

## **THE SUFFERING AND GLORY OF THE SERVANT**

### **ISAIAH 52:13 - 53:12**

You've heard me say in the past that one of the most significant factors to demonstrate the truth of the Bible and the reality of the Lord God Jehovah is prophecy. Today we will be looking at some of the most amazing prophecies in the Bible, prophecies detailing the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. These are prophecies that described many aspects of crucifixion long before that had been used as a method of execution.

For those who weren't here last week, let us give you a very tightly packaged summary of Isaiah 50—52:12, which are crucial chapters in understanding Jesus and His relationship with Israel as well as with all the other people in the world. Then we'll get into our study of God's Servant, Jesus, beginning in Isaiah 52:13.

We've been examining a series of "*Servant Songs*" which describe the ministry of a Servant. Isaiah 50 looks at two very different kinds of servants. One is the imperfect servant, **Israel**, who abandoned their relationship with God (Isaiah 50:13, 11), and the other is the perfect Servant, **Christ**, (verses 4-10). This second Servant is sensitive to the needs of people and responsive to God (verses 4-5). He suffers, but He relies on God and remains committed to doing God's will (verses 6-9). Those who fear the Lord obey this Servant (verse 10).

Having introduced the Servant, Isaiah speaks with a sense of urgency to God's people. A series of commands emphasizes the need for the people to hear and obey (Isaiah 51:1–16). The sense of urgency is maintained as God warns of His coming wrath (verses 17–23).

Isaiah tells God's people **they must wake up**. (Isaiah 52:1–2). Then Isaiah switches gears and tells them that in the past God acted to punish them (verses 3–6), but that He will soon act to save them, and the joyous message of salvation will be announced to all the people of the earth (verses 7–10). This momentous announcement culminates in an even more urgent call. Israel is to leave Babylon and return to a pure and holy life (verses 11–12). The last verses of chapter 52 properly belong with Isaiah 53, for they return to the Servant, Jesus, the agent of God's salvation. But this time to describe His sufferings, through which we will be redeemed.<sup>1</sup>

As we now move into Isaiah 53, it's most appropriate to begin by quoting what the Old Testament scholar, Dr. Kyle M. Yates, wrote over fifty years ago, and his words are still

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<sup>1</sup> Richards, Larry: *The Bible Reader's Companion*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1991, S. 437

right on point: “*The five matchless stanzas of the fourth Servant poem are the Mt. Everest of messianic prophecy.*” Isaiah 53 is at the heart of chapters 49–57, and its message is at the heart of the Gospel.

Like Mt. Everest, Isaiah 53 stands out in beauty and splendor, but only because it reveals Jesus Christ and takes us to Calvary.

The messianic interpretation of Isaiah 53 was held by Jewish rabbis from the time it was written all the way up to the twelfth century. About that time some Jewish scholars, who must have thought they were smarter than God, started interpreting the passage as a description of the sufferings of the nation of Israel. But that concept doesn’t stand up under careful examination of the text in Isaiah 53. How could Israel die for the sins of Israel (Isaiah 53:8)? And who declared that Israel was innocent of sin and therefore had suffered unjustly (verse 9)? The prophet wrote about an innocent person, not a guilty nation. He made it crystal clear that this individual died for the sins of the guilty so that the guilty might go free. **The Servant that Isaiah describes is the Messiah, Jesus Christ;** and the New Testament affirms that this Servant-Messiah is Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God.<sup>2</sup>

Isaiah 53 is quoted or alluded to in the New Testament more frequently than any other Old Testament chapter.

The fifteen verses that comprise the fourth Servant Song from Isaiah 52:13 through 53:12 fall into five stanzas of three verses each, and each of these stanzas reveals an important truth about the Servant, Jesus, and what He accomplished for us.

