

April 16, 2006 by Steve Brandon



He was Triumphant

Isaiah 53:7-12

1. His suffering (verse 7)
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On May 27, 2004, a two year old boy, named Logan Pinto, wandered away from his baby sitter and fell into a canal near his home in Rexburg, about 275 miles east of Boise. He was submerged for nearly 30 minutes before police found him a half-mile downstream. The news article read, ...

Though an officer gave him CPR and emergency workers did everything they could to revive him, Rexburg police Capt. Randy Lewis said, the boy was pronounced dead when it appeared the effort had failed. After giving the boy's mother and stepfather -- Debra and Joe Gould -- some time to say goodbye, Madison Memorial Hospital nurse Mary Zollinger began to prepare Logan's body for the funeral home.

But when she looked at the boy, she noticed his chest was slightly moving and realized that Logan was alive. The boy was flown to Primary Children's Medical Center in Salt Lake City, where he ... was breathing on his own and his color had returned.

"I'm just amazed and overwhelmed with what took place," Lewis said. "They aggressively worked on him for quite a bit of time, and of course it's a bad situation when you have to let the parents know that their son has passed away." But despair turned to joy when emergency workers learned the boy was alive.

I have a two year old. When I saw her this morning for the first time, she was up and dressed in her pretty little dress. When she saw me, she came running after me saying, "Daddy!" She gave me a big hug and a kiss. I also gave her a big hug and a kiss. Certainly, I was happy to see her. But I don't think that my happiness can compare to the happiness of Logan Pinto's parents when they first heard that he was alive, after being presumed dead.

This Resurrection morning, you may be happy that Jesus is alive. But, should you fully realize that He was dead, buried, and cold in the tomb, your joy would increase. Our text this morning, Isaiah 53:7-12, will take us through the death of Christ and will bring us to the resurrection of Christ. My prayer for all of us this morning is to realize the joy that ought to be ours in light of this incredible event that took place. Let's look first at ...

1. His suffering (verse 7)

Verse 7 reads, "He was oppressed and He was afflicted. Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth."

The suffering that Jesus Christ endured while upon the earth was real. They were no imaginary sufferings. Jesus wasn't some sort of shadowy figure who only appeared to be human, as some in the early centuries thought. On the contrary, Jesus was very real. He came to earth as a man who could feel the hurtful accusations against Him. He felt the pain of the blows upon His back. While crucified, He felt the agony every bit as much as the criminals crucified beside Him. His muscles cramped like theirs did. His breathings was difficult like their was.

Verse 7 describes for us the pain and agony that Jesus experienced upon the earth. These words are broad enough to describe the general sufferings of Jesus Christ. And they are also specific enough to detail the unique sufferings that He endured upon the cross. He was oppressed by the religious leaders of the day in their verbal mocking of Him. He was afflicted by the Roman soldiers in their scourging Him. He was slaughtered by being crucified upon His cross.

We don't often think about Jesus being slaughtered. That's a word that we often delegate merely to the animal realm. And yet, the Bible calls us to think about Jesus as being slaughtered.

Lambs that were slaughtered in the days of Jesus had no clue what was about to come upon them. Recently, I saw a video of one of the churches that I visited in Nepal that was gearing up for a grand celebration after church. They had their regular church service in the morning and then they were going to have a goat roast in the afternoon. The goat was purchased and brought to the church, walking on its own four feet. At one point, a man took hold of the goat's hind legs, while another took hold of rope that was tied around the goat's neck. He was held

in this stretched out position. And then, a third man took a khukuri knife and with chopped off the goat's head. And then, those in the church descended upon the carcass and began to prepare the meat for the meal that afternoon. They knew what they had to do to prepare the goat meat for the meal later that evening.

Now, the goat had no idea of what was going on. Only a few moments before his slaughter, I saw him on the video casually eating grass along side the church building. Little did he know that he would be slaughtered in a few moments. [\[1\]](#)

Such a description may be a bit gruesome for you. If so, it's only because you live in a world that shelters itself from the slaughter of animals. In the days of Jesus, lambs and goats were constantly offered in the temple as atonement for sin. In fact, there was a sacrifice every morning and every evening in the temple, similar to what I just described to you. This is how we ought to think about the crucifixion of Christ. He was like a lamb that is led to slaughter.

