THE VIEW FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CROSS

Isaiah 53:1-4
1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?
2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.
3 He is 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.
4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

• He bore our grief’s and carried our sorrow’s. – That’s a good God, a good Savior.
  o He says, “Yet.” – Which means in spite of being a good God.
  o We did esteem Him stricken of God – not by a Roman Soldier…
  o And afflicted.

• It’s almost asking a question – How could a Savior, who is so good to bear our grief’s and carry our sorrows, become smitten of God and afflicted?

• Symbolism is a powerful tool.
  o McDonalds.
  o Eiffel Tower
  o Fist in Detroit.

• Symbolism identifies a person, place or thing.
  o It brings you into a place where in reality you are being taught, “whenever you see this, expect that.”

• Millions are spent developing logo’s, brands, ideas, that associate you with an industry.
  o The Big Apple?
  o The Windy City?

• Symbolism is important in the secular realm but it is also important in Scriptures.
  • God uses symbols so we can understand some things that otherwise we would not understand.
    o The Ark of the Covenant was a symbol. – The Presence of God.
      ▪ They thought if they had the symbol then they had the Lord.
    o But the symbol is not what it represents.
      ▪ If it is, then eat the Golden Arches.
      ▪ There is a difference between the symbol and what it represents.
      ▪ Oil represents the presence of God.
      ▪ Wind represents the presence of God.
      ▪ Water represents the Word of God.
    o These are power symbols…
    o But when you get to the cross – it does NOT represent the presence of God!
      ▪ If anything it represents the absence of His presence.
      ▪ For even Jesus himself said, “My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?”
      ▪ He said that from the cross.
    o Then if it does not represent the presence of God what does it represent?
      ▪ It represents the judgment of God…
      ▪ You may argue it represents salvation but I would argue back you couldn’t have salvation without judgment.
        • The fact that it represents judgment it makes me eligible to receive salvation.
You might say, “It represents love.” – I might say, “It represents anger.”

The fact is we would both be right – but we are looking at it from two different sides.

- You would be looking at it from the earthly side and I would be describing it from the heavenly side.
- You would be looking at it from the earthly side and I would be describing it from God’s perspective.

- Isaiah is teaching us that Christ on the cross was smitten of God.
- We understand that the CROSS is the hinge that connects Judaism with Christianity and without it there is no door that is offered to salvation.

- But what are we missing?
  - Hopefully by the time I get finished you will know what I am saying.

- Let’s digress for a few minutes and go all the way back to Genesis 3.
  - Over and over again we see a reference to the serpent.
  - We don’t talk much about it but it’s there.

- In Genesis 3 “the serpent” is mentioned at least 5 times.
- 1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?
- 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:
- 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.
- 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:
- 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.
- 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.
- 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.
- 8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.
- 9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?
- 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.
- 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?
- 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.
- 13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.
- 14 And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:
- 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Wait a minute – The woman doesn’t have a seed and the serpent doesn’t either.

He starts out talking to the serpent – the symbol – the icon – but he ends up addressing what the icon represents.
To the icon – the serpent He says you are going to crawl on your belly and eat dust.
He also talks about cattle – he is dealing with the physical – the symbol to that which he represents which is Satan.
Satan is operating through the serpent.
He says, “I will put enmity between you and the seed of the woman.”

And now we become messianic – we are dealing with prophecy – The coming of Jesus Christ because Christ is THE SEED of the woman because the woman doesn’t have a seed – Christ is the seed.
He said I’m going to put warfare between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman.
You are hearing two conversations here…
  - He curses the symbol and says you are going to crawl all the days of your life – that’s a lifespan.
  - But it is also prophetic because we are dealing with Satan throughout ages and ages and ages – not a lifespan.

So God deals with the symbol and then He deals with what the symbol represents.

So there are two different dimensions in this Scripture – He begins to deal with the symbol and then He begins to deal with what the symbol represents.
  - When He deals with Satan behind the symbol He says, “I will put enmity between thy seed and the seed of the woman.”

