***Jesus Christ Bore our Sins
RO136-01***

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We are studying Romans 10:14-17. Our subject is "The Heralds of Christ," and this is segment number 3.

In Romans 10, the apostle Paul has indicated that God has clearly communicated the gospel of grace salvation through Jesus Christ to the Jews, but they've refused to believe it. Paul is grieved over this rejection, for he knows from God that it dooms all unbelieving Jews to hell. Paul says, "The Jews just wouldn't listen." But he says, "I'm not surprised at this." Then we saw that he referred to one of the all-time great chapters of the Bible, Isaiah 53:1, which predicted the negative attitude of the Jews toward the gospel. The very information given in Isaiah 53 should have caused the Jews to trust in Christ, Who fulfilled that prophecy before their very eyes.

**The Messiah, Jesus Christ**

So, today, let's go to that holy ground – a chapter you've heard about, perhaps, all of your Christian life, but maybe know very little about. Actually, Isaiah 53 should really begin with the Isaiah 52:13. Isaiah 52:13-15 is an introduction. It's the foyer into the great message of Isaiah 53. So, we'll begin today in Isaiah 52:13. Isaiah says, "Behold My Servant shall deal prudently. He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high – the wisdom of God's servant, the Messiah."

The word "behold" directs attention now to a special person. That special person is here called "My Servant." And in this passage the servant is the Messiah. So, as it speaks about the Servant, it is speaking about the future coming Messiah, Jesus Christ. The suffering of this obedient servant has already been previously presented. In Isaiah 50:4-9, you will see a description that someplace along the line, this Messiah, that God is going to send, is going to undergo some terrible sufferings.

**He Shall Deal Prudently**

So, with that background, he picks up here, in Isaiah 52:13, in dealing with a special individual that he calls "my servant," which is identified in the New Testament as Jesus Christ. It says that: "He shall deal prudently." This means that He will act wisely in fulfilling His mission as God's Servant – His mission relative to salvation. The consequence of His wise dealing will be that: "He will be exalted;" that is, He will not be left in his humiliation. This perhaps refers to His resurrection. It says that: "He will be extolled," which means that He will receive praise and honor. This perhaps is referring to His ascension in heaven. And it says that: "He will be very high" – that He will be greatly exalted above men and angels, which perhaps refers to His present position, His session in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. This same description is given in the New Testament concerning this servant in several passages. For example, it is in Philippians 2:9-11, Acts 2:33, Acts 3:13, and Acts 3:26.

**Exaltation**

The idol gods and all of man's self-deification are gods which are going to fall in time. But Jesus Christ is the one who will be exalted forever. This picture of exaltation of a sinless one can only apply to the God-Man Jesus Christ. It does not, as the Jews say, apply to the nation of Israel. When the Jews read this passage, they are hard-pressed to try to escape how absolutely, in detail, Jesus Christ fulfilled all this. And this is the guilt that they face. When they read this passage, and when they saw what was happening to this man, Jesus Christ, they should have realized that this is exactly what Isaiah was telling them about, and preparing them for, and warning them that when it happened, they should back-off, and realize that their leaders had made a terrible mistake. Instead, they ignored it.

**Roman Brutality**

Verse 14: "As many were astonished at You. His visage was so marred more than any man, and His for more than the sons of men." Here's the appearance of the servant. People who looked at Him were appalled by the appearance of Jesus Christ. The reason for this was that the physical appearance of Jesus Christ was disfigured by the beatings which He suffered beyond that, which people of that day we're used to seeing in a human being. Now, this tells us a lot. If there was anything that was characteristic of the Roman Empire, it was brutality. When they dealt with a person who was a criminal, they brutalized him. But when the people here, Scriptures indicate, looked on Jesus Christ, they said, "We've never seen anything like this. We've never seen a human being so brutalized," so that they were, in effect, awed by the terrible sight before them. The Jews made the false assumption that Jesus Christ was receiving this kind of super brutality and punishment because of some terrible evil that He had done. This was probably because He claimed to be God, and that was blasphemy.

