

The Risen Christ Testifies of God's Satisfaction in the Suffering of His Son

The Truth of the Resurrection

Resurrection Sunday April 1, 2018

Isaiah 53

1 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

2 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no *stately* form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.

3 He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.

6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.

8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke *was due?*

9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

10 But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting *Him* to grief; If He would render Himself *as* a guilt offering, He will see *His* offspring, He will prolong *His* days, And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.

11 As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it and* be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.

To the Glory of God

Now when the Lord graciously saved me back in 197,- the arguments about the Resurrection were more *prominent* and they were more *intense* than they are today. Back in the early 1970's, there was widespread consensus among believers and non-believers alike, *especially* here in America, that deciding about that Biblical Claim that Jesus literally and physically and bodily rose from the dead by the Glory of the Father really mattered.

And back then, you took a stand either way. You either eagerly believed in the Resurrection, or you eagerly and categorically rejected it. And if you *did* believe in the Resurrection, you also generally believed the rest of the Bible and you called yourself a "Christian". And if you *rejected* the Resurrection, then, generally speaking, you relegated the rest of the Bible to be myth and nonsense, and you were intentionally and proudly *not* a "Christian".

But a strange thing has happened over the last 46 years. Today, that question, that debate, that issue, "*Did Jesus literally and physically and bodily rise from the dead?*", is not nearly as prominent and not nearly as intense as it once was because, at one level, people feel that the Resurrection of a Man from the dead 2,000 years ago way across the ocean really doesn't have a direct impact on their own lives, because, after all, different people believe in different things, and maybe it happened, and maybe it didn't. And if it did, and that helps *some* people to get along in this life, then fine. But it really doesn't make much difference to me, and it really doesn't affect me and my life all that much.

And so, many people today really think that they can call themselves a "Christian", and they can join a Church, and they think they can be in good standing with God and have a secure place in

Heaven, and either be *unsure* about the Resurrection of Jesus or outright reject it. And sadly, there is very little within many of those religious organizations that would ever do *anything* to challenge these people about that, even though the Bible categorically teaches that if you do not believe in the Resurrection, you *cannot* be saved.

You see, in our modern American Culture, where everything today is “relative”, objective, propositional, and absolute Truth is no longer vital. We have elevated “personal opinion” to be as valuable as “Truth”. And, at the same time, we have *lowered* and *devalued* Divine Absolute Truth to be nothing more important than personal opinion.

It is common today to hear people say, “*Well, that’s just your opinion*” when presented with clear Biblical Truth that they either don’t like or don’t want to hear. Or, when confronted with things that they really don’t want to accept, they will quickly say, “*Well, that’s just your opinion*”. And it is common today for people to honestly believe that what they “believe” and what they “trust in” and what they “accept” is “Truth”, as long as they are sincere about it or agree with it, even if what they believe or trust in contradicts the Absolute Truth of Scripture.

Many very sincere people say, “*God knows my heart*”, which is really just a catch-all phrase that seeks to justify *whatever* they are believing or doing. And since they honestly believe that, deep down, they really are “nice” people, it really doesn’t matter if they accept the Biblical claim that God physically and literally and bodily raised Jesus of Nazareth from the dead on the 3rd day after His Crucifixion.

Many take the attitude that “*I may or may not call myself a Christian, and if the Resurrection seems helpful to me, then I may believe it, and if it doesn’t, then I won’t. But whether I do or I don’t, it doesn’t affect my relationship with God, and it doesn’t change where I am going to spend eternity.*” But is that true? Does it matter, as far as our eternity is concerned, whether or not Jesus rose from the dead? And the answer to that question is what I want to explore today.

Now behind those two different kinds of unbelief, the kind from 46 years ago and the kind from today, is a completely *different* set of assumptions. For example, back when I was first saved, the assumption among unbelievers then was that there was a body of fixed, closed, natural Laws that make the world understandable and scientifically manageable. And these Laws simply *did not allow* the Truth of the

claim that Someone had risen from the dead to live forever to be believed by intelligent and thinking people.

