

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

They are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye mistakes can be found. So he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at [pastorpat@waukeshabile.org](mailto:pastorpat@waukeshabile.org).

**Date:** April 12, 2009 (Easter Sunday)

**Title:** “The Wonder of the Cross”

**Text:** Isaiah 53

**Theme:** The Father sent His Son to be the Savior of the World.

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Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in **the Storyline of the Bible**. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.

## The Way of His Cross

Date: April 12, 2009 (Easter Sunday)  
 Title: "The Wonder of the Cross"  
 Text: Isaiah 53  
 Theme: The Father sent His Son to be the Savior of the World.

### Introduction:

Over the last several weeks we have considered the cross-work of Jesus Christ. This was done for two reasons: first, to prepare us for a concentrated focus on Passion Week and second, to understand better the cross-work of Jesus Christ. It has been a topical or thematic study and as such has potential obstacles. Our text today is Isaiah 53. The larger thought comes out of chapter 52. It is a celebrated chapter and rightly so.

"Several parts of this passage are quoted in the New Testament: Isaiah 52:15 in Romans 15:21; Isaiah 53:1 in John 12:38 and Romans 10:16; Isaiah 53:4 in Matthew 8:17; Isaiah 53:7-8 in Acts 8:32, 33; Isaiah 53:9 in 1 Peter 2:22; and Isaiah 53:12 in Luke 22:37."<sup>1</sup>

My fear in this study is that in looking at the chapter along five distinct lines I would do an injustice or disservice to the larger thought. It is with caution that I offer you these thoughts.

*"The wonder of the cross is not the blood, but whose blood it was and to what purpose it was shed"*<sup>2</sup>

I have entitled this study "The Wonder of the Cross." In part because it begins with the letter, "W". However, throughout history humanity has sought to catalogue various man-made and natural occurring phenomena that they have entitled, "Wonders." These various lists seek to catalogue the most spectacular man-made constructions and natural things in the world. There is nothing more wonderful than the person and work of Jesus Christ. Today I wish to note five wonders found in the cross-work of Jesus Christ.

In seeking to understand the story of God and the redemption of His people it is important to answer the question, "'What then is the **pinnacle** of all history, and the **ultimate** display of who God is?' The **central** moment of all history, the **greatest** display of God's eternal glory, indeed the very reason that God made the world and worked out all of history to bring things just to that point - to the fullness of time, to the minutely and flawlessly prepared stage for the mightiest of all acts - that central moment was the eternal Son of God's taking on human flesh, accomplishing a perfect obedience, and offering himself up as a substitutionary sacrifice to achieve eternal redemption for those whom the Father had given Him. And this **pivotal** moment of all history was also the unparalleled display of God's nature. God, who had been revealing himself in various ways in past ages, revealed himself fully and perfectly when he sent

His Son into the world (Hebrews 1:1-3; John 1:18). The greatest display of God's nature consists in Christ completing redemption. The pinnacle of Christ's redemptive work, in fact the moment for which he came into the world (John 12:27), occurred nearly two thousand years ago on Good Friday. The cross is both the greatest event in all of history and the mightiest display of God's nature."<sup>3</sup>

Yet we must not forget to link Good Friday with Resurrection Sunday. **This Friday is "good" because Sunday happened.** To speak of the cross without remembering the resurrection is to address a corpse as if it were the person. Paul is clear concerning the significance of our Lord's resurrection. It was the act whereby Jesus Christ is "declared the Son of God with power" (Rom. 1:4). Yet today our focus is on the wonder of the cross itself as found in Isaiah 53.

What we consider in this study follows five distinct lines.

- The suffering in the story is real.
- The object in the story is undeserving.
- The value of the story is priceless.
- The author of the story is God.
- The outcome of the story is certain.

Each of these five ideas is from the text, there is more, but this is sufficient for this study.

Remembering the weight of the cross calls us to note His suffering and then His glory. This chapter celebrates this truth.

