

THE LIMITED ATONEMENT OF CHRIST

Sermon to the saints at Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kansas, June 12, 2016

Nine of your fellow servants were granted the privilege to be ambassadors for our Lord Jesus Christ outside of the funeral services of Muhammad Ali on Friday, June 10, 2016, in Louisville, Kentucky, where they were mad upon their idol, “Ali,” and this is our report: 700 years before our Lord Jesus Christ was born, his prophet Isaiah, by the Holy Spirit, wrote these words:

Isaiah 53:1 ¶ Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

3 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 esteemed him not.

4 ¶ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

10 ¶ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make 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.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Muhammad Ali (f/k/a Cassius Clay) is a reprobate who claimed he believed in Islam, and said that all religions lead to the same place, presumably heaven. (Whatever the heck that means to these idolatrous perverts.) But “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6). Ali was raised a Southern Baptist and therefore knew of the doctrines of grace including the doctrine of the Limited Design in the Atonement. But like Muslims, Southern Baptists don’t believe the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact it wasn’t much of a switch for Cassius Clay to go from Southern Baptist to Muslim. They are indistinguishable in their fundamental idolatry. Friday in Louisville, Kentucky, we said: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” (Acts 16:31). Instead in Louisville we witnessed the same scene as in Ephesus that met Paul, Gaius and Aristarchus when the worshippers of Diana, as described in Acts

Chapter 19, were also in a foam and froth mad on their idol. On June 10, 2016, In Louisville, they roared “Ali is the greatest!” In the First Century AD, in Ephesus they cried out for two hours: “Great is Diana of the Ephesians.” (Acts 19:28, 34). But here is the truth, then, now and forever: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” (Revelation 5:12). And none other. And the time will come shortly when this is the reality: “And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” (Revelation 5:13). Amen.

The Limited Design in the Atonement means that Christ died for the all of the sins of a certain, fixed number of persons known in Scripture as “his elect” (Matthew 24:31), “his own” (Psalm 33:12), “his people” (Matthew 1:21), “his sheep” (Matthew 25:32);” that God the Father elected them to salvation unconditionally; that Christ the Son purposefully and willfully died only for those elect persons; that God the Holy Spirit effectually communicates that salvation to those elect persons while they are alive on the earth and to no others; and all pursuant to the terms and conditions of the everlasting covenant of Grace, which is “ordered in all things and sure,” entered into between the triune God before creation. The only role that the elect have in the covenanting process is that they are the happy beneficiaries of that covenant. (Revelation 17:8; 2 Samuel 23:5).

Southern Baptists don’t believe in that doctrine because they are Arminians—not Armenians (from the country of Armenia)—but followers of that certain fraudulent Dutch theologian, Jacobus Arminius. Isaiah Chapter 53 amplifies the doctrine of the limited design in the atonement and so it will be the subject of my sermon today. Many other places in the Bible testify to this blessed doctrine.

Recently I found a book in our Library by Arthur W. Pink called “The Satisfaction of Christ,” which was published in 1955. (That is the same year that the Westboro Baptist Church was organized and began her ministry.) It is well worth your effort to read Pink’s book. In his 10th Chapter on the efficacy of the limited atonement of Chris, he starts with these words:

“[W]e propose to show from Scripture that that [limited] design [in Christ’s atonement] must *be* accomplished. Two widely differing views have been taken concerning the effectuation of what the mediatorial work of the Lord Jesus was meant to achieve. Some have affirmed that the Atonement possesses only a *conditional* efficacy, others that it is vested with an *infallible* efficacy. These two views are known as the Arminian and the Calvinistic interpretations. They are completely antagonistic and utterly irreconcilable. The difference between them is that of Truth and error, Light and darkness, Jehovah and Baal, God and the Devil. Before attempting to set forth some of the sure grounds on which rests the certain accomplishment of God’s purpose in the obedience and suffering of Christ, we will first glance briefly at the contrary view and expose its fallacy.”

