



## **When a Lamb Saved the Sheep** **Isaiah 53:1-7**

*All we 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 (Isaiah 53:6—ESV).*

God inspired the prophet Isaiah to compare people to sheep. Sheep are prone to wander away from their shepherd and flock. They can eventually get lost, get into trouble, and sometimes get eaten by predators. People often act worse than sheep. God gave us minds, laws, and abilities to make good choices, but invariably at various times all of us have deliberately gone astray. Instead of following our Shepherd, we have chosen to go our own way. We have chosen the selfish and self-centered way instead of God's way. Everyone has meditated on sinful desires, and sometimes we have acted in ways that have brought harm to others and us. God loves us and sent His Son like a sheep to save us from our iniquity, our habitual practice of sin, and the eternal consequences of our disobedience. Isaiah wrote of him, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; *like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent*, so he opened not his mouth" (Isaiah 53:7). Isaiah wrote about the Messiah that God planned to send, and when the Messiah came, He died as a sacrificial lamb on the cross. When John went to heaven and saw Jesus: he saw "a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered" (Revelation 5:6), and yet the Lamb was standing alive on the throne of God. John also explained why God sent Jesus, "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:19). Jesus died on the cross as a sacrificial lamb so God in His great mercy could forgive us for our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. At the same time, God remained just, for His own righteous Son agreed to suffer in our place so we would not need to suffer God's just punishment for our disobedience to our Holy God. "He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).