Now, the characteristic that Isaiah brings out here of a slaughtered animal was His silence. Jesus was silent. When Jesus was being falsely accused, He never replied anything in His own defense. When Jesus was being scourged by the Roman soldiers, He never spoke against the injustices being done. When Jesus was dying upon the cross, He never sought to vindicate Himself by declaring the truth to all who would listen. Rather, Jesus was like a lamb that was led to slaughter, who was casually eating grass before its slaughter.

In many ways, Jesus was not like a lamb. He knew full well what was about to take place. He knew full well of the sufferings that He was about to endure. On several occasions, Jesus had told His disciples that they were headed to Jerusalem, where He would be rejected by the religious leaders and killed (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34). On the very night in which He was to be handed over to death, Jesus knew that His meal with His disciples would be His last. He said, "Truly I say to you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God" (Mark 14:25) The agony that it caused Him was very real. You simply need to read of His prayer in the garden of Gethsemane to the pains that He was suffering.

And so, unlike a lamb, Jesus knew that the plague of death was soon to come upon Him. And yet, Jesus acted like a lamb about to be slaughtered unawares. He didn't fight against His death sentence. He didn't attempt to escape. He didn't call others in to help Him. He could have. Perhaps you remember when Jesus was arrested in the garden of Gethsemane that He said, "Do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:53). That's 72,000 angels that were prepared to come and help Him escape the clutches of those who came out to meet Him "with swords and clubs" (Matt. 26:47).

Dying like this, Jesus demonstrated Himself to be a willing sacrifice. He was willing to lay down His life for us. He was willing to take our iniquity upon Himself.

And so, why did Jesus play like a lamb? The reason was simple. Jesus said, "How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?" (Matt. 26:54). Certainly, Jesus was referring to our passage in Isaiah (or others like it), which indicate that the Messiah would suffer willingly. Isaiah 53:7, "Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth."

2. His death (verse 8)

Verse 8 reads, "By oppression and judgment He was taken away. And as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?"

That the Messiah would die is clearly stated in this verse. It says that He would be "cut off out of the land of the living." That's a poetic way of saying that He is going to die. When making a list of all those living on the earth, the Messiah's name couldn't be added to the list. He would no longer be among the children of men.

Again, with amazing accuracy, this passage is describing the death that Jesus would die. It wouldn't be a death due to sickness. It wouldn't be a death due to a tragic accident. He wouldn't die of TMB (i.e. Too Many Birthdays). On the contrary, when Jesus would die, it would be through difficult circumstances. His death would be because of the oppression of people. He would die through a judgment of death that was cast upon Him.

How appropriate is the picture of Jesus being "taken away." When Pilate sentenced Him to death, Luke tells us that "they led [Jesus] away" (Luke 23:25). Surely, this meant that the authorities came and took Jesus by the arm, and brought Him to His cross which He was forced to carry. Only when Jesus no longer had the strength to carry the cross was He allowed merely to walk to Calvary on His own power. You can almost imagine the crowds carrying Jesus along, as He took the trip outside the city to Calvary. Should He have been unable to walk, He would have been dragged to Calvary. He was "taken away" to be killed.

And I love the question that is asked at the end of verse 8, "Who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?" Who was there in the days of Jesus who really understood the meaning of His death? Those in authority didn't understand. Pilate certainly didn't understand. The religious leaders certainly didn't understand. We know this because 1 Cor. 2:8 tells us that "none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

Those closest to Jesus didn't understand. Though Jesus had repeatedly told His disciples that He must die, they didn't understand. The women went to the tomb, expecting Jesus to be there. When they didn't find Him, they ran to tell His disciples that He had risen from the dead, just as He said (Mark 16:6-8). And yet, hearing the predictions of Jesus and the testimony of the women, they continued in their unbelief. We know this because Jesus rebuked them, saying, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" (Luke 24:25-26).

There was nobody in the days of Jesus who understood fully what the meaning of His death would be. Despite having the Scriptures. Despite searching the Scriptures diligently. Despite attempting to order all of their lives in accordance with the Scriptures. Nobody in the days of Jesus understood that He died "for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due" (verse 8). Nobody understood that Jesus Christ died in the place of those who deserved punishment for their sins. (We won't spend much time dwelling upon this point, because, in fact, we dwelt upon this point during my entire message last week.) Jesus Christ died as a substitution. The fact is that our transgression deserves a stroke of punishment. But, Jesus Christ died in our place. He was our substitute. Where we deserved punishment, Jesus Christ took the punishment for us.