“It is high time that some voice was raised in protest against the fearful perversions of Divine truth which are now being given out by many, who, though posing as the champions of orthodoxy, are nothing more than wolves in sheep’s clothing, blind, leading those who follow their pernicious heresies into the ditch. The omnipotency of God is now frittered down to a persuasive power which He brings to bear upon sinners, but which is so feeble that it fails to move the great majority who are subject to it: more than this “persuasion” must not be affirmed, lest man be reduced to a “mere machine.” The all-efficacious Atonement, which has actually redeemed everyone for whom it was made, is degraded to a “remedy” which sin-sick souls may use if they feel disposed to. The invincible work of the Holy Spirit is supposed to be nothing more than an “offer” of the Gospel which sinners may accept or reject as they please. That such frightful errors should now be accepted in “churches” calling themselves “Fundamentalists,” only shows how far the Apostasy has advanced.”

“The horrible and blasphemous idea of Arminians is that the wondrous and perfect Atonement of Christ has made sure and certain the salvation of none, that it has only made *possible* the salvation of all who hear the Gospel. When this “possibility” is carefully examined it is found to be an impossibility! The supposed “possibility” is that

fallen man, while dead in trespasses and sins, must fulfill a certain condition, must of himself perform a certain act which God is said to require of him, before the sacrifice of Christ can be of any avail. That "condition" is faith; that "act" is that he must believe. Now to reduce the "great salvation" which Christ procured and secured to a bare possibility, as something which is available for everyone but sure for no one, is to say that Christ did no more for Peter and Paul than He did for Pilate and Judas. Everything is thus left to chance and uncertainty."

"To make the efficacy of Christ's Atonement depend upon an act of man's will is highly dishonoring to our blessed Savior. To say that the success of the greatest of all God's works is left contingent upon the creature's pleasure is most insulting to the Almighty, impeaching as it does His wisdom, goodness and justice. To teach that salvation lies within the sinner's own power to secure, is to flatly deny Christ when He said "with men this is *impossible*" (Matthew 19:26). Alas, nearly all preachers today speak of faith in Christ as a comparatively easy matter, as though it were well within the range of the sinner's own ability. But the Scriptures teach far otherwise. They teach that man by nature is spiritually bound with fetters, such as none but God can break (Gal. 5:1), that he is shut up in darkness (Eph. 4:18), and is in a prison house (Isa. 61:1). *The salvation of no man is "possible" apart from the effectual operations of God's invincible grace.*"

"To affirm the "possibility" of an unregenerate sinner believing in Christ to the saving of his soul, is to deny that "men loved darkness rather than light" (John 3:19), that "they that are in the flesh *cannot* please God" (Rom. 8:8), that the "carnal mind is enmity against God" [Rom. 8:7]. In short, it is to repudiate the fact that man is, by nature, a fallen creature, *dead* in trespasses and sins. Carnality cannot thirst after holiness. An evil tree cannot produce good fruit. A corpse cannot quicken itself. Man's will, like all his other faculties, has been disabled by the fall. His only hope is the intervention of sovereign and omnipotent grace: that God will perform upon and within him a miracle of mercy: that Divine power will lift him out of the grave of sin and make him a new creature in Christ Jesus. Until he is born again he can no more love God, savingly believe in Christ, or walk in the Spirit, than he can create a world."

"We have not said that faith is unnecessary, nor that God does not call on man to believe the Gospel. What we do say is that faith is God's gift, that this gift was *purchased* by Christ for all for whom He died, and that in due time this gift is imparted to them. ..."

Beloved, always remember and never forget: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." (Romans 15:4). Today we will study upon the patience and comfort of Isaiah Chapter 53.

John Trapp, a worthy Bible expositor, says that Isaiah Chapter 53 should be called "The Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Isaiah"; "and things are here set down so plainly that Augustine thinks they need no exposition." He may be right, but let me provide some helpful thoughts and applicable Bible verses to our reading, and I pray the Lord will bless this to you for your edification.

