

The Millennium Forecast

The Book of Isaiah

Text

Isaiah 53:4-6

Topic

It was for you that Jesus was bruised.

Title

"Bruised Almighty"

It is arguably the most well known *Aha!* moment of all time.

An *Aha!* moment refers to "a sudden, enlightening realization or insight, often accompanied by a sense of clarity or understanding. It's that moment when a solution to a problem or a new perspective becomes clear."

The most well known? I'll give a clue - It involves an apple. It is the moment when Isaac Newton observed an apple falling from a tree, leading to his formulation of the laws of gravity. BTW: It didn't hit him on the head.

Our text records an incredible *Aha!* moment.

The future generation of Jews who are enduring the Great Tribulation will suddenly realize that Jesus Christ *was & is* their Messiah and the Savior of the whole world.

"They will look upon Him Who they pierced"¹ and "all Israel will be saved."²

¹ Zechariah 12:10

² Romans 11:26

The *Aha!* is that Jesus endured **their** griefs, sorrows, transgressions, and iniquities. It was for **them** that He was stricken, smitten, afflicted, wounded, bruised, and chastised.

It wasn't only for Israel. He did it for me... He did it for you... He did it for love.

I'll organize my comments around two encouragements: **#1 There Is A Moment When You Realize Jesus' Death Was Vicarious**, and **#2 There Is An Eternity To Reflect That Jesus' Death Is Victorious**.

#1 - Jesus' Death Is Vicarious (v4)

What would you say to your younger self?

That has become a popular question to end an interview. I can almost hear Isaiah in verse four asking the future Tribulation Jews, "What would you say to your ancestors?"

It is here in verse four. In fact, the Tribulation Jews will say this.

Isa 53:4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

Judaism granted temporary access to the presence of God through the sacrifice of an animal on your behalf. The animal, often a lamb, substituted for you.

The very first sacrifice/substitution happened in the Garden of Eden, immediately after Adam and Eve disobeyed God.

God had explained to Adam & Eve that if they disobeyed His one, simple command, it would be punishable by spiritual & physical death. After that would come an eternal Second Death. It is a forever of conscious suffering in Hell.

Death is sometimes referred to as "the wages of sin." Death is what you get for sinning.

Now that is a world-class problem because "all have sinned." God worked out the only solution: He would become human and take your place.

Scholars call this *vicarious*, or the *vicarious atonement*. One commentator put it like this:

God's perfectly righteous character means that He can by no means look the other way when it comes to sin. If a just judge on an earthly level will hold people accountable for breaking the law, how much more will the holy Judge of all do so? For sinners, this is a terrifying prospect indeed. Thankfully, Scripture reveals to us that God is merciful as well as just. He has made it so that He can forgive us without compromising His justice by allowing a substitute to bear the punishment for sin in our place.

You might be wondering why I am referring to this person as Jesus when He isn't identified. For proof we could cite passages in the New Testament that apply these verses to Jesus. The well known story of Philip the Evangelist and the Ethiopian Eunuch, for example. The unbelieving but seeking Ethiopian was reading Isaiah 53. Philip explained the prophet was talking about Jesus.

Jesus came and gave evidence that He was the promised Messiah. The Jews could not make the connection between the millions of lambs they had sacrificed over the centuries, and the one Lamb of God, who would take away the sins of the world.

Instead of esteeming Jesus as their substitute, "We esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted." When you read the crowd comments at the Cross you see that they assumed Jesus was getting what He deserved. "Those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "You who destroy the Temple and build *it* in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.' " Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing" (Matthew 27:39-44).

Jesus was crucified with two criminals. One of them "blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong" (Luke 23:39-41).

I doubt the penitent thief understood the scope of his comments. He was part of a graphic picture of Jesus taking the place of sinners. Jesus was dying for them - for both of them - as their substitute. They could both go to Heaven. One believed Him; one did not.

How long do you think the penitent thief was a Christian? Minutes... hours... a day? Nevertheless, he was able to evangelize his fellow thief, and worship Jesus. Think of the millions of believers who have received comfort from his predicament.

J.C. Ryle wrote, *"It is true that we are sinners - but Christ has suffered for us. It is true that we deserve death - but Christ has died for us. It is true that we are guilty debtors - but Christ has paid our debts with His own blood. This is the real Gospel! On this let us lean while we live. To this let us cling when we die. Christ has been 'lifted up' on the Cross, and has thrown open the gates of Heaven to all [who believe]."*

An anonymous author wrote, *"All who will not have Christ - who refuse or ignore His claim upon them - will be exposed to the full punishment due justly for their sins. For they have no sin-bearer; they have not come under the shelter of His atonement. But for the believer, here is the truth: He was forsaken for me!"*

Timothy Cross writes, *"According to Isaiah those sins which separate us from God and damn our souls can be transferred to another. They can be dealt with and put away by Christ. The Christian's glad testimony is 'He bore my sins on Calvary's cross.' "*

- Can you recall the moment that you realized you were a sinner but Jesus had taken your place in death so that you might live?
- Was there anyone else that could do it?

#2 - Jesus' Death Is Victorious (v5-6)

What is the first use of the word "bruised" in the Bible?

Gen 3:14 So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life.

Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall **bruise** your head, And you shall **bruise** His heel."

Scholars call this the *Proto-Evangelium*. It is the first preaching of the Gospel, the first promise of salvation by grace through faith. *Everything else in the Bible flows from these words in Genesis 3:15.* English preacher Charles Simeon called this verse "the sum and summary of the whole Bible."

