

**“SMITTEN BY GOD”**

Isaiah 53:4

**Intro:** I would like to take you back a few Sunday mornings when Tom Matthews was teaching the first lesson in our Isaiah series. He pointed out that some so-called scholars who do not believe that the Bible was inspired of God, say that the book of Isaiah was written by two Isaiah's. They said that because there are some details in the second part of Isaiah, chapters 40 to 66, which could not have been written at the same time as the first because it mentions certain facts of history which could not have been known by the writer of the first part of Isaiah. Also they point out that the language in the two parts of Isaiah are so different that there had to be two Isaiah's. And so they came up with the idea of a Deutero-Isaiah. Deuteronomy is a second recording of the Law, and so Deutero-Isaiah is a second Isaiah.

You may remember, and I hope that you do, that Tom had us turn to John 12 where he read to us from verses 37 through 41. I am going to ask you to turn to that passage again tonight. (Read.)

If you have a center column in your Bible giving the reference for OT quotations (or possibly in your Bible such references are given along the outside of the pages) – however it may be in your Bible, you will notice that verse 38 is a quotation from Isa. 53:3, and that verse 40 is a quotation from Isa. 6:10. The first quotation is in the second part of Isaiah (40-66), and the second quotation is from the first part of Isaiah (1-39). Now this passage answers the question as to whether or not there were two Isaiahs. John said “these things said Isaiah.” That is, the same Isaiah wrote both of these verses, which means that there was only one Isaiah. He was enabled to write, as most writers of Scripture were able to write, because he was writing under the direction of the Holy Spirit! This is all of the evidence a true Christian needs to settle the controversy.

But I have another reason for asking you to turn to John 12 tonight. It is because of what John wrote in the latter part of John 12:41: “These things said Isaiah when he saw His glory,” the glory of our Lord, “and spake of Him.” Who is the “Him”? It is the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah wrote about Christ.

This morning John referred briefly to places in Isaiah where there is an unfortunate chapter division. I think he was referring to Isaiah 9. But we

have another one, as Dr. Lockwood has mentioned in connection our SS memory work in Isaiah 53. He pointed out, and rightly so, that the last three verses of Isaiah 52 should be the first three verses of Isaiah 53. The last three verses of Isaiah 52, especially verse 13, tell us that God was speaking about His “Servant.” The Lord Jesus Christ was, and is, “the servant of the Lord.”

Now if we need further proof that Isaiah was speaking about our Lord (in addition to the words he used which could not possibly refer to anyone but our Lord), the proof is in 1 Pet. 2:24 and 25. Your marginal references will tell you that 1 Pet. 2:24 is from Isa. 53:5 and that 1 Pet. 2:25 is from Isa. 53:6.

So let the critics say what they want to, there was only one writer of the book of Isaiah, and he was used by the Holy Spirit to tell us about the Lord Jesus Christ and the work that He eventually did for our salvation. Details like this help us to understand the Bible is truly the inspired word of God. Isaiah could not have known many of the facts that he wrote about, if they had not been made known to him by the Holy Spirit.

In addition to all of this our text for tonight is referred to Matt. 8:16-17 where we read these words:

16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

These verses do not teach that “healing is in the atonement,” as some of our charismatic preachers declare, but it simply pointed out that when our Lord came, He would have a healing ministry which was one of the ways He could be identified as the Messiah, the Christ.

I hope we are all learning, or re-learning Isaiah 53 which is our SS assignment for this Fall. It is one of the greatest passages in the entire OT because of what it has to tell us about the Lord Jesus Christ, and in particular about His death. But I want to point out what to me is an important detail about the first part of Isaiah 53. It is this: In verse 1 Isaiah was lamenting that there were so few who believed his preaching. Remember Isaiah was a preacher, a forthteller as well as a foreteller. But people in his day were paying about as much attention as people pay today to the

exposition of Scripture. But notice this: In verses 2 and 3 Isaiah was predicting the kind of treatment that the Messiah would receive from people. (Read vv. 2 and 3.) The first part of verse 4 tells what the Lord would do to relieve the griefs and sorrows of people during His ministry on earth. *But beginning with the middle of verse 4 Isaiah began to tell about the treatment that the Lord Jesus would receive at the hands of God!* And, as you can see, this is what He said, “Yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”

In verse 5 we have another series of words. Notice what they are: “. . . wounded . . . bruised . . . chastisement . . . stripes . . .”

