



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

The Suffering Savior, Isaiah 53:4

"The Servant of Jehovah and the Suffering Messiah: - IV"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] ...of the word of God before us and that we can ponder its pages, look beyond it to the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. We're grateful to Thee for the ministry of the great servant of Jehovah and we thank Thee that he came and fulfilled the Old Testament Scriptures that have pointed to him. And we pray again, as we consider the prophecies that we may learn from them in the light of what he did historically when he was here two thousand years ago. May too, Lord, the application of the ministry, the prophecies as they pertain to us today, may that application have its effect in our lives.

We thank Thee for each one present and we pray that there may be enlightenment that comes from Thee. For Thou are the true God and Thou alone through the Holy Spirit dost understand the Scriptures. Now give us to have open and searching hearts to know Thy truth as we study. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] Tonight is the last in our series of studies on "The Servant of Jehovah and the Suffering Messiah: A Study in the Nature of the Atonement". And next time, we shall move on and continue our series that we have been giving on "The Old Testament and the Doctrine of the Atonement". Now just a word, by way of review tonight, because there are some who have not been here; we've been talking about the doctrine of the

atonement. I pointed out that that is perhaps the most important word in the theology of the Bible. It comes from the English word "at" plus the word "onement" which means union. And that is an old Middle English word, an archaic word, but "at onement" means that those who are "at onement" have come to a kind of union.

The Old Testament, we have pointed out, is the story of the development of the history of redemption and, of course, of the preparation for the atonement that Jesus Christ the Messiah was to accomplish. I've also tried to point out that there are two dominant figures in the Old Testament prophecy. These are Messianic figures and these two dominant figures are figures that our Lord Jesus applied to himself. They speak of atonement and its issues. And these two dominant figures are: the Servant of Jehovah and the Son of man. We have pointed out that the term "The Servant of Jehovah" is a term that refers to these passages that we're looking at. The ministry of our Lord and the accomplishment of the tasks that are set forth in these four great chapters: Isaiah chapter 42, Isaiah chapter 49, Isaiah chapter 50, and Isaiah chapter 52, verse 13 through chapter 53, verse 12. These are the acknowledged Servant Songs of the prophecy of Isaiah.

It is the opinion of some that Isaiah chapter 61 may also be included in the Servant Songs, but the term "servant" is not found there. And while it is a section of the prophecy of Isaiah which does, without question, speak of the Lord Jesus, it's the passage he applied to himself when he came into the synagogue in Nazareth and began his Messianic ministry, still it's safer to say that these four great chapters picture the Suffering Servant of Jehovah's ministry. And that they picture the zenith of our Lord's earthly career as suffering. And Isaiah 53, of course, is the climax of those Servant Songs.

Then we also have been trying to point out that the term "Son of man" is also a term used by our Lord of himself. In fact, this is the term that is used of himself more than any other term. It comes from Daniel chapter 7, verses 13 and 14, and it stresses the fact that the issue of our Lord's suffering will be reigning. For in that great vision which Daniel is given in Daniel chapter 7, he sees the Ancient of days seated upon a throne. He

sees the Son of man come and receive a kingdom for those who he represents. And this kingdom is a kingdom that is worldwide; it is the Messianic kingdom about which the Prophet Daniel speaks in Daniel 2 and 7, 8, 9 through 12, the other chapters of the Book of Daniel.

So that these two figures: the Suffering Servant of Jehovah and the Son of man give the two aspects of our Lord's ministry, which are stressed by our Lord himself on the Emmaus road to the disciples. He is to come and suffer and he is to come and enter into glory or reign. So the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that should follow are pictured by these two terms, which our Lord applied to himself: the Suffering Servant of Jehovah and the Son of man.

Now in the New Testament, in more than one place, these two features of suffering and reigning are the summary of the ministry of our Lord. Now we have been studying these Old Testament passages on the conviction and on the presupposition that since these passages are passages which our Lord Jesus referred to himself that, therefore, we can expect to find out some things about him as we study them.

