

Week 7 GOD'S REMEDY FOR MAN'S SIN

Isaiah 53:6

“We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

In the early chapters of Genesis the Old Testament shadows of the cross began to emerge. Among these shadows is the revealing encounter of Abraham's sacrifice of his son Isaac in Genesis 22. Here we see a clear picture of the coming substitutionary death of Christ in the ram that took Isaac's place on the altar of sacrifice. Then we arrive at Exodus 12 and are introduced to the revealing story of the Passover Lamb, a sacrifice without blemish and spot. The blood of this sacrifice two things for the Israelites: deliverance from death and freedom from slavery. Then we arrive at Isaiah 53. This is one of the mountaintops of Scripture and the most perfect shadow, the most vivid and vibrant picture of the Lord Jesus found in the Old Testament. The first phrase of verse 6 is a metaphorical expression used repeatedly throughout Scripture: “we all, like sheep”. To begin to understand this passage we have to consider how it is that we resemble these woolly creatures, so dependent on their shepherd for their survival. There are several principles in play here that merit our thought.

Sheep are Dumb

Think about it, have you ever seen a trained sheep? No. Sheep are dumb; they cannot be trained to do anything, They tend to wander around and frequently become lost because they simply follow their appetite with their heads down. It's no wonder the prophet says, “we all, like sheep, have gone astray.” Most people are opinionated. They talk profusely about politics, sport and the like. However, how ignorant are so many people when it comes to life's greatest subject, God's plan of redemption and His remedy for sin! Yes, we are more like sheep than some of us might want to admit.

Sheep have no Sense of Direction

Sheep tend to simply wander and meander aimlessly along the hillside. This is not true of other animals. Many animals have an inner instinct that enables them to find their way home from great distances. But not sheep. They have no sense of direction. So many men and women go through life without any real sense of direction, void of any perceived purpose. Many simply exist and have never learned how to live because, like sheep, they have no sense of direction in life. Yes, “we all, like sheep, have gone astray”.

Sheep are Defenceless

Almost every animal has some type of defence mechanism. Rabbits can run. Cats can scratch. Dogs can bite. Bees can sting. Goats can butt .. Well , you get the point. But sheep? They are defenceless. They are totally unprepared for fight or for flight. They are virtually helpless. The person without the Lord Jesus Christ is like a sheep. They are helpless to get to the fold themselves. They are on their own against “the devil's schemes” (Ephesians 6:11); ill equipped for fight or flight. Since we find ourselves like sheep - dumb, without direction, and defenceless - and since “each of us has turned to his own way”, God has come to our rescue “and the Lord has laid on him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all.” There is no clearer explanation of what transpired on the cross of Calvary than these words of Isaiah 53:6. On the cross the Lord Jesus took our sin in His own body, bearing the wrath of God's punishment that we deserved. He suffered the hurt, the humiliation of our sin, the agony and the death we deserved to die. He died our death so that we could live His life. He took our sin so that we could take His righteousness. He died in my place and yours. What a Saviour!

As you memorise this verse this week, meditate on the fact that God does not have simply a remedy: He has the only remedy for our sin. **“We all, like sheep, have gone astray We have turned, every one, to his own way .. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”**