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*God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.*

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## Isaiah 53.

(2015)

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The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

***Teach it, don't demand it.***

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## Isaiah 53.

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### Topics.

- He was despised and rejected by men a man of sorrows and of grief.
- He carried our grief and sorrows yet we esteemed him smitten by God.
- He was wounded for our transgressions and with his stripes we are healed.
- The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
- He was oppressed, and afflicted, like a lamb that is led to the slaughter.
- He was cut off from the land; stricken for the sin of the LORD'S people?
- It was the will of the LORD to crush him for an offering for sin.
- He bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors.

**FOR INFORMATION:** concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

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**INTRODUCTION:** Isaiah is the exciting story of the Old Testament and the New Testament compacted into one book. It covers the wonder and splendour of Bible prophecy and echoes of the Lord Jesus Christ resound throughout Isaiah's visions and his messages. It teaches history as it affects God's people and constantly points to a future age when righteousness, justice, joy and peace will be established on earth. Isaiah prophesied about 740–700 B.C.

He lived during the decline of Israel in the shadow of the powerful Assyrian Empire. He spoke the word of God to a people who were "deaf and blind" (Isaiah 6:10) who refused to listen to his warnings of looming disaster.

Isaiah warned the people of Judah's that their sin would bring God's judgment (i.e., seventy-years captivity) and declared that God is sovereign and would use Cyrus the Persian to return the people from exile. He spoke also of a servant and man of sorrows who would be wounded for our transgressions faithfully accomplishing God's purposes of salvation (Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12). The final chapters give a beautiful description of a new creation in which Christ will rule as King, judging the wicked and establishing God's Kingdom on earth. Following are four points that will help the reader understand the book of Isaiah as they travel through it: -

1. The history of Israel and Judah. At this time in the story Assyria has taken the ten tribes of Israel in the land of Samaria into captivity and marched up to Jerusalem (the two tribes of Judah) to destroy it, but failed. Later in the story Babylon attacks Jerusalem and conquers the city and takes the people of Judah into captivity. After this victory Babylon conquers Assyria which resulted in Israel and Judah being brought under the submission of Babylonian rule and the tribes being brought together during the seventy year Babylonian captivity.
2. Many of Isaiah's visions are written as though they have already taken place, but a majority of these visions are predicting future events that are about to happen during Isaiah's generation while others will come to pass in a future age. Though these visions are of future events Isaiah speaks them in the present tense, because he spoke them as they came to his mind and as he saw the events unfolding before him. They are often spoken in this manner because of the certainty of it and because God had ordained them and revealed them to his prophets who spoke them to His people so they must come to pass, because God cannot lie.(Titus 1:2).

3. Though Isaiah is primarily speaking to Judah (the two tribes at Jerusalem) much of what he says applies to Israel (the ten tribes in Samaria) because both Judah and Israel are in the same corrupt spiritual condition.
4. All the promises to Israel are now in Christ. God's promises to Israel now include the Jews and the Gentiles. This is because under the New Covenant God is building an entirely new nation made up of Jews and Gentiles of which Christ is the head. In this new nation that God is creating in the Lord Jesus Christ Jews have no advantage over Gentiles since all are one in Christ Jesus.

The apostle Paul wrote: Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (i.e., one nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (Eph. 2:1-22). The practical application of what this means, is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel through Isaiah also apply to Gentiles who by faith belong to Christ.

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### **He was Despised and Rejected by Men a Man of Sorrows and of Grief.**

Isaiah 53:1-3 ----- <sup>1</sup>Who has believed what they heard from us? And to who has the arm of the LORD been revealed? <sup>2</sup>For he grew up before him like a young (tender in KJV) plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. <sup>3</sup>He was despised and rejected by men a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Some commentators believe the focus of this chapter is of Israel personified as God's servant son for the following reasons: -

- God said that Israel was his son who he called out of Egypt and he gave birth to and that He carried them from the womb even to their old age. (Isaiah 46:3-4). (Hosea 11:1).
- Israel is God's heritage and the apple of His eye (Deut. 32:9-10) a people holy to him and His treasured possession. (Deut. 7:6) (Deut. 14:2).
- To Israel belonged the covenant, the adoption, the patriarchs and they are the offspring of Abraham the father of faith. (Rom. 3:5) (Rom. 9:7)
- In many of the previous chapters of Isaiah he refers to Israel as the LORD'S servant.
- It was the nation of Israel that carried the oracles, the promises, the laws and statutes of God and so meticulously kept God's word preserved. (Rom. 9:4) (Rom. 3:2-4)
- It was from their nation and their descendants that the Lord Jesus Christ came. (Rom. 9:5)
- Both the nation Israel and Jesus were despised and full of sorrows and both were smitten by God and afflicted.

However in the scope of the whole chapter it becomes very clear that it is not only an amazing prophecy concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, but also a prophecy that give us detailed insight into the suffering heart of Jesus and the brutal death he suffered on the bloodstained cross of Calvary. To apportion the entire chapter to Israel dulls the wonder, splendor and beauty of Isaiah's majestic words as they transcend so brilliantly beyond Isaiah's era and the nation Israel and echo the ultimate and perfect servant that God through Isaiah has in focus.

Some think that Christianity is a relatively new faith compared to other ancient religions, but this chapter shows that the Christian faith did not begin at the birth of Jesus, but was in God's eternal mind before time began. Here Isaiah by the inspiration of God is prophesying the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is because God planned and purposed in His eternal mind before time began that the Lord Jesus Christ would be the Saviour of mankind that the prophets under the inspiration of God's Spirit were able to prophecy so accurately and beautifully of things to come.

