

Christ The Sin Bearer

Isaiah 53

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Bible Text: Isaiah 53:11,12

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Look with me, if you will, in your Bibles to Isaiah 53. Lord willing we're going to finish up this chapter, having already preached some eight, this will be the eighth message in this one particular chapter, such a wealth that there is. But today I'd like to speak with you on: Christ the effectual sin bearer. Christ the effectual sin bearer. When John the Baptist declared our Lord, he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." He didn't say he tried to take it or attempt to take it, possibly take it, but taketh. That would be the only way that he could be that effectual sin bearer, if he actually accomplished what he came to do. Did he or didn't he? I will tell you that if he didn't, then there is no hope for anybody in this room. To tell sinners to put their trust in a Savior who might save them or might have saved them, but in the end could still be lost, would be no Savior at all.

So I want us to think about this as we see the success of our Lord in what he came to do. We'll begin again in verse 10 because it's interlinked. Isaiah 53:10 says,

10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.
11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

So we see in verse 11, "he shall bear their iniquities," forward looking to the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, but in verse 12 it's written almost as if it was already done and that is because of the certainty of it where we read, "and he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors." But I would have you to note how many times you see that word "shall." This is the Lord speaking. When we tell somebody, "I shall see you tomorrow," it could be or it couldn't be. We have no control over that. All it takes is for one little thing to get in the way and we have to call and apologize and reschedule and do all these things, but when the Lord God himself says he shall, he shall.

I had a man say to me after he had heard me preach a few times, he said, "Are you a Hard Shell?" I don't know if you've ever heard that term but a Hard Shell is what they call people that tend to believe in God's absolute sovereignty and that he does what he will, when he will, where he will. But I knew where he was coming from and I didn't want to give him any kind of false notion as if I was identified with some particular religious group but I said, "Well, I'll tell you this, I am a Hard Shell," s-h-a-l-l. Whatever the Lord has purposed to "shall be" and it shall be done exactly as he has purposed. I like that because that's scriptural.

"He shall see his seed. He shall prolong his days and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand." Look how many times it's written. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." This, if no other word than that, gives comfort to a sinner that has been caused to look to the Lord Jesus Christ. Let that word "shall" give you comfort because he is all that he says he is. Let's don't ever minimize who the Lord is and let's never minimize the significance of his suffering for sinners and what he endured to pay the debt. I know there are many that approach his death purely from what I've read recently called a forensic view. You've probably heard the term "forensic." Whenever there's a crime scene, then they send detectives out to find evidence of what happened, forensic evidence. The particular view of this author that I read was going back and trying to study the death of Christ and study what had happened on that day and how crucifixion would have taken place and how the Lord Jesus Christ might have died and they came up with some pretty good evidence that it was exactly as the Bible said. I don't ever doubt that whatever men dig up, they're never going to find anything that's going to prove this word wrong but we don't need that evidence to believe that this word is true. It's true because God said so. We used to sing that song, "God said it, I believe it, that settles it." No, God said it, that settles it. Whether you believe it or not, that settles it.

So it's not a matter of trying to understand the blood and water that came out when he died and how that would have been some sort of decomposing that showed that death was imminent. No man took Christ's life. He gave it of himself. He died a death that God the Father himself ordained and it wasn't a natural death so to approach it from that standpoint is to approach it completely from the wrong perspective. I'll tell you this: when the Spirit of God is pleased to reveal Christ in the heart of one for whom Christ died, the only view of Christ that that one desires and wants is what the Spirit gives through this word. We don't run to men to testify of Christ, we run to Christ who testifies of himself.

So that's what I want you to consider with me in this message: what did God the Father see in that death? It's not what men saw, but what did God the Father see in the death of his Son? Well, we know in verse 11 he saw "the travail of his soul." When it says here "his soul," we know it then to be a spiritual offering. We know it to be an offering that it was more than just a physical death. Yes, he had to die physically. For him to be numbered with the transgressors, to bear their sin even though he was without sin, yet he

had to pay the sin debt and the wages of sin is death: physical, spiritual, eternal. So it was in this one death, that the Lord Jesus Christ in that body that he offered up, paid the debt.