### **THE BIG PICTURE:**

March 1	- The Relationship of the Cross to the Hero's Work
March 8	- The Wisdom of the Cross
March 15	- The Work of the Cross
March 22	- The Way of the Cross
March 29	- The Word of the Cross
April 5	- The Weight of the Cross
<b><u>April 12</u></b>	<b>- The Wonder of the Cross</b>

### **Its Eternal Value:**

God by offering up His Son stops the rebellion against Him and secures for His people salvation from sin.

### **The Problem:**

It is possible to mark the day without entering into the story. Today we want to be overwhelmed by the magnitude of what we are considering.

### **The Storyline:**

God has written a story whereby those who have rebelled against Him might become the objects of His affection and enjoy Him forever. This is His purpose, His action and not a reaction against the rebellion of men. The means whereby God secures for His

people salvation from sin is through the voluntary and vicarious sacrifice of His only begotten Son. Those whom He saves are unworthy and undeserving. However, what God wills, He does. The outcome of His infinite sacrifice is inevitable and victorious. God wins!

### **Questions:**

1. Was there anything out of the ordinary in the appearance of Jesus as He grew as a child (vv. 1, 2)?
2. What would cause the change of thought that appears in verse 3?
3. What are the key elements in verses 4-6?
4. What conclusion do we make concerning His sufferings (v. 4)?
5. For whom did He suffer? For His crime or for the crimes of others?
6. Despite the fact that the sheep did not follow the shepherd, what did the shepherd do (v. 6)?
7. How did the "lamb" suffer (v. 7)?
8. Did the "victim" suffer justly?
9. What conclusion is made in verse 9 that begins to speak of His innocence?
10. Ultimately, why did the "lamb" suffer (v. 10)?
11. Will the sacrifice accomplish what it was designed to do (vv. 10, 11)?
12. What are some of the words used to describe the "lamb's" suffering?
13. What are some of the words used to describe the consequences of the suffering?
14. How does the chapter end? On what note?

The Holy Spirit is calling to us from this passage to consider three ideas.

**To Know:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to know the provision of God for the salvation of His people.

**To Choose:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to choose God's provision and not our own.

**To Feel:** The Holy Spirit desires for us to feel the joy of resting in His work in our behalf.

These five ideas will guide us in this short study. It is appropriate for us to make this chapter from Isaiah all about Jesus. When the eunuch in Acts 8 read this passage he asked Philip a simple question, "Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else (Acts 8:34)?" The response is electrifying, "Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him (8:35)."

Today, we will attempt to preach Jesus.

### **Outline:**

- I. The wonder is the **PAIN** of the cross (Separation).

"During His earthly ministry there were many things which disappointed Him, many things which wearied Him to exhaustion, and some things which taxed His spiritual energies beyond the normal. And the gospels make it as plain as anything

can be made, that what taxed Him far beyond anything else was His death. The black shadow of the Cross haunted His days increasingly as His ministry advanced; His soul became "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38). In Gethsemane He was "in an agony" (Luke 22:44). The cry of desertion was wrung from Him upon the Cross (Matt. 27:46). Even if there were no other proof of it, the intensity of His anguish proves that the Cross was His supreme work and God's.

God did an incomparable work for us men by the Cross of His Son. It was God that did it, and He did it through One, His only [i.e., one-of-a-kind] and well-beloved Son. That is a simple thing to say, but I wonder if we have let it sink deep enough into our hearts." <sup>4</sup>

The Bible tells us Jesus bore the sins of the world.

"... and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed" (1 Pet. 2:24).

Consider 2 Corinthians 5:21.

**"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf,** so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

How well do we understand the reality of this pain? It is this bearing that produced the groan, "'ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?' that is, 'MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME'" (Matt. 27:46).

Notice the following ideas as present in Isaiah 53.

