

He shall be Satisfied

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[0 : 00] So we turn again to the passage of scripture we read in Isaiah chapter 53. And read again in verse 11.

Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied. By his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied. Or he shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied, as it's put in the English of the King James.

Matthew Henry, I think it is, says that there is a thread of gospel grace that runs right the way through the scriptures, joining up the old and the new.

And that thread of gospel grace takes us eventually to the Lord Jesus Christ. Because Christ is the key that unlocks the Old Testament for us.

[1 : 08] On the road to Emmaus, Jesus chided the two weary disciples. They had seen all that Jesus had done. They had heard the things that he had said. And they had hoped, they had a tremendous hope for the future, that the kingdom of God would finally be established there in Israel with Jesus at the head of that kingdom.

But they did not understand what the scriptures had foretold that Christ would have to endure before coming into his kingdom and ascending his throne.

And remember the words with which he chided the weary disciples. How foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?

And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself. In all the scriptures, and we don't know how long Jesus spoke to them.

We don't know how long they were on the road together. Did they stop as we, you know, when you're walking along and you're talking to somebody, you sometimes have a tendency just to pause and to stop until you've finished what you are saying.

[2 : 26] And it would have been interesting, fascinating indeed, to have been there as a fly on the wall, to listen to what Jesus was saying to these men, going right back to the very beginning, to the first gospel promise in Genesis chapter 3, that the seed of the woman, the seed of the woman that you have deceived, speaking to Satan, will bruise the head of the serpent, but he would strike his heel.

And then from that point, going all the way through the scriptures, Moses saying to the people of Israel, that the Lord will raise up from amongst your brothers a prophet like me.

You must listen to him. And then the covenant promise that God made to David, that he would never cease, but he would have one of his descendants upon the throne of Israel.

And so many other places. And Jesus would have paused at Isaiah chapter 53, because nowhere other than in Psalm 22 is the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ so graphically depicted for us as it is here by the prophet Isaiah.

Many people have tried to find a substitute for Jesus in this particular passage. They have desperately tried to replace Jesus with the nation of Israel itself, or various Old Testament figures.

[4 : 00] But it is totally futile, because when we examine the choice of words that the Holy Spirit gave to Isaiah, only Christ fits what has happened and what is described here.

Only Jesus has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Only Jesus was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, as we read in verse 5.

Only Jesus was pierced for our transgressions. Only Jesus was crushed for our iniquities. Only upon Jesus was the chastisement that has brought us peace.

Only the soul of Jesus has been made an offering for sin. We see that in verse 10. When his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring and he shall prolong his days. Only Jesus bore the sin of many, and yet makes intercession for the transgressors. And it's interesting, the very last verse of this particular chapter, he speaks in the present tense, makes intercession for the transgressors.

[5 : 16] And just as the glass slipper only fitted the foot of Cinderella in the fairy story, so only Isaiah 53 fits the experiences of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And only he, having been crushed and bruised and pierced and smitten, is able to look with satisfaction upon what he has accomplished in the work that he did upon the cross.

Of who else can it be said that he was cut off from the land of the living, that he was assigned a grave with the wicked? As a criminal, he was killed as a criminal, as a common criminal.

It would have been normal when his body was taken down that he would have been thrown into a common grave. He would have been taken outside the city and he would have been thrown into a common grave together with the other two criminals, one on either side of him.

But no, he was taken and he was placed in the tomb of a rich man. Just as Isaiah had prophesied 700 years before.

[6 : 32] And nobody but Jesus, as Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15, Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. He was buried and then he was raised on the third day, again according to the Scriptures.

He died, he was buried, he rose again, and now he is at the right hand of the Father in heaven, interceding for us at the throne of grace.

And the Father has put all things under his feet. He has given him all authority in heaven and on earth, so that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

And in this chapter we are, as it were, in the position of a passerby, an onlooker. We're looking to the cross, we're looking to Jesus and we're seeing all that was done to him.

But then when we come into verse 11 and onwards, as it were, we are being lifted up into the position of Jesus himself. And we're looking out as he surveys with satisfaction the results of the work that he has accomplished upon the cross.

[7 : 55] And so that's what I want us to look at this evening. I want us to, as it were, take the place of Jesus and look out through the eyes of Jesus. He is, who has suffered such anguish, but he has done so on behalf of a people, on behalf of those whom the Father gave him.

And he looks upon them with a sense of satisfaction, because what he did was on behalf of others. And as a carpenter, I wonder how often Jesus looked with satisfaction at the finished work of his hands.

