***Isaiah 53:3-6 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, everyone, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.***

Over the next three Sundays, we’ll look at a few of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning Jesus, His life, death, and resurrection. It’s important that we understand and appreciate the prophecies made and fulfilled. When we sing Jesus Loves Me, we end with for the Bible tells me so. We don’t end with – for the Gospels tell me so. No, the Bible… the whole Bible tells us so. Isaiah shouts the love of the Savior, though Isaiah prophesied 750 years before Christ. He gives specifics that we can draw straight lines to in the New Testament. Often, we treat the Bible as if it were two separate collections, bound together for the convenience of carrying one book to church. The Truth is that the entire Bible tells us of Jesus’ love. Let’s draw some straight lines this morning.

 Verse 3 *He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.* Despised, rejected, a Man of sorrows acquainted with – seeing grief in person. Jesus came face to face with sorrows and grief. He was and is personal. He meets us in our sorrows, understands our grief. Let’s draw a straight line. In Luke 17:25, Jesus, speaking of His death, said - *But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation*. In Luke 23:18*,* we find the crowd crying*, And they all cried out at once, saying, “Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas.* They despised and rejected Him, in spite of His love, in spite of His healing, in spite of His provision. Matthew 26:67 *Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands*. Isaiah, 750 years before Christ, said – this is how the world will receive the Savior. It was so then, and my friends, it is so today. No name can stir such hateful responses as the name of Jesus. It happened then and it happens now.

 Verse 4 *Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.* Jesus never leaves us nor forsakes us. He bears our griefs and carries our sorrows. The people of that day had witnessed miracles, yet refused to see. Matthew 8:16-17 draws a straight line for us – *When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, 17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: “He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses.”* There is no greater infirmity than sin. It is sickness unto death. Yet, He will bear that sickness for us, even while He carries us in our sorrows and bears us up in our grief. In Luke 8:46, when the woman touched Him in the crowd, He bore her infirmity. In John 4:6, we find Him sitting down wearied on the well before meeting the woman. Fully God, fully human. We believed Him stricken, smitten, afflicted by God… all the while He knew that it is we that are smitten, stricken, afflicted with a desperately wicked heart, consumed by sin, men and women of unclean lips, and He loved us anyway.

 Verse 5 *But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.* Jesus, Holy, Innocent, Perfect. Notice it doesn’t say by our, but for our… wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, took our punishment for our peace… that we might receive peace. Now, BY His stripes we are healed. Let’s draw a straight line – Luke 22:63 *Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and beat Him.* Matthew 27:26 *Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.* But, before He is beaten, the people say something interesting in verse 25, meant one way, but destined to work out another - *And all the people answered and said, “His blood be on us and on our children.”* And by His blood upon us is exactly how our wages of sin, our chastisement becomes our peace. His stripes transfer by His blood and become our healing.

 Verse 6 *All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, everyone, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.* Straight line – Matt 9:35-36 *Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. 36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.* We are like sheep. We need a Shepherd. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life – if we are to come to the Father, it must be by Him. God laid the sins of the world upon Him 2 Cor 5:21 *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.* Through Faith, we are saved.

 This week, let’s start meditating on the Cross. Prophecies foretold what Christ has accomplished. Straight lines, if we will believe. Come to the Cross, cry out, and esteem Him! Cry not Barabbas, as the multitudes, but cry Christ, as those entering by the narrow gate.