

# The Death of Jesus:

## An Old Testament Revelation of Christ's Substitutionary Atonement

### Isaiah 53

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While I recognize the historical Church Calendar, my conscience and my decision-making is bound only to God's Word and what it teaches to me. I do not follow the Church Calendar because I must, but I do recognize it to be a helpful aid for focusing the universal church on certain aspects of the work of Jesus Christ at particular times of the year.

At this time of the year, many friends, neighbors, and relatives (believing and unbelieving) are seeing crosses at the side of the road, on church lawns, and the thought of the cross, well, crosses many people's minds.

With knowledge of that focus of almost the entire world, I wanted us to focus on the cross and what it means for us. What does the Bible teach to us about the cross of Jesus Christ? What was happening on that cross to Jesus and "for us"? How can the Gospel of Isaiah in the famous passage from chapter 53 aid us in our understanding of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ?

Outline:

- I. Death of Jesus Christ- Isaiah 49:1-7; 52-53
- II. Resurrection of Jesus Christ and New Creation- Isaiah 65-66

The "Gospel of Isaiah" reveals that a chosen servant of YHWH (the LORD) will deliver his people from exile and oppression and all people will know that God is the LORD and there is no other. This Servant of the LORD will be both a king and a servant and God will give him as a covenant for the people and a light for the nations. This Servant of the LORD will be humbled through great suffering and death in order to be exalted to his throne as king.

#### **The Prophecy of Isaiah- Introduction/Introduction to the Prophetic Literature and Genre**

Isaiah prophesied about 740-700BC as the shadow of the great and powerful Assyrian Empire was gaining power and territory and Israel was in decline spiritually, economically, and militarily. Israel and Judah were split into two Kingdoms; Israel was taken into Assyrian captivity in 722 BC, and Judah the Southern Kingdom would be taken into captivity and exile by Babylon in 586 BC.

## **Introduction**

The visible people of God were described this way spiritually at the time of Isaiah's ministry:

***Isaiah 1:3-4: The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand." <sup>4</sup> Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged. <sup>5</sup> Why will you still be struck down? Why will you continue to rebel? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.***

The people of God were in exile, in slavery, being oppressed under foreign and oppressive nations, but their problem was not so great as mere oppression and slavery, as was ***their problem of sin***. Yet Isaiah preached that there was still to be salvation from the LORD for those who believe; Israel was to be cleansed, purified from sin:

***ESV Isaiah 1:18: "Come now, let us reason<sup>1</sup> together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.***

This cleansing from sin, this salvation was why Isaiah was to bring comfort to believing Israel:

***ESV Isaiah 40:1-5: Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare<sup>1</sup> is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. <sup>3</sup> A voice cries:<sup>1</sup> "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. <sup>5</sup> And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."***

The people of God are in bondage and slavery to sin, and these ungodly people ("people of unclean lips", cf. Isaiah 6:5-11) must be redeemed and saved from their sins. In order to be redeemed and saved by YWHW, they must be reconciled to him, and their sins must be forgiven.

In this passage, we want to pay attention to the Suffering Servant-King as a sin-bearer, one who takes upon himself the wrath of God for ungodly sinners, and one who will be exalted through suffering and death for his own.

Context of Isaiah 52:13-53:12: Isaiah speaks in 52:7 about the gospel good news and how beautiful the feet of those who bring this gospel good news!

However, he turns from the vision of “breaking forth into singing and worship” (vv. 7-10) to telling the people to purify themselves and make themselves ready for the Lord’s coming (vv. 11-12).

In the middle of this gospel proclamation, Isaiah shows what this gospel and salvation will look like. This will be Israel’s salvation, this will be Israel’s hope, this will be Israel’s exaltation, this will be Israel’s restoration from exile, and freedom from their slavery, this will be Israel’s peace!

***In this Suffering Servant-King revealed in Isaiah 53, Israel and all those from the nations who believe, will find their deliverance and exaltation from a world of sin and misery. This is what the time of Easter is all about!***

But many will not recognize this Suffering Servant-King of YHWH apart from God’s initiative work in making their hearts see and believe!

