

THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

VOL. IV.

JANUARY 1903.

No. 1.

Doctrinal Theology.

CHRISTOLOGY

Christology is the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures concerning the Person and the Office and Work of Christ, the Redeemer and Savior of mankind. The doctrine of Christ is not a product of human speculation, or of a process of evolution from the consciousness of the church. *Search the Scriptures*, says Christ, *for they are they which testify of me,*¹⁾ and the risen Lord himself taught his disciples from the same source; *beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*²⁾ Christ is also the central subject of the New Testament. *The Gospels were written, that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ.*³⁾ The modern distinction between the historical Christ and the Christ of Scripture is a delusion. The Christ of Moses and the prophets, the apostles and evangelists, and no other, is the historic Christ, that was, and is, and shall be. All other Christs, the Christs of Ebionites and Docetists, of Gnostics and Manichaeans, of Nestorians and Eutychians and Apollinarians, of Monophysites and Monothelites, of Socinians and other Unitarians, of Schleiermacher and Strauss and Schenkel and Renan, are caricatures or fictions,

1) John 5, 39.

2) Luke 24, 27.

3) John 20, 31.

Exegetical Theology.

A PEN-PICTURE OF CHRIST DRAWN FROM THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

III. CHRIST, THE SUFFERING MESSIAH.¹⁾

The reception which Christ found in Galilee and in Judea was quite in accordance with another prophecy of Isaiah. For chap. 8, 14. 15 we read of the Son of the Virgin: *And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.* We note that he mentions both houses of Israel, but that he points especially to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. These had the temple of the Lord in their midst and had more opportunities to hear and learn the word of God, both the law and the divine promises of Christ the Savior, than the rest of the houses of Israel. Daily they saw before their eyes the sacrifices of rams and lambs which were to be types and figures of Christ. A very great number of those that were appointed to be builders of Zion (Ps. 118, 22) lived amongst them, namely the highpriest, a great many of the priests, elders and scribes of the Jewish nation. But their opposition and burning hatred against Christ and His doctrine grew stronger every time Christ made a visit to the temple and the city, and this hatred resulted at Christ's last journey up to Jerusalem in His arraignment before the ecclesiastical and civil courts in that city, and in His crucifixion demanded by a clamorous and seditious mob which was in-

1) The II Chapter, on *Christ's public ministry*, will be published in another issue. The present instalment seemed more in time as the lenten season is drawing near.

stigated and incited to this heinous crime by their own spiritual leaders. Thus we have arrived at Christ's *Passio Magna*, the Great Passion, by which the Holy One in Israel suffered not only the most shameful death from the hands of sinners, but by which He also accomplished and brought to a glorious end the work of the salvation of a lost world. The first prophecy which treats of this subject expressedly is Is. 43, 22—25.

In the foregoing verses we find a description of the glorious condition and the spiritual blessings of the Church of the New Testament. Of the Israel of that time, the Israel after the Spirit, God says, v. 21: *This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.* Then the Lord proceeds, vv. 22—24: *But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel. Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honored me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense. Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices.* The emphasis in these statements lies evidently upon the pronoun *Me*. Otherwise all these words would have no meaning whatever or even be contrary to the truth. For in the very time of Isaiah the people of the Jews did much in praying, fasting and in observing the external rites of the ceremonial law, although their offerings were prompted by mere hypocrisy, Is. 1, 11—15. More than this, in the times after the Babylonian captivity the Jews were more zealous than ever before to offer the prescribed sacrifices and oblations, more eager than at any time previous to come up to the requirements of the cult instituted by Moses. But God says, v. 22: *But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; BUT, or rather, BECAUSE thou hast been weary of me.* They did all this with a spirit of weariness, as a servant obeys his master not willingly, not voluntarily, but in order to pay off a heavy debt for which the master could

have him imprisoned, or in order to earn his wages. Thus the Jews were given to the illusion that by keeping the law externally they could balance their account, get even with God. God would be obliged to forgive them their sins and to bestow upon them all temporal and heavenly blessings as a just reward for their work and labor. But God declares unto them, and in fact to all the self-righteous, that this is not the case. They have not served Him, they have not given anything to Him that is the Lord of heaven and earth. If there was any benefit from these rites and ceremonies, they were to have it, since these were instituted to remind them of their God and Savior who continues now: *But thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities.* The Lord has not caused the Jews to serve, He has not made men to weary. On the contrary, the sins and iniquities of Jews and Gentiles have laid upon Him, brought upon Him the weary and tedious labor of a, or rather, *the* servant of men. God's favor, the grace of the holy and righteous God, the forgiveness of sin and life eternal cannot be bought and earned by men, not even by the most pious and holy. For, says the prophet himself, chap. 64, 6, *we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.* There is no exception. God threatens His eternal wrath and punishment even to the one that keeps the whole law and transgresses it but in one point, and to free men from all the curse and threat of the law costs certainly a higher price than the blood of rams, more than the offering of sweet cane and precious incense.