Just like God has manifestations Satan tries to copy God and he also has manifestations.
  - He manifested himself as a serpent and one day he will manifest himself as the antichrist and the false prophet.
  - When God begins to curse him he curses him from his origin to his destiny.
  - There will be war between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

And that’s why over and over throughout history Satan tries to operate through people trying to kill the woman’s child.
  - He is always after your child.
  - He is always after your seed because he hates the curse that was placed on him in the garden.

That’s why when Moses was about to be born there was a decree made that all of the male children would be killed from the ages of 2 years old and under – because Satan is trying to kill the seed before it reaches fruition.

That’s the way he operates – He will always try to kill the seed of your promise before it reaches fruition.

Even when Christ was coming – Satan knew he was coming and he put out a death decree under Herod that he was going to kill every child under 2 years old.
  - Satan is always trying to kill all these people.
  - Satan doesn’t mind who he kills if he can get the seed.

All is birthed through this one text – the serpent!
  - The serpent then becomes the symbol of evil.
• The slithering, crawling, hissing sound of the serpent is the symbol of the treacherous, demonic, influence of Satan – The serpent!

  o We see the serpent again when Moses is having an encounter with Pharaoh.
    ▪ God says, “Throw your rod down,” and it turned into a serpent.
    ▪ But did you notice when his rod turned into a serpent Moses ran?
  o Even in Moses generation, thousands of years later, the serpent is still a symbol of evil.
    ▪ Moses is scared of snakes because he knows it represents evil – and because it represents evil he doesn’t want to touch it and God had to send him back to touch it and when he did it turned back into a stick.

  o A stick and a serpent – Just put that little bit in your mind because you are going to see that over and over again.
    ▪ There will always be the slithering of the snake and the stick.

  o There is some collaboration and some connection between a stick and a serpent.
    ▪ He threw the stick down and it becomes a serpent he picks it up again and it becomes a stick.

• Think about Genesis chapter 3 – this describes the entire conflict of the seed of the woman who would die on the stick.
  o All throughout the bible you will see the seed of the serpent would embody evil and the symbolism of the stick and the snake.

• The serpent is the symbol of evil.
  o Wherever that hissing, crawling snake goes he tries to destroy.
  o The serpent is the symbol of all that Satan wants to do in the earth.

• When Jesus gets ready to minister He makes a parallel between Himself and the serpent.

• Christ said, “Even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so shall the Son of Man be lifted up.
  o There was something that happened with Moses in the wilderness that became a symbol of what would happen with Christ.
  • Even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so shall the Son of Man be lifted up.
    o How then did Moses lift up the serpent in the wilderness?
    o It was the lifting up of the serpent that stopped the biting of the snakes.

• When the Children of Israel were going through the wilderness they were being bitten by serpents and they began to swell up and die.
  o And Moses began to pray and said, “What do I do about all the death that is going through and killing our people?”
  o And God spoke to Moses and said, “Get some brass and beat it into the shape of a serpent. And when the brass looks like the thing that bit the people…then lift it up.”

  o Now in order to get the brass to look like the thing that bit the people they had to beat the brass.
    ▪ If they didn’t beat the brass would not change its form and turn into the thing that bit the people.
    ▪ The beating of the brass is a picture of the judgment of God that took Him and formed Him into the thing that bit the people.
    ▪ When they beat the brass and turned it into the serpent then Moses lifted the serpent up.
• Isn’t it funny that Christ didn’t die on the whipping post?
  o History says that He was beaten bad enough that He should have died on the whipping post.
    ▪ They beat him with a “Cat of 9 tails” until his insides where hanging out…
    ▪ But if He had died on the whipping post He wouldn’t have been lifted up…
    ▪ And if He had not been lifted up – We would not have been delivered.
      • So He resisted death…
      • And held death back…
      • They pulled His beard out of His face…
      • Blood was running down His chin and down His face…
      • But He refused to die because He had to make this correlation between the stick and the serpent.
      • And when they nailed Him to the tree and they hung Him high and they stretched Him wide and they lifted Him up – On the cross He became a picture of what the serpent was in the wilderness.

