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Isaiah 53:10-12

Twelfth Message

Brian Morgan

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# CRUSHED, YET SATISFIED

*SERIES: A NEW SERVANT, A NEW COVENANT, A NEW AGE*

Raising children is not an easy task today. It is hard to find models whom we can learn from. A number of years ago, I knew a Christian couple, Lynn and Della Berntson (Lynn was an elder at Peninsula Bible Church at the time), who seemed to me to be extremely godly and wise in this respect. When I asked Della to share with me the secret to their enviable family life, she replied, "It's simple. Lynn has always sought to impart two things to our children—he loves Jesus, and he loves them." Since that day, I have always tried to impart these same two things to my own children—I love the Lord, and I love them.

To help accomplish this, I have for several years kept journals for my daughters of delightful moments I have spent with each of them. When they go away to college, I intend to present each daughter the journals I have kept about her. I write about spontaneous, mundane, even simple things which we have done together. At the end of each paragraph, I write, "I love you. Dad." This is how God raises every one of his children. And this, in fact, is the theme of our text this morning. In the same way, the Father himself wants us to know these two truths—that he loves his Son, and he loves you. He loves you with the same love he has for his own Son.

Isaiah 53, the "Holy of Holies" of Scripture, as we have already seen, divides into five parts, each composed of three verses. In order to comprehend the magnitude of the love of Jesus as it is expressed in his cross, we could say that the soul must make this five-step journey. We have already likened the scene portrayed in this Servant Song to a stage setting, upon which God is displaying his Servant Jesus to the entire world. In each section the spotlight shines on a different person onstage. An amazing paradox concerning salvation history is recorded in each part. Here is revealed the complexity and the majesty of God, and the astonishing way in which he brings about salvation.

The first section revealed that although the nations had no knowledge about Jesus, still they fell down and worshiped him at the mere mention of his name. The second paradox was that when Jesus went to his own people, the Jews, those who had the priests and the prophets, they rejected him. Thirdly, we saw the paradox that the very One whom they rejected was actually dying for them. Then, fourth, the Servant was violently executed upon the cross, yet he said not a word. It is amazing to contemplate that not only did Jesus die for us, but that we killed him; it was our sin that nailed him to the tree.

Today we come to the final, most amazing paradox of all. The spotlight once more falls upon the Heavenly Father, whom we learn was the Director of this five-part drama. He now appears onstage to reveal that he himself was behind everything. He himself orchestrated all of these events because of his love for us. In this text, therefore, Isaiah 53:10-12, we will learn two truths: The Father loves his Son, and the Father loves us with the same intensity.

Here, then, we will discover that our loving Father orchestrated all of these astonishing paradoxes set out in this Servant Song because of the depth of his love for us.

## I. The Servant will be personally rewarded by God (53:10)

But the LORD was pleased to crush him,  
He made him sick,  
If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,  
(then) He will see His seed,  
(then) He will prolong His days,  
And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.

### A. The reason for His reward: Submission to the Father

The atonement was not a new concept in salvation history; it was always part of God's eternal plan. This is what Peter declared in his sermon in Acts, when, referring to Jesus, he declared:

"This Man, delivered up by the *predetermined* plan and foreknowledge of God." (Acts 2:23)

"For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose *predestined* to occur." (Acts 4:27-28)

Backstage, behind the betrayal, the beating, the insults, the thorns, the nails, the three hours of darkness, the final thrust of the sword in his side; behind the apostles, the Romans, the Jews, Pilate, the Sanhedrin, Judas, and the devil, stood the loving Father God, directing everything. In these verses from our text which I have just read we are enabled, in a sense, to listen in on the intimate conversation between of the Father and the Son, speaking about us, before eternity. The Father is asking his Son, "Will you be a guilt offering?" What an amazing word! Among the offerings of Israel, the guilt offering, which covered the full damages due to sin, had added to it one-fifth more, to ensure that it was more than enough to make reparation (Lev 6:5). Thus, there is no question that the sacrifice of Jesus for our sins was full satisfaction in God's eyes.