Isaiah 53:1 ¶ Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

Joining the other prophets, and with deep groanings and cries of complaint, Isaiah declares emphatically that hardly anyone believed the report, the proclamation, the "Rumour" (Luke 7:17), the message, of the doctrine of the Messiah, but that it had been roundly and universally rejected. The announcement of the true character and work of the Messiah—his omnipotent arm or sovereign power in his work to redeem his elect people ("the power of God unto salvation"—Romans 1:16)—which the prophets preached, had been and would be throughout time roundly and universally rejected. Of this report, Calvin says, "It is reckoned to be folly, because it exceeds all human capacities." The number of believers is so small (Isaiah at Isaiah 1:9 and Paul at Romans 11:5 call the number "a remnant") because no man can come to God but by an extraordinary revelation by the Spirit of God. "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the

earth.” (Romans 9:28). Indeed, Christ said, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him [by the powerful and efficacious grace of the Spirit]: and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:44). “But though,” John says, “he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?” (John 12:37-38). And Paul says, “But they do not all believe the Gospel; for Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?” (Roman 10:16). “And whence proceeds the difference, but from the secret election of God, the cause of which is hidden in himself?” (John Calvin). So while Christ has been revealed and preached to vast numbers there has been no inward revelation with power by the effectual work of the Holy Spirit, who is the messenger of the covenant of Grace. (Malachi 3:1). “Report— literally, "the thing heard," referring to which sense Paul says, ‘So, then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.’ (#Ro 10:17).” (Jamieson, Fausset & Brown). Straight from the mouth of the God to the hearts of his elect people with power. “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power[.]” (Psalm 110:3). But this Gospel is hid to them that are lost. (2 Corinthians 4:3).

Isaiah 53: 2: For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

The word for “tender plant” is the same as for a “sucking child” (Job 3:12). He would be humble and unpretending in his origin. This reference—a root out of a dry ground--is also found at Isaiah 11:1 “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots[.]” Isaiah Chapter 11 is about the Messiah. At the time of the birth of Lord Jesus Christ the house of David was as a stump of a tree cut down to the ground. Both Joseph and Mary were of that house. A sprout or a shrub which is small, puny and withered up; nothing in our Lord Jesus Christ’s personal appearance that would attract attention: scan his entire earthly mission and there was no show or pretense in any of his life because his kingdom was not of this world. The apostate Jews at Christ’s time suffered under a delusion that the Messiah would be some great earthly prince, with great pomp, ceremony, and earthly power, to break off the chains of the tyranny of Roman Empire and there would be some grand and glorious earthly kingdom for the Jews. Though unknown to the world (John 1:11), the Messiah was observed by God, who ordered the most minute circumstances attending His growth. “He hath no form or comeliness.” “How could he? say, when his fair face was covered with blood black and blue, swelths, spittle, tears, scratches, so that Pilate, wondering at it, said, "Behold the man!" (John 19:5). “And yet he was a man of desires, yea, the "desire of all nations," (Haggai 2:7) all over desirable: (Song of Solomon 5:16) but so he is only to such as have their "senses exercised to discern good and evil.” (Hebrews 5:14)” (John Trapp). To the natural man there is nothing about his doctrines, his works and his ways that are attractive. And, we are witnesses to this fact every day.

Isaiah 53:3 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 esteemed him not.