There's some article made of wood. It might have been a door frame. It might have been a lattice for a window. It might have been an agricultural implement, a piece of furniture or a child's toy.

And I'm sure he would have run his hand across it to make sure it was smooth and it was well finished. Any craftsman who is worth his salt would always look with pride at his finished work before selling it or giving it away or passing it on.

And I'm sure Jesus was no different to any other craftsman in that respect. But the greatest work that Jesus did also involved wood, not the smooth, finished carpentry of his workshop, Joseph's workshop, but the rough wood of a Roman cross to which he was nailed.

[9 : 27] And I want us to look at three things briefly this evening. First of all, there is the work that Jesus undertook, because it is he himself who refers to it as work.

I want to see the result of Christ's work. And then finally, I want us to look at the reward that Jesus received for finishing that work.

And the very hands that had fashioned wood in the carpenters' workshops were mutilated, were torn by rough iron nails that were hammered through his hands.

And yes, his feet also into the wood of that cross. And yet on the evening before, when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, when the shadow of the cross was looming over him, when he knew what awaited him on the morrow, Father, he said, I have glorified you on the earth.

I have finished the work you gave me to do. It is Jesus who himself describes what he did on the cross as work.

[10 : 36] He has finished the work. And we might say, if we were cynical, that, well, no, he hadn't yet finished the work, because he had not yet gone to the cross. He would not go to the cross until the following day.

And many things might take place between the Garden of Gethsemane and the Hill of Calvary. But when God determines to do something, then nothing but nothing will prevent him from fulfilling that purpose.

And it was an eternal covenant, a covenant made in glory, made in eternity, made even before the foundation of the world was set in place.

It was covenanted that at a point in time, Jesus would leave the glory of heaven, that he would come into this world, he would become like we are, and he would ultimately go to the cross.

And there on the cross, he would accomplish a work. And Isaiah described 700 years before Jesus went to the cross in all the fearful detail.

[11 : 43] And Jesus knew his scriptures. He was intimate with the scriptures, because all the scriptures pointed to him. He knew that everything written in scripture found its ultimate fulfillment in Christ himself.

And Isaiah here paints a picture for us of the physical suffering of Jesus as he's bruised and as he's crushed, as he's pierced and smitten.

And they all find their focus, as it were, out of the anguish of his soul. When Jesus was going to Jerusalem, his disciples were amazed, because he had set his fist like flint to go up, knowing exactly what awaited him there.

But nothing diverted him, nothing turned him aside. He had a task to fulfill, and he was impatient to see that work brought to its ultimate fulfillment.

He suffered physically. There is, it would be a fool that would deny that. He suffered physically. We might say that the two men on either side of him suffered physically as well.

[12 : 54] But the greatest suffering of Jesus on the cross was not so much the physical, but it was the suffering in his soul. He never flinched from going to the cross, knowing what awaited him there.

But I wonder, God, the second person, the second person of the Trinity, knowing everything, knowing all things, I sometimes think that perhaps nothing in all eternity could have prepared him for the horror that awaited him when the wrath of his father was poured out upon him as he bore upon himself the sins of the world.

On the Day of Atonement, when the scapegoat was brought into the tabernacle, the high priest would lay his hands upon the head of the scapegoat, and he would symbolically transfer the sins of the whole nation.

And then the scapegoat would be slaughtered. One of them, there were two animals. One was taken out into the desert, into the wilderness, and released, and the other was slaughtered. And it's a blood sprinkled upon the altar.

It was burnt in its entirety. And when Jesus hung there upon the cross, then it's as if God had laid upon his head the sins of all of his people from the very beginning of time until the very end.

[14 : 23] Not the sins of the whole world, but the sins of God's people, those whom the Father had given to him. And they are many.

They are numbered in millions, if not hundreds of millions. And God is so holy that he cannot look upon sin. And when Jesus hung there, having been made sin, then for the first time in all eternity, the Father turned away from his Son the beloved countenance.

And through all eternity, the beloved countenance of the Father had shone with love upon his Son. And the Son had looked and received the love of the Father.

But here on the cross, that loving countenance was turned away, and darkness came upon the Son. And that's why he made that great cry of dereliction.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And the Father had forsaken the Son because the Father cannot look upon sin. And the Son was made sin.

[15 : 35] He was made sin. In London, I grew up in London, and not far from the River Thames, in Wandsworth, there's a small office block belonging to one of the trade unions.

And there's a fascinating bronze statue outside, and it's a statue of the old Greco-Roman god Atlas. And there's a statue of this really muscle-bound man. He's a bit like Arnold Schwarzenegger, and he's sort of bent over, and he has on his back a globe.