**Stanza 1—The Exalted<sup>14</sup> Servant:** Isaiah 52:13-15, NAS:

*13 Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted.*

*14 Just as many were astonished at you, My people, So His appearance was marred more than any man And His form more than the sons of men.*

*15 Thus He will sprinkle many nations, Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand.*

If we take these verses in their chronological order, we see that people were shocked by Jesus’ appearance (52:14), His exaltation (verse 13), and His message (verse 15). **Isaiah has described here in these 3 verses Jesus’ suffering and death,** as well as **His resurrection and ascension, and the worldwide proclamation of the Gospel.** So here we have another incredible prediction from God through the prophet Isaiah being made

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 8:17; Mark 15:28; Luke 22:37; John 12:38; Acts 8:27–40; 1 Peter 2:21–24.

<sup>1</sup> <sup>4</sup> To raise in rank, power, or character.

700 years before it actually occurred.

In verse 14 we see that the people are shocked at the Servant's appearance. The *Today's English Version* translation reads as follows: "*Many people were shocked when they saw him; he was so disfigured that he hardly looked human.*" When you consider all that Jesus endured physically between the time of His arrest and His crucifixion, it is no wonder He no longer looked like a man. Not only were His legal rights taken from Him, including the right of a fair trial, but His *human rights* were taken from Him, so that He was not even treated like a person, let alone a Jewish citizen. When He was questioned before Annas, Jesus was slapped by an officer (John 18:22). At the hearing before Caiaphas, He was spat upon, slapped, and beaten on the head with fists.<sup>3</sup> Pilate scourged Him,<sup>4</sup> and his soldiers beat Him (John 19:3). Scourging was so terrible that prisoners were known to die from the ordeal. Do you remember what Jesus said in Isaiah 50:6?

*I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.*

Can you imagine that they were doing this to the very Son of God? To their Creator? To the One who sustains their very lives? The graphic account of His suffering is given in Psalm 22, which could be described as both a cry of anguish and a song of praise:

Psalm 22:1-31, NAS

*1 My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.*

Of course you immediately recognize these words that Christ called out from the cross. They are recorded in Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34.

*2 O my God, I cry by day, but Thou dost not answer; and by night, but I have no rest.*

*3 Yet Thou art holy, O Thou who art enthroned upon the praises of Israel.*

*4 In Thee our fathers trusted; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them.*

*5 To Thee they cried out, and were delivered; in Thee they trusted, and were not disappointed.*

*6 But I am a worm, and not a man, a reproach of men, and despised by the people.*

*7 All who see me sneer at me; they separate with the lip, they wag the head,*

For the fulfillment of the prophecy in verse 7, in connection with Christ's suffering, we can turn to Matthew 27:39, NAS: "*And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads.*" Continuing now in verse 8 of Psalm 22:

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 26:67; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63.

<sup>4</sup> John 19:1; Matt. 27:26; Mark 15:15.

saying,

8 "Commit yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver him; let Him rescue him, because He delights in him."

For the fulfillment of this verse, we can look to Matthew 27:43 NAS: "*He trusts in God; **let God rescue Him now, if He delights in Him**; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'*" Continuing in Psalm 22, verse 9:

9 Yet Thou art He who didst bring me forth from the womb; Thou didst make me trust when upon my mother's breasts.

10 Upon Thee I was cast from birth; Thou hast been my God from my mother's womb.

11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help.

12 Many bulls have surrounded me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me.

13 They open wide their mouth at me, as a ravening and a roaring lion.

14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it is melted within me.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and Thou dost lay me in the dust of death.

16 For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands and my feet.

17 I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me;

18 They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

19 But Thou, O LORD, be not far off; O Thou my help, hasten to my assistance.

20 Deliver my soul from the sword, My only life from the power of the dog.

21 Save me from the lion's mouth; and from the horns of the wild oxen Thou dost answer me.

22 I will tell of Thy name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise Thee.

23 You who fear the LORD, praise Him; all you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, and stand in awe of Him, all you descendants of Israel.

24 For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither has He hidden His face from him; but when he cried to Him for help, He heard.

