

Title: Sufferings of Christ
Text: Isaiah 52: 13-53: 12
Date: February 5, 2012
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Our subject this morning is one that demands our utmost attention and reverence—*the suffering of Christ in the place of his people*.

The horrid effect sin has produced in man, along with God's hatred of the nature of sin, as well as the wages due us for our sin, are exhibited nowhere else as they are in the soul-sorrow, and bodily suffering which Christ endured on the cursed tree.

Our text will be found in Is 52 and 53. I don't intend to go verse by verse but to point out a few things from various verses here.

Proposition: The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God is set forth here as the sinner's Substitute, making atonement for sin by the sacrifice of himself. It is in the future tense, but tis done!

Isaiah 53: 13: Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

In order to redeem and save his people, the Son of God had to become a Man. He is both God and Man. He took upon him the form of a servant—God says, Behold MY SERVANT.

Isaiah 52: 14: As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: 15: So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for *that* which had not been told them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider.

As astonished as many were at Christ, as marred as his appearance and bodily form was disfigured, as deeply and profoundly as our Savior suffered, in direct proportion to his depth of suffering, so is he highly exalted.

If God give us eyes to see and hearts to believe, we see in our Savior's suffering, both the utter loathsome thing our sin is and produces and at the same time we behold the fullest pardon from it.

Because he is both God and Man his suffering unto death both accomplished the redemption of his people and satisfied the infinite justice of Holy God.

I. A LOOK AT SIN IN OUR SAVIORS SUFFERING

To understand some degree of the depth of our iniquities, we must in some degree behold the depths of Christ's suffering.

First, we see the sinful enmity of man's heart against God by the despising of Christ and the torture inflicted upon Christ Jesus at the hands of men—V14:...**his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men...53: 3: He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.**

The Lord Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief all his days on this earth.

- He knew no sin—he went about doing good

- Yet he was despised and rejected of men
- We despised and rejected him all our days until he arrested us by his grace!

We see this enmity most in the cruel torture man inflicted upon him. (Mt 27)

- Pilate scourged him—a whip with bones

Matthew 27: 27: Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band *of soldiers*. 28: And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. 29: And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put *it* upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! 30: And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. 31: And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify *him*. 33: And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, 34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink. 35: And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. 36 And sitting down they watched him there; 37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. 38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. 39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, 40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. 41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said, 42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. 43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. 44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

Christ suffered all of this willingly--"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheek to those who plucked off the hair!"

Secondly, we see the horrors of sin in what our Savior suffered in his own body as he bore sins of his people in his own body on the tree. **Isaiah 53: 4: Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.**

Matthew relates this to his healing bodily sickness and so on--Matthew 8: 17: "*That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.*"

The Lord said about the paralyzed man, *that ye might know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sin, take up thy bed and walk*. Those miracles the Lord performed showed his putting away the sin of his people by taking our sin upon himself.

It is not disease Christ put away by his atonement but the sin that causes infirmities and disease sickness and fever and so on.

2 Corinthians 5: 21: For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

1 Peter 2: 24: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,

But notice this word, YET: **Isaiah 53; 4: Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; [notice these words] yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.**

These words stricken, smitten, are expressions used in scripture when God visited a man with severe and sudden sickness.

Concerning Uzziah,

2 Kings 15: 5: And the LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house. And Jotham the king's son *was* over the house, judging the people of the land.

Concerning Job...

Job 19: 20: My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.
21: Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.
22: Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?

One writer compared the language here: his visage being marred and his form, and this esteeming him stricken of God—to the leprosy which Job bore and the treatment he received from his friends. **And Note:** The marginal reference in verse 3 says, “He hid his face from us”. That was what the law required for one who was unclean. Christ set not one jot or tittle of the law would pass until Christ himself fulfilled all. He did.

I do not know what happened on that cross as Christ bore the sin of his people. But that centurion set to guard him on the cross watched him like Job's friends sat down and watched Job, those that passed by looked upon him. His onlookers saw something in his visage and form being marred which astonished them and caused them to esteem Christ to be a special object of Divine wrath. They thought, of course, it was for something Christ had done himself but, he did no sin, it was because of no sin of his own—him being without sin. The next verse says, **Isaiah 53: 5: But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him;...6:...the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.**

But the wounds and the bruise caused by that iniquity being laid on his own body on the tree were real—it caused a real effect in his body the same as sin does in ours—the word “wounded” and “bruised” means profaned, defiled, broken and crushed. It is pride for man to think this was accomplished by the hands of men. Man has no part in satisfying divine justice. Man cannot inflict the wrath to satisfy the eternal suffering demanded of God. V7: *He was oppressed and afflicted...* Our Lord suffered in his own body far more on that cross than we realize.

1 Peter 2: 24: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,

John Gill--Job was a type of Christ in his sorrows and sufferings;...perhaps we shall not find, in any part of this book, things expressed, and the language in which they are expressed, more similar and to be accommodated to the case, and sorrows, and sufferings of Christ, than in this context.

