

CHRIST OUR SUBSTITUTE
By Pastor Henry T. Mahan

Isaiah 53:1-12
TV-504a

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Now, this morning, I want you to open your Bibles with me to Isaiah, Chapter 53. My subject, if you write for the tape, for the message, this is the subject: "Christ our Substitute."

Someone asked an old preacher this question, they said, "What's your creed?" "Do you have a creed, and is it in print? Oh yes, he said, I have a creed, my creed is the Lord Jesus Christ." My creed is in print, the Word of God. Incarnate word, and the written word of God. It can be summed up, my creed, which is Christ, can be summed up by reading Isaiah Chapter 53.

I want you to turn to that chapter with me, Isaiah 53. It's all there. In verse 2, Isaiah reveals our Savior, the Father's servant. In verse 3, he reveals our Savior, (the man of sorrows). In verse 4 through 6, he reveals, our Savior, (the substitute). That's what I'm going to talk about today. In verse 7, he reveals our Savior, (the willing sacrifice). In verse 8 and 9, he reveals our Savior, (the sin offering). In verse 10, our Savior, (God's chosen Lamb). In verse, 11, our Savior (the victorious redeemer). And, then, in verse 12, (our Savior exalted with His people).

Now, everyone ought to get acquainted with this Chapter. I wish that all of you would just take it, now, and read it carefully and prayerfully and listen to me as I try to show you what Isaiah is saying in this chapter. Some people call the Book of Isaiah, the gospel according to Isaiah. The gospel of the Old Testament, the knowledge of Christ, that's revealed in this Chapter, is just tremendous. Absolutely tremendous!

Now, look at verse 1. Let's start with verse 1, Isaiah 53: And the prophet asked this question, "*Who hath believed our report?*" What is our report? Our report is our message; it's the gospel that we preach. And there's never lived a prophet or an apostle or a preacher who has not mourned and grieved over the fact, that most people do not believe our report, do not believe this gospel. Do not receive and rejoice in this record.

John said, "*He was in the world, and the world was made by Him but the world knew Him not.*" *And he came unto His own, He came to His own nation, His own temple, His own people and they received Him not.*"

“Who hath believed our record, our report?” Who hath believed our message, our gospel? Do you believe it? I do, thank God I believe His record, His report.

In verse 1, the next line says, *“To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?”* What’s the arm of the Lord? It’s the power of God. He says, *“My arm is not shortened that I cannot save.”* I can reach men. God’s power is called His arm. To whom is the arm, the power, and the wisdom of God in Christ revealed?

Romans 1:16 tells us, Paul says, *“I’m not ashamed of the gospel, the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth.”* And then it’s revealed to some. Paul wrote in 1st Corinthians, he said, *“Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man, the things God’s prepared for them that love Him. But, He hath revealed them unto us, by His Spirit.”* The spirit searcheth the deep things of God and reveals them to His people. Who hath believed our gospel? To whom is this gospel revealed? The power of God!

Now, watch these verses. I just told you about them a little while ago. Here’s the first one, verse 2: Listen; here is Christ our Savior, God’s servant. Listen, He shall grow up, this is the report, this is the arm of the Lord, this is the gospel. *“He shall go up, he shall grow up before Him, before God, as a tender plant.”* Now, Christ Jesus was born of a woman, a little babe, a little infant, a tender plant. That’s what He’s called, a tender plant. *“Made flesh, dwelt among us,”* and he grew up. He grew from infancy, to manhood. *“He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant.”*

Christ was born of a woman, made flesh. *“He who thought it not robbery to be equal with God took on Him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of sinful flesh.”* God became a man. *“Great is the mystery of Godliness, God was manifested in the flesh.”* So, He shall grow up, as an infant, a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.”

Now, the key to this, here, is the word (root). When the Messiah was promised He’ll be the Son of David, He’ll be the line of the tribe of Judah, He’ll be the root of Jesse, the root of Jesse. Our Lord is the root of Jesse, out of a dry ground. That’s talking about the nation Israel. At the time, when the Messiah came, when our Lord came to this earth, was made of the flesh, according to the seed of David, Israel was practically, no nation at all. They were in captivity in Rome; they had no leaders, no king, no kingdom, no government, just a root out of a dry ground.