25 From Thee comes my praise in the great assembly; I shall pay my vows before those who fear Him.

26 The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever!

**(Verses 27-31 refer to the Millennium)**

*27 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will worship before Thee.*

*28 For the kingdom is the LORD'S, and He rules over the nations.*

*29 All the prosperous of the earth will eat and worship, all those who go down to the dust will bow before Him, even he who cannot keep his soul alive.*

*30 Posterity will serve Him; it will be told of the LORD to the coming generation.*

*31 They will come and will declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, that He has performed it.*

Psalm 22 shows the stress David must have felt himself in suffering as he wrote down these words that Jesus would later utter. So David, even though he knew that God had whatever power necessary to help him, still experienced what he thought to be the absence of God's presence and help. A faithful person may cry out in great pain, and yet at the same time affirm God's goodness and ultimate deliverance as we see in verses 3, 10, and 22. Have you sometimes gone through dry periods when you felt that God had forsaken you? Most Christians, if they are honest, will confess that at certain dry times they've called out and called out to God. But because God, for very good reasons, delayed His answer they felt abandoned. But feelings can and often do lie to us. God does not forsake His children, even if He stays silent for a while (Deuteronomy 31:6; Joshua 1:9; Hebrews 13:5).

Jesus quoted the first part of Psalm 22:1 while He was dying on the cross: "*About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?'*" that is, *'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'*" (Matthew 27:46), acknowledging His sense of abandonment by the Father as He bore in His own body and spirit the sin of mankind. But in Jesus' case it was real, at least temporarily. Because God cannot look on sin He really did turn His face away from Jesus at that time.

The imagery of Psalm 22:3 represents Israel's praise being a throne of glory for God.

In our Sunday evening Bible study we've talked several times about how "worm theology," that doctrine that considers human beings to be nothing but worms, is not biblically accurate. Psalm 22:6 is not a theological statement on which to base doctrine. Scripture, in several places, indicates that human beings are God's highest and finest creation. Here in Psalm 22:6 David is saying how he feels he is a worm. He is not saying that's how God views him. Neither is he saying prophetically that Christ is a worm. The "*worm*" serves as an illustration of humiliation of one being trodden underfoot with contempt. In Psalm 22:14-16, David prophesied, that is he accurately predicted, **the crucifixion** of Jesus, even though **it was a means of execution that was not known until Roman times.**

The suffering that David described in Psalm 22 was literally experienced by Christ. In verse 16 David prophesies that Christ's body would be pierced and we read in John 19:34

and 20:25 that in addition to the nails that punctured His hands and feet, his side was pierced with a spear. Psalm 22:18 says that they would gamble for Christ's clothes and Matthew 27:35 indicates that's exactly what the soldiers did. David prayed for deliverance from death in verses 19-21, and Christ's deliverance was accomplished by His resurrection from the dead. Psalm 22:22 predicts that Christ would speak of God to His brothers, and Hebrews 2:1, 12 and Mark 3:31-35 indicate He proclaimed God's name to his literal and spiritual siblings. In verses 27-31 of Psalm 22 David predicted the universal worship of God during the millennial kingdom (Zechariah 8:20-23; 14:6-11).<sup>20</sup>

Looking at Isaiah 52:14, it is clearly evident that when the soldiers were finished with Jesus, He didn't look human and people were so appalled they turned their faces away. So if you saw the movie *The Passion of the Christ*, the depictions there were consistent with Scripture, difficult though they were to look at.

People were also startled at the Servant's, Jesus', exaltation. The Servant suffered and died, but He did not remain dead. The TEV translation reads: "*The Lord says, My servant will succeed in his task; he will be highly honoured.*" What looked to men like a humiliating defeat was in the eyes of God a great victory (Colossians 2:15). In John 17:4, Jesus says, "*I have glorified Thee on the earth, ' He told His Father; 'I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do.'*"

Jesus was not only raised from the dead, but His body was glorified. He ascended to Heaven where He sat at the right hand of the Father. **He has all authority** (Matthew 28:18) because all things have been put under His feet (Ephesians 1:20-23). There is no one in the universe greater than Jesus. What a shock to those who considered Him the lowest of the low (Luke 15:1,2; Philippians 2:1-11.) .

