



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah, Isaiah 53:4-6, Matthew 8:14-17

"The Vicarious Messiah"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] We are turning in our Scripture reading to Isaiah chapter 53, and we are reading today three more verses, the third strophe of this great prophecy concerning the suffering servant of Jehovah, and then we are going to turn again to a passage in the New Testament in which a section from Isaiah 53 is quoted in order to impress upon our minds the fact that the Bible regards our Lord Jesus as this servant of Jehovah of whom Isaiah wrote many hundreds of years ago. Isaiah chapter 53, verses 4 through 6 for our passage from the prophecy,

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Now, will you turn with me to Matthew chapter 8, and listen as I read verses 14 through 17, of the evangelist's comments concerning Jesus' visit to the home of Peter.

Matthew chapter 8 and verse 14, and will you notice too as we come to the last verse of

this section that the evangelist Matthew the Apostle, cites a text from that very section that we have read for our Scripture reading in Isaiah 53,

"And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother lying or laid, and sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them, or him When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with demons or devils:" (As you have in your text.) "And he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:" (Now, here is our text.) "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses."

Now, that is a citation from Isaiah chapter 53 in verse 4. May God bless this reading of his word. Let's bow together in prayer.

[Prayer] Our gracious God and Heavenly Father we turn again to Thee with gratitude and thanksgiving for the ministry of the word of God to us by the Holy Spirit, and we pray that like Lydia of old, our hearts may be opened by Thee to hear the things which are spoken from these reliable words of God and we pray, Lord, that the needs that exist in this congregation may be met through that ministry of the word.

We realize, Lord, that many of us have problems that are very deep seeded, and we pray that through the ministry of the Word, we may come to an understanding of the solution that Thou dost provide for us through Jesus Christ, Israel's Messiah and our Lord and Redeemer. We thank Thee for the day in which we live and the challenges of it, and we pray, oh God, Thy blessing upon us to the end that individually and collectively Thy purposes may be accomplished through us. We thank Thee for the assurance that Thy hands are upon everything. Thou art the almighty God, and consequently the affairs of men are under Thy control, and we pray that amid the turbulence and unrest and perplexity of the 20th century that our hearts may have the peace of God being

established upon the saving ministry of Jesus Christ and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the redeemed.

We pray, O God, Thy blessing upon the ministry of every faithful servant of Thine, who has opened the Scriptures to expound them this day. May positive fruit redound to the glory of Jesus name. May many come to know him, whom to know as life eternal, and may the whole church of Jesus Christ be built up, and if it should please Thee, oh God, we pray that Jesus Christ may come again and receive us unto himself, and we pray even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus.

We pray for the elders and the deacons of this assembly of Christian and pray for divine guidance upon them. Bless, in the meetings of this week, and particularly in the youth conference, may Thy hand be upon it for spiritual edification and blessing, and for Lord those who are ill, or who are troubled, who need to the consolation of God, we pray for them, and pray that Thy ministry to them may be a ministry of peace and happiness and joy in the Holy Spirit under guard and strengthen and establish. We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

[Message] Our subject for today, as we turn again to our study of Isaiah 52, 13 through chapter 53 verses 12 is "The Vicarious Messiah." The passage that we have read for our Scripture reading this morning might well be called the Great Reversal. You'll remember that when Jesus was here upon the earth, that Israel, ignorantly and self confidently assumed responsibility for Messiah's death by shouting, "His blood be upon us, and upon our children." Israel of the future, according to our text, then enlightened shall humbly accept guilt by crying out, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace, was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."

Now, that surely is the great reversal. His blood be upon us and upon our children." And then Israel of the future, "But he was wounded for our transgressions. He

was bruised for our iniquities the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." The passage is also one of the greatest of the Old Testament passages on the atonement, and it illustrates that whatever theory we may hold of the atonement, it must include the idea of substitution. For that is one of the great ideas of this section. When we think of the atonement, and how Jesus Christ died for us, we think of the debate that has raged down through the centuries. There have been three well-known theological answers to the questions of Christ's atonement. One of them is the answer that Peter Abelard gave. His theory, best known as the moral influence theory of the atonement was this, the cross reveals the love of God, and it produces faith and love in believers, which is the basis of the forgiveness of sins, the moral influence theory of the atonement.

