

Christ the Suffering Servant

Top Ten Chapters in the Bible

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Bible Text: Isaiah 53:1-12

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Grab your Bibles and turn to Isaiah 53, please. The Top Ten Chapters of the Bible and we are on #5. Isaiah 53. This is an amazing chapter and I sent you my sermon slides as a pdf this morning around 6:30 in the morning so that as you want to review this sermon and gain a greater understanding perhaps of this text than ever before, I hope you will use that. It's a pdf document so it's free, Adobe Acrobat Reader and you can download it. If you don't have that, if it didn't come in your email, that means we don't have your email address and we'll get it and we'll send it to you.

Let's stand for the reading of God's word as we look at this unbelievable chapter. I've been enthralled with it all week.

“Who has believed our report?” In other words, is there anyone out there that believes this? Have all the eyes been blinded? Is everyone deaf? Is there anyone that still believes our report.

“1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? 2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But he was,” pierced or, “wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised,” or crushed, “for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. 9 And he made his grave

with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. 10 Yet it pleased the LORD to crush 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. 11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

Father, we have heard from you through the prophet Jeremiah who spoke these words and recorded them on a holy scroll 2,700 years ago. Thank you, God, for what these words communicate. It is with hearts that are grateful that we express to you gratitude. Come, Holy Spirit, come and be with us this morning: quicken hearts that are dead, open eyes that are blind, unstop ears that are deaf. Make the text come alive through the quickening and convicting and teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Because we are not systematically moving through chapters in books of the Bible, I feel the necessity every time we come to a new chapter to remind you where we are in this narrative, where we are in this glorious story. I'm going to actually go to the next one and then come back to this one.

Let's look at the blackboard up here. Think in your mind of the Bible with four basic clear teachings, four basic clear divisions, if you will: 1. the creation of all by God Almighty; the fall of man; the glorious redemption that Jesus Christ provided on the cross; and then finally, the prophesied restoration of all things. That's your entire Bible. That's your Bible from Genesis 1 to the glorious end in Revelation when we hear about a new heaven and a new earth. That's the story of your Bible. Again, creation, fall, redemption and restoration. I've inserted the law up here which is where we were at last week with Exodus 20 and the law being given by God, Mount Sinai, 1446, through Moses. This morning we're in Isaiah 53 and I'm going to show you in Isaiah 53 how the prophet predicted 700 years before Christ with amazing specificity: his life, ministry, death, burial, resurrection and glorious future. So, I want you to see this.

Let's go back and let me remind you where we're at in our story, where we're at in our glorious narrative. We already did creation and we did fall. In 1446 Moses receives the law from God on Mount Sinai. Moses dies and Joshua is given the responsibility of leading the people of God into the Promised Land and those of you who have been with us, we know that we preached through Joshua, every chapter, every verse. Joshua dies and the people begin to do what's right in their own eyes. There are cycles of apostasy in which God's people rebel against God and go into idolatry and God raises up a people who brings them into slavery and then in slavery, they call out to God in supplication for a mighty deliverer and God raises up a judge who leads them out, back into a right

relationship with him. Then, unfortunately, it just starts all over again and if you study the book of Judges, you've got 400 years of that cycle happening again and again and again. Finally, the people are tired of judges leading them and they call out to God and ask for a king and Samuel, against his better judgment and against what God initially said, gives them a king. The first one is Saul. Saul reigns for 40 years and is followed by David who reigns for 40 years who is followed up by Solomon who reigns for 40 years. Solomon's son, Rehoboam, is a mess, would not listen to the elders of his age or his time, rebels against God's ordained authority in his life and the kingdom is split into the northern kingdom and a southern kingdom. That's where we're at now, the kingdom is split.