The task and burden to purchase a sinful world from sin, death, devil, and hell, the task even to save one sinner from the well deserved damnation is too much for angels and archangels; how could corrupt and sinful men do it? If we shall be saved, our guilt removed, our debt payed, Paradise lost restored to fallen men, God Himself must do it. God

and God alone can work out our salvation. And Christ, the Son of God, has undertaken, has carried out this work. As the servant of God, but also as the servant of men, as the *Servus Servorum* he has toiled, worked, labored with body and soul for our salvation. His whole life on earth from His birth until His death was work, toil, poverty, trouble, misery, humiliation for the sake of men. He was born and reared in poverty and humility. When eight days old He suffered the pains of circumcision, being made not only under the moral but also under the ceremonial law. Soon after His parents had to flee with Him to Egypt. During the time of His public ministry He was indefatigable in traveling, teaching, performing miracles publicly and privately, He was tempted by Satan, contradicted and persecuted by the rulers of His own people; one time He fasted forty days and forty nights; many nights were spent by Him in prayer and intercession, even when He had grown into manhood He had not where to lay His head. By the sight of human misery and human sin His tender and guiltless soul was easier and more deeply affected than any other man, and many more things could be mentioned in confirmation of the fact that His toil and labor did not first begin with His Great Passion. But all the work, all the sorrow, all the misery which the sins of the whole world have caused, pressed upon the divine Redeemer when the last day of His earthly life had come. Witnesses thereof are Gethsemane, the palaces of the highpriests and of Herod, the judgment hall of the Roman procurator Pontius Pilate, the Via Dolorosa, and Calvary. Yea, on Calvary His agony, His anguish, His struggle were so undescribably great that even Nature put on mourning, the face of the heavens waxed black, the noonday sun turned unto darkness, the earth quaked, rocks rent, and He, the eternal and beloved Son of the heavenly Father, cries out: *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* But He also exclaims on the cross: *It is finished.* It is, therefore, not man, but God Himself, the incarnate Son

of God, who extinguishes, or rather, has extinguished the wrath of God against the sinners and has acquired for us the forgiveness of sin. In the following words the Lord assures us of this truth in the most emphatic manner. *I, even I*, we read further on, *am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.* God, the Son of God, does not only assure us here that He is willing, that He is ready, to blot out our sins and to remember no more our transgressions. These words imply, yea, declare more. Through His work and toil He has really and effectually blotted out our transgressions, done away with our sins, caused them to be remembered no more. He has offered a perfect sacrifice for our sins, nothing of the law is left to be fulfilled, nothing of our debt remains to be paid for by us in order to obtain the forgiveness of sin and life eternal, and if many men are still condemned it is in reality not because they are sinners, but because they reject by their unbelief the salvation wrought by the Son of God. God blots out our transgressions and will not remember our sins for His own sake. The Father has sent His Son to bear and take away the sins of the world; the Son has finished the work allotted to Him, not because man has or will ever deserve it, either in part or altogether, but simply for His own name's sake, because His name is: *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth*, Ex. 34, 6. But although what the Lord declares in this passage is true in the first place of the so-called universal or objective justification, it is not less true of the subjective or individual justification of the sinner through faith in Christ Jesus. If this were not the case, the Lord could not say even when speaking of the universal justification: *I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.* If there had been something in the conduct of some men which might cause the Lord to give them justifying faith, or to convert them, the same must have

been also one of the causes which prompted Him to work out the salvation of mankind. But the salvation of the sinner is from beginning to end the work of the Lord, and the Lord alone.

Another prophecy which sheds much light on Christ's Passion we find in Is. 50, 5—9. It begins with the words: *The Lord hath opened mine ear.* These words point not only forward, but also back to the foregoing context which treats of Christ's prophetic office. There the Messiah says: *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.* Then He continues: *He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord hath opened mine ear.* His ear is awakened, is opened, according to this passage, in the first place to learn what to speak and when to speak to him that is weary, to them that labor and are heavy laden; but, on the other hand, His ear is also opened, as the following context proves, to comply with the will of the Lord, difficult though it be to do it. Here the Messiah does not appear as the servant of men, as in Is. 43, but as the servant of the Lord, the servant of His heavenly Father, like in Is. 53. And as the servant of the Lord He says: *and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back,* v. 5b. A servant becomes rebellious when too much work is demanded of him; a wanderer turns back from the path which he has chosen when he becomes aware that it is too dangerous to pursue it. But Christ did not shrink back from His suffering and passion, though He clearly foresaw and knew well what He had to go through, and although His apostles or at least St. Peter entreated Him not to expose Himself to the bitter hatred of His enemies and to the dangers He had predicted them. Even in Gethsemane, when all the misery and woe of human sin pressed upon Him, when He was assailed by all the powers of darkness and the counsel of our salvation had been dimmed for awhile in His human mind, at an hour where

He struggled with death and where His sweat was as it were great drops of blood, He did not murmur, He did not revolt against the will of His Father. He prays in the anguish of His soul, in His unspeakable agony: *Father, remove this cup from me.* Christ calls Him that had laid this burden upon Him, still His Father, yea, before He has uttered His request, He says: *If thou be willing,* and after having uttered it He adds immediately: *Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done,* thus giving full assurance of His perfect willingness to resign His will to the will of His heavenly Father. From His prayer He rises to surrender Himself voluntarily, without any compulsion, to His wicked enemies. And in all the trials of this day of darkness He is and remains the willing, obedient Servant of the Lord, the one that says, Ps. 40, 7: *Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me.* Thus He atones for our waywardness, our revolt and disobedience against God.

