

The last two weeks we have looked at that amazing fourth Suffering Servant Song in which we saw so many details about Jesus' ministry, His taking our sins upon Himself and suffering in our place, His resurrection, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It was a summary of God's plan to save us, New Testament theology explained in the Old Testament 700 years before it came to pass.

While the song has ended, the prose continues with an expansion of an expression in the song, "He shall see His offspring" (Isaiah 53:10). The phrase comes immediately after God making the Servant's soul an offering for guilt. Guilt offerings die, but through the resurrection Jesus sees His offspring and prolongs His days. The offspring are not His physical descendants, but rather His spiritual children born through faith in what He had done for them. The Apostle John saw this clearly when He wrote that those who are children of God through belief in Jesus' sacrifice are those ¹³ *who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.* John 1:13 This is the connection between the Servant Song and our chapter for today.

¹ *"Sing, O barren one, who did not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud, you who have not been in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who is married," says the LORD.* Isaiah 54:1 Paul explains in his letter to the Galatians that this is telling us that Jew and Gentile believers who had not had spiritual offspring would end up with more than the Jewish nation's children of faith. He wrote, ²² *For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman.* ²³ *But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise.* ²⁴ *Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar.* ²⁵ *Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children.* ²⁶ *But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.* ²⁷ *For it is written, "Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband."* ²⁸ *Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.* Galatians 4:22-28 Did you hear Paul's use of Isaiah 54:1 in verse 27? The Jews became like Hagar with Abraham, in bondage to the Law, while it is the church that became like Sarah, the mother of the children of promise, the children of faith who experience the freedom that we have in Christ (Romans 4:13).

How could Paul reach this conclusion? He saw in the four suffering servant songs that the Gentiles would be heirs of God by faith in what the Servant did for them (Isaiah 42:6; 49:6). That is one reason Paul considered it an honor to be the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13). He could foresee the fruit his ministry would bear.

The captives in Babylon probably read this as applying to future fruitfulness after their return to Jerusalem. It would have been a comfort and given them hope for a greater future. But as we read further in the prophecy, we'll see that the details can only be

Commented [PW1]: Isaiah 53:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Commented [PW2]: Romans 4:13 (ESV)

¹³ For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

Commented [PW3]: Isaiah 42:6 (ESV)

⁶ "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,

Commented [PW4]: Isaiah 49:6 (ESV)

⁶ he says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

Commented [PW5]: Romans 11:13 (ESV)

¹³ Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry

true for Jew and Gentile believers in the Messiah. Some of the predictions never applied to the Jewish people as a nation.

² "Enlarge the place of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. ³ For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left, and your offspring will possess the nations and will people the desolate cities. Isaiah 54:2-3 This was the promise to Abraham (Genesis 28:14). Again, Paul sees it happen in a spiritual sense (Galatians 3:16). The descendant of Abraham who would bless the world is Christ Jesus. It is the spiritual offspring of Abraham, through this Seed that blesses the world, who possess the nations (Psalm 2:8).

Missions are an amazing part of world history that is ignored by the secular world. Think of it, **nothing has influenced all of humanity to anything approaching the influence of the message of laborer from the little backwater town of Nazareth.** He lived in a nation under the thumb of Rome. He lived in poverty. He never wrote a book. His crowds of followers were large at times, but when He died a criminal's death, He had 500 followers at most. His closest ones deserted Him in fear for their lives. But today, you can travel to any part of the planet and hear praises sung to Him in their own language. Lives from every background have been transformed from hopelessness to meaning and purpose. The disciples of this one man have possessed the nations with His message.

2000 years after Jesus ascended people hate Him or love Him. Radical Muslims so fear His message that they feel they must execute His followers. The Chinese government so fears the power of the Gospel that they try to control the message of the church and punish those who will not conform. In North Korea anyone caught with a Bible can be executed on the spot. The rate of martyrdom has been at around 100,000 a year and will surge even higher this year.

The first Sunday of November is the time we set aside to remember those who are being executed for their faith or held in prisons. You probably saw the men in orange jump suits who were beheaded. Orange was meant to be a protest over Muslim extremists in Guantanamo. One of those men in orange was not a Christian. He was a laborer from Chad. When the executioners got to him they told him he would be spared if he would just accept Mohammed as the prophet and Allah as the only god. Seeing the faith of the Christians he replied, I want their God to be my God. He died in faith because of the witness of those martyrs. Stand up for your faith brothers and sisters. Love never fails. We know who will win in the end (Revelation 11:15).

Here in the USA the intimidation to be quiet about the Gospel is on the increase. A crazed man executed those college students who declared they were Christians. A High School student quarterback in Syracuse, New York, was penalized 15 yards because He lifted a finger to God after a touchdown, intending to give God the glory for his success. A football coach in Washington was ordered by the school to not mention God, pray, or even bow his head. Thank God he is standing his ground and supported by the players

Commented [PW6]: Genesis 28:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Commented [PW7]: Galatians 3:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ.