Remember these sad words in John’s gospel:

***ESV John 1:10-11: He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.***

**Do you recognize this Servant?** Do you recognize this Suffering Servant-King as your only hope? The reason why many do not recognize him (humanly speaking) is that they do not recognize their own sinfulness. Some folks just do not take their sinful problem seriously. In order to recognize this Suffering-Servant Savior, one must realize how bad they are.

How do you think of yourself? As a sinner; or is someone else’s fault? Are you a blame-shifter? I am the way I am because of this incident in my life, or because of my parents, or because I am not loved as I think I should be, or because of my husband, wife, child, etc *ad infinitum*?!

Why would ask you that here? Well, it seems that we’re always looking for someone else to get the blame; someone else to get the rap; someone else to be the scapegoat. We desire having someone else to be blamed rather than for us to repent and admit our own wrong-doing before God. We inordinately desire to be right. We want to justify ourselves.

Sitting in the psychologists’ office for the 24<sup>th</sup> year, hearing: “It’s not your fault; it’s your father’s fault; it’s your neighbors’ fault; you need to love yourself and shift the blame.” This advice is actually saying you have the authority and right to justify yourself - -before yourself. But you are not the Judge- -and it is before God that we must consider this.

Are you a blame-shifter? We all can be! It is because we know deep down inside in this world of sin and misery that it is not someone else’s fault- -it is our own- -but we don’t want to admit it because it will mean that we have to admit guilt before God and others.

***We are guilty and we are sinners and yet we blame others because that's easier than repentance and turning to God by faith for forgiveness.***

Are you a sinner? Are you ungodly? Or are you a pretty good person? How do you think of yourself before God? (Not so much in comparison with others, but *before God*).

Perhaps you are the kind who thinks you don't deserve anything good God or anyone else can freely give you without you working for it?

***Whether blame-shifter, acknowledged sinner, committed ungodly person, so-called "worthy person", or hard-working person, you are all the same- -in need of a substitute- -in need of salvation and hope apart from yourselves found only in God and in His Suffering Servant-King.***

Do you believe it? Put simply, God has given a scapegoat for His people; a Holy Scapegoat to take our blame, our shame, our sins upon himself! God has given His Beloved Son and has blamed Him in our place! Yet you must admit your guilt, and blame only yourself for your sins, then you will find one who will willingly take your guilt, shame and blame upon Himself.

As one commentator wrote: "In the gospel Jesus says to us, 'I am the willing scapegoat of the world. At my cross, it's my professional business to be crushed under the unbearable guilt of others. It's my role to bear away other people's guilt. That's what I do, because I love *guilty* people. If you'll trust me, here's the deal. My only guilt will be yours, and your only righteousness will be mine. Is that arrangement acceptable to you? Or will you continue to cope with your guilt by your own devices?'" (*Isaiah: God Saves Sinners*, Raymond Ortlund, Jr. pg. 353).

This is what Isaiah 53 is about.

This is not just a one time message that we believe and obey, but we must be constantly reminding ourselves that salvation is of the LORD- -salvation is found in Christ alone. Here in our passage from Isaiah today, 52-53 we are shown verbally-visually the Suffering Servant-King who has come to take away our transgression and sins and reconcile us to God by faith alone!

Let's look at the way Isaiah has poetically penned these lines. These verses are arranged in Hebrew to provide us with emphasis and the main points of Isaiah's gospel message:

- A1: The Servant's Exaltation (52:13-15)**
- B1: The Servant's Humiliation (53:1-3)**
- C: The Servant's Substitution (53:4-6)**
- B2: The Servant's Humiliation (53:7-9)**
- A2: The Servant's Exaltation (53:10-12)**

We will consider these four points in our sermon this morning: (1) The Servant's Exaltation (52:13); (2) The Servant's Humiliation (53:1-3); (3) The Servant's Substitution (focal point of sermon, 53:4-10); (4) The Servant's Exaltation (53:11-12).

