**Does “We Did Esteem Him Smitten Of God” Mean Jesus Was Not Smitten Of God?**

Isaiah 53:4b prophesies about Jesus “we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” I have seen many Christians recently contend this verse proves Jesus was NOT smitten of God. For example, Gary Eubanks wrote in an 11-7-2020 email to me about the verse “It says, ‘we ourselves esteemed Him … smitten of God,’ not ‘He was … smitten of God.’ Thus, this (part of the) verse actually says what I am claiming: that Jesus was not actually smitten by God.” Surely the unsoundness of this argument is readily apparent to all. Let’s discuss …

If I said “I esteem Ronald Reagan as a good president,” would my use of the word “esteem” mean Reagan was not a good president? Admittedly the sentence wouldn’t prove he was a good president, but it certainly wouldn’t mean he wasn’t good, would it? Thinking someone is a good president neither makes them a good president nor a bad one, right? I am confident Gary realizes this because you’ll notice he leaves out “stricken” and “afflicted” with his use of ellipses above. Meaning he realizes the same verse also says Jesus was esteemed stricken and afflicted, and Gary would certainly have to agree Jesus was actually stricken and afflicted (by the Jews through the Roman soldiers). So to avoid that difficulty with his argument, his quote leaves out the parts of the verse that would prove his point false.

Having said all that, we know for sure Jesus was smitten of God (not just that it appeared that way), as verse 10a of the same context says “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him.” The words “smitten” and “bruised” would be synonymous here, correct? So if we allow context to rule, we know for sure what Isaiah 53:4b is saying, Jesus was bruised/smitten of God. But as we’ve discovered, some gospel preachers only let context help decide meaning when it suites their purposes.

And what does it mean “it pleased the Lord to bruise him”? Of course the Father didn’t bruise Jesus directly. It just means God allowed (with a purpose in view) the wicked to smite Jesus. Does the word “pleased” mean the Father was sitting up in heaven enjoying every minute of Jesus’ suffering? No sane father could enjoy the torture of his own son. No, Isaiah 53:10a means God was pleased with the results of Jesus’ suffering and death – the salvation of mankind. This should motivate us to trust and obey God (Mark 16:16) to take advantage of that death.