

Why it Pleased the Lord to Bruise His Son

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Now, in the 53rd of Isaiah, I'll not read it all, it's a well-known passage, but I'll read two verses. Verses 10 and 11. Yet it pleased Jehovah 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. 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.

Those are two verses out of the 53rd of Isaiah. And I want you to notice here that it says the Lord, that is Jehovah, shall bruise Him, that Him being Jesus, and the incident, of course, being the cross.

Now this is a frank statement here, and there are no qualifying words, and the word bruise here doesn't mean what you mean when you bump your arm accidentally or slip and fall, and you say it didn't hurt too much, but I have a bruise. That doesn't mean that at all. In the original it means a bruising so deep and so terrible to be beat to pieces and to crush are the words used to define the original word.

Now God bruises our Lord Jesus and puts Him to grief, this Suffering One. God does it, and this introduces divine sovereignty into the plan of redemption, and it lifts the crucifixion above mere murder. There are those who say they murdered our Lord, but it was not murder, it was a divine act.

And the sovereignty of God here, makes the cross where Jesus died to be not a gallows, but an altar. And there is a vast difference. The criminal dies on a gallows, but the Lamb dies on the altar. And while the world put what they considered a criminal on the gallows, God, by the miracle and wonder of His eternal purpose, turned that criminal into a lamb and that gallows into an altar.

They who crucified Him didn't know the nature of their act. Peter later said that they, by wicked hands, had crucified and slain Him, but their hands were wicked because of their evil motives. But they nevertheless fulfilled the purposes of God.

But let us not imagine that they who slew Him, sacrificed Him as a priest sacrifices a lamb, for it was not they that slew Him really. It was God that slew Him for it says that the Lord bruised him and put him to grief.

Now it was so of inescapable necessity. God could not permit man with his blundering ways and his awkward blundering hands to do this sacred act. Men shouted and cursed and drove nails, but the plan was far above them. The plan of God, it was the work of the Trinity, and it was by the collaboration of the Holy Three.

And it says the Lord bruised Him, that is, beat Him to pieces so that He was crushed completely. He was born to be crushed. The king aspect of His life had to follow, and He

knew this, and He knew that He could not avoid the crushing. He could not avoid the bruising and be made king, so He turned His back on the devil who offered Him the kingdoms of this world.

He did not say to the devil, you are bluffing. You have not the power to give me the world. He said, get behind me, Satan. That was all. He put Satan behind Him, and the devil fled away, but he would not allow Himself to be made king until He had become a bruised Lamb, and He would not permit Himself to be a judge and a divider over men. His soul shall be made an offering for sin.

Now, the soul of a man, the Bible is not always clear in the difference between soul and spirit. Some people are. I wish I knew as much at any time as a lot of preachers know all the time. I wish I knew as much about anything as some do about everything.

So, I'm not clear about the difference between soul and spirit when it's used in the Bible. I think that they are sometimes used interchangeably. But I do know that the word "soul" here means the pleasures, the enjoyments, the feelings, the sentient being. It is that in a man which is above his body and even above his intellect. And that had to be made an offering for sin. So, the Lord made it an offering. And all this was the offering that He made.

Now, if you go back to the Old Testament, you will find there what this making an offering meant. I'll read briefly from the ninth of Leviticus. They brought that which Moses commanded before the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the congregation drew near and stood before the Lord.

And Moses said, this is the thing which the Lord commanded that ye should do, and the glory of the Lord shall appear unto you. And Moses said unto Aaron, go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt offering, and make an atonement for thyself and for the people, and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them, as the Lord commanded.

Aaron therefore went unto the altar, and slew the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself. And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him, and he dipped his fingers in the blood and put it upon the horns of the altar and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar. And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people and blessed them and came down from offering the sin offering and the burnt offering and the peace offering.

And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation and came out and blessed the people. And the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat, which when all the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces. They were caught between a delirium of joy and a great fear. And so, they shouted, and as though to rebuke themselves, they fell on their faces in awe before the mighty fire.

Now it was in fulfillment of this and other such passages that our Lord made his soul an offering for sin. And it says in the text that it pleased the Lord to bruise him. Now it states plainly that it pleased Him. And I went to look it up in its original to see whether maybe our English word might not have been misused. You know, translators are

human beings too. But there's no error here. Pleased is the word. He was pleased to bruise. He was glad to do it. He bruised His son and made His soul an offering for sin.

Did He then, the great God, enjoy the tears and the blood and the agony of His only begotten Son? Is He the great saddest of the universe, reveling in the sight of suffering? No, the whole Bible cries out against that creed of blasphemy.

And that whole Bible sings of the mercy and grace and loving kindness of the Lord. And it declares that God cannot possibly see a man suffer and not suffer with him. He makes all our bed in his sickness and in our grief sees with us. Think not thou can shed a tear, and thy maker is not near. Think not thou can sigh a sigh, and thy maker is not nigh. No, God suffers along with us.

And so why then was He pleased to see His Son suffer? Well, Jesus was God walking among us. And don't forget this. While our Lord Jesus suffered in His body on the tree, the heart of the Father suffered along with Him. And for every pang that rent the heart of Jesus, an equal pang rent the heart of the Father. Let's not forget it.

So, while the Father was pleased that the Son was offered as a sacrifice, He was pleased and suffered along in that pleasure. That was the strange wonder of the redemptive act of God, that He should revel in the suffering which He Himself did in order that He might redeem mankind.