One commentator observes that every verse of the chapter except verse two is applied to Christ at least once and several more than once. The whole of Jesus' ministry is here from beginning to end. I want to approach this text in its context, but I also want us to understand it from a New Testament, Christ-centered perspective.

This text in Isaiah 53 is about Jesus Christ (and this has never been disputed by New Testament Christians. Only has to read Luke 24:24ff; 44ff; and Acts 8:26-35). As we go through the passage together, let us be reminded of this important Christ-centered-focus as we learn more about what Christ has done for us as His people.

**Important Note:** From a Jewish perspective there are few who can deny that the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 52-53 is about Israel's Messiah. Jonathan ben Uziel (19<sup>th</sup> century Jewish scholar) explains that it is speaking of Messiah ("Mashiach") who is yet to come "not that man who was crucified in Jerusalem about the end of the second temple [period]...and this is the opinion of many of the Midrashim [Jewish "traditions" or "interpretations]."

Some Rabbis interpret Isaiah 52-53 today to be speaking of Israel simply as the "Servant of YHWH" but this will not do as I argued last week. Passages in Isaiah that speak of the Servant of YHWH sometimes do speak of the Nation of Israel, but they also speak of a singular person who will restore and redeem Israel (cf. Isaiah 49:4-6).

Until the 11th century commentaries of Rashi, Isaiah 53's 'Suffering Servant' was understood to mean Messiah \*not\* Israel. Scripture gives opposing views of Messiah; Messiah was to be rule the world, yet Messiah was also to suffer for the sins of mankind. Early rabbis, unable to conceive of one Messiah fulfilling both roles, often relied on the 'two-Messiah' theory: one Messiah was Messiah ben Yosef, who suffered; and the other, Messiah ben David, who ruled, and would establish the promised messianic kingdom (<http://www.lightofmashiach.org/rabbi.html>).

## **I. The Servant's Exaltation (Isaiah 52:13)**

- The Servant shall be *high and lifted up and exalted* –three Hebrew verbs ("room, *nasah*, *gavah*"- *almost sounds like one is being exalted or lifted up!*)- Look at Isaiah 52:13:

~W<sup>r</sup> vb. be high, exalted, rise -- Qal 1. a. *be high*

a<sup>f</sup>n" vb. lift, carry, take -- Qal 1. *lift, lift up*

Hb;G" vb. be high, exalted -- Qal 1. *be high, lofty, tall*

- (Perhaps the three verbs refer ultimately to the three stages of Christ's one exaltation: resurrection, ascension, enthronement at God's right hand? – from Delitzsch's commentary).
- This exalted state prior to humiliation implies the fact that the One who will suffer will be divine (although this will be revealed more clearly in the fullness of the times). In Isaiah 52:13-53, there is a human sufferer described but He is also One Who is Exalted and Lifted Up (52:13; cf. "...children of mankind", v. 14).

*ESV John 17:5 And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.*

- God's prophecy through Isaiah will be graphically violent and disturbing in these passages, yet God begins this portion with a sure exalted victory. He says: "My servant will **act wisely** [or "prudently"- lk;f **vb. be prudent** -- **Qal** *be prudent, circumspect. Hiph. 1. look at. 2. give attention to, consider, ponder*], he shall be high and lifted up, and be exalted."
- No matter how it may seem to those around this servant, and no matter how his ministry is interpreted, he will be successful, victorious, and exalted. As Pilate asked Jesus: "**Are YOU then a king?**" "**He saved others why can't he save himself?**"
- The Servant shall be exalted although poetically Isaiah goes on to describe his utter humiliation and suffering unto death.

## **II. The Servant's Humiliation (Isaiah 52:14-53:3)**

- Many will be astonished (v. 14a) - We should understand this to mean that there will be an element of surprise in the Servant's work (this linked to the people's slowness to recognize him or fully to understand his mission).
- The Servant's appearance will be marred beyond recognition that he is human (v.14b, c)
- The Servant's humiliation and suffering will be for:
  - Sprinkling (startling?) (v. 15a) - The priestly duty of sprinkling blood as representative of the people (see Leviticus 4). The sprinkling was for the purpose of **expiation and sanctification** (Delizsche, pg. 308).