The Bible here is telling us that He was so marred that He did not even look human. The reason this is true is because that was the kind of treatment that was given to Him by both the Jews and the Roman authorities (Matthew 26:67-68, Matthew 27:27-30). Jesus Christ suffered enormous physical abuse. The result was that He just didn't even look human anymore.

Isaiah 52:15: "So shall He sprinkle many nations. The kings shall shut their mouths at Him. For that which had not been told them they shall see. And that which they had not heard shall they understand." Verse 15 gives us the consequence of the Servant's suffering: "So" indicates here a result from this condition of disfigurement. As a result of this beating, something good is going to come. And first of all: "This Servant will sprinkle many nations," referring to His blood. Here is the picture of a Lamb's blood being sprinkled for purification purposes – ceremonially. Sprinkled is, as a matter, a technical word, in the Mosaic Law for the ritual of purification by the sprinkling of the blood of an animal (Leviticus 14:7, Leviticus 4:6, Leviticus 8:11, Hebrews 10:22). All those passages (that you may look up on your own) indicate that in the Old Testament, the word "sprinkling" was used as a sign of purification (ceremonially – symbolically) from sin.

Now the Bible picks up that very technical word from the Old Testament, and carries it over here into the book of Isaiah, and says, "What is happening," when they are beating Jesus Christ to a pulp? The blood they're drawing from Him is, in effect, as the high priest of old used to sprinkle the blood on certain individuals and on certain objects in order to indicate ceremonial purification. This is what Jesus Christ is doing. When God's Lamb, Jesus Christ, was sacrificed in this way, His blood was being sprinkled for the purification of the sins of the world.

In 1 Peter 1:1-2, we had this idea presented: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the sojourners scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Grace unto you and peace be multiplied." You are elect. You are brought into salvation (these Jews from these different places that he mentioned) as a result of the sprinkling of the blood of the final Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

So, Isaiah is portraying here is that Jesus Christ, God's Faithful Servant, acted as God's High Priest, sprinkling His own blood voluntarily on mankind, once for all, to pay for the sins of the world.

Now the kings of the earth, we're told, will stand in silence before Jesus Christ. This Christ – whom the kings throughout the ages have both despised and brutalized in their arrogance of power. Many of these kings have not heard the gospel, but in Jesus Christ, when He came on the scene, they will see the sacrifice made for their sins. It impressed one of the Roman soldiers at the foot of the cross as he watched what was happening, and said, "Surely this must have been the Son of God." And he made the connection that here was a sacrifice being made by God Himself for the people of the world.

The kings, we're told here, will then consider that, as they will understand the divine plan of salvation. Other plans of salvation have originated with sinful man. They seek only to find salvation through presupposed deity that lies within man. The answers are all in man, this kind of plan says. But God says, "No, The answers come from outside of you. The provision comes from outside of you."

Now the point of this introduction to Isaiah 53 is that the Jews should have had their eyes and ears open. When they saw what was happening to Jesus Christ, they should have immediately made the connection with this passage that they knew so well. And this should have been the thing that turned around such that they said, "Wait a minute. We made a terrible mistake. We have actually indeed killed our Messiah Savior. This is a terrible thing we have done. Isaiah told us we were going to do this. And here this is exactly what we have done." We are told, of course, that some of the leaders did look at this, and they did understand it. And as Isaiah said, "They considered it, and they themselves were then saved."

**Who is Listening?**

So now we come, with that introduction, to Isaiah 53. The first verse is what Paul is quoting: "Who has believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Verse 1 expresses surprise that few Jews will believe the truth of the Word of God. It's a rhetorical question here, just as it was in Paul's book of Romans; that is, it's a question that doesn't call for an answer. It's asking a question in order to call attention to a very serious condition. Not many Jews believe the gospel message about Jesus Christ. A believing Jewish remnant has been trying to act as heralds to the Jews about the Messiah Savior Jesus Christ, but they won't listen. And that's what's behind this question: "Who?" And it's an exclamation. It's an amazement. It's an expression of amazement. "Who is believing our report?" That is, the message that we have brought about Jesus Christ – the message about His role as Savior. The Jews view Jesus Christ as a nobody.