Think for a moment of the cost of this to God the Father. He bankrupted himself in order to accomplish his plan. He had only one Son, yet he willingly gave him up. And the Son is eternally maimed because of the price which he paid. However, Scripture nowhere tells how much pain this caused the Father. Nowhere do we hear God saying to us, "Do you know what it cost me to buy your salvation?" We do, however, get an occasional clue as to the cost, such as the occasion when God directed Abraham, concerning Isaac, "Take now your son, your only son, the one whom you love, Isaac" (Gen 22:2). Behind these words we can sense the Father's heart being torn by the enormity of what he was about to ask Abraham to do. We get another glimpse of the cost to God when we hear David lamenting the

death of his wicked son, Absalom: “O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!” (2 Sam 18:33). How much more profound and deep was the grief of the Father as he contemplated the death of his righteous, sinless, only Son!

Incredibly, however, our text says that God was “pleased,” he was “delighted” to crush his Servant. “Delight” means exited agitation, taking pleasure in something. This is what the words pleased, and good pleasure mean. Rather than telling us the cost, God instead tells of the delight he had in us! He will never tell us how it impoverished him; he will never tell us of the eternal wounds which pierced his heart because of what he had done. There are many things I could write about in my daughters’ journals. Children at times break your heart. Frequently, after you have given of yourself, they show no appreciation. But I don’t write about any of those times. Instead, I remember and write about how much I love them and delight in them. That’s all I want them to know. This is how my Heavenly Father raises me. He delights in me, and he is not going to bring up how much his love for me cost him.

Backstage, the Director is grieving for his Son, but when he comes to announce what he has done, no tears are visible. Rather, he says, “I delighted to do this for those I love.” Do you know that, if you are a believer, every day of your life, you delight God, you bring him pleasure? Every evening, when day is done, he will say of you, “I love you.”

## B. The rewards of obedience

Because the Servant was willing to become a guilt offering he will personally be rewarded by the Father. This is how fathers demonstrate their love. It’s one thing to be told by someone that you did a good job, but when your father tells you this, it means so much more. Fathers, remember this. Your children may receive a thousand compliments, but if you withhold your appreciation and love for them, that is all they will remember. Here the Father rewards the Son with three things: A new family, a new (eternal) life, and a new position.

First, a new family: “He will see His seed.” This is an amazing word. Jesus never married, so he never had any seed. Yet, it says, because he was willing to become a guilt offering, “He will see his seed.” This is referring, of course, to spiritual seed. What it is saying is that in the new age, in the resurrection, the Servant will be given an abundance of spiritual seed. The next verse, in Isaiah 54, says,

**Shout for joy, O barren one, you who have borne no child;  
Break forth into joyful shouting and cry aloud,  
You who have not travailed,  
For the sons of the desolate one will be more numerous  
Than the sons of the married woman. (Isa 54:1)**

The “desolate one” here is not Israel, but Jesus, who died barren. In the resurrection, his spiritual seed will be far more numerous and fertile than any physical seed of earthly Israel. God rewards his Servant by giving him a new family. This is the same seed which the apostle Paul is referring to in Galatians, where he says to Christians, “if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, heirs according to promise” (Gal 3:29).

Secondly, God will reward his Servant by giving him a new kind of life—eternal life—described in the OT as “length of days.” Preaching from this text on the Day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter declared, in Acts 2:24, 27-28,

**“God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.  
For David says of Him,**

**“Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades,  
Nor allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay.  
Thou hast made known to Me the ways of Life;  
Thou wilt make me full of gladness with Thy presence.”**

Thirdly, the Servant will be given a new position of honor: “And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.” Do you know what the Lord delights in? He delights in you! You are that “good pleasure.” The Son will enjoy enduring success as the executor of God’s good pleasure.

God personally rewards his Son to show how much he loves him. Notice that this does not happen in this life, but in the resurrection. But that’s not fair, someone says. The resurrection is that other age, when we will have no sense of history. On the contrary, the resurrection is as much the reality of history as today is history. It is in the resurrection that the promises of the prophets will find their fulfillment, when God answers the prayers of Jesus. We must expand our limited horizons. Those of you who are older know what I mean. At our elders meeting last week we anointed with oil a brother who was facing a potentially dangerous illness. We shared and prayed together in a time of wonderful fellowship. Later, one of our older elders said to this man, “I have been under a sentence of death for along time, but rather than limiting my horizons it has expanded them. I see the great future that lies before us, when everything will find its fulfillment. I’m living for that day.” This was how Jesus lived. If he had lived for this life alone, he would be without hope, for he died with nothing in his possession.

