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The Servant's Satisfaction

Isaiah 53.11a

Series: The Suffering Servant (Communion Series)

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The Village Church

May 7, 2023

I. Introduction

- A. We were young; Jean was pregnant – with our first child, Matthew
 - 1. In Columbus Ohio
 - a. At the obstetrician's office
 - 2. The entire childbirth class was there
 - 3. It was not the usual childbirth class
 - a. The obstetrician himself was there – Dr. Bryan
 - b. There to answer questions
 - c. There to encourage these young women who were about to give birth
 - d. No – there were no “birthing persons” there; these were real women; real pregnant women
 - e. And their supportive husbands; real men
- B. I don't remember much about what Dr. Bryan said to the class
 - 1. But I do remember one thing
 - 2. He was talking about anesthetics – drugs – pain management
 - 3. At that time there was great interest in having childbirth be as natural as possible
 - a. As little pain killers as possible
 - b. Minimize the drugs as much as you can
 - 4. But Dr. Bryan had delivered, I don't know, dozens, maybe even hundreds, of babies
 - a. He had seen these dear women in all kinds of circumstances
 - 5. And the one thing that I remember that he said was, that if he was a woman, and he was pregnant
 - a. They would have to put him under as soon as he found out he was pregnant!
- C. It is really amazing what women go through to have a baby
 - 1. Of course, all this was predicted all the way back in Genesis
 - a. “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing...” God said to the woman following the fall (**Genesis 3.16**)
 - 2. I don't know exactly when, or why, fathers started to be allowed in the delivery rooms
 - a. Maybe it was to support their wives who were in the midst of excruciating pain, and beginning to curse anything and everything

- they could see; why shouldn't the husband be on the receiving end of some of that?
- b. (None of which the mothers would remember after it's all over, of course)
 - c. But the fathers may have been invited in just so we would realize what our dear wives actually had to go through to deliver the little precious apples-of-our-eyes
- D. Why are women willing to go through the incredible pain of childbearing?
1. Someone – a man – once said he knew why women would be willing to go through childbearing
 2. Then he said what he didn't understand was why they would be willing to go through it again
- E. Of course, we know the answer to that issue
1. At the end of the incredible ordeal is a baby
 2. There is a reward
 - a. An outcome
 - b. A prize!
 3. And mothers know – I think all of us know – that baby is worth it
 - a. Worth whatever the women have to go through
 4. The child – a miracle of creation
 - a. Made in the image of God
 - b. With all the physical equipment with which to adapt into this strange world into which he or she has been dropped
 - c. Hard-wired with all the growth potential to become a fully functioning adult, a contributing citizen
 - d. An amazing being, unlike the offspring of any other creature
 5. Even if they do have to be teenagers for a while!

II. **The Suffering Servant**

- A. In our communion series we've been exploring the classic text in Isaiah 53
1. Isaiah 53 – one of the Servant of the Lord (**Servant of Yahweh**) hymns in Isaiah
 2. Series: The Suffering Servant
 3. And the same question needs to be asked, why was the Servant – who we learn is the incarnate Son of God
 - a. Why was the Servant willing to go through His suffering
 4. Suffering which was even more excruciating than anything a woman in labor would experience
 5. Was there an outcome, a result, a reward for the Servant of the Lord?
- B. In our series, verse by verse, we've examined a number of dimensions of the Servant's ministry
1. **Servant's Gospel**
 - a. Good news of God sending His Servant
 2. **The Great Exchange**
 - a. His righteousness for our sin

3. **The Servant's Redemption**
 - a. How His suffering purchased us out of the slave market of sin, freed us from bondage
 4. **The Servant's Message**
 - a. How His life and ministry declared that God was, in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself
 5. **The Servant's Incarnation**
 - a. How the only way for God to secure our redemption was for Him to send Himself, His own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh
 6. **The Man of Sorrows**
 - a. Examined the excruciating suffering He had to endure
 - b. How He identified with whatever sorrows any human may encounter
 7. **The Servant's Substitution**
 - a. How He stood in for us, took our place, in receiving the just penalty for our sin
 8. **The Servant's Burden**
 - a. How He carried the weight of our sinful world in His person
 9. **The Servant's Silence**
 - a. How He was unwilling to protest the injustice of His suffering and execution
 10. **The Servant's Oppression**
 - a. How He was attacked by enemies, even from the religious leaders who should have been His greatest supporters
 11. **The Servant's Innocence**
 - a. How He deserved absolutely none of the suffering He endured
 12. **The Servant's Offering**
 - a. How His life and death in our place provided the only offering for sin that could satisfy the just demands of the Holy God
- C. Now, this morning, we will try to discover why the Servant of Yahweh was willing to go through all of that suffering?
1. Was there an outcome, a result, a reward – that made it all worthwhile?
 2. **The Servant's Satisfaction**
- D. Text
1. **Isaiah 53:11a (ESV) — 11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied...**

