

ISAIAH 53
THE CHOSEN AND PRUDENT SERVANT--

From March 22, Isaiah 53:7-9

SUFFERS MEEKLY, EVEN TO DEATH

*He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so He opened not His mouth.*

*He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation?
For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people
He was stricken.*

*And they made His grave with the wicked—but with the rich at His death,
Because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.*

ISAIAH 53:9-12

--WILL RECEIVE THE SPOILS OF VICTORY!

*Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.
When You 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.*

*He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied.
By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.*

*Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoils with the strong,
And He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many.
And made intercession for the transgressors.*

This evening we reach the grand conclusion of the Passion section of Isaiah's prophecy. He has been speaking about the Chosen and Prudent Servant of the Lord who would come to free His people from captivity—spoken in terms of the captivity of the Jews to Babylon, but in reality the captivity of all people to sin, death, Satan, and hell! Isaiah has provided details about the Servant and His successful rescue mission:

- a) **52:13-15** Isaiah has explained how the Servant would astound many--with an appearance marred more than that of any man, and at the same time He would astound even kings with a victory over all foes.
- b) **53:1-3** Isaiah has explained how the Servant would be deemed undesirable—like a sucker-shoot on a plant—rejected by men, with men hiding their faces from Him.
- c) **53:4-6** Isaiah explained how the Servant would be stricken, smitten, and afflicted also by God's hand for our transgressions, sins, and iniquities.
- d) **53:7-9** Isaiah has explained how the Servant would suffer meekly, like a sheep being shorn, a lamb being led to the slaughter. He would die with the wicked; yet be buried with the rich. He was innocent.
- e) **53:10-12** In today's conclusion Isaiah shows that the Servant's mission is a success. Although He suffers and dies, He will live, bringing release—righteousness before God—to the captives. The Father will allot them to Him as spoils of war. He has interceded—spoken to the Father—in their behalf! Mission accomplished!

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him. The Father was pleased to bruise His Son, to crush Him until black and blue even to death. The Father was not “pleased” to see the Son squirm and suffer, as a warped man would take pleasure in shooting another just to watch him die. The Servant was His beloved Son “in whom He was well-pleased,” stated at Jesus baptism. His pleasure was in providing rescue for captive sinners-- “This will help them.” We still say, “It has pleased Almighty God in His infinite wisdom to summon out of this world the soul of—.”

He has put Him to grief. The LORD put His Son through grief, like a stone being polished under the grinding of a wheel. Jesus was under a heavy load, being ground down. It was grievous. Grievous and “gravity” are related words. *You make His soul an offering for sin.* Jesus was ground down as the atonement-offering. Atonement is “the making of peace.” The Old Testament atonement sacrifices pictured the making of peace for sin through the coming One. We are not just talking about the sins of the Old Testament people. Nor are we just talking

about the sins of the ne'er-do-wells today—be they criminals, neighbors, or relatives. Certainly, Jesus suffered their punishment too. But we are also talking about you—your sins. “We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). Jesus suffered for you. Criminals are reluctant to give their own lives for their own sins. Would you give your life for a criminal? Jesus did.

He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days; and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. Isaiah turns a corner! The harshness, and gloom, and suffering become joy and gladness, relief and rescue! Jesus will not just die, but will live! Though He was cut off from the land of the living, He “shall see His seed,” His offspring! Jesus did not reproductively have children, but He says “Here am I and the children whom You [God] have given Me” (Isaiah 8:18 and quoted in Hebrews 2:13). Jesus is alive (Easter!) and with His children forever—a very prolonged length of time. “He shall prolong His days.” There will never be a time when He will be sick of forgiving you, as happens in sinners’ hearts. There will never be a time when He will be sick of shepherding you. ***The pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.*** His mission to free the captives is a success in every respect. You are a forgiven and righteous child of God! The Father is pleased.

He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. The heavy labor and load He carried, under which He was wearied to death, met all the requirements for your freedom from captivity. He is “satisfied” and the Father is “satisfied.” It is the same word is sometimes used to express the “satisfied” feeling after food and drink. You and your sin, I and my sin, got us into the predicament behind bars, but He has set us free and is pleased. ***By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.*** By His knowledge, the Holy Son of God, has won a Not Guilty verdict for us! What does it mean “by His knowledge”? II Corinthians 5:21 explains it well. “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” He endured and knew all the effects of sin for us.

Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoils with the strong. Like a victor in a battle, free to take whatever goods he wants, Jesus was granted “spoils” of war in His battle’s victory. (Think of the “spoils system,” which describes how newly elected officials made various appointments to governmental offices. The U.S. federal “spoils system” was at its hay-day in the 1880’s and has since been restricted). ***I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoils with the strong.*** This sentence reads as if Jesus gets a portion of spoils which are divided up and shared with other great and strong individuals. Except that doesn’t match with Scripture truth. Who else is on a par with our Savior in matters of salvation? Not the mighty of this earth, nor the angels. In matters of the victory over our sin, Jesus stands alone. A better translation has been suggested, which the Hebrew will also support. First--the word “great” can also be translated “large” or “many.” “I will divide Him a portion with “many.” Second— we do say, “Parents will be blessed with children,” not meaning “together with children,” but will be blessed “with having children.” Thus, this verse, “I will divide/allot Him a portion with many” does not mean “together with many others,” but “His portion will be the many.” “Many”—the same word used in “He shall justify many,” Likewise “I will grant Him a portion with the strong” meaning “the strong will be His portion.” Even the unbelievers, “the strong of this world,” will be under His control in spite of themselves. The Servant wins!

Because He poured out His soul unto death. Jesus “pours out,” empties, Himself for our forgiveness. He was like a bowl that is emptied. It is completely exposed. Jesus had no shield, no covering, no defense. Jesus was exposed to all forces. He poured out His life. The Chosen and Prudent Servant, the Holy Son of God, accomplished His mission in unique fashion. He suffered in humility for us, but He tends us in glory forever.

Isaiah sums it all up: ***And He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many,***-- familiar thoughts by now-- ***and made intercession for the transgressors.*** “Made intercession.” To “intercede” means to serve as a go-between for someone in trouble. If I am convinced someone is being too harshly treated—guilty or not guilty—I will intercede for him, speak to the one in charge, seeking to make peace for him. The Chosen and Prudent Servant is your Intercessor before God in heaven. Jesus pleads with the Father in your behalf. You are now able to go to the Father with all confidence, in Jesus’ name. Do not approach the Father in your own name—no matter how just you think your cause. You will be tossed out on your ear! Go in Jesus’ Name. He is comfort, assurance, and victorious intercessor!

Isaiah, under inspiration of God, has written a precious section for us. The Chosen and Prudent Servant has willingly suffered humiliation and death, and now lives in victory, His victory and ours. This section of Isaiah is fitting to be read, not just during Lent, but regularly anytime in life!

So be it! Amen!

Pastor Kanzenbach---