Now, I would like to say that I do not question at all that the atonement of Jesus Christ has exerted tremendous moral influence. As a matter of fact, it has exerted moral influence beyond the confines of the Christian faith, and from time to time I have quote, for example Sir John Bowring's hymn. "In the cross of Christ I glory, towering or the wrecks of time. All the light of sacred story, gathers round its head sublime." There was a man who apparently was profoundly influenced by the atonement of Jesus Christ, by the cross, but he was a Unitarian and not a Christian, and so it is easy to see that the cross of Jesus Christ has exercised tremendous moral influence, and as a matter of fact, there is a measure of support from the New Testament for this theory of the atonement, at least in so far as it applies to Christians. For Peter writes in one of his epistles, "For even here unto were you called because Christ also suffered for us." Leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps, and so the cross of Jesus Christ is an example for us who are believers, but I should like to say, and say very strongly that the moral influence of the cross of Jesus Christ is not the basis of the forgiveness of sins, and so Abelard's theory must be rejected, although it contains truth.

A second answer to the theory of the atonement is an answer that has been returned to popularity in the 20th century. It has particularly returned to popularity through the writing of a little book called, *Christu Victor* by Gustaf Aulen, a Scandinavian theologian. And in this book on the atonement, Aulen has reminded us that the classic idea of the atonement was the idea that related the saving work of Jesus Christ to the devil or to Satan, and of course we must agree that there is a great deal in the Bible about the relationship of the work of Jesus Christ to the work of Satan. As a matter of fact, in the first promise of the gospel there is reference to the ministry of Satan, for we read in Genesis chapter 3 in verse 15 that the seed of the woman shall crush the serpent's head, and so it is obviously that in the first promise of the gospel there is a relating of the ministry of Jesus Christ to Satan's work, and when we turn to the New Testament, we read in John's epistle, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil."

And one of the reasons that Jesus Christ came was that he might, through the blood that he shed upon the cross at Calvary provide a basis for the freedom of those who believe in Jesus Christ from the clutches of sin and Satan. It is not only taught, by the Apostle John it is taught by the Apostle Paul in Colossians chapter 2. It is taught by the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews in chapter 2 of his epistle, and so we must say that whatever theory of the atonement we have, we must include within it the fact that Jesus Christ died with reference to the activities of Satan, and it was through the saving work of Jesus Christ that it is possible for us to be free from sin, and from Satan, but that does not tell us everything about the atonement, and I think, does not tell us the most significant thing about the atonement.

Anselm, of Canterbury, many hundreds of years ago, proposed a theory of the atonement, which is probably the most popular theory among evangelicals. It is a penal satisfaction theory. That is that Jesus Christ died upon the cross under the judgment of God for the broken law, and that there he by the death that he died offered a satisfaction

to God, to God's righteous and holiness, which required death because of sin. And that Jesus Christ offered a propitiation in his death, satisfying the holiness and righteousness of a God whose law had been broken, and he did this as our substitute, and through the substitutionary work of Jesus Christ, we may go free. It is expressed by our Lord himself, for example in the words, "For the Son of man not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many., a ransom for many."

Now, I think there is a measure of truth in Abelard's theory. I think the cross should be a moral influence for us. It should illustrate for us, the love of Jesus Christ and the love that we should have for other Christians, and I think there is great truth in the classic theory of the atonement, probably first propounded by Ignatius, that Jesus Christ died with reference to sin and Satan, and delivered us from the thralldom of the evil one, but I think that we must, if we are to adequately explain the reasons why Jesus Christ died, we must include in our understanding of that death, Anselm's point, that Jesus died as a substitute. He died penally. He died under the judgment of God, and he rendered a satisfaction to God in his holiness and righteousness, and whatever theory we have, we must have this at the heart of it. I think that that is the only theory that will enable us to explain, why Jesus Christ cried out, "My God, my God why hast Thou forsaken me?" That alone explains it.

Now, I do not think I understand everything about the atonement, although I think I understand about as much as the next person. In fact, if I were to be honest with you, I think I understand a lot more than most people about it, [Laughter] but I would like to say this, that even I understood more than anyone else about it, and I have some idea that perhaps that may be true. [Laughter] I would like to say publicly and with my heart behind it that I can never, as long as I live, which is forever, expect to understand all about the atonement of Jesus Christ. That is a transaction that takes place, between the persons of the Trinity, which I shall never completely understand, but I do not have to completely understand it to enjoy the benefits of it, and I enjoy the benefits of it, even

though I do not completely understand it. Just as I enjoy to the full, my lovely wife, although I shall never hope to understand her [Laughter] as long as we live.

