

3. THE CHANGING PERCEPTION OF LOCAL OBSERVERS

(3) He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of pain and acquainted with suffering; and like one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised and we did not esteem him. (4) He did indeed bear our pains and take away our diseases, yet we thought him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. (5) But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace fell upon him, and by his scourging we are healed. (6) All of us have gone astray like sheep; each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of all of us to fall on him.

This paragraph begins with a closer look at the humiliation that the Servant must endure in connection with His trial and death. Those who loudly acclaimed Him shrink away; even His disciples flee in terror. He suffers the pain and misery of scourging and insult. A crown of thorns is pressed down on His head, and wicked men ridicule Him. Even Peter, who said he was ready to die for Him, denies ever having known Him. Thus verse 3 is exactly fulfilled in the suffering and death of Jesus Christ.

Verse 4 has often been misunderstood, largely because two quite specific words have been taken in a rather general sense. The Hebrew makes a sharp contrast between the first and second parts of the verse. It puts great stress on the pronoun "he" at the beginning of the first part, in contrast to a similarly emphasized "we" in the second part, thus presenting a contrast between what he did and what we thought. This contrast is further indicated by the fact that the verse begins with a Hebrew word generally translated "surely" or "truly." In the attempt to bring out the contrast more fully, this word has been rendered as "indeed" in the translation above.

The first two verbs in the verse are common Hebrew words for "carrying" or "lifting," and generally also involve the idea of removing something or taking it away. The nouns ^{^38} used with them are literal words for physical suffering and infirmities. The King James rendering, "griefs" and "sorrows," is much too general. The clause pictures the healing ministry of