And listen, and He has no form, no comeliness. Jesus Christ was born of the virgin, and laid in the manger, no room for Him in the inn. He came into this world with no kingdom, no honor, no majesty, no army, and no influence. His parents were poor people. A babe in a manger. *“No form, no comeliness, and no beauty, that we should desire Him.”*

Our Master identified with us. He was so high, and became so low, identified with the servants, identified with the poor people. He came to preach the gospel to the poor. He put on humanity. He put on the form of a servant. He lived in poverty. He had no wealth, no formal education. He owned no property. His family was unknown; He slept in other people's beds. He rode on a borrowed donkey. He was born in somebody else's manger. He died on somebody else's cross. He was buried in somebody else's tomb. (Poor, poor)!

And verse 3, look at verse 3: "*Our Savior's called the man of sorrows,*" not only the servant, but the Man of sorrows, "*Despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief.*" His life was a life of trial and suffering, and sorrow and grief, from the cradle to the cross. And the next verse tells us why.

There's no form, no comeliness, no beauty that we should desire Him. He was despised and rejected of men. A man of sorrow, acquainted with grief. Watch this, (here is Christ our substitute). "*Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows and we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.*" Because, "*He was wounded for our transgressions.*" He came down here, identified with us and took on Himself, our sorrows. He was a man of sorrows, not His own. Acquainted with grief, not His own, our griefs, and our sorrows.

My friend, there's two words that you and I need to learn, if we're going to learn the gospel. Two words that sum up the gospel. One word is: (substitution). The other word is (satisfaction). The whole gospel story is contained in those two words. Jesus Christ the man, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh. Made like we were, of a woman. Made under the law. Obedient to His own law, the second Adam. Tempted in all points as we are tempted, tried in every form that we are tested. In every form of piety, He was tried. Our Lord Jesus was a substitute. In Adam we die, in Christ we're made alive. "*By one man's disobedience we were made sinners, by another man's obedience, we were made righteous.*" He's our substitute. He actually in our stead, and in our place, walked this earth as a man. Subject to the holy law, subject to every trial and temptation. Subject to attacks by satan, attacks by men, attacks by principalities and powers. Subject to all these things, our substitute.

Now, watch this word. But He didn't fail like we did. Adam was a representative, but he failed. All the way down through the years, men have failed. Even the angels failed, even Adam failed. Noah, after the flood failed. And David failed, and all of them failed. But Christ succeeded. He made satisfaction. He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. He fulfilled the law, in every jot and tittle; He kept the law. Everything God demanded, He fulfilled. Everything God commanded, He obeyed. Every requirement, He met. He loved God with all His heart, mind, soul and strength, and His neighbor as Himself. And He never sinned, He never sinned. In whom, there is no sin. He made satisfaction, that's right! Now listen, "*He was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, we hid as it were, our faces from Him. Despised and rejected of men.*" Why? As an example? We didn't need an example of that! We're good examples of grief and sorrow and sin. No, the substitute, He made satisfaction for sin.

“He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities,” in our place and stead. *“The chastisement of our peace was upon Him.”* Now listen, *“by His stripes we are healed.”* He paid the price in full, and He received satisfaction.

The Father looked at Him. Now, when the Father looks at you and me, He's *got* to turn His face. God can't look upon sin and sin can't look upon God. That's the reason, Christ, when He died on the cross, said: *“My God, why has Thou, forsaken me?”* He was made sin. Now, when God looked on His Son, making the full payment, the full restitution, the full reconciliation, He said, *“I'm well pleased.”* This is one man, the man, the only man, in whom I am well pleased. Can you see that? That's (substitution.) Christ the servant became a man, Christ the man of sorrows, grief, tears, and agony. Why? Our substitute! He bore our sins in His body on the tree. He was wounded. Wounded! *“For our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and by His stripes we are healed.”*

All right, verse 2: Christ the servant, came to do the Father's will. Verse 3: Christ, the man of sorrows, (one with us). Verse 4 through 6: Christ the Substitute.

