

Our Suffering Substitute

Chapter 4

Audio Lesson: Old Testament #64



Objective: To understand the message of salvation found in the book of Isaiah.



Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

—Isaiah 53:4-6

In addition to prophesying of the coming and the nature of Christ, Isaiah also prophesied of His death. One of the most beautiful chapters in the Bible is Isaiah 53, which describes Jesus as the Suffering Servant who would pay for the sins of God’s people—“sheep” who have gone astray. For the sake of all human beings, who, like lost sheep, have turned to our own way, God laid our iniquity upon Jesus. He bore the punishment for our sins. Isaiah describes the crucifixion of Jesus hundreds of years before it happened when he wrote that the Suffering Servant would be despised, rejected, afflicted, and pierced for our transgressions. But by his wounds, we would be healed.

Isaiah himself experienced the suffering that God’s servants often go through. According to tradition, King Manasseh had him brutally killed, and many believe his martyrdom is described in the book of Hebrews as an example of great faith.



1. True or false? When the New Testament mentions “the prophets,” it is referring to the Old Testament prophets who wrote books.
2. True or false? The origin of the prophets’ writings was supernatural.
3. True or false? The function of a prophet is to cry out about an obstacle that is interfering with the will of God until that obstacle is removed.
4. True or false? God rarely warns His people before He brings judgment on them.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. How do we know when prophets like Isaiah preached?
 - a. They were very careful historians and wrote down the dates of their ministry.
 - b. They usually identified which king was ruling when they prophesied.
 - c. We do not know because they never wrote anything about the times they lived in.
 - d. We cannot know because they are legendary characters who probably did not really exist.
6. According to tradition, how did Isaiah die?
 - a. King Manasseh had him put into a hollow log and then had the log sawn in half.
 - b. The Assyrians killed him for prophesying against them.
 - c. He died from leprosy.
 - d. He died of natural causes when he was 97 years old.
7. Put the following three sections of Isaiah in order:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| a. Historical interlude | Chapters 1-35 |
| b. Comfort, salvation, and restoration | Chapters 36-39 |
| c. Sermons on the judgment of God | Chapters 40-66 |
8. Which section is really the heart of Isaiah’s message?
 - a. Chapters 1-35
 - b. Chapters 36-39
 - c. Chapters 40-66
 - d. Chapters 67-80
9. Which of the following is true of the book of Isaiah? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. It is the only book of prophecy not quoted at all in the New Testament.
 - b. It has more messianic prophecies than all of the other prophets.
 - c. It is quoted in the New Testament more than any other Old Testament book.
 - d. It is the shortest book among the major prophets.
 - e. It is the first book of prophecy in the Bible’s order of books, but it was written after all of the others.

10. How does the ministry of Jesus apply to us?
- a. It is for us to receive.
 - b. It is for us to give to others.
 - c. We both receive it and give it.
 - d. We neither receive it nor give it. We only learn about it.

11. What is Isaiah 53 about?
- a. How Babylon would capture Israel
 - b. Why God allows suffering in the world
 - c. When Jesus would be born to a virgin
 - d. How Jesus died for our sins

12. What animal does Isaiah 53 compare us to?
- a. Wolves who endanger other people
 - b. Sheep who have gone astray
 - c. Eagles who fly higher than everyone else
 - d. Worms who do not deserve respect



What do you need to receive from Jesus today? What do you have from His ministry that you can give to someone else today?



Thank the Lord for His compassion that provides true healing. Whatever difficulties you face today, ask Him to help you with them. Tell Him you also want to feel His compassion for others.



Going Deeper

1. In what ways does the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah present the meaning of the death of the Messiah on the cross? _____

2. What does it mean when Isaiah writes that the chastisement of our peace was upon Him? _____

3. The sixth verse (in the New King James Version) begins and ends with the word “all.” What would it mean if you agreed that the first “all” of this verse includes you? _____

4. What would it mean if you agreed that the last “all” of that verse includes you? _____

5. Some say that the Romans killed the Messiah, while others say that it was the Jews. According to the 10th verse of this chapter, who crucified Jesus Christ? How does that relate to John 3:16? _____

6. Based on the 11th verse of Isaiah 53, was it the physical details of death by crucifixion that satisfied the divine justice of God, or was it the suffering, the agony, or the labor of His soul? Should we therefore emphasize the physical dimensions of His suffering or the spiritual dimensions? What caused this spiritual suffering? _____

7. How many prophecies of Isaiah in this profound chapter have been fulfilled? _____