This, then, is the paradox. Behind the players in the the crucifixion, behind the Romans, the Jews, Pilate, and the devil, was a loving Father occupied in orchestrating the entire drama. Here in these verses the Father comes onstage, wipes away his tears, and says, “I delighted to do all of this for you. I will not tell you what it cost me. I only want you to know that I did this because I love you.”

Behind the cross was the loving Father suffering the agony of the death of his Son, because he delighted in you and me. He personally rewards the Son in the resurrection with a new, incorruptible family.

Next, Isaiah tells of the impact which this new family will have upon the Servant.

## II. The servant will be satisfied: “He will see it” (53:11)

**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,  
Because He will bear their iniquities.**

### A. His anguish will be turned to joy

The word “anguish” here speaks of pain and toil that has no resulting fruit. Parents feel this kind of emotion at times with respect to their children. We remember that in Isaiah 49, Jesus evaluated his ministry on earth. He was supposed to embody everything that Israel was intended to be, yet when he faced his cross he was abandoned by everybody, even his own apostles. He cried out to his Father, “The result of my labor is chaos, a *tohu* [the Hebrew word from Gen.1:2 foe chaos], a vapor, without substance, without result.” But in the

resurrection, all that pain will be vindicated. We can take this to mean that the pain which we suffer in this life is not wasted. What it will do, rather, is increase our capacity for joy in heaven. As we have already seen, in Isaiah 54:1, the prophet amplifies this thought when in the age to come the “barren one” will produce an abundance of seed greater than could be produced from any physical union. Pain increases capacity for joy. When the Son sees his spiritual seed—you!—he will be satisfied.

In the resurrection, Christ will see his seed, drawn from every nation and tongue, and he will welcome them into his kingdom with great joy.

#### **B. Because of the success of his work**

Through skill and insight, Christ’s one act, his sacrificial death on the cross, reversed the terrible destruction caused by the sin of Adam. It is hard to comprehend this. One can pollute an entire river system by dumping poison chemicals at the source of the river. Death and destruction will follow this one act. But how many acts will it require to clean up the original destructive act? Yet this is what Jesus did. One act by this righteous Man—his crucifixion—justified the many, and repaid all the damages due to sin. Here is how the apostle Paul illustrates this, in Romans 5:18-19: “So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.”

No wonder Isaiah gives Jesus the title, “Wonderful Counselor.” The Servant had the insight necessary to accomplish what he set out to do. And when he had completed his work, he became an “Everlasting Father”—the head of a new spiritual seed.

The Son will be justified by the Father, and he will be satisfied when he sees this new creation.

Finally,

### **III. The Servant will be glorified (53:12)**

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

#### **A. He will be given the highest place of honor in heaven**

Strength and greatness, the spoils of victory, are divided and shared among the victors, and the Servant is given the lion’s share. The fact that there are spoils indicates that a battle has been fought and won. The battle, of course, was fought over evil. Evil was dealt with at the cross. The power of the devil was broken; his captives set free; the world’s idols were smashed.

How was all of this accomplished?

#### **B. Because of his willingness to be weak on earth**

God’s method of destroying evil is quite different from man’s ways. In the Gulf War, the United States and its allies wrested Kuwait from the grip of an evil dictator. But our success was achieved at a terrible cost in lives lost and damage done to Iraq. Supplies of water and food, electricity, communications, almost everything the Iraqis need to run the country were destroyed. To conquer evil, we first

had to create havoc. Contrast this result with the way the Servant conquered evil: The mighty God became weak; without firing a shot, he defeated the evil one. This is why he is called the Prince of Peace. He gave his whole life (“He poured Himself to death”), to its fullest extent (“He was numbered with the transgressors”), yet he refused to seek vengeance, although he was identified with the worst of sinners and bore their sin. He even interceded for them, as Luke records: “But Jesus was saying, ‘Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing’” (Luke 23:34). This prayer resounds through the generations, and God hears it. This is how the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace conquered evil—without firing a shot.

