

Man of Sorrows

by Anton Bosch

This sermon delves into the profound chapter of Isaiah 53, focusing on the sufferings and atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus on the cross. It emphasizes the deep love of God in sending His Son to bear our sins, highlighting the need for personal reflection on the significance of Jesus' sacrifice and the response it should evoke in our lives.

Scripture: Isaiah 53:5, Isaiah 53:6, Isaiah 53:10, Isaiah 53:12, 1 Corinthians 15:3

Topics: "Atonement", "God's Love and Sacrifice"

Description

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Transcript

All right, let's turn to the Word and Isaiah chapter 53, today is Resurrection Sunday and we obviously have no command in Scripture to celebrate Easter even. We are to celebrate the Lord's death in communion, but there are some traditions that are good and there are other traditions that are not so good. And remembering Easter is a good tradition as long as your Easter doesn't include bunnies and eggs and all sorts of other nonsense.

If Easter is about the death, burial, resurrection of the Lord Jesus, then it's a good tradition and it's good for us to remember that. Now, one of the challenges of Easter is that I'm expected to preach a resurrection message on Resurrection Sunday. Well, I did look through the Bible and I didn't find anything that says I must preach a resurrection message this morning.

So I'm going to preach about the crucifixion, which is all part of Easter. And I want to read from Isaiah chapter 52 and Isaiah chapter 53. Isaiah 52 through Isaiah 53.

As you know, I've preached through all of the New Testament and through many books of the Old Testament. I've never preached through Isaiah 53 and I'm not intending to do that this morning because we don't have the time. I need weeks and weeks and weeks.

But as I come to this chapter, I feel wholly inadequate to preach on this chapter. And so I'm not even going to preach on it. I'm going to simply present it to you and make a few comments as we go along.

The chapter is too deep. The picture of Jesus is too profound. And I am not a preacher who is up to the task of speaking of these things.

And we unfortunately sometimes come to the Scriptures too glibly and we say, oh, it's easy, you know, we can explain the sufferings of the Lord. As we study through the Gospel of Luke, as you know, we're coming to the sufferings of the Lord Jesus and we're busy with his trials right now. And as I look forward to the next couple of months as we deal with the final chapters of the Gospel of Luke, again, I struggle.

I didn't start preaching yesterday and yet I find myself with great difficulty speaking on the cross. It is too deep. It's too awesome a subject for me to speak on.

Others may have the gifts and the ability and the bravado to speak on it. I don't. And so I'm trusting that the Lord will help us.

So let's read Isaiah 52 from verse 13 through the end of 53. So again, we have these chapter headings that mess things up and that are just arbitrarily put in the middle of a series of thoughts. And so really we do need to begin in Isaiah 52.

And as I said, it's going to be a long reading, but I want the word to speak to us this morning. So Isaiah 52, reading from verse 13. Behold, my servant shall deal prudently.

He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. Just as many were astonished at you, so his visage, his face was marred more than any man and his form more than the sons of men. So shall he sprinkle many nations.

Kings shall shut up their mouths at him. For what had not been told them, they shall see. And what they had not heard, they shall consider.

Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, as a root out of a dry ground, and he has no form or comeliness. And when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. 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 did not esteem him. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities.

The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquities of us all.

He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as 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 denaration? For he is cut off from the land of the living.

For the transgressions of my people he was stricken. And they made his grave with a wicked, but with a rich at his death, because he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him.

He has put him to grief when he made 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 spoil with the strong, because he has poured out his soul unto death. And he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Obviously this is speaking about the Lord Jesus, and this is, as I've said, probably the, for me, the most profound chapter of all of the Bible.

Unfortunately for the Jewish people who have this in their Bible, this passage does not exist. Many of them have removed it physically from the Bible, because you cannot read these verses and not understand that they speak about the Lord Jesus Christ. The Jews try sometimes to change it, to say, well, it speaks of Israel and Israel's sufferings as a nation over the centuries.