The following verse now is an illustration of Christ's willingness to suffer, while at the same time it plainly sets forth His admirable patience in enduring the insults of His enemies. He proceeds, v. 6: *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* Christ yielded Himself up, resigned Himself in obedience to the will of His heavenly Father, to the gross and most outrageous abuse of brutish and vile men, although He was the stronger, although He could have destroyed them with one word's speaking. Yea, even His enemies could have known this. For when He had said to the multitude which had come into the Garden of Gethsemane to bind Him, *I am He,* they went backward and fell to the ground. These unholy and weak men He suffered to scourge Him, to smite Him, to spit in His face, to mock Him and to pluck off His hair. The last of these provoking insults and cruelties is not particularly mentioned in the New Testament; but it is undoubtedly implied in the Greek word *κολάσειν*, which the English version of Holy Bible

renders by: *They buffeted Him*. Mark 14, 65. No other kind of contempt, no other ignominy, no other disgrace is more degrading and insulting to an honest man than to be spitted in the face, to be smitten on the cheeks, or to be ridiculed in a defenseless condition. The perfectly holy and innocent Son of man who was not hardened by sin as even an ordinary, honest man, must have suffered incomparably more under such treatment. He suffered all this and much more patiently without resenting these wrongs, and when He said to the officer of the highpriest who had smitten Him with the palm of his hand: *If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?* these words were not intended to pay back the insult, but to rebuke the sin and convince the malefactor of his wrong. The next verse reads, v. 7: *For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed*. At the beginning of this verse we have }copulativum, which is evidently to be taken adversatively, and we therefore prefer *but* to *for*. The Messiah gave His back to the smiters, and hid not His face from shame and spitting, but in all His sufferings He trusts in God, in His help. In all His troubles and anguish He prays: *But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Be not far from me*. Ps. 22, 3. 11. When in His deepest humiliation He suffered all the tortures of damnation and hell, the cry burst from His dying lips: *My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?* but this very: *My God, my God*, etc., proves that His confidence in His God is still unshaken, that He still clings to Him, as His only stay and help, expecting Him to help where there is no help. He knows that He shall not be ashamed. Though His enemies did all they could to put Him to shame, yet He was not ashamed of His work, knowing that His trust in the Lord will not be in vain nor disappoint Him. For this reason He says in the same verse: *Therefore shall I not be con-*

founded: therefore have I set my face like a flint. He goes on in His work as our Mediator with unshaken constancy and undaunted resolution, without failing and without being discouraged. His trust in God upholds Him that He is determined to fulfill all that was written by the prophets concerning the Son of man, Luke 18, 31.

The Messiah continues in the same strain, v. 8: *He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together: who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me.* God is near to Him with His help; ere long He shall be delivered. But He shall not only be delivered, but God does also justify Him. Christ was falsely accused, charged with blasphemy, with seditious conduct and preaching, He was sentenced to death by the priests and rulers of His people, yielded up by Pilate to the most shameful death on the cross, but at the same time the false witnesses put up against Him, Pilate himself, Herod, Pilate's wife, Judas, the thief on the cross, the centurion who had superintended His crucifixion, and even the impotent rage of His judges in the council must bear witness as to His innocence. Yea, God Himself testifies by many signs and wonders that the One dying now on the cross as the greatest malefactor is no ordinary man, much less an evildoer, but His Son, even God Himself. But the clearest evidence of Christ's innocence, the most indisputable proof of His divine Sonship is His exaltation, His resurrection, His ascension, the effusion of the Spirit (Acts 11, 36), the existence of the Church and His coming to judge the quick and the dead. Confident of God's help and His justification the suffering Messiah challenges His enemies, whoever they may be, in bold defiance: *Who will contend with me? Let us stand together: who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me.* Though He seems to succumb, though His enemies exult, they exult too soon; His is the triumph, His the final victory. To the chief priests, to the elders and to all the council He says while He stood before them as a culprit, Matt. 26, 64: *Never-*

theless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. But He defies not only His earthly enemies; He defies Satan and hell. The very first prophecy of Him foretells, that He shall bruise the Serpent's head and therefore conquer hell and all the hellish host. This triumphal song the suffering Servant of the Lord concludes with the words, v. 9: Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up. Men shall take notice of and well consider this, that the Lord's help is with Him, that it is a vain undertaking to strive and side against Him, for it is too apparent that His enemies will perish. By murdering Christ the high priests and elders meant to preserve their own dignity and power, to protect the temple and the cult instituted by Moses; but soon after the temple was destroyed, the Mosaic cult discarded, never to be restored, while the Jewish nation is scattered all over the world, an accursed people until the end of the world, and in the meantime the new people of God is mainly gathered from the Gentiles. Let us, therefore, kiss the Son, lest we perish from the way, and then we can also defy all the enemies of our soul, saying with St. Paul, Rom. 8, 33. 34: Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God.

