

Healed by His Bruises

Key Verse: *“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.”*
—Isaiah 53:5

Selected Scripture:
Isaiah 53

THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH

53 is one of the most soul-searching in the Bible, as it details the suffering and ignominy which Jesus endured during his life on earth, all the way to his death on the cross of Calvary. How important is the opening verse, which asks, “Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?” (Isa. 53:1) The verses which follow give the impression that Jesus’ life indeed was a failure. Few, seemingly, would

desire to believe such a report, and follow one who appeared to have little human appeal. “He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. 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.”—vss. 2,3

God points out through the prophet that while to most Jesus had little appeal, he was actually carrying their burdens, griefs, and sorrows. “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” (vs. 4) Although it was perhaps not necessary for Jesus to bear all these things in order to provide the ransom, or corresponding price, as the means for redeeming Adam and his race, yet

in God's wisdom he saw the need of his Son to go through such difficult experiences that he might become truly sympathetic to man's many problems. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—Heb. 4:15

Our Key Verse provides an important truth, that Jesus' 'wounding' was not because of any sin on his part, but for 'our transgressions.' His 'bruising' was 'for our iniquities,' not his, for in him was no iniquity of any kind. Jesus was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26) The chastisement he endured provides "peace with God" (Rom 5:1) to those who have accepted the merits of his sacrifice, and his sufferings provide a means of healing to those who put their trust in him.

This prophecy also shows the humble attitude of Jesus, even in the midst of severe trials. "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." (Isa. 53:7) What a wonderful example is set before us of quiet submission to God's will. The Lord's consecrated people should continually remind themselves of their Master's 'lamb-like' character, especially in times of trial, persecution, and suffering for the Truth's sake.

God provides a glorious conclusion to this prophetic view of his Son's earthly ministry and its ultimate results. "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 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. 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." (vss. 10-12) Truly we can say, as the words of the hymn express, "Hallelujah, What a Savior!" ■