**Who has believed what they heard from us?** (v1) this refers to the following two periods of time: -

1. Old Testament Israel who did not believe God's prophets, but set their hearts diamond hard against the word of the LORD this is why God used Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon as His servant (Jer. 25:9) to take the people of Israel into captivity.
2. New Testament Israel (especially the religious leaders the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes) who not only did not believe Jesus and the apostles, but also plotted the murder of their Messiah the Christ. In the letters of John and Paul it is written: -
  - Though Jesus had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, <sup>38</sup>so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" (John 12:37-38).
  - They have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" (Rom. 10:16).

**The arm of the LORD:** (v1) often applies to God's power or to the nation of Israel, but in the context of this chapter it refers to the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Tender Plant:** comes from the Hebrew word (*yowneq*) and refers to a sucker, a tender plant or to a twig of a tree that is felled and sprouting.

**Root:** comes from the Hebrew word (*sheresh*) and refers to a root (literal or figurative) and carries the idea of planting it deeply in the soil or of plucking fruit from it.

**He grew up before him like a young (tender in KJV) plant, and like a root out of dry ground:** (v2) the dry ground is not referring to the land of Judea where Jesus was born or the country of Galilee where he was brought up. Nor does it refer to his manner of life and his education etc., prior to the beginning of his ministry, but to the family of David from where he sprung.

The picture is of a shoot springing up out of the root of a fallen and decayed tree stump that was surrounded with soil that was so lacking of nourishment that the stump appeared to be completely dead and therefore could not be expected to produce new and healthy life. It is a picture of a weak and frail, sapling growing out of a dead stump planted in dry ground.

The stump and the dry ground signify Israel being spiritually dead and Jesus the tender branch growing up out of it with His heavenly Father watching over his humble and lowly growth as an earthy gardener watches over his plants and nurtures and nourishes them as they grow, flourish, produce fruit and become a thing of beauty.

The following verses speak of a shoot springing from the stump of Jesse (David's father), and a branch from his (David's) roots bearing fruit and standing as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David who the Gentiles will set their hope on and who will arise to rule the nations.

- There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. (Isaiah 11:1).

- In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious. (Isaiah 11:10).
- The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope." (Rom. 15:12).
- One of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals." (Revelation 5:5).

**He grew up before him:** (v2) the idea is that from Jesus birth to the beginning of his ministry he would be seen by the LORD, but unknown to the world while he was growing up. The Messiah would spring from an ancient family decayed, but in whose root, there would be life as there is life remaining in the stump of a tree that is fallen down. The Kingdom would begin from a small and tender branch, but grow and flourish before God until it covered the earth.

**He had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty (comeliness in KJV) that we should desire him:** (v2) the word comeliness comes from the Hebrew word (*hadar*) it means magnificence, splendour, beauty, excellency, goodly, honour and majesty. It carries the idea of being favoured and honoured with glory. The words, he had no form, majesty, beauty or comeliness that we should desire him does not refer to his physical appearance or imply that his body was in some way deformed.

There is no biblical or historical evidence that he was in any way deformed nor does the New Testament give us any information concerning his personal appearance there is no mention of his height, the colour of his hair, his eyes, or his complexion in these the Scriptures are wholly silent. This is most likely deliberate to prevent artists from claiming that their painting or statue of the Redeemer is a true representation of him. All the works of sculptors and painters in regard to his appearance has come down to us by tradition and are simply the works of man's imagination and speculations and most likely contrary to the spirit and intention of the Bible.

However there is no reason to suppose that in statue and countenance he was any less than his forerunners such as Moses, Joshua and David etc., especially when it is considered that he was born of the of the Holy Spirit, and without sin. Rather the words, he had no form, majesty, beauty, comeliness that we should desire him refer to the fact he had no priestly robes, no external glory of royalty, no diadem sparkling on his brow or rich and splendid robes of royalty and no power or kingdom, he had no religious or royal pomp as a priest or monarch would be expected to have and therefore did not appear as a king, prince or noble much less as a Messiah the Christ and Saviour.

It was supposed he would come as a king with grand majestic pomp and power and deliver Israel from the oppression of Rome and their surrounding enemies and restore them to their former splendour and glory as he will do when he returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

In contrast to what they expected Jesus came from a humble home, his supposed father was a carpenter and his mother a poor virgin in Nazareth, he was born in a stable; grew up in a tiny village hidden away among the hills of Galilee; worked as a tradesman and the religious leaders believed him to be born of fornication. (John 8:41).

**True beauty:** Jesus did come with a great deal of true beauty, but those who only look to the outward appearance could not see it, since his beauty was within, the beauty of holiness and of goodness, the beauty of salvation and of righteousness, the beauty of compassion and of grace. The mind of those looking upon him through worldly eyes and only viewing his outward appearance and circumstances were blind to the beauty and glory that dwelt within the only begotten of the Father.

This prophecy of Isaiah written hundreds of years before Christ came not only shines a brilliant light upon the wonder and spender of Bible prophecy in its striking

detail of the actual lowly appearance of the Messiah and Redeemer and its contrast to the expectation the Jews had of him, but also shines a light upon the truth that Isaiah was speaking by the inspiration of God's Spirit.

**He was despised and rejected by men a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief and as one from whom men hide their faces:** (v3) the unbelieving Jews and those who did not believe the testimony concerning him despised and rejected him as a deceiver of the people, an impostor, a blasphemer, an associate of Satan and unworthy to be in the temple of God.

The greater the love, the greater the sorrow of the loving heart when its love is rejected. Jesus fully aware of the brutal and cruel death he was about to suffer prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, "Father if there is any other way to save mankind remove this cup from me, nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." (Luke 22:42). Jesus could have refused to submit to His Father's will, but his love for his heavenly Father and his love for mankind was greater than his own passions and will.

In the book of John Jesus said: -

- God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16).