- A. The pain of being despised (v. 3).
- B. The pain of being forsaken (v. 3).
- C. The pain of bearing grief (v. 4).
- D. The pain of carrying sorrow (v. 4).
- E. The pain of being smitten of God and afflicted (v. 4)
- F. The pain of being pierced through for transgression (v. 5).
- G. The pain of being crushed for iniquities (v. 5).
- H. The pain of being chastened for well-being (v. 5).
- I. The pain of being scourged for healing (v. 6).
- J. The pain of bearing iniquity (v. 6).
- K. The pain of being oppressed (v. 7).
- L. The pain of being afflicted (v. 7).
- M. The pain of silent endurance (v. 7).
- N. The pain of being unjustly oppressed and falsely judged (v. 8).

"The Servant was the victim of a grave miscarriage of justice."<sup>5</sup>

- O. The pain of being crushed (v. 10).
- P. The pain of being put to grief (v. 10).
- Q. The pain of being offered up as a guilt offering (v. 10).
- R. The pain of experiencing anguish of soul (v. 11).
- S. The pain of bearing iniquity (v. 11).
- T. The pain of being poured out to death (v. 12).
- U. The pain of being numbered with the transgressors (v. 12).
- V. The pain of bearing the sin of many (v. 12).
- W. The pain of interceding for the transgressor (v. 12).

Our sin was placed on Him. The cruel reality of this truth can be noted in the Son's desire to avoid the cross if possible and when on the cross His guttural groan, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" Our sin was imputed to His account, and the Father the righteous judge treated Him as such. It was through the pain of the cross that our redemption from sin's debt and our reconciliation from sin's alienation was accomplished and applied. There is wonder in the cross knowing that God loves me and sent His only begotten Son to be my deliverer.

"A guilt-offering or trespass-offering required not only the blood of a sacrificial victim but also compensation exceeding any indebtedness to the Lord by an extra fifth (Leviticus 5: 15-16). The application of this term to the self-sacrifice of the Messiah emphasizes the superabundance of His atoning merits and pains. He suffered more than enough to satisfy the wrath of God aroused by all the sins of all sinners in all of human history."<sup>6</sup>

II. The wonder is the **PURPOSE** of the cross (vv. 4-6 [Substitution]).

<sup>4</sup> "Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. <sup>6</sup> All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him" (Isa. 53:4-6).

The wonder of the cross is in the Son's willingness to bear the sins of His people (2 Cor. 5:21; Isa. 53:4-6). **It was not for His sin He suffered but for the sin of His people.** Throughout Isaiah 53 emphasis is placed on **what God the Father did to, in, and through His Son for His people.** The Father smote His only begotten Son in order that His people might be saved from the penalty of sin, the power of the sin, and the presence of sin. He did this so that we might live in a state of eternal fellowship with Him. He did this in order that we might experience Him.

Although we are exceedingly arrogant and have embraced an ideology of entitlement, you and I deserve nothing short of hell. Even the jobs we enjoy or the roof over our heads, or the food on our table are all gifts from God. Regardless as to whom we are or

where we live, we deserve worse than we have. Even in hell we have only received what is just and right. Yet despite all this, God sent His Son to be our Savior from sin and self.

III. The wonder is the **POWER** of the cross (Satisfaction).

It is because Jesus lived a perfect life and died a sacrificial death that life comes from death. The scope of what He did because of the sacrifice He offered is twin to who He is and seeking to lay hold of it becomes an eternal pursuit. John Piper summarizes the wonder of the cross very well: "The death of Christ is the wisdom of God by which the love of God saves sinners from the wrath of God, and all the while upholds and demonstrates the righteousness of God".<sup>7</sup> **The wonder of the cross is the pleasure of God in the offering of His Son and self for the redemption of His people.** The wonder of the cross is bringing life from death. The wonder of the cross is securing victory in defeat. Therein lays the wonder of the cross. There are eight ideas we can note.

