

Series: Isaiah
Title: Man of Sorrows
Text: Isaiah 53: 3-5
Date: November 3, 2013
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Today, we, as a family of born-again believers, are remembering the Lord Jesus at his table. He said the broken, unleavened bread is to remind us of his body broken for you. The Lord said the wine—made from the grape being crushed in the winepress—is to remind us of his shed blood, “which is the new testament in his blood.” He said, “This do in remembrance of me.”

We are told in Hebrews 12, that when the believer suffers, we are to lay aside the weight and besetting sin that has taken our focus off Christ and we are to focus on Christ, considering his suffering till ours becomes nothing.

Hebrews 12:3: For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4: Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

Therefore, our text is Isaiah 53: 3-5. Let’s begin reading in verse 3, after the semi-colon. It says Christ is,

Isaiah 53: 3:…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. 4: Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5: But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

I. WHILE THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WALKED THIS EARTH HE WAS A MAN OF SORROWS, ACQUAINTED WITH GRIEF.

Christ’s sufferings were incomparably greater than our finite minds can conceive.

A Man of Sorrows, Acquainted with Grief

Sorrows mean pain—Grief means bodily sickness or in Christ’s case, that he was touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Christ was “A man OF sorrows”—he was “ACQUAINTED with grief.” His constant companions—his familiar acquaintance was pain and infirmities; his life was one continued series of sorrow and grief.

Why Did Christ Have to Suffer?

First, that as our High Priest, he might reconcile his people to God (Hebrews 2: 17)

Hebrews 5: 8: Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

It means though he was the Son of God, Christ took the form of a servant and became obedient unto the death of the cross.

Hebrews 5: 9: And being made perfect—[having perfected obedience as the representative head of his people]—he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

Secondly, Christ suffered because “In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” (Heb 2: 17)

Hebrews 4:15: For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

What Was the Cause of his Suffering?

His suffering included bodily pain but it was much more than what sinners inflicted upon his body. It was not merely the physical agonies of His death. Many martyrs have endured deaths that involved terrible physical agony inflicted by sinners. His suffering was much deeper than that. When no human hand touched Christ, he said, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.” (Mt 26: 38) His suffering was heart suffering, soul suffering, even unto death.

Feeling of Our Infirmities

To begin with, when Christ took a fleshly body, a true human nature, he also took all the natural sinless infirmities of our flesh. His human nature was subject to hunger, thirst, weariness, along with every sorrow and pain that accompanies our infirmities. Likewise, the same temptations we face—he was tempted with in all points like we are. All the pain and suffering—that those infirmities and temptations cause in us—he felt.

Because we feel sorrows and griefs when we see others suffer there is in us a natural sympathy toward others. That itself causes pain in us. It is more intense when it is your dearest loved one that is suffering. But we are so sinful, even our sympathy is calloused.

Yet, Christ, being touched with the feeling of our infirmities, had a sympathy with men under affliction that was perfect and caused him to be touched with a perfectly full sorrow and grief. So being touched with the feeling of our infirmities caused sorrow and pain in himself, as well as a perfect sorrow and pain because of sympathy toward others.

At Lazarus tomb, John 11: 33: When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,... 35: Jesus wept. When the Lord wrought a miracle, he entered in spirit into the circumstances of the one he was relieving. With his divine power, there was also divine sympathy that entered into the depth of the need that He relieved. “In all their afflictions He was afflicted.” (Is 63: 9)

Holy amidst the Unholy

Furthermore, his sorrows and griefs were, in part, due to a perfect, holy soul dwelling in constant contact with unholy sinners. Think of a Man perfectly holy and righteous living in constant contact with sinful, sinning, God-hating men. Sin is an abomination to God—this Man is the GodMan.

Kindred Relationship

Then, there was the fact that he had taken part of our flesh and was in kindred, human relationship to Abraham’s seed—who in our flesh—the “imagination of the thoughts and intents of our hearts were only evil continually.” (Gen 6: 5)

Occasionally, we hear of a member of the human race that commits acts so evil that we feel sick to our stomach that one of us could be so vulgar and evil toward another one of us.

Well, Christ made himself one with us. He became a man. So here he was, this one Holy Man, in the midst of his people so guilty and degraded. It would be like beholding your neighbor committing such vile crimes—or worse, your brother or your son. “He endured a contradiction of sinners against Himself.” The sense of men’s guilt, degradation, misery, base ingratitude, hatred toward God and one another, must have bowed down his pure human soul with unspeakable sorrow and shame constantly.

False Accusations

To our Lord Jesus, more painful still, was while being the Holy One of God, to be falsely accused by men and treated as the chief of sinners.