Should anyone doubt the love God and the Lord Jesus Christ have toward them all they have to do is look back to the bloodstained cross of Calvary and see what it cost the Father's heart to save us and what it cost Jesus to redeem us from the condemnation of the law, from guilt and from death and save us to eternal life.

**He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief:** (v3) carries the following five ideas: -

1. He was rejected by his own people, especially the religious leaders (the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes) who should have been overjoyed when he came to them and accepted him with the same great joy and excitement one receives a friend with who they haven't seen for a long time, but have been waiting patiently for their visit.
2. He was aware that the hypocritical and prideful religious leaders ministering in his heavenly Father's name were behind closed doors plotting his murder. Truly he was the stone that the builders rejected (Matt. 21:42) and refused to have reign over them.
3. Everytime those he proclaimed the message of salvation to rejected it he was aware that by doing so they were condemning themselves to the darkness of the grave never to rise again. Every faithful brother and sister in Christ who knows Christ's love and God's grace will after sharing their testimony or the Gospel and had it rejected will have experienced this heartfelt sorrow. Not for any reason of pride, but because they know that person is rejecting the words of life that have the power to enhance their life here and now and at the end deliver them from death to eternal life in everlasting glory.
4. The Roman soldiers while mocking and scorning him, spat on him; tore out his beard; forced a crown of thorns on his head; whipped him until his body was covered in blood and nailed him to a cross to hang in the most extreme pain until he breathed his final breath.
5. Those who had dwelt and walked with him and his closest friends turned away from him as he hung bleeding and suffering on the cross of Calvary, can there be any greater heartfelt hurt than this?

Truly he was as Isaiah prophesied hundreds of years ago a man of sorrows acquainted with grief

**He was despised, and we esteemed him not:** (v3) naturally the colour, foliage and flower of a shoot springing up in dry ground would be starved and show very little beauty in contrast to plants grown in fertile and well-watered gardens, likewise a believer growing up amongst legalistic, prideful and hypocritical religious

teaching would be starved of examples of honesty, compassion, kindness and integrity etc. It is hardly likely that a person growing up in such a corrupted religious environment would develop the true Spirit of God and manifest what is important to His heart, (i.e., humbleness, compassion, mercy, kindness and such like things) However this reality is not so concerning the Lord Jesus Christ who though being raised and growing up in a most spiritually barren and dry environment surrounded with legalistic, prideful and hypocritical religious teachers grew into such a perfect man that God Himself said, “

- This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. (Matt. 3:17) (Matt. 17:5) (Mark 1:11) (2 Peter 1:17).

What the world considers perfect beauty is often not so in God's eyes and what is considered perfect beauty in God's eyes is generally plain and lowly in the eyes of the world. The world exalts the super-rich, the nobles, the prideful, the famous and those with outward beauty that men's and women's sensual eyes are drawn to. In contrast to this God looks at the attitudes dwelling in the heart and mind, His eyes are drawn to integrity of heart, humbleness, honesty, kindness, compassion, mercy and goodness these are the things He exalts and considers as true beauty.

Outwardly Jesus had nothing the world exalts and esteems, but before God and those who know him he is the moral perfection of a perfect man. The inward desire of those with a worldly heart and carnal mind is for something much more powerful, fashionable and showy than Jesus' humble ways, his word and his stainless purity. Pilate the Roman governor looking down from his judgment seat at the lowly man clothed in a robe and sandals asked him, is he the King of the Jews? (Matt. 27:11) (Mark 15:2). Pilate could see nothing outwardly that would signify that Jesus was such a King, only those whose hearts were right before God perceived his inward beauty.

Jesus, claims that he was the Son of God were ridiculed; his love rejected; he was mocked and scorned; the priests in the temple of God treated him with disdain and contempt and at his hour of suffering and need for a little comfort of companionship was deserted by those whom he trusted most. The prophetic words of Isaiah spoken hundreds of years before Jesus came, “He was despised and rejected a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief (v3) were fully fulfilled in Jesus, instead of being given the honour, the esteem and praise due to him as God's Son and the Messiah, the Christ and Saviour he was put to a most brutal and cruel death.

Alluding to Isaiah's words Jesus said to Peter, James and John: -

- It is written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? (Mark 9:12).

And John wrote: -

- He came to his own and his own people did not receive him. (Jn. 1:11).

**He carried our Grief and Sorrows Yet we esteemed Him Smitten by God.**

Isaiah 53:4 -----<sup>4</sup> Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

He (with limitations) can refer to Israel personified as God's servant son, because it was the nation Israel that carried the laws and statutes of God and kept God's word preserved and it was from their nation and their descendants that the promised Messiah the Christ and Saviour came. The nation Israel and Jesus were both despised and full of sorrows and both were smitten by God and afflicted, but the remaining verses of this chapter make it very clear that the true name of the one stricken and smitten by God that Isaiah's vision has in focus is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

This verse means that Jesus has taken away the guilt and punishment of our sin and suffered the burden and sorrow the pain and anguish of it for us, yet those he came to instead of honouring and praising him, put him on the cross to be punished and afflicted by God.

**To be smitten by God:** before time began God in His eternal mind and eternal foreknowledge not only planned and purposed that Jesus would be the central focus of His plan of Salvation for mankind, but also that Jesus would die for our sins that we may be saved by faith and by grace. In the book of John Jesus said, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16).

