

Preached on 5/28/23 at GBC

“Transgressions Blotted Out – Sin NOT Remembered”

Isa.43:25

When it comes to this **ALL IMPORTANT MATTER** OF eternal life, we must be certain based on God's express testimony that our **HOPE** of salvation is "*a good hope through grace*". This **HOPE** which all God's elect possess is the hope Paul referred to in this manner - "*For we are saved **by hope**; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*" (Rom.8:24) The further along I get in this "walk of faith", and the more I study God's Word, the **MORE CONVINCED I AM** that we must remove man, **i.e., his character and conduct**, from what the Scriptures call "salvation". One of the most prominent saints that ever lived, the Apostle Paul believed and taught the same exact thing – "*For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*" (Phil.3:1-3); "[Is] the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." (Gal.2:21); "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*" (Tit.3:5-7). **LET ME BE AS CLEAR AS I CAN BE ON THIS POINT:** We must **NEVER**, I mean **NEVER** think, teach, or entertain the error that what the sinner does, or even what is done in the sinner by the Holy Spirit makes up any part of a sinner's justification and salvation before the true and living God. Now the self-righteous, those who put so much stock in some great change in their lives or in some experience they went through in their lives, I know they will accuse us of being "*against God's law*". They will make accusations like I've been told in the past: "You don't put enough emphasis on personal obedience"; "You don't talk about the law enough". Let me ask those who have sat under me for the last **36+ years: DO WE TEACH ON PERSONAL OBEDIENCE? DO WE EMPHASIS THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S HOLY, JUST, AND PERFECT LAW? OF COURSE WE DO!** But here is the thing we **DO NOT** nor **WILL WE EVER TEACH:** That a sinner should look to their own personal obedience or any improvement in their lives as the cause or hope of their eternal security, nor should they look to any of those things done by them for comfort to their souls or as a reason to receive some **REWARD**. The justified saint should and must **look only to Christ and His righteousness** for all of salvation. Salvation from first to last, from "*Alpha to Omega*", is like Jonah declared in the whale's belly: "*But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.*" (Jonah 2:9)

Now in this 43rd chapter of Isaiah, God talks about His chosen people Israel. Now these people, called Israel, are not a reference to every single individual that did or would make up national Israel. It is a reference to God's true Israel, chosen sinners out of every kindred, tongue, nation, and people on the planet. In John 3:16, John called them "*the world*." Think back to the verses we read in the "**CALL TO WORSHIP**", **vss.1-22**. **Can't we say that everything read in those verse declare **GOD and HIS SERVANT**, which is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ is the source, cause, or **THE ONE WHO SAVES?**** But now look at the complaints God makes against even His chosen people, those who are the objects of His infinite and eternal love - **Vss.22 - 24**. Everything Isaiah wrote here shows that God would be **JUST** to condemn these sinners for their

willful acts of disobedience and rebellion. But the sinfulness and rebellion of man, even God's redeemed, is the opportunity for God to reveal to us and to all, **the greatness of His grace.**

Let's look at our text for this morning - "**I, [even] I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions FOR MY OWN SAKE, and will not remember thy sins.**" This is the second time in this chapter God moved His servant Isaiah to record the same language - "**I, [even] I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.**" (Vs.11) When I see the Lord referred to in this way, i.e., "**I AM**", my mind always goes back to the way God revealed Himself to the father of the faithful Abraham in **Gen.15:1** - "**After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I AM THY SHIELD, and thy exceeding great reward.**" Abraham wasn't looking for a physical land. Like us, His **ONLY HOPE** was in the God who declared - "**Fear not, ABRAM, I AM THY SHIELD and thy exceeding great reward.**" But I think the importance of our text rests in the fact that God references Himself **TWICE** - "**I, I, am He.**" The double emphasis stresses that this is an important truth which should be given special attention. Consider this: These sinner's, (called **Jacob and Israel**), had done **EVERYTHING** worthy of God's just condemnation, were told **TWICE IN A ROW** that God **ALONE** is the **hope and cause of redemption and reconciliation**. He doesn't tell them to improve themselves, or try harder. He told them to **LOOK** to Him who **IS SALVATION** - "**I, [even] I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins.**" Turn over to **Isa.45:20-22**. The same is true to every generation of God's redeemed as revealed by the Apostle Paul in **Heb.12:1,2** - "**Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset [us], and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.**"