But clearly it does not speak of Israel. There's no way you can apply it to Israel. There is no way that Israel paid the price for the sin of the world, which the passage speaks about.

This speaks about a Savior who died in the place of the sinners. And so this can only be applied to the Lord Jesus. And the reason why the Jews are scared of the passage is because you cannot read it without understanding the cross, without seeing the cross.

And in fact, the amazing thing is that Isaiah paints a more vivid picture of the cross than the gospel writers do. In the gospels, there is a veil drawn over the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. They make some references to some of the things that was going on, but they don't deal with it in detail.

As it were, God is saying there are certain things that are hidden, but Isaiah reveals them. And so it's important then that we look at Isaiah. And so I'm going to just make comments on some verses.

I'm not going to go through every verse. But in chapter 52 verse 14, just as many were astonished or amazed at you, so his visage, his face, or his appearance, was marred more than any man, and he's formed more than the sons of men. This is profound.

I believe the Bible to be true. I believe that the Bible's testimony is true. I don't always understand it.

I don't always understand how it works out. But what I understand is that Isaiah, speaking through the Spirit, is saying that Jesus, clearly on the cross, was so beaten up. He was so disfigured through all of the things that he experienced, from the judgment.

Even at the judgments already, you remember, they began slapping him around. And then they took him to the whipping post, and then he ends up on the cross. And by the time he ends on the cross, his appearance is marred.

And some expositors say that what this text is saying is that he was marred so that you could not recognize him as a man anymore. He was a piece of meat hanging on the cross. And of course, we need to also understand that while his physical suffering was excruciating, was incredibly difficult to understand the depth of that pain that he experienced, that that was only a small part of his suffering.

That the greater part of his suffering was that he who knew no sin had become sin for us. That he took upon himself the sin of the world, as we'll see in a moment. And so in verse 3 of chapter 53, he is despised and rejected of man.

We've seen in the Gospel of Luke how that they all fled from him, that Judas, the man who sat at the table with him, kissed him as he betrayed him. Last week we saw Peter denying him and saying, I don't know him. That they all, it seems except for John, had forsaken him.

And maybe even John, for a short while at the trial, may have forsaken him as well. But he was despised. They mocked him.

Not only did the Jews mock him, but the Romans mocked him. The whole world was represented in Jerusalem at that time in the form of Jews that had come from all over the world, in the form of the Roman government that had its representatives there. And they made a laughing stock of the Lord Jesus as they put a robe on him and they blindfolded him.

And they beat him and said, now prophesy who beat you, who hit you. And so he is despised. He is rejected.

He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. This verse speaks about, not about the fact that he experienced sorrow, but that he was sorrow. That's the depth of the language here.

A man who represented sorrow. His whole being carried this grief along with him. And this is not just at the cross.

Obviously this is ultimately at the cross, but this is through the entirety of his life. Remember the occasions when it speaks about Jesus weeping, weeping because of the unbelief of those that he saw around him. Even at the upper room, as we saw a couple of weeks ago, as they discussed the issue of the swords, and he in frustration says, enough of this.

He's grieved by the sin around him. He's grieved by the unbelief of his disciples. He is grieved by Israel's rejection of the Messiah, not just the rejection of the Messiah, but Israel's allegiance to the Roman government.

He's grieved by everything that Israel and Israel's leaders, shepherds who were fleecing the flocks and not feeding them. He's grieved by all of these things. And he carries this load as he, even at the age of 12, he begins to understand the scriptures.

He begins to understand how far Israel had fled from God and got into the things of the world. I was deeply offended. When we first came to America, we, in the first year I think it was, we went down to Orange County and we went to, it was a public holiday.

I don't remember what day it was, but it was a public holiday. We went down to see the Crystal Cathedral because I'd read about this place. And to see two statues there of the laughing Jesus.