Job 16: 6: Though I speak, my grief is not asswaged: and *though* I forbear, what am I eased? 7: But now he hath made me weary: thou hast made desolate all my company. 8: And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, *which* is a witness *against me*: and my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face.—what did God say Christ was bearing and would accomplish on that cross?--Isaiah 53: 14: As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: 15 So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for *that* which had not been told them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider.—compare that with Ephesians 5: 25:...Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26: That

he might sanctify and CLEANSE it [wash, sprinkle-clean his elect scattered through many nations] with the washing of water by the word, 27: That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or WRINKLE, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Christ gave himself for the church...to thoroughly purge us from our sin: that “your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” He did that bearing our sin thoroughly in spirit, soul and body. For Christ to say, “I will, be thou clean” cost Him far more than we realize. Sin ages, it makes sick, it causes fever, it disfigures so that there is no soundness in our flesh. Something happened to Christ’s visage and form on that cross that did not happen to those two men on either side of him because they did not have iniquity laid on them as Christ did. Listen to these other texts that point to Christ’s suffering.

Psalm 22: 14: I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. 15: My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

Isaiah 53 says Christ opened not his mouth the whole time he bore this pain.

Psalm 32: 3: When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. 4: For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. 5: I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

Psalm 102: 3: For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. 4: My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread. 5: By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin. 6: I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert. 7: I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top. 8: Mine enemies reproach me all the day; *and* they that are mad against me are sworn against me. 9: For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, 10: Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

Lamentations 3: 1: I *am* the man *that* hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. 2 He hath led me, and brought *me into* darkness, but not *into* light. 3 Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand *against me* all the day. 4: My flesh and my skin hath he made old;...v6: He hath set me in dark places, as *they that be* dead of old.

Psalm 38: 7: For my loins are filled with a loathsome *disease*: and *there is* no soundness in my flesh.

Isaiah 52: 14: As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

Application: But remember brethren, we who now believe once esteemed him not. "We esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted!" Had he not himself given us faith, we would forever have esteemed him not!

Thirdly, we see the depth and darkness of sin, in God’s unbending justice toward Christ who bore the sin of his people—**v9: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. 10: Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief:**

This is the suffering that made him say “My soul is exceeding sorrowful,” “and to be very heavy”

“And being in an agony” “to sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground” Luke 22:44. It was suffering beyond the cruelty of man’s hands and more than the betrayal of his friend or desertion of his disciples, it was the bitter cup of having a sin-hating God turn his face from him.

The sword of justice barred Adam from taking of the tree of life when he was cast out and cursed. Christ bore that sword of justice.

Zechariah 13: 7: Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man *that is* my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts:

He cried....

Psalm 22: 1: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?...3: But thou *art* holy, *O thou* that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

Application: The “cup of wine” we drink is the cup that symbolized communion, fellowship with Christ in his death; of having communion with him, and of enjoying the blessings of grace which come through his blood; such as righteousness, peace, pardon, and atonement; all which true believers are made partakers of; but his children to drink of that cup of communion our Head had to drink this bitter cup dry. In this utter darkness, there could be no communion with the Father for our Substitute until he had suffered all the consequences of sin to the full satisfaction of Divine Justice. Whips fell not only upon his body, but upon his very soul.

If we did not see the depths of our sin in the enmity and despising of man’s heart or in the torture from men’s hands, or in the sufferings he endured in his physical body as he bore our sins in his own body on the tree, do we not see it here! When he laid iniquity on his Servant...*God spared not his own Son (Romans 8: 32).*

Lamentations 1: 12: Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done upon me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

Does this not melt the hardest heart here this morning?

Zechariah 12: 10: “...they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

We see here the final wages of sin—death--**Isaiah 53: 8: ...he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.**

Oh, but that is not where this good news ends. We have seen a look at sin in our Savior’s suffering. Now let’s see...

II. CHRIST’S VICTORY OVER SIN

Isaiah 53: 10....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.

He arose from that grave!

Acts 13:37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

Romans 4:25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Christ so fully satisfied the justice of God. Christ suffering unto death as the Substitute of his people so fully completed the payment for the debt his people owed to divine justice that those for whom Christ died as a Substitute can no more be damned than Christ himself can be. The honor of God, the faithfulness of God, the integrity of God demand that every soul for whom Christ died, must be regenerated and shall never die.

We saw the depths of sin and suffering he bore, now do you see the height of wisdom—*my servant shall deal prudently*. Do you see Christ exalted to the right hand of the Father? *He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high*.

Application: Someone might be asking, “What does that mean for me?” Let me ask, “Are you yet hiding your face from him, despising him, and esteeming him not? Or do you believe on him? Has he given you faith to rest all upon his finished work?”—for those who he draws to cast all their care on him—*with his stripes we are healed*.

Romans 8: 1: *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit...34: 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.

To you who believe on him--In the light of these things,

- Is anything too much for us to suffer for Christ?
- Is any sacrifice too great for us to make for him?
- Is any devotion to the Son of God too extreme?

Amen!