Now, look at verse 7: And this verse reveals our willing Savior. Twice in this verse, this phrase, occurs, *“He opened not His mouth.”* Listen. *“He was oppressed, He was afflicted, yet, He opened not His mouth. He's brought as a lamb to the slaughter. As a sheep before her Shearer's is dumb, (that is speechless), He opened not His mouth.”* Our Lord Jesus Christ was brought before Harod and Pilate in a mock trial, and He made no defense. He was brought before the people and He opened not His mouth. He was sentenced to death, and He opened not His mouth. Having loved His own, He loved them to the end. He was a willing Savior. He said, *“no man takes my life from me.”* They didn't kill the Lord Jesus Christ, He laid down His life. *“No man takes my life from me, I lay it down.”* Our Lord did not open His mouth. Do you know why?

Listen to me now. He was guilty. Oh pastor, Christ was never guilty of any sin. Not Himself, but He had our sins laid on Him. He was numbered with the transgressors. He bore our sins in His body, so when He was charged with sin, He didn't answer, He didn't reply. He opened not His mouth, (guilty)! We're guilty and as He stood in our place, He was guilty. He didn't open His mouth against the Father. He didn't open His mouth against the people. He didn't open His mouth against justice, (guilty)! Willing Savior! He opened not His mouth.

Look at verse 8 and 9. These verses show Christ, our surety. You know, what a surety is? A surety is someone that goes on a note with you. If you borrow money, and sign a note, they lend you a large sum of money, and I sign as a (surety). If you don't pay, I pay. I'll assume responsibility for your indebtedness. I'll assume responsibility, for the debt you owe. It becomes mine, and you can't pay it, and I pay it. And that's what these verses show here. He was taken from prison, and judgment. Who shall declare His pedigree, His generation? He was cut off out of the land of the living. Why? *“For the transgressions of my people, was He stricken.”* He's my surety. God made Him our surety before the foundation of the world. He's the surety of an everlasting covenant.

He's the surety of a New Testament, a new Covenant. God made Him the surety. He assumed the debt.

Somebody said, "I owed a debt I couldn't pay. My surety in my stead, paid the debt He did not owe." He made His grave with the wicked. Do you see that there, in verse: 9? What does that mean, He made His grave with the wicked? He's crucified between two thieves, treated like a thief, an outcast. They took Him outside the city walls and nailed Him to a tree, between two thieves. He made His grave, His death with the wicked. And listen, and His grave with the rich. What does that mean? That means He was buried in a borrowed tomb that belonged to a wealthy man, called Joseph of Arimathaea. A tomb in which no man had ever lain. A new tomb, so that when He arose, they couldn't say, "that it was somebody else." He arose, you see, made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death.

Because, that word, you see that word in verse: 9, (because), "*He had done no violence, neither was deceit in His mouth.*" That word is (although). He bore the transgressions of my people. He made His grave with the wicked, and His death was with the rich. "*Although, He had done no violence, and no deceit was in His mouth.*" He who knew no sin, (my substitute), "*was made sin for me that I might be made the righteousness of God, in Him.*" He paid it all, all the debt I owe. Sin left a crimson stain; He washed it white as snow. That's substitution. And the big key here is (satisfaction).

Now watch this, verse 10: Now, look at God's Lamb. We've seen God's servant, we've seen the suffering substitute, we've seen the Lord Jesus, our sin offering. Now, watch God's Lamb. It says here in verse 10, you need to listen to this, this is so important. "*It pleased the Lord to bruise Him.*" "*We did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God.*" Now, wait a minute, who crucified Christ? You say, preacher, the Jewish leaders delivered Him to Pilate. And Pilate judged Him and sentenced Him to be crucified, and released Barabas. And the soldiers nailed Him to the tree, and all the people consented to His death. That's true, but back of it all, listen to me, don't run away, listen. Back of it all, the will and purpose of the Heavenly Father. They did, those Jewish leaders, Pilate, those soldiers, those people who mocked Him as He suffered and died. They did what God determined before to be done. "*It pleased the Lord to bruise Him.*" He the Lord put Him to grief. He the Lord, made His soul and offering for sin."

