

## God's Servant Gives Satisfaction Guaranteed!

‡ prospering God's will (v.10)

‡ justifying many (v.11)

‡ rewarding with life (v.12)

In the Name of God's Servant, our Savior, the crucified and risen Christ, dear fellow redeemed:

What I'm about to tell you won't be in docu-dramas about the Bible. People who think all religions are the same miss the fact that Christ's tomb is open and empty. No sign of grave robbers, just a very neat shroud with linen bindings. Through them the risen body of Jesus passed on Easter morning. None of His disciples expected Easter, but they should have.

For the past 40 days we've been meditating on the *Servant Songs* of Isaiah. They tell us that nothing about Jesus' life, death and resurrection was an accident. His disciples did not make it up. All was foretold, prophesied. The Servant of the LORD would be the *Anointed, Messiah, Christ*. God promised He would be sacrificed for all sin, but first He'd live among men to be despised and rejected. He would be falsely condemned to death, as an innocent man die with criminals, be buried in a rich man's grave. But on the third day He would rise and spread His message to the ends of the earth. So here we are, worshiping the exalted Son of God who rules heaven and earth from God's right hand. One promise remains. Since Christ was faithful to suffer and die, won't He also come again as promised? How can there be any doubt that He will destroy His enemies, but take His followers into the glories of heaven?

All the world's religions keep telling people to do more and more – more works, more suicide bombings, more gods of theirs dissatisfied with them. In Christ alone we find something, oh, so different, so wonderful, so refreshing – for us and for God: **God's Servant Gives Satisfaction Guaranteed!**

‡ prospering God's will (v.10)

Isn't this amazing? *"Yet the LORD was pleased to crush him. He made him suffer grief. When you make his life a guilt offering, he will see offspring. He will lengthen his days, and the LORD's pleasure will prosper in his hand."*<sup>2</sup> The LORD made His Servant our Savior Jesus suffer on purpose. To God, Christ's temporary pain was worth our eternal gain. The LORD wanted to crush His Servant to unfold His plan to reconcile us sinners to Himself. God is steady, strong, unflinching in His love for His creatures. So He moved world history to accomplish this at just the right time. (Galatians 4:4f) He planned and foretold through his prophets, then executed Jesus under extreme grief so we would not suffer hell.

Some of you have seen the historically accurate *Passion of the Christ* and that 20-minute, gruesome scene of the Roman soldier scourging Jesus on and on. The nails and torment on the cross were bad enough, but the camera cannot capture the real suffering of Jesus. You see, He offered His own *soul* as a guilt offering for the sins of all mankind. What hurt Him most was weight of our guilt piled on His innocent *soul*. We spend so much of our lives ignoring, denying, or excusing our guilt. "No big deal," we tell ourselves, unless someone hurts us. But each of our sins cuts God to the heart. So what kind of incomprehensible love would take all our guilt and pay for it? Why would God send His Son to make restitution for our crimes? And why raise Jesus on the third day as promised?

<sup>1</sup> Midweek Lenten Series: *God's Servant + Our Savior* at New Life Evangelical Lutheran, Shoreview, Minnesota.

<sup>2</sup> The words of this sermon text are part of my draft review for a translation project. [M.C. 3/26/2016]

When you're feeling guilty as charged, remember this: God made Jesus the sacrifice to pay for all your guilt. He not only atones for sin, but he undoes the wrong by making restitution to God. Every thought, word and deed that you and I and all the world have done wrong; every good deed and word we've left undone, unsaid – for all these crimes of ours God is fully **Satisfied!** by His **Servant** Jesus.

