

Verse 5 gives the conclusion reached on the road to Emmaus by the disciples to whom Jesus Christ had spoken -- a conclusion to which everyone must come who sees Christ in His true character. Such a One as He could not be killed as a common malefactor, without a deeper meaning being involved: "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." Here indeed the atonement is described, rather than in the first half of verse 4.

If the atonement had been presented in the first half of verse 4, which describes the removal of physical suffering, it would warrant the conclusion that the atonement provides healing from all diseases and physical injuries and that we now have a right to claim such healing. Such a conclusion would be false. The Bible contains abundant evidence that it is God's will that in this age many of His people should be subject to infirmity and sickness, and sometimes He uses these hardships as instruments for our development and sanctification.

It is God's desire that we should use every possible means of securing health, and sometimes He chooses marvelously to heal one of His people after medical science has reached its very limit. Yet in this age we have no right to claim this as a right, for it is often God's will to withhold physical healing. We see this even in such a man as the apostle Paul, who prayed in vain that God would remove his "thorn in the flesh." Only in the millennium, when we have been given the resurrection body, will we experience the full outworking of the result of the death of Christ on the cross, in the removal of all physical suffering and the end of all sickness and pain.

In verse 6 believers in Christ, both Jew and Gentile, acknowledge their individual guilt, and recognize that for every true believer this guilt has been laid on the Lord Jesus Christ.

In verse 7 we have absolute proof that the One who is here described is not the nation of Israel but the individual Servant of the Lord who represents Israel and comes out from Israel but who nevertheless is distinct from the nation as a whole. Who could say of Israel in the Babylonian captivity that "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so he