Then in Isaiah 52:15, we're told that the people were shocked at the Servant's message. The people whose mouths dropped open with astonishment at His humiliation and exaltation will shut their mouths in guilt when they hear His message. In Romans 15:20-21, Paul interprets this as the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentile nations . In Romans 3:19, Paul writes: "*That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*"

Jesus' sufferings and death involved everybody in the world. The Gospel message is not "*Christ died,*" for that is only a fact in history, like "*Napoleon died.*" The Gospel message is that "*Christ died for our sins*" (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). You and I are as guilty of Christ's death as Annas, Caiaphas, Herod Antipas, and Pilate.

Now we see why people are astonished when they understand the message of the Gospel: This Man, Jesus, whom the people condemned, has declared that **they are condemned unless** they turn from sin and trust Him. You can't rejoice in the Good News of salvation until you first face the bad news of condemnation. Jesus did not suffer and die because He was guilty, but because we were guilty. People are astonished at this fact; it shuts their

<sup>20</sup> Hughes, Robert B.; Laney, J. Carl; Hughes, Robert B: *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale House Publishers, 2—1 (The Tyndale Reference Library), S. 211.

mouths.

The word translated “*sprinkle*” in Isaiah 52:15 can be translated “*startle*,” but most likely it refers to the ceremonial cleansing that was an important part of the Mosaic sacrificial system. While the sprinkling of blood, water, and oil did not take away sins, it did make the recipient ceremonially clean and accepted before God.

Because of the sacrifice of Christ, we can tell all the nations that forgiveness and redemption are offered free to all who will receive Him (1 Peter 1:1–2).<sup>5</sup>

## A PROPHECY OF JESUS' SUFFERING

### ISAIAH CHAPTER 53

#### Stanza 2—Humiliation: The sorrowing Servant: Isaiah 53:1-3, NAS:

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<sup>5</sup> Wiersbe, Warren W.: Be Comforted. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1992 (An Old Testament Study), S. Is 52:13

*1 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?*

*2 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground;*

*He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.*

*3 He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.*

The question in verse 1 implies that, in spite of these and other prophecies, only a small number of people would recognize who Jesus was when He came. This prediction found fulfillment at Christ's first coming. Israel did not welcome Him. At Jesus' first coming the nation of Israel did not recognize the mighty power of God in the person of Christ, their Messiah.

Few people will believe that Jesus is the promised Messiah because nothing about His physical appearance would attract a large following. He grew up before God as a tender shoot and as a root out of dry ground. In other words, Jesus came from a region that was very spiritually dry, an area where one would not expect a large plant to grow; that is, an area you would not expect a king to come from (John 1:45, 56). His appearance did not give the impression of royalty in beauty and majesty. His true identity would only be recognizable by faith.

The nation of Israel despised and rejected the Servant who experienced sorrows and . . . suffering. He was the kind of person people do not normally want to look at; they were repulsed by Him. They could not accept His suffering, crucifixion, and death as the sign of the conquering king they were waiting for. For these reasons the nation did not esteem Him; they didn't think He was important. Yet He was and is the most important Person in the world, for He is the Servant of the Lord. In other words in our culture Jesus might have come from the wrong side of the tracks, or even the ghetto.

### **Stanza 3—Atonement: The Smitten Servant: Isaiah 53:4-6, NAS:**

*4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.*

*5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our **iniquities**<sup>6</sup>; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.*

*6 **All of us like sheep have gone astray**, **Each of us has turned to his own way**; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.*

Isaiah is saying that the Messiah, Jesus, would bear the consequences of the sins of

<sup>6</sup> Wickedness.



mankind. This is the heart of the passage, and it presents the heart of the Gospel message: the innocent Servant dying as the sacrifice for sin. This message was at the heart of Israel's religious system, the innocent animal sacrifice dying for the guilty sinner (Leviticus 16).<sup>7</sup> The emphasis in verses 4–6 is on the plural pronouns: *our* griefs and sorrows, *our* iniquities, *our* transgressions. *We* have gone astray, *we* have turned to our own way. He did not die because of anything *He* had done but because of what *we* had done.<sup>8</sup>

Jesus was “*pierced through*.” His hands and feet were pierced by nails (Psalm 22:16; Luke 24:39–40) and His side was pierced by a spear.<sup>9</sup> He was crucified, which was not a Jewish form of execution.<sup>10</sup> Capital punishment to the Jews meant stoning.<sup>11</sup> If they wanted to further humiliate the victim, they could publicly expose the corpse (Deuteronomy 21:22–23), a practice that Peter related to the Crucifixion.<sup>12</sup>

On the cross, Jesus Christ was “*crushed*” under the weight of a burden. What was the burden? The sins and wrongdoings of us all (Isaiah 53:6, 12; 1:4).

