

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 Discussion Guide

Pray

Apart from God, we can do nothing. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion. Throughout your time together, continue asking God for help.

Read Scripture

Read all of Isaiah chapters 52 and 53 and together paying special attention to 52:13-53:12.

Bible Study: The HEAR Method

The bulk of your time will be spent discussing God's Word together. HEAR is an inductive Bible study method that looks closely at what the Bible says to discover what it means so that we can faithfully apply it to our lives.

HEAR stands for:

- **Highlight:** read and observe everything in the passage carefully.
- **Examine:** based on your observations, discover what the passage means in its context.
- **Apply:** determine how the meaning of the passage applies to your life.
- **Respond in prayer:** pray God's Word back to Him.

Remember:

- Walk through the Bible study together using the HEAR method and talk about what stuck out most to you in the passage.
- Make sure you move discussion to the application section of your study.
- Affections, beliefs, and practices: Make sure to apply the passage to all your life.

Pray

- Take time to pray for one another and ask for His grace to apply His Word to our daily lives.

Open: Has anyone ever taken your place for something—either in a good way or a bad way? How did it feel?

Context: "Isaiah 53 is perhaps the most famous passage in the book of Isaiah and one of the most famous passages in the entire Old Testament. It's the fourth and final Servant song. Israel, as we have seen, had failed to be a faithful servant of God. So Isaiah promised a coming Servant who would redeem God's people and become the light to the nations which Israel had failed to be. This promise is, as we have also seen, a promise fulfilled in Jesus. Here in Isaiah 53 we discover how Jesus will redeem his people." Tim Chester

Study:

- 1) How do people view the Servant (52:14, 53:1-3)? Why?
- 2) Why is the Servant punished (vs. 4-8)? How many different phrases describe this? Meanwhile what happens to "us" (vs. 5)?
- 3) Imagine a friend or family member were one of the people who "despised" the Servant (53:1-3). What would you say to them?
- 4) Isaiah is looking forward to the coming of Jesus. How was the description of the treatment of the Servant true of Jesus during his lifetime? How it is still true of Him today?

- 5) Isaiah, through the Spirit, reveals how our salvation would be achieved. But it didn't come out of the blue, nor was it without precedent. Isaiah had many pictures and parallels to connect it to. One is found in Leviticus 16, which describes how God instituted an annual festival in which atonement was made for the sins of the people. Read Leviticus 16:15-16, 20-22. What is the substitution here? How do these goats point towards Jesus?
- 6) How does the Servant behave through his suffering (53:7, 9)? What makes this amazing to you?
- 7) What happens to the Servant after he has suffered (53:10-12)? Why? What is the result for sinners?

The death of Christ was the centerpiece of a divine plan stretching beyond time into eternity. The Son covenanted to offer himself as a sacrifice for our sins and the Father covenanted to accept that sacrifice. *"It was the LORD'S will to crush him"* (vs. 10), yet it was also Jesus Himself who *"poured out his life"* and willingly *"bore the sin of many"* (vs. 12).

- 8) Why is the willing participation of Jesus important to our understanding of the cross?
- 9) Look back at 52:15. How will the nations respond? How do we see this promised being fulfilled today?

Apply:

- 10) How do we usually respond when we ourselves are rejected? How might this passage alter our perspective?
- 11) What attitude towards our own sin does Isaiah 52:13-53:12 teach us to have? What difference should that make to us day to day?
- 12) How can you use Isaiah 53 to share the gospel with an unbelieving friend or family member?

PRAY:

- Take time thank God the He truly is the One who always keeps His promises.
- Take time to thank Jesus that He willingly took our sin upon Himself.
- Take time to pray and ask God to help you truly believe that all your sins are forgiven (past, present, and future).
- Ask God to give you a renewed awe and gratitude for the gospel and how it has changed you for all eternity.
- Ask God for opportunities to share what Jesus has done for you with others.

Note: most questions taken from Tim Chester's study, *Isaiah: Here is Your God*.