He has upon his back the whole world because the Greeks and the Romans believed that Hercules bore upon himself the weight of the world, that whatever the world weighs, that burden that Hercules carried was as nothing compared to the burden that Christ himself bore upon himself as he carried upon himself our sins, and as he bore upon himself the angry wrath of his Father. And that was his great fear, wasn't it? The fear of separation from his Father. He feared the outpouring of God's wrath.

[16:54] He feared the turning away of his Father's faith. The look of love and the look of delight that he had known through all eternity suddenly was no longer there.

And so the real suffering of Jesus, yes, he suffered physically, and that was real, but the real suffering was in his soul.

No one has ever suffered greater anguish than did Jesus when he hung and died upon the cross. Yes, he thirsted physically.

We read in Psalm 22 that his tongue was sticking to the roof of his mouth. It was like a pot's herd. But the real thirst that he had was the thirst in his soul because of the separation that he was enduring from his beloved Father, his Father who was and is the fountain of living water.

And so that really is, that's the work that Christ was doing. He was doing a work, not on behalf of himself because he had never sinned, but he was doing a work on behalf of the Lord's people, on behalf of you, and on behalf of me.

[18:08] And so what was the result of Christ's work? Well, in Revelation chapter 7, John was transported in a vision into the end times, and he saw this multitude that was so great that no one could count them, made up of men and women from every nation and every tribe and every tongue.

I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, a multitude of people gathered in over thousands of years.

And even today, as the word is being preached around the world and hearts are being touched and people are being drawn to see their need of Jesus, that multitude is being added unto.

There are those in the Old Testament who saw Jesus with the eye of faith, seeing him in the far distance, seeing him in a shadowy form, not fully comprehending exactly the work that he would do when he eventually came.

Jesus sums them up when he speaks of Abraham, and he said, Abraham saw my day and rejoiced. And how much more can we rejoice in our own day and age?

[19:21] Because we can look back from our present vantage point and we can see all the details of what Christ endured and what he went through. And we have all the testimonies of the New Testament epistles which explain in detail why Christ came, why he died, and how to get right with the Lord.

And John's vision was given to encourage the Lord's people because when John lived, the church was coming under fierce persecution. and many Christians living in different places, isolated from their fellow believers, must have wondered whether their religion would ultimately endure.

But John, in his vision, was able to tell them, be strong, don't give up because the Lord is at work. He is building his church. And as Jesus himself said, even the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

John's vision was for the encouragement of the people in the day and age in which he lived. And it's for our encouragement also because we in this country are living in a time when the church seems to be declining, when more and more government legislation is pushing us as Bible-believing Christians into a corner.

But that multitude of people that John saw is the results of the work that Christ accomplished upon the cross. When he said, it is finished, then he meant exactly that.

[21:03] There was nothing else to be done, no loose ends to be tied up. Many years ago, I had a house built for me and we moved into the house before it was finished.

We didn't yet have the building certificate, the final certificate, but nevertheless, we moved in and for the next two or three years, there was all sorts of jobs that had to be done and then eventually when we did get it finished, we sold it and we moved on.

But when Jesus said, it is finished, there was nothing else to be done except for you and I to come by faith, trusting in the finished work of Jesus, trusting that when he suffered on the cross, he suffered for me, trusting that when he paid the penalty for the sins of his people, that that people included me and included you.

When I was in my teens and twenties, I used to go to one of the great football stadiums in London and it would hold about 50,000 people and you could look across the park and there was this great mass of people and it would be very, very difficult to distinguish any specific individual. But crowds are made up of individuals and every individual is different, every individual is unique. We know that. As I look around the congregation here today, no two of you look alike, no two faces are alike.

[22 : 36] There are resemblances but you're all cast in a unique mold. A few years ago in Kirkcaldy, I used to worship in Kirkcaldy when I was at the Free Church College and there was a wee man there, Jimmy, he had a really harsh, fife accent.

I could never really understand a word that he was saying but when Neil Macmillan, the minister, came across him, he was a man who was drinking heavily, he was homeless but Neil took pity upon him and he managed to clean him up, he got him a flat and Jimmy started to come to the church in Kirkcaldy and he eventually came to faith but Jimmy had a real humility about him.

He would never come and sit at the Lord's table because he never saw himself as good enough to sit down with the Lord's people and as an elder in that church when I would go along the Lord's table with the elements.