This is the hope that we proclaim. We proclaim that Jesus Christ is our substitute, so that all who believe on Him won't perish for their sins, but will instead live forever in His presence (i.e. John 3:16). Do you believe this? This is why Jesus died! He died as a replacement to rebels. Such was His death (verse 8). Next, we have ...

3. His burial (verse 9)

In verse 9 we read, "His grave was assigned with wicked men. Yet He was with a rich man in His death, because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth."

These words are quite amazing in their accuracy of the prediction of the circumstances surrounding the death of Jesus Christ. He is described as one who was "despised and forsaken of men" (verse 3), as one who was "afflicted .. and let to slaughter [as a lamb]" (verse 7), and as one who was taken away "by oppression and judgment," (verse 8). The natural expectation of those in Jerusalem was to give Him a dishonorable burial. In fact, this happened. Those who died upon a Roman cross were known to be criminals. As such, they were often buried apart from the people in a common, criminal's grave.

This is where Jesus would have been buried, had not Joseph of Arimathea come on the scene. All of the gospel writers mention the act of kindness that this man showed to Jesus, even in His death. He asked Pilate for the body of Jesus and carried the body of Jesus to the tomb (John 19:38). He, along with Nicodemus, bound the body of Jesus in linen wrappings along with about 100 pounds of spices (John 19:40). After the body had been prepared for burial, they placed it in a new tomb, in which "no one had yet been laid" (John 19:41). D. A. Carson makes the following observation: "To own a new tomb and use the quantity of spices reported by John, Joseph must have been well-to-do." [\[2\]](#)

The prophecy of the burial of Jesus came true to the last detail. As one who died as a criminal upon a cross, "His grave was assigned with wicked men" (verse 9). But, due to the kindness Joseph of Arimathea, "He was with a rich man in His death" (verse 9), receiving an honorable burial as He deserved. And all of this vindicates His righteousness. Look at the end of verse 9, "Because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth."

Jesus Christ was a righteous man. In fact, the Scriptures clearly tell us that no one has ever been righteous like Jesus. The clear testimony of the Bible is that in Jesus, "there is no sin" (1 John 3:5). In 1 Peter 2:22 we read that Jesus "committed no sin." The writer to the Hebrews tells us that Jesus was "without sin" (Heb. 4:15). This isn't some small point. This is everything to us. It's His righteousness that allows us to be righteous by faith in Him (Phil. 3:9; 2 Cor. 5:21). Would it be proved that Jesus was a sinful man, our hope would be gone!

We have seen (1) His suffering (verse 7); (2) His death (verse 8); and (3) His burial (verse 9). Let's now turn the page and begin looking at the bright side. Let's look at ...

4. His pleasure (verse 10)

Verse 10 reads, "But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand."

These words declare to us the prime mover behind the crucifixion of Christ. Now, to be sure, Jesus was crucified on a Roman cross at the hands of Roman soldiers. And thus, the Roman soldiers crucified Jesus. And yet, the soldiers were under orders of their governor, Pontius Pilate. And so, it was Pilate who crucified Jesus as well. But, Pilate never would have delivered Jesus over to be crucified, had it not been for the mob of people, who were beginning to start a riot (Matt. 27:24). And so, it was the people who crucified Jesus, who were also responsible. In fact, they told Pilate, "His blood shall be upon us and on our children" (Matt. 27:25). But, the crowds would never have been so insistent upon crucifying Jesus had not the religious leaders stirred them to do so (Matt. 27:20). And so, the Jewish people had their hand in crucifying Jesus as well (Matt. 27:25). But, the religious leaders would never have been able to hand Jesus over to Pilate, had not Judas agreed to betray Him (Matt. 26:14-16). And so, Judas was involved in crucifying Jesus as well. But, Judas wouldn't have betrayed Jesus, had not the devil first put such a thought into his heart (John 13:2). And so, even Satan, himself, had his hands in the mix. But, behind it all was God, the Father, who declared the end from the beginning (Is. 46:10), who decreed from eternity past that Jesus would come and be crucified at the hands of the Romans (Acts 4:28). This is what verse 10 says, "The LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief."

