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## **The Servant's Justification**

### **Isaiah 53.11b**

#### **Series: The Suffering Servant (Communion Series)**

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**The Village Church**

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#### **I. The Suffering Servant**

- A. We have been examining a diamond
  - 1. It is the most beautiful diamond in the world
  - 2. It is the most precious diamond in the world
  - 3. It is the most exquisite diamond in the world
- B. It is the largest diamond in the world
  - 1. Surpassing even the Cullinan diamond, weighing 530 carats
- C. It is the most perfect diamond in the world
  - 1. Surpassing the Kohinoor diamond, whose name means “Mountain of Light” in Persian
  - 2. It’s brilliance and flawlessness is said to be unsurpassed
- D. It is the most colorful diamond in the world
  - 1. Surpassing the dark gray-blue Hope Diamond, and the Pink Star Diamond with its lustrous pink timbre – the one my mother-in-law would have if she had the 71 million dollars to pick it up off the market
  - 2. Surpassing the Oppenheimer Blue Diamond, with its fancy vivid blue color grade
- E. It is the diamond with the most clarity in the world
  - 1. Refracting light such that its radiance bursts forth with an unsurpassed brilliance
- F. It is the diamond of the gospel of Jesus Christ
- G. And we have been examining this diamond through our exploration of one of the most treasured OT passages
  - 1. A diamond in its own right
    - a. A diamond which displays the person and ministry of the **Servant of Yahweh**, the Servant of God
    - b. The diamond of Isaiah 53
    - c. Which we’ve been examining for over a year in our communion series
- H. Isaiah 53 is one of the **“Servant Hymns”** of Isaiah of which there are several
  - 1. The Servant of Yahweh is sometimes seen to represent Israel
    - a. Israel – the people of God
    - b. Called as God’s covenant people
    - c. Called to be faithful to the covenant-keeping God by their covenant faithfulness

2. But Israel failed in its covenant-keeping task
  3. So the Servant of Yahweh hymns transition to One who would represent the people of God
    - a. Israel
    - b. Those who, by the faith of Abraham, would be counted among the true Israel of God (Galatians)
- I. And the climax of the hymns is Isaiah 53
1. One of the most quoted OT passages in the NT
  2. In which the person and ministry of the Servant of Yahweh is displayed
- J. Displayed as a diamond
1. A lustrous, perfect, colorful, radiant masterpiece
    - a. More beautiful, more colorful, more perfect, more lustrous than any physical diamond could ever be
- K. We've been examining this diamond by exploring its **Facets**
1. Facets are the flat sides of the diamonds after they have been cut
    - a. They are of various shapes and sizes
    - b. And account for the way light is diffused through the diamond, sparkling its way to the retinas of the diligent observers
  2. Facets are said to be windows into the diamond
    - a. They are the portals through which the appraiser peers to assess its quality, color, clarity, and degree of flawlessness
  3. We've explored most of the facets of Isaiah 53 – we're almost finished with our appraisal
    - a. We're up to the next-to-last verse today
- L. Facets explored already
1. **The Servant's Great Exchange**
    - a. **Isaiah 52.13-14** (for this Servant Hymn actually begins at the end of Isaiah 52)
    - b. "... he shall be high and lifted up"
    - c. And yet, "... his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance"
    - d. So that the Son of glory took on "the likeness of sinful flesh" as Paul says in Romans 8
    - e. Without the sin of course
    - f. But consider the luster of the great exchange
  2. **The Servant's Redemption**
    - a. **Isaiah 52.15**
    - b. "... so shall he sprinkle many nations"
    - c. Paying the ransom price to release from bondage many from every people, nation, and language
    - d. Consider the color of the Servant's Redemption
  3. **The Servant's Message**
    - a. **Isaiah 53.1**
    - b. "Who has believed our message..."
    - c. Yes, the diamond speaks; it communicates a message