I've never got over the offense. There is no such thing as a laughing Jesus. He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

If an artist wants to, and I don't believe that it's the right thing to do because you can never capture Jesus in a statue or in a painting. I don't believe, I think, I believe those things are forms of idolatry. But if you're

going to try and capture him, you have to capture him as a man of sorrows, not a man of mirth and of laughter and of joking around.

There's no scripture that speaks about Jesus laughing. And yet there are scriptures speaking about him weeping. A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

He knew what grief was. And we hid, as it were, our faces from him. We turned away from him.

And you know, Isaiah is speaking for Israel, but Israel represents all of us because they all turned away from him on that day. The only ones that were there was Mary and John on the cross. And everyone else who was there was there to mock him, was there to see the spectacle.

But we hid, as it were, our faces from him. He was despised and we did not esteem him. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. And the message of the resurrection is that Jesus has taken the sting out of death. Death, where is your sting? And the joy that we have in the New Testament is that he carried our grief.

And again, at the resurrection, the question was asked, why are you seeking the living among the dead? Because he had risen. So that we don't need to grieve like the world does who have no hope. Yes, we miss those that we loved and who've gone to be with the Lord.

But we have hope because he took the grief, he took the sorrows, and he bore them in his life and in his ministry. And in spite of that, notice he didn't bear grief, but he bore our grief. And yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Cursed is every man who hangs upon the tree, says the law. And the day that Jesus was hung on that cross, he became, as far as the Jews were concerned, cursed of God. Nobody wanted anything to do with him.

That's why the gospel was very hard to preach to Jews after that, because you want to worship this man, that God is cursed because he's hanging on the cross. We esteemed him stricken, smitten of God. And here's an important aspect that we'll see a little later in these verses, and I'm not going to go too long, but we esteemed him stricken and smitten by God.

Not only did we reject him, not only did the Jews and the Romans reject him, but they said God has rejected him, and God has struck him. In fact, God did strike him, because he bore our sins. Verse 5, but he was wounded for our transgressions.

He was wounded for our transgressions. And folks, again, this can become so impersonal that it's our, the church's. No, it was my transgressions.

He was wounded for my transgressions. And when we go through Isaiah 53, and as you read it, and I would encourage you to spend time in Isaiah 53, and to say, Lord, please open my eyes to understand what is happening here. When we see him suffering, it was for my transgressions.

It was my sin, not just the sin of the world. You see, because when we understand that it was my sin, it changes the way I see him. It changes my appreciation of him, and it must generate a deep love for him.

A love that can change my life, and change my life's direction, as we saw in the testimony earlier. He was wounded for my transgressions. He was bruised for my iniquities.

And the chastisement of my peace was laid upon him. He was chastised. He was beaten to within an inch of his life, so that I might have peace.

And by his stripes, we are healed. I'm not going to analyze that verse. There's a lot of wrong doctrine taught from that verse.

It's not just speaking about his whipping. It's speaking about the whole work of the cross that healed us. And it doesn't just speak about physical healing.

And physical healing, I believe in physical healing now, but it's speaking about ultimate physical healing, when this body will put on incorruption, and when all of our ailments and our sicknesses will be taken away. That is what he paid for at the cross of Calvary, but not just physical healing, spiritual healing, emotional healing. Many people have become Christians, and yet they're still emotionally scarred and emotionally not well.

But he was bruised that we might be healed in every way. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes, we are healed. In spite of that, all we like sheep have gone astray.

We've turned everyone to his own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. You see, there's always this debate about, was it the Jews who were at fault? Was it the Romans who were at fault? And in a sense, both of them were at fault.

Both of them were guilty of his crucifixion. But at the end of the day, it was the Father who laid on him no one could do that. No one could impute to him—there's that difficult word, impute—could put to his account our iniquities.

Only God had that authority, and yet God rewrites the book that day, and he takes your sin and mine, and he puts it to Jesus' account, lays on him the iniquity of each one of us. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. Speaking about before Pilate and before Annas and Caiaphas—we'll talk about this in the coming months—he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is silent, he opened not his mouth.