Have you ever been accused falsely? Your heart was full of love, you were trying to do good for a needy brother or sister. Yet, you were accused of just the opposite. How horrible it feels to be treated as a hypocrite, as a criminal, when you only meant it for good!

So was Christ accused? Possibly not a single human being, when He died, believed that He was who He claimed to be. Even his disciples doubted.

Shame

Then there was the shame he suffered. Shame is far more difficult to bear than bodily pain. Shame was thrust upon Christ in every form all through His life from the manger in a cow stable to the curse of the cross

Hebrews 12: 2 The Author and Finisher of faith, for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Temptation

Add to this, the constant tempting of the devil. Everyone has a limit. There are sights and words and evil that turns your stomach that makes you turn away in disgust. Not only in the wilderness and at Gethsemane, but the devil constantly bombarded Christ with everything evil.

Satan moved wicked, religious men to use every means imaginable attempting to cause Christ to lose His temper. We read in Luke 11: 53,

Luke 11: 53: And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things: 54: Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

I have experienced a very little taste of this. Men speaking vehemently--“Those pastors you love mean nothing to me.” Provoking me to speak something so that they might be able to accuse me and justify not bowing to the gospel we preach. By God’s grace, I opened not my mouth, but in my flesh I sinned in my heart! Christ never did! He knew it was the wiles of the devil.

Satan even used Christ’s dear disciple, Peter. Peter did not want to see his Master suffer. So someone put it in his mind to try to turn Christ from going to the cross. Christ did not blame his beloved child. He knew it was the wiles of the devil. Christ said to him, “Get thee behind Me, Satan.” (Mt 16: 21-23) In this Christ sinned not!

Disregard by His Elect

Through it all, even of those elect children he came to save, we read—**Isaiah 53: 3: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.**

He was mocked for the humbleness of his birth. The educated scribes and Pharisees reproached him as the carpenter’s son who had never learned. The wealthy Pharisees derided him. He was called mad, a gluttonous man and a winebibber.

He heard the crowds chose to set a criminal free and crucify him. The Roman soldiers treated him like savages. He was crucified between thieves, regarded by men as the worst of the three. Even when he hung on the cross, he was mocked. He said,

Psalm 22: 6: I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. 7: All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 8: He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

Brethren, as you think of all these ways he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief just try to conceive of the constant intense anguish all of this would cause in his soul. Just the stress of the presidency turns men's hair white in a very short time. He was only around 30 years old yet one time they said, "You are not yet 50 years old." Why did say that? All of this sorrow and grief had to have taken a toll on our Savior's fleshly body. When he said, "The flesh is weak"—it was his own body he spoke of as it sweat blood.

II. THAT BRINGS US TO THE WORST OF OUR SAVIOR'S SUFFERING

Above all these other ways he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, the worst of it was bearing the sorrows and griefs of his people—**Isaiah 53: 4: Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:**

Temporal Fulfillment

We have a fulfillment of this prophecy in the gospels when he cast out devils and healed all manner of sickness. In Matthew's gospel, when Christ bore griefs away—it meant only that he removed "bodily sicknesses" by his miraculous power. In the same place when Christ carried our sorrows: it meant he carried the pain and anguish of mind from off those sufferers when he took away their bodily sickness.

Yet, as Christ fulfilled this prophecy in that temporal, physical way he bore sorrows, afflictions in his own mind because he knew he faced this far greater, eternal and spiritual fulfillment, of which Isaiah speaks here.

Spiritual Fulfillment

When Isaiah says, "he hath borne our griefs"—in the context he goes further to say that Christ bore the disease of the soul—the sin—of his people. We see it in verse 5, "our transgressions, our iniquities."

Isaiah 53: 6: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

The apostle Peter quotes from verses 5-6, saying,

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

The apostle Paul said,

2 Corinthians 5: 21: For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;

When Isaiah says Christ "carried our sorrows"—in the context he goes on to say the inner pain and anguish of bearing the stroke of divine justice against those iniquities—which we deserved. Again, we see it in verse 5: But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities:

Think on this brethren: each time Christ healed someone of bodily sicknesses, it had to heighten anguish in his own mind, as he was reminded that he would have to go to the cross to put away the root cause—the sin of his people—which causes bodily sickness. All along he knew the hour was approaching. He said,

Luke 12: 50: I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

Christ was—baptized—immersed in shame, immersed in divine judgment, immersed “when he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” He said, “How am I straightened till it be accomplished.” Those words express the trouble and distress Christ was in, at the apprehension of bearing our shame and suffering.

It was like the distress of a person besieged by an enemy or like a woman, when the time for her to travail in child birth draws near, when she dreads it, and longs to have it over:

Plus, those words signify, his desire to have it accomplished; that the justice of God might be satisfied, that the law might be fulfilled, that the salvation of his people be obtained, that his Father’s will be accomplished and his Father be glorified.

