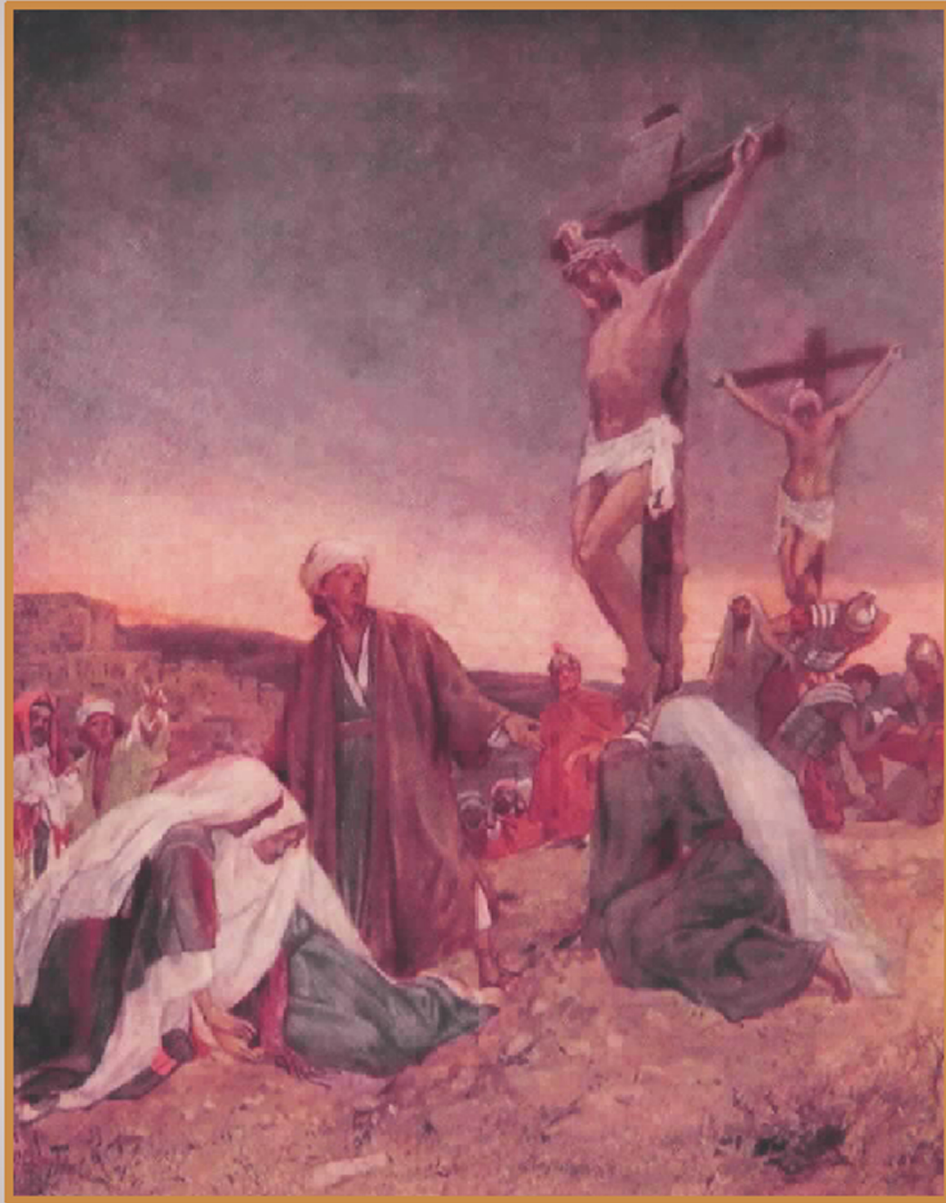


Man of Sorrows



“As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” (Isaiah 52:14)

MAN OF SORROWS

The Prophet Isaiah called Jesus “a man of sorrows.” We will begin our consideration of that title with Isaiah 52:13-15, which reads:

“Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

“As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

“So shall he sprinkle [startle] many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.”