“So, what about Isaiah, Pastor?” Isaiah is the prophet who ministered in the days of four kings beginning with Uzziah and ending with Hezekiah and this is how we are able to tell you this prophesy was recorded 700 years before the birth of Christ. Now, this is critical because this is an apologetic for the word of God. Imagine saying to an unbeliever that you're confronting and working with and hoping that they come to Christ and you say to them, “What would you think about me showing you a passage of Scripture that was written 700 years before the birth of Christ and with great specificity communicates his birth, life, suffering, death, burial, resurrection? What would you think of that? That speaks with how he's going to die. That speaks about who he is going to die with. That speaks about the grave. That speaks about some rich men. That gives you specificity that you would wonder, where could that come from other than God?”

Well, that's what this chapter is and there is no question that what I'm telling you is accepted even by the most liberal scholars on the planet. The Dead Sea scrolls discovery revealed the Isaiah scroll. The Isaiah scroll is the entire 66 chapters of Isaiah beautifully preserved and clearly dated 125 years before Christ. So, what we have is Isaiah the prophet giving it to us 700 years before and we have what we're looking at right now, a copy that was at least 125 years before the birth of Christ. This is a great document. You can find it online very easily. It's in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, the great Isaiah scroll and this is a digital copy though you can actually slide back and forth and look at all 66 chapters in Hebrew. It's beautiful.

Let's get started, Isaiah 53. Three things I want to tell you as a way of introduction: 1. this is a beautiful prophetic poem. It's a poem. It's beautiful language. As we read it this morning, your ears enjoyed hearing this language. You can read this chapter over and over and over again. It's crafted so well that it's pleasant to hear. 2. No other chapter in your entire Old Testament provides a more comprehensive overview of the entire life of Christ. We see the entire narrative in this chapter. 3. No other chapter in the entire Bible shows us the doctrine of vicarious, penal, substitutionary atonement. You say, “Pastor, that's big.” Yeah, it is but I'll tell you what it is: in essence, it's the gospel. In the simplest terms: it's the gospel.

I want to unpack it this morning. I want to unpack it in such a way that unbelievers become believers this morning. I want to unpack it in such a way that you're able to open up to Isaiah 53 and show someone how they can be saved.

Here are the characters in the story, the characters in the poem: starting at the bottom, the rich man. The rich, the individual that is rich that is responsible for placing Jesus in a tomb that is different from where the transgressors go. 2. The transgressors. 3. The believers, that's us. The ones that are asking, "Who has believed our report?" 4. Yahweh or the Lord's righteous servant. 5. The Lord God of Israel. Those are the characters in the poem.

Let's review the doctrine: it's vicarious, penal, substitutionary atonement. If you don't write that down, a week from now you won't have a clue what we talked about this morning so let me remind you, it's V for vicarious, P for penalty, S for substitutionary and A for atonement. I'm going to go over all four of those throughout the sermon.

Now, let me show you the life of Christ as outlined in the chapter. The birth and childhood is in verse 2. The public rejection is in verse 3. The judgment and sentencing is in verse 7. The suffering is in 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 11. Clearly, that's the dominant message of the chapter: Christ suffered for us. The execution is mentioned in verse 8. The burial in verse 9. The resurrection in verse 10. The final exaltation is in verse 12. Do you see the life of Christ? That's the life of Christ right there: from birth until the glorious time where he's seated on the right hand of God the Father waiting for every enemy to be made a footstool.

This chapter is quoted a tremendous number of times. Matthew, Mark, John, Luke, all quote from this chapter and identify Jesus of Nazareth as the righteous servant. Wait a minute, Paul picks it up in Romans 10:16 and Peter literally does an exegesis of this concept in his epistle right there. "What are you telling me, Pastor?" I'm telling you Matthew, Mark, John, Luke, Paul and Peter, six of the eight or nine authors of the New Testament saw Jesus as the fulfillment of this prophecy and wanted to bring it to your attention this morning.

So, the author opens up with a question. He doesn't ask: have you been baptized? He doesn't ask: are you going to church? He doesn't ask: do you give? He doesn't ask: are you kind to your neighbor? He doesn't ask: are you a good person? Instead he asks: have you believed? Have you believed? Who has believed our report? Are there any Israelites out there that believe? Is there anyone here this morning that would say, "I believe that report? The oral communication of this." Have you believed? Have you believed? That's the question: who has believed our report?