*ESV Hebrews 9:13-14: For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, <sup>14</sup> how much more will*

***the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.***

- Many “nations” (the “goyim”) will be sprinkled- -not merely Israel. The Servant’s mission is international, or cosmic in scale- -not merely to Israel, but from Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth (cf. Isaiah 42; Acts 1:8). The Servant’s humiliation will be beneficial for some in Israel and many throughout the world as well.
- Belief in him- even kings and rulers of the nations will believe! (v. 15b, c). This could also stress the king’s recognizing the Servant’s Lordship (as with Nebuchadnezzar) or for rulers to be humbled in his presence (“shut their mouths”- v. 15).

<sup>ESV</sup> **Isaiah 49:7** Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation, the servant of rulers: ***"Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves; because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."***

In chapter 53:1 there is a transition to the “we” of Israel as representative by Isaiah the Prophet (“I am a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips”- there is an association and unity of identity here between Israel and Isaiah which is the “we” plural we notice in Isaiah 53:1).

This indicates that the Servant is not ultimately Israel collectively as a people (some scholars Jewish and other have argued that the Suffering Servant is actually National Israel, but this cannot be true). This makes a distinction between the Servant and his mission and Israel as “we” (those to whom He has been revealed).

It seems as if Israel and Isaiah the Prophet “we” are lamenting their unbelief and transgression in light of the prophecy of nations and kings who will see, hear and believe (cf. Isaiah 52:13-15). Perhaps this is a foretaste of Israel’s jealousy that the Apostle Paul speaks of in Romans 11?

***“Who has believed what they heard from us?” (53:1).***

***In other words, Israel and Isaiah “we-us” are lamenting the unbelief in God to restore them by this Suffering Servant-King from exile and redeem them from their sins through humiliation and exaltation.***

***Who then will save believing Israel and the Nations?***

- The Servant who is the revelation of the “arm of the LORD” or his power (53:1a, b).
- Even though the Servant is the revelation of the LORD’s power, he will grow up as a normal child, and he will have not external, or outward beauty that will be recognizable (v. 2; cf. He is one of the “...Children of mankind”, 52:14).
- In fact this Servant will grow up like a “root out of dry ground”. It will be the Lord’s power that he will grow in a wilderness-desert kind of environment, absent from the Lord’s rich covenantal blessings that He deserves, or far away from his heavenly glory-home at the Father’s side (v. 2b; John 17:5)
- The Servant will be despised and rejected (v. 3a) - Though the Servant is on a mission to reveal God’s power to believers, he will be despised and rejected. Even the signs and wonders that the Servant will show clearly to the world will be despised and rejected.
- The Servant will be a sufferer, full of pains and griefs, and sorrows (v. 3b)
  - His life will be one of constant painful endurance- Delizsche, pg. 314.
  - The Servant will enter into our world of sin and misery. He will identify with Israel’s pains, griefs and sorrows, and know them intimately. The Servant will be like His people in every way... (cf. Hebrews 2:14-18).
- Repetition that he will be despised and not esteemed (v. 3c, d)
  - Not esteemed: Not counted as a worthy person, not one of much value in man’s estimate- -ordinary, an “unfortunate man”.
  - Isaiah’s repetition teaches the people to know that the Servant of the LORD will be a despised man who is not esteemed by the people.
  - The Servant is a powerful revelation of God’s salvation and redemption for the people and the world- *-yet he is not easily recognized* (he is not the one whom most of the people are anticipating).

