

Isaiah

| SEASON 2

Group Guide:
Week 4

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

There are four components to a healthy group: Word, prayer, relationships, and reaching out. In this guide, we will study Isaiah 52 and 53 using inductive Bible study, which has three components: observation, interpretation, and application. As the leader of your group, feel free to use whatever parts of this guide most help you do this!

CONNECT BREAK THE ICE AND GET PEOPLE TALKING

- What is the weirdest “do-it-yourself tip” or “life hack” that you know?
- What is the most physical pain you’ve been in?
- Discipleship check-in:
 - Have you prayed and read your Bible consistently the past week?
 - Who is someone you’re praying to share Jesus with this week, and what’s one way you can love them well?

INTRODUCTION

This week we continue our flyover of the book of Isaiah in chapters 52 & 53. The passage we will focus on this week is the last of 4 “servant songs” in the book of Isaiah; the first three can be found in 42:1-4, 49:1-6, and 50:4-11. These passages lay out how Israel has failed in its designated mission as a light to the nations, and how God will accomplish this role Himself by “a new thing” (Isaiah 43:19): the coming Servant. Isaiah poetically describes a coming Servant of God, who will bring His people out of exile and then lead all the nations to the knowledge of God’s salvation and justice.

Unfortunately, this last servant song describes how He would be rejected, would suffer by the hands of His own people, and yet by God’s power would stand victorious and rewarded for standing in the gap for God’s people. God uses this servant as the substitutionary sacrifice for His rebellious people and their sin, even while they are still in rebellion.

OBSERVATIONS *WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?*

READ: Isaiah 52:1-12

DISCUSS:

- According to this passage, what will the salvation of Israel look like?
- What does this passage identify as God's motivation for redeeming His people?

READ: Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12

- What is the Servant in this passage going to endure?
- How does Isaiah say the Servant will be rewarded?
- What benefit does the Servant's suffering bring to the rest of the world?

INTERPRETATION *WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?*

DISCUSS:

- This passage presents the suffering of the Servant as both i) something that humanity is directly responsible for, and ii) divinely orchestrated. How do we reconcile these two ideas? What does this teach us about God's character and will for humanity?
- Compare/contrast the treatment of Israel in the first passage vs. the treatment of the Servant in the second passage. How does God care for His people (even when they rebel), and at what cost to Himself?
- How does this passage fit into the broader storyline we've been hearing in Isaiah?

APPLICATION *WHAT DO WE DO NEXT?*

DISCUSS:

- **Severity of Sin:** At this point in the story of Israel, their sin has become ingrained as a part of them, so entrenched that only God can provide a way out. Despite the fact that God brought His people out of exile, there is still a need for a further deliverance from the sin within themselves. And when He does bring that salvation through His Servant, those same sinful people reject, despise, and ultimately kill Him. This is the heavy price of sin: death. The death of us, and then of God's Son in our place.
 - Where have you treated sin lightly? Where have you tried to overcome your sin yourself, instead of seeking God's salvation?
- **God's Sovereign Will:** On the flip side, this passage was written over 700 years before the birth of Jesus, who would ultimately fulfill this role of Suffering Servant. God, in His sovereign power, orchestrated this work of redemption over centuries, working in spite of the rebellion of His people.
 - Where have you seen God work out His will in spite of your rebellion? In what ways is this "good news" of "peace" (v. 52:7)?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

As a group leader studying the book of Isaiah could feel daunting and intimidating. Please know that as your staff we are ready and available to help you in any way possible. Two resources that will be helpful are the Bible Project and the Gospel Coalitions course on Isaiah. Links to each of them are below and use them as you see fit.

[Bible Project resources on the Book of Isaiah](#)

[The Gospel Coalitions course on the Book of Isaiah](#)

PRAYER

Praise Jesus who comes to be our suffering servant despite our consistent rebellion. Pray that you would take sin more seriously in your life while embracing God's sovereign will.