

Why Would Jesus Suffer?

Small Group Lesson

Some 700 years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah revealed the terrible suffering that Jesus would endure for us. The dramatic account about the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 52 and 53 indicated that Jesus would willingly lay down his life to bear the sins of the whole world. By seeing Jesus' sacrificial work through the lens of Isaiah, students will better understand Jesus' identity as their personal Savior.

Lesson Objectives

1. **WHAT:** This lesson will strengthen students' understanding of Jesus' crucifixion through the lens of the prophet Isaiah.
2. **WHY:** Followers of Jesus need to personally comprehend God's plan to provide complete forgiveness of sins through Jesus' death on the cross.
3. **HOW:** By studying Isaiah 52 and 53, students will find out how the Old Testament foretold Jesus' crucifixion and the reason he suffered and died.

Primary Scripture: Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Secondary Scriptures: 1 Peter 2:21-25

This is one of the Bible's most famous passages because it so accurately predicted what Jesus would do on the cross for us. Let's spend a few minutes looking into some of this prophecy's amazing details.

1. Isaiah offered vivid details of what would happen to the Savior

What reaction do you have to this passage, hearing about the suffering that Jesus would endure for you?

What do we learn about Jesus' appearance in this passage?

What are some ways that Jesus' life and actions fulfilled Isaiah 52:15? How about Isaiah 53:3-9?

Not only does this passage give specific details that point to Jesus, but it also gives an amazing reason why Jesus would come in the first place. Let's dig a little deeper into some of these verses.

2. Sending Jesus to suffer for our sin was all part of God's salvation plan

Look at Isaiah 53:3. Why do you think people rejected Jesus, when he came to help them? In what ways do people still do this today?

Look at Isaiah 53:10. What was God's plan, and why was it "good"?

Look at Isaiah 53:11. In what ways have you been a rebel against God and his plan? How does it feel to know that God sent Jesus specifically for rebels?

This passage isn't just a prediction that came true or a history lesson. It also makes these profound truths very personal to each of us. Isaiah wrote this passage so we could know Jesus very closely and be set free from our own sin.

3. We needed Jesus to lift the crushing weight of sin off us

Each of us needs to be freed from the crushing weight of our sins. Rebelling against God is such a serious condition that we're completely pinned down. But there's hope! Jesus lifted that entire burden off us, at great personal cost to himself. All we have to do is accept the gift of forgiveness and follow him.

Imagine what the weight of the whole world's sin must look like. How could someone possibly bear it all?

Look at Isaiah 53 verses 5 and 8 again. How did Jesus' suffering lift the weight of sin off us? Why do you think he was willing to take our place, especially when he didn't do anything wrong and we didn't do anything to deserve him?

Look at Isaiah 53:6. In what ways are people like wandering sheep? What paths do we tend to follow instead of Jesus?

On a personal level, what did Jesus come to do for you? What does that mean to you?

BGroup Questions

1. Which part of today's lesson were you most relieved to hear, and why?
2. How can Isaiah's message help you grow closer to Jesus?
3. What are some practical ways you can share this good news with people around you who are burdened by the weight of sin?

TAKE ACTION: Memorize this Scripture this week! “He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed” (1 Peter 2:24).

**Leaders, leave 3-5 minutes for prayer at the end of your group time.