

ANOINTED

TO SUFFER › TO SERVE › TO SAVE

LEADER GUIDE

A Flexible Inductive Study of

ISAIAH 53

by

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TO SUFFER • TO SERVE • TO SAVE
ISAIAH 53

LESSON ONE

The Mysterious Servant

Getting to Know Your Class	10 Minutes
Introduction to Class/Inductive Study	15 Minutes
Opening Questions/Presuppositions:	5 Minutes
Isaiah 53 Observation	30 Minutes
Interpretation—Cross-references on Servant	

General Formatting

The Leader Guide will help you prompt your students toward a logical discussion that will help them to synthesize what they have learned and apply it to their lives. Here are examples of the main elements with descriptions of what will appear in each section.

ASK

Main question will appear like this in bold italic type.

(Additional follow-up questions to help students with responses will be in parentheses just like these sentences are. You'll use these and others of your own if they need more prompting to answer).

The section below the main question will include some of the main points we hope they see.

Don't be alarmed if they don't land on every point mentioned, but do watch to see that they are tracking main topics.

If they are not, use the follow-up questions that are in parentheses (like you see above) or ask other questions to help direct them back to the text for their answers.

APPLICATION**ASK**

You'll also find some application questions woven in to the lesson. We'll usually leave extra space for you to add more of your own.

Your application questions (optional):

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR CLASS

- Introduce yourself
- Have class introduce themselves
- Set boundaries

Make sure you allocate adequate time the first week of class for general introductions and ground rules. If you're teaching men or a mixed group, estimate based on the size of your class. If you're teaching women, take this time and double it. Asking everyone to share their name and respond to a specific question will help keep things moving. If you ask for "a little bit about yourself," you're sure to get more than a little bit!

Start out by introducing yourself in a concise manner to set the tone. Feel free to use an icebreaker game or other ideas you have to help people connect.

You'll also want to establish ground rules during Week One. The time to set effective boundaries in any relationship is the first meeting. A boundary can always be relaxed, but it is very difficult to establish or strengthen if you do not set it properly at the start. This applies both to how you lead your class discussions as well as how you allow your class to interact with you throughout the week. E-mail is usually the best way to stay in touch initially.

Let your class know that it is your job as the facilitator to keep the discussion on track and that you may from time to time have to reel a person in, stop a rabbit trail, or discontinue until after class an interesting but off-topic discussion. Also let them know that you do not have all the answers. No one has all the answers, even those who have studied a lifetime.

While acknowledging your limitations may seem uncomfortable at first, you'll find it is freeing for everyone! If someone asks a question you can't answer, either look into it further yourself or (preferably) assign it to the questioner for further study. This will draw out future teachers – who come back with it answered and prepared to share. Assigning questions also helps people begin discerning what makes a germane question. Encouraging your class to ask questions and helping them to learn how to ask right questions is a huge part of your job as a teacher. Still, as important as questions are, more questions can be asked than we have biblical answers for. Sometimes you will simply have to answer with an honest, "I don't know" or "The text doesn't seem to answer that question for us."

INTRODUCTION TO INDUCTIVE STUDY

Observation | Interpretation | Application

Even if your students are familiar with inductive Bible study, take some time to review the basics.

You'll want to impress on your students that inductive Bible study simply means the Bible is our main source of truth. Before looking for insights from people and commentaries about the Bible, we get into the Word of God itself. We go to the primary source and learn to discover truth for ourselves. Inductive Bible study involves three basic components: observation, interpretation, and application.

1. Observation

This is a very interactive process, well worth the time because the truths you discover for yourself will be accurate and profound. It begins by asking the five W and H questions.

Who is speaking? Who is this about? Who are the main characters? Who is the author speaking to?

What subjects and/or events are covered in the chapter? What do you learn about the people, the events, and the teachings from the text? What instructions are given?

When did or will the events recorded occur?

Where did or will this happen? Where was it said?

Why is something said? Why will an event occur? Why this time, person, and/or place?

How will it happen? How will it be done? How is it illustrated?

Careful observation is the foundation that leads to accurate interpretation – discovering what the text means.

One important part of observing the text involves identifying key words. A key word helps to “unlock” the meaning of the text. It is vital to understanding the text and might be often repeated.

2. Interpretation

The more you observe, the greater you'll understand God's Word. Since Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture we'll be looking at contexts and cross-references to help us understand God's message that was communicated to the original audience.

Observation and interpretation lead to application.

3. Application

After we've observed the text and discovered the meaning, we need to think and live accordingly. Although the text of Scripture has one correct interpretation – what God meant as He inspired the author to write to his original readers – we can have numerous applications. The result is a transformed life – the more you and I are in the Word of God and adjusting our thinking and behavior to its precepts for life, the

more we are changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ! He is the living Word of God who became flesh, the Savior of the world, our coming King of kings!

It is exciting to learn and know about the faith of others. It is transforming to live what we have learned!

INTRODUCTION TO FLEXIBLE STUDIES

- The Basic Elements
- Main lesson material
- FYI boxes
- ONE STEP FURTHER and other sidebar boxes
- DIGGING DEEPER boxes

While the study is self-explanatory, reinforce its flexibility with your students. Direct them to the “How to use this study” page of their books and encourage them to find a level of study that brings joy and not guilt. They can do more one week, less the next; they can mix and match and find the fit that is right.

You may have students who are overburdened and overbooked. Piling on and guilt-ing them with a ton of homework will not fix the problem. Rather, help them find the joy and sweetness of God’s Word and ask His Spirit to begin healing through the power of the Word. Take some time to review student page 2 with them and let them know you believe in them and their ability to use this material.

Take special care in stressing the flexibility to long-time Precept-Upon-Precept® students as many have a finish-every-question-at-all-cost mentality. Such discipline in studying God’s Word is beautiful. The every-last-question mind set, however, can throw people off with this series. Because the material is designed to flex to very advanced students, the volume of material can overwhelm people who force themselves through every question and sidebar.

Assure your class that most students won’t finish every question every week by design. Some weeks they will, but probably not every week. If every student finished every week, the study would not be flexing to meet the needs of the most advanced students. The goal in allowing the material to flex is not to have people study less; it is to have each person take the next appropriate step from where they currently are and to study and apply more as they are continually drawn into deeper relationship with Jesus.

OPENING QUESTIONS AND PRESUPPOSITIONS

ASK

What is your view of the Bible? Why?

(Do you think it is a work of man? A work of God? A little of both? Or are you not quite sure?)

READ ALOUD: Isaiah 52:13–Isaiah 53:12**OBSERVATION****ASK**

What do we know about the “Who?” and “When?” of Isaiah 52:13–Isaiah 53?

(Who wrote it? About when was it written?)

Isaiah prophesied, according to Isaiah 1:1, during the reigns of Judah's kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

This was approximately 700 years before the birth of Jesus.

His primary audience was the Southern Kingdom of Judah comprised of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, as well as many of the Levites and some from other parts of Israel who had settled within Judah's borders.

He prophesied in this section about a mysterious and unnamed “Servant.”

ASK

“Who” or “what” is Isaiah 52:13–Isaiah 53:12 about?

(What basic information did you learn about “the Servant” as you marked references in the text? What did you list?)

“My Servant” refers to the LORD's servant, 52:13, 53:11, but He is left unnamed.

For a time He will be “high and lifted up and greatly exalted,” 52:13.

He will have his appearance “marred more than any man,” 52:14.

Nothing in his appearance will set him apart or attract people to him, 53:2.

He will be ill-esteemed, 53:3.

He will be physically beaten and afflicted, 53:5, 7.

He will carry others' iniquities, 53:6.

He will be “cut off out of the land of the living,” 53:8.

He will be without violence or deceit, 53:9.

He will be a guilt offering, 53:10.

He is “the Righteous One” who will justify, 53:11.

He will intercede, 53:12.

The Servant's both high and low stations *appear* incongruent.

Digging Deeper

More of the Story: The Servant Songs

Digging Deeper sections will help you identify future teachers. Pay attention to who dives in here regularly!

ASK

Did anyone have a chance to look at other Servant Songs this week?

If “No,” smile and move on!

If “Yes,”

ASK

***What did you learn as you studied?
What is the general context of Isaiah 40–54?***

Isaiah 40 flashes forward to a time still future to Isaiah and brings words of comfort to the people of Judah in Babylonian captivity and beyond them.

ASK

Where are the other Servant Songs in the text and how do they compare to Isaiah 53?

The Servant Songs appear in the following passages:

- Isaiah 42:1-9
 - The Servant will bring justice (vv. 1, 3)
 - The Servant will be a light to the nations (v. 6) who opens blind eyes and sets prisoners free (v. 7)
- Isaiah 49:1-13
 - The Servant was called from and formed in the womb (vv. 1, 5)
 - The Servant will bring Israel back to God (v. 5)
 - The Servant will be a light to the nations to bring salvation beyond the Jewish people to the end of the earth (v. 6)
 - Through the Servant, God will show compassion to His people and comfort them (vv. 10, 13)
- Isaiah 50:4-9
 - The Servant is afflicted without cause, but does not fight back (vv. 5-6)

INTERPRETATION

ASK

What in this text points us to who the Servant is . . . or isn't?