Above all else, that is why he groaned within himself at Lazarus’ tomb—he knew what mighty price he would have to pay to raise Lazarus from the grave.

The Garden

As the hour approached, he resisted and strove against sin all the more: against sin in Satan’s evil temptations to turn him from his work, he strove against the weakness and doubting of his own disciples, and most of all, Christ resisted as he experienced the weakness of flesh as his soul-trouble ever increased.

Consider this increasing progression of soul trouble. As he approached that great battle in the Garden of Gethsemane—he said, John 12: 27: Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Then in the Garden—Matthew 26: 37: And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. 38: Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. A little later—Luke 22:44: And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

He told his disciples—“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (Mt 26: 41) He knew what he was saying. His own capillaries ruptured striving against sin.

It appears the death he was praying to be delivered from was not the cross, but his own body of flesh failing him before he could even get to the cross. His Spirit was willing, it was his flesh that sweat blood.

Our all-powerful Savior humbled himself to teach you and I—his weak, disciples—to look out of ourselves to him even as he looked out of himself to his Father.

Hebrews 5:7: Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

Luke 22: 43: And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

And having perfect obedience, even unto the death of the cross, “he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;”—he tells us to look out of ourselves to him like he did.

The first Adam was proven unfaithful in a garden; the last Adam was proven faithful in a garden. Oh, and how many more powers and principalities did Christ have to contend with than Adam! But Christ set his face like a flint toward his Father.

Colossians 2:15: And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

The Cross

Then came the cross itself. And who knows what agonies of body and soul he persevered through in those hours. Our text says,

Isaiah 53: 5: He was wounded for our transgressions. Wounded means to pierce through, to perforate, to break, to violate the honor of—the margin says, to torment

Isaiah 53: 5:...he was bruised for our iniquities. Bruised means to beat and crushed like wheat is ground by a stone or in a mortar

Isaiah 53: 5: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; Chastisement here means an act of vindictive justice, in wrath, taking vengeance on our sins, on our surety, whereby divine wrath is appeased, justice is satisfied, and peace is made:

Christ cried out

Psalm 22: 1: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?...3: But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

- God forsaking our Substitute justly when he laid on him our iniquity
- God forsaking our Substitute that he might declare God just
- God forsaking our Substitute to Justify his people from our sins.

Unfaithfulness & Faithfulness

While Christ bore all of this, two very different things were taking place. It was the same for Christ as he walked this earth, as he “bore the griefs and carried the sorrows” of the multitudes that he healed, as it was while he hung upon the cursed tree—**Isaiah 53: 4: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.**

The word’s stricken, smitten and afflicted means we esteemed him under divine judgment from God for his own sins. One translation reads, “We esteemed him to be a leper.”

But each word in verse 4 corresponds with each word in verse 5, declaring it was not for his own sins but for the sins of his people.

- V4: yet we did esteem him **stricken of God...5: But he was wounded for our transgressions,**
- V4: We esteemed him **smitten of God,...5: but he was bruised for our iniquities:**
- V4: We esteemed him **afflicted of God...5: But the chastisement of our peace was upon him.**

Yet, while that was the esteem of men, this is what was happening in the heart of Christ, in the heart of him who is Faithful and True,

Psalm 22: 9: But thou *art* he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope *when I was* upon my mother’s breasts. 10: I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou *art* my God from my mother’s belly. 11: Be not far from me; for trouble *is* near; for *there is* none to help....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. 16: For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. 17: I may tell all my bones: they look *and* stare upon me. 18: They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture. 19: But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength,

haste thee to help me. 20: Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog. 21: Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

Again, "when he had offered up prayers and supplications...he **was heard** because he feared." After he cried, "It is finished! and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" then three days later God raised him from the grave.

It is Finished!

Because the work indeed was finished we read, **Isaiah 53: 5: and with his stripes we are healed.**

Hebrews 9: 26 says, "Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"—and that is what he did.

1 Peter 2:24: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Christ is now entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:...and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Brethren, we are sinners. We have not resisted, striving against sin unto blood. Christ spent his whole life resisting and striving against sin. Christ strove till he sweat great drops of blood. And now by the blood of his cross, Christ has fulfilled the law, put away sin, and conquered death for us who he has quickened to life and faith in him.

1 Peter 2: 25: For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

- Live unto him who is our Righteousness
- By whose stripes we are healed
- Draw near to him for help—he knows what you are feeling better than you do!
- Be assured that He shall never let us go

Now, Christ said, "Do this in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor 11: 23-26)

Amen!