Now last time we were looking at the identity of the servant after having treated in one of our nights, in fact part of two of our nights, the four Servant Songs. We then last time looked at Roman II, the Identity of the Servant. We took four tests which liberal scholars claim that we must meet if we say that Jesus Christ identified himself with the term "Servant of Jehovah". These four tests we set out as: first, we are required to show first that he referred to the servant at all; second, that the purported illusions are intended to indicate that he was the Servant and not simply catchphrases or generalities; and third, that he referred to the distinctive mark of the servant. That is, the suffering; and finally, that he saw the suffering as vicarious, and Dr. Woods let us know that vicarious meant substitutionary, remember? Substitutionary and redemptive.

And so then we took up these four tests, and in the outline that I have put on the board, it's Jesus of Nazareth and the Tests. In my outline, which I have in my notes, it's

the Passing of the Tests. And we took them up one by one. We took up the first test required of us to answer, "If we believe that our Lord Jesus did see himself as the Servant of Jehovah?" Test number one was that he referred to the servant at all. For some have had the gigantic, scholarly, and Christian nerve [laughter] to suggest that it is possible that Jesus really did not refer to the servant figure at all as a reference to himself.

And we looked at Luke chapter 22 and verse 37. And we saw that it was really nery to make such a suggestion because it seems evident from Luke chapter 22 and verse 37 that he did refer to himself as the Servant. As a matter of fact, we looked at a number of places here and we saw that there are: direct illusions, indirect illusions, the specific reference to himself in Luke chapter 22, verse 37 so that there is an overwhelming passing of the test that he referred to the servant figure.

And it's rather striking that he referred to the servant figure, that is, he looked at himself as the Servant of Jehovah. Not in any incidental parts of his ministry, but at important parts of it. For example, he spoke of himself as "The one who came not be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many"; now that is one of the key statements that he makes in the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Mark.

But when we move on into the most critical stages of our Lord's ministry, and surely everyone would agree that one of the critical stages of our Lord's ministry was when he instituted the Lord's Supper out of the last Passover. A great deal is made of this event in all of our gospels that our Lord Jesus observed perfectly the last Passover. Now he observed it perfectly because he was required by Mosaic Law to observe it perfectly. But in the midst, I think at the end of the service, but in that service, as he concluded the passover, he instituted the Lord's Supper and he told the apostles, and through them he has told us that we are throughout the entire time of his absence from the earth, to observe this feast in remembrance of him. It's obvious that this is one of the key events in our Lord's life and it looms large in the words that he has for the church during the period of time between the First Advent and his coming.

Now in this Lord's Supper, he referred to the Suffering Servant of Jehovah when remember, he took the bread, and then took the wine, and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for the remission of sins". He spoke of the fact that this particular event was designed to represent the fact that he would give his life a ransom for many.

Now it's evident that those statements are built on the language of the Old Testament Suffering Servant of Jehovah in Isaiah 53. So when he enacted the Lord's Supper, he was doing it against the background of Isaiah chapter 53. Now that was one of the climactic events in our Lord's last time upon the earth. And then we looked at Luke chapter 22 and verse 37, which occurred just before his death; it, too, at a climatic time in our Lord's ministry. So test number one was passed.

Test number two; we are required to show that the illusions were not merely generalities. We looked at Luke chapter 22 and verse 37 and saw that in this quotation from the Old Testament, "that he should be reckoned with the transgressors" that it was introduced by an introductory formula and it also closed with an introductory formula. In both of which our Lord stressed the fact that that passage from Isaiah chapter 53 and verse 12 refers to himself. It begins with, "For I say unto you that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me". Then the quotation from Isaiah 53:12 and as the conclusion of the verse we have, "for the things concerning me have a fulfillment".