- d. Yet not everyone finds it as beautiful as they should, and as many of us have
- e. Yet consider the radiance of Servant's Message
- 4. **The Servant's Incarnation**
  - a. **Isaiah 53.2**
  - b. "For he grew up before him like a young plant..."
  - c. Taking upon Himself our humanity, the Servant of Yahweh tabernacled among us (John 1.14)
  - d. Consider the exquisite skill of the divine Craftsman in sending His own Son in our image so we could ultimately be transformed into His image
- 5. **The Man of Sorrows**
  - a. **Isaiah 53.3**
  - b. "He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows... acquainted with grief"
  - c. Willing to go through all our trials and beyond our trials to secure our salvation
  - d. Consider the brilliance of sacrifices
- 6. **The Servant's Substitution**
  - a. **Isaiah 53.4-5**
  - b. "... he has born our griefs... he was pierced for our transgressions..."
  - c. How the Servant of Yahweh took our place, the place we genuinely deserved as rebellious sinners by nature
  - d. Consider clarity of this diamond in securing our every need
- 7. **The Servant's Burden**
  - a. **Isaiah 53.6**
  - b. "... the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all"
  - c. The weightiness of His burden, overwhelming to think about
  - d. Yet consider the massive carats represented by this diamond
- 8. **The Servant's Silence**
  - a. **Isaiah 53.7**
  - b. "... like a sheep that before its shearers is silent..."
  - c. How the Servant was willing to do all of that for us without raising an objection, without so much as a protest
  - d. Consider the passivity as the diamond is cut perfectly to create a redemption of great beauty
- 9. **The Servant's Oppression**
  - a. **Isaiah 53.8**
  - b. "By oppression and judgment he was taken away..."
  - c. How the Servant was unjustly afflicted so that we might be declared just in His place
  - d. Consider the enmity He endured to secure the beauty of our friendship
- 10. **The Servant's Innocence**

- a. **Isaiah 53.9**
  - b. "... he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth..."
  - c. How flawless He was! No imperfections to be found by even the most astute and skilled appraiser
  - d. Consider the purity and clarity of the Servant's life and work
- 11. **The Servant's Offering**
  - a. **Isaiah 53.10**
  - b. "... he makes his soul an offering for guilt..."
  - c. How the Servant's gives His life – His mind, His will, His emotions, His body – to God to pay our debts
  - d. Consider the shape of His life and death and how His offering creates His beauty in us
- 12. **The Servant's Satisfaction**
  - a. **Isaiah 53.11a**
  - b. "Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied..."
  - c. How, after the diamond is cut and polished, the artist is able to stand in awe of its beauty and radiance, and be satisfied
  - d. Consider that the artist and the Servant are One and the same, and that as He looks through the diamond He has created, He sees the beauty He is creating in His people
- M. What incredible beauty!
  - 1. What perfection!
    - a. What luster!
    - b. What radiance!
  - 2. And yet, we're not finished
    - a. We're just coming to a climax
  - 3. For if we could find one facet which issues in a radiance surpassing all that we have seen, it is perhaps this next facet
- N. **The Servant's Justification**
  - 1. For in the Servant's Justification is the core of the diamond
    - a. The prism through which all light passes
- O. **Justification by Faith Alone**
  - 1. Biblical doctrine which is the root or core of our salvation
    - a. The doctrine that shows how the unrighteous might be declared righteous in the sight of God
    - b. How the guilty might be declared not guilty in the divine courtroom
    - c. How the righteousness of the Savior – Jesus Christ, the Servant of Yahweh – might be transferred to our account in the divine books
    - d. How our unrighteousness might be transferred to the Savior, who took upon Himself the punishment we genuinely deserved
  - 2. Luther: Doctrine on which the Church stands or falls
  - 3. **Romans 3:21–26** (ESV) —

- a. 21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law,
  - b. although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—
  - c. 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.
  - d. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
  - e. 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,
  - f. 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.
  - g. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.
  - h. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time,
  - i. so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
- P. Last week we learned from Pastor Ken that David and Goliath was a NT story
- 1. Can’t let Ken upstage me
  - 2. Today we will learn that justification by faith alone is an OT story
    - a. Because there is nothing in Romans 3.21-26 that is not covered in one-half of one verse in our beautiful facet today, Isaiah 53.11b
- Q. Text
- 1. **Isaiah 53:11b** (ESV) —
    - a. 11 ... by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

## II. **The Benefit of Justification**

- A. “... by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many **to be accounted righteous...**”
- 1. That’s the ESV
    - a. Other English translations use the term for “justification”
    - b. NASB – “My Servant... will justify many”
    - c. NKJV – “My righteous Servant shall justify many”
  - 2. So we are talking about justification
    - a. But the ESV is more explanatory
    - b. “... my servant... make many to be accounted righteous...”
- B. We stand in a divine courtroom
- 1. We are accused of great transgression
    - a. Treason against the God of all creation
    - b. No one is exempt from the indictment – for we are all guilty
    - c. Our very natures are unrighteous
  - 2. And our crimes are capital crimes
    - a. Guilty verdicts demand the death penalty
    - b. Indeed, the Scriptures so testify
    - c. **Genesis 2.17**: “... on the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

