

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

by
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CHAPTER VIII

"JEHOVAH'S FINAL WORD CONCERNING HIS SERVANT--
THE GLORIOUS AWARD FOR HIS SUFFERINGS."

In the last two verses "the prophecy leaves the standpoint of Israel's retrospective acknowledgment of the long-rejected Servant of Jehovah, and becomes once more the prophetic organ of God Himself, who acknowledges the Servant as His own."¹ In this climax God puts, so to say, His own seal to the penitent confession of repentant Israel, and sets forth once again the glorious results of the vicarious sufferings and atoning death of His righteous Servant.

"*He shall see of the travail of His soul*" (or, more literally, "because," or, "in consequence of the toil or labour of His soul), He shall see and be satisfied." This "travail of soul" includes, as has been well observed, "all the toil, suffering, and sorrow through which He came, and has been outlined, if not unfolded, in the previous part of the prophecy. It culminated when He was cut off out of the land of the living, and His soul was made an offering for sin, accomplishing what the Levitical sacrifices only symbolized. No accumulation of mere bodily sufferings could satisfy these expressions. The 'travail' is that of the soul; it has its seat within, and is such as might find voice in those words reported from Gethsemane, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,' or in those other words reported from the cross, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' It is what the Greek litany calls 'unknown agonies.'¹²

But what is it that He shall see, *i.e.* look upon with delight, and be abundantly satisfied?³ For answer we have, I believe, to go back to the verse which immediately precedes as well as to what follows.

Abarbonel, followed by some Christian commentators, paraphrases, "He shall see, *i.e.* His seed; He shall be satisfied, *i.e.* with length of days." That is true, but it goes beyond and includes the full and final accomplishment of all "the pleasure of Jehovah." In part this is already being realized. He who for us men and our salvation endured agony and shame, and poured out His soul unto death, is now seated at the right hand of God, being endowed as the Son of Man with "length of days for ever and ever," and everywhere He beholds with joy "a seed that serveth Him."

Then, apart also from the multitude which no man can number, who have been redeemed by His precious blood and who out of love for Him have sought to do the will of His Father in heaven, the *indirect* influences of His gospel in almost all parts of the earth have been great and wonderful. But

1 Delitzsch.

2 Culross.

3 The verb **יִשְׂבַּע**, *yisba* ' = from. **שָׁבַע**, *sabha* ' , means not only to be contented, but to be *filled*, or abundantly supplied. It stands for the fullest realization of expectation, or gratification of any particular desire.

this is not all for which Christ suffered and died. This is not all the "pleasure of Jehovah," which He came to accomplish. It is only when Redemption is fully completed that "He shall see" a glorious completed church "without spot or wrinkle"; a restored and converted Israel which shall bear upon itself the inscription "Holiness unto Jehovah," and be "the priests of Jehovah" and the willing "ministers" of God in diffusing the blessings of their Messiah's gospel among all nations; a world which shall be "filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea"; and a new heaven and a new earth wherein shall dwell righteousness for evermore. Yes, He shall see all this as the outcome of the travail of His soul, *and be satisfied*.

One of the most blessed results of the "travail of His soul," and that which at the same time forms no little part of the "satisfaction" for all the sufferings which He endured, is the prerogative with which He is endowed of removing guilt and imparting righteousness to those who, through faith in Him, seek communion with God.

"By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many," or, to give a more literal rendering of the words in the order in which they stand in the Hebrew, "By His knowledge shall make righteous (or, bring righteousness) the Righteous One (My Servant) many."

It cannot be positively stated whether בְּדַעְתּוֹ *beda* 'to (by His knowledge), is to be understood in a subjective sense of the Servant of Jehovah, *i.e.* "according to His knowledge," or objectively, "by the knowledge of Him." Grammatically it might be rendered either way, but it is correct to say with Delitzsch (who himself favours the subjective view) that nearly all the commentators who understand by the Servant of Jehovah the divine Redeemer, give preference to the latter of the two explanations, namely, *by the knowledge of Him on the part of others*. And this, it seems to me, is the more satisfactory view. The kind of "knowledge" expressed in the word is not only that which has reference to understanding with the mind, but a practical, experimental knowledge⁴--a spiritual *heart* acquaintance with Him, a personal appropriation by a living faith of His redeeming work for sinners--such a "knowledge," for instance, as is implied in the words of Christ, "This is life eternal, *that they might know Thee* the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou didst send," or, in the prayer of the Apostle, "*That I might know* Him and the power of His resurrection."