The arm of the Lord. "And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" What an amazing idea, the arm of the Lord. "Wait a minute, Pastor, God doesn't have an arm." You're right, God doesn't have an arm. This is poetic language to communicate what God does. The arm of the Lord is the outstretched arm in Exodus 6:6 that just sweeps God's people where they need to be. How do we get out of Egypt and into the Promised Land? It was the outstretched arm of God that swept us in there. Get the imagery? Not his whole body, it doesn't take his legs. How powerful? Powerful enough to just reach out and snatch you where you need to go. That's the outstretched arm of God. Who is this outstretched arm?

It is Jesus. Jesus is the outstretched arm of the Lord who will accomplish the will of the Father.

“For he.” Who is the “he”? The “he” is Yahweh's servant. Yahweh' servant. Let me show you in several passages. Chapter 52:13, “Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.” Or how about this one: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him,” what? “The form of a servant.” How about this one, Matthew 20:28, “Even as the Son of man came not to be served, but to serve, and to,” what? “To give his life a ransom for many.”

Here's what you have going on and you need to understand this very clearly: this left hand represents the Old Testament and beginning at Genesis 3:15 is a foreshadowing that God has a servant who will accomplish his will. That very idea is traced throughout the entire Old Testament. Then your New Testament a constant reminder that Jesus is that servant. That's the idea. You need to see that loud and clear this morning. See loud and clear, I'm not sure how that works but you get the idea, right? Loud and clear, alright.

Next slide. So, let's get started with the narrative: the birth and childhood. “For he shall grow up before him.” A simple little phrase. If you're not careful, you'll actually skip over it. Do you teach this morning? Are you a teacher anywhere? Let me talk to you for a moment if you're a preacher or a teacher or a student of the word of God. When you get to these chapters like this that have so many pronouns and there are several like this in the word of God, one of the best things that you can do is take the text, cut and paste it and put it in a Word document and then substitute everywhere there is a pronoun with the antecedent because you lose who we're talking about: him, him, her, him. You almost lose it but you need to understand that this is Yahweh talking to his righteous servant. This is God of Israel talking to Jesus right here or talking about Jesus. You want to see what's going on here.

Let's read verse 2 again, “For Jesus shall grow up before the Lord.” Now look at that. A very simple idea but here's the concept: from the moment of the conception of Christ, God Almighty was looking down from heaven at his Son and watching him grow up. Like this, men, “That's my boy.” Now, if you think that I'm wrong, you haven't looked at the baptism of Jesus Christ in Matthew 3 where he says, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” So, here's the idea: the best father in the world is watching the greatest son in the world grow up and he's watching every time he skins his knee, every time he falls, every time he takes his first step. Do you remember that? Parents, do you remember when your son made the first step? Or how about when he uttered the first word? “Abba, Father.” “That's my boy down there.” And he's watching him grow up.

“As a root out of dry ground.” The root of Jesse. Isaiah 11, the root of Jesse, making that connection that this is the son of David.

“He hath not form nor comeliness.” There is nothing about him that draws men to him. He doesn't have a halo around his head. No beauty that we would find, “Wow!” 6' 5”, broad shoulders, narrow waist, curly hair, slightly bronzed in color, blue eyed. No, none of that stuff. Whatever your dream is, that's not him. No, this is inside. From the outside there is no form nor comeliness, nothing. Nothing extraordinarily handsome about him.

In fact, verse 2b, the second part says, “And when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.” Look back in your Bible at verse 14 and see how bad it gets. I want you to draw this connection to this so look back, please. Look at what it says, “As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man.” Look at the ESV rendering of this, “As many were astonished at you, his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance.” Think about what that's saying. Think about what that's communicating. The point at which Christ was being crushed by God Almighty for the sins of the whole world, when you looked at him from his amazing suffering, you weren't even sure he was still a human. “Is that a person?” Whatever you think that Mel Gibson did, it paled. There is no amount of makeup that can make up what it looked like. It was so bad that his mother's heart was wrenching for what her son was going through. So much so, that people weren't sure that he was still human.

