

John 12:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

Analysis

John quotes Isaiah 53:1, applying the suffering servant prophecy to Jesus' rejection. 'Who hath believed our report?' anticipates widespread rejection. 'The arm of the Lord' symbolizes divine power revealed in Messiah. Isaiah predicted that few would recognize God's power in the suffering servant. This Old Testament prophecy explained the first century's mass unbelief, demonstrating Scripture's prophetic accuracy. The question 'who?' implies 'very few,' validated by Jesus' experience. Belief is divine gift, not human achievement, since the arm of the Lord must be revealed.

Historical Context

Isaiah 53 is the Bible's clearest suffering servant prophecy, written 700 years before Christ. Early Christians extensively used this chapter to understand Jesus' death and interpret Jewish rejection.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Isaiah's ancient prophecy demonstrate Scripture's divine inspiration?
2. What does 'the arm of the Lord revealed' teach about faith as divine gift?
3. In what ways does suffering servant theology challenge triumphalist Christianity?

Interlinear Text

ἵνα ὁ λόγος Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου πληρωθῇ ὃν
That G3588 the saying of Esaias G3588 the prophet might be fulfilled which
G2443 G3056 G2268 G4396 G4137 G3739

εἶπεν κυρίου τίνι ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν καὶ ὁ
he spoke Lord to whom hath believed G3588 report our and G3588
G2036 G2962 G5101 G4100 G189 G2257 G2532

βραχίων κυρίου τίνι ἀπεκαλύφθη
hath the arm Lord to whom been revealed
G1023 G2962 G5101 G601

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 53:1 (Faith): Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

Romans 10:16 (Faith): But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

Romans 10:20 (Parallel theme): But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

1 Corinthians 1:24 (Parallel theme): But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Psalms 44:3 (Parallel theme): For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.

Matthew 16:17 (Parallel theme): And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

Galatians 1:16 (Parallel theme): To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

2 Chronicles 32:20 (Prophecy): And for this cause Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven.