

March 26

His Torture, Our Forgiveness

“Surely, He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed. 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.” (Isaiah 53:4-6)

The Book of Isaiah contains 4 sections called the Servant Songs. Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is the fourth and final song that sings of the coming Messiah and His suffering for His people. There is more content in this song than there is room in this devotion, so I would encourage you to read through the whole song.

The section does not hold back. The One who bore our grief and carried our sorrows not only had to endure that weight, but God Himself struck, smote, and afflicted Him. Verse 5 continues the torment. He was innocent. He did not suffer for anything He did. He suffered because of what *we* did. We put Him in that situation by our sin, and the result from His chastisement and wounds won peace and healing for us. We screwed up, and He suffered. And on top of that, His suffering saves us. Despite that, we still daily stray like sheep (v. 6). We want to go our own way, so we do. We sin and rebel, often dismissing or downplaying what our sin does and what Christ has done because of it.

God is a God of Justice, but also Mercy. Someone has to pay the penalty for sin. And if it weren't for Jesus' blood washing His children clean, we would. Those who reject Jesus as Lord have to foot the bill. But for those who are called as God's children, we have been given peace and healing by His sacrifice.

Prayer: *Dear Jesus, You took the weight of my sin upon Your innocent shoulders and suffered punishment unimaginable for me. I daily stray like a lost sheep, but You have called me as Your own and wash me in Your blood. Keep us ever mindful of Your suffering and grace. Amen.*