His public rejection is predicted. “He is despised and rejected of men.” Jesus said it like this, “Did you never read it in Scripture that the stone which the builder's rejected the same has become the head of the corner.” And this is the Lord's doing. By the way, it's marvelous.

“He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we,” we, “hid as it were our faces from him.” Think about what that's saying this morning. Think about what that's saying. Consider with me for a moment right now, that there are teenagers here that are running from God. Running from God. You're hiding your face from God because you know God brings into your life accountability and so you're running from God. “I don't want anything to do with that God of the Bible.” They are running from him. “We hid as it were our faces from him: he was despised, and we esteemed him not.” In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus cried out, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful.”

So, let's get into the first of four. We're going to start with substitutionary. Let's talk about substitutionary. It's done in place of someone else. Verse 4, “Surely he hath borne our griefs.” Surely, he hath borne our griefs, “and carried our sorrows.” Not his own. Not his own. He didn't die for his own sins. He didn't die for his own grief. He didn't die for his own sorrows. Those were my griefs that he died for. Those were my issues that he died for. It should have been me on that cross. Substitutionary, that's the idea. This is precisely why God's people do not worship him the way they should. Our failure to understand that it is me who should have been crucified, is why we refuse to give it up for Jesus. All over America this morning there are Christians who could barely utter an ounce of praise for the King of kings but if their team wins tonight, they're going to be bananas for nothing. Nobody is going to care a week from now other than those that are paying taxes and those who won a little bit of money on the bets. The reason you do not come unglued on songs that were done today and everywhere else, is you don't think you deserve the cross.

That's why. You see yourself as a decent human being. Christ died for guys like Stalin and Hitler but not you and the Scripture teaches just the opposite. He died for my sins. My attitude problems. My laziness. My selfishness. My lack of self-control. My anger problem. You're looking at a sinner this morning. You've got a sinner for a preacher. A rebel at heart. It doesn't come natural for me to be humble or any other quality that you think is a good quality. He did for my sins. Once you get a hold of that concept, you're going to be willing to give it up for Jesus.

Next slide. My grief, my sorrows, my transgressions and my iniquities. It's me, the sinner, that he died for. As long as we keep talking about this third person dying, that sinner, those sinners, it's not that big of a deal whether we sleep in on Sunday morning and can't get the mattress off our back but we're never late for work. But once we get a hold of what the prophet Isaiah is teaching us about substitutionary atonement, we are ready to run to Jesus and give him the praise he is due.

His suffering. His suffering is overwhelming in this chapter. If you're not moved by his suffering, if you're surfing the internet right now, if you're text messaging right now, put it away including my son. Put your phone away and listen to what the word of God says.

We're dealing with penal. Penal is punishment. Penal is where you go to jail at. This is what God did to Christ. "We did not esteem him," he was "smitten of God." What a concept. We can't even wrap our brains around this. In fact, the church argues about this completely unnecessarily because the Scripture is abundantly clear, it's not up for debate. There are so many liberals out there that have such botched ideas about this that I want to get you straight. It was Yahweh, the Lord God of Israel who punished his Son and this is not cosmic child abuse. His Son is an adult who willingly goes to the cross on his own volition for the sins of humanity. Make sure that you understand this very clearly, unequivocally clearly because there are some who confuse the church with garbage, some confuse the church with God, turning the wrong way and saying and inflicting this: imagine such a heretical doctrine, "Who in the world could pray to a God to have their prayers answered if he wasn't capable of preventing the devil from doing something to his Son?"

It is Yahweh who has orchestrated this entire thing before his birth to his glorification on the right hand. Every bit of it was predetermined from the very beginning. Read Acts 4 and you'll see it was the fore-counsel of God. This is not debatable. This is not end times and you get to pick what you want. This is not Burger King, you cannot have it your way. The Scriptures make it abundantly clear. Once you get a hold of this doctrine, it changes your heart when you realize that the Son was punished for me. For me.

