Christ and Him Crucified

Isaiah records his prophecy some 700 to 750 years before Christ ever comes to the Earth. Following the death of Jesus on the cross, we see the Gospel being preached after the apostles received their inspiration from the Holy Spirit of God (Acts 1 & 2). The message and truth about Jesus Christ is spreading as Paul simply stated when writing to the church in Corinth, "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:20). Yet, one has to wonder, how did Isaiah know what to write about Jesus having never seen or met Him, nor being physically taught anything about what He would do for mankind? Did Isaiah understand fully what he was writing? Perhaps not, however, it is clear to the reader of his prophecy that he sincerely believed that what he was writing would occur because he declares that it was the "Lord" who was speaking (Isaiah 1:2).

Moving forward from Isaiah, about 700 to 750 years, we see his prophecy remembered and spoken from in the New Testament book of Acts. While traveling via chariot from Jerusalem to Gaza, an Ethiopian was reading from the prophecy of Isaiah - specifically from what we know as Isaiah 53:7-8. The Ethiopian is perplexed by what he is reading, likely because he does not know the story or truth about Jesus, never actually seeing or hearing Him nor hearing about Him. God sends a messenger, Phillip, to intercept him. Upon arrival, Phillip knows the prophecy the Ethiopian is reading and asks him, "Do you understand what you are reading?" (Acts 8:30)

Seemingly, the two men read the passage from Isaiah together and the Ethiopian asked Phillip a question. "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself

or of some other man?" (Acts 8:34) Phillip then begins to do that which Paul stated to the Corinthians, he preached about Jesus and His crucifixion (Acts 8:35). A very simple message that when heeded by the sincere heart will lead one to obedience (Acts 8:36-38).

Although we are not privy to everything Phillip said, perhaps he explained some of the points the Prophet Isaiah was making. First, that Jesus was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, and by His stripes, we are healed (Isaiah 53:5). Second, that Jesus was lead like a lamb to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7). Third, that He was killed even though He had committed no wrong (Isaiah 53:9). Moreover, that Jesus would see His seed and the labor of His soul - speaking of His resurrection and His continued glory - (Isaiah 53:10-11, Psalm 110:1, Hebrews 1:3).

No doubt, the Ethiopian left that encounter with Phillip with true peace of mind. He sought and he found. He knocked and the door was opened. He obeyed the Gospel, and just like those in Acts 2:47, God added him to the church. The Gospel message is simple. We just simply need to obey.