

Isaiah 53:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

This prophetic description of the suffering Servant (fulfilled in Christ) reveals His rejection and sorrows. 'Despised' (bazah) means treated with contempt, regarded as worthless. 'Rejected' (chadal) conveys being forsaken, abandoned by others. 'A man of sorrows' shows His intimate acquaintance with grief—not occasional sadness but one whose life was characterized by suffering. 'We hid as it were our faces from him'—people turned away in disgust or indifference. 'We esteemed him not' means we considered Him insignificant, without value. This describes humanity's response to Jesus: religious leaders rejected Him, crowds turned away, disciples fled, and even today many dismiss Him.

Historical Context

Written 700 years before Christ, Isaiah's detailed description of Messiah's suffering confounded Jewish expectations of a conquering king. Jesus's life perfectly fulfilled this prophecy—rejected by religious leaders, abandoned by friends, despised by crowds who chose Barabbas. The cross epitomized this rejection: executed as a criminal, mocked by observers. Yet Peter explains this rejection was predicted (Acts 3:18) and necessary for salvation. The early church, facing similar rejection, found comfort knowing their Messiah experienced it first.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's experience of rejection and sorrow comfort you when you face similar experiences?
2. In what ways do people today still 'hide their faces' from Christ and 'esteem him not,' and how should we respond?

Interlinear Text

נִבְזָה ה	וְנִדְּחָ ל	אִישׁ אִישׁ	מִכְאָב וְ	יָד וְעַ	
He is despised	and rejected	a man	a man	of sorrows	and acquainted
H959	H2310	H376	H376	H4341	H3045
חִלִּי	וְכִמְסִיתָ ר	פְּנֵינוּ	מִמֶּנּוּ	נִבְזָה ה	וְלֹא
with grief	and we hid as it were	our faces	H4480	He is despised	H3808
H2483	H4564	H6440		H959	
וְשִׁבְּנוּ:					
and we esteemed					
H2803					

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 26:67 (Parallel theme): Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands,

Isaiah 53:10 (Parallel theme): Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt 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.

Isaiah 49:7 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

Isaiah 53:4 (Parallel theme): Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Mark 14:34 (Parallel theme): And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

Hebrews 5:7 (Parallel theme): Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

Isaiah 50:6 (Parallel theme): I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

Luke 9:22 (Parallel theme): Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

Hebrews 4:15 (Parallel theme): For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Mark 15:19 (Parallel theme): And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him.