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Sermon Notes

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Jesus, the Suffering Servant: Part 3

Isaiah 53:10-12

Patrick Morley in his book, *THE MAN IN THE MIRROR*, tells a heart-wrenching story about an ill-fated Alaskan fishing trip. Some fishermen in a small seaplane find a secluded bay where they can fish. They have a great day of pulling in salmon and then return to their plane late in the afternoon. Much to their surprise, they find the aircraft high and dry because of the fluctuating tides. There is no choice but to wait until morning when incoming tides will make takeoff possible again. The next morning, with the plane afloat, they start the engine and take to the air. Within minutes, however, the plane falls back into the sea. A leak in one of the pontoons lets it fill up with water, and the extra weight causes the plane to crash. The three adult fishermen survive the crash as does Mark, the 12-year-old son of one of the fishermen. After praying, the four abandon the sinking plane and begin to swim toward shore, fighting the cold waters and a vicious riptide as they go. Two of the men, strong swimmers, reach shore exhausted. But looking back out onto the water they see the father cradling his son in his arms as they are swept out to sea. The father could have made shore alone, but his son, much smaller, could not. The father decides to die with his son rather than leave him.

Spurgeon: “We read in ancient story of a father whose two sons were taken prisoners; they were both condemned to die. The old man appeared on the scene to offer up his life — all that he had to offer — and to die himself, if his sons’ lives might be spared. For some reason the soldiers, melting to pity, went as far as they could, and told him he might have whichever of his sons he chose to be spared for the ransom. He looked first at one, and then at the other. He would fain say, “Spare that one,” but then they would put the other to death; and he would fain say, “Spare this one,” but then the other must die. And so the old man alternated between one and the other, undecided which should be released, till both were slain.”

One of the most painful, heart-wrenching agonies a father can undergo is to watch the death of his son...

But in our text today, we plumb the depths of mystery in the heart of God as He was pouring out His wrath on His only begotten Son

***Isaiah 53:10-12* Yet it pleased the LORD to crush him and cause him to suffer**

WHY? Because of all the ETERNAL GLORY He would get and the ETERNAL JOY we will get... it brought God pleasure; NOT THE THING ITSELF, but what it would produce!!!!

Death in verse 8: **CUT OFF FROM THE LAND OF THE LIVING**

Burial in verse 9: **ASSIGNED A GRAVE WITH THE WICKED AND WITH THE RICH IN HIS DEATH**

Triumph in verse 10: **HE WILL SEE HIS OFFSPRING...** His children, the fruits of His labors

Triumph in verse 11: **HE WILL SEE THE LIGHT OF LIFE AND BE SATISFIED**

Triumph in verse 11: **HE WILL JUSTIFY MANY AND BEAR THEIR INIQUITIES**

Triumph in verse 12: **HE WILL DIVIDE THE SPOILS WITH THE STRONG**

An incalculable river of blessing and triumph and riches and glory flow from this, the greatest act in all of history

Christ took on Satan's dark Kingdom and defeated it! Christ took on the Holy Law of God which was set against us and condemned us, and He satisfied its demands! Christ took on the dark realm of the grave and rose triumphant over it! Christ is the VICTOR! And to this victor belong eternal spoils....

The SPOILS of this victory are clearly in view in Isaiah:

***Isaiah 53:12* Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong**

No chapter in the Bible so clearly predicts the SPOILS OF VICTORY before the fact as does Isaiah 53

No book in the Bible so clearly explains the SPOILS OF VICTORY after the fact as does the Book of Revelation

Revelation 5:5-6 Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." ⁶ Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne

Revelation 5:9-13 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." ¹¹ Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. ¹² In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" ¹³ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

Review: This is the third sermon on this amazing prophecy

Isaiah 53 is the clearest chapter in the Bible on the central mechanism of our salvation: SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT... the idea that our sin, our guilt, our wickedness can be transferred to a substitute, and His suffering can completely atone for it all!

This eternal gospel—this timeless message—of salvation through a substitute sent by God—was proclaimed with crystal clarity an amazing 700 years before Christ was born.

We began looking at this amazing chapter over the last two weeks and now, by God's grace, we will seek to finish our look at it; BUT we will spend

eternity in heaven studying the details and glories of these amazing 15 verses!!