- A. The power of the cross speaks to our grief (vv. 4, 11).
  - 1. He bore our grief (v. 4)
  - 2. As He will bear their iniquities (v. 11).
- B. The power of the cross speaks to our sorrows (v. 4).
  - 1. He carried our sorrows (v. 4).
- C. The power of the cross speaks to our transgressions (vv. 5, 8, 12).
  - 1. He was pierced through for our transgressions (v. 5).
  - 2. He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people (v. 8).
  - 3. And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors (v. (12).
- D. The power of the cross speaks to our iniquities (vv. 5, 6, 11).
  - 1. He was crushed for our iniquities (v. 5).
  - 2. But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him (v. 6).
  - 3. He will bear their iniquities (v. 11).

- E. The power of the cross speaks to our well-being (v. 5).
  - 1. The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him (v. 5).
- F. The power of the cross speaks to our healing (v. 5).
  - 1. And by His scourging we are healed (v. 5).
- G. The power of the cross speaks to His wrath (v. 11).
  - 1. He will see it and be satisfied (v. 11).
- H. The power of the cross speaks to our justification (v. 11).
  - 1. My Servant, will justify the many (v. 11).

The cross speaks to the human condition. It is impossible for us to answer any of these areas in the absence of the cross.

“In these days of dark confusion, God is calling for men and women who shall speak a plain and loving word to their fellow-men. Once and for all He has spoken His word through the Cross of Christ, and those who have heard it must pass it on. If they have really heard it they cannot but pass it on. It will melt the coldness of the world when it comes from the Cross through hearts which are hot.”<sup>8</sup>

IV. The wonder is the **PLEASURE** in the cross (vv. 10, 11 [Determination]).

The Father determined to place His Son as the means through which His people would be saved. We tend to believe there were other options and if so why this way? Yet in the wisdom of God this was the best means to accomplish the highest good of glorifying God.

“The waw, although always in such a connection grammatically disjunctive in some fashion, is here **used specifically with emphatic force to introduce a clause which summarizes and explains** the sinless sufferings of the Servant of the Lord depicted in the preceding two stanzas and which thereby also provides the basis of the results of these sufferings which are depicted in the remaining lines of this verse and, indeed, in the two following verses. In general, to be sure, translations of the verse assume here an adversative use of the waw as "yet" or the like. The point, however, that **it was the Lord Himself who was responsible for the suffering of the Messiah in the most ultimate and grievous way** has already been made in the preceding stanza and is only being reiterated here [Emphasis added].”<sup>9</sup>

The language of Isaiah in chapter 53 is breath-taking. All earthly images that one can conjure up to describe that which exceeds the mind to imagine pale in contrast to and in comparison with the wonder of the cross. The prophet tells us the "The LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief" (Isa. 53:10). Let this not escape us . . . **it pleased God to crush His only Son.** This is not the joy of the sadist or the action of a cruel tyrant. It is the pleasure produced by the perfect obedience of the Son's willingness to carry out the story to redeem His people. Somehow, in ways that are unsearchable, the servant "will justify the many" (53:11).

<sup>10</sup> "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. <sup>11</sup> 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" (Isa. 53:10, 11).

"He who reads the Bible with the eye of faith, desiring to discover its hidden secrets, sees something more in the Savior's death than Roman cruelty, or Jewish malice: **he sees the solemn decree of God fulfilled by men,** who were the ignorant, but guilty instruments of its accomplishment. He looks beyond the Roman spear and nail, beyond the Jewish taunt and jeer, up to the Sacred Fount, whence all things flow, and **traces the crucifixion of Christ to the breast of Deity** [Emphasis added]."<sup>10</sup>

No one has ever suffered as deeply as did Jesus at the hand of His heavenly Father. Some have maliciously understood this to be the outworking of a cruel Father.

**Julie M. Hopkins:** "It is morally abhorrent to claim that God the Father demanded the self-sacrifice of his only Son to balance the scales of justice...A god who punished through pain, despair and violent death is not a god of love, but a sadist and despot."<sup>11</sup>

No one here would offer up their child for the sake of one who hated them and sought their destruction. And because we cannot fathom the act, we dismiss it as evil and fail to understand God. Yet God sent His only begotten Son in order that He might redeem His people from their sins. Whatever else we might make of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ it was the determined purpose of God and it pleased Him to do so.