Now, why was He pleased? He was pleased because the crushing and the bruising and the bleeding fulfilled a purpose which He had purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began. The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.

Now, that word "pleasure" means a delightful matter. And what is this delightful matter that angels desired to look into? What is that delightful matter which a sage and saint and poet sang? What is that delightful matter which made God willing to sacrifice His own Son and take pleasure in having Him die? What is that delightful matter that that dying purchased for us?

Well, it was a delightful matter indeed. It opened a fountain for cleansing in which the unclean might bathe. And the Lord God had wanted this fountain opened in the house of David, and this was the only way to open it.

Now, I say it was the only way to open it. Let us not say God might have thought of ten or a hundred ways. There was only one. There was not two, but one. Not ten, not five, but one. It was the opening of the fountain by the crushing and bruising of the Lamb. And so how wise was the English Cowper who said, there is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, and sinners plunge beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains. That was the delightful matter. To a holy God it was a delightful matter that a cleansing fountain could be opened where unclean persons who wanted to be clean might become clean by bathing. Then He ransomed and redeemed and delivered and set free.

God hates all prisons and all chains and all manacles and shackles. God hates all oppression and all bondage. And for everyone who would be free, who would come out

of prison, who would have the chains taken from his hands, and who would lift up his head and sit at the king's table, this was the delightful matter that provided it. And this provision brought about the delightful matter called deliverance.

And then He wanted to give life. God hates death, and He hates everything that's death, and He hates half-death, and He hates all that's dying, and He hates mortality, and He loves immortality and life eternal. In order that He might give to this fallen race in prison and in bondage, this unclean race, that He might give life and immortality, He let His Son die, and He was pleased to let Him die, and in His own great heart suffered with Him when He was dying. And the delightful matter was that He could give life to the dead and immortality to the mortal.

And then He won back a race dear to Him. For there cannot but be an emotional content here. Let nobody, nobody talk to you in legalistic terms when we talk about Calvary or God's justice or justifying work.

I have read theological works that were correct but cold, and they made the atonement in His blood to be a legal transaction over the counter under the law. And it is all that God knows, but it's infinitely more than that. It is so highly charged with emotion that when the Lamb would go out to die, He stopped long enough to bleed and sweat on His way to die.

And when He would die, He sang a hymn before He went out to bleed. And when He would die and rise again, He sang among His brethren. So, there's a high emotional content here in all this. It pleased the Lord. The very word "pleased" is an emotion. To feel pleasure is an emotional thing. And if the church of Christ could only let go, could only let go.

As soon as the benediction is pronounced, the average church member goes out, and on the way home he's laughing and letting himself go. He goes to a ballgame and lets go. But when he thinks about God, he has been taught by the devil, through the lips of men who should have known better, who were not themselves servants of the devil, but who unknowingly and unwittingly played the devil's game. He was taught that the only way a Christian should live would be to be sober faced.

And whereas there is a high emotional content here, I stood here and sang or partly mumbled along with you on that song, not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain. And I wondered why I didn't feel it more. I wondered why it did not have a greater charge of moral sentiency in it for me. And I looked up to God and said, God, you know I believe it, and my will is settled, even if my heart for the moment isn't feeling it so keenly.

So, I don't insist that we should always be in a state of high emotion, thus to live. It would be impossible thus to live very long. But the children of God should have those moments, as God had those moments and Christ had them, when he leaped with joy at the thought and at the knowledge that the fountain was open, the delightful matter had been wrought, the ransom had been paid, the redeemed were free, the deliverer had come, and life had been given. So, God was pleased to bruise him. And every ransomed soul is the reason that God was pleased.

Go to the Book of Revelation, if you will. I don't ask that we should give any exposition here, only that we should just gaze a bit and look and notice:

And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, And he, taking the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they said, were ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands cried, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. 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.

That's why it pleased God that that chorus, so vast that they didn't count them, so vast that even an angel or an apostle couldn't count them, that chorus, rank upon rank and rank upon rank of altos and contraltos and mezzo-sopranos and sopranos and basses and baritones and all the rest, sang together in gorgeous harmony, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to redeem us. And they fell on their faces and threw their crowns at His feet.

That was why it pleased the Lord. He looked past the suffering and the dying. He looked past the anguish to the time when the redeemed souls should join together in one harmonious song with Baptists and Methodists and Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox and all the rest and where they have actually found Jesus Christ. Not those great denominations please, but the redeemed out of all denominations back over the centuries, and all living today and those who have nothing to do with denominations. If they're born anew and redeemed, they'll join that chorus too.

I don't know whether I'll be able to sing then, but I'll be pleased if God will just let me turn the music. I'll be happy just to turn the music and to hear the vast oratorio of redemption. The last final hallelujah chorus before eternity displaces time.

Now, my brethren, we have our communion service to keep all this in remembrance. And I wonder if we're psychologically prepared for it. You've driven here and you've stopped and gone. Or you have walked here, or you have traveled by bus or some other way you've gotten here. Just the act of traveling through Vanity Fair, just the act of going 20 blocks in Sodom, unfits us for thinking thoughts like these.

Oh, may God, may God honor us and bless us by letting us think these thoughts after Him. Holy Ghost with light divine, shine upon this heart of mine and this heart of yours and make us psychologically able and inwardly able to understand what this communion service is about.

We do celebrate the Lord's death till He comes. We're in, as I've said a thousand times, in direct lineal descent to the apostles and to Christ Himself by the blood of the everlasting covenant. May God make us worthy.