Commented [PW8]: Psalm 2:8 (ESV)

⁸ Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

Commented [PW9]: Revelation 11:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

and parents though he is on suspension. Public displays of Christianity are being removed while symbols of other religions are accepted. Why? Because Jesus' and His followers are possessing the nations. They should fear us, not because we will do harm to anyone, but because Jesus' message is the most powerful message in the world.

⁴ *"Fear not, for you will not be ashamed; be not confounded, for you will not be disgraced; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more.* Isaiah 54:4 Before we became the bride of Christ, we were like an abandoned widow, left to fend for ourselves. The shame of our youth was that we turned away from the One who cared about us and lived in rebellion toward Him. But because the Servant removed our sins from us, we no longer need to fear. We can forget the rebellion of our past. Like the scapegoat carried off the sins of the nation of Israel (Leviticus 16:10), so our Savior has removed our sins as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12). We no longer need fear the judgment of God or the wrath of man. We won't be ashamed when we stand before God, for we will be clothed in the righteousness of Jesus (Isaiah 61:10).

⁵ *For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called.* Isaiah 54:5 We are the abandoned widow no longer. As the bride of Christ, we have the ultimate husband. His provision and protection are incomparable. His names are wonderful (Isaiah 9:6). "LORD of hosts" reminds us that He commands the angel armies. Nothing can happen to us that He has not allowed. "The Holy One of Israel" means that He is the eternal, unchanging God who is holy in all His actions (Malachi 3:6). "Your Redeemer" signifies He is the Suffering Servant who has become our guilt offering, redeeming us from servitude to Satan and our rebellious nature (John 8:36). "God of the whole earth" reminds us that nothing gets past Him. He is present everywhere and sovereign over everything. This is the glorious One to whom we are forever wed.

⁶ *For the LORD has called you like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit, like a wife of youth when she is cast off, says your God. ⁷ For a brief moment I deserted you, but with great compassion I will gather you.* Isaiah 54:6-7 I'm sure this spoke to the Jews in captivity and encouraged them to have hope. But it is for us too. Our sins separate us from God, just as the Jews' sins had made them feel as if God divorced them (Isaiah 59:2). God sometimes leaves us to our own devices to wake us up and get us to change our course. The grief in our spirit and feelings of being deserted cause us to examine ourselves and cry out to God for restoration. **When we see our wrongs, He is there with open arms of compassion to gather us back to Himself. That time of grief was for our good.** It is often in those times of grief that God becomes everything to us and we discover our calling to be His instruments. Out of the ashes comes a life of true value (Isaiah 61:3).

⁸ *In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you," says the LORD, your Redeemer.* Isaiah 54:8 God repeats the promise of hope to be sure we hear it. God's dealings with us are always to bring us

Commented [PW10]: Leviticus 16:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the LORD to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel.

Commented [PW11]: Psalm 103:12 (ESV)

¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

Commented [PW12]: Isaiah 61:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

Commented [PW13]: Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Commented [PW14]: Malachi 3:6 (ESV)

⁶ "For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.

Commented [PW15]: John 8:36 (ESV)

³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Commented [PW16]: Isaiah 59:2 (ESV)

² but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

Commented [PW17]: Isaiah 61:3 (ESV)

³ to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.

into a deeper walk with Him. Because He is our Redeemer, He is always at work in our lives to change us into His perfect bride, to make us holy as He is holy (1 Peter 1:16).

⁹ "This is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, and will not rebuke you. ¹⁰ For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you. Isaiah 54:9-10 This is clearly not to the Jews but to the people of faith. The Jews saw another rebuke in 70 A.D. and another in 135 A.D. They have experienced numerous rebukes from the hand of God. This can only be the eternal state of those redeemed by the Servant's sacrifice. If He paid for all your sins, past, present, and future, how can the LORD be angry with you? This is describing an everlasting covenant. It is the new covenant in Jesus' blood (Isaiah 52:15). It is the result of the Servant's sacrifice in the previous chapters. The wording of this verse is one clear reason this must be addressing the redeemed people of faith.

God may discipline us, but just as He promised to never flood the earth again, so He has promised that He will never remove His steadfast love from us (Psalm 89:30-34). That new covenant that results in us being at peace with God is not conditional on what we do. It is because of that covenant that God works at transforming us continually until we see Him face to face. You may stumble along the journey, but He will never fail to have compassion on you. The price is paid in full. The covenant is sealed. It cannot be broken.

¹¹ "O afflicted one, storm-tossed and not comforted, behold, I will set your stones in antimony, and lay your foundations with sapphires. ¹² I will make your pinnacles of agate, your gates of carbuncles, and all your wall of precious stones. Isaiah 54:11-12 Again we see that it could have given hope to the Jews in captivity, but the real application is to the people of faith. Revelation describes New Jerusalem, the heavenly city of the saints, in a similar way (Revelation 21:18-21). So Paul and John saw this passage referring to the redeemed believers, both Jew and Gentile. Jerusalem was restored and the temple was magnificent, but nothing as glorious as this description.

