

The Suffering Servant Lives! (Isaiah 53:10–12)

Though we trust God for what we cannot see, that faith is based upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ which was seen. The fact of the resurrection and the gift of God's Spirit changed the disciples tremendously. As the resurrection helped them, so it helps us believe what we cannot see. The prophecy of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53 contributes to our understanding of what the resurrection makes visible.

I. The resurrection of Jesus demonstrated that God fulfils His purposes.

1. The purposed resurrection is implicit in the promised exaltation of God' Servant (52:12).
2. The purposed resurrection is explicit in various phrases of 53:10–12: "he shall see his offspring," "shall prolong his days," and "I will divide him a portion with the many ..." All require the continued life of the Servant, a resurrection considering the death that was prophesied.
3. Jesus taught God's purposes that He suffer and be raised from the dead (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:32–34; Luke 24:26, 46).
4. Therefore, the resurrection becomes a demonstration for us that God keeps His promises.

II. The resurrection of Jesus demonstrated that God was pleased with the sacrifice of His Servant and that forgiveness could be a reality.

1. The suffering of the Servant, the death of Jesus Christ, was a sacrifice for sin. It was the offering of a Sinless One (vv. 9, 11) as a guilt offering (v. 10) bearing our sins (vv. 11–12).
2. Because Jesus bore the sins of many, and by knowing Him they could be accounted righteous, therefore (v.12) He had ultimate victory which of necessity meant also His resurrection. (Cf. John 17:3 – eternal life is to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.) His resurrection demonstrated that His sacrificed was accepted.
3. This is THE promise which the resurrection guarantees. Cf. Romans 4:25. Remember that all the sins of the believer are forgiven in Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one whose sin is forgiven (Psalm 32:1–2).

III. The resurrection of Jesus demonstrated that God wanted for us a perfect Mediator.

1. God's Servant performs the role of a mediator in that He represents man to God. He bore their sin; He makes intercession; He is their guilt offering.
2. God's Servant, Jesus Christ the righteous One, is also God's perfect representative to man (v.10). That which the Lord has determined (His "will") is placed in "His hand" and it will prosper.
3. God's Servant continues as Mediator, dividing the spoil with His followers, who by His work are strengthened (v.12). After His exaltation, Jesus has given His Spirit to those who believe (Acts 2:32–33), gifted the church (Ephesians 4:8–12), and continues to intercede for believers (Hebrews 7:25).

The resurrection means that we have a living Lord and Savior. We have today only eyewitness accounts, but are especially blessed when we believe, though not having seen Him with our own eyes (John 20:29). The resurrection remains a testimony visible to mankind, demonstrating the certainty of truths we must believe without seeing. Celebrate a truly risen Lord and Savior!

Questions for further thought and discussion:

- What promises of God do you need especially to hold to at the moment? How should the resurrection of Jesus help you understand God's willingness and ability to keep them?
- Do you have specific sins which you wonder if God might not forgive? Are there sins which you struggle to overcome? How might understanding and appreciating better the resurrection help?
- The resurrection means that Jesus continues to live, not merely as spirit, but with a human body bearing the marks of His crucifixion. Thomas claimed those marks as points of persuasion. What are they for you?