• Even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so shall the Son of Man be lifted up.
  o The people are dying in the wilderness…
  o God says, “I’m going to cure you with what you are dying from…
  o You’ve been bitten with the venom of the snakes and the antidote is going to be made from the same antidote that has been killing you.
    ▪ Even today when a snake bites a person the venom is made from the very poison…
    ▪ Somehow injecting in you what you are trying to get away from builds up your resistance against getting infected what you are trying to escape.
  o This is not a new idea.
    ▪ For when the people of Israel were bitten by the cockatrice, God said, “I’m going to cure you with what is killing you.”
      • So He didn’t lift up a dove – that wouldn’t have done it…
      • He didn’t lift up wind – that wouldn’t have done it…
      • He didn’t lift up water – that wouldn’t have done it…
      • But He lifted up the very evil that you are infected by.
    ▪ The Bible says if you lift up the brazen serpent all of those that are dying…
      • All those that are dying on the ground, in the desert, with parched throats, scorching fever, and hallucinations…
      • If you can get them to look up…
      • They will find healing…

• I’m trying to show you what your Jesus did on the cross to bring about deliverance for you.
  o I want you to see that the serpent – the brazen serpent – becomes the savior to the people.
    ▪ So it was made a serpent but when it was lifted up it became a savior to the people.
    ▪ And if anybody looked at it they were saved from the poison that was killing them.
  o Even today modern medicine has a symbol of the stick and the snake to represent healing.
    ▪ When you go to the doctor’s office you will see a logo somewhere that represents healing and the symbol is a stick and a serpent.

    ▪ You don’t have to tell me what bit you…
    ▪ You don’t have to tell me what’s wrong with you…
    ▪ You don’t have to tell me that you are twisted…
    ▪ In some way or another everybody in here has something wrong with them…
• If I can just look up…
  ▪ When all hell is breaking loose…
  ▪ And trouble is everywhere…
  ▪ And the storms of life are raging…
  ▪ If I can look up – I can be healed.

• Moses makes the serpent out of brass and lifts it up and the people are healed and then God forbids Moses from keeping the brazen serpent lest the people worship the symbol.
  ▪ He didn’t want them to worship the symbol…
  ▪ The reality was that the symbol was only a schoolmaster…
  ▪ You cannot make a God out of who God used to help you because God will snatch them away and say, “I will not share my glory with another.”

• Only God can take what is wrong with you and use it to heal you.
  ▪ Isn’t it funny how God can take the very one who broke your heart and use what they did to heal your heart.
    ▪ You have to live a while to understand what I’m taking about…
  ▪ That’s why it’s hard to destroy the heart of a saint because just when you come in to make me feel bad again the very thing that used to make me miss you now makes me sick of you.

• God is in the business of making the antidote from the venom.
• Watch this – When the serpent is lifted up he transitions and becomes the savior.
  ▪ There you are with a snake biting you on the ankle and you look up at a snake and the snake you are looking up at is healing you from the snake that bit you.
    ▪ When He becomes lifted up it saves you from what you went through.

• If you don’t see this transition you’ll never get the cross.
• In Galatians Paul said, “Christ became sin for us,”
  ▪ *He became sin who knew no sin that we might become the righteousness of God.*
    ▪ God is so smart…
  ▪ What He is doing here is He is switching stuff.
    ▪ “*Until Christ became sin…*”

  ▪ I want to dig here a minute because I want you to see it.
  ▪ *He became sin who knew no sin* means *He became it without doing it.*
    ▪ He wasn’t a liar but He became a lie for me…
    ▪ He wasn’t an adulterer but He became adultery for me…
    ▪ He didn’t commit the act but He symbolized the act when He went to the cross.
  ▪ He stands on the cross as the epitome of every evil, nasty, wicked, dirty, treacherous thing that you have ever done.
    ▪ Not only what you have done but anything that you will do.
    ▪ Anything that any abuser, rapist, whoremonger, fornicator, idolater, murderer – He became sin.
    ▪ He had to cover everything or the cross wouldn’t mean anything.
    ▪ He couldn’t become adultery and not become homosexuality…
    ▪ He couldn’t become homosexuality without becoming a lie…
    ▪ Because if He did we could only preach the gospel to certain kinds of people…
      ▪ But He became sin…
      ▪ He became sin for me.
• Watch this – You are looking up and you see a Savior – But God looking down sees sin.
  o You look up and you see righteousness – God looked at the cross and He saw wickedness.
  o The cross was so horrific to Christ that He prayed three times, “Father if it be Thy will let this bitter cup pass from me…”
    ▪ Do you think He was scared of death? NO!
      • He woke Lazarus up from the dead on the way to the cross.
      • He wasn’t scared of death.
    ▪ Do you think He was scared of the nails? NO!
      • He made the steel that would be the nails.
      • You don’t see Him say, “Father, oh Father, these nails are too much.”
      • You don’t see Him say, “Father, oh Father, this cross is too much.”
    ▪ But He says, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”
  o From heavens point of view he became the symbol of every wicked, lustful, craving, devious, conniving, satanic, witchcraft, child molesting, raping, murdering, serial killing, mass suicide, national genocide, and the worst thing that would ever happen in the world.
    ▪ He became the icon that God had to hit to be able to save you.
      • He was smitten…
      • He was smitten of God…
      • All of your sins and your iniquities would be laid on Him.
    ▪ When the Father slapped Him on the cross – He was really slapping our sins.

• Romans 8:1 “There is therefore now no condemnation…”
• Now I know we have some judges here who will back me up on this…
  o You cannot try a man twice for the same thing.
  o Once you’ve executed judgment on him you can’t come back and judge me again for the same thing because then you wouldn’t be just….

  o So if Christ became the picture of my sins…
    ▪ And God judged it on Calvary…
    ▪ Then I am free…from my sins…as long as I cast them on Calvary He cannot judge me when He already judged me 2000 years ago…

• I want you to see that the serpent in the wilderness became a Savior so Christ who was a Savior on the cross becomes a serpent.
  o He became sin who knew no sin.
  o So sinners – while they were bitten could look up at him.

• SONG: How to reach the masses, men of every birth, For an answer, Jesus gave the key: And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, Will draw all men unto Me.
• Refrain: Lift Him up, lift Him up; Still He speaks from eternity: And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, Will draw all men unto Me.

• Romans said, “If the princes of this world would have known they would have never crucified the Lord.”
  o If they hadn’t crucified Him then He would not have been lifted up.
  o If He would not have been lifted up then Satan would have won.
• Lift Him up, lift Him up; Still He speaks from eternity: And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, Will draw all men unto Me.

• So I can preach the same gospel in the White House or the crack house…
  o I believe that abortion is wrong…
    ▪ I believe it is sin…
    ▪ And I know there are probably women in this room who have had an abortion…
    ▪ But that was on the cross too.
  o It is not God’s will for us to divorce and remarry and do the things that we do the way that we do them…
    ▪ Because we break a covenant and an oath between us and God…
    ▪ But that was on the cross too.
  o In this crowd there are people who have been molested and if the molested is here the molester is here…
    ▪ As hideous as that may sound…
    ▪ That was on the cross too…
    ▪ Whatever you are thinking about right now…
    ▪ Whatever you did…
    ▪ Whatever was done to you…
    ▪ Whatever you are ashamed of…
    ▪ Whatever you imagine…
    ▪ Whatever you came from…
    ▪ Whatever wakes you up in the middle of the night…
    ▪ Christ did not leave that sin out…
    ▪ It was included on the cross…

• Surely...
• Surely...
• Surely he hath borne our grieves, and carried our sorrows:
• Isaiah said, I don’t understand what I’m seeing – I’m seeing it from such a distance.
  o He said, How can He be so good and yet be smitten of God.
  o Isaiah, you are looking from the bottom up but God is looking from heaven down.
    ▪ Christ died for us.
• When they lifted Him up on the cross the ground trembles…
  o I believe because it had never seen so much sin in one place.
• And the son said, “I can’t look at Him, I’ve never seen so much evil in one place.”
  o But this dynamic is neither the physical ground nor the son’s embarrassment but there was something that happened in the spirit where He was smitten of God…
• The cross is to us what the brazen alter is in the temple.
  o It is the place where sin is dealt with.
  o The people would take the lamb to the brazen altar…
  o The lamb would be tied to the brazen altar…
There would be a pan to catch the blood and fire to burn the flesh…
- Then the Father (the priest) would raise the knife…
  - To slay the lamb…
- Whoever brought the lamb – it was their sins that the lamb died for…
- The lamb did not die because it was innocent it died because it had taken on the sins of the man.
- I know that God didn’t kill the innocents – because the innocents that was on the lamb went on the man….
- So the sins that were on the man could go on the lamb…
- And if you want to know how alive the man is – check how dead the lamb was.
- God killed the Lamb because He became what the man used to be and He let the man live because the man became the righteousness that the Lamb had before…
- Paul said, “It is no more I that liveth, but Christ that liveth in me. And the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself a ransom for me”

- He gave Himself a ransom for me…
- I cannot teach the consequences of the cross and not teach it in such a way…
  - That the witch knows – He became witchcraft…And sorcerer…
  - So that the manipulator knows – that Christ became manipulation…and wickedness…and debauchery…and perversion…and abuse…
    - And God judged it all on Calvary…
  - So that I could preach this glorious gospel of Jesus Christ and not excluded anybody.
- Because if God died for somebody, He died for everybody.
  - …Even if you don’t like what I did…
  - …You can’t lock me out…
  - Because the same blood that covered your mess – covered my mess.

  - Every thing that you have ever done was placed on Him…
  - He was the first one to die on the cross because he bore the iniquities of us all.

- Well then what happened to the sins?
  - There were two animals that were used in the sin offering.
    - One of them was a lamb – you hear about that all the time.
    - What you don’t hear about is the one called the scapegoat.

  - The scapegoat was the one who they laid on him the iniquities of Israel – They slapped him and he went running into the wilderness carrying their sins away.
    - The imagery is so strong that even in a secular setting when someone gets the ax for everybody else they still call him “the scapegoat.”
    - So Christ was not just my Sacrificial Lamb, who paid the price for my sins, but He was also my scapegoat, who carried my sins away…

- The reason we have trouble in today’s society getting today’s church to have real worship…
  - Is because you don’t understand what He did…
  - If you ever could understand what He did for you…
    - You wouldn’t have to have an organ, a drum set, or a tambourine…
    - You could be cleaning out your closet and say, “When I think of the goodness of Jesus and all that He’s done for me…”

  - Because you can’t understand what He did you praise God for stupid stuff…
    - You praise God for a new car…
- They marked down the dress and I got two for the price of one...
  - But God is looking at you like you are crazy...
    - Because what He provided for you is more than a dress...
    - It’s more than a car...
  - When your soul was at the gates of hell Jesus came Himself and died for you...
    - If you are really going to praise him you ought to praise Him for that.

- I have see people who have done terrible thing (Murderers, witches) stumble down to the altar and the blood won’t back up from them...
  - The blood said, “I’ll cover that too.”
  - “If you will repent and turn from your wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, I will forgive your sins, and I will heal your land.”
    - “Preacher, you don’t know what all I’ve done.”
    - “You don’t know who all I did it with.”
    - “You don’t know the problems I’ve caused.”
    - But the blood says, “If you will repent – I will cover that too.”

- Here’s the truth – When Jesus died He had you on His mind.