Let it never enter your mind that the circumstances surrounding the death of Jesus somehow were out of God's control. All went exactly as planned. The early Christians knew this well, affirming this in their prayer to God, ...

O Lord, it is You who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them, who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David, Your servant, said, "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples devise futile things? The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ." For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur (Acts 4:24-28).

It was God's hand that crushed His Son. That's what verse 10 says, "The LORD was pleased to crush Him."

But verse 10 goes a bit further than merely saying that God crucified Jesus. It says that it pleased the Father to do so. Now, you need to take this in the right way. It's not that God derived any pleasure in inflicting pain and punishment upon His Son. This isn't His character. We know that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11). We know that God "does not afflict [His people with distress] willingly" (Lam. 3:33). It's not that God was cold-hearted when His Son was dying upon the cross. On the contrary, I believe that the cross was as painful to the Father as it was to the Son.

However, there was something about the crucifixion that gave God great pleasure. I believe that it was the result of what the crucifixion would accomplish that gave God so great a pleasure. By abandoning Jesus upon the cross, God the Father could pour out His wrath upon Jesus, thereby creating the way of salvation for all who believe. By crushing His Son, God would redeem His people from their sins. Thereby, He would obtain for His own glory, a multitude in heaven which no man can count (Rev. 7:9). So, how did God derive pleasure from crucifying Jesus upon the cross? It was the fruit of the cross.

Perhaps an illustration at this point might help. I want for you to think about disciplining of your children (if you have any). Now imagine with me that in some way or in some fashion, your child does something that was wrong, which merits punishment from you (if you can imagine this). Instantly, a dilemma is created in your mind. You love your child. And the last thing that you want to do is bring physical pain to your child. But, on the other hand, you know what will happen if you ignore the transgression. You know that it will mean pain further down the road as your child learns to live sinfully, and reaps what he sows.

And so, you face the dilemma of causing pain to your child today or allowing your child to face pain in the future. And the way that God has created the universe is that the pain of the future will be much larger than the pain of the present discipline. The Scripture tells us that the fruit of discipline is good. In Hebrews 12:11 we read that "all discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness." But, the actual administration of the discipline is painful. It is painful for the child. It is also painful for the parent. I can't tell you how many times I have sought to back out from what I know is the best thing for one of my children, because it was painful for me to discipline them. I have looked into their crying eyes, and everything in my is crying out to have mercy upon them. But, I know how much it is needed for their own good in the future.

And so, the father or mother who loves his child will discipline him (or her). Proverbs 13:24 says that "He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently." Love is displayed in that the parent has a long-term view of his child's life and wants the child to know the fruit of discipline, which is joy and happiness and freedom!

Let's step back into Isaiah 53. How does God take pleasure in crushing His Son upon the cross? It's not in the pain that was inflicted upon the Son during the crucifixion. It's in the fruit that will be produced by the cross. This fruit is mentioned here in verse 10. "If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand." The fruit of the sacrifice of Christ would be threefold: (1) offspring, (2) length of days, and (3) pleasure for the Son.

The offspring that Jesus will see is the body of Christ, the church. John wrote that believers in Christ are called "children of God" (1 John 3:1), in that they can rightly call God, their Father. The prolongation of His days will be forever, as He will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16). The pleasure of the LORD will be accomplished through that hand of Jesus, whose blood brings sinners pure to God. This is why it pleased the LORD to crush Jesus: Because He knew that in so doing, He would redeem a people for Himself for all eternity.

For any Jew who was reading this passage, something strange would immediately jump out at him. "How in the world will the servant, who is cut off out of the land of the living (i.e. verse 8), see His offspring?" Or, to say it another way, "How in the world will the one who was placed in the grace (verse 9), have prolonged days of life?" Or, "How in the world will the dead one know anything of the 'good pleasure of the LORD'?"

The only way for this to take place was for Jesus to be raised from the dead. The resurrection of the Messiah is implied very clearly in this passage. As Jesus prepared Himself for being the ultimate sacrifice, I'm sure that He knew full well what lay before Him. He knew that the pain and shame of the cross would be great. You need simply to look into the garden of Gethsemane to see how well Jesus understood what lay before Him. But, He also knew of the resurrection that would follow His death.

