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labour. Since taxes were almost entirely paid in kind, the Levy was of the utmost importance to the king for public works. It made its appearance already under David (2 Sa. 20:24) and was the most burdensome aspect of the monarchy for the ordinary man (cf. 1 Sa. 8:11-18).

THE PENTATEUCH OF SUFFERING

H. C. HEWLETT

5. The Gain of the Cross (Isaiah 53: 10-12)

The final verses in this Song are unmistakable in their likeness of theme to the book of Deuteronomy. The latter looks backwards and forwards, backwards over God's dealings with His people, and forwards to their life in the land of promise. The lessons of the past are gathered together, and the heart is gladdened by the prospect of the inheritance. So it is in Isaiah 53:10-12. The path of suffering trodden by Jehovah's Servant, and especially the lonely valley of His atoning death, are seen to lead to a surpassing goal. The Cross has its immeasurable gain. Its sorrows are past, and the Crucified enters into His glory.

It is abundantly evident that in verses 11 and 12 it is God who speaks. Here again is the expression 'My Servant', which none but God could use concerning the Messiah, and here is the Divine decree which gives Him the redeemed as His inheritance. Verse 10 is considered by many to be spoken by Israel in its penitence, as with verses 1-6. It is more satisfactory, however, to find here the meditation of the prophet himself. He has pondered the words of his prophecy (cf. 1 Pet. 1:10-11), and that greatest of all mysteries, the laying of the burden of sin upon the Servant by God Himself. So he muses—'It pleased the Lord to bruise Him'. Then with a flash of revelation he sees its meaning. The wonder of the sequence of suffering and glory lights his soul, and triumphantly he addresses God: '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'. Then, as the song began with the voice of God, so it finishes, and most fitly so.

Verse 10. The Divine Pleasure

'Yet Jehovah—Jehovah—was pleased to bruise Him'. So we render to bring out the emphasis on the name Jehovah. Could He, who paid such tribute to the worth of His Servant be pleased (haphetz, to delight in) to bruise (dacha', to crush, as in verse 5) Him, seeing 'He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. To crush (i.e., bruise as in Isa. 53:10) under foot all the prisoners of the earth . . . the Lord approveth not' (Lam. 3:33-36)? Here is depth of wonder. If the line were unsupported and unexplained, it would be intolerable, but it is not. In what sense, then is it Jehovah's delight, His choice, His will, to bruise His Servant? The key is given by the consequence of the bruising. For Christ, the Cross was not the goal, but the way to the goal, to the glory of the Throne, and to all the joy that should accrue to Him. The pleasure of Jehovah in the bruising—shall prosper in His (the Servant's) hand. Here we find in the heart of God a cherished purpose, so great, so wonderful that, if we may dare to say it, it justified the Cross.

'He hath put Him to grief', Grief (halah, whose noun 'holi' has been before us in verses 3, 4) signifies distress or suffering. Here it is not how men treated the Messiah, but how God dealt with Him. Thus the statement of the preceding clause is accentuated in its mystery. But now there follows the relation of Cross to Crown which gives such satisfying answer to the problems of the heart that they give place to the gladness of adoration.

'When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin' (so A.V., R.V., and J.N.D.). The rendering—'when His soul shall make an offering for sin' (R.V. Marg., *et al.*), while grammatically possible, lacks conviction, because—

1. It diverts from the theme of the earlier part of the verse. where it is Jehovah's act that is in view, not that of the Servant, If light is to be thrown on the bruising inflicted by Jehovah, then

it must be Jehovah who is the subject of the clause. The Servant's own act is given in verse 12 ('He hath poured out His soul unto death').

2. It makes the soul of the Servant to *provide* the offering, whereas, as the words just quoted from verse 12 make clear, His soul *is* the offering.

It is objected by some that the rendering—'When Thou shalt make'—is the only direct address to Jehovah in the Song, but this is surely no ground for objection, seeing that there is also but one statement addressed to the Servant (i.e., 52:14, first clause). To take verse 10 as the meditation of the prophet, and to see him thus addressing Jehovah in acceptance of His ways, and vindication of His wisdom, gives harmony to the whole passage.

'An offering for sin' ('asham, trespass offering, and so often in Lev. 5, etc.). The trespass offering has in it the idea of the giving of satisfaction, the making of compensatory payment (see Delitzsch in loc.). The offering provided by Jehovah meets every claim of His own righteousness. By no way other than the provision of such an offering can the glorious sequel be procured, which is now unfolded.

(a) '*He shall see (His) seed*'. The 'seed' are those who spiritually receive life from Him. They are His redeemed ones, not of Israel only, but of every nation. Even so it is said of the Lord Jesus in 1 Corinthians 15:45—'The last Adam became a life-giving spirit' (R.V.). He is the last Adam in that God's ways are complete in Him. Never will there arise another head for creation. The first Adam passed on to his seed the ruin of the fall; the last Adam gives to His seed the triumph of redemption, and they possess eternal life through Him.

