

The Humiliated Christ

Harmony M.B.C., February 26, 2012

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Isaiah 53:1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

Isaiah 53:2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him.

Isaiah 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.

Isaiah 53:4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Isaiah 53:5 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.

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.

Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Isaiah 53:8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

Isaiah 53:9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth.

Isaiah 53:10 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.

Isaiah 53:11 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.

- v. 1 - “Who hath believed our report....” - Skepticism is the first response of humanity concerning the reality of Christ and the gospel
 - ▶ This very skeptical attitude was clearly present when Jesus began to reveal Himself as Messiah in Matthew 13.
 - ▶ The skepticism revolves around the power of God being incarnated in the man Jesus Christ - Jesus, the Son of Man hardly looked like the “arm of the Lord” (which is a Jewish phrase which means the strength of God, the power and might of God)
 - ▶ Such skepticism is entrenched, because men insist on reasoning out things using human wisdom, so, it always takes a revelation from God to cut through the garbage of human intellectualism
 - Never has the saying “the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God”(1Cor 3:19) been more real than here, in humanity’s assessment of Christ
- vv. 2-3 The ground for the skepticism lies within the framework of Christ’s debut before the world (He didn’t appear with the characteristics that human reasoning demanded)
 - ▶ Tender plant (have mental imagery of a really vulnerable looking plant sprouting up out of the ground; also emphasize the “grow up” part of this, since the reasoning of the human mind cannot conceive of the fulness of the Godhead bodily have a component which actually

passes from infant to adult man in a normal human growth process - human reasoning demands that God manifest Himself in full-blown power all at once) - 1 Cor. 1:25 "...the weakness of God is stronger than men."

- ▶ Root out of dry ground (have visual imagery of a "sucker" sprouting up from a root of a tree that no longer is seen above ground [like one that has been cut down and the stump removed] in an area of the ground that doesn't look like it would grow anything) - tell the story of the basswood tree sucker in the back yard at the Holliday house
 - This aspect of Christ speaks of His anonymity as a simple carpenter from Galilee; Nathaniel expressed the human attitude about Jesus' origin and humble beginnings well when he said (Jn. 1:46) "...can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"
- ▶ No form nor comeliness...no beauty (have visual imagery of a beggar or street person alongside a king or a billionaire all decked out in the most expensive clothes and showing great authority, power, popularity) - consider the prejudiced assessment of the human mind from which we rate people based on whether they are tall and handsome or short and homely, muscular and vigorous vs. weak and dumpy, etc.- this is what is considered here.
- ▶ v.3 - Humanity is also influenced to reject him based on the opinions of their peers (despised and rejected of men [humans]);
- ▶ And because He was deeply immersed in things of sadness and sickness (a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief) the human mind looks the other way (hid as it were our faces from Him)
 - Illustrate using our natural tendency when we see someone very disfigured, and we try to, and often do, look the other way
- v.4 - the human mind interprets His lowly, overburdened lot in life to be judgment from God upon Him personally
- v. 5 - The real truth about His lowly, degraded condition on earth
 - ▶ Wounded for our transgressions
 - ▶ Bruised for our iniquities
 - ▶ Chastisement of our peace was upon Him
 - ▶ With His stripes we are healed
- v. 6 - The necessity for these things to happen to Him
 - ▶ Like sheep we have gone astray
 - ▶ Everyone turns to his own way
 - ▶ The iniquity of all of us, which was born of this behavior, was laid upon Him
- vv. 7-9 - His submission to the degradation and injustice involved in this work
 - ▶ Oppressed and afflicted - no protest by Him
 - ▶ Handled as though He had no personal rights - yet totally silent before the users
- v.8 - Wrongfully imprisoned and wrongfully found guilty, yet made no effort to defend himself from the punishment or the false accusations
- Killed without having a defender or anyone to plead his case ("...he was cut off out of the land of the living...")
- Killed for someone else's crime ("...for the transgression of my people was he stricken.")
- v. 9 - He was buried as just another of 3 supposedly wicked men, and at his death did not even have a burial place, but the charity of a rich man provided one, although he had done no violence, nor exhibited any deceit.
 - ▶ For all of the lives He touched and enriched; for all the honesty and plain speaking, in love and compassion, He did amongst those who sought Him out for help, despite the continual message of peace He spoke, and peaceful demeanor He showed, when it came time for Him to die, He was simply counted among the wicked, and only two people stepped

forward to show Him reverence; Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus (both were apparently rich).

- It is dishonor to a true hero and champion, and a shame to a society when such a true hero and champion is treated like a criminal and forgotten and disrespected as though he had never contributed to the glory and honor of a community, people, or nation.
- Any criminal justice system that finds an innocent man guilty as a result of deception and lies dishonors both the offended victim and the justice it is supposed to uphold. This is what happened to Jesus. He could not be honestly accused of violence or deceit, yet he was thrown away by his society.

- v. 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.

Isaiah makes this statement in a way that we immediately feel a sense of mystery. As he looks back at what is said in verse 9, he ponders with amazement the fact that the Lord was pleased to bruise Christ and put him to grief. Then he explains the reason for it; because He has made His soul an offering for sin, so that He might perpetuate His eternal spiritual offspring.

- ▶ The bruising and grief of Christ: 1) guaranteed our spiritual birth (“...He shall see His seed; 2) was the route for us to an endless life (He shall prolong his days....”) and 3) ensured protection and tenderness for us (somebody has to pay...who? Christ pays in suffering; bruising and grief; we are treated tenderly by the Father of grace)
- ▶ The result of this action will also be to grow the pleasure of God by ensuring the salvation, the redemption of His offspring (“...pleasure...shall prosper, etc.).
- v. 11 - The soul-suffering of Christ satisfied the requirement that the holiness and justice of God demands for sin (remember in our earlier message about Christ’s bruises and stripes I emphasized that those outward injuries were the least of the beating He took. Here, the Lord looks at Christ’s inward injuries as sufficient.
- What knowledge does He mean here? He means the knowledge of punishment for sin...our sin - Christ has a personal knowledge of what kind and degree of punishment God requires in order that a sinner might be viewed just as if he had not sinned (justified). In fact, Christ has intimate knowledge of what kind and degree of punishment is necessary for all the elect of God to be viewed by God as if they had not sinned. This is that knowledge by which He has justified us! And the last sentence in this verse verifies that this is exactly what is meant!

“Man of Sorrows!” what a name
For the Son of God, who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim.
Hallelujah! What a Savior!
Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned He stood;
Sealed my pardon with His blood.
Hallelujah! What a Savior!