He didn't try to defend himself. He didn't try to justify himself. He didn't try to call down angels to deliver him as they tempted him to do.

But in silence, he bore the shame. He bore the sin. He bore the pain.

He was taken from prison and from judgment. He wasn't really in prison, but what this is speaking about is that he was denied judgment. He was denied justice, as we'll see in the coming weeks in the book of Luke.

Legal analysts and Hebrew scholars have analyzed the trial of the Lord Jesus, and there are over 20 points of the law that were broken when he was found guilty of a crime that he had not committed. Every aspect of those trials, whether before Herod or before Annas or Caiaphas and ultimately Pilate, every aspect of those trials was a scam and was a mockery of justice. He was denied justice and judgment, and who will declare his generation? For he was cut off from the land of the living, and for the transgressions of my people he was stricken.

You know, one of the things that struck me as I went through this passage this last week is the number of times it refers to my sin. While the passage is about Jesus and his suffering, yet over and over and I neglected to count, but there must be at least three or four or five times when it refers to my sin. And it's no wonder then that Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, that passage I quote so often because it defines the gospel, that Christ died for our sin.

According to the scriptures, that he was buried and that he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures. That the gospel is encapsulated in the death, burial, and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, but included in that great work is my sin. And Isaiah 53 does exactly the same thing, speaks about his atoning work, speaks about his suffering, but over and over reminds us it was my sin.

And folk, again, we cannot excuse ourselves. We cannot hide in the crowd and say, well, you know, it was for the sin of the whole world. No, it was my sin.

And he bore our sins individually and specifically. They made his grave with the wicked, but with the rich at his death, speaking about the tomb in which he was buried, because he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. This is an important verse theologically, because it says that even when he died, he still was not a sinner.

There's a false doctrine that goes around that Jesus became a sinner and that he had to go to hell. Jesus never became a sinner. He took our sin upon himself.

But here it tells us he had done no violence. He had done no wrong. So he himself was still pure and undefiled, even though he had become guilty on our behalf.

But he had not sinned. And so he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. And here's the verse, probably of all of the verses in the Bible that I wrestle with.

It pleased the Lord, Yahweh, Jehovah, the Father. It pleased him to put him to grief. And I know that there are many who say, well, you know, this is a terrible God who kills his own son.

This is infanticide, God killing his son. No, this speaks about his great love for us, that he was willing to give his son. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.

And of course, it doesn't mean that the Father took some perverse pleasure in seeing his son suffering. But it's about the consequence, it's about the results. It's about the fruit of his suffering.

And so it pleased the Lord to bruise him, because the Father saw that that was going to bear the fruit of the bride of Christ, the church. When you make his soul an offering for sin, when God made his soul an offering for sin. You see, here's the thing.

Jesus did not just die as a martyr. He died as an offering for sin. Martyrs die for the faith, and I admire them.

We don't worship them, but I do admire them. I'm encouraged and I'm rebuked. By the stories of the martyrs who died for the faith, when I can't even live for the faith.

But Jesus was not a martyr. He was an atoning sacrifice. He died in our place in order to pay the price of sin.

When you make his soul an offering for sin, you shall see his seed. He shall see his seed, and he shall prolong his days. You see, the verse begins, it pleased the Lord to bruise him.

Not because of the bruising, but because he will see his seed. He will see his progeny, his descendants, which is us. This is what he saw.

And this is why the Father says, even though this is painful, I will do it. Because he will see his children. He will see his descendants, and 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. And of course, we have to ask that question as he looks at us, because we are the labor. This is what he has worked for.

Is he satisfied with what he sees? And by his knowledge, my righteous servant will justify, make righteous, make as though they'd never sinned, many. For he shall bear, there it is again, their iniquities. We don't need to bear our own sins.

We don't need to make penance. We don't need to go through all sorts of ritual to try and feel sorry and what have you for our sin. Yes, we need to repent.