Now listen to me, if a man commits an awful crime, a horrible crime, and he's brought before the judge and found guilty, and the judge sentences him to death, and they put him in the electric chair, and somebody pulls the switch, the judge didn't kill him. The man who pulled the switch didn't kill him, the (law) killed him. Justice killed him. That man that pulled that switch is not guilty of murder at all. The law put that man away. The law condemned him. I'm saying this, God's justice; God's righteousness made Christ my surety. God's justice and God's righteousness took him. When God gave him a body and God put him on this earth, in that body as a man, under the law, under the justice of God, God's justice took him. God's law took him, with our guilt and our shame and our sin upon him, and God delivered him into the hands of wicked men, to be crucified and slain.

Now look a verse 10. *“And the pleasure of the Lord, shall prosper in His hand.”* Now listen, *“we did esteem Him, stricken, smitten of God.”* He is our substitute. He is the sinner! It’s God that sends men to hell. Someone said that people send themselves to hell. I beg your pardon! They don’t even know where hell is. No man is going to send himself to hell. God Almighty judges men and God Almighty condemns men. And when Jesus Christ stood in our place and our stead, as our substitute, he was stricken and smitten of God. He said, *“No man takes my life from me”* They couldn’t touch Him, without the Father’s permission. *“It pleased God to bruise Him.”* It pleased God to make His soul an offering for sin. It pleased God Almighty to put His soul to grief. The pleasure of the Lord prospered in His hand. God gave Him something to do. He did it. That’s right, God gave Him something to do, and He did it.

Can you understand that? That’s the reason this old man said, *“my creed’s Christ.”* And it’s all right here in Isaiah 53. Christ the servant of God, the substitute, the satisfaction, the sin offering, the willing Savior, and here, God’s Lamb. They asked David one time, they said, *“where’s your God? Our God’s in the Heaven.”* What’s He like? He said, *“whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in Heavens, earth, the seas, and all deep places.”* And when He would redeem a people, His sheep, His church, His elect, His people from all ages and all generations, of all races under Heaven, every nation, tribe, kindred, tongue, under Heaven. God’s got a people.

But they’re all in debt. They’re all under the law, they’re all under the curse, and they’re all under judgment. Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God came into this world. Man of sorrows acquainted with grief. We hid as it were, our faces from Him. No beauty that we should desire Him. And we did esteem Him, smitten of God, stricken, and afflicted. It pleased God to bruise Him; it pleased God to put Him to grief. It pleased God to make His soul and offering for sin. And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.

And do you know what it says? *“He shall see of the travail of His soul, and He shall be satisfied.”* What’s that talking about? Well, you ladies know something about travail. You know the word travail is (birth pains). When a woman is expecting a child, she carries that child for 9 months and then the baby’s due. And she goes through such pain and distress and suffering to give birth to a child. And after it’s all over, she receives her little baby in her arms with joy. *“For the joy that was set before her, she endured the pain.”* It was worth it. Our Lord Jesus Christ said, *“For the joy that was set before Him, he endured the shame, endured the cross, and despised the shame.”* That’s right, and He saw the travail of His soul.

Our Lord made, people talk about His physical suffering. It was his (soul agony) that gave birth to His people. *“He made his soul and offering for sin,”* His soul.

Our God said, *“Don’t be afraid of anybody that kills the body, fear Him that is able to cast you, body and soul, into hell.”* That’s right, *“He shall see of the travail of His soul.”* He saw every one of His people, He knows them. I know my sheep, and they know me. *“And by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify, many.”* Why? *“He shall bare their iniquities.”* That’s how He justified them. Not through their works. He bore their iniquities, as their substitute.

Now, here’s the last verse: Therefore, because He did all this, I’ll give Him all power, all preeminence. *“He shall divide the spoil of the strong because He poured out His soul unto death. He was numbered with the transgressors. He bore the sin of many. He made intercession for the transgressors.”* He’s the Victor; He’s the exalted Savior. He has all preeminence. That’s my creed, (Christ my creed). Let’s call that message this: (Christ my creed). You can remember this can’t you? (Christ my creed)!