In verse 6, “. . . the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

In verse 7 the words continue: “. . . oppressed . . . afflicted . . . brought as a lamb to the slaughter . . .” In verse 8 we read that He was “cut off,” and then we have the word “stricken” again.

But then look at verse 10 which begins with one of the most startling statements in all of Scripture: “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him . . .” This does not mean that the Lord took sadistic pleasure in the suffering and death of His Son. It is one of those great statements of Scripture which was designed by God to show us how much He loved us. Our Lord was His beloved Son, but so great was God’s love for His elect people that it was described as a pleasure to God, as the following verses to the end of this chapter show, because of what was being accomplished in the death of His Son. The NT tells us also about God’s part in the death of His Son. We have it in 2 Cor. 5:17-19:

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

From all of these statement I would point out to you that it was what God the Father did to His Son that our salvation is to be seen. It was suffering which was completely concealed from the eyes of men, and we would know nothing about it if it had not been revealed on the pages of Scripture. But as you and I read this, we need to recognize that what He

suffered was what we should have suffered, suffering far beyond that which could have been inflicted by men. No one can read Isaiah 53 with any understanding at all and ever again minimize the awfulness of sin in the sight of God.

Now as we come to the Lord's Table tonight, let us take just a few minutes to look at these words that Isaiah has used to tell us about the sufferings of our Lord which were put upon Him by the Father.

- 1) "Stricken" – This means that God laid His hand on His Son to strike Him as a penalty for sin.
- 2) "Smitten" – Our Lord was smitten so that He would die even though He was innocent of any sin. See His innocence in Isa. 53:9.
- 3) "Afflicted" – The manner of our Lord's death was the most humbling that it could be. Cf. Phil. 2:8, "And being found in fashion as a Man . . ."
- 4) "Wounded" – This is an interesting expression because in addition to speaking of death, it means that the Lord was pierced with sorrow for our sins just like our sins were His own.
- 5) "Bruised" means actually to be broken in pieces. It suggests a full atonement for our sins. And yet we must remember that He did this for all of us.
- 6) "Chastisement" was the penalty necessary for the establishment of peace with God. Cf. Rom. 5:1. And so chastisement is that which our Lord had to suffer for our justification and peace with God.
- 7) "Stripes" – The penalty for crimes was often by so many stripes. The Lord has taken the stripes that we should have had, so we are healed, accepted by God. Our case is closed.
- 8) "Oppressed" means that God exacted from our Lord the full penalty of all of our sins.
- 9) "Afflicted" – repeated from verse 4.
- 10) "Stricken" – repeated also from verse 4, the first word in this series.

Now when we look over this list, and then read that “it pleased the Lord to bruise Him,” the Son. This was the will of God. This is what God desired because of His great love for His own people, and because there was no other way for the barrier caused by sin to be removed.

**Concl:** What more could possibly be said? Is it any wonder that as Handel was composing *The Messiah*, it is reported that someone came into his room, found him with his head down on his folded arms at his table, weeping and weeping because of the truth of this great Psalm. The sufferings which men inflicted upon our Lord were terrible beyond description, but beyond that, and behind that, was the suffering that our Lord experienced at the hands of God. And yet because of our Lord’s love for His Father, and His love for us, His willingly gave Himself to suffer all that was necessary before a holy God to save us from our sins.

If we could only realize it, the greatest shame that can be placed on a human being, and it is on us all, is that we are sinners. It is our greatest shame, and should humble us constantly before our sinless Savior.