Isaiah 53:1-5 continues:

“Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

“For he shall grow up before him [God] as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he [Jesus] hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as

it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”

This Scripture reading from the Book of Isaiah is a prophecy about the work and ministry of Christ, particularly the closing features of his life. As shown in the New Testament, the Master's words of grace produced wonderment in all who came within range of his voice, and his healing ministry attracted great multitudes, some of whom followed him for long distances and at considerable personal sacrifice (Luke 4:22). During his ministry, the people listened attentively to this One they esteemed as a possible prophet sent of God. It was not until the close of his ministry that the nation of Israel looked upon Jesus in another light.

Isaiah chapters 52 and 53, as quoted, are basically a prophecy of the Crucifixion and the attitude of the nation toward this act. Since nothing in Scripture indicates that the Master had any disfigurement of face or body or that his form was not comely, we would assume, to the contrary, that beauty and nobility were in

his character and posture. Near the end of his life, when he came forth “wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe,” Pontius Pilate said, “Behold the man!” (John 19:5). He was impressed with Jesus’ demeanor and his natural serenity and majesty even under the unfavorable circumstances pertaining to the Crucifixion.

Therefore, when the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah tells us that Jesus had no form or comeliness and “no beauty that we should desire him,” the statement was made because of Jesus’ submissiveness to the cruel experiences he had at the end of his earthly ministry—a submissiveness that was confusing to the nation. He had presented himself as the Messiah, as the Son of God, as the One sent of God to redeem man. And many hoped that he would be a King to lead them out of bondage, a Savior to the nation, and an example to the Gentiles. Instead, when he was oppressed and afflicted at the end of his ministry, he submitted himself. He was “brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth” (Isa. 53:7). Not only does this Scripture tell us of the nobility of Jesus’ character and of his submissiveness and meekness to God’s judgment and will, but also it views the situation from the standpoint of the people. They could not understand why he remained silent and did not raise his voice in his own defense, why he did not perform the miracles that all through his ministry were exercised on behalf of other people, and why he could not deliver himself

from the circumstances. The situation was too confounding for the people.

**“He was taken from prison and from judgment:
and who shall declare his generation? for he was
cut off out of the land of the living: for the
transgression of my people was he stricken.**

**“And he made his grave with the wicked, and with
the rich in his death; because he had done no
violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.**

**“Yet it pleased the LORD [God] to bruise him
[Jesus]; he [God] hath put him [Jesus] to grief:
when thou [God] shalt make his [Jesus’] soul an
offering for sin, he [Jesus] shall see his seed, he
shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the
LORD shall prosper in his hand.” (Isa. 53:8-10)**

The nation of Israel did not realize that the great Redeemer prophesied in the Old Testament must also lay down his life for sin. He had to sacrifice his life before he could deliver them in great power and glory at the end of the next age, the Christian Age (the near future from our perspective). Thus the Master’s behavior seemed to belie his claim to be the great Redeemer.

The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah views Jesus’ experience from the standpoint of the people, the *nation*. However, the twenty-second Psalm prophetically reveals the secret and innermost thoughts of *Jesus* on the Cross. Verse 1 reads: “My God, my God,

why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" At the close of his ministry, Jesus had many agonizing experiences. He said in the Garden of Gethsemane, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38). In fact, he agonized to such an extent that he sweat drops of blood (Luke 22:44). The Apostle Paul refers to this incident in Hebrews 5:7, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him [God] that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." Jesus was not praying to be spared from a sacrificial death but was asking if it was necessary to suffer an *ignominious* death. Jesus "was heard in that he feared." He drank the cup of death with thanks, but the loneliness that he experienced was something he had not anticipated.

Psalm 22:6 tells us that when Jesus was suspended on the Cross, he thought, "I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." As he was there, nailed to the Cross, with his body exposed, he was twisted out of shape, and thus his beauty was marred. Those who beheld his distorted posture and his dying in such an ignominious fashion, apparently without the ability to help himself, could not see any form or comeliness in him. His taunters reviled him: "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross" (Matt. 27:40).

“All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,

“He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

“Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.

“They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.

“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

“My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

“For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

“I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.