But the Father saw "the travail of his soul." I don't believe that we could enter into this. I will tell you this: if God were to take every other condition of salvation away and just say to you or to me, "I want you simply to know the full weight of your sin and then I'll save you," there would be none that could be saved. We fall into that trap a little bit with our kids sometimes, "Go to the room until you really feel sorry for what you've done." So they sit there awhile and they don't want you to think they're having too good a time, but they're going to do whatever they can to hurry up and get this over with. "I'm sorry. I won't do it again." But if you could really see the heart, you would know that there wasn't a one of us that really ever really felt sorry for what we did. We felt sorry because we got caught.

That's the way we deal with our sin. It's fine until you get caught and then all of a sudden we start trying to make amends and then go on and right back into it. Such is our nature. But when it speaks here of the Father seeing "the travail of his soul," here is Christ, the sin bearer, taking upon himself sin which was not his own. You see, even there, we don't mind getting blamed for something we did wrong but if you want to see rebellion kick in, try taking the blame for what someone else did. How quiet are you going to be? We quickly put it back to them, "It was their fault. I'm not going to take the blame for what they did." That is our nature.

But here, our Lord went to this death in obedience to work out the salvation of his people and it is described as a travail. That word is literally the word to be in labor. It's like when a woman is about to give birth she goes into labor. It's not a pleasant experience from what I hear, I can't attest to it, but it's laborious and yet it has an end. The design is to bring forth a fruit, a child, and even so with our Lord when I said that his death was not an attempt, it was an accomplishment. When he cried, "It is finished," it was finished. There was a fruit to his labor. There was a result to this obedience unto death: his sorrows, his sufferings, the birth travail of what he was doing under the wrath of his Father.

You see, it's like the ark of Noah. Noah had to go through that judgment right along with the rest of the world, but that judgment didn't fall on Noah and his family, it fell on the ark. The ark bore it. When we talk about God delivering us from the wrath of God, us being delivered from the wrath of God, it's because that wrath fell on his Son. His Son bore it. We don't feel it, know it, because his Son knew it. His Son bore it and all that that entails and so the agonies and pains of death are compared to that of a woman in travail here. What he went through and the travail of his soul.

I know this: that an eternity of hell will not suffice for those that are outside of Christ. When the Scriptures talk about eternal judgment, eternal condemnation, I know that's not a popular subject today, but it's true whether men believe it or not. There is an eternal condemnation that waits for those that have been left to themselves, that don't have a ransom. If you want to understand a little bit of the weight of what our Savior bore in that

incident, in that time there on the cross, he bore an eternity of the curse for that people that he came to save. The rest, an eternity won't suffice. All this notion that somehow you can pray for the dead and shorten that amount of time that they're in some place, a purgatory, and come out is just men's devices. So it gives you an appreciation for what Christ bore.

Again, the second thing that we see here as far as what the Father saw, he saw the travail of his soul, but he also saw the satisfaction of his justice. The death of the Lord Jesus Christ was designed to be a satisfaction. In order for God to be just and declare sinners righteous, there had to be a death. Not a semblance of a death, but death. It had to be blood shed unto death and either his death satisfied God's justice or didn't. There is no middle ground here. To say that Christ died for sinners that end up in hell anyway is to say then that justice wasn't satisfied.

So you have to draw the line where the Bible draws the line. There are none in hell for whom Christ died and yet hell exists so what do we conclude from the Scriptures? There are those for whom Christ did not pay the debt and justly so. God is just; he is sovereign. "Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated." He is just in his hatred for sinners and his wrath and pouring it out. We shouldn't be alarmed to hear that God sends sinners to hell. They don't just fall into hell. He has determined to pass them by and their lot is that eternal condemnation, no questions asked. It ought to surprise us that there are any that he purposed to save. Therein is the grace of God and if I am one of those, then I bow humbly and ask why. "Why me? Why me?" But I do know this: that my redemption and my salvation is not in me, it's in this satisfaction the Lord Jesus Christ worked out.

