

From the Pulpit of the Japanese Baptist Church of North Texas  
March 26, 2017

## The Passion of the Christ

Isaiah 53:1-5

53:1 Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

53:2 For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.

53:3 He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

53:4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

### **1. Prophecy of the Passion**

Isaiah is a mysterious book. As the entire Bible consists of 66 books, Isaiah consists of 66 chapters. The first 39 books of the Bible are the Old Testaments and 27 books are the New Testaments, and chapter 1 through 39 of Isaiah are closer to the Old Testaments and from chapter 40 and after talk about the new theme. In other words, 27 chapters from 40 to 66 are more like the New Testaments. The Bible and Isaiah show a mysterious harmony.

In Chapter 1 through 39 of Isaiah, we see a word “redemption” but

only a few. But from chapter 40 and onward, we repeatedly see “redemption”. In Isaiah, “redemption” directly refers to the release and return of Jews from the Babylon captive, but it also prophesied the redemption of Jesus Christ on the cross. The last part of Isaiah, chapter 40 and onward, the main theme is redemption of Savior, just like the New Testament.

Today, we are going to learn together about the prophecy of redemption of Christ in Isaiah, which focused on the Passion of Christ, through which it was prophesied that Jesus would fulfill redemption. In Isaiah, there are many more prophecies about Jesus Christ other than the Passion. For example, prophecies about Jesus to be born of virgin (7:14), to be heir to the throne of David (9:7), John the Baptist prepared the way (40:3-5), and Jesus to heal the brokenhearted (61:1-2). However, what Isaiah described the most in detail was the Passion of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah 50:6 says, “I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting.”, which clearly prophesied Jesus would be hit in the cheek at the hearing by high priests, and whipped in the back by Roman soldiers after Pilate’s trial.

And in Isaiah chapter 53, the Passion of Jesus was described more in details.

Verse 1 “Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? “ Even Jesus came to his people as a promised savior, people never believed him nor accepted Him.

Verse 2 “For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look

at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.” means Jesus was born and raised in poor.

Verses 3-4, “He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows” is cited in Matthew 8:17, which described the Mission of Jesus.

Verse 7 “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth” is cited in I Peter 2:22-23. At the trial when people continuously blamed and despised Him, Jesus did not fight back but endured it. On the cross, Jesus asked God for forgiveness of those people who despised Him and tortured Him.

Verse 8 “By oppression and judgment he was taken away” means although Pontius Pilate did not see any sins in Jesus, he was defeated by the voice of crowds and handed Jesus to the cross. The Roman Empire expanded not only by military power but also by the rule of law. Roman soldiers were known for their royalty and discipline. But the law was broken at Jesus’s trial. Roman soldiers were sympathetic to criminals who were about to be sent to a death penalty and they tried to ease the pain, but for Jesus, they broke their law and tortured him, humiliated him, and beaten him with a whip. “By oppression and judgment he was taken away” is exactly what happened to Jesus.

Verse 9 reads as “And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death” according to the New Japanese Bible. It means that the grave was with the wicked, but the buried was with the

rich. What does this mean? It means that Jesus died as one of three criminals, but his dead body was put away by the rich man, Joseph of Arimathea. The mysterious story was fulfilled like this.

Since it is not the Bible study time, I cannot give you more lectures in detail. But Isaiah 53 itself has a lot of contents worth of writing a book. When I read Isaiah 53, I have goose bumps, which I mean that prophecies in the Bible are so accurately fulfilled and it is almost scary. I am sure you have felt reverence when you read the Bible and encounter the truth of God's words beyond human comprehension. Well, it is a matter of course because it is the Bible, but I cannot do anything but feel reverence because eight hundred years before the cross of Jesus, it had already described the Passion of Christ so accurately.

## **2. Purpose of the Passion**

Now, why the Bible has such accurate prophecy about the Passion? Because it is the very important theme of the Bible that saves us.

As we have just read through, Isaiah prophecy describes the Passion very clearly, and totally identical to the New Testament; moreover, the under meaning of the Passion was also written down in Isaiah as same as the testimonies, in addition to how Jesus was actually crucified on the cross. Throughout Isaiah prophecy, it says that the Savior will be the atoning sacrifice for all people. Here are verses 4-12.

Verse 4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

Verse 5 But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought

us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

Verse 6 The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Verse 10 His soul makes an offering for guilt.

Verse 11 By his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

Verse 12 Yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

These verses speak likewise Mark 10:45, “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Also, according to 1 Peter 2:24-25, it has the direct citation from Isaiah; “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.” Isaiah told us beforehand that Jesus’ Passion and His death would save people, and He was the sacrifice for sinners.

Every year we try to meditate the Passion of Jesus during 40 days of Lent toward Easter. Because the Passion of Christ is the theme of the Bible and it is our salvation; all of the gospel, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, took 1/3 part to write His last one week and testify the Resurrection. The early churches taught about the cross of Jesus Christ, and testified His Resurrection because this is the theme, and the most important teaching in the Bible. Everyone will be forgiven through Jesus’ sacrificial death and live the new life because of His Resurrection; this is the true life, and the total solution of your life.

The Bible teaches about “issues of life.” It gives us wisdom to survive. In fact, Dale Carnegie’s, “How to Stop Worrying and Start Living”, Stephen Covey’s, “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People”,

and many other self-help books are based on the Bible teachings. However, when the Bible talks about the life's issues, it means "dead or alive," the most basic thing.

Our life issues are important but simply non-sense when we face the "dead-or-alive" situation; who considers about your schools, business, companies, marriage, family or society when you about to die? First of all you just desire of life, and try to gain the power for life. When your child got illness, parents won't say "Study!" or "Be a good boy/girl!" They would only hope kid's recovery. Like this, the Bible let us solve the core problem of your life. What is "to live," why we live, and where our lives came from? It has to be solved because you need the way "how you live" next. The theme of the Bible, the cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ literally teach us about "death and life" of Jesus, but His death on the cross and His resurrection can make us alive truthfully, and give us total solution in our life problems.

If we understand something, we nod. When we heard of the touching stories, we may drop tears. Yet no intelligence and impression are everlasting contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ. This good news cannot be vanished or forgotten after long time and changed generations. The song, "Tell Me the Story of Jesus" by Fanny Crosby, has lyrics-

Tell of the cross where they nailed Him,  
Writhing in anguish and pain;  
Tell of the grave where they laid Him,  
Tell how He liveth again.  
Love in that story so tender,  
Clearer than ever I see;

Stay, let me weep while you whisper,  
“Love paid the ransom for me.”

As this song, every time we hear or read the gospel, Lord Jesus’ Cross and Resurrection, touches our deepest point of heart, because this is the power of believers, and the life itself for us. By the story of death and resurrection, the gospel of Jesus Christ, only can make people alive.

Today, we heard the story of the cross from the prophecy of the Passion of Jesus. When you read Isaiah 53, you may be still in mind and meditate; and you will see Jesus Christ. You may taste the prophecy, and be assured of Romans 4:25, “Who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.” Every one of us should be subjective on this verse, and say, “Who was delivered up for MY trespasses and raised for MY justification” and we only need to worship Him.

### **(Prayer)**

Dear God, you wrote the prophecy in the time of the Old Testament about the Passion of Jesus Christ very clearly, and gave us the Savior along with the prophecy and the promise. You lead us the truth of salvation, and the faith to believe in Your redemption, by both prophecy of the Old Testament and the testimony of the New Testament. Please open up our heart and let us accept Your truth, and make us alive and let us walk our lives in Your salvation. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.