

*The Servant of Jehovah:
The Sufferings of the Messiah and
The Glory That Should Follow*

by
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CHAPTER VII

"THE RESURRECTION AND FUTURE GLORY OF
THE SERVANT OF JEHOVAH"

With the 10th verse begins the account of the Messiah's exaltation and glory. But first it is once more reiterated and emphasized that they were not mere chance experiences which the Servant of Jehovah passed through. Nor was it merely that wicked men were allowed to work out the evil of their hearts in the sufferings and humiliations which they were permitted to heap upon Him, and thus make manifest by their treatment of "the Holy One" their enmity towards God.

No; "the supreme *causa efficiens*," as Delitzsch expresses it, was God, "who made the sin of men subservient to His pleasure, His will, and predetermined counsel."

"Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise (דַּכָּאוּ , *dak'o*, literally to crush) Him; He hath put Him to grief."¹

This is the confession of the penitents whose eyes are now opened to see the true meaning of it all. He who "had done no violence nor was deceit found in His mouth," "whose actions were invariably prompted by pure love, and whose speech consisted of unclouded sincerity and truth," was yet "crushed" and put to grief by Jehovah. "Here is not only the mystery of suffering innocence"; but of innocence suffering at the hands of righteousness and perfect love." Yes, mystery of mysteries; and apart from the explanation He Himself gives of it, it is the most inexplicable thing in God's moral government. But it is fully explained, not only in all that preceded in this chapter, but by the great purpose of redemption formed by the triune God before the world was founded, and which is progressively unfolded in the pages of the Old and New Testaments.

In this light of God's own revelation the sufferings of the Messiah in which the good pleasure of God's will was accomplished, become a mystery of light in which there is no darkness at all. We see that this pleasure of Jehovah in the sufferings of the Righteous One, to use the words of another, "does not proceed from caprice, but that He acted righteously as well as sovereignly in what He did.

"Not only did the Lord bruise Him, but it was the 'good pleasure of His will' to do so. He who has no pleasure in the death of the wicked was pleased to put His righteous Servant to grief--not, of course, because the death-agony was a pleasure to look upon, but as means to the fulfilment of a great purpose.

"Even a noble-minded man finds pleasure in contemplating heroic and self-sacrificing love in others, to

1 דַּכָּאוּ , *he'cheli*, as is generally admitted by scholars, is the hiphil of חָלָה , *chalah*. Both the verbs "to bruise," or "crush," and "to put to grief," or "afflict with sickness," go back to verses 4 and 5: "He hath borne our griefs," or "sicknesses," and "He was bruised," or "crushed," "for our iniquities."

accomplish glorious ends. We look back, for example, on our martyrs, who suffered cruel death for the Gospel's sake; we forget the physical torture they endured; or rather it ceases to be a horror in our eyes, and becomes a glory; we read of their sufferings with uplifted and joyful hearts, thanking God who gave such grace to men. And even so, we cannot help thinking, the Lord, whose pity is like unto a father's pity, had pleasure in the self-sacrifice of His Servant; yea, had pleasure in the very appointment which issued in the self-sacrifice. And if we add to this--as exhibited in what follows--the results which the sufferings achieved, in their nature, blissfulness, magnitude, and perpetuity, we shall understand how it comes to be said, 'Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him: He did put Him to grief.' "²

These blessed results the spirit of prophecy in the mouth of the penitent confessors now proceeds to enumerate, after emphasizing yet again that they are all conditioned on His sufferings and death.

"If (or when), His soul shall make an offering for sin."

The word תָּשִׁים , *tasim* ("shall make"), is either second person masculine, in which case the rendering would be as in the Authorized and Revised Versions, "When Thou (*i.e.* God) shalt make His soul an offering for sin"; or third person feminine, "When His soul shall make an offering," which is the rendering accepted in the margin and by most modern scholars. The latter translation is preferable, as Jehovah is nowhere else addressed in this chapter. In either case the Servant of Jehovah gives His life as an offering for the sin of others and takes on Himself the penalty which their guilt had incurred. "Language could not more simply and unequivocally declare the significance of His death."

