

# Christ, Conqueror, Savior and Sufferer

by A.B. Simpson

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*The sermon emphasizes the victorious Christ, who has won the battle of redemption and guarantees our victory in every conflict, while also highlighting the solitariness of Christ's sufferings and the importance of sharing in His burden.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 63:1

**Topics:** "Victory in Christ", "The Suffering Savior"

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## Description

A.B. Simpson presents a profound exploration of Jesus as the Conqueror, Savior, and Sufferer, emphasizing His victory over sin and death, which He achieved through His solitary suffering. He illustrates that Christ's triumph is not just a historical event but a present reality for believers, who can claim His victory in their own lives. Simpson highlights the importance of recognizing Jesus as the righteous and mighty Savior who fights for the oppressed, and he encourages Christians to embrace their own sufferings as part of their journey with Christ. The sermon concludes with a call to understand the solitude of Christ's suffering and the necessity of sharing in His burdens as part of the Christian experience.

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## Transcript

"Why are you red in your apparel, and your garments like him that treads in the wine vat? I have trodden the winepress alone." (Isa. 63: 2-3).

Three pictures of the Lord Jesus are given in this splendid poetic vision.

I. The Conqueror. It is a picture of the hero warrior coming back from the conflict with Edom, Israel's traditional foe. It is a picture of the conqueror, not the warrior, that we see. The battle is over. The carnage, the struggle, the horrors of the battlefield are all behind Him. It is only as a victor that He appears, marching in splendid majesty, "glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength."

The picture is true to the whole analogy of prophecy and the whole story of redemption. It is all one long battle from Edom to Armageddon. The first promise of redemption is the prophecy of a battle between the seed of the woman and the serpent, the emissary of Satan. The conflict between Moses and Pharaoh, Israel and Amalek, Joshua and the Canaanites, David and his enemies, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and the kings of Judah: all these were but types of that greater battle raging in the heavenly places and leading on to the final triumph of the Son of God and the setting up of His millennial throne. The life of every Christian

is but a section of this great conflict. It is renewed from generation to generation and age to age and every Christian must be a soldier as well as a saint.

But the point of the whole prophetic picture is not so much the conflict as the Conqueror. The figure that stands in the front is the victorious Christ, the battle fought, the triumph won and the enemy destroyed. The lesson for us is that the battle is not ours, but God's, and that the battle has been won for us already by Him and we go into every conflict with the prestige of victory assured. Just as David met Goliath single-handed, and as the champion of Israel defeated the army of the Philistines by defeating their leader, so the Son of God has won for us the great victory of redemption, and it is our privilege to enter into His victory and go into every conflict saying, "Thanks be unto God who always causes us to triumph in Christ Jesus."

Are we thus taking His victory and entering into the triumph of His cross? It is our glorious privilege so to do. Then we need never know defeat or doubt or fear, but shall meet Satan as a conquered foe and ourselves be "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

The prominence of Edom in this conflict is very significant. Edom stands for the flesh, our greatest spiritual foe. In this connection there is a remarkable passage in the seventeenth chapter of Exodus describing Israel's first conflict with the race of Edom, Amalek. This was typical of the battle which God has ever been waging against the flesh and the power of sin. This battle was not won by human valor, but by divine power. Only while Moses held up his hands did Israel prevail, and when his hands grew heavy and fell down, then Amalek prevailed. It was to teach us that we are to overcome our spiritual adversaries not by our energy, but by the uplifted hands of faith, claiming the supernatural power of God. This battle was to be permanent. "The Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation," and we find this true in every stage of our Christian career.

But in the marginal reading of this verse there is a striking expression which confirms the teaching that we have just been giving. "Because the hand is upon the throne of the Amalek from generation to generation." The hand upon the throne of the Lord represents the hand of faith taking God Himself for the victory, and when this is the case and our hand is there, then the Lord fights our battle and comes from Edom evermore "traveling in the greatness of His strength," "mighty to save."

Shall we learn the lesson of His victory? Shall we follow the Captain of our salvation, and "in all these things be more than conquerors through Him that loved us"?

## II. The Savior.

"I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." (Is. 63: 1.) This is not a selfish conflict like most human wars, for personal ambition and earthly power and renown. Oh, how human blood has flowed and human hearts have ached that some selfish hero might be called earth's greatest conqueror. There are some wars that have been undertaken, not for ambition, but for the deliverance of an oppressed and captive people. Such is the great conflict of redemption. Our mighty Captain has come forth to fight the battle of a lost world and to rescue us from the powers of darkness, and He conquers only that He may save. He is the Champion of the oppressed and it is written of Him, "He shall save the children of the needy and shall break in pieces the oppressor; He shall deliver the needy when he cries, the poor also and him that has no helper."

The prophet tells us four things about His great salvation.