The construction of the phrase צַדִּיק עֲבָדִי , *Tsaddiq 'abhdī*, is unusual, and is intended to emphasize the unique character of the Servant of Jehovah and to explain in part *how it is* that He is the bringer of righteousness to others.

"It is in the Hebrew language as a rule, that the adjective should be placed *after* the substantive to which it belongs. But in the passage before us that rule is transgressed. 'Righteous' is not placed after 'Servant,' but stands before it, and that without the article. The omission of the article before words which are, nevertheless, definite, indicates both in Hebrew and Greek that the person or thing denoted is to be regarded as standing in a sphere of its own--singular, isolated, or pre-eminent. So it is here. We must translate 'One that is righteous, or 'the Righteous One.' The omission of the article indicates that the person thus spoken of held in earth a position of righteousness that was singular and isolated, and that there was none like it. The peculiar position of the word 'righteous' preceding, and not following its substantive, is intended to give especial prominence to the thought it expresses. Our minds are intended to rest on the righteousness of the Righteous One as the procuring cause of the blessing spoken of in this verse. In virtue of having been the Righteous One, He becomes the causer, or bringer of righteousness to His believing people.

4 יָדַע , *yada*, stands in the Bible for *experimental* knowledge.

"Yet whilst prominence is thus given to the great fact of His righteousness, it is important also to observe that the words 'My Servant' are added. . . .

"It is not in virtue of that essential righteousness that pertains to Him as God--one with the Father and the Holy Ghost--that He brings to us righteousness. The righteousness by which we are constituted righteous is a *service*, and *obedience* which He became man in order to render, and which He commenced and finished *in the earth*. It commenced when He said, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." It terminated when He had become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and said, "It is finished." It is true, indeed, that unless He had been one to whom righteousness essentially belonged, He could not have wrought out the righteousness which He did work out as the Servant. The service of that Servant had in it a superhuman excellency, for that Servant was Immanuel--God manifest in the flesh."⁵

The word יצדיק , *yats'dik*, followed as it is by the preposition ל , *le*, ought, as I have already suggested, to be rendered "shall cause, or bring righteousness."

The רבים , *rabbim* ("many"), to whom He thus brings righteousness, or constitutes righteous, is the mass of mankind, or all--not only in Israel, but amongst the nations also--who shall respond to His call, and by a living faith enter into an acquaintance with Him. It is probable that this passage was in the mind of our Saviour when, on the night of His betrayal, He took the cup and said to His disciples, "This is my blood of the New Covenant which is poured out *for many* (τὸ περὶ πολλῶν⁶), and it is almost certain that it was in the mind of the Apostle Paul when writing Romans v. 12-21, which is an inspired unfolding and application of the same doctrine of substitution which is set forth in this great Old Testament prophecy. After writing of the consequence of Adam's transgression to the whole of mankind, he says: "*But not as the trespass, so also is the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many be dead, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many. . . . For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One shall the many (οἱ πολλοί), be made righteous.*" To repeat, it is the righteousness of faith which is the consequence of justification on the ground of the atoning work of the Messiah which is set forth in this passage, yet those are not altogether wrong who maintain that it *includes also* that "righteousness of life which springs by an inward necessity out of those sanctifying powers that are bound up with the atoning work which we have made our own."⁷ For though this is not the ground of our acceptance before God, it is yet important to remember that the doctrine of justification does not stand alone in the Bible, and that God does not constitute any one righteous to whom He does not also impart the power *to be* righteous. We are justified that we may also be sanctified and glorified, and the outward seal of the true followers of Christ is that they "depart from iniquity" and "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." But to return to our immediate context. "Because our righteousness has its roots in the forgiveness of sins as an absolutely unmerited gift of grace without works, the prophecy returns once more from the justifying work of the Servant of Jehovah to His sin-expunging work as the basis of all righteousness."