The “rejected of men” is literally “ceaseth from men”; he was not admitted into their company and conversation. “[H]e was not reckoned among men, was accounted a worm, and no man; or, if a man, yet not in his senses, a madman, nay, one that had a devil: or "deficient of men"; he had none about him of any rank or figure in life, only some few fishermen, and some women, and publicans, and harlots. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "the last of men," the most abject and contemptible of mankind; despised, because of the meanness of his birth, and parentage, and education, and of his outward appearance in public life; because of his apostles and audience; because of his doctrines, not agreeably to carnal reason, and his works, some of them being done on the sabbath day, and, as they maliciously suggested, by the help of Satan; and especially because of his ignominious sufferings and death[.]” (John Gill). They chose a murderous thug, wicked Barabbas, over Jesus Christ; he was hung on the

cross between two thieves and he was regarded the worst. “And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.” (Mark 9:12). He was made up of sorrows from head to toe and his whole life was one uninterrupted succession of sorrows and sufferings; “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15). Our Lord Jesus Christ knew grief. The word rendered ‘grief’ means usually sickness and disease; (Deuteronomy 7:15; Isaiah 1:5) but it also means anxiety and affliction; (Ecclesiastes 5:16) and any evil or calamity. (Ecclesiastes 6:2). And, then to make sure you understand, he is identified a second time in this verse as despised: universally despised. Fellow pilgrims and sojourners in this world: we know how much He is despised. Hold up a sign with His words on them and hear and see and feel the despising, although in small measure comparatively. There was universal enmity amongst the population of Louisville on Friday, June 10, 2016, because of our Lord Jesus Christ’s words. “The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.” (John 7:7). He suffered disgrace and underwent dishonor for the sin of God’s elect whose surety Christ became. But we regarded him as loathsome and abominable and abhorred. We did that. Until sovereign grace overpowered and killed the enmity we had toward him based upon our totally depraved nature, we too despised our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:7; Ephesians 2:15-16).

Isaiah 53:4 ¶ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

The word “Surely” is necessary here for strong emphasis. “The meaning is, that those who had despised and rejected the Messiah, had greatly erred in condemning him on account of his sufferings and humiliation. We turned away from him in horror and contempt. We supposed that he was suffering on account of some great sin of his own. But in this we erred. It was not for his sins but for ours. It was not that he Was smitten of God for his own sins — as if he had been among the worst of mortals — but it was because he had taken our sins, and was suffering for them. The very thing therefore that gave offence to us, and which made us turn away from him, constituted the most important part of his work, and was really the occasion of highest gratitude.” (Albert Barnes). He has borne, or carried away our griefs, which are our sicknesses, diseases, anxieties, afflictions, evils and calamities. “All the sorrows and griefs which Christ bore were not for any sins of his own, but for the sins of his people; wherefore these griefs and sorrows signify the punishment of sin, and are put for sins, the cause of them and so the apostle interprets them of Christ’s bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, in 1 Peter 2:24, and the Septuagint and Arabic versions render the words here, “he bears our sins”; and the Targum is, “wherefore he will entreat for our sins”; these being laid upon him, were bore by him as the surety of his people; and satisfaction being made for them by his sufferings and death, they are carried and taken away, never to be seen any more.” (John Gill) “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd[.]” Zechariah 13:7. He was indeed stricken and smitten of God but for our sins and not any of his own so that he might fulfill that role set out in the covenant of grace as the acceptable substitute for his people. He lived out that life of righteousness so that it would be imputed to our account; he paid for all of the sins of all of his elect with his life so that sin would not be imputed to us. “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” (Romans 4:8).

Isaiah 53:5: But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

The word bruised is crushed as in Psalm 72:4: “He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall **break in pieces** the oppressor.” This word, chastisement, includes the correction or discipline as a parent chastises a child (which includes admonition, counseling and punishment). In this instance it is the taking of vengeance on our sins to satisfy vindictive justice upon our surety whereby divine wrath is appeased, and thereby this chastening effects or secures to us our peace: perfect peace from the Prince of Peace by effectuating our reconciliation to God and thereby paying for our salvation which is our happiness. His stripes, including that literal scourging he endured, purchased the Spirit and grace of God for his people, to mortify our corruptions and put our souls in a good state of health that would make us fit to serve God and prepare us to enjoy Him. He healed us by taking the sicknesses of his people upon himself, by bearing our sins, enduring the blows

and suffering death for us. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9.