We turn now to the most lucid, the most comprehensive and the most powerful prophecy of Christ's suffering and death together with His exaltation, Is. chap. 52, 13—53 to the end. This prophecy is the History proper of Christ's Passion in the Old Testament, and every Christian ought to be thoroughly acquainted with this admirable description of the Passion of our divine savior. This prophecy helps much to understand the account of Christ's suffering which the Evangelists have given. It has been rightly called the

Golden Passionale, and one of the interpreters of Isaiah has well said: If we had only Is. chap. 53 and Luke chap. 15 we would know enough to be saved. Even the ancient rabbis have understood this prophecy of the Messiah, but some Christians have been so blind and perverted as to refer it to the prophet Jeremiah, and the Chiliasts, still more perverted, have construed it into a song which the converted Jews would sing at Christ's coming for the establishment of the millennial kingdom. But the apostle Philip, who from hence preached to the eunuch, has put it past dispute that of Him speaks the prophet this, of Christ and of nobody and nothing else. The frequent use of the so-called *perfectum propheticum* in this passage is worthy of special notice. It gives to the whole prophecy much of impressiveness, inasmuch as these *perfecta prophetica* cause the reader not to look forward as to things still future, at least considered from the standpoint of the writer, but to look backward as to things which have become reality. Before the prophet, however, enters upon the full and particular description of Christ's suffering and exaltation, he makes first, vv. 13—15, an announcement of the great theme which has engaged his mind and pen.

We read, chap. 52, 13: *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.* "Behold," הִנֵּה, points again, like in Is. chap. 7, 14, to something wonderful and of the greatest importance, and, indeed, besides Christ's Nativity there can be nothing more important for sinful man than that which is recorded in Is. chap. 53. *Behold*, the Lord says, *my servant shall deal prudently.* Perfect prudence and wisdom, indeed, did the Servant of the Lord evince by humbling Himself, by His singular obedience in accomplishing the work of redemption which His heavenly Father had entrusted to Him. But He shall not be for ever a servant. His obedience, His humiliation, leads Him to great honors. In the same verse we read further on: *He shall be exalted and extolled, and be*

very high. These three synonymous terms not only impress upon our minds that His exaltation shall be certain and very great, but they point unmistakably to three distinct stages of Christ's exaltation, to His resurrection, His ascension, and His session at the right hand of the Father. For the first word used in the original, רום , denotes to rise from the ground, the second, שָׁמַיְמָה , to be lifted up, and the third, גָּבַהַר , to be high, to occupy a high place or position.

Vv. 14. 15: *As many were astonished at Thee; His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men: So shall He sprinkle many nations; the Kings shall shut their mouths at Him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.* These two verses are closely connected grammatically as well as logically. They contain a comparison which is indicated by כַּמֶּן , as, at the beginning of v. 14, and by כֵּן , so, at the beginning of the 15th verse. They compare Christ in His state of humiliation and Christ in His state of exaltation. At Christ in His exinanition many are astonished or horrified. But why Christ has become a wonder or horror to many is told in the subsequent words: *His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of man* or, according to the original: So (much) disfigurement away from man is His visage and His form from the sons of man. His visage and form is so miserable that He does not look any more like a man. He Himself complains, Ps. 22, 6: *But I am a worm and no man.* The nation abhorred Him, chap. 49, 7, treated Him as the off-scouring of all things. But as He was marred, or, rather, as He was abhorred, so shall He sprinkle many nations. The Hifil of הִזְקִיף = to sprinkle is used in the Old Testament of the cleansing and purifying of the priests for which they took the blood of animals slain in the Sanctuary. And Christ shall cleanse, purify many nations from their sins by imparting to them that righteousness, that expiation which He has brought about by His

great humiliation, His suffering and death indicated in the 14th verse. This sprinkling of nations, however, the justification of a great many nations, is ascribed to the exalted Servant of the Lord. Then, when He is exalted and justifies many heathen, Kings, the representatives of them, shall shut their mouths at Him. Their horror shall be changed to admiration and silent, reverent astonishment. Thus the prophet says, chap. 49, 7: *Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.* He that had been a horror to many shall receive from many divine honor and worship. But by what means these Kings and nations shall be justified or cleansed from their sins and thus converted, the following words tell us: *For that which had not been TOLD them shall they see, and that which they had not HEARD, shall they consider.* It is the word, the gospel or the preaching of the cross which brings to light things unheard of, the mystery kept secret from the beginning, and which, at the same time, effects such a change that kings and nations, instead of turning away from Christ in horror and disgust, adore Him as their gracious Lord and King. That the preaching of the gospel is meant here, can also be conclusively proven from Rom. 15, 21, where these words are quoted according to the translation of the Septuagint.