The word is used there, verse 11, he "shall be satisfied." God the Father would be satisfied. After the travail of his soul, he would see what his Son had accomplished and would be satisfied just as a woman after her travail, her labor, the sharp pains are over, brings forth a child and looks upon that child with joy and pleasure and is satisfied and forgets her former pain and anguish. There are no stillborns with God. There is none that would have, could have, should have with God. If Christ paid your debt, he owns you. He owns you and he will most certainly have you. That's what gives me great courage in preaching the Gospel even in the face of much unbelief and hardness in the world today, it's because I know that even though many will not hear and they'll plug their ears and run the other way, the Lord's will hear. His sheep will hear. Those for whom he has paid the debt will hear and he shall be satisfied with having every one of them. There is not going to be one that is going to be lost for whom the Lord Jesus Christ died. Such is the effectual death that he accomplished. That's a whole lot different than the Jesus that's being preached today, isn't it? I hear preachers almost begging people to please trust in the Lord because he paid the debt, he did all he could, and now you're refusing to trust in him. Poor Jesus. That's the kind of Jesus, little j-e-s-u-s that's being preached today but that's not the Christ Jesus of Scripture. He shall be satisfied. Of all that the Father has given him, he said, "I will not lose one. I'll lose nothing."

Well, the third thing that the Father saw in the death of his Son is that righteousness that the Lord Jesus Christ would earn and would establish and that the Father would impute

upon completion of his work. There was a righteousness that had to be worked out for sinners to be saved. You know, this gives me great comfort to know that all the legalities have been taken care of. What good would it do for somebody that had a serious court case that would affect the rest of their life to always live and wonder that somehow an appeal could be made and somehow some little "i" wasn't dotted or "t" crossed and that somehow eventually it would come back on you. There is no rest in that. As a sinner that God has given a heart to look to Christ, here is my rest, that the Father upon looking on his Son saw a righteousness that his Son earned, established and so perfect was that righteousness that upon completion of his work, God the Father justified, declared acquitted forever, those for whom he died.

Do you see how it's put there in verse 11? "By his knowledge," it's by his knowledge, "shall my righteous servant justify many." Christ is described as we've seen already here in the book of Isaiah but other parts of Scripture as well, as the servant of the Lord. This means that salvation is not with men as we are men, per se. It's the Lord himself who came and worked out this righteousness and the Lord Jesus Christ is that servant of the Father to accomplish it because it's not in us.

It says here that he is righteous. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." In the original, you've actually got "righteous" used in two ways: Christ himself being the righteous servant, declaring righteous, because that's what "justify" means. It means "to declare righteous many." Based upon his righteousness and his accomplishment, God the Father justly declares righteous sinners such as we are. That's his work to do as a mediator. There in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ there was the putting of the curse of sin, the debt of sin, to Christ's account but so complete then was that payment that there remained nothing but righteousness to put to the account of those for whom he died. It's an eternal transaction but it took place there at the cross.

When it says that he justifies many, he justifies everyone for whom he died. There are many for whom he died, but the point is that he justifies every one. He justifies, acquits. That's an amazing thing. Not just forgiven but declared righteous. Just as holy and just as God himself. To be absolved from any guilt whatsoever. Now, we feel guilt. The Spirit causes us to when we fall and we sin and we do daily. We are sin itself and the Spirit of the Lord causes us to know that we are, but as far as God is concerned, there is no guilt. There is no sin for which to condemn one for whom Christ has died. I don't even think there is a term in legal terms today that even comes close to this. Some people say, "Well, we've got a pardon." You can pardon somebody but a governor can pardon or the president can pardon somebody whether there has been just payment or not. He can just declare one pardoned whether there has been satisfaction or not and even with the notion of pardon, if you somebody that has been pardoned, we know some politicians that have committed a felony and then they've been pardoned and then they come back and run for office again. It's still on their record that they were pardoned, but you can't really say it was absolved because the whole notion is they're still guilty. They were just pardoned.

But when this word is used here, "by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many," through his knowledge, this is Christ himself knowing the Father, that's his

knowledge, knowing the law, knowing exactly what was required and facing it, taking it upon himself and perfecting that work in every way to the satisfaction of God the Father. That's what was required and that's why it can be said that he justified many. There, again, if it was left up to you or me even to look at this law as it is written here and to begin today a determination to satisfy it, you'd be condemned even from the beginning. Even if you could keep it from here forward, what about from birth until now? It still stands against you.