### **III. The Servant’s Substitution (Isaiah 53:4-10)**

- Although not esteemed at all, and despised greatly, his mission of suffering will be accomplished despite the misunderstanding and rejection of his person.
- The Servant's suffering will have a purpose: "bearing our grief, carrying our sorrows, being wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities, chastisement to bring us peace, and by his stripes we are healed (53:4-5).
- The Servant's suffering is specifically for his people :

***There is pain.***

- i. He has ***borne*** \*\*OUR\*\* griefs (or sicknesses, diseases- all of the results of a world affected by sin, cf. Matthew 8:17- <sup>ESV</sup> **Matthew 8:17** This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases." (v. 4a)

- "Borne or carried" (v. 4a), means specifically ***"sin bearing" or "taking upon the punishment for sin"***- af'n" vb. lift, carry, take -- Qal 1. lift, lift up

<sup>ESV</sup> **Leviticus 5:17** "If anyone sins, doing any of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done, though he did not know it, then realizes his guilt, ***he shall bear his iniquity.***

Jesus was our scapegoat:

<sup>ESV</sup> **Leviticus 16:22** ***The goat shall bear all their iniquities*** on itself to a remote area, and he shall let the goat go free in the wilderness.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Leviticus 17:16** But if he does not wash them or bathe his flesh, ***he shall bear his iniquity.***"

<sup>ESV</sup> **Leviticus 24:15** And speak to the people of Israel, saying, Whoever curses his God ***shall bear his sin.***

- ii. He has carried \*\*OUR\*\* sorrows- the sorrows we experience in a world of sin and misery (death, burdens of guilt, shame, hurts, pains, etc.) (v. 4b)
- iii. He has carried \*\*OUR\*\* griefs and sorrows as he is smitten by God and afflicted by God's holy anger and wrath, yet "we" understood his punishment as somehow deserving of what he received (cf. Job); (v. 4c,d)

**Application:**

- Picture the Suffering Servant taking upon his back all of the great sinful weights and miseries of this life you cannot bear or endure.
- Picture the Suffering Servant taking upon himself your sins and the consequences of your sins.
- Picture the Suffering Servant relieving you of your burden of sin, guilt and shame.
- Picture the Suffering Servant being punished for your sins against God and man!

***There is judgment!***

- iv. He was **wounded** (or “pierced”) for **\*\*OUR\*\*** transgressions against God (v. 5a)- the **penal aspect** of the Servant’s being wounded or pierced as our substitute (transgressions against God’s Law- -requires just payment!)
- v. He is **crushed** under God’s great wrath for **\*\*OUR\*\*** sins and iniquities (v. 5b)- “Iniquities are the “bentness” of fallen human nature.”- J. Alec Motyer, Isaiah, pg. 335. Iniquity is our sinful guilt before a holy God.
  - **[ak'D'] vb. crush**, poet. not in **Qal**; **Niph. crushed**, fig. = *contrite ones*. **Pi. crush**, (fig.) c. acc. **Pu. crushed, broken in pieces, shattered; made humble, contrite.**

***There is hope!***

- vi. He was chastised so that we could have peace with God (v. 5c)
  - vii. His stripes heal us (v. 5d)- the miseries of the effects of the fall on us from sicknesses, diseases, sinful thinking and acting, mental handicaps, etc. This Suffering Servant will restore us to “wholeness”.
- **Three Important Theological Words:** (1) **Atonement**- What is being described in Isaiah 53 (using the language of bearing, carrying, being lifted up). Atonement is a taking away of God’s wrath by a substitute. Atonement is another getting what we deserve and so making satisfaction as a substitute for others.

One writer said about chapter 53 of Isaiah’s Gospel: “Isaiah 53 represents the most profound spiritual summary of the aspects of atonement; here virtually all

lines converge and are fused into a greater whole” (*Concise Reformed Dogmatics*, Genderen and Velema, pg. 514.

- (2) **Propitiation**- The act of appeasing God’s just wrath through an acceptable sacrifice (Romans 3:23-26). (3) **Expiation**- The removal of sin and guilt.
- **The Reformed View of the Atonement**: Often called “Atonement through satisfaction”. The Belgic Confession states it clearly: “God...sent his Son to assume that nature in which the disobedience was committed to make satisfaction for the same, and to bear the punishment for sin...Christ presented himself in our behalf before the Father, to appease his wrath by his full satisfaction, by offering himself on the tree of the cross...Christ performed his holy works for us in our stead.”