Then he says, "To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" The word "arm" is a symbol for power in the Old Testament Scriptures. It's God's strength. In the Old Testament, when God's power was spoken of in behalf of people, it would be described as God's arm working for them. You have this even in Isaiah 51:9-10 and Isaiah 63:12, where it is described as God's arm taking them out of captivity in Egypt. The power of God enables some Jews to believe the Word of God about Jesus Christ. Jews who trust in Jesus Christ, in fact, are revealing that God's power is upon them. The idea is: "Upon whom has the arm, or the power of the Lord, been revealed?" That is, to whom has this information been brought?

Isaiah is crying out: "God, who is listening to us? Who's believing us? We're proclaiming the Word of Truth, but who's listening?" And so it is today among the population of the world in general – fewer and fewer are listening to the Word of God. Fewer and fewer are seeing the Bible as the final word. "To whom has the power of God been revealed in being able to open their eyes to see?"

**A Tender Plant**

Verse 2 describes the course of the life of God's Servant, Jesus Christ: "For He shall grow up before Him like a tender plant." "Grow up" refers to Jesus Christ in His life on earth. "Before Him" refers to: "Before God the Father." Jesus Christ is the servant of the Father. He lived His whole life in the conscious presence of God. Jesus Christ, in His humanity, functioned in the power of the Holy Spirit, which God provided to Him. His life is compared to that of a tender plant. He was like a plant who was sprouting from an arid desert. And such soil did not promise any kind of impressive vegetation.

So, when people looked at the family that Jesus came from, and when they looked at his background, and when they looked at his carpenter lifestyle, they didn't think much of Him. It was like some little sprout of a plant growing out of bad soil. And you don't expect it to develop, or to amount to much.

**A Root out of a Dry Ground**

He was, furthermore viewed like a root out of a dry ground, carrying this analogy even further, referring to His lowly circumstances in life. Jesus simply did not look like a royal person with stately ways and wearing stately clothing. He looked like a common working man trying to survive. When you shook his hand, they were the hands of a common working man. This was not royalty that you were dealing with. He was not impressive like King David. 1 Samuel 16:18 tells us how impressive David was to look at as a king. When you looked at David, you said, "Now that's what a king should look like." But when you looked at Jesus, there was nothing like that. He had no charismatic appearance. So, the Jews were not impressed to consider Him one of the beautiful people.

The Bible is actually not telling us that Jesus was ugly in His appearance. The Bible is silent about how Jesus Christ looked. It does not imply that He was not handsome. It just says that, as you looked at this Man, He did not impress you. So, when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. They simply were not drawn to Him.

**Despised and Rejected**

Verse 3: "He is despised and rejected of men." Here the details are given of the Jews' response to this Man that they were not impressed with. "Despised" means that they had no use for him. "Rejected" means that they refused to accept Him in His claim as being their Messiah. So, the people in general, including the elite of the day, dismissed Jesus as an insignificant person.

**Sorrows and Grief**

This was the Man, however, who was acquainted with sorrows, and He was acquainted with grief. He was a person whose sorrows and grief were such that people didn't even want to look at Him. They hid their faces. They turned away from the sight, as we have already seen, of the brutality which was imposed upon Him, so that He didn't even look like He was human anymore. And the Jews found Jesus Christ, who bore their sins, to be a repulsive sight. They despised Him, furthermore. They had no esteem for Him. They hid their faces from Him: "He was despised, and we esteemed Him not." They treated Jesus as an unimportant, impractical visionary. Today, Jesus Christ is, for most people, simply a swear word. He is rejected as the only Savior of mankind, and as the only way in the heaven. The Jews today are not any more impressed with Jesus Christ than their forefathers were. So, they share the same consequences of having no access to heaven: "We didn't esteem Him."

