



## **A Man Acquainted with Grief**

**By Keith Greer**

Isaiah 53 contains one of the best-known prophecies concerning our Lord. This prophecy deals with His suffering on the Calvary cross. Understanding this wonderful prophecy can help us have greater appreciation for the sacrifice our Lord made on that cruel tree so long ago.

"For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him." {Isaiah 53:2} So certain was this event that the prophet spoke of it in the past tense -- as though it had already occurred! He would grow up in the presence of His father. (John 8:29) During a difficult time period -- when the Jews and Pharisees would try to discredit everything He did -- He would flourish. He had no outward appearance, no royal adornment, no charming presence to attract people to Him. Our Lord's draw was His message -- not his outward appeal.

"He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And he hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him." {Isaiah 53:3} To despise is to ascribe little worth to someone or something, to hold in contempt. An example is seen in Esau's attitude toward his birthright. (Genesis 25:34) Our Lord understood grief, not only the grief He suffered at the hands of others, but also the grief that sin brought upon the entire world. Men were so wrapped up in themselves, they could not see the beauty and importance of the things Christ offered and taught. The same is true today. Men did not hold Him in high regard. The sinful world soundly rejected God's beloved Son, His greatest gift to mankind. He was never appreciated for the beauty He brought, and continues to bring, into this world.

"Surely He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted." {Isaiah 53:4} He carried our, sins and sorrows to the cross -- not His own. This humble servant willingly took upon Himself the burden of sin for the whole world! While here, He healed many physical ailments; but His greatest healing -- the healing of the sin disease -- continues today. Instead of understanding that this righteous man was redeeming them with His own blood, the world believed He was being put to death for His own sins! "And all the people answered and said, His blood be on us and on our children." {Matthew 27:25}

"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." {Isaiah 53:5} Our sins -- yours and mine -- cost the precious life of God's only Son! "Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness -- by whose stripes you were healed." {1 Peter 2:24} One of the songs we sing, "I'm the One," contains the words "I could not do a single thing to hurt God's only Son, but every time I sin on earth I feel that I'm the one." This is a correct thought. He died -- not because He sinned -- but because I sin. (Romans 3:23)

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." {Isaiah 53:6} All of mankind has wandered from God's care. By rejecting His word and His Son, we follow our own paths -- which lead to certain spiritual death. (Romans 6:23) He paid the price for the entire world. (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 2:2)

"He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not his mouth." {Isaiah 53:7} Christ was subjected to cruel treatment at the hands of his oppressors. "When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified." {Matthew 27:29-31} Did he offer a defense? "And went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer." {John 19:9} He willingly submitted to the mockery of

justice and to the will of His Father in heaven! He understood that His death was necessary. "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour.' But for this purpose I came to this hour." {John 12:27}

"He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken." {Isaiah 53:8} Our Lord did not receive fair trials at the hands of His accusers. He received a mockery of six trials -- three Jewish and three Roman. Pilate, on three occasions, declared Him innocent. (John 18:38; 19:4,6) Even the false witnesses could not agree! (Mark 14:56) He was taken out of the land of the living -- led away to His death on the cruel tree on Calvary. Many saw Him as a blasphemer worthy of death. Yet, a closer look at their own lives would have shown that they, not He, were deserving of death! (Romans 5:8,9)

" And they made His grave with the wicked -- but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit found in His mouth." {Isaiah 53:9} Although, in keeping with His guilt for the crime of which He was accused, His burial should have been with the wicked, he was, instead, buried in the tomb of a rich man. Joseph of Arimathea asked for His body and placed it in a new tomb hewn out of rock. (Matthew 27:57-60) Our Lord's life was beyond reproach, and nothing evil could be said or proven against Him. (Hebrews 4:15; Acts 10:38)

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You 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. He shall see the travail of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made the intercession for the transgressors." {Isaiah 53:10-12} By the determinate foreknowledge of God, His son would be an adequate sacrifice for the sins of the world. (Acts 2:23) His Son's obedience brought delight to the Father. It provided the means for man's redemption! His seed will bless many. (Galatians 3:16-29) Though His suffering and death were terrible, it brought glory to Christ and the Father. Without His cross, there

would be no crown! Justification was made possible by the blood shed on that cross! It gave man what he had not had before -- a true remedy for his sins. Jesus Christ was a Man who truly was well-acquainted with grief!