**Westminster Confession of Faith 11.3** Christ, by His obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to His Father's justice in their behalf.(1) Yet, inasmuch as He was given by the Father for them,(2) and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead,(3) and both, freely, not for anything in them, their justification is only of free grace;(4) that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.(5) (1)Rom. 5:8,9,10,19; 1 Tim. 2:5,6; Heb. 10:10,14; Dan. 9:24,26; Isa. 53:4,5,6,10,11,12. (2)Rom. 8:32. (3)2 Cor. 5:21; Matt. 3:17; Eph. 5:2. (4)Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7. (5)Rom. 3:26; Eph. 2:7.

The need for atonement is because of sin. We are not sinners because we sin, but we sin because we are by nature sinners. All humanity is guilty before God. Our guilt is the reason why we need a Substitutionary Atonement!

***Think about this carefully every person who can hear my voice:***

- God’s holy law demands perfection. In the context of Isaiah 53, Israel was experiencing the judgment of God for her sins because she had been unfaithful to God’s revealed will. Israel had a problem of being enslaved in a worldly way in the exile, but here deeper problem was sin and transgression against God and His revealed will (cf. Isaiah 1:18-24).
- All have fallen short of the glory of God the Scriptures teach (Romans 3:23). This means that all (both Jew and Gentiles are guilty before God for covenant-breaking. Israel’s exile was a consequence of covenant disobedience to God, but her exile was also a picture of the world’s bondage and slavery to sin.
- In focusing on the Suffering Servant, we must remember the righteousness that God’s Law requires:

*<sup>ESV</sup> James 2:8-10: If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. <sup>9</sup> But if you show*

*partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.*<sup>10</sup>  
*For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.*

- Every human being is required to perfectly keep God's law, but sinners and the ungodly realize they cannot. Sinners and the ungodly realize that they "fall short of the glory of God" and are described by Paul in Romans 3:10-23:

*For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin,*<sup>10</sup> *as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one;*<sup>11</sup> *no one understands; no one seeks for God.*<sup>12</sup> *All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."*<sup>13</sup> *"Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive."* *"The venom of asps is under their lips."*<sup>14</sup> *"Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness."*<sup>15</sup> *"Their feet are swift to shed blood;*<sup>16</sup> *in their paths are ruin and misery,*<sup>17</sup> *and the way of peace they have not known."*<sup>18</sup> *"There is no fear of God before their eyes."*<sup>19</sup> *Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.*<sup>20</sup> *For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.*<sup>21</sup> *But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it-*<sup>22</sup> *the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:*<sup>23</sup> *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...*

- **What are you going to do?** Blame someone else for your law-breaking? Are you going to play the victim sitting back as judge that you think you are and sneering at others? Are you going to deny this reality and suppress the truth and reality of deserving God's holy wrath and punishment for your sins against God and man? Are you going to try and "be a good person" (you need to be a "perfect person" in order to escape God's wrath).
- Or, will you believe? Here's the Gospel-good news!
  - a. Jesus kept God's holy law.
  - b. Jesus took God's holy wrath and anger against sin upon himself. Jesus is a substitute (the Suffering Servant-King in our place) for those who believe.
- For those who have ears to hear the good news- -listen to this!

*<sup>ESV</sup> Romans 3:23-26: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*<sup>24</sup> *and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,*<sup>25</sup> *whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.* *This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.*<sup>26</sup> *It was to show his righteousness at the*

***present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.***

What separates the “men and the boys” spiritually is whether one acknowledges oneself before God as not just bad, but completely hopeless *apart from grace*. Not just completely hopeless, but completely guilty and worthy only of wrath and eternal judgment.

You see the whole idea of substitution is an affront; it is an offense; it is a stumbling block to the self-righteous. The self-righteous say: “Substitute? Why would I need a substitute? I’m doing just fine on my own. Give me some law and I’ll do it, unlike the rest of the big ‘ol bad world.”