Coming to verses 4-6, we have a description of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ for Israel. Verse 4: "Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." God's Servant bore the punishment for the sins of the Jews. "Surely" here stresses the fact of the innocence and sinlessness of Jesus Christ. Surely he wasn't suffering this because of Himself, or because of what He deserved, as the Jews were trying to imply. Surely something is out of whack here. He doesn't deserve this. There must be some other reason for Him to be so treated. Jesus bore the griefs and the sorrow (that is, the pain) due to sinful humanity, not that which was due to Him.

**Substitution**

Here you have the principle of substitution. He died in the sinful Jews' place. And the gentiles were brought in to benefit that death. The Jews watched the agony of Jesus Christ in crucifixion, and they thought He was receiving divine judgment for the blasphemy of claiming deity.

**Sicknesses**

The world "griefs" in the Hebrews (you may find in your Bible notations there) is a word which can be translated as "sicknesses." The charismatics love this word "griefs:" Surely He has borne our griefs," and they always read it as "our sicknesses." Sickness is the product of sin in the human race, which was introduced by Adam. All sickness is the product of sin. And that's the reason that Phil Donahue likes to get so emotional about, as he did this week, when somebody suggests that a judgment such as AIDS (the judgment of disease) is something that comes from God as the result of sin. And he rises up, and he loves to say, "Is that why babies are born deformed? Are you going to say that God is behind this child being born with this drug habit; with this blindness; or, with this case of AIDS?" And I have yet to hear anybody say to him in response, "Yes, God is behind it, because God judges sin. And all sickness is the result of sin. As a matter of fact, for certain sins, there are specific illnesses. And a case in point, of course, is AIDS.

Isaiah is not saying that Jesus Christ on the cross removed the believer's sicknesses along with his sin guilt. That's what the charismatics make out of this. That's why they feel a justification to have healing meetings, because they say, "If you are sick, it is because you have the wrong attitude." This is very closely akin to what Christian Science teaches: It's all up here in your head, and it is your mortal attitude that causes you to be ill. But the Word of God says, "No, no, no, sickness is the result of sin. And as long as there is a sin nature in man, there will be sickness in the human body. Isaiah is not saying that Jesus Christ removed all illness from the believer so that a Christian can claim complete healing if he's ready to receive it from God. The charismatics are false prophets when they stand up and say, "You may now claim your healing before God." And usually you have to claim it through one of them.

**Christ Bore our Sins' Guilt**

Matthew 8:17 quotes this particular passage in Isaiah. This is on the occasion of the healing of Peter's mother-in-law. Matthew 8:17 says, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses." What this passage is indicating is that the healing ministry of Jesus Christ, while He was on earth, was the fulfillment of what Isaiah said would come about – that the Messiah Servant of God would indicate His Messiahship and His authority by His healing ministry. And here, you have the Scripture saying that when Peter's mother-in-law was healed by Jesus, it was an example of the fulfillment of what Isaiah said He would do with sicknesses. It had nothing to do with saying that it is the removal of all sickness from all Christians (from all believers). The payment of Jesus Christ for the sins of mankind is the basis for the eventual removal of the sin nature, and then indeed for the full removal of all sicknesses. Jesus Christ has borne our sicknesses by bearing our sins' guilt which causes those illnesses.

1 Peter 2:24 puts it this way: "Whose own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness by Whose stripes you were healed." It is the payment for sin that enables us to have the sin nature removed, and thus to have our sicknesses eventually removed. Disease is the inseparable companion of the sin nature. And as long as you've got a sin nature, you can count on getting sick.

The Jews should have been horror struck by what they saw happening to One that they knew was sinless, and to realize that He was suffering, as Isaiah had foretold, for another.