Strength and greatness, therefore, are gifts of grace. This illustration of dividing the spoils of war is applied by the apostles as the dispensing of spiritual gifts to the church of Jesus Christ (Eph 4:8-12). Therefore, Christians demonstrate that Christ is Lord in the outworking of these supernatural gifts to build his church.

The final grand paradox of God’s salvation is that God the Father was behind all the events of the trial, execution and death of his Son. In the cross, God expended his holy wrath against all sin. Because the Son freely submitted, and was willing to be misunderstood, he is given the place of honor above all.

What is required of so great a salvation?

As we have already seen, this text of Isaiah 53 became the basis for the apostle Peter’s first sermon. As he concluded his words, the Jews grasped the implications of what he had said. They recognized the depth of their sin and the depth of God’s grace, as Acts records:

**Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” And Peter said to them, “Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”...So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (Acts 2:37-38, 41)**

In that hour, the words of the prophet Zechariah were fulfilled:

**And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born...And the land will mourn, every family by itself. (Zech 12:10, 12)**

Every family will weep as if they had lost their first born. I lost my first born, and I wept over that loss. But I must admit that I never wept in the same way over my sin. This is what God desires, however. If we truly come to see the shame of what we have done, every family will weep “by itself.” This Hebrew idiom conveys the thought that because one was wounded in the house of his friends, the resulting sense of shame felt by everyone made them go out and weep alone for the part they played in the shameful act. God desires this same spirit of repentance for every generation, for this text from Zechariah was written for us, too, not just the Jews. We also were there at the cross. We pierced him with our sins.

This becomes the repeated experience in the history of the church, as the following illustration shows. David Brainerd, a missionary to the American Indians from 1743-47, writes in his personal diary how God graced him to experience this kind of spirit among the Indians.

As he was preaching to the Indians, the Holy Spirit was poured out in tremendous power, converting even the worst sinners.

In the afternoon I preached to the Indians, their number was now about sixty-five persons—men, women and children. I discoursed upon Luke 14:16-23, and was favored with uncommon freedom in my discourse...afterwards the power of God seemed to descend upon the assembly “like a mighty rushing wind,” and with an astonishing energy bore down all before it.

I stood amazed at the influence, which seized the audience almost universally; and could compare it to nothing more aptly, than the irresistible force of a mighty torrent, or a swelling deluge, that with its insupportable weight and pressure bears down and sweeps before it whatever comes in its way. Almost all persons of all ages were bowed down with concern together, and scarcely one was able to withstand the shock of this surprising operation.

Old men and women, who had been drunken wretches for many years, and some little children, not more than six or seven years of age, appeared in distress for their souls, as well as persons of middle age...There was almost universal praying and crying for mercy in every part of the house, and many out of doors; and numbers could neither go nor stand.

Their concern was so great, each one for himself, that none seemed to take any notice of those about him, but each prayed freely for himself. I am led to think they were, to their own apprehensions, as much retired as if they had been, individually by themselves, in the thickest desert; or I believe rather that they thought nothing about anything but themselves, and their own state, and so were every one praying apart, although all together.

It seemed to me that there was now an exact fulfillment of that prophecy (Zechariah 12:10, 11, 12); for there was now “a great mourning, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon”; and each seemed to “mourn apart.”<sup>1</sup>

How great a love is this! The Father, who for us wounded and maimed his only Son, dries his tears before he addresses we who were responsible, saying, “I delight in you.”

With whom does the high and lofty God dwell? Isaiah asks. Here is the answer:

**But to this one I will look,  
To him who is humble and contrite in spirit,  
And who trembles at My word. (Isa 66:2b)**

The word “contrite” here is the same word translate “crushed” in Isaiah 53:5: “He was crushed for our iniquities.” When we come to truly understand that the Servant was “crushed for our iniquities,” the full weight of this realization will bear down upon us and crush our hearts in thankfulness and appreciation. This is what God wants from us. May that be our gift to him today.

1. Walter Searle, *David Brainerd's Personal Testimony, Selections from his Journal and Diary* (Grand Rapids: Baker).