So before the text and after the text, contrary to most of the passages in the New Testament in which a passage is quoted from the Old Testament, we usually have an introductory formula like a: "it stands written", or "in order that that might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet", or "Moses saith", or "He says", or "it says". This one, however, is introduced by, "This is something about me"; Isaiah 53:12, and then when he finishes he says, "It's something about me". So that it seems that we should have no question that our Lord referred Isaiah chapter 53:12 to himself and Luke chapter 22 and verse 37.

Then test number three was that he referred to the suffering. It's not enough for our unbelieving friends and, of course, I mean unbelieving in this respect, that is that our Lord referred to himself as the Servant of Jehovah, saw himself as fulfilling that ministry; they have said that we should demonstrate that he referred to the suffering. And I tried to point out that each of the references, with one exception, is in the context of his suffering and so we passed that test.

And finally, test number four, that he saw his suffering as vicarious and redemptive. And we pointed out that he accepted the role of the servant and if he accepted the role of the servant, it was inconceivable that he could do this without accepting the vocation of suffering for that's what the servant was to do. You cannot have a Servant of Jehovah who does not suffer in the light of those texts from the Old Testament.

But anyway, we argued it further and we concluded that these four tests, which the enemies of this view that our Lord took this term and referred it to himself say we must pass, we looked at them, analyzed them, and we concluded that our Lord did refer to himself as the Suffering Servant of Jehovah; that he did refer to the suffering; and furthermore, that he thought of himself as carrying out that suffering; and he regarded that suffering as redemptive and vicarious. That is, he regarded it as the basis of human redemption and he regarded it as the basis of human redemption under the figure and by means of substitution.

Now then we turn to Roman three, the Character of the Servant's Work. And we sought to begin a survey in simple fashion of the nature of the atonement that was offered and we looked at its Christological character. I commented upon the fact that there is not a great deal of information in the Servant Songs about the Christology of the servant. I think the reason for this is that the great prophecies of the Book of Emmanuel in Isaiah: Isaiah 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, stress the person of the one who is going to come and carry out the ministry of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah. And so, therefore, there is no need

for Isaiah to again stress the personal side of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah. In this section, he looks at the work.

Then we turn to the soteriological character and I noted one general note. That is that the obedient suffering is the will of God and that there is a unique conception in the Suffering Servant of Jehovah because the prophets, like Jeremiah suffered in the course of, or as a result of their witness, but with the servant and our Lord, suffering is not an incidental, it is the means by which they fulfill their mission.

Now did I stop there? I didn't make a note in my notes. If someone is taking notes, do you remember did I stop there or not? [Comment from the audience] I did stop there? I either stopped there or that's when you went to sleep. [Laughter] Is that what we are to conclude from this? [Comment from the audience] [Laughter].

Now I want to tonight, in the time that we have remaining, I want to talk about three emphases that are found in the soteriological work of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah. And so first of all, and in our outline, if I were giving you all of this, it would be Aramaic one, The Suffering is Penal? Now I have penal suffering with a question mark. And so the question is, "Did the servant suffer penally?" Now penally is p-e-n-a-l-l-y. That means "Did the servant suffer under the punishment of God?" That is "Did he bear sin as a punishment from God?"

A simpleminded Christian reading the Bible would say, "I don't see any problem with that at all". But this is one of the things that many of our students of Scripture are not willing to grant. They are willing to grant that our Lord Jesus died. They are willing to grant even that he died as a substitute. But to say that he died under the wrath of God; well in the 20th Century, it's a very unpopular thing to say that "God is the kind of person who looks upon sin with a wrathful attitude". The concept of God that the 20th Century has is such that the idea of a god who is angry with sin is something that is outside of their experience, outside of their thought, it's outside of the normal concepts that they have been given, and are given in their religious life, in their political life, in their social

life, in their ethical life because the idea of God as an angry God is just something that runs against the grain of the thought of the 20th Century. Now we want to ask and answer the question, "Is that suffering penal according to the prophecy of Isaiah?"