So, Isaiah 53:4 says, "He was smitten of God and afflicted." That means that He was struck down by God. "Afflicted" means that He was humiliated by the experience that He had.

**Wounded**

Verse 5: "But He was wounded for our transgressions." What the Jews observed about the physical condition here of Christ on the cross is described in verse 5. "But" emphasizes the contrast between what the Jews thought was the reason for this terrible suffering that they were observing, and the real reason. The reason was that: "He was wounded for our transgression." In Hebrew, the word "wounded" here means to be pierced through. And it connotes a wound that results in death. Because of the transgressions of mankind, that's the reason Jesus Christ was pierced through to the point of death.

**Bruised**

He was bruised for our iniquities. The word "bruised" in the Hebrew here means "to be crushed." It connotes a person being crushed to death. And this is what they did to Jesus Christ with those physical beatings. They didn't just put a rock and drop it on Him and squash Him with one blow, but they did it in detail blows. So, they crushed Him to death. Now that is painful, and that is a horrendous sight to observe.

**Vicarious**

It was done to Him, furthermore, verse 5 says, "Because of man's iniquities;" because of human violation of the moral code of God. The punishment of God's Servant, the Messiah, was vicarious; that is, it was done for others. It says that: "The sins of the Jews were imputed to Jesus Christ on the cross. So, He bore their moral guilt. In their place, He was therefore pierced and crushed to death. His death had saving merit for others because He Himself was sinless. God the Father Himself chastised His Son to secure peace with God for the believing Jew. The chastisement for our peace was upon him: "And with His stripes, we are healed."

**Peace**

Peace here is the same as salvation. The chastisement was on Christ for our salvation. And through His piercing and crushing, the price has been paid, and we have been healed: spiritually; and, ultimately, physically. Why? Because God has been satisfied. His justice has been propitiated. So, man can be reconciled to God by receiving the gift of absolute righteousness. The stripes beaten on the body of Jesus Christ bring us healing.

God does not forgive sin simply by forgetting it, or by ignoring its reality. God's justice demands the sin first be punished. Then it can be forgiven. For the Jews and gentiles, now there is peace available with God through Jesus Christ. Now we can call upon Him in faith.

**Everyone has Turned to his Own Way**

Then verse 6 says, "All we like sheep have gone astray." This is the reason that the Servant Jesus Christ had to suffer. The Jews are compared to a flock of sheep who have strayed from their True Shepherd, Jesus Christ. They've gone their own sinful ways. The Jews are seeking salvation by doing their own thing, and keeping the Mosaic Law by their good works; by their morality; and, by their religious rituals. But God the Father views them as sheep who have gone astray from the true path of salvation: "We have turned every one to his own way. And the Lord has laid on Him iniquity of us all." Everyone has gone to his own reality. He's done his own thing, and that is iniquity which had to be laid upon Jesus Christ.

Now I want you to notice that it says, "It was the LORD." This is in all capital letters in your English Bible: "Yahweh." "Yahweh" is the Supreme God. God the Father here: "Who laid this iniquity on Jesus Christ," with all its subsequent brutalizing of Him. "Laid on Him" in the Hebrew means "it hit Him violently." It was the Father who caused the Messiah Son to have to suffer for the sins of the world. Jesus Christ took the blow from a holy God for our moral guilt, and the Messiah cried out in pain, consequently.

Matthew 27:46 records His crying out: "My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?" This was the agony of being now under sin, and finding Himself spiritually dead, for the Father and the Holy Spirit turned away from Him, as He bore, for those three hours from high noon to 3 o'clock, the sins of the world. The Shepherd Jesus Christ gave His life for the sheep who are described as "us all."