The Servant is exalted at times and downtrodden at others.

The Servant suffers on behalf of others.

While the Servant's suffering has led some to conclude that this text refers to the nation of Israel 53:9's descriptions of no violence and no deceit rule this out. Elect Israel is being narrowed down ... ultimately to a single person.

ASK

What does the text say about the Servant's relationship to sin?

(Does He have any sin? What does He do with regard to others' sin?)

The Servant Himself is sinless.

He is referred to as "the Righteous One," 53:11.

He has done "no violence" and there has not been "any deceit in His mouth," 53:9.

He renders Himself as a perfect guilt offering, 53:10.

Yet, the Servant bears the iniquities of "the many" transgressors (53:6, 11) and is numbered with them (53:12), having been:

- "pierced through" for our transgressions, 53:5
- "crushed" for our iniquities, 53:5
- chastened and scourged, 53:5
- "cut off" for the transgression of His people, 53:8

ASK

What does the text teach about sin and its consequences?

(How many people go astray or turn away? What consequences follow transgressions and iniquities?)

All people go astray like sheep and turn to their own way, 53:6. Although originally spoken to Israel, this is universally true.

Sin comes with a cost. The servant bore the stroke that was "due" God's people, 53:8.

The LORD requires an appropriate offering for sin, 53:10.

A Righteous One can justify another by bearing their sin, 53:11.

APPLICATION**ASK**

***Do you think people take their sin as seriously as God does?
Why/why not?***

What about you?

If we don't take sin seriously, where can that lead?

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION: Cross References In Isaiah For “Servant” (Hebrew: *Ebed*)**ASK**

What did you learn about the Hebrew word “ebed”?

“Servant” translates the Hebrew *ebed*, a common word that appears 800 times in the Old Testament.

ASK

Who are the servants and who do they belong to in each of the references you looked at this week?

- **Isaiah 14:2**
People taken as spoils of war and ruled over by others.
- **Isaiah 20:3-4**
The prophet Isaiah is called the LORD’s servant.
- **Isaiah 22:20-21**
Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah who served King Hezekiah, is also called the LORD’s servant.
- **Isaiah 37:35**
King David is called the LORD’s servant.
- **Isaiah 41:8-9**
The nation of Israel (as descended from Jacob) is referred to as the LORD’s servant.
- **Isaiah 42:18-22**
Again, the servant is the people of Israel. They are described as a blind and deaf messenger, “a people plundered and despoiled.”

ASK

Do any of these match up with the servant described in Isaiah 53? Why/why not?

No. None is sinless like the Servant in Isaiah 53.

While some argue that it refers to the Jewish people who have suffered down through the ages, as we mentioned earlier (p. 6), the fact that the Servant is without violence and deceit rules this option out.

The Jewish people (and all people!) needed a sin bearer: the sinless Servant bears their sin.

ASK

What needs does the Servant of Isaiah 53 meet?

He helps those with sorrows and griefs by bearing them, 53:4.

He takes the punishment for transgressions and iniquities, 53:5, 8, 11, 12.

He brings peace (53:5), healing (53:5), justification (53:11), and intercession (53:12) to those broken by their own sin.

APPLICATION

ASK

How is the servant “good news” for people under the burden of sin, grief, and shame?

What difference has having a sin-bearer made to you?

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION: THE “SERVANT OF THE LORD”

ASK

Based on Isaiah 52:13–53:12, what possible answers might people have to the question, “Who is the servant of the Lord?”

While your students may all jump to “Jesus,” help them reason through why they believe what they believe based on specifics in the texts.

APPLICATION

ASK

What benefits does the Servant offer that you find yourself needing today?

LESSON TWO

Who Has Believed? Have You?

Review	5 Minutes
Isaiah 53:1 The Arm of the LORD –Exodus 6:6 –Deuteronomy 5:15	15 Minutes
Isaiah 53:2 The Tender Shoot –2 Samuel 7:11b-13 –Isaiah 11:1-10	15 Minutes
Revealed Truth –John 12:27-43	15 Minutes
Memorizing	10 Minutes

REVIEW

ASK

What basics do you remember about Isaiah 53?

(Who wrote it? When? What is it about? What is the big question?)

Isaiah prophesied approximately 700 years before Jesus.

The Servant Song (Isaiah 52:13–Isaiah 53) describes a mysterious and unnamed servant of the LORD.

The servant will, at different times, be highly exalted and also roundly rejected.

“Servant” (*ebed*) is a very common word and used of everything from common slaves to great men of faith. At times the phrase “Servant of the LORD” is used to refer to the nation of Israel.

READ ALOUD: Isaiah 52:13–53:12**“THE LORD”**

Last week as we observed the whole Servant Song, we started out by looking at the “Servant.” This week we looked more closely at the LORD Himself as we marked.

OBSERVATION**ASK**

What did you learn about the LORD and His relation to the Servant by marking references to the LORD in Isaiah 53?

(Did you make a list? What did you list?)

- The “arm of the LORD” has been revealed, 53:1.
- The Servant grew up before the LORD, 53:2.
- The LORD caused our iniquity to fall on the Servant, 53:6.
- The LORD “was pleased to crush” the Servant and put Him to grief, 53:10.
- The LORD’s “good pleasure” will prosper in the Servant’s hand, 53:10.
- The LORD will allot the Servant “a portion with the great,” 53:12.

Almost everything that is said about the LORD in this passage is in relation to the Servant. The Servant bears the iniquity of others, but the LORD causes it to fall on Him. The LORD eventually brings good to the Servant and the justified out of a dire situation.

READ ALOUD: Isaiah 53:1-2

- 1 *Who has believed our message?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?*
- 2 *For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot,
And like a root out of parched ground;
He has no stately form or majesty
That we should look upon Him,
Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.*

ASK

What is Isaiah 53:1-2 about? What two main questions are asked?

The verses introduce the message, the arm of the LORD, and the Servant.

The Servant grows up before the LORD and is an unlikely hero.

Two questions are asked: 1. “Who has believed our message?” and 2. “To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”

INTERPRETATION

Isaiah 52:13–53:12 is the Word of God delivered through the prophet Isaiah. The point of view from which it is spoken, however, is not as clear. If the point of view

were either God's or Isaiah's, we would expect the phrase: *"Who has believed My (or my) report?"* The words, however, are delivered from the perspective of a group of people speaking them.

ASK

What is the point of view from which this message is delivered?

(Who might the "our" of "our message" refer to? What are some possibilities based on the groups either mentioned or implied in the near context?)

Some possibilities include:

- The "sprinkled nations" and kings of Isaiah 52:15.
- Isaiah's contemporaries.
- Believing Israel.

ASK

How can we reason through these options?

(What do we know about each of these possibilities?)

The Nations: According to Isaiah 52:15, the Messiah "will" sprinkle nations and kings "will" shut their mouths on account of Him. This seems to be a picture of *future* Gentile belief in the Messiah, not of those who would bring a message to the Israel of Jesus' generation.

The Contemporaries: While this is technically a prophecy of Isaiah, the "our" seems to indicate a different point of view rather than simply more than one messenger. The messengers include themselves with those who rejected the incarnate Christ.

Future Believing Israel: Future believing Israel makes the most sense as the point of view through which Isaiah delivers the message. This group rejected Jesus initially, but eventually will acknowledge and accept Him as Messiah

ASK

What is the message?

(What does it tell us about the Servant? What does it tell us about mankind?)

The message is about the wrongly-esteemed Servant who grew up in an unexpected place but turned out to be an innocent and eventually exalted sin-bearer and intercessor.

The message also includes the unpleasant truth about sin. Man needs a sin-bearer because all men stray and turn aside to please themselves.

The message is the Gospel proclaimed in detail 700 years in advance of Jesus' birth.

APPLICATION**ASK**

Why did the Jews reject their Messiah?

Why do people today?

Generally, what are some common barriers to belief? For Jewish people? For others?

Take some time to let your class discuss barriers to belief for both Jewish and non-Jewish people. Add additional discussion questions below as needed.

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION: Cross-References for “the Arm of the LORD”**ASK**

What did you learn about “the arm of the LORD” from the cross-references?

The “arm of the LORD” refers to God’s strength to save.

Arm translates the Hebrew root *zeroa*.

In Exodus 6:6, the arm of the LORD is associated with God delivering Israel from their oppressors and redeeming them.

In Deuteronomy 5:15, Israel is to remember that the LORD brought Israel out of Egyptian slavery by “a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.”

ASK

How do you think this helps us interpret the phrase in Isaiah 53:1?

It alerts readers to a saving work that God is going to do for His people.

Likely “the arm of the LORD” in this context refers specifically to Jesus.