And that was a commonly held assumption back then, that the modern world with its scientific understanding of natural laws does not allow for Resurrections. So, "unbelief", back then, was often rooted in that kind of smug, intellectual, self-righteousness disguised as "scientific analysis", when, in fact, it was simply just blind, ignorant, disbelief.

But today, in 2018, that is *not* the most common working assumption that we face. Today, the assumption is *not* that there are natural laws *outside* of me that forbid my acceptance of the Resurrection of Jesus, but rather, the assumption that we face today is that there is a "*personal law*" that is *inside* of me that says: "*I don't have to accept anything in my life that I don't find personally helpful or personally relevant.*" Or you could state this modern assumption another way by saying that many people today actually believe that: "*Truth for me is not objective or propositional, it isn't Divine or Absolute, but truth is simply whatever I find personally attractive and helpful.*"

And with that new assumption in place, and with that new subjective and suppositional "inner law" in place, it really doesn't matter whether Jesus rose from the dead or not, because, whether He did or didn't is irrelevant. Their only issue is: "*Do I care? Do I personally find that idea helpful? Do I 'feel' that it helps me flourish as a human being?*"

And if it seems like the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead on the third day *doesn't*, then they will view the Resurrection the same way they view UFOs and possible life in some distant galaxy, or some special effects in a movie they really don't need to bother with it. And their false, pseudo-humility will also say, "*But if it helps somebody else to believe or to trust in the Resurrection of Jesus, then by all means, that's just peachy-keen, but don't you dare try to impose that nonsense on me.*"

And that is *increasingly* becoming the attitude of more and more people here in America, especially those younger than 46. In fact, some of you sitting here today may actually think that way without even knowing that's the way you think. You have simply absorbed this carnal logic from the general culture because that way of thinking is now

woven into most television shows and most advertising and most movies, and is taught in modern educational curricula from the public school system.

So, what I am attempting to do this morning is confront this issue head on, and honestly examine how we as human beings sift through the "new indoctrination" that is coming at us every day from all these various sources. And my hope is that God will empower me to put the Resurrection of Jesus Christ before you today *not* simply as a "religious belief", but as an historical fact, and *not* something that "might be helpful to *some* people", but as something that is required if *anyone* is to spend eternity in Heaven. And if I, by God's Grace, am successful this morning, then you will not so easily buy into the bombardment of pagan and humanistic and just flat out wrong information concerning this Issue.

As Christians, we are those that believe and teach that what the Scriptures say about Jesus and about Salvation, and what the Scriptures say about Creation and Right and Wrong and Heaven and Hell are *historical facts*, and not merely theological debate points.

A Biblical Christian believes and teaches that God Almighty humbled Himself, not only in taking on flesh in the Incarnation, but also in taking on nouns and verbs through the inspiration of Scripture. A manger in an obscure Jewish village in the first century and a bloody Cross outside the gates of Jerusalem 33 years later were *not* sensational events at the time. And neither are pronouns and the various tenses of verbs. But that is how the one, true, and living God chose to reveal Himself to Man.

A poor Jewish peasant and a prepositional phrase have something in common; they are both very human and they are both very ordinary. And the fact that a poor peasant was God in human flesh, and that prepositional phrases are the Word of God doesn't change that.

Therefore, if God so humbled Himself to drape human flesh over perfect Deity and to make sure that very common human language was recorded on scrolls, how can any thinking person be so arrogant to ignore either the full Humanity of Jesus Christ or the Words of Scripture?

And so, when the Bible tells us that three days after He died on a Cross that Life from God entered back into Jesus' dead Body, and He opened His Eyes and He stood up and He walked out of that tomb and

He rose from the dead, we believe that, and we trust that, and we confess that, and we teach that, and we defend that, because that is what the Bible says. And it goes on to say in **1 Corinthians 15:17**:

And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.