It is to be noted that the seeing of His seed is mentioned before the prolonging of His days. We might have expected the order to be otherwise, but the prophet rightly speaks first of that which is so dear to the heart of Christ, the winning of the people gained at the cost of His death. How sweet to the heart of the Crucified must it have been when just before the darkness fell on Calvary a thief dying by His side spoke of His kingdom and sought His

mercy. It was a foretaste of the eternal joy in His people which awaited Him as a result of His Cross.

(b) *'He shall prolong (His) days'*. The thought is frequent in Deuteronomy, e.g., 4:40—'that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for ever' (note that the children are mentioned here before the prolonging of days). The days of the Messiah are cut short in death; they are prolonged in resurrection, prolonged for evermore. We hear the cry of His heart: 'O My God, take Me not away in the midst of My days', and the sublime-answer, 'Thy years are throughout all generations' (Psa. 102:24). Again, it is said of Him, 'He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it Him, even length of days for ever and ever' (Psa. 21:4), and still again, that He is Priest 'after the power of an indissoluble life' (Heb. 7:16, R.V. Marg.).

The promise to the godly Israelite was length of days 'upon the earth' and 'in the land' (Deut. 5:33), but what land shall be possessed by the triumphant Servant? His portion shall be the universe without bounds. Not only the earth where He suffered, but the heaven where He is now enthroned in Manhood, constitute alike the domain of the One once despised and rejected.

(c) *'And the pleasure of Jehovah in His hand shall prosper'*. Pleasure (haphetz, delight, from haphetz in this same verse) tells of Jehovah's will and purpose not only for restored Israel, but for the ages to come. Prosper (tzaleah, to advance, be successful, as in Psa. 45:5) 'And in Thy majesty prosper Thou, ride Thou', tells that Jehovah's pleasure shall come to its predestined goal. No purpose shall fail of complete fruition. But more, the achievement of the goal is committed to the hand of the Servant. (Note the emphasis given to 'in His hand' by the order of the words.) It is most fitting that He to whom was entrusted the work of atonement should be entrusted with the work of government. His was the sorrow of the sin-bearing; His must be the joy of accomplishment of its goal. The nail-printed hand must wield the sceptre of all authority. As surely as He completed the task committed to Him on earth, so surely will He bring to fruition the harvest of His sowing into death.

Verse 11. The Satisfied Servant

'From the travail of His soul He shall see, He shall be satisfied'. Here once more the preposition *min* is used of the cause, i.e., arising from or because of the travail He shall see. Travail ('amal, the word combining the ideas of toil and of suffering) tells of the bitter toil, the painful exertion, of the soul of the Servant at the Cross. The word occurs first in Scripture in the saying of Joseph: 'God hath made me forget all my toil' (Gen. 41:51). But Joseph saw of his travail when he saw his sons, and when later he embraced his brethren. The verb 'He shall see' implies an object, and it is most naturally supplied from the preceding verse, 'He shall see His seed', though not so as to exclude the gaining of everything which He sought as the result of His death. So precious is the seed to Him that 'He shall be satisfied'. Satisfied (*sabha'*, to be sated, to be filled with what has been desired) is a term to bring great joy to our hearts. Is it possible, we may ask, for the suffering of Calvary to have adequate recompense? Yes, for the Word says it. For every sorrow of the Saviour there must be fully compensating joy. It humbles us, and yet gladdens us, to think that we today who belong to Him are also part of the seed, and among those in whom He is satisfied. It is instructive to compare certain occasions when the verb *sabha'* is used.

Prov. 27:20. 'Hell and destruction *are* never *full*; so the eyes of man *are* never *satisfied*'. Here is the result of sin. But in the three following passages is the result of matchless grace.

Psa. 17:15. 'I shall be satisfied'.

Psa. 65:4. 'We shall be satisfied'.

Isa. 53:11. 'He shall be satisfied'.

'By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many'. The phrase 'by His knowledge' is capable of two meanings, (a) objective, by their knowledge of him, and (b) subjective, by His knowledge, i.e., what He knows. It seems simpler, and more in harmony with the context, to accept the first meaning. The words 'My righteous Servant' demand attention by the peculiar

emphasis of their order—(a) righteous (One) My Servant. Here stress is laid not only on the character of the Servant, but on the contrast between the one righteous Person, the Servant, and the many who are declared righteous (see Rom. 5:18-19). 'Justify' (hiphil of tzadaq) is used in a forensic sense—My righteous Servant shall declare righteous the many. Thus the words of our passage are in complete accord with Paul's doctrine of justification in Romans 3-5. The many are those who know Him by faith, and they are justified on the ground of His death, as is clearly stated in the words that follow.