“...And if I am found to be “weak” in this matter or “imperfect” (not guilty or condemned but worldly terms like merely weak and imperfect) then someone else is to blame!”

But no one else is to blame but yourself O Mr. and Mrs. Self-Righteous- - the only one who has a right to blame and condemn has been blamed and condemned in the place or as a substitute for those who repent and realize their sinful unworthiness in its mammoth proportions before God!

***For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God -2 Corinthians 5:21***

- For your shame, Jesus bears your guilt and sins.
- For your idolatry, loving something and/or someone more than, or other than God.
- For your taking God’s name in vain.
- For your Sabbath breaking.
- For your dishonoring your mother and father.
- For your lust, your adultery (physical and spiritual) and the abuse of sex and your positions as husband and wife.
- For your murdering, your hatred, unforgiveness, ongoing bitterness, and sinful anger.
- For your stealing what does not belong to you (including money, time and resources that belong to God).
- For your ongoing envy and coveting- -desiring more and what someone else has.
- For your shame, there is Jesus Christ! Where you have shame and guilt because of your sins as sinners and ungodly, let the blood of Jesus’ sacrifice cleanse you, assuring you of God’s love for you, and that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.
- Rather, because of Christ’s sacrifice, his righteousness is imputed to us.
- Repent of you best works; repent of your best repentance; surrender your best righteousness that is as filthy rags.

- Turn to the LORD Jesus Christ for your right standing before God and man.
  - Turn to Jesus when shame and guilt from your sins get the best of you.
  - Run the race with endurance, looking to Jesus the Author and Perfector of your faith, laying aside your shameful weight, and the sins that so easily cling close to you.
- Our typical response:
    - viii. Yet we as sheep have gone astray (v. 6a; Romans 3:11-26)
    - ix. We have disregarded this salvation and hope to turn to our own way apart from God (v. 6b) - -we look for false hopes in something or someone other than Jesus (a righteousness in ourselves!).
  - God's Revelation of Grace to Sinners:
    - x. In God's grace, YHWH has not punished those who he loves, who believes, but has laid on him the iniquity of us all (v. 6c).
    - xi. The Servant *willingly in "deliberate self-submission" (Motyer)* suffered greatly through oppression and affliction, but he was silent and set on accomplishing his mission with full trust in YHWH (v. 7a)
    - xii. The Servant was like a lamb to the slaughter, and he did not open his mouth to resist God's holy wrath and judgment because he committed to this mission covenantally (v. 7b)

*ESV 1 Peter 2:21-25: For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup> He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. <sup>23</sup> When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. <sup>24</sup> He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

xiii. The Servant was cut off and stricken for God's people (v. 8)

- The Servant's remembrance and memory will be with the wicked and the rich (v. 9)

*ESV Psalm 27:13 I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!*

IV. **The Servant's Reconciliation-Exaltation of Servant and His People (Isaiah 53:10-12)**

- It was God's will to crush this Servant and to put him to grief (v. 10a)
- This was God's will to make his soul an offering for sin (v. 10b)
- The servant shall see his "seed" or "offspring"- -his mission will be accomplished by God's grace and God's will be done (v. 10c, d)

*Although the Savior's people strayed as sheep, they will return to him as sons and part of the Suffering Servant's inheritance! The servant shall live to see his offspring, heritage, or children!*

<sup>ESV</sup> **Hebrews 2:10-15:** *For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.<sup>11</sup> For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,<sup>12</sup> saying, "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise."<sup>13</sup> And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Behold, I and the children God has given me."<sup>14</sup> Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,<sup>15</sup> and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.*

- The Servant will make many righteous before God because he shall give them a right standing or justification before God by being their substitutionary sin-bearer (v. 11)
- God will accept his offering for the sins of his people (v. 12)

<sup>ESV</sup> **Romans 5:6-11:** *For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.<sup>7</sup> For one will scarcely die for a righteous person- though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die-<sup>8</sup> but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.<sup>9</sup> Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.<sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.<sup>11</sup> More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*

Are you weak? Are you ungodly? Are you unrighteous? Are you a sinner? Are you an enemy of God because of your sin?