Sin is indeed a burden that grows heavier the longer we resist God (Psalm 38:4).

Jesus was “*chastised*” and given many “*stripes*,”<sup>13</sup> and it was that punishment that could bring us peace and healing. The only way a lawbreaker can be at peace with the law is to suffer the punishment that the law demands. Jesus kept the Law perfectly, yet He suffered the whipping that belonged to us. Because He took our place, we now have peace with God if we believe that He suffered and died in our place, and therefore we cannot be condemned by God's law (Romans 5:1; 8:1). The “*healing*” in Isaiah 53:5 refers primarily to the forgiveness of sins, not only to the healing of the body.<sup>14</sup> Sin is not only like a burden, but it is also like a sickness that only God can cure.<sup>15</sup>

Sin is serious. The prophet calls it *transgression*, which means rebellion against God, daring to cross the line that God has drawn (Isaiah 53:5, 8). He also calls it *iniquity*, which refers to the crookedness of our sinful nature. In other words, **we are sinners by choice and by nature**. Like sheep, we are born with a nature that prompts us to go astray; and like sheep we foolishly decide to go our own way.

<sup>7</sup> Wiersbe, Warren W.: Be Comforted. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1992 (An Old Testament Study), S. Is 53:4

<sup>8</sup> Wiersbe, Warren W.: Be Comforted. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1992 (An Old Testament Study), S. Is 53:4

<sup>9</sup> John 19:31–37; Zech. 12:10; Rev. 1:7.

<sup>10</sup> John 12:32–33; 18:31–32.

<sup>11</sup> Leviticus 24:14; Numbers 15:35–36.

<sup>12</sup> Acts 5:30; 10:39; 1 Peter 2:24.

<sup>13</sup> Whipped severely.

<sup>14</sup> 1 Peter 2:24; Psalm 103:3.

<sup>15</sup> 1 Peter 2:24; Psalm 103:3; James 5:14–16; Hebrews 12:12–13.

By nature, we are born children of wrath (Ephesians 2:3); and by choice, we become children of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2).

**Stanza 4—The Silent Servant: Isaiah 53:7-9, NAS:**

*7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.*

*8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?*

*9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.*

As noted, the tendency of sheep is to follow others even to their destruction. In verse 7 the quiet, gentle nature of sheep is stressed. Seeing many sheep sheared for their wool or killed as sacrifices, Israelites were well aware of the submissive nature of sheep. Jesus, as the Lamb of God (John 1:29), quietly submitted to His death. He did not try to stop those who opposed Him; He remained silent rather than defend Himself.<sup>16</sup>

Jesus was willingly led to death because He knew it would benefit those who would believe.

After being arrested and bound (John 18:12, 24) and after His judgment, Jesus was sentenced to die (John 19:16) and led to His death. He died not because of any sins of His own for He was sinless,<sup>17</sup> but because of and for the sins of others. To be taken away means to be “*taken to death*.” It is the same as being “*cut off from the land of the living*,” an obvious reference to death. The words, “*as for His generation*,” mean He was cut off in the prime of life. Those words, however, could also be translated, and “*who of His generation considered*” (NIV) meaning that a few of those who lived then considered His death important. These things were done to Him by God the Father according to 2 Corinthians 5:21: “*God made Him . . . to be sin for us.*”

The soldiers who crucified Jesus apparently intended to bury Him with the wicked like the two criminals (John 19:31). However, He was buried with the rich, in the grave of a rich man named Joseph (Matthew 27:57-60).

**Stanza 5—The Lord’s promise about the blessing of the Servant: Isaiah 53:10-12, NAS:**

<sup>16</sup> Matt. 26:63a; 27:14; 1 Peter 2:23.