"Smitten of God and afflicted. He was wounded," or pierced, "for my transgressions." The Hebrew word in the text is "pierced." "Wounded" is a fair translation, "pierced" is the best translation. Here's the Hebrew word right here. "Bore through," think about that. "Bore through." Think about what you know about the mode of death on a cross, nails driven through his bones and arms and feet pierced. Think about how you know how he died. At the very end, to ensure that he was dead, the centurion pierces him in the side.

Consider with me for just a moment the depth and the magnitude of this when the mode of crucifixion was not invented for at least 100 years after this was prophesied. Up to this point, men were stoned and men were hung but nobody was wounded or pierced.

What you're dealing with this morning, like it or not, is a supernatural book inspired by God the Holy Spirit that predicts the mode of death to the T. If that doesn't get you off our chair and in love with Jesus, nothing is going to do it.

Smitten, bruised, crushed, chastisement, wounds, opposed, afflicted, led as a lamb to slaughter and ultimately cut off. I cannot believe for a moment that the church is arguing about penal substitutionary atonement. The word of God makes it utterly, utterly, unmistakably, unequivocally absolute that God punished his Son for my sins. Sean Harris' sins. That's why I was having an emotional party when they were talking about Lazarus and why your blesser was broke. Because I understand I am a sinner. Austin has a sinner for a Dad. I don't get it right every day. Ask him, he'll tell you all about it. That's why I need the gospel. That's why when I read this chapter, it comes alive because I realize what a wretch I am and yet he died for my sins.

The King James uses the word "bruised." It's an unfortunate rendering, I'm afraid. Clearly the Hebrew word, look it up for yourself in the Blue Letter Bible, it's "crushed." "Bruised" doesn't communicate the magnitude of something. We get bruises all the time, you recover from a bruise. Crushed. Think about that for a moment. Crushed for my sins. "I come to church six times a year for someone who was crushed for my sins. I occasionally listen to a song of worship a couple of times a year for someone who was crushed for my sins. I read more about the quarterback of the Denver Broncos than I did the man who was crushed for my sins." Men, am I talking to you? Because I could stand for all the hype to be over and let's focus on what's really important.

Now, let's look at the word "vicarious." We've looked at substitutionary, we've looked at penal and now I want to look at the word "vicarious." David help me with this and I'm so thankful for David and I'm so thankful for men like Bill and David and the team that can help. I give them ideas and they come back with great suggestions. It's awesome. I don't come up with this on my own. I'm thankful that God led other men into this institution that can be a help.

Vicarious. Every one of you have been to a sporting event and you've seen a parent living out their childhood experience through the kid on the court. The kid scores and the parent comes unglued. The parent is receiving more delight from the child scoring than the child is. David, that's vicarious right there. That's vicarious. It's where I receive something second hand through someone else. Let's talk about this now, now that you've got it, let me show it to you.

"The chastisement of our peace was upon him." The chastisement that brought us peace. Now, you've got to get this, listen to me very closely, please: he was chastised and I received peace. Think about that now. Now, David, you're going to unpack this tonight, right? This whole idea of peace so I'm going to stop there. But how about the other one?

“By his stripes,” I am healed? Hold on, wait a minute, time out, it doesn't work that way. He gets whipped and I experience healing? That's vicarious. That means through someone else, I'm experiencing something awesome. Look, it happened this morning, this is my dream, John. My dream is for one day for you to give me private vocal lessons and then I just bust out in song in front of the whole congregation. So what I was doing this morning is I was experiencing that through these men up here. I was thinking about what I would do, movements I would do, if I was singing the song because I love that song. That's vicarious. I was receiving delight and benefit and joy through Matt and Darren and John and Robby. That's vicarious.

Again, once you get a hold of this concept, I promise you, we'll come unglued as a church and the worship will lift the rafters because we're not there yet. We have not achieved what God intends for us to achieve on worship yet.