This was God's plan from the beginning. Some today may feel that because Christ did not appear during the Old Testament age, the faithful during those generations were saved solely by adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions, but this is not so. They were saved by having faith in the promised Messiah the Christ to come and not by works of the flesh or by self-effort, but because they by faith looked: -

- Toward the promised seed of the woman spoken of in Genesis. (Gen. 3:15).
- Toward the promised seed of Abraham. (Gen. 22:18) (Gal. 3:16).
- Toward the prophet Moses said was to come like him. (Deut. 18:15) (Acts 3:22) (Acts 7:37).
- Toward the Holy One to come (whose body God will not let see corruption in death) (Psalm 16:9-11).
- Toward the promised seed of David. (Psalm 89:4) (Psalm 132:11) (Jer. 23:5) (Matthew 1:1).
- Toward the Messiah the Christ all the Old Testament prophets and the Scriptures speak of such as (Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53). The Lord Jesus himself said, "I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book (Heb. 10:7) (the scroll of the book refers to the Scriptures).

Added to this even though Old Testament Israel offered animal sacrifices to God they were not saved by them, they were a type and shadow of Christ the Lamb of God without blemish the Saviour to come and it is his blood that cleanses them. This is because the power of Christ's cleansing blood flows back to the foundation of the earth so that the faithful of the Old and New Testament are saved by the same Saviour and the same Redeemer. In the book of Revelations it is written: -

- All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev. 13:8).

And Peter wrote: -

- You were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot foreordained before the foundation of the world and manifest in these last times for you. (1 Peter 1:18-20).

These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that Jesus was not only the central focus of God's eternal mind and of His eternal plans and purposes for mankind's salvation and for eternity, but also the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

The cleansing power of Jesus blood shed on the cross of Calvary doesn't just cover and cleanse only those who have come to the Lord after his death and resurrection, but flows all the way back to the foundations of the earth to Adam and Eve like an invisible spiritual river cleansing all the faithful of the Old Testament from the fall of Adam onward who by faith looked to the coming and the appearing of the promised Messiah the Christ.

**He was Wounded for Our Transgressions and with His stripes we are Healed.**

Isaiah 53:5 -----<sup>5</sup>But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

This entire chapter speaks of Jesus: -



- Growing up before God as a tender plant doing no violence or speaking any deceit.
- Being full of grief and sorrow himself and carrying our sorrow and grief's.
- Being despised, rejected and led as a Lamb to the slaughter.
- Being crucified for our transgressions with criminals and a rich man being involved in his death.
- Bearing the sin of many and healing us by his stripes.
- Making many to be counted righteous and making intercession for sinners

When it is considered that Isaiah prophesied these words thousands of years before Christ was even born no-one can deny that the inspiration of God's Spirit was flowing through Isaiah one of the greatest prophets of the Bible. This is a simply breathtaking and awe-inspiring chapter that in majestic glory shows that as the finger of God's engraved the Ten Commandments on stone, likewise God's Spirit has inspired the words of the prophets that we have written and recorded in the Cannon of the Bible today.

**By his wounds/stripes you have been healed:** this expression has been misunderstood by some today, based upon these prophetic words of Isaiah there are a certain few ministers and pastors who proclaim that everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ should be able to be fully healed no matter what their sickness, illness or disability maybe.

They claim that providing a believer has enough faith they can claim (some say demand) from God a full and perfect healing. The implication of this is of course that all who are not healed or suffering cancer, terminal illness, disabilities etc., are only suffering them because they do not have enough faith.

Generally these congregations are told if they learn certain keys of faith, they will be able to overcome their sickness, disease or disability. Those under this type of teaching are bound to such preachers; because they desperately desire to find these keys of faith that they might be healed and who can blame them?

Should such keys of faith exist wouldn't we all not only desire them, but once obtained be healing all our suffering family members and friends and those who came to us as Jesus and the apostles healed the sick (no matter what they believed and who they were) out in the open public places they visited.

Now if this is not what Isaiah had in mind when he spoke the words, "By his stripes you have been healed," what did he mean". The best way to answer this question is to begin at the meaning of the word "stripes." It comes from the Greek word (*molops*) and means black eye or blow-mark (i.e., the enraged and swollen marks of a blow; the marks we refer to when we use the expression "he was beaten black and blue" referring to wounds made from outraged anger by beating). Christ to redeem us from our faults allowed his enemies to scourged (whip) his body until it was black and blue with bruises and wounds and this all on account of our sins and not for his.

By his stripes you have been healed, means by Christ's own death in contrast to offering a bloody sacrifice as the Jews had been doing for over four-thousand years the Lord was himself the sacrifice and it is by his death and not the death of bulls, goats and lambs that we are healed.

Sin is a disease, a natural and hereditary one (inherited from our earthly father Adam). It can be likened to an epidemic virus that reaches to all people, and to all the powers and faculties of our minds, hearts, emotions and passions. It is a sickness that is not only nauseous and loathsome, but cannot be healed by anything that even our world's best medical scientists, doctors and surgeons can do. The end result of this sickness is death and the darkness of the grave never to rise again.

Christ is the only physician, and his blood is the only balm and sovereign medicine that has the power to cleanse from all sin. It is the forgiveness of sin, which is meant by the words, "By his stripes you have been healed," means we have been wholly healed from our sin. This is because the sting of death, which is sin, is taken away, and the strength of sin, which is the law, is dead to those who are in Christ.

The healing the prophet Isaiah had in mind when he spoke the words, "By his stripes we are healed," (v5) was healing from our sin and healing from death to eternal life it is in this sense we have been healed by Christ's strips and wounds (i.e., his suffering and his death).

Peter cites Isaiah's words:

- He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Peter 2:24).

Israel was wounded for their own transgressions and they never brought peace, in contrast to this Christ was wounded not for his own transgressions (he was without sin), but for ours and when he returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords he will establish God's Kingdom of justice, righteousness, joy and peace on earth.

Paul wrote: -

- Jesus was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification. (Rom. 4:25).

**With his stripes we are healed:** means by the death and resurrection of Jesus the law no longer any power to condemn us to eternal death and that those who are by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are saved to eternal life and everlasting happiness. It means that we are totally and wholly healed from the law of sin and death, the law no longer has any power to condemn those in Christ to destruction and death.

**Consider for a moment:** if our world's top scientist and medical practitioners could invent a pill that would give people eternal life the billionaires of this world would write out a cheque no-matter what the cost to buy them for all their family and friends, and almost all the world would sell everything they had to purchase one.

This is the high value Peter, the apostles and Paul placed on the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. To the apostles, Paul and Peter there was nothing in this world more valuable for any man or woman to possess than the gift of eternal life.

How sad it is that in some modern churches today this high value of eternal life has been lost and replaced by a Gospel that focuses on a blessed, prosperous and successful life now in this mortal and corrupt world and messages that appeal to self, ego and pride. Especially when one considers what it cost God the eternal Father and the high price His Son paid to purchase this gift of eternal life for all who would humbly accept by faith the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**The LORD has Laid on Him the Iniquity of us All.**

Isaiah 53:6 -----<sup>6</sup>All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

For those who do think that this chapter refers to Israel this verse clearly show that they are wrong for the following three reasons: -

1. All have gone astray includes Israel.
2. Everyone has turned to their own way includes Israel.
3. Our iniquities are not laid on the people of Israel.

**An overview of the nature of sheep:** there is a certain strain of highly intelligent sheep known as leader-sheep. These sheep have the ability to lead a flock home during difficult conditions and the instinct to sense danger and lead the flock to safety.

They are prominent in the flock and have alertness in their eyes looking around in all directions for any dangers as they walk in front of the flock to guard them against predators. These leader-sheep never need assistance and often give birth to lambs that are extremely healthy and spirited right from birth.

However in contrast to these sheep there are other leader-sheep utterly devoid of such intelligence. These sheep in contrast to leading the flock on a good path lead them to slaughter. This is because lambs from birth are conditioned to follow the older members of the flock. This instinct is hard-wired into them it is not something they think about and because of this they have a strong instinct to follow the lead sheep in front of them wherever that sheep decides to lead them, even if that lead sheep jumps over a cliff they are likely to follow such is the nature and instinct of sheep.

**All we like sheep have gone astray:** can refer to the following two groups of people: -

1. Isaiah's focus in the last few chapters have been upon the gross sin and wickedness of Israel, their suffering and oppressions during their seventy years in captivity to Babylon and their deliverance from it. Therefore the expression, "we all like sheep have gone astray," can refer to the whole nation of Israel during the generations of the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions. At this time God used Assyria to bring His judgment upon the ten tribes of Israel. The armies of Assyria overthrew the ten tribes of Israel in the land of Samaria and not only laid their land waste, but also took the people into captivity.

After this God used Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon as His servant (Jer. 25:9) to bring His judgment on the land of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Babylon's armies burned the city of Jerusalem and also took the people captive. This judgment came, because both Israel and Judah had turned from God to worship idols and pagan gods. They had become so grossly corrupt and wicked that they brought God's judgment upon themselves. Truly this was a time when all Israel like sheep had gone astray.

Archaeologists have found that at this time all of the cities of Judah were completely destroyed and that the glorious kingdom of David and Solomon was brought to an end. Observers would have said that the Hebrew nation was annihilated. Many of the other nations conquered by the Assyrians and Babylonians did cease to exist, but the prophets proclaimed a better hope for the chosen people. "A remnant shall return" Isaiah had said, and in time this remnant, purged and returned, became the basis on which a new Israel would be built.

- 2 The whole race of mankind (Jews and Gentiles) in general since we are all descendants of our earthly father Adam and as such have inherited sinful dysfunctions and aberrations in our fallen corrupted body of flesh and all have gone astray and wandered from the right path to gratify the flesh, pride, self and ego in some manner and all are in need of atonement and redemption.

**All we like sheep have gone astray:** carries the idea that they have foolishly followed the ways of sin and the world rather than the ways of God. They have followed the ways of the false shepherd rather than the ways of the true shepherd. Rather than follow the right path that leads to eternal life they chose to follow the crooked path which leads to destruction, turning their faces from God, so they can go their own way and set their hearts and mind upon those things that gratify the flesh, pride, self, ego and their impulses and own desires and interests.

**The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all:** meaning, the punishment of our iniquity, and not the sin itself. Jesus came into the world not to do His own will, but to do the will of his heavenly Father. In the garden of Gethsemane Jesus prayed: -

- My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will. (Matt. 26:39).

God the Father, the creator of all things and source of all life laid upon His Son the burden of suffering for our sin which he willingly accepted.

John in his letters wrote: -

- In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4:10)

This means that those who place their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for their righteousness and salvation will be made right before God and receive his favour at judgment and not condemnation.

Paul in his letters said: -

- For our sake he made him *to be* sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor. 5:21).

It should be noted here that the words (*to be*) are not in the original text, the verse most likely means: -

- For our sake God ordained Christ to bear sin (or bear the punishment of sin) who knew no sin, so that in Christ we might become the righteousness of God.

This is in perfect harmony with Scripture since it is hardly likely Christ became sin since the Lamb to be slain was to be without blemish and the following Scriptures state that he was without sin: -

- We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Heb. 4:15).
- You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. (1 John 3:5).

These verses not only shine a brilliant spotlight upon the truth that Jesus was without sin, but also shine a spotlight upon the overwhelming love he had toward his heavenly Father and the love, mercy and grace he had toward us. Christ an innocent man not only died a brutal, cruel and bloody death, but also died as a common criminal and all this extreme suffering not for himself, but for us.

- God has made us alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, <sup>14</sup>by cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. (Col. 2:13-14).

