

Which answer? (3) Review of alternative answers

THE WRITER'S review of the various alternatives given as answers to the questions in the August issue ([p. 174](#)) are set out below.

The writer and Editor would welcome healthy disagreement, better solutions and better reasons, all with good Scriptural support, of course.

1	Isaiah 53:3. What is meant by “we hid as it were our faces from him”?	
1a	Take it at its face value.	Men shrinking at the pitiful sight of this loveliest of men, tortured on the cross, racked with pain, his life ebbing away.
1b	Follow the RV: “as one from whom men hide their face”.	Literally, according to <i>Speaker's Commentary</i> , this is, “as one from whom there is hiding of faces”. The authorities closed their minds to his words and their eyes to his miracles. The disciples did not listen when he told them of his death by crucifixion.
1c	Follow the RV margin: “he hid as it were his face from us”. See also the AV margin and the LXX.	He did not do so. He took upon himself the seed of Abraham (Heb. 2:16).
2	Genesis 4:13 reads, according to the AV, that Cain said to God, “My punishment is greater than I can bear”, but according to the RV margin, “Mine iniquity is greater than can be forgiven”. Which is correct?	
2a	The AV is correct.	God had cursed Cain and the ground; he was to become a fugitive and a vagabond, a wanderer without home or roots, a stranger likely to be put to death if found alone. He could not bear this.
2b	The RV margin is correct. But if so, how did he know?	It is evident from verses 3 and 4 that God had said what was acceptable sacrifice. For this to be the correct alternative, then presumably God had also explained about sin and the way to forgiveness.
3	In 2 Samuel 12:14 David is told by God that his child by Bathsheba would die, but in verse 16 we read, “David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth”. Why did David not accept God's decision?	
3a	He thought God might change His mind.	In Psalm 51:16 David says, “For Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt offering”. He knew sacrifice was not sufficient, but he also knew that “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (Jas. 5:16), so he prayed for the life of the child, though God had said it would die.
3b	He was only asking for relief of the child's suffering.	The verse says, “David therefore besought God for the child”, which could mean to alleviate its suffering; but verse 22 indicates that he was asking for the life of the child.
3c	He was really praying for the forgiveness of his own sin.	In Psalm 51:17 David says, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise”. David's own comment leads to this being a correct solution.
3d	He prayed because he could not help it. He had to pray.	How true of any man of God, especially the man after God's own heart, even in these circumstances!

4	Acts 13:33 reads in the AV, “God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus <i>again</i>; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten thee”, but the RV correctly leaves out “again”. Then what does the verse refer to?	
4a	Christ’s birth.	Paul might have mentioned the Lord’s birth in verse 23, but not in this context, although we accept that Paul spoke for longer and this is Luke’s précis of the critical essence of his speech.
4b	His baptism.	Likewise, verse 25 refers to John’s preaching and baptism of repentance, but this is not the context of verse 33.
4c	His resurrection.	The psalm confirms the action God took in raising His Son from the dead, which Paul likewise confirms in Romans 1:4: “declared to be the Son of God in power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord” (RV mg.). His birth had been questioned by the Jews, his resurrection is irrefutable.