In one of the expositions of Isaiah chapter 53, I ran across a statement by Professor Edward Young, and he said this, "So prominent is the idea of substitution that one scholar, by no means a conservative felt compelled to write, substitutionary suffering is expressed in this divine oracle, in not less than five sentences. It is as though God could not do enough to make this clear." And with that, I agree. So I think that when we come to this passage in Isaiah 53 verses 4 through 6, we are going to see if we see anything at all the Jesus Christ died as a substitute. He died under the judgment of God. He provided a satisfaction for you and for me, so that I may possess everlasting life in righteousness.

Now, we often think of God as a kind of namby pamby God, who turned his face, perhaps did not exhaust his righteousness in his dealings with us, but rather overlooked his righteousness and received us by grace. Now, I'd like to say that Jesus Christ receives us by righteousness. It was grace that gave the Son, but our salvation is provided through righteousness, for our Lord has born all of the judgment that is due, you and me, and because he has born it all, because the law has been completely satisfied in the work of Jesus Christ, I do not have a salvation which God provided by overlooking my sin, but I have a salvation which he provided by through his own Son paying within the Godhead for my sin, and so I stand righteous before God. I have a salvation that is a righteous salvation, and I can stand confident before God that I am accepted because it is a righteous salvation. "Grace reigns through righteousness." The Apostle Paul said.

It's what we often sing in our hymns, "Oh Christ what burdens bowed Thy head, our load was laid on Thee. Thou stoodest in the sinners stead, bearest all my ill for me. A victim lead, Thy blood was shed. Now, there's no load for me." In each one of these messages on Isaiah 53, I've been turning to a passage in the New Testament in order to impress upon you the fact that the identification of the servant of Jehovah in Isaiah 53

with Jesus of Nazareth is not something that I myself am responsible for. It is not only the teaching of the prophet Isaiah, I think I could demonstrate that, but it is surely the teaching of the apostolic church. In the 8th chapter of the gospel of Matthew, we have one of these texts cited. Our Lord had had a busy day. He was engaged in the performance of miracles in order that men might see the credentials of his Messiah ship. He had healed the centurion servant, and after the conclusion of it, Peter invited Jesus with James, and John, so the parallel passages tell us, to come home to his house for dinner.

Now, that showed a great deal of confidence in Peter in his wife. How would you, ladies, like to have three unexpected guests for supper? Well, Peter brought them home. Jesus, and he brought home James and John, so the parallel passages say. And when Jesus came into the house of Peter, by the way, he had a wife. He had a mother-in-law also, so he had a blessing and a problem. The first pope was married. That's right. That's what it says, "When Jesus was come in to Peter's house, he saw his Peter's wife's mother. Laid and sick of a fever." It must have somewhat sudden. I wonder how Peter felt? Did he have mixed emotions when he came in? Someone has said, "Mixed emotions is when you see your mother-in-law driving your new Cadillac over a cliff." [Laughter] There was an Englishmen in the crowd. He just got the joke just a minute ago. [Laughter]

And so when he was there, you know the text interestingly enough states in the other parallel that they besought Jesus to heal her, and I think that Peter responded. He turned to the Lord and said, "Lord, will you not heal my mother in law?" And others too chimed in, and Jesus did. And then Matthew says, when the evening was come they brought unto him many that were possessed with demons, and he cast out the spirits with the word, and healed all that were sick, and Matthew the evangelist adds, that it might be fulfilled, fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet saying, "He himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses." And so in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Matthew the

evangelist sees the fulfillment of the prophecy of the servant of Jehovah in Isaiah chapter 53 verses 4. It is Matthew's way of saying, "This is the servant of Jehovah, and healed the sickness in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 53."