### **He was Oppressed, and Afflicted, Like a Lamb that is led to the Slaughter.**

Isaiah 53:7 ----- <sup>7</sup>He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

Here again the wonder and marvel of Bible prophecy is manifested, hundreds of years before these things came to pass Isaiah, by the inspiration of God predicted them and Matthew, Mark, John, Peter and Philip all write about these events in the following verses: -

- Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God. (Matt. 26:63).
- He remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" (Mark 14:61).
- He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. (John 19:9).
- When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. (1 Peter 2:23).

Here is another example of the wonder of Old Testament prophecy and how it can minister today to those seeking God. An angel of the Lord told Philip to go to an Ethiopian a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure.

The official happened to be reading the words of the prophet Isaiah Philip asked him, "Do you understand what you are reading?" And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?"

The passage that he was reading was: -

- Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. <sup>33</sup>In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth." (Acts 8:32-33).

The official asked Philip, was Isaiah speaking about himself or someone else? Philip beginning with this Scripture of Isaiah's told him the Good News about Jesus. (Acts 8:26-35).

### **He was cut off from the Land; Stricken for the Sin of the LORD'S People?**

Isaiah 53:8-9 ----- <sup>8</sup>By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my (the LORD'S) people? <sup>9</sup>And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

These verses were fulfilled by the religious leaders of Jesus generation the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes who plotted his murder behind closed doors and by the Romans who the religious leaders enticed to put him to death.

**Cut off out of the land of the living:** (v8) refers to Jesus death on the bloodstained cross of Calvary. Jesus had done only good he had not harmed anyone and neither had he lied or deceived anyone in any way. This is why those of his generation (with the exception of those who had a hand in his death) would never have considered that he should be put to death as a common criminal.

Even though Jesus had told his apostles a number of times that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. (Mark 8:31) they did not fully understand what he meant until he appeared to them in his resurrected body.

**They made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death:** (v9) this verse embraces the following two events: -

1. Jesus and innocent man being put to death on the cross of Calvary between two criminals.
  - He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (1 Peter 2:22).
2. The rich man named Joseph who took Jesus body off the cross and laid it in his own new tomb.
  - When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. <sup>58</sup>He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. <sup>59</sup>And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud <sup>60</sup>and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. (Matthew 27:57-60)

For those who believe the Christian faith is just a figment of the imagination, a fantasy of the mind, made strong by belief in it, like a child's belief in Santa Claus, consider the enormous amount of detail of this prophecy concerning the events that took place in Jesus life during his years on earth. Then ponder the wonder that they were spoken hundreds of years before Jesus was even born.

Added to this there are literally multitudes of biblical prophecies that predicted many historical events that have been fulfilled and are recorded in secular history. Though there are many other things that do prove the validity of the Bible the prophecies it contains that have been fulfilled are the strongest evidence that it is the inspired word of God.

**NOTE:** for those who credit this chapter to the nation of Israel, these verses show how wrong they are. the person Isaiah has in focus has done no violence and there is no deceit in his mouth, neither of these statements can apply to Israel as they were at war many times and did many acts of violence and throughout their generations were full of deceit and false teachings that lead the people astray and away from God and ultimately to destruction.

**It was the will of the LORD to Crush Him for an Offering for Sin.**

Isaiah 53:10 ----- <sup>10</sup>Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand

**It was the will of the LORD to crush him:** (v10) means that it was in the eternal plan and purposes of God for His Son the Lord Jesus Christ to be put to death that all who come to him could be saved to eternal life by faith in him and by his righteousness and not their own.

Here is the beauty the wonder and the miracle of the Christian faith its roots go back to the foundations of the world. Many think Christianity only began when the Virgin Mary gave birth to the Lord Jesus Christ, but this is not so, God planned and purposed Christ's coming into this world long from the seven days of creation. It would be right and proper to say that God set in motion mankind's salvation on earth with the creation of Adam and Eve and not at the birth of Christ.

Nothing that happens on our earth takes God by surprise or shock. This is because in His eternal mind and eternal foreknowledge He has seen all things from the beginning to the end and planned and purposed all things accordingly. This is why prophets inspired by God's spirit were able to speak of future events and why Paul could confidently say: -

- Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup>As it is written, <sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:35-39).

God's plan for mankind's salvation has survived all generations of history and it is still growing and flourishing toward its final destination when it's Saviour and Redeemer returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish the glorious Kingdom on earth that God promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

**God has put him to grief:** refers to Jesus suffering on the bloodstained cross of Calvary.

**When his soul makes an offering for sin:** refers to Jesus laying down his life for mankind's redemption.

- We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Heb. 4:15).
- You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. (1 John 3:5).

**He shall see his offspring:** refers to Christ returning in glory to gather from the Jewish nation and from the Gentile nations those who have died in faith and those who are alive to himself in eternal glory.

**He shall prolong his days:** speaks of Jesus being resurrected from the dead to eternal life and glory.

**The will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand:** the hand of the LORD here refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, it means that God's plan of salvation will succeed because of Jesus obedience to his heavenly Fathers will.

## **He Bore the Sin of Many and Makes Intercession for the Transgressors.**

Isaiah 53:11-12 ----- <sup>11</sup>Out of the anguish (travail in KJV) of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. <sup>12</sup>Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

**Out of the anguish (travail in KJV) of his soul:** (v11) the words anguish and toil in this context are used to signify the long hours of Jesus toil and labour; his weariness and demanding work; his obedience and death; his sorrows and sufferings involved in bringing redemption to mankind and to the tortuous death he suffered.

**He shall see and be satisfied:** (v11) the allusion here is most likely to a woman in travail of birth about to deliver her child, no matter how great the pain when the child is born and placed in her arms her joy surpasses the pain and she is fully satisfied as she beholds her child. Like the woman giving birth to her child, Jesus is delivering sinners from the condemnation of the law and from death and giving birth to his church and on that day when he returns to gather the faithful to himself and sees the fruit of his labour he will be fully satisfied.