- d. **Romans 6:23**: “For the wages of sin is death.”
  - 3. So we stand condemned
- C. But God!
  - 1. Don’t you just love those words!
    - a. My favorite two words
    - b. “But God”
  - 2. In sending His own Son
    - a. In His incarnation, in the likeness of human flesh
    - b. In the Great Exchange
    - c. Our Substitute
    - d. Who bore our burden of punishment
    - e. Who made an offering for sin
  - 3. Whose righteousness is able to be transferred to our account!
    - a. **2 Corinthians 5:21** (ESV) — 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
  - 4. This is not new! Not just NT stuff
    - a. This is what saved Abraham!
    - b. **Romans 4:3** (citing Genesis 15.6) (ESV) — 3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”
    - c. That’s justification
  - 5. We who were not in the least righteous, have now been accounted righteous!
    - a. The essence of justification
    - b. Theology – **“Imputation”**
    - c. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to our account
    - d. As a bookkeeper transfers His riches into our bankrupt bank account
  - 6. It’s right here in the OT – in Isaiah 53!

### III. **The Beneficiaries of Justification**

- A. “... by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, **make many** to be accounted righteous...”
- B. The beneficiaries of justification are many!
  - 1. **Revelation 7:9–10** (ESV) —
    - a. 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,
    - b. standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,
    - c. 10 and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”
  - 2. “Many” are accounted righteous
- C. Now “many” does not mean everyone

1. **Matthew 7:14** (ESV) —
  - a. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.
2. Not everyone finds it; not everyone is saved by the work of the Servant
  - a. There are those whose pride, whose self-sufficiency, whose arrogant presumption will keep them from believing in the Servant and His work
3. Only those who humble themselves will become the beneficiaries of justification, will be declared not guilty, will be accounted righteous
  - a. **James 4:6** (ESV) — 6 But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”
4. Only those who, like the tax collector in Luke 18
  - a. **Luke 18:13** (ESV) — 13 But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’
- D. And yet the good news is – there are many, and there will be many more, who will humble themselves, cast themselves on the mercy of God
  1. And be part of the multitude that cannot be numbered!
  2. Are you numbered among the multitude from every people, tribe, tongue and nation?
- E. So the benefit of justification is to be declared righteous, not guilty, in the divine courtroom
  1. In which the righteousness of Christ, the Servant of Yahweh, is transferred to your account
  2. And the beneficiaries of the Servant’s work are many
    - a. From every people, tongue, tribe and nation

#### IV. **The Qualification of the Justifier**

- A. “... by his knowledge shall **the righteous one**...”
- B. Only the Servant of Yahweh is “the righteous one”
  1. Israel as the Servant of Yahweh failed to qualify as righteous
    - a. That’s why the Servant of the Lord, the Servant of Yahweh, had to be another
    - b. A person
    - c. A holy person
    - d. An altogether righteous person
  2. In whom was no sin, no imperfection
    - a. **1 Peter 2:22** (ESV) — 22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.
    - b. Peter alludes to this very passage – Isaiah 53.9
  3. **Romans 3:26** (ESV) —
    - a. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time,
    - b. so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
  4. Only the just, the righteous, could be the justifier

- a. And only Jesus qualifies
- 5. **2 Corinthians 5:21** (ESV) —
  - a. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- C. The benefits of justification
  - 1. To be accounted righteous through the righteousness of another
  - 2. The beneficiaries of justification
    - a. The many, the multitude, who humble themselves and cast themselves on the mercy of Jesus Christ
  - 3. The qualification of the justifier
    - a. Jesus Christ the righteous (John puts it in his epistle)
    - b. No righteousness could be transferred from the account of another for all have sinned
    - c. Only Jesus, only the incarnate Son of God
    - d. Only the righteous Servant of Yahweh qualifies

V. **The Means of Justification**

- A. "... by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, **and he shall bear their iniquities.**"
- B. That's the means by which the Servant makes many to be accounted righteous
  - 1. He bears their iniquities
- C. How does He do it?
  - 1. Through His substitutionary sacrifice
    - a. His death in our place
    - b. The very death we observe today in the Lord's Supper
    - c. Indeed, the death we celebrate in the Lord's Supper
    - d. For it is the means by which He justifies the many, the multitude
- D. We've already seen it
  - 1. As we've examined the diamond, looking through the window of its facets
    - a. We've seen it
  - 2. In the Servant's Substitution
    - a. His death in our place
  - 3. In the Servant's Burden
    - a. His carrying the sins of all those who would ever believe in Him
  - 4. In the Servant's Offering
    - a. The offering of propitiation
    - b. The offering that is a wrath-removing sacrifice
- E. Often when you look through different facets of the diamond, you see the same light refracted at a slightly different angle
  - 1. With slightly different color
    - a. With a slightly different kind of radiance
  - 2. So here, once again, the Servant accomplishes our justification through His bearing our iniquities
    - a. "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."