And you sitting here today, taking all this in, enjoying the warmth of God's love and the favor of God's people are all part of another prophecy you don't want to miss: ***“He will see offspring.”*** That's you and me. ***“He will lengthen his days....”*** That's living again, so that now Jesus can never die, but only live on forever and ever. ***“And the LORD's pleasure will prosper in his hand.”*** Jesus not only died as our Substitute, He also lives as our Substitute. By Christian Baptism God connects us to Christ's death and His life. (Romans 6) Now God's law is on our side. God's satisfaction in Christ is our guarantee of satisfaction in Him. Because Christ's sacrifice is complete (John 19:30), you come over to God's side by trusting in Jesus. Now you are on the side of His holiness, light and life, love and blessing. Here is where God wants you to be. This is where His *pleasure* to bless you prospers for generations. ***“Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!”*** (Deuteronomy 5:29 NIV84)

### † justifying many (v.11)

***“From the anguish of his soul he will see the light of life. He will find full satisfaction. By knowledge of him as the Righteous One, my Servant, will justify the many, and he himself will carry their iniquities.”***

This too was promised 700 years before Christ. The Suffering Servant would be **Satisfied!** when He saw the new life His death produced. When Jesus sees you coming to Him for forgiveness, help, encouragement, comfort, sight, riches, healing of the mind, He finds great joy in giving you all that and more. He builds a huge pipeline to your heart by Word and sacrament. No one can shut this down because Jesus is **Satisfied!** And now because of Jesus, God is **Satisfied!** with you. It's not about doing more; it's all about trusting more in all that Jesus has already done. We so often forget about His well deserved feelings of victory and joy over what He has done for sinners all. We forget that we are the portion (53:12) and inheritance (Psalm 82:8; 106:5) promised God's Servant + Our Savior.

Imagine yourself in a courtroom, God's courtroom. You know you're guilty as charged. In fact, the prosecution goes on and on reading all the charges against you. You jump when the Judge's gavel comes down. You think all is lost. But you hear these words, “Not guilty!” God smiles at you. That's when you realize your defense attorney has the scars of nails in His hands. Jesus is **Satisfied!**

### † rewarding with life (v.12)

***Therefore I will give him a share among the great, and with powerful multitudes he will divide plunder, because he poured out his life to death, and he let himself be counted with rebels. He himself bore the sin of many, and he intercedes for the rebels.”***

When God ***“laid on him the iniquity of us all,”*** God's just wrath came down so hard that Jesus was crushed (53:10) in body and soul. But now this same force turns around in His passion to pray for you. As determined as He was to willingly carried your guilt to the cross, now with the same intensity Jesus turns to the Father and *intercedes* for us. We are ***the rebels*** who daily sin against God. He knows it, He paid for all of it and now He prays night and day, “Father, you laid all their iniquity on me. Look! I paid it all! Help them! Bless them for the sake of the blood I shed for them!” How can the Father turn away from such passion by God's Servant + Our Savior? His suffering Passion ended when He offered up His soul; His prayer passion for our souls continues until He has us home safe and sound in heaven.

In the oldest book of the Bible written over 4000 years ago, Job longed for ***“someone to arbitrate between [him and God], to lay his hand on both of us.”*** But Job also believed God's promises: ***“Even***

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*now my witness is in heaven; my advocate is on high. My intercessor is my friend...; on behalf of a man he pleads with God as a man pleads for his friend.”* And from the depths of near despair Job cried out in hope: *“I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!”* (Job 9:33; 16:19-21; 19:25-27)

Don't let your past define you. What you *were* is not what you *are* today. God looks at you in Christ Jesus and sees nothing but good because God is good. Everything wrong in your life popped up when Christ died. And when He rose again, bam! He buried it all with Christ. Maybe sometimes you feel like your conscience is one big Whack-a-Mole game. Sins pop up faster than you can whack them. But Jesus is your Champion. Before you can see another one pop up, He already buried it. It's not bam!...bam!...bam! *“because this He did once when He offered up Himself.”* (Hebrews 7:27)

It's Easter! Jesus lives! Now you live in Him as He lives in you. Now our question to God is pure praise: *“Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.”* (Malachi 7:18f NIV84) Amen.