Isaiah 53:6: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” (John 10:11). Peter was fond of quoting from Isaiah 53. See 1 Peter 2:25: “For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.” The path of straying is an evil path, it is dark and slippery and crooked and ends in destruction. “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” (Proverbs 14:12). All of God’s elect; both Jews and Gentiles, are represented here as sheep. This is an oft-used Bible metaphor and especially relating to the salvation of souls. “And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.” (Matthew 25:32-36). “But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.” (John 10:26-31).

Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

It is important to keep in mind that from birth to death our Redeemer, the lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8), was oppressed and afflicted for his people’s sake. “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (2 Corinthians 5:21). He opened not his mouth against his oppressors, nor murmured at the affliction. He did not speak against the justice of God, and the demand that was made upon him, as the surety of his people; he owned the obligation he had laid himself under; he paid the debt, and bore the punishment without any dispute or hesitation. He was a willing party to that everlasting covenant of grace; he knew it was “ordered in all things, and sure!” (2 Samuel 23:5). He had a great readiness of mind and willingness to be sacrificed for the sins of his people: as a lamb that goes to the slaughter he was patient and silent for those 33 years of oppression and affliction. “Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” (Psalm 40:7-8). “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” (Hebrews 12:1-3). He gave the shame no consideration. “Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously[.]” (1 Peter 2:23). We should have the same mind under oppression and affliction. “I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it.” (Psalm 39:9) “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.” (1 Peter 4:1-2). “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit[.]” (1 Peter 3:18).

Isaiah 53:8: He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

“Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.” (John 18:24). Two things are signified by “He was taken from prison and from judgment” — the detention or confinement preliminary to the trial, and the execution of the death sentence immediately at the end of the mock trial. No stays of execution; no appeals. By high-handed oppression he was deprived of due process of law; he was given a kangaroo court proceeding. Every wrong procedure was followed all contrary to the due process of law that should have been afforded to him. “Taken” is an ellipsis for “taken out to die.” “[H]e was taken by distress and judgment; that is, his life was taken away in a violent manner, under a pretence of justice; whereas the utmost injustice was done him; a wrong charge was brought against him, false witnesses were suborned, and his life was taken away with wicked hands; which sense seems to be favored by the quotation in Acts 8:33 “in his humiliation his judgment was taken away”: he had not common justice done him[.]” (John Gill). “Who shall declare his generation” means several things: (1) Who can adequately describe the wickedness of his contemporaries; (2) Who can fully describe the history of his life and death (to which this verse supports: John 21:25: “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.”); (3) Who can tell of the volume of his holy seed, his death giving life to an innumerable generation, as described in Revelation 7:9: “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands[.]; (4) Who can tell of his eternal generation: Proverbs 8:23-31: “I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him[.]” Note throughout Isaiah Chapter 53 the limiting language, e.g., “For the transgression of **my people** was he stricken.” “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” (John 10:11). Christ poured out his soul unto death for his sheep; he did not die for a single goat, he did not die for a single hog, and he did not die for a single dog. “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.” (John 10:17-18).

Isaiah 53:9: And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

In short, although he had done no sin by word or deed, he was treated as a person worthy of capital punishment for an offense punishable by death such as sedition, murder, robbery, etc. But it was in rich man Joseph of Arimathaea’s sepulcher where he was buried. (Matthew 27:57). Peter uses Isaiah 53 in the following context: “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear [“for the Lord’s sake”—see 1 Peter 2:13]; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.” (1 Peter 2:18-25) This injunction (“Servants, be subject to your masters”—we all have masters after all) and the compelling reasons in support of the order are plain and clear. Just do it.

Isaiah 53:10 ¶ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make 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.