APPLICATION**ASK**

How does knowing God as Deliverer and Savior bring peace in both the big and little things of life?

Give your class some time to discuss how this applies to specifics in their lives.

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION: Cross References for “The Tender Shoot”

Second Samuel 7 and Isaiah 11 shed additional light on Isaiah 53:2’s “tender shoot.”

2 SAMUEL 7:11b-13**ASK**

What did you learn about David’s descendant in 2 Samuel 7:11b-13?

The LORD promised to raise up a descendant from David and to establish his throne forever.

Solomon built the temple, but finished poorly so this “descendant” has to be someone else.

ISAIAH 11:1-10**ASK**

How is the shoot described in Isaiah 11?

Isaiah 11:1 speaks of a specific “shoot” that will come from the stem of Jesse (King David’s father).

The “shoot” will come from the line of Jesse/David, 11:1.

The Spirit of the LORD will be upon Him, 11:2.

He will be characterized by righteousness, 11:4-5, 53:11.

His rule will be characterized by peace, 11:6-9.

The nations will acknowledge Him, 11:10, 52:15.

ASK***How does Isaiah 11:1-10 compare with Isaiah 53?***

While Isaiah 53 stresses the suffering of the “tender shoot” (past to us, but future to its original audience), Isaiah 11 focuses on his restoration of all things and his righteous rule (still future).

APPLICATION**ASK**

If you were expecting a forever-kingdom of peace, how would the idea of a suffering deliverer sit with you? Would you have believed the message? Why/why not?

How can listening to other people and trying to understand them better help us live as God's ambassadors?

Let your class discuss how believers can act wisely as God's ambassadors to those around them.

Your application questions (optional):

OBSERVATION**The Servant's Early Years****ASK**

Going back to Isaiah 53:1-2, what do we learn about the Servant?

He grows up before God like a tender shoot, 53:2.

He is like a root that comes from parched ground, v. 2. In other words, He comes from an unlikely place.

He doesn't look like anything special, 53:2.

Nothing about His appearance attracts people, 53:2.

In short, the Servant does not fit the traditional picture of a hero. He seems to come from out of nowhere with nothing to commend Him.

ASK

How does the Servant's description differ from what people usually look for in a hero?

Let your class discuss how the Servant differs from secular culture's perception of a heroic figure or deliverer.

INTERPRETATION: Cross-Reference on Revealed Truth**JOHN 12:27-43****ASK**

What is the context for the John 12:27-43 cross-reference?

Jesus has just raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11) and now predicts His own death (John 12).

ASK

What is happening in John 12:27-36? What did you learn about Jesus from these verses?

Jesus becomes "troubled" (Greek: *tarasso*) and prays, but submits to God's purpose, 12:27.

Jesus speaks of being lifted up from the earth which indicates that He will die by crucifixion, 12:32-33.

He continues to call people to belief while He, the Light, is still there, 12:36.

ASK

How does John 12:37-43 help us understand and interpret Isaiah 53?

John writes that the unbelieving people of his day fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy of Isaiah 53:1 (John 12:38) and Isaiah 6:10 (John 12:40).

Still, while many disbelieved, many others did believe what had been revealed (John 12:42).

ASK

What do people need in order to be able to believe?

Believing the truth about Jesus involves both revelation (12:38) and eyes that can see (12:40).

APPLICATION

ASK

Who did Jesus declare truth to? What can we learn from this?

Jesus declared the Gospel to everyone.

We don't know how God is working in hearts, so we speak the truth in love and let Him do the saving.

Your application questions (optional):

APPLICATION

ASK

Have you believed the message? Do you know the message well enough to share it with others? Are you sharing it?

Let your class discuss this and share encouragements and concerns.

Add additional discussion questions for your group as needed.

Your application questions (optional):

MEMORIZING

If you have extra time, use it to help your class memorize or review their memorization of Isaiah 53:1-2 and begin memorizing Isaiah 53:4-5.

ASK

Does anyone have any favorite memorizing tools or methods?

With any remaining time, let your class discuss and share helpful tools and successful methods.

LESSON THREE

Despised and Forsaken

Review and Memory Work	5 Minutes
Overview and Isaiah 53:3-4	15 Minutes
Cross-References: –Matthew 2:16-23 –Mark 6:1-6 –John 7:1-8	20 Minutes
Cross-References: –John 15:18-27 –Matthew 8:14-17	20 Minutes
Memorizing	10 Minutes

REVIEW

ASK

What basics do you remember about Isaiah 53?

(Who wrote it? When? What is it about? What is the big question?)

It is a prophecy of Isaiah who lived about 700 years before Jesus.

It describes a mysterious servant of the LORD.

It proclaims the Gospel in the Old Testament.

ASK

How has the memorizing been going? Does anyone want to recite what they've memorized?

Do NOT pressure anyone to do this. Offer the opportunity and a little bit of encouragement, but no pressure.

READ ALOUD Isaiah 53**OBSERVATION****ASK**

What did you learn about the Servant's rejection?

(How did people view Him? Who despised Him and why?)

People despised, forsook, and hid their faces from the Servant, 53:3.

The Servant was a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," 53:3.

"We" did not esteem Him, 53:3.

ASK

Who does the "we" refer to?

Likely the Jewish people.

He is despised and forsaken because the people think God has smitten and afflicted Him for something wrong He has done, 53:4.

Your class might note a similarity with Job whose friends thought his afflictions were a result of sin in his life.

ASK

What do they think about the Servant's relationship to God?

They think God is out to get Him. His hardship, in their estimation, is His own fault.

REPEATED WORD PAIRS

This section will reinforce with your class what they answered in the previous section. If they have covered everything sufficiently, feel free to skip to the INTERPRETATION section.

ASK

What word pairings did you notice in Isaiah 53:3-4?

1. He was **despised** and forsaken of men, v. 3a.
He was **despised** and we did not esteem Him, v. 3d.
2. [He was] a man of **sorrows** and acquainted with grief, v. 3b.
And our **sorrows** He carried, v. 4b.
3. [He was] a man of sorrows and acquainted with **grief**, v. 3b.
Surely our **griefs** He Himself bore, v. 4a.
4. He was despised and we did not **esteem** Him, v. 3d.
Yet we ourselves **esteemed** Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted, v. 4c, d.

ASK

Comparing and considering the repeated word pairings: How was the Servant viewed?

He was viewed negatively—despised, forsaken, ill-esteemed.

Who despised the Servant and why?

He was despised and forsaken by His own people because He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Whose sorrows and griefs did He carry?

He carried the sorrow and grief of the very people who despised Him for it!

INTERPRETATION: Word Studies**ASK**

Did any of you do the word studies in the ONE STEP FURTHER sections? What did you learn about “despised,” “forsaken,” “sorrows,” and “grief”?

Despised (Hebrew: *bazah*, used 42 times in the Old Testament): to disdain or hold in contempt.

Besides the two occurrences in chapter 53, this word is used in Isaiah only one other time, again to describe the Servant in Isaiah 49:7.

You may want to read Isaiah 49 aloud in class as a cross-reference.

Forsaken (Hebrew: *chadel*, used only 3 times in the Old Testament): rejected, refused, or fleeing. The Hebrew root is associated with ceasing or stopping.

Sorrows (Hebrew: *makov*, 16 uses in Old Testament): also translated in the NASB as sufferings, pain (10), and painful.

Its first appearance in the Bible is in Exodus 3:7 where God in speaking of the Hebrews' affliction in Egypt says “I am aware of their sufferings [*makov*].”

According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, while the Hebrew root can be used of physical pain, it more often shows “mental anguish” or a combination of both. (Oswalt, John N. “940 בָּאָכ.” Edited by R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1999.)

Grief (Hebrew: *choli*, 24 uses in the Old Testament): translated “grief/s” in Isaiah 53 (NASB) but elsewhere almost exclusively “sickness.”

The sickness may be physical or spiritual.

Jesus certainly “took ... infirmities” and “carried away ... diseases” from many in His day (Matthew 8:17).

APPLICATION

ASK

Do you ever think that God does not understand your pain? Do these verses speak to that? If so, how?

One who has endured pain and suffering understands pain and suffering.

Let your students discuss and apply.

Your application questions (optional):

APPLICATION

ASK

Are there sorrows and griefs you need to ask Jesus to carry for you today?

What happens when we try to carry our own sorrows and griefs?

Let your students apply this by considering the adverse affects of trying to bear our own burdens.

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION

Discuss the cross-references from Matthew 2, Mark 6, and John 7 with your class, focusing on the opposition and rejection Jesus faced throughout His life.

MATTHEW 2—His Birth**ASK**

What is the context for the Matthew 2:16-23 cross-reference?

Jesus has been born in Bethlehem

The Magi have come and gone and King Herod realizes they aren't coming back to bring him info.

ASK

What is Herod up to in Matthew 2:16-23 and why?

Herod realizes the Magi have tricked him and left another way.

He becomes enraged and calls for the execution of all male children two-years old and under in the area of Bethlehem.

