

actual accomplishment of His work. It is simply an indication making it easier to identify the exact one here described. This unusual circumstance occurred in connection with the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was buried in the tomb of the rich man, Joseph of Arimathea. The verse is like an indicator, pointing to Him and saying, "This is the One who is described in Isaiah 53."

It is interesting that the fulfillment in Christ, which requires some explanation in our Christian version, should be more obvious in the Jewish translation!

The latter part of verse 9 shows a reason why the actual burial should be so different from what would have been expected. It was because "he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth." Joseph recognized that Jesus did not deserve to die on the cross. He had done no violence like Barabbas and the two thieves. There had been no deceit in His life; He alone of all who ever lived could say: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John 8:46).

Despite this fact it is pointed out again in verse 10 that he suffered the terrible death on the cross. "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief." We must pause here over the first phrase: "It hath pleased the LORD to bruise Him." It was not that He was involved in a situation which He could not escape. It was not the result of purely human circumstances. It was an act of God foreordained from before the foundation of the world. It was God's pleasure that this should come to Him. It was God's purpose that salvation should be attained in this way. "It pleased the LORD to bruise Him."

In connection with this phrase we should note the end of the verse: "the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand." God gave His Son to die on the cross, but He did not give Him in vain. What God has planned will be accomplished. Those who believe on Him are actually redeemed through His death. The sovereignty of God is the wonderful thought in this verse. Sin may rage; Satan may appear triumphant; things may seem hopeless and almost drive Christians to despair at times, but God's hand is always on the rudder and His plan is bound to succeed in the end. It was part of God's purpose that He should be bruised and God's full purpose will prosper in His hand.