Sometimes people ask me is healing in the atonement?" I always reply very quickly, "Yes, healing is in the atonement." That does not mean of course that I may expect to have healing now, but healing is in the atonement. My body is sick. Oh, I don't mean it in the sense that we ordinarily use the term. I'm feeling very well this morning, thank you, but my body is sick. As a matter of fact, it has a deadly disease it's fatal, and I shall die someday, if Jesus Christ does not come. As a matter of fact, Paul says, "That I am dying." I'm in process, but I know that since I have believed in Jesus Christ, the day is coming when by the resurrection I shall receive a new body, which shall never die. A better one than the one I have, though I'm kind of proud of the one I've got. [Laughter] I'm being honest with you this morning. [Laughter]

Now, you see, healing is in the atonement because it is by virtue of that which Jesus Christ did when he died on the cross that I'm to have a resurrection body, like his own glorious body, but Paul tells us that we do not expect to have that healing now. It comes at the resurrection, so healing is in the atonement for sin, suffering, ill. Sickness is the product of sin, the product of original sin, and sin. We are sick because we are sinful. Every time you get up and you feel sick, you should be reminded of the fact that Adam fell, and you have fallen in him.

Now, Jesus came healing sickness. He could not do that were it not for the fact that he should go to the cross at Calvary and die, but he did it on the basis of what he would do at Calvary's cross, and Matthew sees the identification. He healed of the sickness, which was in Peter's house because he would die for sin, and thus manifested himself as the suffering servant of Jehovah.

Now, let's look at the three verses. In the first verse the fourth one, we have Israel's confusion, as they express it. In the next verse, the fifth, we have Israel's

conviction, and in the sixth, Israel's confession. Remember last time, as we began our study of the 53rd chapter, I mentioned to you that this is Israel's great potential confession which she as a redeemed remnant shall make in the future at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. That is when this prophecy shall be fulfilled, in its ultimate fulfillment. Remember the Bible states that Jesus Christ shall come to the earth at his Second Advent after the church has been called up to meet him in the air, and after the great tribulation period upon the earth, that Jesus shall come to the earth, and Israel, the nation, shall look unto him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourns for his only child. The nation shall be converted in a day. The remnant shall turn in faith to the one whom Israel crucified, and they shall lament their past history. What shall they say? What is the content of that lament? What are the words that make up the mourning? Well, they are given us here in Isaiah chapter 53. These are the words that Israel shall say at that time.

Now, I know this because in the Hebrew text, the verbs from verse 2 through verse 9 are almost entirely in the past tense, and so the prophet is carried forward by the Spirit of God into the future to the Second Advent of Jesus Christ and he is given an ear to hear the things that Israel shall say in the future, and this is what they shall say,

"Who believed our report, the message that men told us? To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he grew up before him like a tender plant, and like a root out of a dry ground. He had no form nor comeliness, and when we should see him, or when we saw him there was no beauty that we should have desired him. He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted, but he was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities."

This is Israel of the future in their great lament speaking of their reaction at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus to his First Advent, when he came as the lowly Son of man, and notice in the first part of that fourth verse, "their faith now," that is at the Second Advent, "surely" that word in the Hebrew text is a word that is really an exclamation to emphasize the unexpected. "He was despised and we esteemed him not, surely unexpectedly," exclaimatorily they say, "surely he has born our griefs and carried our sorrows."

You know, there are things that affect me very much, I'm not really a very emotional man, but I think I am most effected when I hear the story of someone's conversion, and if you want to make a tear come to my eyes, it's much easier to do it by telling me the touching story of the conversion of someone who has come to our Lord and Savior, and has come to know him whom to know is life eternal, and some of the stories of the conversion of the saints of the word of God and some of the stories of the conversions of the saints who are not in the word of God, these are the things that really touch me, and I think that I am going to have a good old cry at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. When the whole of that redeemed remnant of Israel exclaims together this great penitential confession, and I think I shall cry for joy as I see what God is going to do. Surely he hath born our griefs and carried our sorrows.

You know that word bear is a word that I never ceases to associate with a great passage in the Old Testament. It's the Hebrew word, nasa. It means to bear. Some times it means to bear away, and it's used in the 16th chapter of the book of Leviticus in the great ritual of the day of atonement. Remember when the high priest came out with the two goats, and killed the one goat. Took the blood from it. Went into the holy place, into the holiest of all. Sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat in order to provide a satisfaction for one year. God's broken law requires death, and that's what that taught. Then the second goat was taken, and over it the high priest confessed the sins of the children so Israel, and he sent that goat off into the wilderness

by the hand of a fit man to a land not inhabited, but Moses put it this way. He said that goat shall bear nasa shall nasa of the children of Israel off into the wilderness to a land not inhabited. God's showing by this that through the death of Jesus Christ to come, not only was his righteousness satisfied, but sins were removed, born away, and that's the word that's used here. "Surely he hath born our griefs," born them away.