3. Bearing our iniquities doesn't literally mean He sinned in our place
  - a. But that He took our punishment for our sin in our stead
4. It is the means of His justification of us
  - a. It is the means of our being accounted righteous

VI. **The Way of Justification**

- A. "... **by his knowledge** shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities."
- B. Oh, this is rich!
  1. This is a beautiful facet, full of meaning
    - a. And yet, meaning about which the commentators often differ
- C. Here's the issue
  1. "His knowledge"
    - a. That would clearly be the knowledge of the Servant
  2. But is it His objective knowledge?
    - a. Or is it His subjective knowledge?
  3. Don't worry – it's not that complicated
    - a. I'll explain
- D. If it's His **Objective Knowledge**, that would be knowledge about the Servant
  1. That would be our knowledge of Him, of the Servant, of Christ
  2. Can you be saved without knowing about Christ?
    - a. Without knowing who He is?
    - b. Without knowing His person and His work – at least in some meaningful way?
    - c. Of course not! You can't be saved by believing nothing
    - d. Or by believing a phantom
    - e. Or by believing a figment of your imagination
    - f. You can only be saved by believing in Jesus
  3. **Romans 10:14** (ESV) —
    - a. 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed?
    - b. And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?
    - c. And how are they to hear without someone preaching?
  4. In other words, no one can call on Christ unless they know to whom they call
  5. Our knowledge of Christ, of the Servant, is crucial to our salvation
    - a. Is by the knowledge of Christ that we believe in Him
    - b. And the knowledge of Christ is the goal of our salvation
    - c. **John 17:3** (ESV) — 3 And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.
  6. So "... by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous..."
    - a. By the knowledge of the Servant, our knowing Him
    - b. Objective knowledge

- E. Or, if it's His **Subjective Knowledge**, that would be the Servant's knowledge of the many
  - 1. And that's just as essential to our salvation
    - a. The Savior's knowledge of those whom He saves
  - 2. **John 10:11-16** (ESV) —
    - a. 11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.
    - b. 12 He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.
    - c. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.
    - d. 14 I am the good shepherd. **I know my own** and my own know me,
    - e. 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.
    - f. 16 And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.
  - 3. Jesus saves those He knows: "I know my own"
    - a. Those are those for whom He lays down His life: "... and I lay down my life for the sheep"
  - 4. Jesus died for you personally!
    - a. Because He knows you!
  - 5. **John 10:3-4** (ESV) —
    - a. 3 To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.
    - b. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.
  - 6. So Jesus', the Servant's, personal knowledge of those for whom He died is critical to our salvation
  - 7. That's the subjective knowledge; the Servant's knowledge of us
- F. In fact, both the objective and subjective knowledge are seen in this passage in John 10
  - 1. "I am the good shepherd. I know my own (subjective) and my own know me (objective)... and I lay down my life for the sheep."
- G. So which is it?
  - 1. I have no idea
    - a. Let's say both!
  - 2. "... by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities."
  - 3. "His knowledge" – the way of justification

## VII. Conclusion

- A. **Isaiah 53:11** (ESV) —

1. 11 ... by his knowledge shall the righteous one,
2. my servant,
3. make many to be accounted righteous,
4. and he shall bear their iniquities.

B. Essentially nothing in justification that is not included in this verse

1. **Benefit of Justification**
  - a. Accounted righteous
2. **Beneficiaries of Justification**
  - a. The many, the multitude, who will humble themselves, bow the knee to Jesus, and trust in Him alone for salvation
3. **The Qualification of the Justifier**
  - a. Jesus Christ the righteous
4. **The Means of Justification**
  - a. Bearing the iniquities of those He justifies
5. **The Way of Justification**
  - a. By His knowledge
  - b. His knowledge of His sheep
  - c. His sheep's knowledge of Him