This verse is so richly filled with comforting truth to the children of God that we must ponder each and every phrase in it. We are not only to look to Jehovah alone, but to Jehovah as revealed in His covenant relationship to all His children in the way He dealt with their "**transgressions**" - "**I, I, am He that BLOTTETH OUT thy transgressions.**" Turn over one chapter to **Isa.44:22**. This was David's prayer in **Ps.51:1** - "**Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.**" The words used by David and in our text bear the idea of a ledger with one's debt written in it. Those debts are literally scratched out or drawn through with a line. **But it means more than that.** It actually means 'to **obliterate** or wipe out of one's memory'. Our English word "**OBLITERATE**" means to 'destroy utterly; wipe out, cause to become invisible'. **Think about that this morning:** All my transgressions are so perfectly put away that they are no longer remembered by God - "**He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.**" (**Micah 7:19**) Surely this can't rest on me, my obedience or my religious effort. The **ONLY WAY** God can and did "**blot out**" or **obliterate** from memory my or your transgressions was as He dealt with them in the person of our Substitute and Representative man, the Lord Jesus Christ - **Isa.53:4-6**. Our sins or transgressions are not, nor can they ever be laid to our account, seeing Christ bore them perfectly and completely when He justified us at Calvary by His obedience unto death - "**For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.**" (**Heb.10:14**)

But notice what Isaiah wrote next: "**for MY OWN SAKE**". **THINK ABOUT IT**: The One who wrote the law and gave the law; the One whose law has been broken by man; Who hates **ALL SIN**; Who Is infinitely **JUST**, and who will by "**no means clear the guilty**"; Is the same God who delights, actually glories in His forgiveness of sin in a way that glorifies and honors Him as "**both a just God and a Savior**." **NO ONE CAN FORGIVE SIN BUT GOD** - "**In WHOM we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace**."(Eph.1:7); "**In whom we have redemption through his blood, [even] the forgiveness of sins**."(Col.1:14) **I'm not sure who said it, but they got this right** - "Confessing our sins can't bring forgiveness - Tears of remorse can't forgive sins - promising to do better can't do it - actually doing better can't bring forgiveness". According to our text, **GOD FORGIVES SIN** "**for His own sake**." I love what one old author wrote on this portion of this verse - "Forgiveness is not procured by anything of the creature; not by riches, nor by righteousness, nor by repentance, nor by faith, nor by obedience to any ordinance; it is not for the sake of these that the Lord forgives sin, **but for his own sake, and his Son's sake**, which is the same; it is an instance of unmerited and distinguishing grace; it flows from the free grace of God; it is a branch of the covenant of grace; it is through the blood of Christ, and yet according to the riches of grace; and it is for the glory of all the divine perfections, justice, truth, and faithfulness, as well as grace and mercy; and after such a list of sins of omission and commission, to hear such language as this is surprising grace indeed!"

Look at the last part of this verse - "**and will not remember thy sins**." **What a comforting truth to a sinner!** We are still sinners, every moment of every day. None of us love God with all our hearts, minds, and souls. None of us love our neighbors, which includes our worst enemies, as ourselves, **DO WE?** Sin still effects every area of our lives, even now, even after true God-given faith has been bestowed on us by God's free grace. Don't you, like the Apostle Paul find yourself often crying: "**O wretched man THAT I AM. Who shall deliver me from this body of death?**" This one phrase encourages us to take heart and be of good cheer in spite of ourselves and our remaining sinfulness. The true and living God **FORGIVES AND FORGETS**. Solomon put it this way: "**I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him**."(Eccl.3:14) God will not at some later date reach back into some ancient record book and drag back out some sin or transgression previously committed by any of the objects of His love. God won't remember the sins of his people against them, **seeing He has forgiven them for His own sake**. He will never punish us for them **BECAUSE** He punished them perfectly and completely in our Surety, the Lord Jesus Christ - **Heb.10:14-17** - **ELABORATE**.

Turn over to **Zeph.3:17** - "**The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; HE WILL REST IN HIS LOVE, he will joy over thee with singing**." **WHAT IS GOD'S LOVE?** Let me show you from the New Testament - "**In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins**."(I John 4:9,10) I think Paul put it best - "**For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord**."(Rom.8:38,39) This is the **LOVE** that God rests in. This love found in Christ's perfect work of redemption is the **ONLY THING** a sinner

needs, wants, or is to look to as their **ONLY HOPE** and **CAUSE** of salvation from **FIRST TO LAST**.