<sup>17</sup> 2Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 John 3:5.

*10 But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a **guilt offering**, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.*

*11 As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.*

*12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.*

The suffering and death of the Servant was clearly God's will. In that sense He was "slain from the Creation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). The statement that the Servant gave His life as a guilt offering, does not mean that Jesus' life satisfied the wrath of God but that His life, which culminated in His death, was the sacrifice for sins. As indicated in Isaiah 53:7-8, He had to die to satisfy the righteous demands of God. The word for "guilt offering" is used in Leviticus 5:15; 6:5; 19:21 and elsewhere as an offering to atone for sin.

His death and burial appeared to end His existence (He was "cut off," Isaiah 53:8), but in actuality because of His resurrection Jesus will see His offspring, those who by believing in Him become children of God (John 1:12) and He will prolong His days, that is He will live on forever as the Son of God. **He will be blessed, that is prosper (Isaiah 53:12a) because of His obedience to the will and plan of God.**

His suffering, which included His death, led to life, His resurrection. Satisfied that His substitutionary work was completed, He now can justify many, that is declare righteous those who believe. "By His knowledge" could be translated "by knowledge of Him" as in the NIV.

He bore the punishment for their iniquities, so that many people would not have to die. Because He died, they live.

Having willingly followed God's plan, the Servant, Jesus, is exalted. "To have a portion and divide the spoils" pictures a general, after winning a battle, sharing goods taken from the enemy.<sup>18</sup> Because He was numbered with the transgressors, that is, was considered a sinner (Matthew 27:38) and bore the sin of many, that is, everyone, He is exalted and allows believers to share in the benefits of that exaltation. And because He is alive, He now intercedes for sinners before the throne of God in Heaven. So Satan has no control over us. When he appears before the throne of God and accuses me of being a sinful, wretched human being, Jesus steps forward on my behalf and says to His Father: "Ron may be a sinner, Father, but You Yourself have said that anyone who believes that I died for their sins is guiltless and is to be set free. I paid His penalty." To which God the

<sup>18</sup> Ps. 68:18; Eph. 4:7-8.

Father replies: “*Case dismissed! Bring Ron into everlasting life in Heaven because of the work of my Son.*”

This great passage gives a magnificent picture of what the death of Jesus Christ accomplished on behalf of Israel (John 11:49-51) and the whole world (1 John 2:2). His death satisfied God’s righteous demands for judgment against sin, thus opening the way for everyone to come to God in faith for salvation from sin.<sup>19</sup>

If you have never accepted this work of Christ for yourself personally, don’t let another day go by without being sure your sins are forgiven and that you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Please say something to us after the service and we will be happy to show you exactly how to go about it.

In summary, this has been the fourth and most compelling of Isaiah’s servant songs (52:13–53:12). It contains the Old Testament’s clearest description of the sufferings of Christ. Isaiah begins with a sharp contrast: The Servant is valued by God, but rejected by mankind (52:13–15). Eager for a powerful ruler, God’s people see no beauty in the carpenter of Galilee despite His good works (53:1–2). Despised by His own people, Christ was a sufferer, not a conqueror (verse 3). His affliction seems to the people to be evidence of God’s displeasure, but His suffering actually is for us, that we might be healed by His wounds (verses 4–6). He remains humble in life and death. Though innocent, He dies for the transgressions of His people (verses 7–9). It was God’s intent to crush Him, for Christ is a guilt offering, a substitute paying the price of our sins (verse 10). Yet death is not the end. Beyond the grave the light of life waited for the Savior and because of Him it waits for us as well. He not only rises, but is satisfied that His suffering was not in vain, for by it He “*will justify many*” (verse 11). Vibrant with new life, Christ is raised to glory. In submitting to God’s will, “*He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors*” (verse 12).

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<sup>19</sup> Walvoord, John F. ; Zuck, Roy B. ; Dallas Theological Seminary: The Bible Knowledge Commentary : An Exposition of the Scriptures. Wheaton, IL : Victor Books, 1983-c1985, S. 1:1107