In his zeal to squash a rival to his throne, he fulfills a prophecy made by Jeremiah.

ASK

What did you learn about God in this passage?

(How does He show Himself as protector?)

He protects Jesus by causing the Magi to return another way.

He sends Joseph to Egypt.

He tells Joseph when to come back and where to go.

APPLICATION**ASK**

How easy or hard do you find it to trust God as your protector or the protector of your family?

If it's hard, why do you think that is?

If it's easy, what truth about God holds you?

Let your class discuss this.

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION**MARK 6—His Hometown****ASK**

What is the context for the Mark 6:1-6 cross-reference?

Having grown up in Nazareth, Jesus returns to His hometown only to find rejection awaiting Him.

ASK

What kind of reception does Jesus find at home? Does this surprise you?

Jesus is rejected at home. Mark says they “took offense” (Greek: *skandalizo*) at Him. The cross was the supreme stumbling block to the Jewish people, but even Jesus’ presence in Nazareth caused them to “take offense.”

ADDITIONAL CROSS REFERENCES:

These are not in the lesson, but your class may find them helpful to read together.

- **Isaiah 28:16** – The cornerstone is prophesied.
- **Romans 9:33** – Jesus is the stone of stumbling and rock of offense that people must believe in.
- **1 Corinthians 1:23** – Christ crucified is a stumbling block to the Jews.
- **Galatians 5:11** – The cross is a stumbling block.
- **1 Peter 2:6-8** – Jesus is the stone the builders rejected that became the corner stone.

APPLICATION**ASK**

Has anyone close to you ever taken offense at you because of Jesus? How did you handle that?

Let your class discuss how Jesus’ example can comfort them and give them an example of how to live in the face of rejection.

Your application questions (optional):

APPLICATION**ASK**

How can Jesus' example help you?

Again, let your class discuss.

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION**JOHN 7—Jesus at the Feast****ASK**

What is the context of John 7:1-8?

(What had happened at the end of John 6?)

In the face of some difficult teaching, many of Jesus' disciples were no longer "walking with Him."

Jesus has been facing Jewish threats in Israel's southern region of Judea.

ASK

What is happening to Jesus in John 7:1-8?

(How are different groups responding to Him at this point in His ministry?)

John 7 records Jesus' ministry in Israel's northern region of Galilee.

His brothers travel to Jerusalem to the Feast of Booths, but Jesus waits for the right time to go.

Some Judean Jews want to kill Him.

His brothers don't believe Him and are mocking.

The "world" is beginning to hate Him because He is bringing their sin to light.

APPLICATION**ASK**

Why do people—then and now—hate Jesus?

Have you ever been hated because you stood for specific truth?

Do you think that knowing people will hate you for being a Christian will prepare you for it? Why/why not?

Let your class discuss. Encourage them to continue to look to Scripture for how to respond.

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION**JOHN 15:18-27—Opposition We Can Expect to Face****ASK**

What is the greater context of John 15:18-27?

The Upper Room Discourse (John 13–17) records Jesus' final words to His disciples before going to the cross.

ASK

What does Jesus teach/warn His disciples in John 15:18-27?

(What did he tell them about “the world”?)

The world loves its own.

The world hated Jesus and will hate those who belong to Him.

The world is going to persecute them.

APPLICATION**ASK**

What is the normal human response to hatred?

We often hate in return. At the very least, we become super riled up.

Your application questions (optional):

APPLICATION**ASK**

How should we as believers respond?

(What specifically can we take from the text? What other Scripture can we bring to bear?)

Let your class discuss.

Remember the example of Jesus and His words that the world's hated/persecution of us is because of our identification with Him.

Remember that we have the Holy Spirit.

Your application questions (optional):

APPLICATION**ASK**

Are we tempted to get the world to love us? If so, How?

(Do we ever stay silent when we should speak up? When might it be proper to be quiet? Do we try to win the world with worldly methods? etc.)

Let your class discuss this.

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION: Healing Cross-Reference

Matthew cites Jesus' healing of Peter's mother-in-law as a fulfillment of Isaiah 53:4.

MATTHEW 8:14-17—Healing**ASK**

What's the setting of Matthew 8:14-17?

Jesus is at Peter's house and Peter's mother-in-law is sick with a fever.

ASK

What happens in this passage?

(What does Jesus do while He is there? Who are the primary people involved?)

Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law at Peter's home.

When Jesus touches her hand the fever leaves and her sickness disappears.

Others are brought to Him and he casts out evil spirits "with a word."

He heals those who are sick.

ASK

How does this tie in with Isaiah 53?

(Who does Matthew think the Servant is?)

Matthew says Jesus fulfills Isaiah's prophecy that the Servant "took our infirmities and carried away our diseases." Matthew clearly believes that Jesus is the prophesied Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 53.

Jesus carried away sin and also healed physical sickness.

The fact that He physically healed people demonstrated that He had God's authority to forgive sins. (See Matthew 9:6, Mark 2:10, Luke 5:24.)

APPLICATION**ASK**

What concerns do you typically dismiss as being either too big or too small for God?

Is there something specific you need to trust God for today?

(What action can you take? Is it taking a step of faith into an unknown or risky area? Giving even when you're not sure how God is going to provide for you? etc.)

Let your class discuss the issues they don't bring to God in prayer because they think they are either too difficult or too insignificant.

Your application questions (optional):

APPLICATION

ASK

What kinds of situations most prompt you to say or think, “No one understands!”?

What truths from God’s Word can you bring against this thinking?

Again, let your class discuss application with one another.

Your application questions (optional):

MEMORIZING

If you have extra time, use it to help your class review their memory verses.

LESSON FOUR

Crushed for Our Iniquities

Review	5 Minutes
Overview	10 Minutes
Suffering –Luke 18:31-34 –Matthew 27:17-26 –John 19:31-37, Zechariah 12:10 (additional references)	20 Minutes
Sin-Bearing –Matthew 1:20-24 –John 1:29-45 –Luke 5:17-26	20 Minutes
Memorizing	5 Minutes

REVIEW

ASK

How has the memorizing been going? Does anyone want to recite what they've memorized?

Do NOT pressure anyone to do this. Offer the opportunity and a little bit of encouragement, but no pressure.

ASK

What truths have you been applying from our study so far?

READ ALOUD Isaiah 53**OBSERVATION****ASK**

In marking references to “we/us,” pronouns that refer to the Servant, and the “LORD” in verses 5-6, what did you learn about each? How are they all related?

(What did you learn about the “we/us”? What did you learn about the “Servant”? What did you learn about the “LORD”?)

We/us . . .

“We” bring everything bad to the table: transgressions, iniquities, and behaviors that result in chastening and scourging.

Every single person has gone his own way, done his own thing. In modern terminology, everyone has “followed their hearts.”

Instead of getting what “we” deserve, “we” receive “well-being” (Hebrew: *shalom* = peace) and healing.

The “we” here refers to the people of Israel but also to the whole world as is clear from Isaiah 52:15.

The Servant . . .

The Servant takes on all of the punishment and judgment that was due the people.

The Servant endures crushing, chastening, and scourging in the people’s place.

He dies (is “pierced through,” and later “cut off out of the land of the living,” 53:8) because of the people’s transgression.

The LORD . . .

The LORD orchestrates the exchange. He causes the people’s iniquities to fall on the Servant.

ASK

As you read through Isaiah 53 this week, what did you notice and mark about the Servant’s physical suffering?

“He was pierced through,” 53:5.

“He was crushed,” 53:5, 10.

He was chastened, 53:5.

He was scourged, 53:5.

He was oppressed, 53:7.

He was afflicted, 53:7.

He was killed (“cut off out of the land of the living”), 53:8.

None of the suffering was due to any wrongdoing on His part.

INTERPRETATION: Word Studies**ASK**

Did anyone work through the One Step Further on page 40? What did you learn about the words used in Isaiah 53:5 to describe some of the Servant’s physical suffering?

“Pierced through” is translated from the Hebrew word *chalal*. It means to pierce or fatally wound.

“Crushed” is from the Hebrew *daka* meaning to crush or break.

“Chastening” comes from the Hebrew word *musar* which is most often translated “discipline” or “instruction” by the NASB. Its only other occurrence (in Isaiah 26:16) carries the idea of discipline.

“Scourging” is translated from the Hebrew *chaburah* which means a bruise, wound, or injury. In the NASB, Isaiah 1:6 translates *chaburah* “welts.”

APPLICATION**ASK**

How does Isaiah’s teaching about the general condition of man (everyone has gone his own way) help you understand the world you live in?

Your application questions (optional):

ASK

Are you living as a person who has received unmerited peace and healing from God? Do you forgive others as you’ve been forgiven? Explain.

Give your class time to discuss the application questions. Add more as needed for their situations.

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION: Cross-References on Suffering**LUKE 18:31-34—The Son of Man****ASK**

What did you learn by marking references to “the Son of Man” and what will happen to Him?