Now I want you to look at a couple of passages in Isaiah chapter 53. In Isaiah chapter 53 and verse 4, this is one of our Servant Songs, of course, the climactic one. And we read here, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted". Now in a moment, I'm going to say something about those who are uttering these words which have become prophecy in Isaiah chapter 53. But I want you to notice the expression "smitten of God".

Now this, I think, was inserted because it is something that has the approval of God. Our Lord Jesus, when he hung upon the cross, was smitten of God. We are to look at our Lord as under the judgment of God according to this text it seems. Verse 6 is even clearer, "All we like sheep have gone astray (they confess); we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

I think I commented last time, which may support the assertion that you fell asleep, Bob. I'm not sure about this. I'm not accusing you publicly; of course, of doing this because that would be a dastardly thing to do in any lecture that I would be giving. But I want you to know it has been done before [laughter]. But anyway, I just remember in my mind saying something about this. At any rate, here we read, "And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all". It is evident from this, and remember I think I said, "But this is a very violent figure expressed by this Hebrew verb because it's the same verb that is used to describe the action of the soldiers of David when he asks them to fall upon the man who confessed that he had killed Saul". I think I referred to that. He's remembering it now. He was kind of dozing at that point. And that figure is a very, very strong figure. "So that the Lord hath cause to smite upon him the iniquity of us all" is a figure of all of the judgments of God meeting upon our Lord Jesus Christ as those soldiers

fell upon that man and put him to death. "So the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all".

And will you notice, it is the Lord who is the person carrying out this activity? So it is the Lord who has caused to meet upon him the iniquity of us all. And if you can think of Calvary as a place where Jesus Christ was hanging upon a cross and God the Father getting up off of his throne, if you have that concept of God in heaven, and if you can have the concept of him with a sword in his hand, getting up off of his seat upon the throne and smiting his Son, then you have something of the figure that Isaiah presents here in prophetic fashion of the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ when he hung upon the cross at Calvary. Now that is why he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" That is why there came a darkness over the face over all the land for three hours. For it was at that time that Jesus Christ bore the wrath of God. I would call that penal suffering. Verse 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. (And again, we have the figure of our Lord Jesus bearing the punishment of other's sins. He shall bear their iniquity. He bears the punishment, the guilt of their sin. Verse 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 bore the sin of many". (Again the idea of penal satisfaction; this suffering is a penal suffering).

Now second, Arabic two: Is This Suffering Propitiatory? Now when we speak of propitiatory suffering, we mean, "Is this suffering designed to satisfy something in God? In other words, we could think of our Lord's suffering under judgment because he bears our judgment. But now, let's not look at it from the manword standpoint; let's look at it

from the Godword standpoint. Why is this necessary? And when we say that the suffering was propitiatory, we mean that it is true that our Lord bore the judgment, the wrath, the guilt that was ours, but the one who required this is God because there is something in him that requires this judgment.

Now the term "propitiation" is a term that can probably best be rendered in English by the English word "satisfaction". Propitiation is a very big word. People don't like big words. They particularly don't like them in theology. Anything else is all right. You can have the biggest kind of words and the longest kind of words if it's in economics or politics, but if you have this in theology, well that's something else. Just the other day, I opened *Time Magazine* I think it was, opened it up to the Economic section and here I saw this word. Disintermediation, I think. What a meaningful concept. Disintermediation, I think that was what the term was. I wasn't sure if I could even pronounce it. And there disintermediation was explained; a little section in *Time Magazine* three or four columns to explain disintermediation.

Now I know exactly what that means. Do you know what that means? Well, that refers to you, when you have money in the savings and loan and its drawing five and a half or six percent and you discover because your friend tells you that you can get eight to ten percent if you'll take the money out of the savings and loan and put it over here. And if you do that, that's disintermediation. Did you know were guilty of that crime? [Laughter] That's what it is according to *Time Magazine*.