It could also be likened to a groom preparing a wedding for his bride, once all the work has been done and he sees his bride walk down the aisle toward him it matters not how much work was involved in bringing the wedding to pass, it is all counted as nothing when his eyes behold his bride.

The Bible pictures the global faithful church as the bride of Christ and there is no doubt that every faithful brother and sister in Christ who knows his love and grace have a heartfelt joy and excitement at the thought of seeing Christ their Groom face to face. There is a truth in this example that is often overlooked and that truth is that with the same joy and excitement we have at the thought of seeing Jesus he has the same excitement and joy at the thought of seeing his Bride and gathering her to himself.

Jesus satisfaction could also be likened to a farmer who labours in preparing his soil for the seed, and after planting it patiently waits for the fruit to appear. Then when the harvest comes he is abundantly satisfied with the work he has done. Likewise when Jesus looks upon the immense multitudes of the redeemed entering into heaven and witnesses the divine perfections displayed by them and the praise and thanksgiving given to God for all that he had done for them it will give him such infinite satisfaction, delight and pleasure that he will be happy he chose to obey the will of his heavenly Father and faithfully endured his sorrows and torturous sufferings.

The author of Hebrews tells us: -

- Jesus, the founder and perfecter of their faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb. 12:1-2).

**The righteous one, my servant, makes many to be accounted righteous:** (v11) this refers to the Messiah and to his holiness, purity righteousness and to his faithfulness to God and the fact that he would make many righteous. To correctly understand God's plan of salvation it is important to understand that all are saved by Jesus righteousness and not their own. The foundation upon which he justifies others is his own righteousness.

- It was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. (Heb. 7:26).
- We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. (1 John 2:1).

No one could feel secure of salvation unless they could commit their life to one who was perfectly holy, and able to bring in everlasting righteousness.

It is by Jesus everlasting righteousness that he justifies his people and by his righteousness that he acquits and declares them righteous and frees them from the condemnation of the law and from death. It is on account that he himself was perfectly holy that he is able to secure the justification and salvation of all who trust their eternal salvation to him.

This is why there is no other way to salvation and no other saviour, no-one else can claim such holiness and righteousness. All others are born of their earthly father Adam and as such have all inherited various sinful aberrations and dysfunction in their fallen corrupted body of flesh. In contrast to this Jesus the Son of God was born of the Holy Spirit, no others can claim to be born of such a holy birth nor can any descendant of Adam claim to be without sin as Jesus was.

This is why there is no other Saviour on earth that has the power to justify a sinner and declare them righteous before God. All who are saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are saved by Jesus righteousness and not their own no-one can stand before God in their own self-righteousness.

The Scriptures state our self-righteousness and righteous deeds are as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). This is because not one of us is free of selfishness, pride, ego, greed, anger, lustful thoughts, jealousy, coyness or any other form of sin. It matters not how strictly one adheres to ceremonial rites and holy days or how meticulously they keep religious customs and traditions none of these things can make a person righteous before God. It is interesting to note that the expression "filthy rags" stems from the Hebrew word ('ed) which literally means to soil as a periodical menstrual flux.

Clearly any righteousness and religious good deeds and acts that we may do maybe counted as righteous according to our fallen standard and the world's standard, but before the perfect standard of the law and God's Holy standard they fall far short of God's Holy eternal perfection.

This is why the apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans said: -

- The righteous shall live by faith. (Rom. 1:17).

This meaning that they trust in Christ's righteousness and God's grace and not in their own righteousness to be counted worthy before God for eternal salvation.

**By his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous:** (v11) the word knowledge here is used in the following two ways: -

- 1 Many will be made righteous by the message of the bloodstained cross of Calvary; by the Gospel; by the knowledge of God's will; by the way of faith and love; by the knowledge of Jesus suffering; by his death and resurrection and by obedience to him. The idea is that a sinner can be justified and saved by becoming fully acquainted with Jesus and God's plan of salvation.

The Christian faith produces in the heart and mind good joyful emotions and it is right and proper to embrace these emotions. However no one should trust their good and happy emotions and feelings to be justified or as evidence that they are saved, but make having a full knowledge of all things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ the foundation of their faith. John in his letters wrote: -

- This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (John 17:3).

The apostle Paul wrote: -

- I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup>and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith(Philip. 3:8-9).



- 2 Jesus prayed to his heavenly Father, "Even though the world does not know you, I know you (John 17:25). He intimately knew God, His character and His eternal plan of salvation for mankind and makes this knowledge the foundation of His power to impart the message of justification, redemption and salvation. Had Jesus not had this knowledge of God and of His plan of salvation He could not have led sinners to know God as He knew Him.

**The LORD will divide Jesus a portion with the many:** (v12) the many embraces those born Hebrews or Jews and those born of any other nation, it includes males or females, kings and the lowly, the rich and the poor, whoever come to God through faith in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Gospel are not only accepted as his brothers and sisters now in this present world, but will also be his everlasting family in eternal glory. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians wrote: -

- No one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, they will receive a reward, but if anyone's work is burned up, they will suffer loss, though they themselves will be saved, but only as through fire (1 Cor. 3:11-15)

When we all stand before the Lord each one's portion will be divided justly and accordingly. These verses shine a brilliant spotlight upon the truth that righteousness that leads to eternal life is a free gift and that rewards are a totally separate issue to salvation. Whoever belongs by faith to Christ will be saved to eternal life, but not all who are saved to eternal life will have rewards stored up in heaven, in fact the heavenly storehouse of some will be so empty they will suffer some form of loss.

