

Sermon Series: The Prophets Foretold: Part 1
Isaiah 53

MAIN POINT: The Old Testament prophet Isaiah anticipated a Suffering Servant who would bring forgiveness, healing and peace. As Christians, we look at Jesus as the fulfillment of Isaiah's vision.

Introduction: The Nature of Prophecy

Ask the small group members to respond to this “warm-up” discussion question:

- **Pastor Andy compared the role of the prophet to the role of modern musicians, artists, or writers who bring a timely word from God. What are some memorable songs, art, or literature that spoke a powerful spiritual truth to you?**

Isaiah's Vision: The Servant

Ask a volunteer to read aloud Isaiah 53:1-3, and then ask the group to respond to the following discussion questions:

- **Why would God choose someone as undesirable as the Suffering Servant to accomplish God's salvation?**
- **What does this choice say about God?**
- **How does this description compare to the way artists, writers, and film-makers have depicted Jesus? What are some specific examples?**
- **How does this description compare to the way the New Testament describes Jesus? What are some specific examples?**
- **How does this description compare to your perception of Jesus?**

Isaiah's Vision: The Suffering

Ask the group to respond to the following discussion questions:

- **How would you feel if a coworker took all the credit for an accomplishment you had at work? Would you be willing to let that happen? Why or why not?**
- **How would you feel if someone else took responsibility and the consequences for a major mistake you made? Would you be willing to let this happen? Why or why not?**
- **What do our answers tell us about our cultural values of personal responsibility and accountability?**

Next, ask a volunteer to read aloud Isaiah 53:4-8, and then ask the following discussion questions:

- **How would you feel if you were the beneficiary of the person described in these verses? Would you be willing to let this happen? Why or why not?**
- **What news story or personal experience do you know about in which one person gave up a body organ in order to donate to another person?**
- **Do you think you could ever do something similar? Why or why not?**
- **During his sermon of November 22, Pastor Andy said that sin and redemption are both personal and corporate. How is this truth illustrated in these verses?**

Jesus Fulfills Isaiah

Ask a volunteer to read aloud Isaiah 53:9-12, and then ask the group to respond to the following discussion questions:

- **Verses 10 and 12 use sacrificial language to describe the actions of the Servant. How does this go beyond a “mere” martyr’s death?**
- **What is the first word that comes to mind when you consider that Jesus did just what Isaiah describes: he gave his life for our sakes?**
- **How do you account for the paradox between the death of the “Servant” in verse 9, and his seeing the “light of life” in verse 11?**

Next, ask a volunteer to read aloud Philippians 2:5-11. Ask the group to identify similarities and differences between the Philippians passage and Isaiah 53.

Prayer

Spend time in prayer with your group. After taking personal prayer requests and praying for those, close the group time by reading aloud together Isaiah 53:11-12 as a prayer.