And that means that if Jesus "was" and "did" *everything* that the Bible says He "was" and "did", but did *not* rise from the dead, the Bible says our faith is absolutely worthless and we are still in our sins. So, without the literal and bodily Resurrection of Jesus, not a single sin has been forgiven and not a single soul is saved.

And here's the point in taking our text from **Isaiah 53** this morning. This Chapter was *not* written by Christians *after* Christ's Resurrection. This Chapter is *not* some effort by those in the early Church to rewrite history about what really on that particular Friday and that particular Sunday.

No, this Chapter was written by a Jewish Prophet about 700 years *before* Jesus was ever born. And it was copied thousands of times, and was published and had been distributed as far west as England and as far East as India 200 years *before* Jesus Christ came. And what this Prophet saw in the future was *not* a mere Man who taught people some things about God, but God Himself, Who was born of a virgin and Who lived a perfectly sinless Life.

Isaiah doesn't record a man who *escapes* death and thus has no need for a Resurrection, but a Messiah Who dies, and dies explicitly in the place of sinners, and then rises again to make intercession for His redeemed and forgiven and justified people forever.

So, this sermon is about what *really* matters, not just what your own heart *says* matters to *you*. It is about unshakable, unchangeable, absolute Truth, and your relation to that Truth.

Now one of the great advantages of having the Old Testament and the New Testament in one Book is that they give support to each other. *Together* they strengthen our faith that *both* are God's Word. So, if you are Jewish, or come from a Jewish background, your confidence in the Old Testament, the Jewish Scriptures, may be strong, and with good reason.

And so, when you see the amazing *fulfillments* of the Old Testament in the Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ, and His Teachings, and the Movement of Christianity that he unleashed on the world, your confidence in the New Testament is made even stronger.

Or if you have never read a syllable of the Old Testament and hear the Story of Jesus Christ and His sinless Life and perfect Teaching and His Death and Resurrection and the Movement He unleashed, you may be overpowered by the Truth and relevance and credibility of Christ and believe that He really is Who He says he is, and you will become a Christian.

And then you discover that this Jesus *embraces* and *endorses* the entire Old Testament as being true and reliable Scripture (as in when He said, "**Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.**"). And so, your confidence in the Old Testament grows precisely *because* of the New Testament.

And so, it works all through the Christian life. The better you know Jesus Christ, the better you know the *roots* of His Life and Ministry that are in the Old Testament where God was at work to *prepare* for the Coming of His Son into history. And the better you know the Old Testament, the better you know the Meaning of Jesus Christ and what He came to *fulfill* that God had been planning for so long.

So, this morning I thought it would deepen our understanding and strengthen our faith if we fixed our gaze on the Resurrection of Jesus as it was described by the Prophet Isaiah 700 years *before* it happened. And here in **Isaiah 53** we will see the content and the confirmation of the Resurrection of Christ:

- ✓ *Content*, because the precious meaning of it for our lives is opened to us.
- ✓ *Confirmation*, because it was predicted 700 years before it happened.

So, let's go to **Isaiah 53** and see the Prophecy that the "Servant of the Lord" (52:13; 53:11), the Messiah, would die and would rise again, and that this Death and Resurrection are both *planned* by God and *necessary*. And as we look at this, keep in mind, it has to do with you here and now, and for the rest of your life and eternity. Because what becomes clear from this Chapter and from its fulfillment in the New

Testament is that your sins *can* be forgiven, you *can* be declared righteous before God, and you *can* have eternal life with the risen Christ in everlasting Joy.

So, first, let's notice that the promised "Servant of the Lord" was to die and why. The Death is made explicit in verses 8, 9, and 12:

8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke *was due?*

9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.

So, after verse 7 says He was led "like a lamb to the slaughter," verse 8 says that the slaughter was successful:

By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke *was due?*

... "taken away", "cut off out of the land of the living", this Man was killed. And His Death was an *execution*. His Death was *not* accidental. Then verse 9 makes the Death clear by referring to His burial:

His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

But look also at verse 10:

But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting *Him* to grief...