"*And their iniquities He shall bear.*" The introduction of the pronoun, as Dr. Alexander observes, makes a virtual antithesis suggesting the idea of exchange or mutual substitution. *They* shall receive His

5 B. W. Newton.

6 Matt. xxvi. 28.

7 Delitzsch.

righteousness, and *He* shall bear the heavy burden⁸ of their iniquities. "From this doctrine the heart that is self-righteous, hard, and proud may turn scornfully away--as Naaman did when told to dip seven times in Jordan; but to the man who knows himself to be a ruined and helpless sinner, and who has been made to sigh for reconciliation and peace with God, the news of grace to the ill-deserving manifested in righteousness will be welcome beyond all thought, and mighty to produce newness of life."⁹

Before we pass on to the last verse let me quote also a note by Delitzsch on this last clause: "This *yisbol* (He shall bear)," he says, "which stands along with future verbs, and being also future itself, refers to something to be done by the Servant of Jehovah after the completion of the work to which He is called in this life, and denotes the *continued operation* of His 'bearing,' or 'carrying' (ver. 4) through His own active mediation. His continued lading of our trespasses upon Himself is merely the constant pressure and presentation of His atonement which has been offered once for all. The dead yet living One, because of His one self-sacrifice, is an eternal Priest, who now lives to distribute the blessings that He has acquired."

The last verse takes us back, as it were, to the very beginning of this prophecy (chap. lii. 13-15), and sets forth again the personal exaltation of the One who has been despised and rejected of men, and the victor's prize, which He shall receive on His triumphant emergence from the conflict with the powers of darkness.

"Therefore will I divide (or 'allot') to Him a portion among (or 'in') the many (or 'great'), and with the strong shall He divide the spoil."¹⁰ The award is bestowed upon Him by Jehovah's own hand--"I will divide Him a portion"--and the prize is glorious beyond conception, for the *rabbim*, "many," who form His portion include not only "His own" nation, whom He saves and blesses, and who shall yet render Him such loyal devotion and service as the world has not known, but extends beyond the bounds of Israel to the Gentile nations.

"What is meant by His having His portion among the *rabbim* (the 'many,' or 'great')" observes Delitzsch, "is clearly seen from such passages as chaps. lii. 15 and xlix. 7, according to which the great ones of the earth will be brought to do homage to Him, or, at all events, to submit to Him." But this is only a mere outline. For the full extent of His "portion" as the Son of David and Son of Man, who, in order to carry out the pleasure of Jehovah in the redemption of the world, took upon Himself the form of a servant, we have to go to a Scripture like the 2nd Psalm: "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession"; or Psalm lxxii.:

"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea.
And from the River unto the ends of the earth.

8 The thought expressed in יִסְבֹּל, *yisbol*--"shall bear"-- is that of pressure as of a heavy burden. It is the future of the same verb as is rendered "carried" in ver. 4.

9 Culross.

10 The Septuagint and Vulgate, followed by the Fathers and many modern commentators, render בְּרַבִּים (*barabbim*), among the many, and אֶת־עֲצוּמִים (*eth- 'atzumim*), with the strong, as accusatives, and explain "the great" and "the strong" as constituting the spoil given to the Servant of Jehovah. But the more natural construction of the words is that given in the English versions. בְּ (be) occurs nowhere else as a connective of this verb with its object, and the particle, אֶת (eth), must mean *with*, as it is indeed rendered in this same verse, where it occurs again, as well as in the ninth verse.

They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him;
And His enemies shall lick the dust.

Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him:
All nations shall serve Him."

But while His portion is "divided" or allotted to Him of God, He Himself "divides spoil" "with" or "among" the strong. These (*atsumim*, "strong" or "mighty ones") are those who flock to His banner and go forth with Him to the conflict against the powers of darkness. They are those of whom we read in the third verse of the 110th Psalm: "Thy people offer themselves willingly (or 'are all willingness,' or 'thorough devotion') in the day of Thy power." They are those whom the beloved John beheld in vision as "the armies of heaven," following in His train as He rides forth in glorious majesty, conquering and to conquer, "riding upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure."¹¹

With these He condescends to share His triumph and to divide the spoil taken from the enemy by making them partners with Himself in His kingdom and glory, even as they were sharers in His sufferings. And truly He and no one else is worthy to be thus exalted, and deserves the glorious award which God bestows upon Him. This is emphasized in the recapitulation of His peerless merit in the last words of this wonderful prophecy.

"Because He poured out His soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. And He (Himself) bore the sin of many. And He made intercession for the transgressors."