Last week, I mentioned the movie, Narnia. I mentioned of how Aslan died as a substitute for Edmund. Aslan died a painful death. But, he knew that death could not contain him. He knew that "when a willing victim, who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor's stead, the Table would crack and Death itself would start working backwards." [\[3\]](#) Aslan knew the results of his sacrifice to be joyful. The scene in which he resurrections is filled with joy. There was laughter. There was joy. There was playful romping about. And then, finally, Aslan felt like letting out a giant roar of victory!

In the same way, Jesus also knew of the joys that would follow the agony. It's why the author to the Hebrews could write of how Jesus, "for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the same" (Heb. 12:3). It's not that the cross was a joy. It's what lay after the cross that was His joy! And Jesus kept this ever before Him. To the thief on the cross, He said, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

Jesus knew that the cross wasn't going to end His life in the ultimate sense. Jesus knew that He would live way beyond the cross. He knew that paradise was the place for Him. What comes to mind when you think of paradise? A private, tropical beach with lemonade and a slight wind? A day on the golf course at Pebble Beach? A day of pampering with a manicure, pedicure, a massage, and dinner out at Red Lobster?

Whatever comes to your mind when you think "paradise," it's full of pleasure and delight. That's what Jesus was anticipating after the cross.

He called it "paradise." It's what He was purchasing on the cross! His resurrection would demonstrate that He purchased it. He knew that He would be raised from the dead! Jesus knew that God's pleasure would prosper in His hand, because He would be alive to see it happen.

The resurrection is implied in verse 10. In verse 11, we see how the resurrection is implied again. ...

5. His satisfaction (verse 11)

Verse 11 reads, "As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied. By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities."

Not only will the death of Christ ultimately give Him great pleasure. It will also be His satisfaction (verse 11).

Again, when the ancient Jew would read this passage of Scripture, a big question would come to mind. "This anguish can be nothing other than the oppression and judgment of the Messiah, which leads ultimately to His death and burial. How can this suffering servant then look upon what was accomplished if He were dead!?" The only way that Jesus would see the outcome of His anguish upon the cross was to be alive after the cross.

This is what we are celebrating this Resurrection Sunday. We are celebrating Jesus Christ, risen from the dead! We are celebrating a satisfied savior this morning. Jesus knew that there would be anguish of soul. But, He also knew that there would be great satisfaction afterwards.

Isn't this how it works in life? The result of your anguish often ends in satisfaction. I had breakfast this past week with a man who was talking about going to the gym. He told me that he loves going to the gym after work and hitting the weights hard. Upper body, ... Lower body, ... and then, ... coming home exhausted. He told me, "You come home feeling so good." I thought of this verse. "As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied."

Anguish can often give you a sense of satisfaction. It takes place in the gym. It can take place at your work. You work on a project for months. And finally, it's done. You look back at a sense of satisfaction at work well done. It can take place at home. You are working on redecorating your home somehow. Perhaps you are redoing your kitchen or repainting some room or installing some new floor. The project is consuming for you for a season. And when it is done, you sit back and delight in what you accomplished through your work. It was no different with Jesus. As verse 11 begins, it is the "result of the anguish of His soul" that will allow Him to "see it and be satisfied."

The next question that comes as a result of verse 11 is this: What is Jesus going to see that will so satisfy Him? If you go to the gym, you are satisfied with the strength you gained. If you work on a big project in the workplace, you are satisfied with the accomplishments of the project. If you do some work in your home, you are satisfied with your new surroundings. But, what did Jesus accomplish that so satisfied Him? In a word: our redemption. "By His knowledge the Righteous One, my servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities" (verse 11).

Last week, I spoke long and hard about what it meant for Jesus to "bear our iniquities." It means that He was a substitute. He took the punishment that our sins deserved. He bore the penalty of our iniquities.

How easy is it for us merely to think of our sin in general, and not our sin in particular. Perhaps you can think of some particular sin that you committed this week. And then, think of how that sin was born by Jesus upon the cross. I can think of my own sin this week. My wife and family went to a Good Friday service at a church here in town. The service was done very well. There were certain circumstances of the service that impressed the death of Christ upon my soul with greater reality than I have felt in a long time. On the way home, my wife and I were having a conversation with each other. She made some statements, which were absolutely true. I took them the wrong way and became offended. I became angry at her for saying such things. I became defensive. I became depressed for the rest of the evening. She didn't intend for her words to be taken like I took them. But, in my sin, I responded in this sinful way.