Now you cannot speak big words in biblical things because that's supposed to be over the head of people. But I know you, you are intelligent, you are learned, so you know propitiation. But, in case someone has managed to sneak in here who is one of the underprivileged, I want you to know that propitiation is probably best represented in English by the term "satisfaction". So that when we say in the death of our Lord that God was propitiated, such as Romans chapter 3, verse 24 and 25, "Whom God hath set forth a

propitiation through faith in his blood", what that means is that God set forth Jesus Christ as a sacrifice and by means of that sacrifice, he was satisfied.

Now evidently, there is something in our Lord that requires satisfaction with reference to our sins and what that thing is in our Lord that requires satisfaction is his holiness; his justice; the sense of law which prevails in his universe and which he carries out even if it does not seem as if he is. His laws are inviolable laws. They are never broken by men. They break us. And so when we read that our Lord was a propitiation, it means that he bore our judgment in order that God's law may be satisfied. For the law says, "The sinner shall die". The law says, "The wages of sin is death" and so that is precisely what happened when Jesus Christ died. There he was a satisfaction for the sins of many. He bore the judgment and God's holiness and God's righteousness, God's justice was satisfied in the death of Jesus Christ. You see, this was a question that may have disturbed thinking people through all of the Old Testament.

Those who represented Jehovah were saying that God is the kind of god who punishes sin, but it did not seem to be empirically true. For when you looked around, you discovered that often the people who were supporting this Jehovah and proclaiming his name and worshiping him, it seemed as if they were the ones who were suffering more than those who did not worship this Jehovah. It almost seemed as if when you analyze the lives of the people that it's those who didn't worship Jehovah who were the most prosperous, who were the happiest, who seemed to be enjoying life the most. Whereas the saints were suffering, the saints were persecuted, the saints were scattered. The saints were persecuted into the four corners of the earth. And you might say, "Where are the wages of sin?"

And finally, God having passed over sins, for he did not punish sin as sin should be punished in the Old Testament times, he passed over sin because he was waiting for the Redeemer to come. And when our Lord hung upon the cross, all of the vast storehouse of human guilt and human sin represented by the design of the atonement

was heaped upon our Lord Jesus when he was upon the cross at Calvary and there is the final answer to the question, "Does God punish sin?" Yes, he does. And when he made Jesus Christ cry out, "My God, my God why hast Thou forsaken me?" There's the answer to the question, "Is God an angry god with reference to human sin?" And he is. He punishes it. And he is so determined to have his law prevail in his universe that he is willing to give up his own Son to be the means of exhausting the wrath of God against sin. And that's an amazing thing, amazing thing. And so the Lord Jesus, the only person who could exhaust the wrath of God, died and finally, having exhausted it, he said, "It is finished" and then gave up his spirit into the hands of the Father. That suffering is propitiatory.

By far, the most important effect of the death of Christ was its effect on the mind of God. Nine tenths of modern books on the atonement of the Lord Jesus, or the atonement, are occupied with the effects of the death of Christ on the mind of man. One tenth, if we could even say that much, are occupied with the effects of the death of Christ on God. I think it's fair to say that ninety percent of the preaching of the atonement of the Lord Jesus stresses the effects of human sin upon man. And in the preaching of the death of the Lord Jesus, ninety percent of the preaching is occupied with the effects of the death of Christ on man. We think of the death of Christ, yes, it's the death of Christ by which I'm forgiven. It's the death of Christ by which I have remission of sins. It's the death of Christ by which I have eternal life. And so on, down the line, but how many times do we think and meditate upon the effect of the death of Christ upon God?

Now did you notice that passage in Romans? It says,

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in the Lord Jesus: Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his name. (Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation? And

then in a few moments he says) that he might be just, and the justifier of them who are of the faith of Jesus".