The prophets wrote about the Son of Man, 18:31.

He will be:

- handed over to Gentiles, 18:32.
- mocked, 18:32.
- mistreated, 18:32.
- spit upon, 18:32.
- scourged, 18:33.
- killed, 18:33.

He will rise again on the third day, 18:34.

ASK

How do you think Jesus’ description of the Son of Man in Luke compares to Isaiah’s description of the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 53:5-6?

The prophet says the Servant will be pierced through (fatally wounded), crushed, and scourged.

Jesus was mocked, mistreated, scourged, and eventually killed.

Jesus was raised from the dead and Isaiah 53:8-12 indicates that the Servant will live again after He has been “cut off out of the land of the living.”

Jesus fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecies: He neither resisted nor deserved the treatment He received.

APPLICATION**ASK**

What can we learn from Jesus’ example of suffering when we are opposed and persecuted?

Give your class time to discuss this and other application questions you would like to add.

Your application questions (optional):

MATTHEW 27:17-26--The Christ**ASK**

How does what we learn about Jesus during His interaction with Pilate compare with what we know about the Servant from Isaiah 53:5-6?

Both were innocent yet scourged nonetheless.

Pilate twice says “Jesus who is called the Christ” when talking to the Jewish people. “Christ” (Greek: *Christos*) is equivalent to “Messiah” (Hebrew: *Mashiyach*).

Pilate's wife sends word to him not to do anything to Jesus because of a dream she had. She refers to Jesus as “that righteous Man.” The Servant is called “the Righteous One” in Isaiah 53:11.

The people refuse to answer Pilate's question “What evil has He done?” They have no answer. Jesus, the “Servant” of Isaiah 53, has done no evil.

Pilate washes his hands to indicate his disagreement with the people's accusations. He does not want the blood of an innocent man on his hands.

Eventually Pilate hands Jesus over to be crucified. His death will include His side being pierced through.

ASK

In Matthew 27:17-26, does Jesus sound like the Servant of Isaiah 53? Why/why not?

Give your class time to discuss.

ASK

Did anyone do the One Step Further word study on “Christ”? What did you learn?

“Christ” (Greek: *christos*) means anointed. It is the Greek translation of the Hebrew *mashiyach* from which we get the word “Messiah.”

In the Old Testament the word is used often in reference to priests and kings God appoints.

Psalms 2:2 and Daniel 9:24-26 refer to a future coming Messiah.

In the New Testament, *christos* is used exclusively (531 times) to refer to Jesus the Messiah, God's Anointed One.

READ ALOUD John 19:31-37 and Zechariah 12:10

(These references are not in the lesson.)

ASK

How does John 19:31-37 compare with Isaiah 53:5?

Isaiah 53:5 says that the Servant will be pierced through.

John 19:34 records a soldier piercing Jesus' side with a spear and then a prophecy from Zechariah 12:10 that says Israel will "LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED."

Zechariah 12:10 – "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn."

ASK

Who is speaking in Zechariah 12:10? Who is pieced? Who is mourned?

In the original text of Zechariah God speaks and switches from the first person "Me" to the third person "Him" saying, "they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him." It's a perplexing statement that an incarnation makes sense of.

INTERPRETATION: Cross-References on Bearing Sin**MATTHEW 1:20-24****ASK**

What did you see in Matthew 1:20-24? How does it compare with the description of the Servant in Isaiah 53:5-6?

Both reference a sin-bearer:

The angel tells Mary that Jesus will save His people from their sins.

Isaiah's Servant is pierced for His people's transgressions, crushed for their iniquities, chastened for their well-being, and scourged so they will be healed.

APPLICATION**ASK**

What difference does having a sin-bearer make? How has having a Savior changed you?

Give your class time to discuss this and other application questions you would like to add.

Your application questions (optional):

JOHN 1:29-45**ASK**

Looking at John 1:29-34, what does the text tell us about John the Baptist and the message he delivered?

(What connections would first-century Jewish people have made between a lamb and sin?)

John tells the people that Jesus is “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” 1:29.

John testifies that Jesus is the Son of God, 1:34.

He tells his audience that Jesus has been manifested (see “revealed” in Isaiah 53:1) to Israel. John’s work of baptism played a role in Jesus being manifested to the nation, 1:31.

In this passage, we see John the Baptist and others—including the disciples Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael—believing God’s revelation.

ASK

What did you learn about Jesus in John 1:29-45? What additional titles do these believers attribute to Him?

John the Baptist calls him:

- the Lamb of God, 1:29
- the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit, 1:33
- the Son of God, 1:34

The disciples call him:

- Rabbi/Teacher, 1:38
- Messiah, 1:41
- “Him of whom Moses in the Law and *also* the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph,” 1:45

John the Baptist says these other things about Jesus:

- He takes away sin, 1:29.
- He “has a higher rank than I,” 1:30.
- He existed before John (even though He was born after him), 1:30.

ASK

How does this compare with what Isaiah prophesies about the Servant?

Isaiah’s Servant is pierced for others’ transgressions and crushed for others’ iniquities.

Like the speaker in Isaiah 53, John delivers a message which some believe and others reject.

Both Isaiah’s Servant and John’s Jesus are lambs sacrificed for sins.

The Servant will have both high and low positions. John says that Jesus has a higher rank than he (John 1:30) while Philip refers to Jesus as the son of Joseph. The near-context Joseph is Jesus' adoptive father, a carpenter. The Old Testament's Joseph was a Messianic type who suffered before promotion in Egypt.

LUKE 5:17-26**ASK**

What situation does Luke record in Luke 5:17-26?

(Who is trying to get to Jesus and why? What does Jesus do?)

Jesus is teaching in the midst of a large crowd that includes Pharisees.

Some men drop a paralyzed friend down through the roof of a house to gain access to Jesus so he can be healed.

Jesus sees their faith, forgives the man's sins, and then addresses the scribes and Pharisees who have been "reasoning in their hearts" and inwardly accusing Him of blasphemy since God alone can forgive sins.

Jesus then heals the man saying, "But, so that you [plural] may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins . . . get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home" (5:24).

ASK

After Jesus healed the man, what should the scribes and Pharisees and the rest of the crowd have been able to conclude?

If only God can forgive sins and healing comes only with forgiveness, Jesus proved by healing the man that He had the authority to forgive sins and so must be God.

ASK

Did anyone do the One Step Further word studies on "transgressions," "iniquities," "gone astray," and "well-being"? What did you learn about the sin-related words? What about "well-being"?

Transgressions (Hebrew: *pasha*, 93 uses in the Old Testament): also translated "rebellious acts" in NASB. The Hebrew root involves broken relationships.

All transgression is ultimately against God.

God Himself "wipes out" Israel's transgressions according to Isaiah 43:25 and has blotted them out according to 44:22.

Iniquities (Hebrew: *avon*, 232 uses in the Old Testament): common but strong word for sin in Old Testament that has the sense of perverting or distorting. It also can be used to describe consequences of sin like guilt. (Schultz, Carl. "1577 אָוֹן." Edited by R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1999.)

Gone Astray (Hebrew: *taah*, 50 uses in the Old Testament): to stray, err, wander.

The psalmist compares himself to a wandering sheep in Psalm 119:176 saying, “I have gone astray (*taah*) like a lost sheep; seek Your servant, for I do not forget your commandments.”

In the Old Testament, sometimes individuals wander on their own and at other times shepherds lead them astray (see Isaiah 3:12, 9:16).

Well-being (Hebrew: *shalom*, 237 uses in the Old Testament): commonly translated “peace,” also “safety” and “welfare.”

According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, “The general meaning behind the root š-l-m is of completion and fulfillment—of entering into a state of wholeness and unity, a restored relationship.” (Carr, G. L. [1999]. 2401 שָׁלוֹם. R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr., & B. K. Waltke [Eds.], *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* [electronic ed., p. 930]. Chicago: Moody Press.)

APPLICATION

ASK

What difference does having a sin-bearer make? How has having a Savior changed you?

Give your class time to discuss this and other application questions you would like to add.

Your application questions (optional):

MEMORIZING

If you have extra time, use it to help your class review their memory verses.

LESSON FIVE

Bad Sheep and the Perfect Lamb

Review	10 Minutes
Overview	10 Minutes
Straying People and Straying Sheep –Romans 3:9-12 –John 10:11-18	20 Minutes
The Perfect Lamb –Hebrews 12:1-3	10 Minutes
Memorizing	10 Minutes

REVIEW

ASK

How has the memorizing been going? Does anyone want to recite what they've memorized?

Again, don't apply pressure.

If you're up for it, recite a few verses yourself to set the example.

ASK

What were the most significant truths you saw in your study this past week?

Give them time to answer.

READ ALOUD Isaiah 53

OBSERVATION

ASK

As you marked references to "our" culpability in Isaiah 53 (page 55), who did you discover they referred to?

In the immediate context the “our” refers to Israel.