I. Review: Outline of the Chapter(s)

A. Christ Repulsive, But Redemptive, then Exalted (52:13-15)

1. Christ presented as one who will be successful, then raised, lifted up, highly exalted (vs. 13)
2. (vs. 14) Yet we are also told he will be **APPALLING TO LOOK AT...** disfigured so badly that he will be barely recognizable as a human being
3. (vs. 15) The disfigurement of the Servant of the Lord is the way by which He will **SPRINKLE MANY NATIONS...** this word “sprinkle” we will discuss, but it means cleansing them from sin, making them pure in God’s sight
4. (vs. 15) This is the very one who will be proclaimed even to **Kings**, and they will shut their mouths because of **Him...**
5. The distant **Gentile Kings** will hear about **Him**, and they will believe

B. Christ the “Arm of the Lord,” But Human and Despised (53:1-3)

1. The next two subsections simply trace out the biography of Jesus Christ
2. (vs. 1) **But** it begins with an assertion that this message must be believed, this suffering Servant must be revealed by God or you’ll never see **Him**
3. (vs. 1) He is revealed as the **ARM OF THE LORD...** the mighty One who will work deliverance, redemption, salvation for His people
4. (vs. 2) **BUT THEN** He is portrayed as human... he “grew up” before the Lord... Not only is He human, He is unimpressive, weak, unattractive, nothing in His appearance that would make people follow Him, still less worship Him

5. (vs. 3) He is despised and rejected... people were horrified by His appearance, and He was held in low esteem

C. Christ Rejected, But Our Atoning Substitute (53:4-6)

1. The theological center of the Bible... substitutionary atonement
2. Christ takes up OUR pain, He carries OUR sin, and DIES for it
3. He was PIERCED for our transgressions, CRUSHED for our iniquities, the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him and by His wounds, we are healed
4. Jesus thus gives HEALTH to diseased people, and PEACE to wicked rebels formerly at war with God
5. But He does this at the cost of His own life

Isaiah 53:6 “All we, like sheep, have gone astray; each of us has turned to his own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

D. Christ Innocent, But Willing to Be Slaughtered (53:7-9)

1. Christ, by His willingness to die in our place is able to atone for our sins...
2. So this suffering man, was exactly like the sheep led to the slaughter in that he died... the killers led, and Jesus meekly followed
3. BUT unlike the sheep that were led to the slaughter, Jesus knew exactly what He was doing, and that’s precisely HOW He atoned for us
4. He was completely innocent... no violence in His actions, no wickedness in His speech... a PERFECT MAN, sinless... but dead in our place
5. Prophetic Details: He died by PIERCING (vs. 5) and was BURIED in a RICH MAN’S TOMB (vs. 9)

How amazing is all of this?!! We are the sheep going constantly astray, we are the wicked rebels, made sick by our sin and at war with God; before all nations, God bares His holy arm in the form of His frail, unimpressive

looking Son whom we despised and rejected... this One carried our infinitely heavy load, died under the infinitely fierce wrath of God, and was buried in a rich man's tomb; this same One rose from the dead and now enjoys looking at His spiritual children day after day in every nation on earth

II. The Pleasure of the Lord in Crushing His Son (vs. 10)

^{KJV} Isaiah 53:10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief...

^{NAS} Isaiah 53:10 But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief

^{NIV} Isaiah 53:10-12 Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer

A. Our God is a Happy Being

1. God is eternally happy in heaven...
2. The perfect joy of the Lord is in no way disturbed by the events on earth
3. God is happy within Himself and in the perfect fellowship of the Trinity
4. Great verse on this:

1 Timothy 1:11 the glorious gospel of the blessed God

John Piper: "the good news of the glory of the happy God."

God delights perfectly in Himself... He is happy being God!!

And the Father is perfectly delighted in His Son... He LOVES Him with a love that cannot be measured

The Father delights in His RULERSHIP over Heaven and Earth... this is expressed in His Sovereign will, expressed in detailed plans He is PLEASED to make

B. Extension of God's Happiness: His "Will"... His Plans

1. Isaiah 53:10 speaks of the pleasure of the Lord... what PLEASED Him
2. Many translations speak of this as “the will of the Lord”... **“It was the will of the Lord to crush Him...”**
3. Many verses link God’s will with His pleasure

Psalm 115:3 Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.

In other words, because God sits on a throne in absolute sovereignty, and because no one can stop Him from doing what He wants or question His decisions, God’s will is WHAT PLEASES HIM TO DO!!

- a. It pleased God to create heaven and earth
 - b. It pleased God to create the birds, fish, and animals
 - c. It pleased God to create man, male and female in His image
4. God’s pleasure extends into Redemption as well
 - a. It pleased God to permit Satan’s fall into rebellion
 - b. It pleased God to permit man—Adam and Eve—to follow Satan into rebellion at the tree
 - c. It pleased God to begin a work of Redemptive History, especially focusing on the call of Abraham
 - d. It pleased God to promise Abraham descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky; it pleased God to credit to him as righteousness when he believed the promise
 - e. It pleased God to unfold the history of the Jewish nation... step by step... including the slavery in Egypt, the Exodus, the Passover, the establishment of the Jews in the Promised Land
 - f. It even includes the Exile because of sin... the Bible clearly uses the “pleasure” language there:

Deuteronomy 28:63 Just as it pleased the LORD to make you prosper and increase in number, so it will please him to ruin and destroy you.