Now who has first place in the work of our Lord Jesus in Romans 3? Why did God? But that's the apostle speaking. That's not a modern preacher. The big question is not so much how we can get a man to God, if I may put it by way of emphasis for both are true of course and necessary, but the biggest question is how we can get a holy God to man? And that is answered by the suffering of our Lord Jesus "so that he might be just". That is important.

Let me give you an illustration. There are those who think of our Lord Jesus as a sacrifice, but who do not understand that involved in this sacrifice is this penal satisfaction. Let me read you a statement by Canon Vernon Storr. He has written a book entitled *The Problem of the Cross* and he speaks of the satisfaction of Christ as a satisfaction to love. He has strong leanings toward the moral influence theory of the atonement. Let me ask you a question (just be sure that you remember that I did lecture to you on the subject of the moral influence theory of the atonement). Whose theory is the moral influence theory of the atonement? Does anyone remember? [Comment from the audience] Good. Good. We are growing some theologians. It may take a long time, but we are gaining some theologians.

Abelard, do you remember what century Abelard lived in? The 12th Century. Now you would think that people in the 20th Century would not have anything to learn from any individual in the 12th Century, and you would think that somebody who lived in the 12th or 13th Century, "Well, my goodness, their thoughts are not contemporary, are they?" Well listen, Canon Storr lives in the 20th Century. He and Abelard would have been brethren in their ideas of the atonement. In fact, you go around in the churches of Dallas, right around this city, the great majority of them, if they had any theory of the atonement at all, would probably be Abelardian. And if you were to ask them, is your

theory of the atonement Abelardian? They would think, "Well, you must be a member of some new cult" [Laughter]. And if you told them you went to Believers Chapel, they would know [Laughter] that that was true. I saw in the newspaper what it said. It lumped you with the Jehovah's Witnesses and the rest of those cults, didn't it? Someone gave me a clipping out of the paper, I was shocked.

Now, Canon Storr, he accepts the conclusion that one cannot get rid of the idea of vicarious punishment from Paul's teaching, but he adds, "We are in no way bound to accept Paul's interpretation of Christ's death". So here is a man who at least admits that we have a vicarious punishment in Paul's teaching, but he just says, "We don't have to follow Paul".

C. H. Spurgeon has written in one of his expositions of a text of the New Testament a paragraph that I think is an outstanding paragraph. He says, "Did God, instead of forgiving my sin without a penalty, make the anointed Substitute smart for it? Then I reverence the Lawgiver, the mighty Lawgiver who would not, even though He is Love itself, suffer His Law to be broken. I reverence that dreadful Judge of all the earth, who, though I be his child, yet since I had offended, would not spare me for my sin, but executed the penalty that was due to me upon Himself. Himself! For Christ His Son is One with Him, and dear to His Father's soul. Why, more than that, it makes me feel an intense love to Him. What? Was He so just, and yet was He so determined to save me, that He would not spare His only Son, but freely gave Him up to die? O blessed God, I tremble at Thy Justice, which yet I come to admire. But oh, Thou love - what shall I say of it? It wins my love. I must love Thee, my God - the Just and yet the Gracious One. I must love Thee".

Now that expresses the sentiment of a New Testament Christian. He senses the justice of God in the sacrifice of Christ, but he sees beyond the awful justice of it to the revelation of the love of it. And I want to say to you that you will never know the love of God until you know the justice of God. That his love through justice triumphs over our

sin and he wins us and I feel like Spurgeon. It wins my love to realize that. Now I don't want to preach. This is supposed to be a theologic class.

Third, "Is the Suffering Vicarious?" I want to read verses 4 through 6 of Isaiah 53. I want you to notice the personal pronouns,

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 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. (Our, we, us, and all related to what Jesus Christ did, I think about ten times. Will you count them for me and tell me afterwards if that's true? We have "our", "we", "us" with reference to the sufferings of our Lord. Now in verse 10, we have the statement) 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. (I was really looking for verse 11. That was a good verse too, however) 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 (and then in verse 12). He bore the sin of many".