**Christ Remained Silent**

In verse 7-9, we have the death of God's Servant, Jesus Christ. Verse 7 says, "He was oppressed and He was afflicted. Yet He opened not His mouth." Jesus Christ bore the suffering of our sins with quiet patience. He was oppressed and afflicted unjustly, but He didn't protest. His was a voluntary sacrifice for the Jews' sins. You may read Matthew 27:11-14, Luke 23:8-9, and 1 Peter 2:23. All these passages tell us that when He stood before His accusers, He would not say anything. He knew they were wrong. He had a case. They did not. But He didn't speak up. He took it silently, exactly as Isaiah described here. He did not defend himself against the false accusations of the Jewish leaders.

**A Lamb**

The silence here of Jesus Christ is compared to that which is characteristic of a little lamb. When the lamb is about ready to be sacrificed, he just stands there quietly. He doesn't know what's about to happen. He doesn't know that they're about ready to jerk his head back and slash his throat with a knife. When a lamb is to be shorn, he stands there quietly, and they cut his wool off. And this is the picture that we have in Isaiah, describing how God's servant, the Messiah, would act. For Jesus Christ was God's Lamb, who was willingly led to His death to benefit the Jews who murdered Him, and who rejected His atonement for them before God. 1 Peter 1:18-19 and John 1:29 tell us that.

**Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch**

So, Isaiah 53 tells us about the Servant's death for the sins of the world. This description right here is what is applied by Philip to Jesus Christ. When he met the Ethiopian treasurer on the road, and the man was reading in the book of Isaiah, this is what he was reading – this very passage here. In Isaiah 53:7, this is what the man inquired about. And I want you to notice to whom Philippi applied this. Acts 8:32: "The place of the Scripture, which he read (the Ethiopian) was this: 'He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb, dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth. In His humiliation, His judgment was taken away. And who shall declare his generation? For His life is taken from the earth.' And the eunuch answered Philippi and said, 'I ask you: of whom does the prophet speak this? Of himself; or, some other man?' Then Philippi opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached onto him Jesus." So, there was a clear application here to Isaiah 53 to the person of Jesus Christ. That's who Isaiah is speaking of. And it was very clear to the apostles, and that's what Philippi made clear to this Ethiopian eunuch.

Verse 8: "He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare His generation?" "Was taken" means He was taken to His death. "From prison" means from arrest by the authorities in Jerusalem, which was a false arrest. "From judgment" refers to the judicial system of Rome. The Jewish leaders used the judicial system to bring Jesus to His death. Behind the human actions, however, against Jesus Christ, was the sovereign hand of God controlling all of this? Yes, the Jews were doing their best to kill Him. The Romans were acquiescing in the act. But behind it all, Peter says, "You weren't getting away with anything. It was God's decree, executing the plan for providing for human salvation.

Therefore, in Acts 2:22, we read Peter's words: "You men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, the man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as you yourselves also know – Him being delivered by the determinate council in full knowledge of God (because of God's previous decree), you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." You're doing in time what God has determined in eternity past: "Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it," because salvation was accepted by the Father.

So, the innocent and sinless Jesus Christ was removed from the land of the living in the prime of life, and He had no posterity left to Him. He was cut off in death. The Jews didn't care that this young man, in the prime of life, was dying with no posterity, even though posterity was an enormously important thing to a Jew. The Jew should have been prepared by Isaiah to recognize, from this particular fact, that something was special with Jesus Christ. The Jews should have wondered why this was happening to this Man, against Whom they could bring no accusation. God the Father says that His Servant, Jesus Christ, was punished for the sins of the Jews: "For He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of My people." That's why he was stricken.

Verse 9 speaks of the burial of the Servant, Jesus Christ. Now, had they been paying attention to the very events following the death of Christ on the cross, they should have said, "Hey, there's something odd here. Look what Isaiah has told us." Verse 9: "He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his deaths." Jesus Christ was viewed as a criminal. So, the Roman soldiers were going to bury Him with the thieves who were common criminals. Jesus was instead, as you know, buried in a rich man's tomb. Therefore, He was given an honorable burial. The word "deaths" here is plural in the Hebrew: "In His deaths." Probably, the word refers to his spiritual and physical deaths, which were necessary for the atonement.

