

⁷ *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.*

⁸ *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? (NASB)*

Text: Isaiah 53:7-8 A 3/19/17 Passion History, part 3 Psalm 32 Responsive Psalm: 86
Hymns: 23, 156, 363, 147

THE LAMB OF GOD HAS TAKEN OUR SINS AWAY!

- 1. He was wrongly condemned to die**
- 2. He was willing to die**
- 3. He died for our sins**

A Lamb goes uncomplaining forth, The guilt of all men bearing;
And laden with the sins of earth, None else the burden sharing!
Goes patient on, grows weak and faint, To slaughter led without complaint,
That spotless life to offer;
Bears shame and stripes, and wounds and death, Anguish and mockery, and saith,
“Willing all this I suffer.”

“Yes, Father, yes, most willingly I’ll bear what Thou commandest;
My will conforms to Thy decree, I do what Thou demandest.”
O wondrous Love, what hast Thou done! The Father offers up His Son!
The Son, content, descendeth!
O Love, how strong Thou art to save! (TLH #142:1, 3)

Dear fellow believers in Christ,

– 1 –

Last Sunday our text was from the same chapter as today’s text: the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. In today’s section Isaiah prophesied about Jesus, “*He was oppressed and He was afflicted. ... By oppression and judgment He was taken away.*” The sense of the original text is: “Through the violent treatment of those in ... earthly power He was snatched away” (p. 443, Isaiah II, August Pieper, ©1979, NPH). In his account of the events at the end of Jesus’ life Matthew tells us that “*a great multitude with swords and clubs came from the chief priests and elders of the people*” to arrest Jesus and take Him away (26:47). Later when Jesus was on trial in the Jewish court the Bible says that “*the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death.... Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none*” (Mt. 26:59-60). “*Some began to spit on Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him, and to say to Him, ‘Prophesy!’ And the officers struck Him with the palms of their hands*” (Mk. 14:65). When Jesus was on trial before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, the Bible says that “*Pilate ... said to [the Jews], ‘I find no fault in Him at all.’*” And yet to try to satisfy those who hated Jesus “*Pilate took [Him] and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Then they said, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ And they struck Him with their hands*” (Jn. 18:38; 19:1-3).

All this happened because the Jewish leaders believed that Jesus deserved to die for teaching that He was the promised Messiah – the Son of God. But Jesus had told the truth about Himself. Jesus is the Son of God and our Savior. He wanted them, and He wants everyone to hear the truth about Him and believe in Him and be saved.

– 2 –

When the Jews came to capture Jesus, Scripture tells us, “*Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, ‘Whom are you seeking?’ They answered Him, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus said to them, ‘I am He’*” (literally: “I AM”) ... “*Now when He said to them, ‘I AM,’ they drew back and fell to the ground*” in the presence of “I AM” – the eternal, almighty Son of God (Jn. 18:4-6). Jesus could have easily escaped from His enemies. But He stayed there until they recovered, and allowed them to take Him away. When Jesus was on trial before Pilate, the Bible tells us that “*while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then Pilate said to Him, ‘Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?’ But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly*” (Mt.27:12-14). Although Jesus was completely innocent, He didn’t complain about what was being done to Him, or resist it. He said and did nothing to defend Himself. Jesus humbly, patiently accepted His Father’s will that He should die for us. Peter says, “*Christ ... suffered for us.... [He] committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth; ... when He was reviled, [He] did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to [His Father] who judges righteously*” (from 1 Pet. 2:21-23).

It was as Isaiah had prophesied: “*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.*” Animal sacrifices were a major part of the Jewish religion, so this picture was very familiar to them. Think of a little lamb. Lambs are small and helpless. Lambs innocently allow themselves to be led along. For hundreds of years God’s people had sacrificed countless lambs, as God had commanded them to. It was a picture for them of the coming Messiah and His sacrifice. John the Baptist pointed to Jesus and said, “*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*” (Jn. 1:29). Peter says, “*You were ... redeemed ... with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*” (1 Pet. 1:18-19). God sacrificed His only, dear Son, Jesus, for us. “*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.*” Jesus, the innocent Lamb of God, willingly allowed Himself to be captured, put through sham trials, beaten, treated horribly, and finally put to death.

– 3 –

The Bible says that when Jesus was on trial before the Jewish authorities “*many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree*” (Mk. 14:56). Jesus didn’t respond to any of the lies that were told about Him, allowing the lies to speak for themselves. But He did respond when He was asked who He is: “*The high priest ... said to [Jesus], ‘I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!’ Jesus said to him, ‘It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven*” (Mt. 26:63-64). Jesus told Pontius Pilate, “*‘My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.’ Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘Are You a king then?’*” (Pilate wanted to know. **Was** Jesus any kind of

threat to him?) *“Jesus answered, ‘You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice’* (Jn. 18:36-37).

Isaiah prophesied, *“As for His generation”* (the majority of the Jews at the time Jesus was crucified), *“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?”* Last Sunday we heard, *“We esteemed Him stricken, smitten by **God**, and afflicted.”* Jesus’ enemies thought He was guilty of blasphemy, and that His crucifixion was a punishment from God. Even among the many Jews who liked Jesus and didn’t want Him to be put to death, very few understood at the time the real reason that Jesus died.

All those innocent, helpless lambs had to die, and Jesus, the innocent Son of God had to die because sin is **so** bad in the eyes of God. In our text God speaks of *“the transgression of My people;”* from the original text, *“the rebellion of My people.”* Sin isn’t just a mistake or poor choice on our part. Every time we sin we fail to love and obey God as we should. Therefore, in effect, every sin is *“rebellion”* against God. Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be put to death for our sins: *“He was cut off out of the land of the living **for the transgression of My people, to whom the stroke was due.**”* I knew a Christian woman whose Jewish boss asked her, “Do you think the Jews are responsible for the death of Jesus Christ?” She told him, “No more responsible than I am.”

Not long after Jesus’ resurrection and ascension Peter told the Jewish leaders, *“Jesus of Nazareth, [whom] you have taken by lawless hands, [and] have crucified, [was] delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God”* (Ac. 2:22-23). Human eyes see Jesus being put to death because some Jews hated Him. The eyes of faith see God using that evil deed to accomplish our salvation. God sent Jesus to die for our sins on the cross so that we wouldn’t have to die for our sins forever in hell.

When Isaiah wrote the words of our text, Jesus wouldn’t come to earth for another 700 years or more. Yet Isaiah spoke as if Jesus had already come and all those things had already happened to Him: *“He **was** oppressed and ... afflicted, yet He **did** not open His mouth.... He **was** taken away; and ... He **was** cut off out of the land of the living.”* God said these things would happen. When God tells us something in His Word, it’s as good as **done**. Jesus **did** come and allow Himself to be captured, to be put on trial, to suffer, and to be put to death on the cross. All of our sins **have** been forgiven, and we **are** saved!

“Thank You, Jesus, Lamb of God, for humbly giving Your life and taking all of our sins away!”

Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing My great Redeemer’s praise,
The glories of my God and King, The triumphs of His grace!

See all your sins on Jesus laid; The Lamb of God was slain;
His soul was once an offering made For every soul of man.

Glory to God and praise and love Be ever, ever given
By saints below and saints above, The Church in earth and heaven. Amen.

(TLH #360:1, 6-7)