The word rendered "offering for sin" אָשָׂם , *asham*, really means "trespass," but just as the word חַטָּאת *chattath*, which is used for "sin offering," "denotes first the *sin*, then the punishment of the sin, and the expiation of the sin, and hence the sacrifice which cancels the sin; so *asham* signifies first the guilt or debt, then the compensation or penance, and hence the sacrifice which discharges the debt or guilt and sets the man free." There was much in common between the trespass offering and the "sin offering." Both are called *kodesh-kadashim*, "most holy,"³ and as regards the manner in which the sacrifice was to be slain, and as to which portions were to be burnt on the altar, and what parts assigned to the priests, there was "one law for them both."⁴

Yet there were differences between the *chattath* (sin offering) and *asham* (trespass offering), and in their moral and typical significance each one of the sacrifices set forth a distinctive aspect of the great work of atonement which was to be accomplished by the Messiah⁵ and the blessed results accruing therefrom to sinful men. On the whole, it is correct to say with Dr. Culross, that while the sin offering looked to the sinful state of the offerer, the trespass offering was appointed to meet *actual transgressions*, the fruit of the sinful state. The sin offering set forth propitiation, the trespass offering set forth satisfaction. It was brought by the transgressor "to make amends for the harm that he hath

2 Culross.

3 Lev. vi. 17; xiv. 13.

4 Lev. vii. 7.

5 "Every species of sacrifice had its own primary idea. The fundamental idea of the *'olah* (burnt offering) was *oblatio*, or the offering of worship; that of the *sh'lamin* (peace offering) *conciliatio*, or the knitting of fellowship; that of the *minchah* (meat offering) *donatio*, or sanctifying consecration; that of the *chattath* (sin offering) *expiatio*, or atonement; that of the *asham* (trespass offering) *mulcta (satisfactio)*, or a compensatory payment. The self-sacrifice of the Servant of Jehovah may be presented under all these points of view. It is the complete antitype, the truth, the object, and the end of all the sacrifices" (Franz Delitzsch).

done." "It symbolized rights violated and compensation rendered, debt contracted and satisfaction made." But whether it be a sin offering or a trespass offering it had to be *slain*, and its blood shed before it could become a *sacrifice*.

I. The first of the blessed results of Messiah's vicarious sufferings and atoning death which are enumerated in this 10th verse is expressed in the two Hebrew words, **יִרְאֶה זְרָע**, *yir'eh zera'*, "*He shall see His* (or more literally a) *seed* (or *posterity*)."⁶ Jewish controversialists, supported by some Gentile rationalistic writers, have based a quibble on this clause. Taking *zera'*, "seed," in its literal sense as denoting natural offspring, they have argued that this prophecy cannot apply to Jesus of Nazareth, who had no natural progeny, overlooking the fact that this "seed" (like the other fruits of His atoning Passion set forth in the last three verses of the prophecy) follows His death, on which it is conditioned, and therefore cannot be taken in a literal sense.⁶ No; the Messiah's "seed," of which the spirit of prophecy speaks here, is the glorious *spiritual* progeny which He has begotten with "the travail of His soul," and the new family which He came to found, and which sprang, so to say, at His resurrection out of His empty tomb, is the new "seed of Israel," or the Household of Faith. The spiritual "seed"--the "bringing of many sons unto glory"⁷--was the chief joy which was set before Him, for the sake of which He endured the cross, despising the shame. Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit; and the Church of Christ, consisting of the multitude of the redeemed out of all nations, Jew and Gentile--which was born when He died, and which looks back to Him as the source of its life and the origin of its being--is the continuous living witness to this truth.