John the Baptist, when he saw Jesus, said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away, beareth away the sin of the world, and carried our sorrows or our pains, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted." That's their faith at the first coming. Isn't it interesting that Israel, at the first coming, thought him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted? You know, there's a message for Christians in this. Very often men think that pain means that we have committed some sin. As a matter of fact our English word pain, is derived from a Latin word *poena*, which means penalty or punishment, and so the very word pain, itself by it's derivation suggests penalty or punishment. When a man suffers pain, the idea originally was, he's done something wrong. That's his penalty. That's his punishment. He suffered. And have you ever noticed this about Christians? That when another Christian falls into difficulty what is the first thought that often comes into our minds? He's done something wrong. He's disobeyed the Lord in some way.

Now, you've never thought that, never thought that at all? You are sitting very piously this morning. [Laughter] Reminds me of Lucy. I love that strip that Mr. Schultz had about a year or so ago, when Linus had the sliver in his finger, and he was standing there with the sliver in his finger holding it like this, and Lucy says, "What's the matter with you?" And his tongue is kind of hanging out of his mouth, I think as I remember. And he says, "I have a sliver in my finger." And Lucy says, isn't she a lovely little girl? [Laughter] And Lucy says, "Ah, ha that means you are being punished for something. What have you done wrong lately?" And Linus says, "I haven't done anything wrong." "You have a sliver, haven't you? That's a misfortunate, isn't it? You are being punished with misfortune because you've been bad." And Linus, now the perspiration's flowing off

of his face, and his tongue's out of his mouth, and Charlie Brown interrupts, and he said, "Now, wait a minute. Now, wait a minute, does" And Lucy won't even allow him to talk. She said, "What do you know about it Charlie Brown? This is a sign. This is a direct sign of punishment. Linus has done something wrong, very wrong, and now he has to suffer misfortune. I know all about these things. I know that." And Linus says, "It's out. I just popped out." [Laughter] And Lucy turns in the last panel, and she walks off like a thundercloud with a scowl on her face, and Linus is very happily and triumphantly he says after her, "Thus endeth the theological lesson for today." [Laughter]

Now, Mr. Schultz has captured a lot of truth in that. You see, that's the attitude that people have about misfortune, and pain, and sickness. It's because we've done something wrong, and Israel confesses at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus that that's what they regarded him as at his First Advent. "Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted." We thought that the reason that he suffered was because he was a blasphemer. That word stricken is a word that was used of Uzziah's leprosy, and some have mistakenly thought that Jesus had leprosy. That is figurative language. "He was like a leper." That's the way we regarded him. We wouldn't have anything to do with him because we figured that the curse of God was upon him. Cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree, and he hung upon a tree.

The Jews called him pasha, the transgressor. The Talmud links him with Titus and Balum in hell. "We esteemed him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted." And down to this present day, the great majority of Judaism still regards him as under the judgment of God. Talui, the hanged one, and unfortunately the great majority of the Gentiles do to, if they ever bother to think about him at all.

Now, Israel confesses their conviction in verse 5, "but he was wounded, yet we, but he was wounded for our transgressions." That word means pierced. "But he was pierced for our transgressions." Pierced, what does that suggest? Why that suggests the

cross explicitly. Remember in the Psalms the 22 Psalm about the 16th verse the psalmist writes, "Thou hast pierced my hands and my feet. And Israel in the future shall look unto him whom they have pierced." And here we read, "But he was pierced for our transgressions." *Chalal* means "to pierce," and I am reminded of our Lord hanging upon the cross when the soldiers came, and they plunged the spear into his side. They pierced his side, and forthwith there came out blood and water. But in the future Israel shall confess that he was pierced for our transgressions, and then they shall sing, "Rock of ages cleft for me. Let me hide myself in Thee. Let the water and the blood from Thy side flow, which flowed. Be of sin the double cure. Save from wrath, and make me pure." And they say, he was bruised or battered for our iniquities, and I think immediately of the promise in Genesis chapter 3, in verse 15, "He was crushed," that's the meaning of the word here. "He was crushed for our iniquities," and Moses said, "The seed of the woman shall crush the serpent's head, and the serpent shall crush his heel." A reference to the fact that Satan's wound should be fatal at the cross but Jesus' wound should not. He should recover from it in resurrection. And so he was crushed for our iniquities. "The chastisement of our peace, the chastisement which leads to our peace, was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."