**He shall divide the spoil with the strong:** (v11) the word strong comes from the Hebrew word, (*ʾatsuwm*) it literally means powerful and by implication numerous, great, mighty and strong. In the context of this verse it refers to those who are strong in faith and endure through the hardships, troubles and sorrows of life. The book of Revelation says that those who overcome will: -

- Eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. (Rev. 2:7).
- Not be hurt of the second death. (Rev. 2:11).
- Eat of the hidden manna and given a white stone and new name (Rev. 2:17).
- Be given power over the nations: (Rev. 2:26).
- The Lord will confess their name before his Father and his angels. (Rev. 3:5).
- Be made a pillar in the temple of God. (Rev. 3:12).
- Be granted to sit in the Lord's throne as he sat with his Father in his throne. (Rev. 3:21).
- God will be their God and they will be his son. (Rev. 21:7).

Here is the reward of those who are strong, meaning those who endure to the end and hold fast to their faith regardless of persecution, sorrows, hardships and troubles. Is there any other religion on earth that offers such a glorious eternal inheritance to its followers? Myself as the author of Bible House of Grace has not heard of one.

**He poured out his soul to death:** (v11) the founder of the Christian faith does not draw his followers to himself by intimidation, force or manipulation, but by laying his life down so that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16).

- Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends. (John 15:13).

**Numbered with the transgressors:** (v11) refers to Jesus being crucified on the cross as a common criminal with two criminals nailed to crosses on either side of him.

**He bore the sin of many:** applies to the entire world, but it only becomes a reality in the lives of those who accept it and put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

- As one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. <sup>19</sup>For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:18-19).

**He shall bear their iniquities and, he bore the sin of many:** (v11-12), the apostle Peter also said, "He himself bore our sins in his body," (1 Peter 2:24), it is thought by some that these expressions mean that Jesus took on himself mankind's sin, which means that he by doing so became sin, yet the scriptures state that he was without sin: -

- We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Heb. 4:15).
- You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. (1 John 3:5).

Added to these verses is the fact that the sacrificial Lamb to be slain was to be without blemish and the truth that sins cannot be transferred from one person to another which means that these words of Peter and Isaiah cannot mean that Christ took upon himself the sins of people so that he became sin himself. To say that our sins were so imputed to him that he became sin and that his heavenly Father therefore beheld him as grossly blackened with imputed sin is hideous and also denies the scriptural command that the Passover lamb had to be without blemish.

These words of Peter and Isaiah allude to his sufferings. The sufferings which he endured on the cross were such as if he had been guilty, meaning that he was treated as he would have been if he had been a sinner and as if he was guilty. It means he was crucified as a criminal and endured the same kind of physical pain that the guilty do and passed through the same mental sorrow and anguish of mind as those who are guilty and punished for their own sins, Christ an innocent man suffered in all respects as the most-guilty do, he put himself in the place of sinners, and bore that which those sins deserved.

He was treated as if he had been a sinner, in order that we might be treated as if we had not sinned; that is, as if we were righteous. There is no other way in which we can conceive that one bears the sins of another. They cannot be literally transferred to another therefore all that can be meant is that he should take the consequences on himself, and suffer as if he had committed the transgressions himself.

**The blood of bulls, goats and lambs and the blood of Christ:** Christ's death in the Old Testament was typified by an innocent animal being sacrificed on behalf of the sins of the guilty. Once a year the High Priest would take the blood of the innocent bulls, goats and lambs that had been sacrificed for the guilty before the Ark of the Covenant (the symbol of the very presence of God) with the cherubim (symbolising God's holy angels) in the Most Holy Place of the temple to make atonement for the sins of the people of Israel. In the same way Christ the sacrificial Lamb without blemish laid down his life, the innocent for the guilty and himself took his own blood to the heavenly Mercy Seat of the Holy Place in heaven in the midst of the angels of heaven and before the very throne of God in heaven: -

- To make atonement for our sins.
- To remove the punishment of death due because of sin.
- To provide a way of pardon and escape.
- To abolish the sin-offerings and put an end to the Mosaic Law and Levitical priesthood by his one offering of himself.

Christ the Lamb without blemish has laid down his life as a sacrificial sin offering for all and taken his sinless blood into the very throne room of God as a sin offering on behalf of us all. As the innocent bulls, goats and lambs without blemish were led to the slaughters knife on behalf of the guilty in the same manner Christ surrendered his life to be slaughtered on the cross of Calvary to redeem the guilty from their sin.

- God by the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot has ransomed us from religious works (dead works) so that we would be believers in God, who raised Christ from the dead and gave him glory, so that our faith and hope are in God alone and not self-effort and the strict adherence to ceremonial rites, religious customs and traditions as Israel's fathers under the Old Covenant of the law practised (1 Peter 1:18-21).

As the Jewish high priest appeared before the Shekinah the divine presence in the Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle so Christ appears before God himself on our behalf in heaven to present the merits of his blood as a permanent reason why we should be saved (Rom. 8:34) (Heb. 7:25).

**Jesus makes intercession for transgressors:** means Christ is the mediator between sinful man and his heavenly Father. No one today needs a human priest to intercede on their behalf before God. The Lord Jesus Christ is God's perfect High Priest and the only one anyone needs today to intercede for them before God.

In fact should anyone place their trust in a human priest rather than the Lord Jesus Christ they are not only denying what Jesus achieved from them on the bloodstained cross of Calvary, but are by their actions also denying God's plan of salvation and making Jesus suffering death upon the cross of Calvary count for nothing. There is only one priest today who can intercede for us and his dwelling place is not in a church built of bricks and stone, but in the Most Holy Place in heaven at the right hand side of God. John in his letter wrote: -

- My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. (1 John 2:1).

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End.