“They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.” (Psa. 22:7,8,12-18)

We can now appreciate more fully Isaiah 52:14, one of the Scriptures initially cited, saying that many were astonished at Jesus, for “his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” It was not during the Master’s

life and ministry that his physical image or appearance was so marred in the people's sight but when he was on the Cross. In the light of his claims to be the One sent of God, the great hope he had engendered in many of the poor of Israel was shattered. The people were discouraged because of the Crucifixion—just as later on, after his resurrection, the two on the way to Emmaus, who did not recognize Jesus, said to him sadly, “Art thou ... a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? ... we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel” (Luke 24:18,21).

When the nation saw Jesus on the Cross, they did not feel that his message was from God, for they failed to realize that the prophecies required him to undergo certain detailed experiences. In order to be the Redeemer of the nation of Israel and the rest of mankind, he had to give his life as a *corresponding price* for Adam (1 Tim. 2:5,6; Rom. 5:19; 1 Cor. 15:22). The following are examples of the necessary correspondencies between Jesus and Adam:

1. Adam was a *king*. Therefore, it was necessary for Jesus, as the corresponding price, to be figuratively presented as a *King* before the nation. The soldiers of Pilate clothed the Master with a scarlet and purple robe, put a reed in his hand as a scepter, and mockingly bowed the knee and worshipped him (Mark 15:17). Moreover, a crown of thorns was placed upon his head, and a

sign in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek was affixed to the Cross, stating, "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS" (Matt. 27:37; John 19:19,20).

2. Adam was condemned, and his *unborn seed*, consequently, had no life rights. To be an offset for the sin of the world, and also to be a potential Father, or Life-giver, to redeem Adam's seed, Jesus had to be as Adam was before Eve was formed: childless with an *unborn race* in his loins (Isa. 9:6). Jesus was "cut off out of the land of the living" in the flower of his manhood (Isa. 53:8).

3. Sin gained an entrance into earth's society in association with a *tree*, and Jesus was crucified on the Cross (or a *tree*), thus putting an end to sin (Gen. 3:6; Acts 5:30; 10:39). "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13). In other words, the Cross is directly associated with a tree. In allegory in the type, Isaac carried the wood for his own offering, and Jesus carried the Cross to Calvary (Gen. 22:6; John 19:17).

4. At the time of Passover, the Jews sprinkled the blood of the Paschal lamb on the lintel and the two side posts of the door of each home (Exod. 12:7). The motion of the sprinkling pre-figured a *cross*. Accordingly, Jesus had to die on the *Cross*. His bleeding hands and feet corresponded with the three placings of the blood (on each hand separately and on the two feet together,

one foot on top of the other). In Leviticus 16:14, the atonement blood was sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat eastward and before the Mercy Seat, that is, crosswise—thus, again, prefiguring the sign of the Cross.

5. Just as the bullock was burned *outside the camp* in the type, so Jesus had to die *outside the gate* of the city of Jerusalem (Lev. 16:27). Adam was expelled from the Garden of Eden because of his sin. Jesus, therefore, to be the corresponding price, had to be crucified outside the city.

6. A *serpent* was the instrument of deception to the seed of woman, and Jesus was crucified at the hands of the Roman pagan power, which was represented by a *serpent* or dragon (Gen. 3:1-5). The time of Jesus' death was Satan's seeming hour of triumph. Moses and the brazen serpent on the pole, upon which all who looked would live, find a correspondency in Jesus' taking the place of the sinner on the Cross. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:14,15).

Jesus was nailed to the Cross, "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, ... and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:14). His humanity must forever remain dead in order to constitute an effective remedy against

sin. The wages of sin are not the act of dying but the *permanency* of death (Rom. 6:23; Ezek. 18:4). Therefore, Jesus, in laying down his human life, forever gave that life over to Justice in order that Adamic death might be abolished (2 Tim. 1:10).

7. Jesus' legs were not broken on the Cross, and neither were the bones of the Paschal lamb broken (Exod. 12:46; John 19:33,36). When Jesus' side was pierced, puncturing the cardiac sac, there flowed out blood and water, showing he died from a broken heart (John 19:34). The blood was indicative of the necessity of his death, and the water represented the need for the Word of God in connection with redemption. In the words of the hymn, "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins; and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains."