1. He is a righteous Savior. He does not override the claims of justice, but He is "a just God and a Savior." He has recognized the claims of God's law against sinful men and has fully met them. He has paid the penalty of sin in His own person and by His death upon the cross. He has fulfilled for us a broken law and presented to God a perfect righteousness in our stead and the salvation He gives to us is not merely the obliterating of the record against us but a complete settlement of every claim which justifies us in the sight of God and enables us to say, "Who is he that condemns; who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

2. He is a mighty Savior. He has overcome all the obstacles that interposed and there is no case too hard for His power. He saves us from the guilt of sin and the wrath of God against it. He saves us from the fear of punishment. He saves us from the defiling power of sin in our hearts and purifies and cleanses our nature. He saves us from the physical effects of sin and is the Healer of the body as well as the Redeemer of the soul. He saves us from the consequences of our sin and restores to us "the years the locust has eaten," and the opportunities that our folly threw away. He saves us from the fear of death and raises us to a higher glory than we could have ever known if sin had not come. He is "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him." He is able to save from the uttermost, too. There is no soul too lost, there is no heart too hard for Him to conquer. He can save our loved ones and rescue the captives of the mighty from the very jaws of the destroyer.

3. He is the only Savior. "I looked and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me and my fury, it upheld me." (Is. 63: 5.)

4. There is a strange blending here of salvation with destruction. "The day of vengeance is in mine heart and the year of my redeemed is come." (Is. 63: 4.) This is really one of the underlying principles of the plan of redemption. It is a salvation through destruction. This is the very significance of the cross. It is life through death, victory through seeming defeat, and joy through sorrow. It was thus that the antediluvian world was saved "by water," that is, through the destruction of the sin that was engulfing it. It was thus that Israel was saved from Egypt by the death stroke that smote the first born. It was thus that humanity was saved on the cross by the death of Christ, and all our sinful nature with Him, and it is thus that each of us is saved by going through death to life through the power of His grace. So finally the material world is to be saved by fire and the destruction of the present economy is to usher in "the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwells righteousness."

### III. The Sufferer.

But this was a costly victory. This Conqueror has not easily won His splendid triumph and saved His captive people. "Why are you red in your apparel and your garments like him that treads in the wine vat? I have trodden the winepress alone." (Is. 63: 2, 3.) While a severe exegesis might insist upon the application of this figure wholly to the sufferings of His foes, yet the beautiful Christian sentiment that has always associated it with the sufferings of the Redeemer cannot be set aside, and His grateful and ransomed people will always associate this pathetic verse with the agony of the garden and the cross.

The peculiar feature, however, of Christ's sufferings emphasized in this passage, is their solitariness. "I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with Me." (Is. 63: 3.) The very greatness of Christ and the loftiness of His nature separated Him inevitably from others both in His sufferings and in His deepest life. His lofty nature made Him peculiarly sensitive to things that we would not so deeply feel. To Him the world of sin and sorrow was wholly strange and new. On his finer

sensitiveness, the rudeness, coarseness and wrongness of every earthly thing must have grated with a strange pain. Above all, the presence of sin and His identification with it, must have been a hideous agony to the holy nature of the Son of God. To be treated as a malefactor, to be counted worthy of the shame that the vilest sinner deserved, "to be made sin for us who knew no sin," to be judged by His Father as an accursed one and to go down for a little while into the very realms of Hades, and touch for a moment our very hell; all these were elements in the peculiar sufferings of the Son of God which human hearts can never comprehend. Then, besides, He was left in utter desolation in His darkest hour. His disciples forsook Him and fled. Peter denied Him. Judas betrayed Him, and even His Father covered His face with a cloud and for a little while poured upon His head the judgment that sinners deserved. Truly He was treading "the winepress alone."

Surely it is fitting that those who love Him should often go apart and gaze upon that spectacle of sorrow while they hear Him saying, "All you that pass by look and see if there is any sorrow like My sorrow wherewith the Lord has afflicted Me in the day of His fierce anger."

The very design of the Lord's Supper is to keep alive the tender recollection of His passion and to do this in remembrance of Him.

There are two practical lessons for us in connection with this subject.

1. The place of suffering in our life. The greatest mystery about the gospel is that Jesus, that most innocent of beings, was the greatest sufferer, and His suffering is His supreme glory. It is equally true of us that suffering must be part of our discipline and our glory too. While there were sufferings which He had to bear alone, there are others which He shares with us. We can have no part in that sacrificial offering by which He once for all redeemed us and saved us, but we can have a part in the travail of His soul which, as our great High Priest, He is forever bearing in the conflict of the ages and the accomplishment of redemption. On yonder heavenly throne He is still suffering in sympathy with His people and in prayer for the completion of His redemption. That is the burden which we may share with Him. It was of this Paul said, "I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind in all the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church." Every soul that is converted, every victory that is won for the cause of Christ costs Him the travail of His soul, and we, His body, can bear that travail with Him. This is the meaning of the ministry of prayer. This is the meaning of the burden of suffering which He lays upon the hearts that are willing to watch and weep with Him. Shall we enter into this holy ministry and thus be partakers of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that shall follow?

2. The solitariness of our life. The Master was alone in the deepest tragedy of His life and every true follower of Jesus must also learn to be often alone. There are sufferings that will come to us that no other can share. There are experiences that no other can understand. There are confidences between us and our Lord that no human soul can share. Shall we go with Him along the solitary way? Many of us are there now. Let us not be discouraged, but remember the lone Master who went before us, saying, "Yet I am not alone for My Father is with Me."

"Ah, be not sad although thy lot be cast

Far from the fold, and in a boundless waste

No shepherd's tents within thy view appear;

But the chief Shepherd even there is near.  
Thy tender sorrow and thy plaintive strain  
Flow in a foreign land, but not in vain  
Thy tears all issue from a source divine,  
And every drop bespeaks a Savior thine."

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