

Isaiah 53:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

This verse reveals the substitutionary nature of Christ's suffering—He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. The Hebrew 'nasah' (bore) means to lift, carry, take away—depicting Jesus taking upon Himself what we deserved. 'Griefs' (choli) refers to sicknesses, pains, and 'sorrows' (makob) to emotional and physical anguish. Yet observers misinterpreted His suffering: 'we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted'—thinking God was punishing Him for His own sins. This tragic irony: they witnessed substitutionary atonement but interpreted it as divine judgment for personal sin. Matthew 8:17 applies this to Jesus's healing ministry, while 1 Peter 2:24 emphasizes His sin-bearing on the cross.

Historical Context

Jewish observers of the crucifixion saw a man under God's curse (Deuteronomy 21:23), not recognizing He bore their curse (Galatians 3:13). Roman executioners thought they were punishing a criminal. Only later did disciples understand He bore their sins and sorrows. The early church grasped this substitutionary atonement as the gospel's heart: Christ suffered what we deserved so we might receive what He deserved. This theological truth transformed lives and founded the church.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does understanding that Jesus bore your specific griefs and sorrows affect your view of His sacrifice?
2. In what ways do people today still misinterpret Jesus's suffering, missing its substitutionary nature?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵת חִנּוֹתָנוּ סִבְלָל מִמְּכָאֵב יְנִזָּה	וְאֵת חִנּוֹתָנוּ סִבְלָל מִמְּכָאֵב יְנִזָּה			
Surely our griefs	H1931	he hath borne	our sorrows	and carried
H403	H2483	H5375	H4341	H587
וְאֵת שְׁבַבֵּן הָוֹתָה יְמִינָה אֱלֹהִים מִמְּכָאֵב				
yet we did esteem	H5060	him stricken	smitten	of God and afflicted
H2803		H5221	H430	H6031

Additional Cross-References

1 Peter 2:24 (Parallel theme): Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Matthew 8:17 (Parallel theme): That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

Galatians 3:13 (Parallel theme): Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

1 John 2:2 (Parallel theme): And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 Peter 3:18 (References God): For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

Hebrews 9:28 (Parallel theme): So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

John 19:7 (References God): The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

Psalms 69:26 (Parallel theme): For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded.