

## THE MIRACLE OF THE LOVE OF GOD IN CHRIST

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### Isaiah 53

Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.

He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked—but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied.

By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

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Isn't it absolutely incredible what God has done to ensure that His precious possessions, His people, would be made worthy to be in His glory, in His eternal kingdom. As our passage of Scripture speaks of, from **Isaiah 53**, it was a prophesy of the coming Messiah (Mashiach) or Christ, which would not take place for around another 700 years. The suffering and brutal death that our Lord and Savior had to endure had to be done, as Isaiah explains the reasons, as Jesus took our

punishment and death for our sins, yet it had to all begin with Jesus being born of a virgin, and by the Holy Spirit of God, so that he would be the propitiation (as the Apostle Paul calls it), ie, to meet the satisfying of the requirement of God's perfect law. Christ Jesus had to also be fully man, to take our place and punishment for our sins, and He had to be fully God, to meet the Righteous requirement of the law of God, as God is perfect in all His Ways (**2 Samuel 22:31**) and Works (**Deuteronomy 32:4**). I just marvel at the great mercies and love of God.

It is truly miraculous that not only had Jesus to be born of a virgin, through the seed of the Holy Spirit, but He also survived to adulthood, and began preaching the message that John the Baptist was, declaring, "repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (**Matthew 3:2, Matthew 4:17**), meaning to forsake your sins and turn to God for forgiveness of sins, to receive His gift of grace for the forgiveness of sins. As we know from Scripture it is believing on Christ Jesus for dying on a cross for our sins, raising from the grave on the third day, overcoming death and the devil and that He is now seated at the right hand of God, and He has made it possible for us too to overcome death and have eternal life in Him and that He isn't just sitting on His throne next to God but that He then dwells in all of His children. Just as Jesus promised, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." (**John 14:23**)

Once the Holy Spirit reveals to us that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that we are in need of His saving grace, we are then led by the goodness of God to repent of our sins and receive His Holy Spirit, to become born-again. "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (**John 1:12-13**) That is the amazing grace of God! "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (**Ephesians 2:8-10**) We are God's workmanship that He then continually works in us, as the Apostle Paul tells us in **1 Corinthians 1:30**, His Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. That is, by the revelation that comes from the Holy Spirit, He gives us wisdom to accept the free gift of God, His Righteousness and to then live in His Righteousness, in Christ Jesus, as He then sets us apart to live in His Holiness, and we begin our new lives in our Redemption that is in Christ Jesus! The Holy Spirit then begins bearing the fruit of the Spirit of "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." (**Galatians 5:22-23**) That becomes noticeable to ourselves and to others as we begin to know Him and His Word, trust Him, and

honor Him, primarily by loving God with all that is in us, and loving others as ourselves.

After John the Baptist was thrown into prison for telling Herod that it was a sin to take his brother's wife, John the Baptist sent messengers to Jesus, to ask Him, "are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" That was for their understanding, by the way, not John's. Remember John seeing Jesus coming toward him, he said, "'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (**John 1:29**) Jesus replied, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." (**Matthew 11:2-6**) Jesus then took the love of God all the way to the cross, with mocking, and severe brutality and suffering, and then death on a cross. The incredible miracle to us is that even though Jesus knew what He'd have to go through, He did it anyways, for us! "For God **SO** loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (**John 3:16-17**)

That "SO" is never lost with me anymore, as I think about, and meditate on, what my Lord Jesus went through to ensure that I, and all of us, that is, all who believe on Him and receive Him, will have through Him, and with Him, a life everlasting in His eternal and glorious kingdom. As God is perfect in all of His ways and works, He had a plan, that is, a perfect plan, in dealing with the fact that as He was to create the heavens and the earth, and give man a free-will to choose between good and evil, that the outcome would not be favorable for mankind. There is where we find a continuing miracle throughout the Old Testament, of God's plan for the Messiah, His only begotten Son, that would be from the seed of Abraham and then through King David, to become the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (although technically He already was, is and always shall be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords). Starting in the garden of Eden just after Adam and Eve had disobeyed God by eating of the forbidden fruit off of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God had cursed Satan and told him, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." Those of Satan's seed are those that follow the ways of the devil in disobedience and dishonoring God, just as Jesus told the Jewish leaders that their Father was the devil. (**John 8:44**) The seed of Eve that God spoke of is captialized and it means Christ Jesus, who has basically crushed the head of that snake, Satan, the devil. The complete fulfillment of His punishment comes later when He will be cast into the lake of fire! (**Revelation 20:10**) Right then and there Satan knew that he had to do everything he could to eliminate the seed of Eve so that the fulfillment of that Word of

God would not come to pass. What happened next, with regards to that? Cain slew Abel. Yet, in the genealogy of Christ in **Luke 3**, we see that Jesus came from the seed of Seth, the third son born to Adam and Eve. Later, when the world became so wicked and perverse that God decided to eliminate all of the human race, He spared Noah and his family from the flood that covered the whole earth. We see also from the genealogy in **Luke 3** that Jesus' lineage came from Shem, one of Noah's 3 sons. Over 200 years later, after the flood, we have the story of Abraham. God called Abram, later he was named Abraham by God, was told by God "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." Once again God was speaking of the Messiah, the Christ. Then when Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90 years old, (**Genesis 17:17**) she had her first and only child, Isaac.

To test Abraham, God told him to take Isaac and sacrifice him on an altar. Hagar, the maidservant of Sarah had born Abraham's first child, Ishamel. Yet, God had told Abraham that His everlasting covenant would not come through Ishmael but Isaac. Can you imagine Satan getting excited at the prospect of Abraham killing the seed of the promised One on the altar? Yet, God stopped him just in time and then provided a ram, caught in a thicket, for the sacrifice on the altar. Another important story that follows in God's Word, with regards to the lineage of Christ, is in the story of Joseph, the beloved son of Jacob, who became Israel, the father of the 12 tribes of Israel. Joseph had told his brothers his dreams that basically meant that Joseph's brothers would all end up bowing down to Joseph. His brothers hated him after that and eventually conspired to have him killed. Fortunately for Joseph, Reuben and then Judah talked the other brothers out of killing Joseph and decided to throw him into a pit and then shortly thereafter sold him into slavery. One can then imagine, as likely did Satan and Joseph's brothers and maybe even Joseph, based on Joseph's dreams and the covenant of his forefathers with God, that Joseph was destined to be in the lineage of the Messiah, to be the continuing seed to which all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

Yet in the midst of the story of Joseph, which starts in **Genesis 37**, in **Chapter 38** there is a seemingly irrelevant story of Judah. First we are told that his two sons were so wicked that God killed them. Judah was then supposed to give his youngest son to Tamar, after he was of age, but he didn't. Judah then, supposing that he was having a fling with a prostitute, finds out that it was Tamar, and she ended up having twins, Perez and Zerah. Guess who is listed in **Luke 3** in the genealogy leading to Christ Jesus? Judah and then Perez, not Joseph nor either of his sons!

Another fascinating story that we are told in the Bible, was in the time of the Judges, before Israel cried to God for a king, and it is

the story of Ruth, in the book of Ruth. The story begins saying that Ruth and another woman were married to brothers and they and the brother's mom Naomi were in in the land of Moab, on the other side of the Jordan river from most of the land of Israel. Both of the brothers died and Naomi, the mother, decided to go back to her homeland in Judah. Ruth was determined to go with Naomi while the other daughter-in-law did not. Long story short, Ruth ends up gleaning from the field of Boaz, who ended up being in the line of being a kinsman redeemer, which meant that he would take his dead relatives wife so that he could continue their lineage, posthumously, meaning even though the man was dead. The first in line to be the kinsman redeemer bowed out after he found out that he wouldn't just receive his land and that it involved a woman too. Boaz ended up taking Ruth to be his wife and they had a son called Obed who was the father of Jesse who was the father of King David! To add to the wow factor of that story is, do you know who were the parents of Boaz? Salmon and Rahab the harlot. Rahab was the one who helped the spies of Israel in the conquering of the city of Jericho, to which "the walls came a tumblin' down".

From there, through the good and bad kings, starting with Judah's first king in the lineage of Christ, King David, through their eventual ending up in captivity, Israel to Assyria and then Judah to Babylon, through the intertestamental period of 400 years between the last book of the Old Testament to the birth of Christ, the lineage of Christ remained. Man and his faith through all of those people were not constant, but God remained faithful to His promise that eventually, through the seed of Abraham, all the nations on the earth would be blessed. When King Herod heard from the wise men that the Messiah had been born, he had all of the male children, 2 years old and under, to be killed. Satan was desperate at that point.

While we celebrate Christ's birthday on December 25<sup>th</sup>, the miracle of Christ Jesus is an ongoing miracle, from the lineage of Adam and Eve and their son Seth, to Noah and his son Shem, to the promise given to Abraham that in his seed all the nations would be blessed, through Isaac, and Jacob, and Judah and his son Perez, through Salmon and Rahab the harlot, through Boaz and Ruth through the times of good and evil in the kingdom of Judah to their going into captivity and the fall of their kingdom, to the faithfulness of Joseph and Mary of the promise given to them, as the angel told Mary, ""Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." (Luke 1:30-33) We are richly blessed by the love of God in the miraculolous way He has given us life eternal with Him, through Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord!