

The Triumphant Servant

Text: Isaiah 53:1-12

Introduction

1. Isaiah 53 is perhaps the greatest Messianic prophecy in the Bible. It contains a detailed description of the Messiah's sufferings for sin approximately 700 years before Christ was born.
2. Isaiah 53 is the most quoted chapter in the New Testament.
3. Isaiah 53 presents the three main points of the Gospel in prophetic form – the death, burial and resurrection of Christ are all in view in this chapter.
4. Christ is presented in this chapter as the righteous servant of Jehovah (Vs. 11). Christ came in obedience to the Heavenly Father to do His will. His greatest act of service was what He accomplished through His death, burial and resurrection.
5. In this message we continue our study of Jehovah's Righteous Servant with an emphasis on His victory over death and exaltation.

I. THE SONSHIP OF THE SERVANT (Vs. 1-2)

II. THE SORROWS OF THE SERVANT (VS. 3-4)

III. THE SUBSTITUTION OF THE SERVANT (VS. 5-6)

Put simply, by substitution we mean Christ took our place.

A. The Necessity of Substitution (Vs. 5-6)

B. The Price of our Substitution (Vs. 5-6, 8, 10, 11-12)

Consider the price the Lord Jesus Christ paid when He took our place.

1. Wounded for our transgressions (Vs. 5a).
2. Bruised for our iniquities (Vs. 5b) The Hebrew word for "bruised" (daka) means "to crush." (Fruchtenbaum)
3. Chastened for our peace (Vs. 5c)
4. Scourged for our healing (Vs. 5d)
5. Laden with all our iniquities (Vs. 6b, 11, 12)
6. Stricken for the transgression of His people (Vs. 8) The word 'stricken' refers to a blow. It means to strike. We broke God's law (transgressed) and Christ took the blow for us that we deserved.
7. Died for us – "cut off out of the land of the living" (Vs. 8)
8. Made an offering for sin (Vs. 10)

IV. THE SUBMISSION OF THE SERVANT (VS. 7-8)

We see the total submission of the Son of God to the Father's plan. How thankful we should be that Christ was totally surrendered to the will of God. This total surrender is seen in Messiah's:

A. Surrendered to His Sufferings (Vs. 7a, 8a)

1. The **silence of Christ** in the face of His sufferings is evidence of His perfect surrender. This was literally fulfilled in the trial of Christ. Pilot marveled at Christ's silence in the face of accusation (Mk. 15:5).
2. 1 Peter 2:21-24 "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."
3. Christ was surrendered in His arrest and trial – "taken from prison and from judgment". The word 'prison' comes from the Hebrew word that has the sense of 'restraint' or 'coercion'. The Hebrew term for "judgment" (mishpat) refers to a judicial judgment, meaning the act of deciding a case in a trial and the litigation before judges. Hence, Isaiah predicted that the Servant would be taken away from prison to undergo a judicial judgment. (Fruchtenbaum) Christ was a prisoner in the sense that he was bound and held captive by the authorities. Note the following summary from the Biblical Illustrator:
 - a. He was first taken a prisoner from Gethsemane (John 18:13)
 - b. He was then taken as a prisoner from Annas to Caiaphas (John 18:19-24)
 - c. He was next taken a prisoner from the palace of Caiaphas to the hall of the Sanhedrin.
 - d. He was next taken as a prisoner from the hall of the Sanhedrin to Pilate (John 18:28-38; Luke 23:1-7; Mk. 15:1-5; Mt. 27:11-14)
 - e. He was then taken as a prisoner from Pilate to Herod (Lk. 23:8-12)
 - f. He was then taken as a prisoner back from Herod to Pilate (Lk. 23:13-25; Mt. 27:15-26; Mk. 15:6-15).
 - g. He was finally taken as a prisoner from Pilate to Calvary (Mt. 27:27-50). The cross was the culmination of the whole.

B. Surrendered to His Slaying (Vs. 7b, 8b)

1. Christ was brought as a lamb to the slaughter. He submitted silently to the cross. The reference to the 'lamb' here is a precious

reminder of the fact that Christ is the “Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

2. **Four soldiers** were assigned the task of crucifying Christ (John 19:23). No doubt the number was in part due to the expected struggle with the victim. But Christ laid down His life willingly.
3. John 10:18 “No man taketh it from me, but **I lay it down of myself**. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

V. THE SEPULCHRE OF THE SERVANT (VS. 9A)

A. The Determination of Messiahs Grave – “And he made his grave”

1. Not only did Christ determine the hour of His death, He also determined His own burying place. The power of God was at work to ensure the Son of God’s body was buried according to His Sovereign will.
2. **Question: What normally happened to the dead bodies of crucified criminals?** It seems that the disposal of the bodies was under the authority of the Governor. Often the bodies were left a prey to wild dogs and carrion eating birds (A deterrent to others). Cunningham Geigie DD, sheds some light here. Without any contrary instruction from the Procurator, the destiny of these bodies, including our Lords, was as follows: “Bodies of Jewish criminals seem to have been buried with ignominy in the Valley of Hinnom – known, from this reason as the Valley of Corpses- amidst the unclean dust-heaps of the city, and the ashes of the burned offal of the Temple sacrifices. They could not be laid in the graves of their fathers – the common burial-place of the community - for the guilty could not be buried with the just; but were huddled out of sight, the beheaded or hanged, in one spot, the stoned and burned, in another. But such an indignity was not to befall the sacred form of the Saviour.”¹