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way: and the LORD has laid on him,” substitutionary, “the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth.” But you say, “Pastor, I know he said some things,” so let's talk about this. What does the prophet mean when he said, “Opened not his mouth?” Since we know Jesus spoke, in fact he answered the high priest, do you remember that? He answered the high priest, “Don't you know who you're talking to?” And they give him a good smack for his failure to immediately answer. He answered Pontius Pilate, “What is truth?” And they have an entire conversation that you need to check out. Then on the cross, he utters seven sayings.

So, what is the prophet communicating? By “opened not his mouth,” it doesn't mean that a word never came out of his mouth but he did not offer up an objection to the inevitable crucifixion. “Get me out of here! I can't do this! I'm innocent! This is not fair!” Those words never came out of his mouth. Nothing like that. In fact, when he speaks, it's to teach or to correct something that's wrong. To teach, “It is finished.” That was a theological lesson right there, “It is finished.” You don't need to be baptized to be saved. You don't need to work out your salvation in order to be saved. You don't have to do good works. It's finished. That was a theological lesson. Instructions to John, “Take care of my mother.” Those are examples of either teaching or setting the record straight.

Judgment and sentencing. Isaiah 53:8 predicts this very idea right here that Pontius Pilate has him in chains, that Jesus has been drug from a Roman prison, presented in front of the people. He was taken from prison and from judgment and the author asks the question: “who is going to declare his generation?” “What does that mean, Pastor?” He's not married. He has no children. If he dies, who's going to carry on the name?

Pilate sentences him but before sentencing him to death, he writes these instructions on a piece of wood, something like this: “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” Do you remember what the Jews immediately did? They immediately take him to task, “Don't say that. Say that he said that he was.” And Pilate says, “What I have written is what I

have written.” Imagine this, folks, listen to me: an unsaved abominable sinner of sorts has been used by God as a prophet. Think about that.

When you're struggling with the sovereignty of God, stop struggling and pray. Why did I say “pray?” Well, what's the point of praying to a God who is not sovereign? I want to pray to a being who is in charge. I don't want to pray to a being who struggles to accomplish things day-by-day, flips coins and hopes things work out his way.

His execution. Look at the language: “He was cut off out of the land of the living.” Could have said, “He died,” but it's a poem. It's a prophetic poem. The language is beautiful. He's no longer part of the land of the living. Paul picks this very idea up and says to us, “But God demonstrated, commended, showed his love toward us and while we were yet sinners,” here's the message, “Christ died for us.” This is why this morning I can absolutely positively walk up to every single person in this auditorium and say, “Christ died for you. Christ died for you. You. When you were a rebel. When you were a sinner. When you hated God. When you were running from God. When you were a selfish male pig like me, Christ died for you.”

“Made his grave with the wicked.” What is this all about? Luke unpacks it and says that there were two malefactors, two criminals, like this or how about verse 12, “He was numbered with the transgressors.” Think about that. The probability of predicting that he would be accounted with transgressors, that he would not have an individual execution but would be executed with other transgressors?

His burial. His burial is amazing in its specificity. “And with the rich in his death.” Wait a minute, he's with the wicked? How does he go from being with the wicked to the rich? You don't put those two things together in the same poem. You don't have a stanza that says “with the wicked” and follow it up with a stanza that says “with the rich.”

Do you understand this morning what would typically happen with these bodies? They were removed from the cross and thrown on a pile. Nobody was providing them a dignified burial. These were criminals. No money would be expended from the national treasury to ensure they got a dignified burial. Yet God Almighty sovereignly predicts 700 years before that a rich man would take care of it and then provides the means for Joseph of Arimathea to become a wealthy man, has that man fall in love with Jesus and he appeals to Pontius Pilate for his body and puts him in a tomb that no one had ever laid in before. And you're struggling with a God who is in charge? I have no idea why. Read your Bible.