C. The “Will of the Lord” Sums Up this Verse as Well

Vs. 10 It was the Lord’s will (pleasure) to crush Him...

Vs. 10... the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

D. The Infinite Mystery: It PLEASED GOD to Crush His Son

^{NAS} Isaiah 53:10 But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief

1. This is the hardest of them all, for it makes God seem sadistic, taking pleasure in the agony of Jesus
2. I don’t for a moment think I can plumb the depths of this mystery
3. No earthly father has ever loved his son one millionth a percent as much as the heavenly Father loved His perfect Son

Matthew 3:17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

4. Jesus lived a perfect life... sinless... listen to this one statement:

John 8:29 I always do what pleases him

John 14:31 the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

5. YET... it was the PLEASURE of the Lord to CRUSH HIM
 - a. The Hebrew word “crush” here is well translated... the idea of an IMMENSE PRESSURE brought to bear until the thing is destroyed
 - b. Jesus was CRUSHED on the cross for our sins (vs. 5)

Isaiah 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities

6. How do we understand the PLEASURE OF THE LORD in crushing His Son?
7. The best verse: Hebrews 12:2

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Father TAKES NO DELIGHT or PLEASURE in the cross itself... He endured it like Jesus did. He took no pleasure in crushing His Son as though He enjoys the torment of the Son in agony... that is not the Father's nature, as though He's some masochist. Rather, like the Son, the Father ENDURED the cross FOR THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE THEM BOTH!!

What joy? The joy of the salvation of a vast multitude from every nation on earth!

The joy of seeing us in heaven! The joy of having us converted from sin and worshipping in the New Heaven and New Earth!

So it was the Father's GOOD PLEASURE to crush His Son and GIVE YOU A KINGDOM!!

Luke 12:32 "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

III. The Fruit of His Labor: Spiritual Offspring (vs. 10)

Vs. 10 "when you shall make His soul an offering for sin, He will see His offspring and prolong His days..."

A. The Theme of Substitution Again

1. Jesus did not die for His own sins... He was not crushed for His own wickedness...
2. But GOD ("you") made Christ sin for us so that we might live forever

B. SINCE that is done... WHEN that is done... BECAUSE that is done... Jesus will see His seed

1. Strong link... because of His substitutionary death, Jesus will SEE His seed

2. If He had not died in their place, they would have been crushed by God's justice eternally in hell
3. But Jesus WINS seed for God...

Psalm 127:3 Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward.

- a. To see your grandchildren and great grandchildren is the mark of a blessed life

Job 42:16 After this, Job lived a hundred and forty years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation.

- b. Jesus will see His SPIRITUAL SONS and DAUGHTERS, bought with His blood

John 1:12-13 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Hebrews 2:13 "Behold, I and the children God has given me."

C. These are the Very Ones Jesus Came to Buy... to Rescue from Death

Hebrews 2:14-15 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death-- that is, the devil-- ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

IV. The Will of the Lord Prospers in Christ's Hand (vs. 10)

Vs. 10... and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand

- A. The Will of the Lord = God's Infinitely Deep Salvation Plan
- B. Images of this PROSPERITY

1. Because of Jesus' death on the cross, astonishing FRUIT has come... Jesus is like an astonishingly gifted gardener who makes the Garden of God's will flourish

Psalm 1:3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

Think of how many souls have been saved... how many lives put in order!

Think of Roman noblewoman Felicitas and her sons, converted during the era of Roman persecution; think of the King of the Franks during the barbarian era in Europe, converted because God gave him a victory on the battlefield; think of former Vikings converted; think of women laying down their lives to nurse sick people during the Black Death in the 13th century; think of Martin Luther, discovering the gospel in an Augustinian monastery; think of former slave trader John Newton, converted from wretchedness and degradation to a life of holiness; think of a Romanian secret policeman, converted by the courage and suffering of a Baptist pastor whom he tortured. The list goes on and on...

2. Jesus is like a stunningly skilled violinist who can take the piece of music and play it like no one has ever played it before... the piece was composed by God the Father; Jesus played it to perfection... the will of the Lord PROSPERED in His hand!

C. Heaven is Glorious with this Prosperity

Revelation 21:18-23 The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. ¹⁹ The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. ... The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

V. Christ's Resurrection Victory (vs. 11)

Isaiah 53:11 After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.