B. The Description of Messiahs Grave – “with the wicked and with the rich”

1. His grave would be made with the wicked. Christ died between two common thieves. The tomb he was buried in also belonged to a sinner, honorable as he may have been.
2. His grave would be made with the rich. This was literally fulfilled in Christ’s burial in the tomb of a rich man named Joseph of Arimathaea. Matthew 27:57-60 “When the even was come, there came **a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph**, who also himself was Jesus’ disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

¹ Cunningham Geikie, The Life and Words of Christ (London: James Nisbet & Co, MDCCCXC) P. 717

And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.”

3. Note: Christ did not need his own, permanent tomb. A borrowed tomb would do as He would not need it for long (only 3 days)!

VI. THE SINLESSNESS OF THE SERVANT (VS. 9B)

The perfect sinlessness of Jehovah’s servant is declared in this verse. He was not suffering, dying and being buried in a grave for His own sin but for the sin of others.

A. Christ committed no outward sin – “he had done no violence”.

1. Isaiah 42:2 “He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.”
2. Christ is described as “holy, harmless, undefiled” in Hebrews 7:26.
3. Christ was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin (Heb. 4:15)

B. Christ had no inward sin – “neither was any deceit in his mouth”.

1. The words that come out of our mouths reveal what’s in our hearts (Matt. 12:34). Every sinner has deceit in his fallen heart (Jer. 17:9; Mk. 7:21). Sinners speak lies from the womb (Ps. 58:3). Christ had no deceit in his mouth because His heart was totally sinless. He is called “my righteous servant” by the Father in verse 11. The fact there was “no deceit in his mouth” points to His absolute sinlessness.
2. In Christ is no sin – “...in him is **no sin**.” (1 John 3:5)
3. Christ is the Lamb **without blemish** and **without spot** (1 Pet. 1:19).
4. 2 Cor. 5:21 “For he hath **made him to be sin for us**, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”
5. **Not only did Christ do no sin (1 Pet. 2:22), He knew no sin (1 Cor. 5:21) and in Him is no sin (1 John 3:5).**

VII. THE SATISFACTION IN THE SERVANT (Vs. 10-11)

A. The Father’s Determination (Vs. 10)

1. The cross was according to God’s sovereign will – “yet it **pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin...**” The final three verses of this prophecy (Vs. 10-12) emphasis the inner sufferings of Christ. The ‘soul’ is mentioned three times – “when thou shalt make his **soul** an offering for sin” (Vs. 10), “He shall see of the travail of his **soul**” (Vs. 11) & “he hath poured out his **soul** unto death” (Vs. 12). Christ suffered in His whole person – Spirit, Soul and Body.

2. The Hebrew term for “an offering for sin” is the word ‘asham’ and means “offense” or “guilt”. The word refers to a trespass offering, the most important offering of the Hebrew Bible. God made this Servant an ‘asham’ offering. (Fruchtenbaum) “The trespass offering was offered in respect of specific transgressions of the law. The distinctive feature of the trespass-offering is the satisfaction that it offered.” (J.M. Riddle)
3. “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, **Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?** that is to say, **My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?**” (Matt. 27:46; Psalm 22:1) Sin’s punishment is eternal separation from God (2. Thess. 1:9). Christ endured the wrath of God on our behalf and was forsaken by the Father at the cross. From all eternity past, the Father, Son and Spirit had enjoyed close and intimate communion but now Christ is left alone.

B. The Father’s Satisfaction (Vs. 11a)

1. The Father saw the Son’s travail on the cross and was perfectly and fully satisfied in the sufficiency of the sacrifice that was made for sin. The word ‘travail’ speaks of birth pangs. Think of it. Christ’s travail on the cross made the new birth possible for all who will come to Him by faith for salvation.
2. The Father is ONLY satisfied in the sacrifice of His Son for our sin, not our works or religion. Nothing else could satisfy God’s righteous demands of a Holy God.
3. Christ, in a loud voice, shouted “FINISHED” (Compare Matt. 27:50, Mk. 15:37, Luke 24:36 & John 19:30)
4. “It is finished” = (τετέλεσται) “Word was used in Greek commercial life. The term signified the completion of a transaction by the full payment of a price or the discharge of a debt by a completed payment.”²
5. Christ paid my sin debt in full! We can add NOTHING to His perfect, complete sacrifice. (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:3-7)

VIII. THE SPLENDORS OF THE SERVANT (Vs. 10b-12)

There is a note of victory in these concluding verses. We see the rewards for Jehovah’s Righteous Servant.

A. The Splendor of Messiah’s Resurrection (Vs. 10b)

All of a sudden, the Servant of Jehovah who has suffered, died and been buried is alive again and exalted! There is only one way this is possible – resurrection!

