

SUMMER GATHERING 2: DeRouchie Message on Isaiah 53:10–11a Sovereign Joy Baptist Church

THE GOSPEL, MISSIONS, AND SOVEREIGN JOY (ISAIAH 53:10–11a)

At these Sovereign Joy summer gatherings, Pastor Charles and I are considering foundational texts that shape the identity of Sovereign Joy Baptist Church. Tonight, I want to meditate on Isaiah 53:10–11, which helps us consider how Christ’s substitutionary sacrifice is related to making disciples of all nations. This good news and this mission to the many are central to who we are as a church. Find in your Bibles Isaiah 53, one of the Old Testament’s greatest depictions of the gospel for the many. As you turn, pray with me.

Lord, in these brief moments set aside to meditate on your Word, grant us light that we may see, humility that we may receive, and hunger that we may grow. I pray this through Jesus, our only Savior. Amen.

Isaiah 52:13–53:12 is the last of Isaiah’s four “servant” songs—poems that apply the title of God’s “servant” to the promised coming royal deliverer, whom we know as Jesus. In this last song, both God and his prophet clarify how ungodly sinners from many nations can be declared right with God through the victorious substitutionary sacrifice of the servant.

This whole chapter is focused on the mission of Messiah Jesus, whom Isaiah earlier names “Immanuel” (God with us, Isa 7:14) and “Everlasting Father” who will rule on David’s throne (9:6). He’s also one we’re told in 52:13 “shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted.” Picking up at the end of 53:9, Isaiah says:

He had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied. (53:9–11)

Beginning in verse 10, note first the contrast signaled by “Yet.” This person, “marred beyond human semblance” (52:14), “committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth” (1 Pet 2:22). Yet verse 10 declares, “It was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief.” The contrast emphasizes that this man himself whom God would crush did not deserve to die, yet God purposed that he would serve as a substitutionary sacrifice—dying not for his own sin but bearing the just wrath of God on behalf of others. In the words of 53:5, “He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed [using the same word] for our

iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.”

But now consider the irony in verse 10. What is it that pleases God? What does he desire to do? My ESV reads, “Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief.” Isaiah uses the term “crush” to speak of the way the powerful in Israel’s society oppressed the poor, even grinding their faces in the dust (Isa 3:15). He also compares the leaders in Egypt to pillars that will be crushed in Yahweh’s judgment (19:10). Finally, a crushed heart is one that is contrite, lowly, humble (57:15). Word-for-word the text here says, “Yahweh desired his crushing; he wounded.” Or, as the CSB translates, “Yet the LORD was pleased to crush him severely.” The death of Christ does not happen randomly, and the decisive agent in his death is not the wicked Romans or the seething, conniving Jewish leaders. In Peter’s words talking to God, “In this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place” (Acts 4:27–28). Earlier in Isaiah, using the same verb, God declared, “I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats” (Isa 1:11). Now, we learn that there is a sacrifice in which he does delight—the crushing of his Son.

But this is not divine child abuse. No, this is the offering of a willing substitute to bear the wrath of God against sinners. And it was for a purpose—not simply to see the penalty of sin cancelled but the power of sin destroyed and a new people shaped for the sake of God’s name.

Look with me at what comes next: “When his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand” (Isa 53:10). God was pleased to send his Son as “a lamb that is led to the slaughter” (53:7) and as a substitutionary sacrificial “offering for guilt” (53:10), because of what would result. Three results are given, all of which imply the resurrection of this once-dead sacrifice. Looking initially at the second, the very one who is crushed under God’s hammer will “prolong his days,” a phrase that recalls the promise of Deut 17:20 that the king who is faithful would enjoy extended days over his kingdom. The third result: The very pleasure of God that brought the servant’s death will now move through that death and become something that will flourish in his hand. God’s purposes did not stop with the darkness of Friday’s cross but instead pushed through the rise of the Son on Sunday beyond to all that the resurrection would accomplish.

Yet now I want to focus on the first promised result. “If his soul becomes a guilt offering, bearing the sins of many, then he will see offspring.” Sight is a sense

that only living people enjoy, so if operating as “an offering for guilt” requires the substitute’s death, *seeing* must require his resurrection. The messianic servant would die, but he would also rise to see offspring. Some 750 years before Jesus, God placed in his Word a conditional promise that would motivate the Messiah’s perfect obedience, even unto death, death on a cross. Because Jesus never married a physical bride, the “offspring” must be spiritual, and they would become his children because of his sacrificial, substitutionary work.

Who are these offspring? The surrounding context makes it clear. First, they are many nations, whom his atoning blood will sprinkle. Look back at 52:14–15. Comparing the exile of the nation of Israel to Jesus’s curse-bearing death, the text reads, “As many were astonished at you—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind—so shall he sprinkle many nations.” This sprinkling likely recalls how sacrificial blood was sprinkled on the priests to declare their cleansing from sin and to consecrate them to their special office (Exod 29:21; Lev 8:30). Now, Christ’s substitutionary death will create a new set of priests from “many nations,” who will in turn mediate God’s presence to the world and stand as the primary pointers to God provision of the substitute for the salvation of souls. Second, the Messiah’s offspring are the many that the righteous servant will account righteous. Look at the second half of 53:11. God declares, “By his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.” This is the great legal exchange that stands at the core of the gospel—our sins placed on Christ and his righteousness counted as ours. In Paul’s words, “As by the one man’s disobedience the *many* were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the *many* will be made righteous” (Rom 5:19; cf. 2 Cor 5:21). So who is the offspring? They are the many new priestly mediators from the nations whom God has accounted righteous through the victorious, substitutionary sacrifice of the righteous servant.

Now look back at the beginning of verse 11, which I believe includes the prophet’s final reflections before Yahweh again speaks about his servant. Isaiah comments, “Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied.” The translators of the NIV and CSB sensed the need for the servant to see something, so they follow a tradition of adding “light” into the text. But the word “light” is not in the standard Hebrew text. Instead, what we read is simply, “Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see, he shall be satisfied.” In context, what is it that the servant will see? The previous verse told us. “He shall see *offspring*.” And what will be the result? “He shall be satisfied.”

Isaiah 53:10–11 includes two amazing portraits of Sovereign Joy. First, it pleased the Lord to crush his Son. Why? Because there was an even greater

pleasure that only the death of his Son made possible: “If his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see offspring, he shall be satisfied.” There was a joy that was set before Christ at the cross, and that joy was a people (Heb 12:2)—a great cloud of saints bearing witness to his worth (12:1) that you and I get to join when Jesus acts as “the founder and perfecter of our faith” (12:1). In Revelation John speaks of everyone whose name was “written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain” (Rev 13:8). Before the foundation of the world, God purposed to crush his Son so that through his death he might save all whose names were written in the book of life. Your personal salvation joyfully motivated Christ to endure the cross. Because God was pleased to crush his Son, Christ is now pleased to save sinners like you and me. This hope stands at the core of Sovereign Joy Baptist Church. “Oh praise the One who paid my debt and raised this life up from the dead!”