“Pleased” and “pleasure” are the same word in the Hebrew, meaning: “delight, desire, longing, the good pleasure, that in which one takes delight.” God did it. Our Lord Jesus Christ was not mistaken as to the original source of all things that fell out to him in his life. Man most of the time is like my great nephew Peter—he turned 3 last week. His grandmother bought him a nice new outfit for his birthday, but his cousin, Elias, actually delivered the gift to him. Now, his mother reports, that every time he wears the outfit he says, “Elias gave me this outfit.” As to this particular matter of the crucifixion of Christ, the Bible is clear. “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain[.]” (Acts 2:23). The faithful in Acts 4, addressing themselves to God on this exact subject, by the Holy Spirit, declared: “For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.” (Acts 4:27-28). This bruising and this grief were the accomplishments of God’s purposes, a fulfillment of his covenant and promises, and of the prophecies in his word; and, particularly, hereby the salvation of his people was brought about. “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Hebrews 9:14). “For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” (Hebrews 9:26). “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (Hebrews 10:10). He was altar, sacrifice, and priest. “And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.” (Ephesians 5:2). ***He shall see his seed.*** “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” (John 12:24). All of the names that are written in heaven (Luke 10:20) in the Lamb’s Book of Life (Philippians 4:3, Revelation 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 20:15, 21:27, 22:19): those people he saw; and what he saw was their calling, their justification and their glory in all the details: all of it precisely as he had predestinated it to happen. “Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:30-39). “For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” (Hebrews 2:10). ***He shall prolong his days.*** “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.” (Revelation 1:18). “His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.” (Psalm 89:29). “His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.” (Psalm 89:36). ***The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.*** All the elect of God shall during their lifetime by the work of the Holy Spirit be called, separated out, and gathered into the sheep fold and ultimately presented “faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 1:24). “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son [or rather to whom it pleases the Lord to reveal his Son (Galatians 1:15-16)], and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:37-40). Paul said, “[b]ut when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately [I complied]” (Galatians 1:15-16), “[f]or we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10). “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning,

and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure[.]” (Isaiah 46:9-10). If the blood that Jesus spilled is not efficacious to fulfill the pleasure of his will in saving all for whom his blood was provided pursuant to that everlasting covenant of grace, “which is ordered in all things, and sure” (2 Samuel 23:5), then God would no longer be God, his word would be useless, and his promises unreliable. “Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus[.]” (Hebrews 6:17-20). “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11). “Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.” (Isaiah 62:3). “The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.” (Psalm 147:11) “For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.” (Psalm 149:4) “The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.” (Zephaniah 3:17). “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, ... Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself[.]” (Ephesians 1:5,9). “Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power[.]” (2 Thessalonians 1:11).

Isaiah 53:11: He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

You will notice the rich repetition of these good things in this chapter. The Lord shall be satisfied with the fruit of his hard labor. ***By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.*** “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3). This is the preaching commission Paul received of our Lord Jesus Christ: “To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” (Act 26:18). “And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” (John 6:69). “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 13:3) “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Corinthians 4:6). “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death[.]” (Philippians 3:8-10) “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue[.]” (2 Peter 1:2-3). “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.” (2 Peter 3:18). “[T]hrough his knowledge; the knowledge of him, of Christ, which is no other than faith in him, by which a man sees and knows him, and believes in him, as the Lord his righteousness; and this agrees with the New Testament doctrine of justification by faith; which is no other than the manifestation, knowledge, sense, and perception of it by faith.” (John Gill).

Isaiah 53:12: Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.” (Psalm 22:14) “And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.”

(Mark 15:27-28). “But thus saith the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.” (Isaiah 49:25). “So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.” (Isaiah 52:15). “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise [break in pieces] thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Genesis 3:15). If you want to efficiently kill a snake, you got to break their head into pieces. “Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” (Psalm 2:8). “Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.” (Daniel 2:45). Christ is that stone. “But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.” (Matthew 12:28-29). “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:8-11). “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins[.]” (Colossians 1:13-14). “And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” (Colossians 2:15). “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” (Hebrews 2:14-15). “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us[.]” (Hebrews 9:24). “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: ...I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake.” (1 John 2:1,12). “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (Hebrews 7:25). “And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” (Revelation 11:15).

I love you. Amen.