'For their iniquities He (emphat.) shall bear.' 'Iniquities' ('awon, as in verse 5) is emphatic by its place in the clause. This, with the emphasis of the pronoun 'He', supplies full explanation of the justification of the many. Their iniquities, in all their heinousness as only God can know them, have been borne by none other than the righteous Servant. 'Bear' (sabbal, as in verse 4) has here obviously a substitutionary sense. In verse 4 the Servant bears the load of sorrow; here He bears the load of guilt. On the ground of this sin-bearing, and that alone, can He justify those who have faith in Him.

Verse 12. The Victor's Reward

'Therefore I will allot to Him (a portion) in the many.' This line has been translated in many different ways. The rendering of the A.V. (and R.V.) makes the Servant merely to share with others, whereas unquestionably the merit is altogether His. Lowth, in line, with the Septuagint, renders it: 'I will distribute to Him the many for His portion', which is substantially the thought of the literal rendering attempted above. This is justified by the use of the same verb (halaq, to divide or share or apportion) with the same prefix in Job 37:17—'neither hath He imparted to her (in) understanding'. The corresponding noun (heleq) is found often in Deuteronomy for the portion of the Israelites in the land, and noticeably in one passage (Deut. 32:9)—'The Lord's portion is His people'.

Here, likewise, we find that the Servant's portion is His people. 'The many' refers obviously to 'the many' of verse 11.

Those whom He has justified are given to Him by Jehovah as His portion. What reward for His obedience unto death could be compared with His redeemed ones? We remember the words of John 17:3—'as many as Thou hast given Him', and of Ephesians 1:18 'the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints', (i.e., the saints are the inheritance).

'And with the strong He shall divide the spoil'. The same verb (halaq) occurs as in the preceding line, but this time it is the Servant who divides. The strong ('atzum, mighty) are His people of Israel, once so small and weak, but in the day of His coming in glory become a strong nation (see Isa. 60:22 and Micah 4:7). That the preposition 'eth (with) is used in this clause 'with the strong' but not in the preceding one, is further confirmation of the rendering adopted for that clause. Shall not His heavenly people, in a further sense, by their faithfulness to Him in the day of His rejection, be counted sharers with Him of the spoil of His triumph? 'Spoil' (shalal, spoil or booty, especially of war) tells of the victory won at the Cross, whereby in His glory He shall take possession of all things, and be displayed in majesty as Lord of all. In this wealth His people share, being called to fellowship with Him in glory and honour as in His loneliness and humiliation.

But all this is by right of infinite deserving, by virtue of His suffering unto death. Four glimpses of this merit conclude the Song.

'Because He hath poured out His soul unto death'. His death was not forced upon Him, but was entirely voluntary. 'Poured out' ('arah, to make bare or empty, as in Genesis 24:20 'she hasted, and emptied her pitcher') indicates the completeness of the Servant's self-humbling. In it there were no reserves. It was 'unto death, even the death of the Cross'.

'And with transgressors He was numbered.' 'Numbered', (the niph'al is here used reflexively with the sense of permission, as 'afflicted' in verse 7), i.e., He let Himself be numbered with transgressors, with criminals; and, as though in men's eyes the worst of all, He was placed on the middle cross, being thus given

pre-eminence in shame. But this He bore in meekness, despising the shame.

'*And He (emphat.) the sin of many bore.*' Here is the immeasurable cost of His death. He, the holy One, the obedient One, He the One whose pre-incarnate place was the Throne, high and lifted up, bore the sin of many. So once more the central fact of the atonement is stated.

'*And for the transgressors made intercession.*' 'Made intercession' is the hiphil imperfect of pagha', whose hiphil perfect occurs in verse 6, i.e., 'laid'. There it spoke of a forceful act, a vehement approach, when God made to meet on Him 'the iniquity of us all'. Here the same term is used of the action of the Servant at that very time. He interposed on behalf of the transgressors. What a scene this is! The burden of sin and judgement is laid upon the sufferer, but it is met with, is matched by, an equal burden of love in the sufferer's heart. But whereas in verse 6 the perfect tense tells of that which is viewed in its completeness, in verse 12 the imperfect tells of that which abides. Though the reference is to the intercession of the Cross, not of the Throne, the change in tense is most suggestive. The burden of sin was over, but not the love that bore it, not the love in which He interceded. His love exhausted the suffering, but the suffering could not exhaust the love. Thus the Song ends, not with the sin of men, not even with the sorrows of the Tree, but with the love of Christ that triumphed in death, and abides unchanged for evermore.

(Continued from page 7)

And when I think that God, His Son not sparing,
Sent Him to die—I scarce can take it in:
That on the cross my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin.

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation,
And take me home—what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
And there proclaim, my God, how great Thou art!

—Translated by STUART K. HINE