

# Man Of Sorrows

Our studies in Isaiah now bring us to Chapter 53, surely the Mt Everest of Old Testament Christology. Isaiah has been comforting the Lord's remnant people with views of deliverance by the Messiah. Here, the representative nature and saving purpose of Jesus' death to redeem His people from the captivity of sin is plainly laid out. Our Old Testament brothers and sisters are shown the circumstances of Christ's passion, the meaning of His suffering and the glory that should follow. These verses might have been written by an eyewitness.

## **A restricted revelation**

The Lord Jesus told His followers 'strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it'. Isaiah was aware of this phenomenon. The fewness of spiritual hearers was a feature the prophet found notable. How few believe the gospel! Neither the hearers of his own day, nor those of the Lord's day, would give ear or attention to the words of truth. Such is the pride and prejudice of our fallen nature that without divine enabling we shall have nothing to do with God's Son.

## **The Arm of the Lord**

Christ is the arm of God's strength to save His people yet beyond the angelic witness at His birth nothing gave outward appearance of Jesus' majesty or power. The Jews entertained ideas of kingly greatness for the coming Messiah despite Isaiah's direction here and elsewhere. Christ would be like a little shoot in dry ground, a small branch, mean and insignificant; not a conquering king but a suffering servant. There would be no indication that the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily.

## **Of sickness and infirmity**

In His life the Lord Jesus was a man widely despised as irrelevant and dispensable. He was accused, falsely, of all kinds of sin and endured physically all manner of suffering. The pains Jesus experienced were more extensive than we know. Christ not only assumed a true human nature, capable of sorrow and grief, but did really suffer the pain, shame and distress of all our natural sicknesses, too. This He did so that, having borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, He might better be able to empathise and sympathise with His people, being in all points touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

## **Any sorrow like unto my sorrow?**

Christ's sufferings were aggravated by being rejected by His own nation, forsaken by His disciples, denied by His friends and betrayed by one of His own number. All His life He lived among sinful people, knowing their hearts; the holy and pure Son of God. However, it was in His soul that His greatest pains were felt and here Isaiah shows the Lord Jesus to be not merely a private person but rather, as He should always be considered, the public head and representative of His church and people. His wounds were incurred for our sins, His bruises for our iniquities. He died in our place.

## **Healed by His stripes**

But the wonder of covenant grace shines forth. Isaiah tells the remnant church, 'the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all'. The Messiah in suffering and dying served God's purpose and fulfilled God's will. It pleased the LORD to bruise and punish the Saviour for our sins, in our stead. By suffering and dying as our representative Christ secured our salvation. He accomplished redemption, appeased divine anger, reconciled us to God and purged our sins by bearing them in His own body.

## **Obedience that justifies**

Yet, there is more. God's suffering servant, being Himself perfectly righteous and becoming sin for His people, did prosper them eternally by His obedience unto death. Christ justified and declared righteous all for whom He travailed in soul. He acquitted His people before the bar of divine justice and delivered the elect from all condemnation, making them righteous in God's sight. These are God's people in whom His heart took pleasure, having loved them everlastingly. God was satisfied with Christ's sacrifice. Christ was satisfied with His Bride.

## **The Lamb's wife**

The suffering for sin of the Lord Jesus Christ in His human body, soul, and spirit, was more than anyone ever suffered. The prize He won was greater still. It satisfied the Lord Jesus to secure the redemption and salvation of the people He loved and gave Himself for. On the cross, in the depths of His deep tribulation, the Saviour was comforted to see you and me who trust in Him. We are the portion God promised to Christ in the covenant of peace, we are the precious seed, the sheaves for which He suffered, the fruit of His death.

Amen

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