8. As God formed Eve from Adam's *side*, so God, our Father in heaven, draws the Christian from Jesus' *side*, as it were (Gen. 2:21-23). Christians are figuratively bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, being members of the body of Christ (Eph. 5:30). As Adam was the *father* and Eve was the *mother* of all the living, so Jesus is to be the age-lasting *Father* of the redeemed race and the glorified Church is to be the *mother*. Rebekah, a type or picture of the Church, was prophesied to be "the mother of thousands of millions" (Gen. 24:60). Accordingly, the Church will be the mother of a regenerated race. Adam fell into a *deep sleep* at the

time of Eve's creation. Jesus' *sleep of death* preceded the formation of the "second Eve," the Church.

9. Two gardens were involved in the correspondency between Adam and Jesus: the *Garden of Eden* in the type and the *Garden of Gethsemane* in the antitype.

10. *Thorns* were associated with the curse, and a crown of *thorns* was placed on the Master's head (Gen. 3:17,18).

11. The *sweat* of the brow was tied in with the curse, and Jesus in Gethsemane *sweat* blood (Gen. 3:19; Luke 22:44).

12. As the *Garden of Eden* was a scene of betrayal with Eve, so the *Garden of Gethsemane* was a scene of betrayal with the kiss of Judas (Matt. 26:48,49). It is quite possible that Eve induced Adam to partake of the forbidden fruit with a preparatory kiss.

13. Adam's *tasting* of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden eventually produced death, and Jesus *tasted* vinegar mixed with gall just before his death on the Cross. Jesus, "knowing that all things were now accomplished" and his death was imminent, and desiring "that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst" (John 19:28-30; Matt. 27:34).

14. Genesis 2:10 states, "A river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into *four*

heads." That river of life and its water, which nourished mankind in four distinct lands of habitation, prefigure the development and the nourishment of four different classes of mankind: the Church, the Great Company (a secondary spiritual class likened to foolish virgins in Matthew 25:1,2), the Ancient Worthies (the faithful individuals prior to the Christian Age, some of whom are listed in Hebrews chapter 11), and the world of mankind. In connection with Jesus' death and crucifixion, his garments were divided into *four parts*, excluding the seamless robe or coat, for which lots were cast (John 19:23,24). The robe represents the Master's righteousness, which is not to be applied piecemeal as a covering for man's sin. The four parts of the garments, which the robe covered, prefigure four classes of humanity who will ultimately be beneficiaries of Jesus' death, covered by the robe of his righteousness.

15. When Adam sinned, he experienced a sense of *guilt and shame* and thus hid behind a tree (Gen. 3:8). When Jesus was apprehended in the Garden of Gethsemane *as a thief*, he was in a grove of trees at night. Moreover, he was crucified between two thieves as a malefactor, as an outcast from God's favor, and as a violator of God's law (Matt. 27:38).

16. After sinning, Adam and Eve hid *behind a tree* with a sense of *nakedness* (Gen. 3:8-10). To be a corresponding price,

Jesus had to experience the same. In all works of art depicting the Crucifixion, Jesus is shown wearing a loincloth. However, it is very unlikely that he had even this sop of favor, for he was probably *naked* when exposed to the full view of the nation *in front of the Cross* (tree). Therefore, it was with kindness that the women stood and viewed him “afar off” (Matt. 27:55; Mark 15:40).

Now we can understand with more fullness Jesus’ statement in Psalm 22:17, “I may tell all my bones: they *look and stare* upon me.” Isaiah 53:3 is also more meaningful: “We hid as it were our faces from him.” No wonder Isaiah 52:14 prophesied that many would be astonished at him and that his visage and form would be marred more than those of other sons of men. The nakedness of Jesus on the Cross and his exposure in this very unfavorable light, especially considering the background of his professions to be the Messiah, made his death a most unenviable experience. Truly he was “a man of sorrows.”

“Man of sorrows!” What a name
For the Son of God who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim!
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned he stood.
Sealed my pardon with his blood;
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Guilty, vile, and helpless, we;
Spotless Lamb of God was he.
Full atonement! Can it be?
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Lifted up was he to die,
"It is finished," was his cry.
Now in heav'n exalted high,
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Frank Shallieu