The truths about the state of mankind and the Servant’s work, though, are universal, applying beyond this original audience.

The Servant did not suffer at the hands of Israel alone or *for* Israel alone.

All people are straying sheep.

ASK

What did you learn about “our” role in the Servant’s suffering?

Our sin is the root cause of everything that happened to the Servant.

He carried the weight of our griefs and sorrows.

The punishment and discipline that was due us fell on Him.

Our transgressions caused His piercing through, our iniquities caused His crushing.

Because we needed healing and peace (Hebrew: *shalom*, translated in NASB as “well-being”), the Servant was chastened and scourged.

Because of our transgression, the Servant was oppressed, afflicted, and struck.

We needed a guilt offering and the Servant provided Himself as that for us.

We needed to be justified so the Servant bore our iniquities and interceded for us.

INTERPRETATION: New Testament Cross-References on Straying People and Sheep

Discuss with your class what they learned about straying sheep and straying people from Romans 3:9-12 and John 10:11-18.

ASK

Did anyone do the One Step Further on page 58? If so, what did you learn from Romans 1:18–3:20?

Paul explains that the truth about God is evident in creation, but men suppress the truth.

Men claim to be wise, but they are fools.

People exchange truth for lies and worship creation rather than the Creator.

Those who have God’s revelation through the Law violate it.

Apart from Christ, every person is without excuse and under God’s judgment.

ROMANS 3:9-12 (with quotations from Psalm 14:1-3 and Psalm 53:1-3)**ASK**

What did you learn in Romans 3?

(What did you learn about people? About sin? Are there any exceptions?)

Every single person is under sin—“Jews and Greeks.” There are no exceptions.

“Greeks” is a term for all non-Jewish people. We can tell this because of the “all” and “none” terminology Paul uses:

- “none righteous, not even one”
- “none who understands”
- “none who seeks for God”
- “none who does good, not even one”
- “all have turned aside”

ASK

So do Gentiles also fit the “straying sheep” picture painted in Isaiah 53? Why does this matter?

Let your class discuss the truth that all people are straying sheep and equally culpable for the death of Jesus.

ASK

Did anyone do the One Step Further on page 59 about Jesus’ view of “Good?” What did you learn?

(How does Jesus define “good”? How does this differ from man’s common view? How does this affect our witness?)

The man in the account wants to know how he can obtain eternal life.

He thinks he can do good in order to please God, but Jesus corrects him and tells him “good” is a descriptor of only One—God.

There is no amount of “good” a sinner can do to inherit eternal life.

For your reference, here is the dialogue from each of the Gospel accounts:

Matthew 19:16-17

Man: “Teacher, what **good** thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?”

Jesus: “Why are you asking Me about what is **good**? There is *only* One who is **good** . . .”

Mark 10:17-18

Man: “**Good** Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

Jesus: “Why do you call Me **good**? No one is **good** except God alone.”

Luke 18:18-19

Man: “**Good** Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

Jesus: “Why do you call Me **good**? No one is **good** except God alone.”

APPLICATION**ASK**

How can the truth that all people have turned aside be the precursor to good news?

What opportunities do you have to share the good news with others? Do you look for them?

What challenges do you face when sharing your faith?

Give your class some time to discuss the hope that comes from knowing no one can work their way to God and that God Himself made a way through the Servant.

Give them time to discuss if and how they are sharing the gospel with others.

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION**JOHN 10:11-18****ASK**

What did you learn about sheep in John 10:11-18?

Sheep need protection from predators, a shepherd who won't run away but will protect them from wolves and other dangers.

Without protection, sheep will be snatched for dinner or scattered by predators.

Sheep know the voice of their shepherd.

ASK

What did you learn in John 10 about the Good Shepherd?

(Who is He and what does He do? What did you learn about His other flock?)

Jesus refers to Himself as the Good Shepherd who lays His life down for the sheep (10:11, 15).

He knows the sheep and the sheep, in turn, know Him (10:14).

He has more than one fold of sheep, but all of His sheep will become one flock.

The two folds refer to Jewish and Gentile believers.

He will lay down His life for the sheep but will take it up again (i.e. He will come back to life)—He has the authority to do both.

ASK

How does this passage compare with Isaiah 53?

In Isaiah 53 the Servant is compared to a sacrificial lamb; in John 10 Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep.

The sheep in John 10 refer to believers from both Israel and Gentile nations (the other fold).

Both passages discuss self-sacrifice: Isaiah 53 tells of the Servant offering Himself as a guilt offering for the people; John 10 has the Good Shepherd laying down His life for the sheep.

In both passages, the One who dies the sacrificial death overcomes death and comes back to life.

APPLICATION

ASK

How can knowing Jesus as both the Servant and the Good Shepherd encourage you today?

How can experiencing this kind of love impact the way you view and treat others?

Give your class time to discuss.

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION: New Testament Cross-References on the Perfect Lamb**HEBREWS 12:1-3****ASK**

What did you learn about Jesus and His suffering in Hebrews 12:1-3?

(What did He endure? How did He endure it?)

Jesus is called “the author and perfecter of faith.”

“For the joy set before Him,” Jesus endured the suffering that came as a result of our sins.

Jesus understands first-hand both suffering and shame. There is no suffering or shame we face that He will not understand more fully than we do.

APPLICATION**ASK**

What situations weary you and tempt you to lose heart?

(Do you have difficult people in your home? Do you work with people who tear down instead of build up?)

How can considering Jesus help in these times?

What ways can you actively consider Jesus this week?

Give your class some time to discuss.

Your application questions (optional):

MEMORIZING

If you have extra time, use it to help your class review their memory verses.

LESSON SIX

No Violence, No Deceit

Review	5 Minutes
Details of Jesus' Death –Matthew 27:37-38 –John 19:31-37 –Matthew 27:57-60	15 Minutes
Jesus' Innocence –Matthew 27:3-4, 17-19, 22-24	15 Minutes
Isaiah 53:10	15 Minutes
Memorizing	10 Minutes

REVIEW

ASK

How has the memorizing been going? Do you think we can recite what we've learned so far as a group?

Again, don't apply pressure.

See if your group can recite the passage or a portion of the passage together.

ASK

How are you doing keeping up with the study? Are you making use of the flexibility it offers?

Give them time to answer.

READ ALOUD Isaiah 53**OBSERVATION****ASK**

As you read through Isaiah 53 this week looking for contrasts and comparisons, what did you notice?

(How does the Servant compare with the people? How does His start compare with His finish? etc.)

Your class may have noticed that the Servant is selfless while the people are entirely self-focused.

The Servant is silent in situations where people typically object loudly.

The Servant is innocent yet punished while the people are guilty yet pardoned.

The Servant starts in a humble position, but ends up exalted.

The Servant dies, but ends up living.

ASK

What did you learn about the Servant and the LORD in Isaiah 53:9-10?

The Servant . . .

- was assigned a grave with wicked men
- was with a rich man in His death
- had done no violence
- had no deceit in His mouth
- was crushed
- was put to grief
- rendered Himself as a guilt offering
- continues after His death
- sees offspring, prolongs days, prospers

The LORD. . .

- was pleased to crush His Servant
- will eventually cause His good pleasure to prosper in His Servant's hand

INTERPRETATION: Cross-References

Discuss with your class what they learned from the cross-references in Matthew and John.

MATTHEW 27:37-38 and JOHN 19:31-37**ASK**

What did you learn from the cross-references to Matthew 27 and John 19?

(Who is Jesus with when He dies? What should have happened to His body?)

The charge against Jesus “read, ‘The King of the Jews.’”

He is crucified between two robbers—wicked men.

The Jews want the bodies taken down before the Sabbath (which starts in the evening).

The Jews ask Pilate to order the victims’ legs broken to speed up death so the bodies can be removed for the Day of Preparation and the approaching Sabbath.

Jesus is already dead so instead of breaking His legs the soldiers confirm death by piercing His side, fulfilling the prophecies of Psalm 34:20 and Zechariah 12:10.

READ ALOUD Exodus 12:46 and Numbers 9:12

(These verses are not in the workbook.)

Exodus 12:46

46 It [the Passover] is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it.

Numbers 9:12

12 They shall leave none of it [the Passover] until morning, nor break a bone of it; according to all the statute of the Passover they shall observe it.

ASK

What do these verses tell us about the Passover lamb? How does this compare with what happened to Jesus?

The people are not to break the lamb’s bones.

Like the Passover lamb, Jesus’ bones were not broken.

MATTHEW 27:57-60**ASK**

Who enters the scene in Matthew 27:57-60 and what happens?

(Who is this man? What do we know about him? What does he do?)

Joseph of Arimathea asks Pilate for Jesus' body and Pilate grants his request.

Joseph is a rich man who has become a disciple.

Joseph prepares Jesus' body for burial and lays him in his own new tomb.

ASK

How does this compare with the prophecy about the Servant in Isaiah 53:9?

Fulfilling the prophecy, Joseph (a rich man) buries Jesus in his own tomb.