So, Jesus Christ was given an honorable burial after a dishonorable death. This should have been a clue to the Jews as to Who it was that they had killed. The reason for this honorable divine provision for Jesus Christ was that He did not deserve to die. It says, "Because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth." This is why He was so treated in such a gracious, honorable way by the Father. He was not guilty of any violence, and He was not guilty of any deceitful words. Jesus Christ hurt no one. He helped everyone – helped them, as a matter of fact, all the way into heaven.

Then the final portion, in verses 10-12, is God's promise to bless His Servant, Jesus Christ. Verse 10 says, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him." That is amazing. God the Father took pleasure in subjecting His servant, Jesus Christ, to death. The death of Jesus Christ was in the hands of God the Father, not in the hands of the Jewish and Roman authorities. The wicked leaders, however, were responsible for the crime they were perpetrating. We have this declaration of the Father's pleasure in the death of the Son.

Why did Jesus Christ go to the cross to die in such a way? You might be inclined to say: "So that we could all go to heaven," or "so that we could have salvation." But that is not the primary reason. That is not the first reason for the death of Christ. The first reason for the death of Christ was to clear up the justice of God – to vindicate something that God the Father had been doing ever since the time of Adam. Ever since the time of Adam, everybody who has trusted in God for salvation was given salvation, even though there was no basis to give it to them. So, God was saying, "I'm going to give you salvation on credit. I can't really give it to you, because the basis has not been provided for your sins to be covered. But I'm going to give you salvation on credit. I'm going to give it to you, Adam; to you, Eve; to you, David; to you, Abraham; to you, Moses; and, to all of you down the line. I'm going to give it to all you people on credit." Now something had to be done about that. That was the first, and most important, reason for the death of Christ.

Notice Romans 3:25-26, that clarify that reason for us: "Whom God (Jesus Christ) has set forth to be a propitiation through faith (satisfaction to the justice of God), in His blood, to declare His righteousness (God the Father's righteousness) for the remission (for the forgiveness) of sins that are passed through the forbearance of God;" to justify that God was marking time in His judgment against sin, and, on credit, holding back the judgment, because He was going to cover that sin later: "To declare, I say at this time, God's righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of him who believe in Jesus:" who does nothing more than believes in Jesus. God was holding off until the Son came. And that's why, when Jesus finally died, it was a great pleasure to the Father, because now the price for sin has been paid, and all that God had given on credit was now covered. So, all those people could indeed come into His heaven. Covering God's forgiveness was the first purpose of the death of Christ. Our salvation came after that. Jesus Christ was sacrificed by the Father as an atonement for human sin. That's what it means when it says, in verse 10, "It put Him to grief."

"When You shall make His soul an offering for sin." That is better translated as: "Though He makes Himself an offering for sin;" that is, "Though he is going to be killed, yet he will see his seed. His seed refers to the offspring of Jesus Christ. What kind of offspring did Jesus Christ have? Well, He has the posterity of all those whom He redeems, and thus they become the children of God. Since the Servant sees His spiritual seed, it obviously indicates to us that He is also going to be raised from the dead.

**Jesus Christ will Live Forever**

Then we're told that: "He shall prolong His days," meaning that He will live forever after His resurrection." The last book of the Bible reiterates that fact. After the resurrection of Jesus Christ, He could say in Revelation 1:18, "I am He that lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forever more, and have the keys of Hades and of death." And that's what Isaiah 53:10 says: "He shall prolong His days. He will live forever. And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." God the Father's pleasure will prosper in the hand of the Son. What is God the Father's pleasure? To see you in Heaven. It is His pleasure to see that nobody goes into hell. And "shall prosper" means that Jesus Christ is going to successfully lead many into eternal life. "His hand" refers to the mediation of Jesus Christ between God and man. Through the death of Jesus Christ, the blessings of redemption are secured for the Jews to the pleasure of God the Father. Jesus prospered because of His obedience to the will of God in providing salvation for the Jews and for the gentiles.