Now, you can see a progress in their understanding of the ministry of our Lord in this one verse the 5th. They begin by reference to their penal consequences of their sins. They call them transgressions, and iniquities. Then they move to the vicarious character of his sufferings. The chastisement of our peace was laid on him, and finally they conclude with the redemptive value of them. "With his stripes we are healed." By the way, did you notice too, it says, "With his stripes, with his stripes, with his stripes, we are healed." Not with his stripes, plus our faith. Not with his stripes plus our repentance, with his stripes we are healed. Men are not saved because of their faith. Men are saved because of Jesus Christ and his saving work. It is our Lord who saves us, not our faith. It is not our repentance that saves us. It is our Lord's work. That is the saving work that

becomes ours through the instrumentality of faith. Becomes our through the instrumentality of a God produced faith and repentance, but the salvation is of the Lord, it is of the Lord from beginning to end. It is his salvation. "With his stripes we are healed." Not with our faith, with his stripes.

And now, finally in the 6th verse, Israel confesses, "All we like sheep have gone astray." I love this confession. Do you know why? Because it's completely unreserved. "All we like sheep have gone astray." And it's a very thoughtful confession too. He does not say, "All we like oxen," because oxen at least know their owner. An ass knows his master's crib. Isaiah says in the first chapter, but what about a sheep? Why a sheep is so dumb, it doesn't even know to whom it belongs. Isn't that a wonderful term for Christians, sheep. That's God's way of saying we are dumb, just as dumb as a sheep. "All we like sheep have gone astray."

You know, a sheep has a wonderful way of finding the way to get away from the Lord or its master, its shepherd. The sheep will wonder over to the fence, and find a way through that fence when no one else could possibly see it, and it will get outside, and it will never be able to find its way back. It's amazing about sheep, and I've noticed that about Christians too. They can find ways to get away from the Lord, and it seems also that they can never find their way back, and so he has to go out as the Great Shepherd and bring us back. "All we like sheep have gone astray." That's what we are just sheep, dumb sheep. That's why Peter says, "We were as sheep going astray, but have now been returned to the shepherd and bishop of our souls." Wondering sheep that the Great Shepherd has called back into his fold.

"All we like sheep have gone astray." Universal for everyone mentioned. All the redeemed of Israel in the future, were sheep going astray, so they say. They who have come to him confess that they were going far from him. Not only that, did you notice our text says, "We have turned everyone to his own way." Not only are we universally like sheep going astray, but each one of us seems to have his own special sin. It's almost as if

every one of us has aggravated God in a special way. I don't think we'll ever get to heaven, any of us unless we have deep down in our hearts the conviction, there never has been a sinner like me.

Paul said he was less than least of all the saints, but his expression was the expression of every true Christian. For every true Christian knows deep down in his heart that he has offended a Holy God. He has run from him like a sheep going astray, and deep down within him he feels that he himself is the greatest of sinners. Don't you? We've turned everyone to his own way, special, something special that I know about. Then he says, "And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, us all who are near redeemed." It has been laid upon him, and so it's almost as if the prophet thrown into the future by this vial figure describes the clouds of heaven gathering in their blackness in all of the places from the east, west, north and south, all gathering in judgment at once, but then the judgment is brought upon the one man on Calvary's cross, and there a tempest of judgment poured forth from God. God the Father caused his own Son to cry out, "My God, my God why hast Thou forsaken me?" Because our sin was upon him. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, not I, the Lord. "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death." The psalmist said. The iniquity of us all upon him.

May I close by just commenting upon this? I began by saying that in this chapter we have a great chapter on the substitutionary work of Jesus Christ. Have you noticed the little pronouns "our" "we" "us" about ten times in these few verses? The substitutionary suffering of Jesus Christ is so plainly taught in the word of God that it is difficult for me to understand how someone cannot see it. May I take just a moment or two of your time to read a statement by one of our outstanding theologians of the 20th Century? This man was a bishop. One of the first six presidents, elected by the World Council of Churches, and in the midst of something he wrote he denies this substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ, but further he goes on to say that the God who would be presented in such a way as that is not a God at all. Listen to what he says.