Now the sermon proper of the prophet begins, and begins with the complaint, chap. 53, 1: *Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Isaiah speaks in the name of all the preachers of the gospel, of all those who proclaim to the Jews as well as to the Gentiles the mysteries of Christ's Passion and His subsequent exaltation. The answer upon His questions is: Not many, only a few. To represent this answer as a general truth confirmed by the experience of all the preachers of the Gospel the prophet has employed in his exclamations the perfect tense. But how does this agree with the assertion made before that the exalted Christ shall sprinkle many nations, that many shall come to the true

faith in Christ? Both are true. The number of those converted through all the ages and inheriting eternal life through faith in Christ Jesus shall be very great; but still by far the greater majority of men have always and will as long as the world stands reject the preaching of the word, resist wilfully and persistently the saving power of the gospel, or, as the prophet puts it, the arm of the Lord is not revealed to them. They take offense at Christ, at His appearance in the world and his exceedingly great humiliation. For this reason the prophet proceeds, v. 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.* These words together with verse 3 contain a brief summary of Christ's life on earth. Verse 2a applies evidently to Christ's youth, as we have seen in the first part of our pen-picture; verse 2b refers particularly to the time of Christ's life when His people *saw* Him, that is during the time of His public ministry, and the words: *He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty*, do certainly not refer to Christ's person, to the form of His body, but to the manner of His appearing in the world, which had nothing in it of earthly glory. It would be unworthy of Christ and undoubtedly in contradiction to Ps. 45, 2 to assume that the holy and sinless body of Christ was in His youth and before His great suffering destitute of beauty and comeliness, or that He was in the least deformed and misshapen. His enemies would also have gladly availed themselves of such a reproach. They did, however, not desire Him, because His doctrine, His lowliness, His submission to all kinds of human infirmities and miseries, and above all a spiritual kingdom of God, did not suit their taste nor agree with the ideas they had conceived of their Messiah. And even to this day, when Christ is presented to carnal minded men's view in the preaching of the word they find nothing in Him that they would de-

sire, and the gospel itself is not preached with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but with all plainness appropriate to the subject. But the prejudices of carnal-minded men grow stronger yet when they see or hear of Christ's Passion proper and His death on the cross. And this subject is taken up again by the prophet in the following verse, v. 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.* Twice the prophet tells us in this sentence that Christ is despised, and He is not only despised because His person is not according to the expectations of men, but because His suffering and misery is beyond description. He is rejected or *נִדְּרָה אִישִׁים*, ceasing in regard to men. His measureless suffering makes Him cease to be a man; so inhuman is the treatment which He has to undergo. The *Ecce Homo*, *Behold the man*, with which Pilate presents Christ to the merciless Jews, is to a measure expressive of the greatness of His misery; but even at that time the worst was yet to come. He is a man of sorrows or pains, a man acquainted with grief or sickness. His suffering is one continued chain of pains, tortures, sickness and consuming grief in body and soul, so that whosoever sees Him thinks of Him only as of the man of pains and sickness. They have given Him His character. The prophet says furthermore concerning this man of sorrows: *And we hid as it were our faces from Him*, or, according to the original: *And as hiding of faces from Him.* Christ's suffering is so unusually severe, His form and figure have become so utterly miserable that He is not only the object of deepest contempt but of horror and inexpressible disgust. And we esteemed Him not. His own people rejected Him, their King and their Messiah, and even His friends and disciples took offense at His suffering and left Him, increasing thus in no small degree the sorrow and grief of their loving Lord and Master.—In this verse we

had again, as in chap. 52, 14, Christ's suffering summed up and described with a few words, simple but full of meaning, and it is hardly necessary to point to peculiar incidents in His Passion in order to prove the fulfillment of them. The whole account of Christ's suffering as given by the four evangelists is one perpetual illustration of what these words express.

In the following verses, and in fact throughout the whole chapter, we have a further account of Christ's suffering. The prophet even enters on some details, but at the same time He gives us some necessary and wholesome information about the deep significance, the cause, the end and glorious fruit of this great Passion. First of all He tells us, vv. 4—6, why this excellent person, the Servant of the Lord, had to go through all this.

V. 4: *Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.* The second part of the verse shows what men thought to be the cause of this great suffering. They looked upon Christ as suffering justly for His crimes, and though they could lay nothing to His charge, they esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. Their verdict was that this man was marked by God Himself as the greatest of malefactors, paying now the just penalties of a wicked life and furnishing forever a conspicuous example of God's retributive justice. But God's verdict on the suffering of His Servant is quite different, entirely opposed to man's judgment. And the prophet introduces this judgment (verdict) with *surely*, יִשְׁרָאֵל, as to leave no room for doubt or contradiction. He has borne our griefs or sicknesses and has carried our sorrows or our pains. Stress is evidently to be laid both times on the pronoun *our*. Christ's suffering is vicarious. Christ has not deserved this unutterable woe and misery Himself; He is and has remained holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. What He suffers, He suffers because He has taken away from us our