Then there is good news for you!

Are you willing to believe this day (no matter how many times you have believed it before!!) that Jesus is your only hope for righteousness. Your exaltation and right standing before God is found in Jesus' humiliation and suffering and death for you!

- Believers have been justified by Christ's blood.
- Believers have been saved from the wrath of God.
- Believers have been reconciled with God and saved by Christ's resurrection life.

Everyone must see themselves under the cross where we see the ultimate realization and ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah's Suffering-Servant Prophecy and be able to cry out "*Surely, this was the Son of God!*"

*ESV Mark 15:33-39: And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. <sup>34</sup> And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" <sup>35</sup> And some of the bystanders hearing it said, "Behold, he is calling Elijah." <sup>36</sup> And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." <sup>37</sup> And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. <sup>38</sup> And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. <sup>39</sup> And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"*

Can you too, with the centurion say in response to this prophecy and its fulfillment in Jesus: "*Truly this man was the Son of God!*"

Can you believe that in your place as your substitution, your sins, all your guilt and shame were imputed to the Lord Jesus Christ and in him you too cried out:

*"Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*

### **There Shall Be Exaltation through Humiliation**

- The Servant shall be high and lifted up and exalted (Isaiah 52:13)—three Hebrew verbs ("*room, nasah, gavah*" - -almost sounds like one is being exalted or lifted up!)

~Wr vb. be high, exalted, rise -- Qal 1. a. be high

af'n" vb. lift, carry, take -- Qal 1. lift, lift up

Hb;G" vb. be high, exalted -- Qal 1. be high, lofty, tall

*ESV Philippians 2:4-11: Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**“Room, nasah, gavah!”**

*ESV Philippians 2:9 Therefore God has highly exalted [u`peru, ywsen-u-perupsosen]him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name...*

*ESV Acts 2:32-34: This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. <sup>33</sup> Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. <sup>34</sup> For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "' The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand...*

We rejoice because as the Suffering Servant-King's people, we too are united to him in his humiliation and exaltation. We are those who have died with him and been raised with him (Rom. 6). In fact, we are those who are seated with him in the heavenly places and have been raised up with him!

Isaiah saw that one day the Suffering Servant-King would be the One through which Israel would receive restoration from exile and be exalted. This is fulfilled in Christ and His Church, made up of both Jew and Gentile! Praise be to God. He is risen!

*ESV Colossians 3:1-4: If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup> For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

The accomplished work of Jesus Christ, particularly in his Substitutionary and Sacrificial Atonement has brought purification to those who believe and one day for the whole world in that the wicked will be judged, and only righteousness will remain.

The sacrifice of Jesus, the Suffering-Servant is not for all- *-it is for those who believe-* but the results of his atoning work are cosmic in proportions! Jesus' work brings a new creation (Isaiah 65:17-66, which we will look at in detail more next week, D.V.).

Grant Almighty God, that we see our whole salvation and all its parts comprehended in Christ.

If we seek salvation, we are taught by the very name of Jesus that its is "of him";

If we seek any gifts of the Spirit, they will be found in Jesus' anointing;

If we seek strength, it lies in his dominion and power;

If we seek redemption, it lies in Jesus' passion; if acquittal, in Jesus' condemnation; if remission of the curse, in Jesus' cross; if satisfaction, in Jesus' sacrifice; if purification, in Jesus' blood; if reconciliation, in Jesus' descent into hell; if mortification of the flesh, in Jesus' tomb.

If we seek newness of life or immortality, it is in Jesus' resurrection; if inheritance of the Heavenly Kingdom, in Jesus' entrance into heaven.

If we seek protection, security, if abundant supply of all blessings, these are found in Jesus' Kingdom.

In short, since riches of every kind of good abounds in Jesus, let us drink our fill from this fountain, and from no other!

We pray dear Father that we may truly know this day that Jesus was put to death for our sins and raised for our justification.

We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

**CRB**

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