ASK

Did anyone do the One Step Further word studies on “violence” and “deceit”? What did you learn?

(If no one has completed the One Step Further, you may direct them to read Genesis 6:11-13 to see the first two occurrences of “violence” in the Bible.)

Violence: Hebrew: *chamas*, 60 uses in the Old Testament; also translated “wrong” and “malicious.” It first appears in the Bible in Genesis 6 as a reason for God’s judgment in the flood.

Then God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.” –Genesis 6:13

According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, *chamas* almost always refers to “sinful violence” and often to “extreme wickedness.” (Harris, R. Laird. “678 חָמָס.” Edited by R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1999.)

Deceit: Hebrew: *mirmah*, 39 uses in the Old Testament; also translated “treachery,” “deception,” “dishonest,” and “false.”

APPLICATION**ASK**

Are you ever tempted to sin because of external circumstances or people who mistreat you?

How can Jesus’ example—no violence and no deceit—help you when you are tempted to sin in response to others?

What truths from Scripture can help you respond like Jesus when you're confronted with people who are "Asking for it!"?

Give you class time to discuss the ways our environment can goad us toward sin and how we can stand firm instead.

Your application questions (optional):

INTERPRETATION**ASK**

Did anyone do the One Step Further on page 75? What did you learn from 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Hebrews 4:15?

In 2 Corinthians 5:21 Paul says Jesus knew no sin but was made sin on our behalf so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

Jesus takes our sin; we are credited with His righteousness.

Hebrews 4:15 says Jesus was tempted in all things but did not sin.

Because He was tempted, He is a high priest who can sympathize with our weaknesses.

ASK

Did anyone do the Digging Deeper on page 77? What did you learn about Jesus' victory over temptation?

In the Wilderness (Matthew 4)

The devil attacks Jesus' identity as the Son of God and strikes at a point of physical weakness after Jesus has fasted for 40 days and nights.

He goads Jesus and tries to get Him to prove His identity by doing what he says is consistent with that identity.

The devil also offers Jesus the kingdoms of the world.

In each instance, Jesus meets the temptations with Scripture and finally tells the devil to "Go!"

The devil, also knowing God's Word, twists it to his own use in one of the temptations.

Bottomline: When face to face with the devil, Jesus resisted temptation using the Scripture.

In the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36ff, Mark 14:32ff, Luke 22:40ff)

Prior to His arrest and crucifixion, Jesus is grieved and distressed. If the wilderness highlights physical vulnerability, this highlights emotional vulnerability though we see each in both accounts.

Jesus takes Peter, James, and John with Him. They are to keep watch and pray.

He tells them, “Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41).

Bottomline: When Jesus is “grieved and distressed” and must submit His will to the Father’s, He keeps watch (Greek: *gregoreo*, to be awake or alert) and prays.

On the Cross (Matthew 27:33ff, Mark 15:22ff, Luke 23:33ff, John 19:17ff)

As in the wilderness, Jesus faces a test of His identity when the Jewish leaders challenge Him to come down from the cross “If You are the Son of God.”

He does not react to the their taunt or to the others who insult and hurl abuse at Him.

From the cross, Jesus does not strike out against His persecutors: rather, He asks the Father to forgive them because they don’t know what they are doing (Luke 23:34).

MATTHEW 27:3-4, 17-19, 22-24**ASK**

What people are convinced that Jesus is innocent? What did you learn about them?

Judas, who betrays Jesus, feels remorse, returns the bribe money, and declares “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” He then hangs himself.

Pilate’s wife calls Jesus a righteous Man and sends a message telling her husband she has “suffered greatly in a dream because of Him.”

Pilate is convinced of Jesus’ innocence and washes his hands in front of the crowd to indicate it. He declares to the people, “I am innocent of this man’s blood.”

APPLICATION**ASK**

Have you ever been accused of something untrue or been lied about? How can Jesus’ endurance encourage you?

Let your class discuss.

ASK

What has been your biggest takeaway this week?

Let your class discuss.

Your application questions (optional):

MEMORIZING

If you have extra time, use it to help your class review their memory verses.

LESSON SEVEN

The Final Sacrifice

Review	15 Minutes
Isaiah 53 The Servant's Life, Death, and Life	15 Minutes
Isaiah 53:10 -Isaiah 1:1-20 -Exodus 34:6-7 -Hebrews 9:27-10:14 -Leviticus 5:1-5, 6:1-7	25 Minutes
Memorizing	5 Minutes

REVIEW

ASK

How would you explain the basic flow of the Servant Song that we've been studying?

(What is the main content of Isaiah 52:13-15; Isaiah 53:1-3, 4-6, 7-9?)

Isaiah 52:13-15

This pictures the Servant as both:

- very high ("high and lifted up and greatly exalted").
- very low ("appearance marred more than any man").

Kings and nations will take note of Him and understand.

Isaiah 53:1-3

Asks who has believed the message about the Servant.

Says servant emerges from an unlikely place.

Says nothing about Him is attractive.

Describes Him as an outcast ("despised and forsaken," etc.).

Isaiah 53:4-6

The Servant's condition is a result of bearing sins of others.

God caused the sins of all to fall on the Servant.

The Servant brought peace and healing to those deserving punishment and beating, by bearing both for them.

Isaiah 53:7-9

The Servant bore affliction silently and died the death of a wicked person although He was entirely innocent.

His generation didn't understand what was happening. They didn't realize He was taking the punishment that they deserved.

In His death, He was with a rich man. New Testament cross-references show this to be Joseph of Arimathea.

ASK

How has the memorizing been going? Does anyone want to recite what they've memorized?

Again, don't pressure anyone to do this. Offer the opportunity and a little bit of encouragement, but no pressure.

READ ALOUD Isaiah 53**OBSERVATION****ASK**

As you read through Isaiah 53 this week what in the text indicates that the Servant has actually died?

He is pierced through (53:5).

He is like a lamb led to slaughter (53:7).

He is "cut off out of the land of the living" (53:8).

He had a grave (53:9) and was with a rich man in His death (53:9)

"He poured out Himself to death" (53:12).

ASK

What points to the Servant living again after His death?

While it's clear that the Servant died, other phrases point to Him living again after His death.

Each of the phrases talks about events that "will" happen after His death:

- He will see His offspring (53:10).
- He will prolong His days (53:10).
- The LORD's good pleasure will prosper in His hand (53:10).
- He will see (53:11).

- He will be satisfied (53:11).
- He will justify the many (53:11).
- He will be allotted a portion with the great (53:12).
- He will divide the booty with the strong (53:12).

The Servant dies but does not remain dead. He acts after His death.

READ ALOUD Isaiah 53:10

Isaiah 53:10

*10 But the LORD was pleased
To crush Him, putting Him to grief;
If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,
He will see His offspring,
He will prolong His days,
And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.*

ASK

What did you notice about the LORD and the Servant in this verse?

The LORD

The LORD “was pleased” (Hebrew: *chaphets*, Strong #2654; verb) to crush the Servant (line a and b), but later the LORD’s “good pleasure” (Hebrew: *chaphets*, Strong #2656; noun) will prosper in the Servant’s hand.

The LORD put the Servant to grief.

The verb “was pleased” and the noun “good pleasure” come from the same Hebrew root.

The Servant

The Servant is crushed and put to grief by the LORD when He makes Himself a guilt offering.

As we saw before, He will see His offspring, prolong His days, and “the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.” (Prolonged days was a typical Old Testament blessing on obedience—see Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:32-33 as two examples of many.)

It is the LORD’s will that the Servant offer Himself for man.

The moment will be sorrowful, but the Servant will perfectly accomplish the purpose of the LORD. “The good pleasure” or “delight” of the LORD will prosper in the Servant’s hand.

ASK

What has “crushed” already been associated with in Isaiah 53?

In verse 5, the Servant was crushed for a purpose. He was crushed for our iniquities.

INTERPRETATION: Cross References

Discuss with your class what they learned from the following passages about the LORD being “pleased” to crush the Servant.

ISAIAH 1:1-20**ASK**

What message does God send to the people through Isaiah’s vision?

(What are the people like? What does He think of their sacrifices and offerings? What does the LORD not take pleasure in?)

Israel doesn’t know the LORD (1:3).

They are a sinful and rebellious people, but they still bring sacrifices and offerings to the LORD as though the relationship were in tact, as though their whole hearts were toward Him.

The LORD is not pleased with their false worship of Him and says

- “I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle” (1:11).
- “I take no pleasure (Hebrew: *chaphets*, Strong #2654) in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats” (1:11).
- “I hate your new moon festivals and appointed feasts” (1:14).

The LORD calls their offerings “worthless,” their incense “an abomination,” and their feasts “a burden” (1:13-14).

The LORD takes pleasure in proper worship, in sacrifice that is offered rightly; but He takes no pleasure in sacrifices offered by the unrepentant and rebellious.

ASK

Did anyone read through the Inductive Focus section on page 85? What inductive principle helps us when we run into an unclear passage or phrase?