sicknesses and our pains and taken them upon Himself. That this is the sense of these words, appears still plainer from the quotation of this passage, Matt. 8, 17., where the evangelist employs ἐλάβεν = *He took* our infirmities. And Christ goes through all these sufferings, not because they were forced upon Him, but because He chose to do so by His own free will and choice. This truth is especially emphasized by ἑαυτοῦ in the original and by αὐτός, He Himself, in Matt. 8, 17. Of Christ's vicarious sacrifice the prophet says furthermore, v. 5: *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.* Christ was wounded or pierced and bruised; He dies not of a natural but of a violent death, and the verb *pierced*, ἔκτετα, points, as in Ps. 22, 16b, to His crucifixion. He has been killed or crucified for, by, ἡμῶν, our sins, our iniquities and transgressions. Our sins are the thorns in His head, the nails in His hands and feet, the spear in His side, our manifold and innumerable transgressions and iniquities. As our substitute, as our security He paid the penalties of our sins which we were obliged to pay and which would have brought upon us the eternal wrath of the divine Judge. But His wounds, His bruises bring us deliverance, restore peace unto us. For this reason the prophet continues in the same verse: *The chastisement of our peace was upon Him.* After Christ has paid the penalty and has acquired unto us freedom of our heavy guilt, God has no more reason to condemn us for our iniquities and transgression, to cast us away from His face; through Christ He is reconciled with us, His chastisements have settled an amity between God and man, God takes us into friendship and fellowship and thereby peace and all good come to us, Col. 1, 20. He, Christ, is our peace, Eph. 2, 14. And with His stripes we are healed. The prophet presupposes that we have already tasted something of the pain and smart of these wounds and stripes inflicted upon Christ.

All men have to bear the temporal consequences of sin as bodily sickness, poverty, etc. All men have, as they are by nature, an evil conscience, and all men are by nature under the wrath of God, and have to expect but death and damnation. But Christ's suffering is such as to restore unto us a good conscience at peace with God. Christ's death has entirely freed us from hell and damnation and won again for us heaven and eternal bliss and thus also taken the sting, the gall and wormwood out of our earthly woes and miseries. From the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, however, no man is excluded. Christ has suffered for all, as all men are sinners and have come short of the glory of God. And to impress this truth upon our minds, Isaiah proceeds, v. 6: *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.* The prophet likens men to sheep which have gone astray from their rightful owner and wander about in the wilderness, pursuing their own ways leading to destruction and certain death. Through the fall of our first parents we all, no one excepted, have gone astray, have alienated ourselves from our God and Creator, we have denied to Him the obedience which we owe to Him. But this is not all. Instead of attempting to seek and return to Him, every one has turned to his own way, every one has wandered still farther away from the true God, following stubbornly his own way, his own lusts, and so, in addition to original sin, he has heaped iniquities upon iniquities. But the original sin, as well as the actual sins of all and every one, has God laid or thrust, *הִפָּקֵד*, upon His Son to atone for them, and there is in truth no sin for which Christ has not paid a ransom, no sin, either, which God has not laid upon Him.

Christ suffers by His own free will, but it is likewise true that He submits Himself to this great suffering in obedience to the will of His heavenly Father whose wisdom had conceived this plan of redemption for lost and lorn

mankind, and not only for some, as Calvin has taught, but for every individual of the human race. In the following verse the prophet describes again, as in chap. 50, 6, the admirable patience and willingness which Christ exhibited in all His suffering and the hard usage which He received at the hands of sinners. V. 7: *He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.* Christ was oppressed or treated cruelly, as for instance the Israelites were oppressed by their task masters in Egypt. He was afflicted, or, since the \aleph in the original marks a contrast: yet He bowed Himself, that is, He suffered Himself to be oppressed although He could have easily made resistance. In His great meekness and willingness to suffer He opened not His mouth as the prophet assures us twice in this verse, and resembled therein a lamb which is brought to the slaughter and a sheep under the hard hands of her shearer. He was bound, led before the council of the Jewish people, before Herod and Pilate, they led Him out to Calvary, the place where He was to be crucified, and Christ bore all this with silence, without upbraiding or cursing His enemies for doing what they did, and without using His power to take revenge on them, and when He opened His mouth, when He spoke, it was to bear testimony to the truth, to pray and even to make intercession for His enemies, to speak warning and comforting words to His friends. Alluding to this prophecy St. Peter says 1 Pet. 2, 22. 23 of Christ: *Who did not sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.* His example Christians should follow. But above everything, because Christ suffered willingly, patiently, His sacrifice is perfect and acceptable to God. Thus He has proved Himself to be the true Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world; thus He has blotted out our in-

iniquities and we are redeemed, redeemed not with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ as a lamb without blemish and without spot. Blessed he that looks upon this Lamb of God, blessed that man who places himself under the cross of Christ acknowledging and confessing his sins, but also accepting and believing in Christ, the Lamb of God, which has likewise taken away his own sins, great and innumerable as they may be.

After the description of Christ's patient, voluntary, and innocent suffering Isaiah in the following verse calls our attention to the Messiah's deliverance, though not without pointing again to some special features of this singular passion. V. 8: *He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was He stricken.* Christ was in prison, or, if we take the original and literal meaning of *אָרֶץ*, in anguish, He was also under a judicial process. The truth is, neither the highpriest nor Pontius Pilate, who had sentenced Christ to death and delivered Him to the most shameful death of crucifixion, could have harmed Christ in the least if he had not also been arraigned before another tribunal, the tribunal of God Himself. God had pronounced the sentence of death upon Him, God had condemned Him not only to suffer temporal death, but to suffer also all the torments of hell which men should suffer; for this reason He was in exceedingly great anguish, thence all this indescribable woe and misery of His soul. But His agony, His distress was not to last forever. God was satisfied, pleased with it, the suffering of the Son of God on that first, ever memorable, Good-Friday has quenched the wrath of God against men or against their Substitute, it has satisfied the divine righteousness and justice since the godhead of Christ gave to His passion according to His human nature infinite value and weight. When Christ exclaimed on the cross: *It is finished*, his work had been brought to a happy issue, and He was delivered from anguish, He was

taken from the judgment of His heavenly Father. In fact, His death on the cross through which His body and soul were severed was deliverance, release for Him from all His grievous toil and work, it was for the Messiah but a transit into a new, glorious life. So we understand why the prophet continues now with the exclamation: *And who shall declare His generation?* or if we prefer to follow the more literal rendition: *And who shall think out His age?* The answer upon this rhetorical question is certainly: Nobody, no man can count the years of His life: He shall live forever, in all eternity. *He rose*, says the apostle, *to die no more, death hath no more dominion over Him.* The prophet adds: *For He was cut off out of the land of the living.* This explains to us in what manner Christ was taken out of anguish and judgment, namely by a sudden, violent death, the death of an evil-doer. But to prevent all misconception, to engrave it upon our mind forever, that Christ was cut off out of the land of the living not for His sins, but for our transgressions, that His suffering and death were vicarious, while He Himself was innocent, Isaiah adds immediately: *For the transgression of my people was He stricken.* It is another that commits the transgression, the people, and another upon whom the curse, עָרָא , is laid to bear it. Had Christ Himself deserved the curse, had He been cut off out of the land of the living for His sins, God would not have been pleased with Him, neither would His death have brought to Him deliverance, glory, and life forever. These statements, however, concerning Christ's death are followed by an indication of His burial, and we have here, as in the gospels and in the Apostles' Creed, the chronological order: Christ suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried.

V. 9: *And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth.* He made, or they (the people) gave, designed, יָצַא , His grave with the

wicked. This was the intention of Christ's enemies, the Jews, to inter Him with the thieves and murderers. But God had directed it otherwise and set their nefarious plan at naught. Christ was in His death or in His state of death, מות, with the rich or with a rich man. עשיר means *rich* and is not used here as a synonym of *wicked*, as some would have it. Such a conception would be also quite contrary to history. The evangelists relate unanimously that Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy and honorable counselor of the Jews and heretofore a secret disciple of Christ, went to Pilate and begged the body of Christ. But having received permission to take it, he wrapped it in a fine, clean linen cloth and laid the body of Christ in his own new tomb which he had hewn out in the rock. Thus Christ received an honorable burial, in the sepulchre of a rich man, and rested there until His resurrection. Christ's burial and rest in the grave belong to His state of humiliation, but at the same time they are to be considered as an allusion, as a prelude to His state of glory very near at hand. God has bestowed this honor upon Him *because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth*, and testifies by this already that He has accepted the innocent, willing and vicarious offering of His Son, and that Christ has carried out completely and faithfully the work allotted to Him by His heavenly Father.

The following three verses of chap. 53 are in the main a prophecy of Christ's exaltation; but as in the foregoing part of this chapter Isaiah had again and again interwoven with the description of Christ's passion some hints at its future glory, so here again he does not fail to point back to Christ's suffering in every verse, indicating thereby that both subjects stand in the closest relation and that neither of them should be treated without reference being made to the other.

V. 10 reads: *Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief; when thou shalt 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. It pleased the Lord to bruise or contuse Him, to lay upon Him sickness. Christ's passion is the result of the eternal counsel of God conceived for the salvation of mankind. The highpriests, Pontius Pilate, and all those who participated in the murder of Christ, have committed the most heinous crime ever perpetrated on earth, they have also to bear the consequences of this crime if they did not repent; but, nevertheless, they served also as instruments to carry out God's will and counsel which His wisdom had invented to save men from utter perdition. But when Christ has carried out this counsel of God or, as the prophet says further on, if He has made or given His soul an offering for sin, *He shall see His seed*, etc. Christ indeed offered up His soul as a trespass offering. His soul was the sin offering itself, which He has yielded up for the souls of men unable to give their souls to make satisfaction thereby and to still the just and well deserved wrath of an angry God. And Christ having sacrificed Himself, His soul as well as His body shall have His reward, *He shall see His seed*. His seed or His progeny are the true believers, those that are truly regenerated or converted by means of the incorruptible seed of His word. They are given to Him by His Father as His inheritance. We read, therefore, Ps. 22, 30: *A seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.* Christ Himself prays, John 17, 11: *Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me.* It is the Father who draws us to the Son. Of Him, the Son, it is said furthermore: *He shall prolong His days.* Human fathers must often leave their children to the care of others, but Christ lives forever, and forever He shall take care of His progeny, the true believers. Ps. 23. He preserves them so that at the great day of judgment He can step before His heavenly Father and say: *Behold I and the children which God hath given me.* Hebr. 2, 13. Is. 8, 18.