A. The Death of Christ Clearly Established in Isaiah 53 (as we've seen)

Death in verse 8: **CUT OFF FROM THE LAND OF THE LIVING**

Burial in verse 9: **ASSIGNED A GRAVE WITH THE WICKED AND WITH THE RICH IN HIS DEATH**

B. Verse 11 makes it clear He did not STAY DEAD

1. "After the suffering of His soul..." (clearly referring to His death)
2. "He will see" (NIV adds "light of life")... BUT most translations just have something like this:

AFTER THE SUFFERING OF HIS SOUL, HE WILL SEE AND BE SATISFIED!!!

Since that involved death and burial, how could He see anything and be satisfied **EXCEPT BY RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD**

Two disciples on the Road to Emmaus:

Luke 24:22-27 some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴ Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." ²⁵ He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

C. Clear Doctrine (Again) on Substitutionary Atonement

Vs. 11 ... by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.

1. One scholar says verse 11 "is one of the fullest statements of atonement theology ever penned" (Motyer, p. 442)
2. The Suffering Servant knows the needs to be met and what must be done
3. Since He is "righteous" and "my servant" he is both fully acceptable to God and appointed BY HIM to satisfy His wrath
4. He identified Himself personally with us in our sins; He accomplishes the atonement fully and perfectly, once for all time

5. DOUBLE IMPUTATION: Our sin laid on Him, His righteousness given to us... He is GUILTY in our place, we are RIGHTEOUS ("justified") by His work

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

VI. Eternal Glory for Christ's Substitutionary Atonement (vs. 12)

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

A. Glorious Summation of these Fifteen Verses!

B. "Therefore"... Christ Gets What He Deserves

1. Similar to Philippians 2

Philippians 2:8-11 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross! ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

2. So also Revelation 5: Jesus alone has WON THE RIGHT to take the scroll and open its seals

Revelation 5:2-5 "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" ³ But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. ⁴ I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. ⁵ Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."

The TRIUMPH means it is JUST and RIGHT for Him to take the scroll and open its seals... He has WON THE RIGHT to do it!

3. Jesus gets “a portion with the strong”... He is the greatest warrior in history and deserves a name greater than any of theirs
4. Or perhaps better... the strong ARE His portion! He wins the Redeemed by His blood and they are now HIS... He OWNS them

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price.

C. Powerful Link Between Christ’s Blood Shed AND His Intercessory Ministry

Vs.12 ...he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Hebrews 7:24-25 because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Romans 8:34 Christ Jesus, who died-- more than that, who was raised to life-- is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

D. What He Prays For (Especially)

Luke 22:31-32 Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail.

“Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy”

Lo, Th’incarnate God ascended PLEADS THE MERIT OF HIS BLOOD...
venture on Him, venture wholly; let no other trust intrude.

“Arise my Soul, Arise”

Five bleeding wounds He bears,
Received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers;
They strongly speak for me.
Forgive him, O forgive, they cry,
Nor let that ransomed sinner die!

The Father hears Him pray,
 His dear anointed One;
 He cannot turn away
 The presence of His Son.
 His Spirit answers to the blood,
 And tells me I am born of God.

VII. Applications

A. Unbeliever: You Have to DEAL With Isaiah 53!!

1. You can't ignore it!
2. You can't say you didn't know it existed!!
3. There is clear scientific proof that a scroll of Isaiah (the Dead Sea scroll) was written at least two and a half centuries before Christ was born; but the truth is the book itself was written 700 years before Christ
4. The chapter clearly speaks of Someone who died in the place of others, to bear their sins
5. The chapter goes into specifics about how He died (by piercing), was buried (in a rich man's tomb) and rose from the dead
6. The chapter declares that, if we hear and believe this message, we will be JUSTIFIED (counted righteous) and have our sins atoned for
7. What will you say on Judgment Day when the Lord asks you to account for what you did with Isaiah 53?
8. COME TO CHRIST!!!

B. Believer: Rejoice in the Certainty of your Salvation!!

1. You are continually going astray in sin, but the Lord has laid on Jesus the iniquity of us all
2. Thank the Lord for suffering in your place!

3. Trust in Him more and more fully to cure you of your wandering ways!
4. Isaiah 53 is the clearest depiction of substitutionary atonement in the entire Bible

C. Share This Chapter With An Unbeliever... It Has Converting Power!

1. Find a co-worker, neighbor, fellow student or dorm-mate and ask if they'd be willing to go through this chapter with you
2. Explain how it was written seven centuries before Christ
3. Go carefully through its message; emphasize the "We" part about our sin, and the "He" part about what Christ has done
4. Urge them to repent and believe!!

D. Give Christ the SPOILS He Deserves: YOURSELF

1. He shed His blood for you...
2. He has EARNED your full obedience and submission
3. Meditate on the fact that your are NOT YOUR OWN, you were BOUGHT AT A PRICE
4. Worship Him; honor Him with every moment of your life!!