We always interpret what is unclear in light of what is clear.

READ ALOUD Exodus 34:6-7**Exodus 34:6-7**

- 6 *Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth;*
- 7 *who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.”*

ASK

What clear truths do we know about God from these verses where God describes Himself to Moses?

He is compassionate.

He is gracious.

He is slow to anger.

He abounds in lovingkindness and truth.

He forgives iniquity.

He punishes the guilty.

APPLICATION**ASK**

Are there ways that we practice false worship today?

(Do we elevate things or people above God? Do we try to approach God on our own terms instead of His?)

Let your class discuss this together.

Your application questions (optional):

What truths about God that you have learned or been reminded of this week do you need to remember to keep your thinking and behavior aligned with Him?

Again, let your class discuss.

Your application questions (optional):

Hebrews 9:27-10:14**ASK**

How does Jesus' sacrifice compare with sacrifices offered under the Law?

(What do we know about the Old Testament sacrifices? What do we know about Jesus' sacrifice?)

Old Testament Sacrifices

Sacrifices according to the Law are only a shadow (10:1).

The blood of bulls and goats can never make a person perfect (10:1) or take away sins (10:4).

They are offered over and over and over, but can't accomplish the intended result (10:11).

These sacrifices remind people of their sins (10:3).

God doesn't take pleasure in them (10:6, 8).

Jesus' Sacrifice

The offering of Jesus brings salvation (9:28).

Believers are sanctified through it (10:10) and perfected (10:14).

Jesus does God's will in becoming the "one sacrifice for sins for all time" that is effective (10:12).

Jesus, "the very form of things" (10:1), is an offering God can take pleasure in because He accomplishes His will.

APPLICATION**ASK**

What effect does guilt have on people? How does this news change that?

How can you live in this truth more and more?

How can you share this truth with others?

Let your class discuss.

Your application questions (optional):

LEVITICUS 5:1-5, 6:1-7**ASK**

What did you learn about the guilt offering from Leviticus?

Guilt offerings were presented when people became aware of their sin.

Not knowing that we've sinned doesn't make us innocent; we are still guilty and due punishment (5:17).

The guilt offering for theft includes returning stolen items plus 20%.

APPLICATION**ASK**

What has been your biggest takeaway or application from this week?

Let your class discuss.

Your application questions (optional):

MEMORIZING

If you have extra time, use it to help your class review their memory verses.

LESSON EIGHT

Forgiven!

Review	5 Minutes
Individual Marking and Discussion	10 Minutes
Isaiah 53:11 –Romans 5:6-21	15 Minutes
Isaiah 53:12 –2 Corinthians 5:14-21	15 Minutes
Final Wrap-Up	15 Minutes

REVIEW

ASK

Does anyone want to recite Isaiah 53?

If no one wants to do it alone, try doing it together.

ASK

What were the most significant truths you saw in your study this past week?

Give them time to answer.

READ ALOUD Isaiah 53**OBSERVATION****ASK**

What words did you choose to mark on this read through of Isaiah 53? Why? What did you learn?

Let your class discuss.

ASK

Are you feeling confident in your ability to identify key words, mark texts, and list what you've learned?

Again, let your class discuss any remaining hang-ups they may have.

Encourage them that marking texts becomes easier over time.

Remind them that it is one in an assortment of excellent Bible study tools.

ASK

Overall, how comfortable are you studying the text inductively?

(Is there anything that you still find difficult or unclear?)

Again, give your class time to discuss how they are doing with the method and encourage them that it will become easier over time.

INTERPRETATION**READ ALOUD Isaiah 53:11****Isaiah 53:11**

*11 As a result of the anguish of His soul,
He will see it and be satisfied;
By His knowledge the Righteous One,
My Servant, will justify the many,
As He will bear their iniquities.*

ASK

Who are the individuals mentioned in this verse?

(Who does each pronoun refer to? Who is speaking?)

If you have access to a white board, you may want to write out the verse, replacing the pronouns with their appropriate antecedents.

The Servant

- “the anguish of **His [the Servant’s]** soul”
- “**He [the Servant]** will see *it and* be satisfied” (The follow-up question to this is *What will the Servant see?* No object is mentioned in the text, so it will have to be inferred from other factors.)
- “By **His [the Servant’s]** knowledge the **Righteous One [the Servant]** will justify the many”
- “**He [the Servant]** will bear their iniquities”

The LORD

–“**My [the LORD’s]** Servant”

The LORD is the speaker in this verse.

The Many (Hebrew: *rab*, “many” or “great”)

–“He [the Servant] will bear **their [the many’s]** iniquities”

Note: The Hebrew word (*rab*) translated “many” in verse 11 is found twice in the NASB version of verse 12: “I will allot Him a portion with the great [*rab*]” and “He Himself bore the sin of many [*rab*].” The ESV translates both *rab(s)* “many.”

ASK

Did you notice anything in the text that was unclear? If so what?

Note: *This is addressed in the sidebar on page 98. If your students aren’t bothered by anything in the text, simply move on.*

If they are, help them see that they can still have confidence in their ability to handle the text even when inductive study leaves some questions unanswered.

Assure them that this is more the exception than the rule and that we can still typically understand the core meaning of even difficult texts.

What will the Servant see and be satisfied with?

What is clear is that the Servant IS satisfied; the outcome is acceptable to Him.

INTERPRETATION: Cross References

Discuss with your class what they learned from Romans 5 and how it helps us to understand Isaiah 53.

ROMANS 5:6-21**ASK**

How does Romans 5 help us better understand Isaiah 53?

(What did Christ’s death accomplish? What did Christ’s death demonstrate about God? What did you learn about righteousness?)

Like the wandering sheep in Isaiah 53, the people Christ dies for are “helpless,” “ungodly,” “sinners,” and “enemies.”

God shows His love toward man when Christ dies on man's behalf.

Isaiah 53 says that the Righteous One will justify the many as He will bear their iniquities. He is pierced through, crushed, chastened and scourged for our wrongdoing.

Romans 5 says that man is justified through Jesus' blood, reconciled to God through Jesus' death, and will be saved from God's wrath.

APPLICATION

ASK

How does your life reflect your status as “declared righteous”?

(Is your life now marked by growing righteousness? Are you beginning to bear “the family resemblance?”)

Let your class discuss how God is at work not only justifying (declaring people righteous) but also sanctifying (making people righteous).

Your application questions (optional):

OBSERVATION

READ Isaiah 53:12

Isaiah 53:11

*12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great,
And He will divide the booty with the strong;
Because He poured out Himself to death,
And was numbered with the transgressors;
Yet He Himself bore the sin of many,
And interceded for the transgressors.*

ASK

Who are the main characters in this verse?

(Again, who does each pronoun refer to? Who is speaking?)

The LORD

The LORD continues as the speaker and is the One who allots (i.e. “I will allot”)

The Servant

He is the main focus of the section who

- is allotted a portion; “I will allot **Him** a portion with the great (Hebrew: *rab* – “great number,” “many”)
- will divide the booty; “**He** will divide the booty with the strong”
- poured out Himself; “**He** poured out **Himself** to death”
- was numbered; “**[He]** was numbered with the transgressors”
- bore the sin of others; “**He Himself** bore the sin of many”
- interceded; “**[He]** interceded for the transgressors”

The Great and Strong

The Servant is either allotted a portion and divides the spoil *with* this group, or the great (Hebrew: *rab*) and the strong *are* the portion and spoil the Servant receives. (See workbook page 101.)

The Transgressors

They are also referred to as “the many.”

The Servant died for and interceded for them.

ASK

What clear and key truths does this verse teach?

(What specifically did you learn about the Servant? Was He a helpless victim?)

The Servant sees great gain after His death.

Although the LORD crushed the Servant, the Servant who rendered Himself a guilt offering (v. 10) is also described as having “poured out Himself to death.”

The Servant willingly bore sins and interceded, and the LORD rewards Him for it.

INTERPRETATION: Cross Reference

Discuss with your class what they learned from 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.

2 Corinthians 5:14-21**ASK**

What does Paul say Jesus’ death accomplished?

(What did it do? What resulted from it?)

When Christ died, we died with Him.

Believers are now new creatures in Christ.

Christ’s love is now the controlling power in believers’ lives; believers live for Him and no longer for themselves.

God reconciled us to Himself through Christ and was “in Christ reconciling the

world to Himself" (v. 19).

God now sends us as ambassadors and agents of reconciliation to the world.

Jesus was made to be sin on our behalf; what we get as a result is "the righteousness of God in Him."

APPLICATION

ASK

How are you living as an ambassador?

How is your church body doing as an agent of reconciliation?

How are you doing personally in this role?

Let your class discuss.

Your application questions (optional):

ASK

What has been the most important truth that you've learned and are applying from our time in Isaiah 53?

Again, let your class discuss what they are learning and how they will continue to apply God's Word in their lives.

Your application questions (optional):