III. **The Biblical World of Paradox**

- A. The more you study the Bible the more you realize that, in many ways, the Bible is filled with paradoxes
1. Paradox – pair of propositions or concepts that appear to contradict one another
 - a. Key word – appear
 - b. Because once the paradox is examined and investigated, the apparent contradiction turns out to be no contradiction at all

2. In fact, I'm convinced that the word of God includes paradoxes because they force us to more fully examine key issues about God and about the Christian life
 - a. And lead ultimately to a greater understanding of the nature of God
 - b. As well as the nature of our spiritual journey in Christ
- B. Examples
1. Role of faith and works
 - a. **Romans 3:28** (ESV) — 28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.
 - b. **James 2:24** (ESV) — 24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.
 - c. Appears contradictory, doesn't it?
 - d. But we're compelled to study the matter further; and when we do we discover that Paul and James are using the same vocabulary to talk about two different things
 - e. Paul – justification is to be declared righteous before God
 - f. James – justification is to be shown to have genuine faith before humanity
 2. Life of faith – easy or hard?
 - a. **Matthew 11:30** (ESV) — 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”
 - b. **Matthew 7:14** (ESV) — 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.
 - c. Again, we're compelled to examine the issue
 - d. We discover that the life of faith is easy – that there is nothing we can do to earn salvation before the altogether righteous God
 - e. But that in itself is hard for us to swallow – we're proud, and are convinced that we have to do something
 - f. Not only that – it all requires us to be humble, to admit to God and to ourselves that we are debtors who cannot pay our debt – and that's hard to admit!
 3. Should Christians engage in judgment?
 - a. **Matthew 7:1** (ESV) — 1 “Judge not, that you be not judged.”
 - b. **John 7:24** (ESV) — 24 “Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.”
 - c. So, should we judge or not? And if so, how?
 - d. And we learn that there's a difference between being judgmental – judging others before we've judged ourselves
 - e. And using good spiritual discernment
 4. Many others...
- C. The one we have before us is a big one
1. **The Suffering Servant is the Happy Servant**
 2. **Isaiah 53:3** (ESV) — 3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

3. **John 15:11** (ESV) — 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.
 4. **John 17:13** (ESV) — 13 But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.
- D. How is it that the Suffering Servant is the Joyful Servant, the Happy Servant?

IV. **Out of...**

- A. **Isaiah 53:11a** (ESV) — 11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied...
1. Five elements in this verse – all critically important for us to understand how the Suffering Servant can be the Happy Servant
 2. “Out of”
 3. “The anguish”
 4. “Of his soul”
 5. “He shall see”
 6. “And be satisfied”
- B. “Out of” is not inconsequential in this construction
1. It ties together each of the other key elements
 - a. The Servant’s anguish is not unrelated to the Servant’s satisfaction
 2. In fact, it is “out of” the Servant’s anguish that the Servant is satisfied
 - a. The anguish is the source of the Servant’s satisfaction
 - b. Even the formal cause of His satisfaction
 3. There is no anguish, the Servant is not satisfied
- C. It is said that there is nothing lost in God’s economy
1. That every event, every circumstance, every relationship – everything – is used by God to accomplish His purposes
 - a. **Romans 8:28** (ESV) — 28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
 - b. God works “All things” together for good
 - c. “All things” means all things
- D. So it is not that the Servant is joyful, or satisfied, or happy, or blessed in spite of His anguish
1. Like some kind of stoicism
 2. No!
 3. He is joyful, or satisfied, or happy, or blessed because of His anguish
- E. Because “Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied”

V. **The anguish...**

- A. “Out of *the anguish* of his soul he shall see and be satisfied”
- B. It hasn’t been that long ago that we went through Holy Week
1. And had our Good Friday service
 - a. And explored the suffering of the Servant
 2. The events on the Via Dolorosa
 - a. The false accusations

- b. The beatings
 - c. The rejection
 - d. Carrying His own cross until He couldn't anymore
 - e. The crown of thorns
 - f. The nails in His hands and feet
 - g. His being stripped naked, clothes the object of games of chance
 - h. The excruciating crucifixion itself
- C. In our study of the **Man of Sorrows**
- 1. He was
 - a. Despised
 - b. Rejected
 - c. Revulsed
 - d. Devalued
- D. Imagine, ladies, having to give birth
- 1. With all of those attacks superadded, multiplying insult and injury to normal pain
 - 2. "Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied"