That's the basis of Mark chapter 10 and verse 45 and there, remember, our Lord expounded it and applied it to himself. Would a great teacher make a statement like our Lord made in Mark chapter 10 in which he referred to this? Would a great teacher make a statement like that if it were not true? Let me illustrate what I mean. He said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many". Imagine someone saying something like that. Imagine someone saying, "I have come to give my life a ransom for many". Why the very idea is preposterous. To think,

suppose I were to say to you, "I have come to give my life a ransom for many". Why, you would immediately say, "What do you mean? How could your life be a ransom for many? Why even if your life were a kind of perfect life it might be a ransom for one life, but the idea that your life would be a ransom for many it's ridiculous". Why that's a remark of a conceited ass: "I've come to give my life a ransom for many".

And as I've said over and over again to you, these statements in the mouth of a human being are the statements of conceited asses. But there is something about our Lord Jesus that when he makes these statements, we don't even think that there's anything unusual about it all. In fact, when I said it to you, before I tried to explain it, you said, "Well, what's unusual about that?" Well here is a man who is saying that his life is a ransom for many. Why it's the attitude of a cocky, conceited ass. But there is something down underneath in the human heart that responds when our Lord Jesus makes statements like this even when we don't believe and we say, "Yes, it's true. It's right in his case".

I was preaching yesterday and I was preaching on John chapter 10 and in John chapter 10 the Lord Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep". And it suddenly dawned on me, but what is our Lord doing, but praising himself? And so in this statement, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep", our Lord Jesus praises himself.

Now again, if that were not true, it would be the remark of a conceited ass. But in our Lord's case, we pass through those statements and even if we don't believe in him we say, "Yes, it's true in the case of our Lord Jesus". We don't go around shouting, "The Lord Jesus is a braggart!" You don't find unbelievers doing that. You see, instead, this remarkable thing that these people who do not accept the truthfulness of our Lord Jesus, who do not believe in him will say, "Ah, Jesus the Christ is a great teacher. His system is a great system of ethics. We should follow the ethics of our master". And so they follow

this man, who on their own terms would be nothing but a lying braggart, but he praises himself.

Now, of course, our Lord's statement that he bore the sin of many is bound up in the fact that when our Lord suffers, it's a different suffering from the kind of suffering that I might suffer. In fact, it's a different kind of suffering from the suffering that a perfect man might suffer. For a perfect man could only give his life for one man, but our Lord says, "He bore the sins of many".

You see, the dignity of an act is determined by the character who performs the act. When prisoners are bartered at the conclusion of a war, the exchange is usually a soldier for a soldier; a man for a man. But in practice, that's not always true. In practice, in the past, a lieutenant on one side being turned over might be worth two or three of the privates in the other. A general might be worth a platoon or more. A beautiful woman who had been captured might be worth more than one of the soldiers. Or if by chance the king's son had been captured, for the price of the king's son, you might demand a division of men. But in our Lord's case, you have the dignity of a Godman. And because he is a Godman, he is able to die upon the cross at Calvary and there fulfill his own prophecy, "I lay down my life a ransom for many". "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep": one life for many sheep because his life is absolutely unique, the life of the Godman.

William G. T. Shedd is one of my favorite theologians because he probably is the clearest writing theologian of the 19th Century. I don't always agree with Shedd, but I do like to read Shedd because reading his theology is like reading a devotional paper for me. In one of his sermons somewhere, not in his theology, he tells of a visit to St. Margaret's Church Westminster in England where he heard a sermon from a young clergyman on the atonement. And among other striking and truthful utterances, he said, "He heard the young man say, 'The atonement of Jesus Christ is the hold which the sinner has upon God'. And he went on to say, "That sentence is the gospel in a nutshell. By pleading the

merits of Christ's oblation, the sinful creaturely, the creature utterly powerless in himself becomes almighty with God. For in so doing, he brings an argument to bear upon the infinite justice and infinite mercy of God which is omnipotent. He in effect says, 'The atonement of Jesus Christ is for sinners. I am a sinner. It's for me. Father, I hold to the atonement of Jesus Christ as my basis of acceptance with Thee and the argument with an eternal holy God is an omnipotent argument!.' It utterly prevails with him. So when modern man objects to the Anselmic view of the atonement of Christ that he offered a satisfaction to God, then I reply in the words that Luther replied to Erasmus, "Your thoughts of God are too human".