In verse 11, after the resurrection, Jesus Christ will be pleased with His sacrifice also: "He shall see the travail of His soul;" that is, He'll see the suffering and death on the cross, and He'll be satisfied with it. He'll see the results of his sacrifice. He'll be pleased. God's justice, He will see, has been satisfied, so the believing sinner can now enter heaven. Jesus Christ can now justify, or declare righteous, those whose sins He bore on that tree.

**Justification**

Then: "By His knowledge shall My Righteous Servant justify many." This is by the knowledge about Jesus Christ. This refers to the gospel. Those who believe the gospel will have absolute righteousness imputed to them, and they will be declared by God, the judge, therefore, to be justified. Those who do not know Jesus Christ (those who do not hear the gospel) cannot be justified, and cannot go to heaven.

"By His knowledge shall My Righteous Servant justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities." "Justify" is a legal term about the absolute righteousness that a person possesses. And this is the result of the fact that Jesus Christ bore their iniquities. He did not Himself become sinful. He simply bore our sins.

**The Spoils of Victory**

Then finally, in verse 12, the Servant is going to be forever exalted by the Father for what He has done: "Therefore, will I divide Him a portion with the great." "Therefore" introduces God the Father's decision about His Faithful Servant Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is to be given the spoils of His victory over Satan on the cross, as is given to other great conquering generals. The spoils that Jesus Christ receives are His born-again seed, which He snatches from Satan.

**The Strong**

"The strong" here refers to those believers with whom Jesus Christ shares His victory: "Therefore, I will divide Him the spoils," as with all great generals: "And He shall divide the spoils with the strong. We Christians are the strong ones with whom He is going to share the victories. The Jews who believed in Christ were the strong ones with whom He would share the spoils of the victories.

**He Voluntarily Poured out His Life unto Death**

The reasons that Jesus Christ is so gloriously exalted are then set forth to close this chapter. One: He is going to be gloriously exalted above all, for all eternity, because He voluntarily poured out His life unto death: "Because he had poured out his soul unto death."

**He was Numbered with the Transgressors**

Secondly, He was numbered with the transgressors because He took the place of sinners on the cross between the two criminals.

**He Bore the Sin of Many**

He bore the sin of many. He bore the moral guilt of the sin of mankind.

**He Made Intercession for the Transgressors**

Finally, He made intercession for the transgressors: "He made intercession before God for sinners as the only Mediator that there is between God and man. 1 Timothy 2:5 very clearly says, "Jesus Christ is the only intermediary." Jesus Christ now prays for we believers, and He intercedes for us before the Father. He, furthermore, acts as our Defender, our Advocate, against the accusations of Satan.

So, this is the grand message of Isaiah 53 such that Paul says, "God sent you a messenger. God gave you the information. You should have believed it." Isaiah gives a complete picture of the marvelous thing that the death of Christ accomplished for the Jews. But they've thrown it all the way through their unbelief. The death of Jesus Christ satisfied the righteous demands of God's justice against sin, so that 1 John 2:2 tell us that the Father has been satisfied (propitiated) for our sins, and the sins of the whole world. Today, any Jew can find salvation through Jesus Christ, and escape hell. There is no other way a Jew can be saved except through his true Messiah, Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.

**The Message of the Gospel**

So, we close with Romans 10:17, which simply sums up everything that Paul has been saying: "So then, faith (trusting in Christ) comes by hearing (comes by receiving a message)." This word "hearing" is the Greek word "akouo" that we looked at before, and it is a message – "That message by the word," not of God. It should be translated by the word "of Christ." Salvation (trusting in Christ) is the result of information. That information is the gospel, and that gospel is the message of Christ, which has to come to us through some source of information. The Jews had that marvelous passage of Isaiah 53, but they didn't use it, and they will spend eternity in hell for failing to understand the message given to them. May we not follow in their foolish steps.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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