But our Lord wrought that perfect satisfaction through his life, he obeyed every precept of the law. Not just the letter but the spirit of the law. What if the only commandment that you had to keep was to love your neighbor as yourself, how would you do? That would be enough to send me to hell. I drive out of my driveway every day and look at my neighbors and I don't know what problems they're going through. If I really loved them as I love myself, I'd probably stop and check. "Is there anything I can do for you? Anything I can help with?" Then when they tell you, stop what you're doing and take care of it. Isn't that what you do with yourself? If a problem comes up, you stop what you're doing and you take care of it. But we pat them on the back and we tell them, "Well, I'll be thinking of you, be praying for you," and off you go. But our Lord in every aspect of the law. When you talk about "by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many," he obeyed that law. Not only in the letter but in the spirit and then he paid the penalty. There is the precept and then there is the penalty.

So that's what the Father saw, this satisfaction, but it took, as you see at the end of verse 11 there, again, this satisfaction, this working out. It took a working out of this salvation in his body. The bearing of their iniquities, "for he shall bear their iniquities." Again, who are the "them" or the "their"? Well, the many that God the Father has purposed to justify. This is the reason why there is the justifying. Do you see the little word "for"? There are some that will preach today that they were justified even before Christ died. I don't find that in Scripture. God purposed to justify them. But Paul said in Romans 4:25 that God was forbearing with their sin until such time as Christ came and put it away. There was an atonement that was made by the sacrificial lambs, the animals of the Old Testament, but there was no sin put away until Christ died and therefore there was none justified until he died.

It's very clear here, "by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." "Shall" is in the future. It's looking forward to this cross. It's looking forward to the death that he should die. God would be unjust to declare righteous and acquitted and absolved anyone before the debt was paid. Now, did he foresee it? Yes. Did he ordain it? Yes. From all eternity it was determined that it should be, but when you talk about when were your sins put away if Christ died for you, it was right there when Christ died.

"For he shall bear his iniquities." That was what was necessary, the bearing of those iniquities. Bearing them in the sense of God pouring out his wrath on his Son rather than poured out on those for whom he died. The bearing of them indicates the bearing away. Taking away. "They are all taken away, away. They are all taken away. My sins are all

taken away." Nothing more was necessary in order for God to justify than the taking away of those sins and he did it. He did it.

The fourth thing that God the Father sees in the death of his Son we see here in verse 12 and that's the result. The effectual result of the work that Christ accomplished. Some people talk to you in these terms, "If you want something done, visualize it being done. Then set out to do it. If you can visualize it, it can be done." That's the way it's said. Well, there was no question that God the Father saw the result. He saw what Christ would accomplish and that's really what's mentioned here in verse 12. This is the grand crescendo. This is the grand conclusion. This is not going to be like the North Koreans with all the hoopla of firing off that missile and watching it explode just a few hundred meters off the launching pad. There is no failure here in what our Lord set out to do.

This word was written 500 years before Christ died and yet we read in verse 12, "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great." In other words, that of all the great that you can think of in this world, there is none greater than Christ. There is none greater. There is no greater work that a king or a monarch or the great ones of this world have accomplished and left as a legacy than what the Lord Jesus Christ himself accomplished and did.

"I will divide him a portion with the great." This, dear friends, that we read of here, this one is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Isn't it interesting that in a study of history in our schools, the very one who is the greatest of all is least mentioned. In fact, law is being written now to completely take any mention of Christ out of textbooks and history. How on earth do you have history without Christ? Just the way that time is divided, BC is what? Before Christ. AD, the year of our Lord. It's an Italian word. It means "in the year of our Lord." All of that is this one of whom God said, "I will divide him a portion with the great."

Have you ever thought of who his portion is? When you stop and think of an inheritance, you stop and think of something that is really of value, but what did the Lord say to his disciples? "Do you see these little birds that fly around? Doesn't the Father take care of them?" And what did he say? "You are of more value than they." You stop and think about who you are as a sinner and I know we have to confess we're nothing before a holy God and yet Christ himself considers each one for whom he paid the debt of the greatest value. Willing to identify with them throughout eternity. He paid for his own with his shed blood. How important is that? When it says here that, "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great," we're talking about sinners that have been given to Christ for whom he died and in whom he delights.

Then it says there, "he shall divide the spoil with the strong." I believe that it's showing how this would be accomplished. How would the Lord go in and take out what is his and own it by his death? Well, it says there, "by dividing the spoil with the strong." Another way of reading that in the original is "dividing the strong as a spoil." In other words, there was this strong man that Christ came to conquer: it was the law; it was sin; it was death;

it was Satan. But the Scripture says that he entered in and conquered that strong man and then brought out those that are his.