The parallel scripture to Isa. liii. is Ps. xxii. There also the sufferings of the Messiah are minutely foretold in advance as well as the glory which should follow. And among the blessed results which are there set forth as following from His death is, "*A seed (zera') shall serve Him*";⁸ which shows that it is not a literal but a spiritual seed, namely, His disciples, or followers, who also "serve" Him.

II. "*He shall prolong His days*." How wonderful, how seemingly paradoxical! He "pours out His soul unto death," as a trespass offering; He is "cut off from the land of the living"; is dead and buried, and yet He shall live and have continuance of days!

How is it possible? The answer to this question is that the Messiah was not only to die for our sins but must rise again from the dead "according to the Scriptures." And in the light of the glorious fulfilment all these seeming paradoxes in the Old Testament in reference to the person and mission of the Messiah are cleared up.

Our Lord Jesus, who was delivered up for our offences, was raised again for our justification, and ascended into heaven, where He now sitteth at the right hand of God, whence His word of encouragement and assurance comes to His disciples: "*Fear not, I am the First and the Last, and the Living One; and I became dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of death and of Hades*."⁹

This prediction that Messiah shall "prolong His days" after having died, is in accord also with what we

6 **יִרְאֶה זְרָע**, *zera'* is again and again used in the Hebrew Scriptures in a figurative sense of spiritual seed. It is used also in this sense of spiritual "seed," or disciples, in post-Biblical Rabbinical writings.

7 Heb. ii. 10.

8 Ps. xxii. 30.

9 Rev. i. 17, 18.

read in other Scriptures, as for instance Ps. xvi. 10: "*Thou wilt not leave my soul in (or to) Sheol; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption*"; and Ps. xxi.: "*He asked life of Thee, Thou gavest it Him, even length of days for ever and ever,*" which Jonathan in his Targum, and Kimchi in his Commentary, themselves explain that the expression *orekh yamim*, "*length of days,*" refers to "*the life of the world to come,*" and so in fact it must be, since it is for ever and ever.

III. "*And the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand,*" i.e. God's will shall be fully accomplished by Him: the mission on which He is sent He shall triumphantly carry through. But if we want to know more particularly what this "pleasure of Jehovah" is, which is thus to be brought to prosperous issue "in His hand," we find the answer in the commission entrusted to the perfect Servant of Jehovah as set forth in this second part of Isaiah. Let me quote only two or three passages from preceding chapters.

*"Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen, in whom My soul delighteth: I have put My Spirit upon Him, He shall bring forth judgment (or "justice") to the nations. . . . I Jehovah have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold Thy right hand, and will keep Thee and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." "And now, saith Jehovah that formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, and that Israel be gathered unto Him: . . . yea, He saith, It is too light a thing that Thou shouldest be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to 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."*¹⁰

This then, in brief, is the pleasure of Jehovah which shall prosper in His hand, or be brought to a triumphant accomplishment through His mediation, namely, the regathering of Israel, the bringing back of Jacob, not only to his land but into new covenant relationship with God, of which He Himself will be the bond; the illumination of the Gentile world with the light of the knowledge of the true and living God; the establishing of judgment and justice in the earth; the deliverance of men from spiritual blindness and the bondage of sin, and the bringing near of God's salvation to all men throughout the whole world, even "unto the end of the earth."

And to this we must add words from the New Testament which open up yet more illimitable vistas of this "good pleasure" of Jehovah which is to be realized in and through the mediation of the Messiah. "*For it was the good pleasure of the Father,*" writes the Apostle Paul, "*that in Him should all the fulness dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of the cross . . . whether things upon the earth or things in heaven.*" And again, "*Making known unto us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Him unto a dispensation of the fulness of times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth . . . according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will.*"¹¹

"Glorious consummation of redemption," exclaims one, "which is also the manifestation in its fulness of the Divine Love!"

10 Isa. xlii. 1-7; xlix. 5, 6.

11 Col. i. 19, 20; Eph. i. 9-11.