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Isaiah 53 - Part V

Several translations of the subject verses are considered so that the reader can see how a meaning can vary by the words rendered from a verse of the Bible. The Septuagint, rejected by Christians as a doctored version of the Old Testament, but still used by the Greek Orthodox Church, is used as it is often quoted by writer's of the New Testament, and still has an influence on modern translations. Here is **Isaiah 53:10-11** from the King James (KJV):

10. Yet it pleased^{H2654} the LORD^{H3068} to bruise him; he hath put (*him*) to grief: when^{H518} thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin^{H817} he shall see (*his*) seed, he shall prolong (*his*) days, and the pleasure^{H2656} of the LORD^{H3068} shall prosper in his hand. 11. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous^{H6662} servant justify^{H6663} many; for he shall bear^{H5445} their iniquities^{H5771}.

These verses have three participants: LORD^{H3068} = [Hebrew = Yahweh; is the God, or, the Father; the one bruised is the Son, Christ; and “many” is humanity/me. (words supplied by translators); [supplied by this author]

The most difficult portion in this chapter seems to be verse 10. Take the word pleased^{H2654}. About twice as many versions render the Hebrew in the form of “please” versus “will.” Then the phrase when^{H518} thou shalt make is when he makes himself in the RSV; though the LORD makes in the NIV; and If ye can give in the Septuagint. Taking what I already know about the Father, Son and the cross, I do not think the Father was “pleased” to bruise the Son, but that it was “His will,” (Mk 14:36), and which experience caused the Son to grieve and suffer. The most significant suffering by the Son was expressed by his words while on the cross: *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me* (Mt 27:46)?

The ancient Hebrew verb rendered as pleased^{H2654} is *desire from hiding a treasure; to desire something out of pleasure or necessity*. The death of the Son of God was not for the pleasure of his Father, but necessary for the salvation of mankind. There is also hidden treasure in the event of the cross: **Colossians 2:1-3**: *1. For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; 2. That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery [hidden things] of God, and (of the) Father, (and) of Christ; 3. In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

In the next part of the verse, consider what the translation mean: when^{H518} thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin^{H817} he shall see (*his*) seed, he shall prolong (*his*) days, and the pleasure^{H2656} of the LORD^{H3068} shall prosper in his hand. The Hebrew word ^{H518} is a conditional particle [can be rendered “if.”]

RSV: when he [the Son] makes himself an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring [in those accepting his sacrifice], he [the Son?] shall prolong his (the Son's?) days; the will of the Lord [God] shall prosper in his [the Son's] hand. [Did the Son “make himself” a sin offering? According to the first part of the verse it was God's will that he suffer, and God who caused the suffering. This viewpoint comes from someone who believes the Father & Son to be one and the same individual.]

NIV: and though the LORD [the Father] makes his [the Son's] life an offering for sin, he [God] will see his [Son's] offspring and prolong his [Son's?] days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. [Is it the object of God to prolong the Son's or humanities days? Or, as the RSV the LORD is also the Son offering his life.]

LXX: If ye [man/me] can give an offering for sin, your soul [man/I] shall see a long-lived seed. [Is there any offering anyone can give to save his soul?]

Mark 8:34-37: 34. *And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.* 35. *For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.* 36. *For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* 37. *Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

KJV: when thou [mankind/me] shalt make his [Son's] soul an offering for [my] sin, he [God] shall see [the Son's] seed [hidden treasure - understanding of the sacrifice, grow in my heart], he shall prolong (his) [my] days [by my resurrection], and the pleasure [Hebrew = purpose] of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. [comments supplied by the author]

By the Son of God offering himself in behalf of humanity, he will see his seed in those who believe, prolong their days [in eternity] and the purpose of Yahweh [the Father] will prosper in his [Son's] hand [work], and the Father shall see of the travail of his [my] soul, and shall be satisfied [verse 11].

I personally favor the KJV rendering. **Ephesians 1:3, 10-12:** 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*10. *That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:* 11. *In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will:* 12. *That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*

The last part of verse 11, by his knowledge shall my righteous^{H6662} servant justify^{H6663} many; for he shall bear^{H5445} their iniquities^{H5771} is rendered in the RSV as *by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities.* The Hebrew verb for justify^{H6663} is the root of the Hebrew adjective for righteous^{H6662}. The verb is in the Hebrew "causative" and brings out the meaning of *to declare righteous, make clean or pure.* Man's iniquities are his twisted, perverted thoughts about God [Isa 55:7-9] and how man is saved. Christ [the righteous servant] purifies our thinking by giving us his knowledge [faith]. By doing this, he bears or carries away our iniquities [distorted thinking]. This is what is meant in the last part of **Isaiah 52:13-15:** 13. *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.* 14. *As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:* 15. *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.*

Here is the concept rewritten: **Isaiah 53:10-11:** 10. Yet it was the will of the Father to bruise the Son; He caused him to grieve: when Christ's soul is made a guilt offering for my sin, God will see that which is sown in my heart, he will prolong my days, and the purpose of the Father shall prosper in Christ's work. 11. the Father shall see the travail of my soul and be satisfied: by Christ's knowledge will the Father's righteous servant cause to be cleansed, the many [of mankind]; for Christ shall carry away the iniquity [i.e. twisted thinking] of humanity. Amen!