² Pentecost

1. He shall see His Seed – It has been pointed out that men see “their seed” whilst they are still alive, but He would see them after he had “poured out his soul unto death” (Vs. 12). The seed of Messiah would be all those who benefit from His substitutionary death by spiritual rebirth. The moment we repent and put our faith in Christ’s substitutionary death for our sins, we are born again spiritually by the Holy Spirit. Because the Servant has been resurrected, He sees His seed; He sees the ones who come to Him by faith. That includes **YOU** if you are saved. A woman goes through pain and travail in childbirth but at the end she is filled with joy when she looks upon her seed. Imagine the joy it is for the Son of God who went through all the travail of the cross to see precious sons and daughters born again spiritually to become a part of His family.
2. He shall prolong His days – Although the Lord Jesus would be “cut off out of the land of the living” (Vs. 5) and be “with the rich in his death” (Vs. 9), He would “prolong his days”. The expression is used approx. twenty times in the Old Testament but its “use here, referring to one who died is unparalleled.” (J.A Motyer) In other words, it normally refers to one who is alive having his days lengthened but here it is used of One who has died and been buried. Again, the truth of the resurrection is implied. Messiah would be raised from the dead to die no more. His days are endless, they have been prolonged for all eternity. Rev. 1:18 *“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”* Death has no more dominion over him (Rom. 6:9). See Matthew 28:1-7 for account of resurrection morning.
3. The pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand – the pleasure of the Lord refers to God’s Sovereign, Perfect Will (See 10a – “it pleased the LORD”). The will of God would not just be fulfilled through His Righteous Servant, it would flourish and prosper. This points us to the truth of Christ’s Mediatorial ministry. The plan and purposes of God are mediated through Christ (See 1 Tim. 2:5).

B. The Splendor of Messiah’s Justification (Vs. 11)

1. Justification is now possible because the Messiah lives. Think of it. If Christ was still in the grave, there would be no justification for sin. But because Christ lives, He is able to justify the repentant, believing sinner. Romans 4:25 “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”
2. Christ justifies us by His knowledge. He has the knowledge and the power to justify the sinner. On our end, we must come to understand and believe the truth of the Gospel in order to be

justified. John 17:3 “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

C. The Splendor of Messiah’s Exaltation (Vs. 12)

This verse describes the exaltation of Jehovah’s Servant after His death and resurrection (Phil. 2:5-11). The chapter ends with the promise of rewards. Because of everything the Servant did, according to verses 1-11, because He suffered vicariously for sinners, among whom He was counted and for whom He died, He would be greatly rewarded.

1. The rewards (Vs. 12a)

- a. Jehovah would divide him a portion with the great – Christ is the greatest of the great. This phrase likely points forward to the future Millennial reign of Christ where the uttermost parts of the earth will be made His possession. Psalm 2:8 “Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”
- b. Messiah would divide the spoil with the strong. Spoils are the rewards of victorious battle. Christ defeated sin and Satan (principalities and powers) at the cross (Col. 2:15). The spoils are the souls of men who have been rescued from Satan’s grasp. They also refer to the future redemption of the cosmos when the world will be brought under Messiah’s reign. As His seed, we will have the privilege of reigning with Him. He will share the spoils of His victorious death, burial and resurrection with us.
- c. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum explains it well, “God would give Him a portion with the great. Furthermore, the Servant would get to divide the spoil with the strong. Both of these statements refer to the day when Messiah returns at the end of the tribulation period. At that time, He will inherit the entire world and rule over the kingdom of men. The “great” and the “strong” are likely the saints who will co-reign with Him during the 1,000-year reign. As His seed, they are heirs with Messiah of kingdom promises and kingdom blessings.”

2. The reasons (Vs. 12b)

Four reasons are given for the exaltation of Messiah introduced by the word ‘because’.

- b. Christ poured out His soul unto death – Christ’s death was voluntary. He poured out His life in death as a willing sacrifice for us.
- c. Christ was numbered with the transgressors – Christ was crucified between two criminals. One of them repented and is in heaven with Christ now!

- d. Christ bare the sin of many – Christ took the sins of the world upon Himself. He bore your sin that day!
- e. Christ made intercession for the transgressors.
 - 1. This was literally fulfilled at the cross where Christ prayed for His torturers. Luke 23:33-34 “And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, **Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.** And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.”
 - 2. This continues to be fulfilled today in the intercession of Christ for His people. The verb translated “made intercession” is “an instance of the imperfect or indefinite future and expresses a work begun, but not yet ended” (David Baron) Hebrews 7:25 “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing **he ever liveth** to make intercession for them.” Romans 8:34 “Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”
- f. Christ is worthy of all glory, exaltation and praise because of what He accomplished on the cross.

Conclusion:

- 1. Hebrews 2:3 “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation...” Will you receive God’s offer of salvation through Christ this Easter?
- 2. Christian, are you worshipful and thankful this Easter? Will you proclaim the Gospel to others or are you ashamed (Rom. 1:16)? Will you surrender your life completely to the Father’s will?