"[Name indistinct] tells of a father and son at church. "The aged rector read from the Old Testament and the boy learned of the terrible God who sent plagues upon the people and created fiery serpents to assault them. That night when the father passed the boys bedroom, the boy called him and put his arms around his father's neck, and drawing him close, said, "Father you hate Jehovah. So do I. I loathe him, dirty bully." Our bishop continues, "We've long since rejected a conception of reconciliation associated historically with the idea of a deity that is loathsome. God, for us cannot be thought of as an angry avenging being, who because of Adam's sin must have his chelonian pound of flesh. No wonder the honest boy, in justifiable repugnance could say, "dirty bully," who is saying concerning the substitutionary theory of the atonement, taught so plainly in the word of God that such a God as is presented by these texts of Scripture is a dirty bully." Then he adds, "It simply does not make sense to me. It is rather an offense it offends my moral sense."

And so I should like to say to you, Bishop Oxtum, and any other bishop or any other preacher or any other individual who regards the saving ministry of our Lord Jesus, his vicarious substitutionary penal satisfactory work for me, I should like to say to you that your thoughts of God as Luther said to Erasmus are too human. That when we come to the things of God we are not to think like human beings, we are to think like God, and when we come to understand the things of the word of God, by the Holy Spirit's enlightenment, we shall find them to be imminently intelligible, and that they speak to the hearts of men with a power that comes from God the Holy Spirit, and when men see it they are blessed, and they are changed they are given, new life and new birth, and their lives are transformed, and they glorify God, it is not only imminently intelligible, but it is imminently practical. And men come to love the God who is a Great Shepherd for the sheep.

He said, "All we like sheep have gone astray, but the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." The remedy corresponds to the perversity. I wish I had time to talk

about why this great plan of salvation is imminently just. If I did I would like to say just briefly some things like this. It's something God did. It must be just. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? I should like to remind you that Jesus died voluntarily. He was not forced to die for me. I should like to also remind you that he is called the shepherd, and I am called his sheep. There is a union between us, and he has voluntarily linked himself up with me, so that my destiny is his, and his is mine. It's like my wife. If tomorrow she should leave home, and go to Neiman Marcus, and buy lots of things, and come home to me and throw a lot of bills in my face, and say, "Well, how do like this?" I'd pay them because she's bound up with me. And then I remember that he is my representative, the last Adam. Ah, how wonderful it is that there is one to come to take my judgment and to die for me, for otherwise, I should be lost forever.

Joseph Cook in a story that I love, in the great parliament of religions that took place at Chicago, sixty or seventy years ago now, where practically every known religion was represented asked for just a few minutes of time, and he stood up in the midst of the great company of representatives of all of the religions and sects that were there, and he said, "Let me give you an example." And he said, "I want to introduce you to a woman with a great sorrow. Bloodstains are on her hands, and nothing will remove them. She has committed murder. She has committed other crimes. She has been driven to desperation in her distress. Is there anything in your religion that will remove her sin, and give her peace?"

And he stopped, and he looked at the great company of people that were there, and everybody was silent, Hindus, Buddhists, Taoists, and so on. They all were silent, and finally, he raised his eyes heaven wards, and Dr. Cook said, "I'll ask another. John, John the Apostle, can you tell me anything that will help this woman?" And then he said, "I hear John speaking. I hear John's voice. I hear these words. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son cleanesth us from all sin, and Christianity offers the forgiveness of sins through the substitutionary ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, the suffering servant of

Jehovah." Have you put your trust in him? Have you believed in him? The moment you put your trust in him you shall find life. You shall be born again. You shall pass from death into life, from darkness into light. The forgiveness of sins, justification of life, you become a child of God. May God help you to respond. Shall we stand for the benediction?

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the ministry of our great shepherd of the sheep who first of all gave his life for us, and who now lives to perfect his life within us the redeemed, and Father, we pray for any in this auditorium who may not know him. Oh Father, minister to them through the Spirit, and open their hearts to him. May grace, mercy and peace be in and abide with us until Jesus comes again. We ask in his name. Amen.