So, this Death is *not* a historical accident. It is the Purpose and the Plan and the Pleasure of God. So, the Death of God's "Redeeming

Servant" is predicted here clearly. One more confirmation from verse 12:

Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death

Now, why did Jesus die? We are told no less than 10 different times in this single Chapter:

1. Verse 4: "**Surely our griefs He Himself bore.**"
2. Verse 4: "**. . . And our sorrows He carried.**"
3. Verse 5: "**But He was pierced through for our transgressions.**"
4. Verse 5: "**He was crushed for our iniquities.**"
5. Verse 5: "**The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him.**"
6. Verse 5: "**And by His scourging we are healed.**"
7. Verse 6: "**The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.**"
8. Verse 8: "**[He was] stricken for the transgression of my people.**"
9. Verse 11: "**He will bear their iniquities.**"
10. Verse 12: "**He bore the sin of many.**"

Now if you have ever asked, "*What is the essence of Christianity? What's at the heart and center of it all?*" Here is the answer. Let's use the words of verse 6:

All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way;

... and this, "going astray", and this "turning to our own way" is called "Sin". Turning away from God and making *ourselves* our own master and our own treasure is the rebellion against God that is Sin. So, Sin is looking at the Glory of God in all its magnificence and saying, "*No, thanks, I'd rather have something else*". And you simply cannot *belittle* God's Glory any more than that. You cannot *insult* God any more than that.

So, our sin *insults* God, our sin *tramples* on the Glory of God. And because God is Righteous, He rises to defend His Glory that has been offended by our sin. God's righteous Character *compels* God to adjudicate the horror of His Glory being insulted by the rebellion of creatures from the dust. And that adjudication is the eternal Damnation of sinners in everlasting Torment.

You see, if God didn't defend His Glory, that has been belittled by our wickedness, God would be agreeing with us that His Glory was not worth defending. So, this eternal Damnation is *certain* because we are all guilty and it is *eternal* because the offense must be corrected.

Now God could have left it at that. He didn't have to do anything to rescue any of us from our plight. God was not *obligated* to forgive or save a single soul. And He would have remained perfectly Holy had He chosen to leave us in this terrible condition. But He didn't! Thank God, He didn't.

Before the foundation of the world, God chose to magnify the Glory of His Grace by rescuing unworthy sinners by what He alone would do for them. So, from ages past, God chose to send a "Suffering Servant", not mainly to give us an example of love for us, but to bear our sins as a Substitute for us. Verse 6 finishes by saying:

But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

And this is the very *heart* of Christianity. Jesus Christ came into the world to fulfill this Prophecy. Now He also fulfilled many other Prophecies, but this one is central and basic. Jesus came to die. And He came to die in our place. And He came to die for our sins. And this is our only hope. And the New Testament is all about just *how* this happened and *how* it affects our lives now and in the ages to come. And I beg you this morning to pursue after what the Bible teaches about these things with all your heart and all your mind.

But what about the Resurrection? Let's look at the Resurrection of the redeeming, suffering "Servant of the Lord" in these words written 700 years before it happened. At least three times, Isaiah tells us that the Sacrifice that this Servant made in dying results in a Resurrection triumph. Now he does not use the word "Resurrection," but the *reality* of the Resurrection is clear. Look again at verse 10:

But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting *Him* to grief; If He would render Himself *as* a guilt offering, He will see *His* offspring, He will prolong *His* days, And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.

Now look closely at what Isaiah said:

If He [Jesus] would render Himself *as* a guilt offering...

... three things will result from that:

1. He will see His offspring
2. He will prolong His days
3. And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand

In other words, if Jesus dies for others as a "guilt offering", or as a perfect "Scapegoat", or as a Substitute:

1. He will live to see His offspring, which are those whom He has saved by dying for them.
2. He will live for a long time ("prolong his days"), which by implication, means, "forever" because once death is conquered it can't ever defeat you again.
3. God's great Purposes will triumph in His Hands.