This description is for every believer who feels they just can't go on. The world can come in like a flood and weigh on us till we want to give up. "O afflicted one, storm-tossed and not comforted," look at what is coming. Look at what the LORD is making out of you through this affliction. The city of God is the people of God, the bride of Christ (Revelation 21:1-2). It is you and me when the Lord has finished His work in us (Philippians 3:21).

¹³ All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children. Isaiah 54:13 I believe we can claim this promise for both our physical and spiritual children (Acts 16:31). Because we are the redeemed, the bride of Christ, our husband, Jesus, will take it upon Himself to teach our children and lead them into great peace. That means He will lead them to righteousness, for Isaiah has declared there is no peace for the wicked (Isaiah 57:21).

Commented [PW18]: 1 Peter 1:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Commented [PW19]: Isaiah 52:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they see, and that which they have not heard they understand.

Commented [PW20]: Psalm 89:30-34 (ESV)

³⁰ If his children forsake my law and do not walk according to my rules,
³¹ if they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments,
³² then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes,
³³ but I will not remove from him my steadfast love or be false to my faithfulness.
³⁴ I will not violate my covenant or alter the word that went forth from my lips.

Commented [PW21]: Revelation 21:18-21 (ESV)

¹⁸ The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
¹⁹ The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald,
²⁰ the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.
²¹ And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Commented [PW22]: Revelation 21:1-2 (ESV)

¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.
² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Commented [PW23]: Philippians 3:21 (ESV)

²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Commented [PW24]: Acts 16:31 (ESV)

³¹ And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Commented [PW25]: Isaiah 57:21 (ESV)

²¹ There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

14 In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you. 15 If anyone stirs up strife, it is not from me; whoever stirs up strife with you shall fall because of you. Isaiah 54:14-15 Not only will our children be established in peace, but we will be as well. God is not saying we will free of strife or oppression. He is saying it will not come from Him. He is reiterating the promise that unlike what has happened and would happen again to the Jews, the strife in our life will not come from God. He also promises that the strife the world brings will not end in us falling, but in their demise (Psalm 17:8-9). **When you contend with the bride of Christ, you are asking for a confrontation with her protector.** That is why we never need to fear the confrontations that come from this world. Remember that Jesus' name is the LORD of hosts. The angel armies are at His command. He doesn't even need to bother with it Himself. He can just send one angel who is more than enough to deal with any force. (2 Chronicles 32:21).

16 Behold, I have created the smith who blows the fire of coals and produces a weapon for its purpose. I have also created the ravager to destroy; Isaiah 54:16 Whether the army of Cyrus to set the Jews free from Babylon or the angels of God to silence those causing strife in our lives, all things are overseen by God for His purposes.

17 no weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD and their vindication from me, declares the LORD." Isaiah 54:17 By following the Servant we become the LORD'S servants. We will have many battles in this life, for the enemy of our soul plots to make our life ineffective. The world will want to silence you. But if God is for you, who can be against you (Romans 8:31)? Every weapon, scheme, plot, or effort against us will eventually fail. We are the victorious army of the King of kings. They can kill our body but they can't harm our soul (Matthew 10:28). They can lie and slander us. They can even catch us in our weakness being hypocritical. But when their words reach the ears of our Redeemer, He knows that He has paid for that sin and their words only condemn themselves for refusal to accept His forgiveness for the very same sins in their lives. Our vindication is from the LORD. Our army is undefeatable because our King goes before us (Deuteronomy 1:30). He has given us a heritage that exceeds our greatest hopes. I have a human heritage, but it is insignificant compared to our spiritual heritage as the servants of the LORD.

Chapter 54 has listed for us some of the gracious benefits received by those of us who have accepted the Servant's offering of Himself as our guilt offering (53:10). Because of what the Servant has done for us we enter into an everlasting covenant of peace with God (54:10). He promises us a multitude of spiritual offspring (54:1), that we will never be ashamed (54:4), to be like a husband to us (54:5), to protect and vindicate us (54:17). Perhaps the greatest of the promises is that His steadfast love will never be taken from us (54:10). That is something to sing about! That is why the LORD started the chapter with the command, "Sing!"

Commented [PW26]: Psalm 17:8-9 (ESV)
⁸ Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings,
⁹ from the wicked who do me violence, my deadly enemies who surround me.

Commented [PW27]: 2 Chronicles 32:21 (ESV)
²¹ And the LORD sent an angel, who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he came into the house of his god, some of his own sons struck him down there with the sword.

Commented [PW28]: Romans 8:31 (ESV)
³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Commented [PW29]: Matthew 10:28 (ESV)
²⁸ And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Commented [PW30]: Deuteronomy 1:30 (ESV)
³⁰ The LORD your God who goes before you will himself fight for you, just as he did for you in Egypt before your eyes,

Questions

- 1 What was the last chapter about?
- 2 Who is being addressed? How do you know that?
- 3 How are we possessing the nations?
- 4 Review the stories of persecution.
- 5 Why should we have no fear?
- 6 How do His names reassure us?
- 7 Why does God hide His face from us?
- 8 Why does God put up with so much from us?
- 9 What is the promise in verses 11 and 12?
- 10 What is the promise of verses 16-17?