Jesus is the ultimate Seed of the Woman who would one day come to bruise the serpent's head. In the process His "heel" would be bruised on the Cross.

The serpent, of course, is the devil, Satan.

Think about stomping with your bare heel on the head of a poisonous serpent. That is what was happening as Jesus was crucified outside the city of Jerusalem on a hill called Golgotha, the place of the skull.

Jesus was badly "bruised," and He died. Three days later He arose victorious over Satan, sin & death.

Satan was immortally wounded at the Cross but remains free to wreak havoc as a defeated foe until the Lord returns. His crushing is predicted by the apostle Paul who wrote, "the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Romans 16:20). Isaiah is going to mention peace with God in verse five.

I'm going to put myself in verse five.

Isa 53:5 But He was wounded for [my] transgressions, *He was bruised* for [my] iniquities; The chastisement for [my] peace was upon Him, And by His stripes [I am] healed.

Jesus endured the Cross and has thereby made "peace" possible between whosoever will believe and God. It is the spiritual peace given to those who believe.

The last six words of verse five are a battleground among Christians. "By His stripes we are healed." Can we claim, even insist upon, physical healing because of the "stripes?"

The way to approach this is to remember that this stanza of the song is about the future remnant of the nation of Israel being preserved and saved through the future Time of Jacob's Trouble. Jesus will return and inaugurate the Kingdom of God on Earth. In the one-thousand year Kingdom, sickness and disease will be eradicated. Jesus will heal everyone, as I understand it.

These healings, then, are in the Kingdom, after the Church Age & after the Great Tribulation.

Physical healing in the Church Age in which we live is not on the table in these words. Certainly you could apply them to salvation, which is our ultimate healing. But I think there is a strong element of the Kingdom in them. After all, Jesus establishes the

Kingdom at His return. Jew & Gentile believers who survive in their mortal bodies will be healed.

We absolutely believe in gifts of healings. God continues to heal people; there has been no cessation of that, or any of the other gifts of God the Holy Spirit.

Why so few healings? A common answer is that the Church is failing. Are we ready to say that the Church has been failing for over two thousand years?

It's time we admit that there are fewer healings in the Church Age by *design*, not by *defeat*.

The Church Age is a time in which God's strength is made known through our weakness. He tells us that divine healing is not necessary because His grace is enough.

There are gifts of healing. None of the gifts of God the Holy Spirit have ceased. There is no biblical justification for cessation of the gifts. Pray for divine healing; be grateful for medical healing; leave the disposition to God.

Isa 53:6 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.

If you are a cat owner, you've probably discovered the cartoon, *Simon's Cat*. It amplifies all the ways cats behave - much to our disapproval. But, hey, you're the one who wanted a cat and he or she can't help it. It's in their nature.

Sheep are known for wandering off, going "astray." It is in their nature to do so.

You are not a sinner because you sin; you sin because you are a sinner.

You and every human conceived inherit a sin nature. It is as natural for you to go astray from God as it is for a sheep to wander off.

What happens to helpless animals when they go astray? They are easy prey for predators, like "roaring" mountain lions.

"Our sinful condition makes us akin to a lost, stray sheep. Sin separates us from the warmth of the fold and fellowship with the Shepherd."

A.W. Tozer wrote, "The only safe place for a sheep is by the side of his shepherd, because the devil does not fear sheep; he just fears the Shepherd."

This may be slightly off-topic, but I want to mention it. More-and-more Christians are disconnecting from live fellowship in a church. *It's wrong.*

Have you noticed that most of the illustrations about the church on Earth demand us gathering together:

- Sheep need to be a flock and have shepherds. If you are a lone sheep, it won't be long until you encounter the lone wolf.
- Individual believers are living stones in the building of the church. When you put something together, is it important to have all the parts? Seems like you are always missing the Johnson Rod.
- You are a member of the body of Jesus. You are not a dismembered appendage. You aren't useful like Thing in the *Addams Family*.
- The gift of speaking in other tongues aside, the gifts of God the Holy Spirit require you be among others in order to exercise them. For example, you can't exercise the gift of hospitality on yourself.

If you received a personal invite to attend CalvaryHanford as the guest of Jesus, Who would be there, it would at the very least be rude to stay home - even if you watch it live streaming.

In His Revelation, Jesus depicted the church gathered on Earth as a "lampstand" and said He would be, "In the midst of the seven lampstands" (1:13).

I'm sharing this so you will have something to share with your friends and family, who so easily excuse themselves from gathering together. They are stray sheep, in a rock pile of one, dismembered and hoarding their gift or gifts.

The Bible is prose, poetry, prophecy, parables, proverbs & praise.

You will read law & letters; private letters & general epistles. The authors employ metaphors, analogies, types, figures & illustrations.

Isaiah 52:13 through 53:12 is a song consisting of five three-verse stanzas. Why a *song* rather than a *sermon*?

Let's say you go to college and have an Art class in Impressionism. You also have a class in Astronomy. In one class, you marvel at *Starry, Starry Night*, while in the other you measure the stars at night.

I think you know where I'm going with this. You can't study Impressionism the same way you study Astronomy. They 'move' you in different ways:

- When we in awestruck wonder consider the stars God has made, then sings our soul, "How great Thou art."
- But when we understand the stars are a backdrop for things like His vicarious atonement of the human race, you're moved in a much different way.

He did it for me...He did it for you...He did it for love