"The idea of the first clause of verse 10a is not that God takes pleasure in the process of crushing the Messiah, but that He takes pleasure in the accomplished action. The reasons why He takes such pleasure in the action are then specified in the clauses which follow as being the necessary results of the Messiah's self-sacrifice, namely, the regeneration and eternal salvation of sinners."<sup>12</sup>

V. The fifth wonder is the PROMISE of the cross (vv. 10, 11 [Vindication]).

<sup>10</sup> "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. <sup>11</sup> 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" (Isa. 53:10, 11).

Our text tells us that, "He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand." God shall finish and fulfill all He foresees and foretells. Both words in verse 10 for "pleased" and "pleasure" are the same. Isaiah uses the same word with the same idea in Isaiah 55:11.

<sup>6</sup> "Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. <sup>7</sup> Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. <sup>8</sup> For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. <sup>9</sup> For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts. <sup>10</sup> For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; <sup>11</sup> **So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I DESIRE, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.** <sup>12</sup> For you will go out with joy And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap their hands. <sup>13</sup> Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up, And instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up, And it will be a memorial to the LORD, For an everlasting sign which will not be cut off" (Isa. 53:6-13).

God said it and it is so. All that He determines to do shall come to pass. Those whom He seeks to save shall be saved. God the Father will vindicate the Son's work by His resurrection from the dead.

<sup>7</sup> "How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!" <sup>8</sup> Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices, They shout joyfully together; For they will see with their own eyes When the LORD restores Zion. <sup>9</sup> Break forth, shout joyfully together, You waste places of Jerusalem; For the LORD has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup> **The LORD has bared His holy arm In the sight of all the nations, That all the ends of the earth may see The salvation of our God**" (Isa. 52:7-10).

Who of us can comprehend the magnitude and mystery of what God chose to do for those who are His? Although the enormity of this is beyond limited minds to fully process, it does not mean finite minds are stripped of the responsibility and privilege of pursuing this understanding. We must and we can meditate on these truths. Let us not

relent as we push onward in our pursuit of Him. Let us continue to bind ourselves together in our common pursuit of this uncommon God.

Today is a day of victory. The Father sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. God's purpose has been accomplished. How do you know these truths? Are they personally or merely intellectually?

### **Shepherding the Sheep** (What's the NEXT STEP?)

1. Do you know Jesus as your Savior from sin?
2. Do you understand that God has provided a way for your sin to be addressed?
3. Have you accepted what He has done in your behalf?

### **INVITE THE SINNER TO JESUS**

4. Today is a great day if you know Jesus Christ as your resurrected Savior.
5. Today is a day to be marked by hope and love.

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<sup>1</sup> (John A. Martin, "Isaiah," in *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, OT:1106).

<sup>2</sup> Donald English, <http://www.christianity.co.nz/cross-13.htm>

<sup>3</sup> ("The Centrality of the Cross," Nathan Pitchford - [http://www.reformationtheology.com/2006/04/a\\_meditation\\_for\\_good\\_friday.php](http://www.reformationtheology.com/2006/04/a_meditation_for_good_friday.php))

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.abcog.org/lamont.htm>. Sermon preached by Daniel Lamont, Helensburgh, Scotland, 1920.

<sup>5</sup> (G.W. Grogan, "Isaiah," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 6:306).

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ctsfw.edu/etext/judisch/pent22b.htm>

<sup>7</sup> (John Piper, *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist*, chapter 2)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.abcog.org/lamont.htm>. Sermon preached by Daniel Lamont, Helensburgh, Scotland, 1920.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ctsfw.edu/etext/judisch/pent22b.htm>

<sup>10</sup> (<http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/0173.htm> The New Park Street Pulpit, "The Death of Christ," Delivered on Sabbath Morning, January 24, 1858, by the C. H. Spurgeon at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens).

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.religioustolerance.org/quotes0.htm>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ctsfw.edu/etext/judisch/pent22b.htm>