"He shall divide the spoil with the strong." He would actually take the spoil from the strong is what it's saying there. That none could keep him from claiming his own. Christ told Peter that. He said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The picture there is of Christ entering in through the gates of hell and redeeming out, ransoming out every one of his own.

That's the result that God the Father saw in the death of his Son but, secondly, the second result is that of the pouring out of his soul unto death. You see in verse 12, "because." You see, all of this is related. "For he shall bear their iniquities," up in verse 11, "because he hath poured out his soul unto death." That pouring out of the soul is a reference to the drink offerings that were offered in the Old Testament where they would take either water or wine and pour it out upon the sacrifices. Christ accomplished every detail of every sacrifice of the Old Testament in his death and here we see an example of it. When it talks about the pouring out of his soul, it had to do with respect to his life. Life is in the blood. When you see a picture of a person laying dead and a big blood spot all around them, that life flowed out of that body; with that blood went the life.

So, again, this is what God the Father saw in the death of his Son, the pouring out of his soul unto death. That's what was necessary for the remission of sins. But there is another mention here in verse 12, again, of what God saw. He saw his Son numbered among the transgressors. "He was numbered with the transgressors." He was never guilty of any transgression. Even when he bore the sin of his people, he was not personally made guilty. Even 2 Corinthians 5:21 when it says God made him to be sin, it very quickly says "who knew no sin." He never knew it. There was never any corruption in him. That sacrifice had to be perfect just like the Old Testament sacrifices, without blemish. But he was certainly numbered among transgressors and that is how he died. He died as if he were the worst transgressor, but by imputation, the Lord put into his account their sin and thereby putting to their account his righteousness. But that's what the Father saw, him being numbered with the transgressors.

But also, he saw him, verse 12, bearing the sin of many. Every sin. Do you see how it's in the singular? "He bare the sin of many." It's all summed up as one because that's what it is before the Father. It's only people that kind of categorize, "This sin is worse than this one. No, don't do this before God. This one you can get away with, but not this one." No, the sin. But I like it in singular too because that means sin past, present and future. There is no distinguishing there either. There are a lot of people that think, "Well, Christ paid the debt for the sins of his people up to their point of conversion but then after that, they're on their own." Can you imagine if that were the case? There would none be saved. In fact, the longer I live and the more the Lord teaches me of who I am as a sinner, the more I see my sin. The more he causes me to see that had he not paid the entire debt, I would be lost and so would you.

But we also see here, our final point, what the Father saw, verse 12, "and made intercession for the transgressors." It is put in the past tense. What was necessary for Christ to intercede for transgressors? It took his death; his obedience unto death. I can tell you thankfully today that Christ is not seated in heaven as the sin bearer. It's done. He put it away. Either he did or he didn't. When it says "he ever liveth to intercede for us," it's not as if he's constantly whispering in the Father's ear every time one of his own sins, "Okay, forgive him because I already died." That's not what the Scriptures are saying. Here you can see it's already put as if it's done, "and made intercession for the transgressors." It's done. It's finished. Christ being seated in the heavens where he ever liveth to intercede, it just means that his very presence there is a testimony to the grace of God, the fact that he finished the work, otherwise he wouldn't be there and that justice has been accomplished. A new way has been opened and all those blessings which the Father has purposed for sinners such as we are have been given already in the death of his Son.

Let me have you look at one verse and then I'll be done. Romans 8. Can you enter into this? Is this how your heart rejoices? I pray so because it is the testimony of those that Christ has redeemed and the Spirit has taught. Now, it may be that Christ has redeemed you and you're still lost and you can't enter in right now; all of this just seems foreign to your ears. Well, the truth is if Christ paid your debt, he'll draw you. He'll cause you to see it. Faith comes through hearing and hearing through the word of God.

But look how plainly it's put right here in Romans 8:33, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Do you see the "who"? His very presence there is our intercession before the holy Father. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God," but don't put a period there, it says, "which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." That's where his love is and all that the Father saw in his Son that he accomplished for sinners is the portion of those sinners for whom he died. We have much for which to rejoice and thank him.