So, by dying as a Substitute, Jesus will conquer Death itself, not just for Himself, but for all that put their trust in Him. **Romans 6:1-14** says:

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?

2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection,

6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;

7 for he who has died is freed from sin.

8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.

10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,

13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.

14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

And then, according to **The Revelation 5:5**, this same Suffering Servant Who has died in our place and risen again will take the scroll of history and unroll it as the Lord of the Universe. So, this is a picture of the Messiah Who was dead and is alive forevermore, and Who is victorious forever as the Lord of all those who receive His Salvation.

Then **Isaiah 53:11** says:

As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it and* be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.

Again, we see that eternal Triumph comes from this Death and Resurrection in three ways:

1. He sees the fruit of His Death and is satisfied. And that means that He doesn't stay dead. He lives and is satisfied. His Work is complete, and He is glad. He is alive and satisfied.
2. He justifies many, everyone who trusts in him, no matter how sinful they have been. If you trust in Jesus and all that Jesus has done, God Himself will declare you Just and Righteous, and He will forgive all of your sins. That is what "justify" means. A Christ Who dies but Who does not rise cannot justify anyone. Only a dead and risen Christ justifies.

3. "He will bear their iniquities." Yes, Jesus bore these iniquities when He died. But He *goes on* making intercession and bears them forever in the sense that as long as He lives, it is plain that His Death was utterly sufficient to pay for all our sins.

So, God is satisfied with Jesus. And the result of that is that wicked rebels are justified. And all our sins are carried by this other one, *forever*, and we will never bear our sins again! And if you have ever failed, if you have ever sinned, if you have ever committed wicked acts, *that is the best News in all the world!* And it only comes by *believing in and trusting in* a Savior, Jesus Christ, Who not only *lived perfectly*, but Who *suffered fully*, and Who *died completely*, and Who *rose victoriously!*

Finally, verse 12. God speaks:

Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.

Now look closely at exactly why God will give Jesus **"a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong"**

... Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many...

This is the third Statement that the Resurrection existed because of the obedient Death for sinners that Jesus carried out. In other words, after Jesus pours out Himself to death, He then lives again! And He then divides the booty with the strong, as though His Death were a great Triumph in war with much booty.

Now what this means is that the Resurrection of Jesus did not happen for His sake alone. It *was* for His sake! O, yes! And we would not have it any other way. Let Him be honored for His great Work of Salvation on the Cross! Verse 11:

"He will see it and *be satisfied.*"

... so make no mistake about it, Jesus was raised from the dead for HIS Satisfaction. But what is the Son satisfied with? Verse 10 says:

"He will see his offspring."

So, I conclude that *part* of Jesus' Satisfaction in the Resurrection is looking out on a great assembly of people, from every race and tribe and language and nation, who have trusted Him and who have been forgiven and justified. And with tremendous Joy, Jesus walks among them now and in the ages to come, and in the words of verse 12:

A people "great" and "strong"

And Jesus divides the spoil of His Triumph with them all. Because this is what He loves to do. And *this* is His Satisfaction. He *delights* to save. Jesus *loves* to bring people from death to life so they can enjoy His Majesty forever.

Now I purposefully preached from a Passage that is not normally used to illustrate the Resurrection. And I had one goal in mind: If you can see the value and importance of the literal and physical and bodily Resurrection of Jesus from an obscure Old Testament Passage, how crystal clear will the Resurrection illustrated in the New Testament be to you?

So, I ask you: *"Are you His? Have you trusted in Jesus and in His finished Work? Have you turned from your wicked ways? You can. You can belong to that "great and strong people", even though you feel utterly unworthy?"* That is the whole point of the Death of Jesus Christ. He died in our place. And all who trust Him as the Savior and Lord and Treasure of your life, you will be forgiven and justified and live forever with Him. And that amazing Work was forever sealed by the Resurrection. So, I beg you to run to Jesus today for forgiveness and the Salvation of your soul. And trust in the Resurrection as the crowning achievement and God's "seal of approval" of what Jesus did on our behalf.

Amen. Let's pray

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.