Psalm has been proved to belong to the Messiah. Accordingly Jesus, while he was suffering on the cross, was deserted by his Father, and in his agony used the very words with which the Psalm begins, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 5thly, The Messiah was to be numbered with transgressors; accordingly, with Jesus, the Jews crucified two thieves (Mark 15:15, 27, 28), the one on his right hand, and the other on his left; and the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

Nothing could more effectually do it, than their placing him between them, and his dying with them, which was a manifest indication, that he was reckoned as a malefactor, and so was numbered with them. 6thly, His garments were to be parted, and lots cast upon his vesture, according to Psalm 22:18 which was literally fulfilled in Jesus, Matthew 27:35. 7thly, It was prophesied of him, that gall would be given him for his meat, and vinegar for him to drink, and accordingly these were given to Jesus, when upon the cross; and therefore, in order to bring it about, and that this scripture might be fulfilled, he said, I thirst; which was not fulfilled by a mere accommodation of such a phrase found in the Psalms, [22] for this does not suppose that there was a prophecy of him, that he should say, I thirst, but his saying so, was an evidence of that thirst being upon him, prophesied of in Psalm 22:15, which was the occasion of fulfilling the prophecy, concerning the gall and vinegar, which were to be given him in this distress.

Psalm 69:21. 8thly, A bone of him was not to be broken. Now it is very remarkable, that whereas it was a custom to break the legs of the crucified, and accordingly the legs of the thieves, which were crucified with Jesus, were broken; but when they came to him, finding him dead, notwithstanding all their rage and malice against him, they brake not his legs; and the evangelist observes (John 19:36), that these things were done that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

The scripture referred to, is Psalm 34:20, he keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken. Which, if understood of the righteous in general, had a very particular and remarkable completion in Jesus, though it seems rather to regard some particular person, and who can be so well supposed to be understood as the Messiah? To understand it of the righteous in general, will not hold good, for such a calamity sometimes befalls them as well as the wicked; and when under such a distress of body, they would be liable to a greater distress of mind; for from hence they would be apt to conclude, that they were not righteous persons, nor under the special care and protection of God, otherwise this promise would be made good to them, he keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken. 9thly, The Messiah was to be pierced, at the time of his suffering, and accordingly Jesus was; for one of the soldiers, with a spear, pierced his side; whereby, as the evangelist observes (John 19:37), that scripture was fulfilled, they shall look upon him whom they have pierced: the scripture is Zechariah 12:10.

Which prophecy, by many Jewish writers, [23] is understood of the Messiah, and of the piercing him. The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy, says, that the words "manifestly appear not to concern Jesus; his reasons are, because there was to be a war in Judea, and a siege of Jerusalem, and then a deliverance of the Jews, by the destruction of all the nations that should come up at that time against Jerusalem." And Mr. Sykes asks, "Did any one circumstance of all this happen to the Jews about the time of the death of Jesus? or rather, was not every thing the reverse of what Zechariah says; and instead of all nations being destroyed that came about Jerusalem, Jerusalem itself was destroyed; instead of a spirit of grace and supplications, the Jews have had their hearts hardened against the Christ; instead of mourning for him whom they pierced, they curse him and his followers even to this day."

To both which I reply, that these things instanced in, were not according to this prophecy, to come to pass at the time of the piercing of the Messiah, but at the time of the Jews looking to him, and mourning for him, on the account thereof, when brought under a conviction of their evil in so doing; now whereas the piercing of the Messiah has been literally fulfilled in Jesus, and though the Jews, even to this very day, are hardened against him; yet there is no reason to conclude, but that that part of the prophecy, which concerns their looking to him, and a mourning for him, on the account of his being pierced by them, will also, in God's own time be fulfilled; when we may reasonably expect all these circumstances, attending it, will have their full accomplishment. ENDNOTES:

- [1] See Kimchi in loc.
- [2] Vid. Jarchium in loc. Yophi in loc.
- [3] Vid. R. Abendana not. in Miclol Yophi in loc.
- [4] Midrash Tillim in hunc Psalmum. R. Sol. Jarchi in verse 26.
- [5] In chapter 52:13 and in 53:10.
- [6] Talmud Sanhed. fol. 98, co1. 2.
- [7] Zohar in Exodus fol. 85. 2. Beresh. Rab. in Genesis 24:67. Pesikta in Kettoreth Hassammim in Targ. Jerus. in Numbers 29:7. Tranchuma in Isaiah 52:13. Midrash Ruth, fol. 34 col. 3.
- [8] Jarchi, Kimchi, & Aben Ezra, in loc.
- [9] Vid. Basnage's History of the Jews, book 4 chapter 23. s. 17, 18.
- [10] Saadiah Gaon in Aben Ezra in loc.
- [11] Jeremiah 20:12, 14 and chapter 12:3.
- [12] The Hebrew word twmb signifies, High places, and is frequently so rendered; see Deuteronomy 33:29. Psalm 18:33. Habakkuk 3:19. and here the plural number being put for the singular, it signifies an High place, or a structure over a grave, as R. Aben Ezra, from their Rabbis, observes; and if it should be objected, that the point Camets, and not Sheva, should have been placed under the letter b if that is here radical; I answer, (not to say any thing of the original of vowel points) it is easy to suppose an irregular punctuation, of which there are a very large number of instances in the Bible; nor is this a mere supposition, for the authors of the Masora, in their marginal note upon this word, observe that it is nowhere extant in the like form. Sheva being in the room of Camets, and the letter Vau wanting. The first among Christians who observed this, was Forsterus, in his Lexic. Hebrews Rad. hmb which was afterwards taken notice of with approbation by those excellent Hebricians, Mercer and Schindler.
- [13] Vid. Kidder's Demonstration of the Messias, part 1. p, 90. Page 217.
- [14] Toldos Jesu, p. 15, 16
- [15] Vid. Viccarsium in loc.
- [16] Vid. Kimchii praefat. in Jeremiah.
- [17] Mede's works, p. 963. 1022, 1023.
- [18] Vid. Bezam. in loc.
- [19] Mede's works, p. 963.
- [20] Toldos Jesu. p, 17.
- [21] Vid. Aben Ezra & Miclol Yophi in loc.

[22] So Mr. Sykes, in his Essay, p. 266 which way of interpretation, the author of the Scheme of Literal Prophecy, p. 347, 348 justly find fault

[23] Talmud. Succah, fol. 52. 1. Jarchi, Kimchi, Aben Ezra in loc. & Bereshith Rabba, in Pearson on the Creed, art. 4

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