I later apologized and confessed my sin to her. The glorious news of the gospel is that my sinful response to my wife was born by Jesus on the cross. When Jesus died upon the cross, He bore the penalty of all of our iniquities. This resulted in justification for us. "Justification" is a legal word that simply means that we will be vindicated. We will be declared "not guilty." There is nothing that the law that will be able to accuse us any more! My sinful response to my wife no longer sits at the bar of God, ready to accuse me. It has been taken away and removed. This is the work that so satisfied Jesus: the justification of sinners!

We often can think only about ourselves when we think about the gospel of Christ. But, have you ever considered God's perspective of the work of Jesus? It satisfied God. It made Him happy. It gave Him much delight.

From time to time, I will leave a note behind for my wife to find when I'm not around. (Now, I must admit that I don't do this as much as I should do this type of thing). But, there have been occasions in which I have been out of town for some reason and written a note and placed it under the covers of our bed, only to be found by her when she crawls into bed. The note might say, "I wish I were home with you. I love you. I love putting this smile on your face." Do you want to put a smile on the face of God? Believe in His risen Son. Receive the justification that can be yours by faith. Jesus will look upon you with great joy and satisfaction and delight. It gives Him much delight to forgive sinners through His blood!

Let's now turn our attention to my last point this morning:

6. His victory (verse 12)

This comes in verse 12, which reads, "Therefore, I will a lot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong, because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressions; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors."

again, please notice on this Resurrection Sunday that the resurrection is implied in this passage. "How can this servant divide the booty with the strong" when "He poured out Himself to death"? There is only one way in which this can take place: the resurrection. This servant is alive and well. In fact, we see the servant "triumphant!" (From which I derived the title of my message this morning, "He was triumphant!") He has gained the victory. He has brought back the spoil and now distributing it "with the strong."

The picture here is that of a king who went out to the battlefield to fight a war. When the battle was over, this king was victorious. He came back triumphant. He brought back with him the spoils of war to be distributed to those in his home country who fought the battle. This is how the work of Jesus upon the earth is seen from God, the Father (who is speaking in this verse). The work that Jesus did was a victorious work. It gained the victory. Just as an earthly king will distribute the livestock, gold, or precious jewels to his people, so also will Jesus distribute His booty to His people.

But, what's the booty that Jesus won? There is some question as to whether or not you can press this poetical language in Isaiah 53 to speak about actual booty that will be received. However, if you can, I believe that you can make an argument that Jesus won eternal life that He will distribute to all who believe! At the end of 1 Corinthians 15, (which speaks so well of the resurrection and its implications), we find a few verses that give us this hint. Paul writes, ...

1 Corinthians 15:50-57

Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The victory that Paul says that Christ has won is the victory over death. Death is our enemy and will claim each and every one of us. And yet, the resurrection demonstrates that Jesus conquered death. When you come to the end of Revelation, which is describing the end of the world, you see that those who come to Jesus are permitted to drink of the water of life and are permitted to have access to the tree of life (Rev. 22:17-19). But, those who don't come to Jesus are prohibited from these things. And so, I believe that Jesus will be passing out the booty of life that he earned upon the cross to those who believe in Him.

Again, please notice how central the cross is to all of this. The reason why Jesus can pass out this booty of life is because He, Himself, died our death. "... Because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors" (Is. 53:12). It's on account of the work that Jesus accomplished that gives Jesus the victory, as "He, Himself, bore the sin of many." It is only through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus that we can be freed from the clutches of sin and death.

Indeed, Jesus Christ was triumphant! He triumphed over the grave. To be sure, He died a violent death and was buried. But, He also was raised from the dead on our behalf.

And now, I end with one simple application for you. Do you believe it?

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on April 16, 2006 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rvbc.cc.

[1] I have read that this isn't necessarily the case today, as slaughter houses today line animals up in a big line, where they come into a door and come out butchered. I have read that these animals can often smell the blood of death that is in the air and react against the danger they sense. But, in the ancient days, this surely wasn't the case, as animals weren't slaughtered in mass numbers.

[2] The Expositor's Bible Commentary. Volume 8 (Matthew), p. 584, written by D. A. Carson.

[3] C. S. Lewis, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. p. 160.