Verse 9, “No violence, no deceit in his mouth.” “Come on, Pastor, was he really a righteous man? I mean, come on, the liberal church is teaching us that Jesus was a man. I mean, little sins. I mean, nothing too big but he certainly couldn't be righteous.”

How do you deal with Pontius Pilate on two different occasions refusing to find him guilty? Doing everything he can to get him off his hands? He does not want to convict this man. He washes his hands in a symbolic way to communicate, “I don't think this man

deserves death and I want no part of this. I can't find anything worthy of crucifixion in his life. Take him to yourselves and crucify for I find no guilt in him.”

How about the Roman centurion after he dies. What does he say? “Surely this was an innocent man. Surely this was a righteous man.” Why did he say that? Because he was convicted by what had just happened and becomes a prophetic voice by God.

“Yet it pleased the LORD.” It pleased the Lord? Wait a minute, it pleased the Lord to crush his Son? How in the world could it please the Lord to crush his Son? “I mean, Pastor, isn't this an indication that we have a bizarre, strange God that should not be worshiped?” No. No, you're failing to see the big picture. You're failing to see the glorious story of redemption that will be told over the ages by thousands upon thousands upon thousands of people who believe the gospel. You're failing to understand that yes, at the cross, things look miserable but on the other side of the cross, it is a glorious future. God Almighty fully knowing the degree to which he would exalt his Son above every single name to the point that every knee would bow, is thrilled to accomplish this for the end state and that's the idea right there. Next slide, please.

“He hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.” What did John the Baptist say in John 1 when he sees Jesus? “Behold, the Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world.”

His resurrection predicted with these simple words: “Yahweh shall prolong his days.”

Finally, the atonement and we're done. Look at two slides with me. 1. The wrath of God is satisfied. The wrath of God is satisfied. Please understand the reason why there is a necessity for atonement, the reason why there is a necessity for reconciliation is because there's an enmity between God and man. That enmity is interfering with man's relationship with God. There is a hostility towards sin but when the wrath of God is satisfied, reconciliation can be made. In other words, the debt is paid. That's the idea.

Or how about this one, “by his knowledge shall my righteous servant” do what? “Justify many.” You mean, like Romans 1, “the just shall live by faith?” Yes. You mean to say that God imputes to me righteousness? Yes. You mean to say that me, a wretched sinner who is struggling every day with doing right can be made righteous? Yes, through Christ and Christ alone.

Finally, the exaltation. “I'm going to divide a portion with the great and shall divide the spoil with the strong.” A kingdom is being prepared for Christ and the Father is thrilled to give it to his Son and if you're a believer this morning, you'll get to be a part of that kingdom. You'll get to be a part of that kingdom.

So, here's the question, back to verse 1: have you believed the report? Because I gave it to you this morning. You heard the report this morning. You heard the report of his birth, his life, his death, his burial, his resurrection and his ultimate exaltation where he is on the right hand of God the Father interceding, mediating, making intercession for the

transgressors. Would you pull yourself out of the camp of the transgressors and become a believer?

Let's pray. Sitting right where you're at with your head bowed and your eyes closed, would you pause for a minute and offer to the Lord a sacrifice of praise? Would you this very moment, forget about leaving. This is not time to slip out before the crowd. This is a time to settle in for a moment of meditation and to contemplate what Christ has done for you and to offer to him a sacrifice of praise. This is where you connect with God on an individual and a personal way. You're not looking at your phone or your ipad or anything like that. You're focused only on the Lord and to him you offer gratitude, praise. He is worthy and so you worship him for he is worthy.

Maybe you're not saved this morning but now you are. "What do you mean, Pastor?" Maybe you came in an unbeliever but during the preaching service, God convicted you of your unbelief and you believe. Is there anyone that would be so bold as to say, "Pastor, that's me this morning. I believe." Who hath believed our report? And you would say, "Pastor, for the first time this morning, I believe the report." Is there anyone that would be so bold as to say that to me? "I believe the report." Don't leave here an unbeliever. Recognize that Christ died for your sins.