And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. God's counsel shall take effect through Him, in His hand, and not one iota or tittle shall fail, the salvation wrought by Christ shall also be communicated to and enjoyed by sinners. But how this is brought about we shall learn especially from the following verse.

V. 11: *He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.* Our Lord Jesus Christ was in travail of His soul for our redemption. To bring it about, He put in all His power and strength. With an ardent desire to fulfill all the divine promises He hastened on in His work without ever pausing or resting until all was finished. Now after the travail is over and His work done He shall have the gain, the fruit of His labor. But the fruit of it are we, the true children of God, the Church of Christ. Thus we confess in the second article of our Christian faith with father Luther: Who has purchased and won us from all sin, etc. But seeing of the travail of His soul, He shall be satisfied. It contributes to His glory and fills Him with joy if many enjoy the salvation acquired by Him, if His travail, His labor is not spent in vain. *By His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.* Through the justification of many shall the counsel of the Lord prosper in Christ's hand. Christ justifies sinners by His knowledge, imparts to them by His knowledge that righteousness which He has acquired for us. It is the knowledge of those things which the prophet has just told us concerning the Servant of the Lord, it is the preaching of the Cross, as the prophet plainly suggests, continuing: *For he shall bear their iniquities.* In all the world Christ has His gospel preached, which possesses the inherent power to produce faith in the hearts of men. Those, however, who accept the gospel and believe in Christ as their Savior are justified, they are robed in Christ's righteousness, this righteousness is imparted to them and

they have and enjoy the forgiveness of sins. But where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation. The last verse of chap. 53 reads: *Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.* Therefore, $\text{לְרַב־חַטֹּאתֵינוּ}$, because Christ has borne the sins of so many, of all men, God promises here to divide Him a portion with the great, or apportion to Him the many. By the many those are again meant, of whom the prophet had spoken in verses 10 and 11, the seed, the progeny of the Messiah, those whom the Servant of the Lord justifies. They are His portion, the portion which the Father has assigned to Him as a reward and recompense for all His labors and toil. As all these many are His children, so they are His property, He is their Lord. But the consequence of this again is: *And He shall divide the spoil with the strong.* Enemies of the Lord, proud and rebellious sinners, who had raged and revolted against the Lord and His anointed, shall be subdued to Christ, they shall be converted, and then they shall also share with Christ the fruit and reward of His labor. He leads them to life eternal and to the participation of the glory which He has received at the hands of His Father. Christ says, therefore, John 17, 22: *And the glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them;* and, John 17, 24: *Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am.* But since Christ's glory and the salvation, eternal blessedness and glory, of the true believers are the fruit and consequence of nothing else than Christ's suffering, the prophet points once more to it and concludes the grand and incomparable picture of Christ's Great Passion with the words: *Because He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the*

transgressors. Christ's Passion, the yielding up of His soul to voluntary death, the shame He bore while He was counted with the transgressors, the intercession He makes for the sinners, are the source and fountainhead of all bliss and happiness which the true believers enjoy even now, and of all blessedness and glory, great beyond all expectation, which they shall enjoy in all eternity, and no knowledge, no wisdom in all the world should be dearer and more precious to us, to the preachers as well as to the hearers of the word, than that which Isaiah teaches in his 53d chapter.

J. HOENESS.

AN APOSTOLIC LESSON IN CHRISTIAN ETHICS.

1 PET. 2, 11—20.

(Epistolary Lesson for the Third Sunday after Easter.)

The apostle Peter addresses his First Epistle "to the *strangers* scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, *elect* according to the foreknowledge of God." (1, 1. 2.)

These Christians are styled "strangers," "elect strangers." *Strangers* they were because they lived scattered in various countries of the Gentiles. They were strangers in a strange land. The principal reason, however, why the apostle applied this name to them was because they still lived in the world. Christians, all true Christians, are strangers and pilgrims, so Scripture describes them.

As strangers these Christians of Asia Minor were despised, hated, and oftentimes persecuted by the Gentiles. Theirs was not an enviable lot. But they were *elect* strangers, chosen out of the *massa perditionis* by God to be His own. Hence, though they were *strangers* and therefore hated by men, they were *elect* strangers, highly honored of God. That was a strong consolation on their miserable pilgrimage.