VI. **Of His soul...**

- A. But it was the anguish of his soul that was most excruciating
- 1. "Out of the anguish *of his soul* he shall see and be satisfied"
- B. The soul
- 1. I know that it's possible that the soul is simply a **synecdoche**
 - a. Not Schenectady; synecdoche
 - b. A part represents the whole
 - c. That is, the soul means the person
 - 2. But I don't think that works in this sentence
 - a. "Out of the anguish *of his soul* he shall see and be satisfied"
 - b. If it means the whole person, it would just have read, "Out of his anguish..."
 - c. No – "Out of the anguish *of his soul...*"
 - 3. Soul – mind, will, emotions
- C. We so much think of the sufferings of the Suffering Servant in physical terms
- 1. The beatings and the crucifixion itself
 - a. Physically excruciating
 - b. That's what came out years ago with Mel Gibson's movie *The Passion of the Christ*
 - c. The bloodletting in that movie was awful
 - 2. But my main criticism of that movie was that it did not adequately show the soul-suffering of the Christ
 - 3. The immaterial, spiritual anguish
 - a. Not only of His rejection by His enemies, the religious leaders
 - b. Not only of the betrayal by Judas
 - c. Not only of the denial by Peter
 - 4. But mainly, by the turning of the back of His Father

- a. “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”
- b. The moment of the Servant’s experience of hell itself
- 5. Started in Gethsemane
 - a. As He looked into the cup of the wrath of God and pleaded with God, if there be any other way...
 - b. “Yet, not my will but Thine be done”
 - c. And He sweat as if it were great drops of blood
- D. Because “Out of the anguish *of his soul* he shall see and be satisfied”
 - 1. The anguish of His mind, will, emotions far outweighed His physical suffering

VII. **He shall see...**

- A. “Out of the anguish of his soul *he shall see* and be satisfied...”
- B. The fact that out of His soul’s anguish “he shall see” is itself a wonderful, astonishing statement
 - 1. His soul’s anguish would lead to death
 - a. But if “he shall see” – there must be a resurrection!
 - 2. Isaiah prophesies the resurrection of Servant of the Lord in that phrase: “he shall see”
- C. The idea is not absent from the Hebrew Bible
 - 1. **Job 19:26** (ESV) — 26 And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God...
 - a. Job – expecting to be resurrected
 - 2. The fact that the Servant of the Lord shall see anything is enough to lift one’s spirit
 - a. The Spirit of the Servant of the Lord, especially!
- D. Some ancient manuscripts read, “... he shall see light”; or “... he shall see the light of life...”
 - 1. The Servant’s story does not end in darkness
 - a. Does not end in ultimate destruction
 - b. Does not end in despair
 - c. Ends in light
- E. Remember the Gospel of John?
 - 1. **John 1:4–5** (ESV) — 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
 - 2. **John 1:9** (ESV) — 9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.
 - 3. **John 8:12** (ESV) — 12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”
 - 4. **John 12:36** (ESV) — 36 “While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”...
- F. And then, the Sermon on the Mount?
 - 1. **Matthew 5:14** (ESV) — 14 “You are the light of the world...”

- G. What does He see, this Suffering Servant, when He is raised from the dead and is able to see?
1. He sees you!
 - a. You, the sons of light
 - b. The light of the world He sees
 2. We've already seen it in Isaiah – in the very last verse we studied
 - a. **Isaiah 53:10** (ESV) — 10 ... when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring...
 3. He shall see you!
 - a. He shall hold the baby
 - b. And it will all be worth it!
- H. “Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied...”

VIII. **And be satisfied**

- A. “Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see *and be satisfied*...”
- B. Satisfied in Hebrew carries the notion of fullness
1. Its root is used in the context of filled after having eaten
 - a. Sense of contentment
 - b. Nothing more is necessary
 2. “How are you?”
 - a. “I’m fine”
 - b. “I’m fine even though we find all kinds of things to complain about”
 3. Not in this case
 - a. “How are you, Jesus, Servant of the Lord, Suffering Servant... How are you?”
 - b. “I am absolutely and definitively the most satisfied Being in the universe”
 - c. “There is not one thing I desire; I have everything I could ever want”
 4. “Because I have you!”
 - a. “I see the light of life”
- C. **Revelation 7:9–10** (ESV) —
1. 9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,
 2. 10 and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”
 3. “I have everything I could ever want”
 - a. Because “Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied”

IX. **The Happy Servant**

- A. Our Savior is a happy sufferer

1. He is completely satisfied
 - a. Because His suffering has born fruit
- B. **John 6:39** (ESV) —
 1. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.
- C. **John 17:12** (ESV) —
 1. 12 While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.
- D. The Servant is Satisfied
 1. Because of all those the Father has given Him, He has saved them all
 - a. Not one has been lost
 2. “Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied”
 - a. He sees every one
 - b. Every one of His offspring
 3. No hand-wringing, no regrets, no “should have, could have, would have” in the Servant’s mind
 - a. No!
 - b. The Servant is satisfied
 - c. Everything He came to do – He has done
- E. **Hebrews 12:2** (ESV) —
 1. 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
 - a. With a smile on His face
 - b. And joy in His heart