To me it was a great privilege that I would go to the back of the church and offer the bread and the wine to Jimmy. To me it was such a tremendous privilege to be able to serve this man who was a brand, a taken from the fire, a man who had been in the gutter, the world had given up on him but the Lord gives up on nobody.

And then when Jimmy was dying of cancer Neil went to see him in hospital and he asked him how did he feel and he just lifted his fist and he said that he was victorious in Christ Jesus.

[24 : 24] It was for the likes of him that Christ died on the cross. It was the likes of Jimmy that Christ finished the work, that the father gave him to do.

And Jimmy is now in the presence of his Savior and Lord. He's one of that great multitude and if you and I believe in Christ tonight then we have to be found in the Bible.

We're to be found there in Revelation 7 in that great multitude because that is a vision John was given at the very end of the ages.

So Jesus completed the work that the father gave him to do. And the work that the father gave him to do was to redeem a people, to cleanse them of their sins.

Israel Folau, the Australian rugby union player, was in the news recently because he's a Christian and he had, he tweeted, I don't have tweet and I don't have, all I have is an old fashioned phone that probably says a lot about me.

[25 : 34] But he quoted from Paul's letter to the Corinthians in chapter 6 that list of people who would not go into heaven but who would go into hell, drunks and cheats and adulterers and fornicators and all the rest and mentioning homosexuals.

and the drunks didn't get together to complain about what he said neither did any of the other sinful people. But the homosexuals didn't like it and so he has been dropped from the Australian rugby union team that are competing in the World Cup this summer.

But Israel Folau doesn't mind that because what's important for him is to serve and to be faithful to the Lord. But what Israel Folau didn't mention was the next line of the text that Paul wrote because he was writing to Christians in Corinth and he was listing this long list of sinful behaviors and then he said that is what some of you were.

That's what some of you were but you were washed, you were made clean and they were washed and they were made clean because of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the throne. And then finally the reward, what was the reward that Jesus had on the cross? Well out of the anguish of his soul we read in verse 10, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days, the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand and out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied.

[27 : 21] Out of the travail of his soul he shall be satisfied. And it's as if Jesus having finished the work, having said it is finished, that he was looking out and he was seeing before him that great multitude of saved sinners from every generation, from every nation and from every people group, men and women taken out of the pit, men and women taken from the prospect of a lost eternity, men and women given a new hope and a new life and Jesus looking with satisfaction upon them because they're precious to him.

These were they whom the Father had given to him to redeem and Jesus says that he will raise them up on the last day and not one single one of them will be lost.

Every one of the Lord's people is precious to him. In looking out over the park in a football stadium and seeing that great crowd of people, it's like the hundred sheep and the shepherd sees them and one's missing so he leaves the hundred in the fold and he goes out onto the hills to search for the one that's missing because every single one of the Lord's people is precious to him.

Christ suffered as much for the one on the cross as he did for the other. It's not as if he suffered more for Abraham and Paul and David than he did for you.

The anguish that he suffered in his soul on the cross was the same for you and for me as it was for all the great patriarchs of the Bible.

[29 : 09] So Jesus looked beyond the agonies of the cross. He looked to the results and as we read in Hebrews 12 who for the joy set before him endured the cross scorning its shame.

The joy of seeing a multitude of people taken from the kingdom of darkness and brought into the kingdom of light, snatched from the hand of the evil one and now being held safe and secure in the hands of Jesus.

And Jesus knows every sin that you and I have committed and because of that he knows the anguish of having suffered for our sins in a way that we gladly will never ever know because Jesus has paid the penalty.

The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus. He suffered torment for his people but he does not begrudge it.

He endured separation from his father but he does not regret it. He died the righteous for the unrighteous to bring us to God.

[30 : 18] Christ died for the ungodly we read in Romans chapter 5 and Jesus Christ the author and the perfecter of our faith looks upon us and is satisfied because it is you and I if we are believers here tonight we are the finished work we are the evidence that Christ accomplished the work that the father gave him to do upon the cross.

He loves wrote Douglas Macmillan not those who cost him nothing but those who cost him much who cost him in terms of tears and anguish and suffering and death and when an unworthy sinner believes then that sight satisfies his soul.

That's from the God of all grace by the late Douglas Macmillan. Remember the angel who came before Jesus was born? He would have given the name Jesus because he shall save his people from their sins.

That was the agenda for Jesus and on the cross he announced that he had completed the work that the father had given to him and he looks with contentment with satisfaction at the product the finished product of that work which is men like you and me.

May he find satisfaction in each and every one of us this evening. Amen and may the Lord add his blessing to these thoughts and meditations on his word.

[31 : 55] Shall we