



TODAY'S READING:

Isaiah 53:3-5:

He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.

Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,

yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

Jesus came to earth to give us the gifts of acceptance, peace, healing, and forgiveness, but those gifts were not cheap. We could never afford what Jesus came to provide, and gratefully, we don't have to. God now accepts us, not because of our own good behavior, but because Jesus paid the price by

experiencing the greatest rejection on our behalf. Jesus chose to die to cover our sin, conquer death, and bring us life. The prophet Isaiah called our sins “transgressions” and “iniquities” - essentially our crimes and our wickedness. Those sins created a debt we could never repay, but Jesus, in His perfection, could. As Jesus chose to be born into a world where He would be bruised and crushed, He brought us peace and healing.

The prophecy in Isaiah 53 portrays God’s great exchange: Jesus’ life for all of ours. Jesus knew the cost of Christmas, and He embraced it so we could embrace Him and the eternal life He made available for us. As you celebrate this season, don’t forget: We can only be forgiven, healed, and set free because Jesus chose Christmas.

Prayer: Jesus, I can never thank You enough for paying the price that covered my debt. I would truly be lost without You. I worship You as my Peace, my Healer, and my Savior! Thank You for choosing Christmas. Help me to receive all You came to give me, and help me then share those gifts with the world around me.