Now there is one final thing that I want to say something about before I close tonight and that is the eschatological character of the servant's ministry. We don't have time to develop this and it's not really important for our course because we're studying the atonement. I merely want to make this comment that in verse 15 of chapter 52, we have reference to some of the things that the servant will do at his Second Advent. "As many were astounded at Thee; (in Thy First Coming in verse 14, then there is a parenthesis) his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men" (So just as many were astonished at Thee at Thy first coming), so (in verse 15) shall he sprinkle many nations (at his Second Coming).

Commentators debate whether the term "sprinkle" should be "sprinkle" or "startle". It doesn't really make a great deal of difference. If we were to translate this "startled" then it would simply mean, "Just as many were astonished at the things that happened when the Messiah came in his First Coming, so they shall be astonished when he leaves the heavens and comes in his Second Advent to the earth. And kings shall be so astonished that they shall shut their mouths at him". That makes good sense.

On the other hand, it is also true that, "Just as many were astonished at Thee at Thy First Coming, so in like manner, he shall astonish people at his Second Coming by

the fact that when he comes, that shall be the time when Israel and the nations shall enter into the experience of the forgiveness of sin". And so that makes good sense too.

The important thing is that the servant's ministry is not only a ministry of suffering at his First Coming; it is also a ministry that moves on into the future to the Second Advent. Let me just show you in a couple of the other prophecies that this is a note that prevails throughout the Suffering Servant of Jehovah Songs. And then I'm going to stop about five minutes early, believe it or not, from our hour, and if you have a question, feel free to ask it. Isaiah chapter 42, verse 1,

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth justice to the nations. (That he does at his Second Advent. Verse 4) He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth: and the coasts shall wait for his law. (Verse 6) I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people (Israel), for a light of the Gentiles. (The ministry of our Lord touches the whole of the earth as Suffering Servant of Jehovah. Chapter 49, verses 6 and 7 we read) And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nations abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD who is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee."

So our Lord's ministry as Suffering Servant of Jehovah is a ministry of suffering, but it also issues in ultimate glory in the earth. Now do we have a question or so? We started

about three minutes early so we have troubling you, anything been puzzling to you? Do you have any kind of problem? [Laughter] Yes, sir?

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] I'm not sure that I understand the question.

[Comment from the same audience member]

[Johnson] Is the question, "Is there any connection between the penalty upon Cain for his sin and the suffering of Christ on the cross? Is that what you're saying?"

[Comment from the same audience member]

[Johnson] Well, I don't think I understand your question so I'll answer, "No".

[Laughter] Maybe you could come up afterwards. [Laughter]

[Comment from the same audience member]

[Johnson] Yes. Well, of course, that is referred to in the New Testament, Cain's sin. In 1 John, for example with, but of course, the ultimate punishment of Cain's sin is not the judgment that God placed upon Cain in the Old Testament because that was only a physical thing. The ultimate judgment for that sin is an eternal separation from God. And that, of course, Cain could not bear in this life and our Lord can only bear that kind of punishment on the cross. But perhaps we could talk about it a little afterwards.

[Comment from the same audience member]

[Johnson] Yes, as he looked forward to the bearing the curse, right. One more question, real quick.

[Question and discussion from the audience]

[Johnson] I think that was a question that Mr. Burns wanted to have answered, don't you? [Laughter] He put those words in your mouth [Laughter], so I refuse to answer his question to you. I'll just answer his question to himself. But I don't see the connection between the murder...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]