The phrase **תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר**, *tahath asher*, expresses more distinctly than the English rendering "because" the idea of compensation or reward. It has been translated by some "instead of," or "in return for that," *i.e.* the glorious portion or allotment which is divided to Him by the Father is 'in return' for the great Redemption which He has accomplished with His own life's blood. The word **הִעֲרָה**, *he'erah* (rendered 'poured out'), means 'to strip,' 'lay bare,' 'empty,' or to 'pour clean out,' even to the very last remnant.¹² And it was "His soul," which stands here for *His life-blood*, which He thus *completely* emptied out "unto death."

And although all this was in accord with the pre-determinate counsel of God, He did it *voluntarily*, for this also is implied in the original verb, which accords again with His own word, which has already been quoted: "*Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life. . . . No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down Myself.*" And not only did He thus voluntarily pour out His soul unto death as an atonement for sinners, but "*He was numbered*" (or, as Delitzsch, Hengstenberg, and others more properly translate the reflexive verb **נִמְנָה**, *nim'nah*, *He suffered Himself, i.e.* voluntarily, to be numbered, or "reckoned") "*with transgressors,*" **פְּשָׁעִים**, *posh'im*--that is, not only ordinary sinners, such as all men are, but *criminals*--open transgressors of the laws of God and of man, with whom to be associated would be a great humiliation for ordinary men, and how much more to the "Holy One." To the believer it is precious and interesting to remember that this clause formed one of the direct quotations from this chapter made by our Lord Jesus Himself just before His betrayal and crucifixion. "This which is written," He said, "must be fulfilled in Me, And He was reckoned among transgressors."¹³ It was, indeed, as another writer observes, "one of those remarkable coincidences which were brought

11 Rev. xix. 14.

12 Delitzsch.

13 Luke xxii. 37.

about by Providence between the prophecies and the circumstances of our Saviour's passion"¹⁴ that the Christ should have been crucified between "two thieves" (or, more literally, "robbers"), but this one striking incident did not exhaust the scope of the prophetic word.

He suffered Himself also to be reckoned with transgressors "in the judgment of His countrymen, and in the unjust judgment (or 'sentence') by which He was delivered up to death as a wicked apostate and transgressor of the law."¹⁵ "And He"--the pronoun is *emphatic*--"He Himself bare the sin of many"--blessed words which are again and again joyously echoed in the New Testament, as, for instance, in 1 Pet. ii. 24: "*Who His own self bare*" (or "carried up") "*our sins in His own body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sin, might live unto righteousness*"; and Heb. ix. 26-28, where there is also an underlying allusion to the great Old Testament prophecy: "*But now once at the end of the ages hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after death the judgment; so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for Him unto salvation.*"

Yes, He Himself, the Holy One, who knew no sin, bare our sin right "up to the tree," and "was made sin for us," enduring the penalty due to it on our behalf, that we might for ever be freed from the accursed load and "become the righteousness of God in Him."

The whole prophetic picture of the sufferings of the Messiah and of the glory that should follow closes with a brief but pregnant reference to His priestly function:

"*And He made (or 'maketh') intercession for the transgressors.*"

The verb *יָפַגֵּא*, *yaph'gia* ('made intercession'), is an instance of the imperfect or indefinite future, and expresses a work begun, but not yet ended. Its most striking fulfilment, as Delitzsch observes, was the prayer of the crucified Saviour, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But this work of intercession which He began on the cross He still continues at the right hand of God, where He is now seated, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins. Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost (or "completely," "all along") them that draw near unto God through Him, "*seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*" Hence also the triumphant challenge of the Apostle, "*Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea, rather that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*"

But remember, dear Christian reader, that He who is now our Advocate (or blessed *Paraclete*) with the Father, by whose unceasing priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary our life of fellowship with God is maintained, bears also "His own" nation Israel on His heart. It was for them primarily that He prayed on the cross. And now at God's right hand He still pleads for them, "*For Zion's sake will I not hold My peace,*" He says, "*and for Jerusalem's sake will I not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness and her salvation as a lamp that burneth*"--because it is not till then that the glory of Jehovah shall fill this earth as the waters cover the sea, and our Lord Jesus Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Will you not for love of Him share in this ministry of intercession for the people which, in spite of all their sins and apostasies, are still beloved for the fathers' sakes, and whose receiving again into God's favour will be as life from the dead to the whole world?

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day nor night. Ye that are Jehovah's remembrancers, take ye no rest, and give Him no rest till He establish and till He

14 J. A. Alexander.

15 Delitzsch.

make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."