Obviously, we understand that. But he bore our iniquities. Therefore, I will divide him a portion with the great.

Now, this comes right back to the beginning of the passage, and so we're almost at the end of this passage. But if you go back to verse 13 of chapter 52, behold, my servant shall deal prudently. He shall be exalted and be very high.

So it begins with saying he is exalted, but then it goes through the whole thing of the cross. Now, he comes to the end of the picture of the cross, and he says he will divide him a portion with the great. So he's coming from glory, going down, down, down, down, even to the death of the cross.

And God has now highly exalted him. He will divide him a portion with the great. He shall divide the spoiled with the strong, because he poured out his soul unto death.

He poured out his soul unto death. There's just an inkling, just a hint to the fact that his suffering was more than physical. And this is the second time he refers to his soul.

Remember, the soul is the heart, the emotions. And so he pours out his soul, not just his body, but he pours out his soul even unto death. Remember in Gethsemane, he said, my soul is troubled even unto death.

And he was numbered with the transgressors. We saw this recently in the book of Hebrews. Crucified between two insurrectionists, robbers, the vilest of the vile.

And he gets the center cross, chiefest of sinners, leader of the gang. He was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sin of many. Again, repeating that same refrain, he bore the sin of many, and he made intercession for the transgressors.

Father, forgive them, because they don't know what they're doing. But not just then at the cross for those who are crucifying him, but he ever lives to make intercession for us. And then the last verse, sorry, that's

the last verse.

He made intercession for the transgressors. And this brings me to this hymn. I don't think we sing it, but I want to just look at the verses because it really sums up my response, and I pray that this will be your response this morning as we close.

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. Guilty, vile, and helpless we, spotless Lamb of God was he, full atonement cannot be, hallelujah, what a savior.

Lifted up was he to die, it is finished was his cry, now in heaven exalted high, hallelujah, what a savior. When he comes, our glorious King, all he's ransomed home to bring, then anew the song we'll sing, hallelujah, what a savior. Father, I pray that you would, through your word this morning, give us a new appreciation for our savior.

Lord, forgive us for getting involved in all sorts of unimportant things over this weekend. Lord, that we may have taken the time, and Lord, for whatever time is left on this day, whatever time is left in the rest of our lives, Lord, that we may begin to grab hold of the reality of what Jesus did for us. Because he who has been forgiven much will love much.

Oh Lord, I pray that you'd help us to understand just a little bit of what happened at that cross on that day, and Lord, that as a result there would just be this response, hallelujah, what a savior. Lord, I know that we will never fully understand until that day when we know all things even as we are known, and Lord, on that day when we see you, and when we know and fully appreciate the price you paid. Lord, there may be some regrets, but I pray, Lord, that even now we may have a vision of the cross, and Lord, that it may change the way we live our lives, that it may change the way that we spend our time, Lord, that it may change the things that we love.

Because as another hymn says, love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all. Help us to understand, Lord. Help these truths to somehow penetrate our hearts and our souls.

Lord, we've in many ways become blasé to and insensitive to the sufferings of the Lord Jesus as we see daily on our TV screens the bloodshed in wars and the violent movies that we love so much. And Lord, in a sense, we have become hardened and don't appreciate what Jesus went through on that cross, but I pray, Lord, that you would again soften our hearts, make these things real, Lord, that there may be more than just words on the pages of the book, but they may become realities. Ask this in Jesus' name.

I pray, Lord, that you would go with us, keep us and protect us, bring us together again safely, Lord. We continue to pray for the Heinz family, Lord, and the work that they're doing for the Gideons. And Lord, we pray that you would bless them and prosper them, open doors for them, Lord, and meet their needs, we pray, in Jesus' name.

And so, Lord, I pray that you'd continue as we continue in fellowship now, that you'd be amongst us, Lord, and that our talk would be edifying and encouraging to one another. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

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