God Promises a Suffering Servant

Summary and Goal
In the previous unit, we explored why God would judge the sins of His people. In this session, we will examine how God showed mercy to us by transferring our sins to His Son, the Suffering Servant. Though people often look for a Savior who is a bold, charismatic leader, the Servant—Jesus—came to serve the least of these and ultimately redeem us by His blood. It is in living by faith in His sacrifice for us, following His example, that we will find a life of satisfaction and fulfillment.

Session Outline
1. The Suffering Servant is despised and rejected (Isa. 52:13–53:3).
2. The Suffering Servant is struck down as a substitute (Isa. 53:4-9).
3. The Suffering Servant is exalted and victorious (Isa. 53:10-12).
Background Passage: Isaiah 49–55

Session in a Sentence
Jesus is the Suffering Servant who was rejected and struck down on our behalf in order to win the victory.

Christ Connection
God opened the eyes of Isaiah to see the coming Savior with detail no one had seen before. Isaiah prophesied about a faithful Servant who would be rejected and despised and yet accomplish salvation through His suffering. The New Testament shows that this prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus and His work.

Missional Application
Because we have received life through the sacrifice of Jesus, we embrace a life of service and suffering on His behalf as we share the gospel with others.
Group Time

Introduction

READ: Use the paragraphs in the DDG (p. 76) to compare the different cries from the NICU and the Labor and Delivery Unit, and note how hope often determines one’s perception of pain.

Walk around the NICU at a local hospital and listen to the babies crying, unable to vocalize their hurts and their questions. Pokes, prods, tubes, and shots. These are painful and surely confusing for an infant. The weight of a child’s pain is felt profoundly by a parent, and its purpose may even elude us.

Now move to the Labor and Delivery Unit, where you hear a different sort of cry—laborious cries. What sounds like someone near an excruciating death are the pangs of childbirth. Moms endure the pain because they know what is coming—a beautiful, unique, wonderfully made baby. And moms are even willing to face this pain again for the sake of another child.

Our perception of pain often depends on what we hope for after the pain.

INSTRUCT: Ask group members to use the scale in their DDG (p. 76) to examine their typical response to their own suffering.

How do you tend to perceive your pain and suffering in this world?

Pointless  Irritating  Redeemable  Purposeful

EXPLAIN: All suffering is part of God’s sovereign plan. We have no hope in our suffering if God has nothing to do with the pain, but the Bible is clear that God has everything to do with it, and He uses it for our good (Rom. 8:28). This does not dismiss the hurt or the difficulty of suffering, but it does put it in perspective. Jesus Christ, our ultimate example, walked the path of suffering that God chose for Him to bring redemption for us.

SUMMARIZE: In this session, we will examine how God showed mercy to us by transferring our sins to His Son, the Suffering Servant. Though people often look for a Savior who is a bold, charismatic leader, the Servant—Jesus—came to serve the least of these and ultimately redeem us by His blood. It is in living by faith in His sacrifice for us, following His example, that we will find a life of satisfaction and fulfillment.

For session-by-session training videos, please visit MinistryGrid.com/GospelProject.
For additional teaching options and other resources, please visit GospelProject.com/additional-resources.
Point 1: The Suffering Servant is despised and rejected (Isa. 52:13–53:3).

READ Isaiah 52:13–53:3 (DDG p. 77), asking group members to circle positive descriptions of the Suffering Servant and to underline negative descriptions of Him.

52:13 See, my servant will be successful; he will be raised and lifted up and greatly exalted. 14 Just as many were appalled at you—his appearance was so disfigured that he did not look like a man, and his form did not resemble a human being— 15 so he will sprinkle many nations. Kings will shut their mouths because of him, for they will see what had not been told them, and they will understand what they had not heard.

53:1 Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 He grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground. He didn’t have an impressive form or majesty that we should look at him, no appearance that we should desire him. 3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of suffering who knew what sickness was. He was like someone people turned away from; he was despised, and we didn’t value him.

EXPLAIN: Reference the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 77) as you explain the correlation between the suffering and the victory of the Servant, Jesus.

For the overwhelming solemn, even negative, tone of this passage, one can almost miss the fact that it begins in victory. Honor would come to the Servant, yet this Man would suffer deeply. But His punishment would not be for His own sins but for those who would behold Him in faith. It’s this pivotal act that would cause knees to bow. The Servant’s suffering leads to victory. His broken body paves the path to glorification.

• Victory: The Lord starts by explaining the Servant’s great success with three various terms: “He will be raised and lifted up and exalted” (52:13). Even foreign kings will be quiet in respectful silence, consistent with their rising and bowing before the Servant in Isaiah 49:6-7.

• Suffering: People would be appalled at the sight of Him. Can you imagine people bowing a knee to a disfigured, humiliated man (52:14)? How could people go from being horrified by this Servant to bending a knee before Him.

• We can’t seem to reconcile deep suffering with dynamic success; like oil and water, we assume they must be separate, so we hold them in tension. But God sent His Son as the Servant, which reveals this tension need not exist. Jesus faced rejection, abandonment, mocking, flogging, a spear to His side, and nails to His hands and feet for His eternal glory. In Him, God painted a picture of utter bleakness and weaved it with ultimate victory so that we could spend a lifetime in faith reconciling our suffering with our eternal celebration.
INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

Why do people so often believe that suffering cannot be connected with glory? (we equate our suffering with God’s punishment for our sins; we only have an earthly perspective regarding the result of suffering; we have an earthly perspective of glory, which involves riches, fame, and success)

EXPLAIN: Reference the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 77) as you comment on the three ways God correlated leadership with servanthood and glory with the lowly.

We typically correlate leadership with charisma, power, and victory. With God’s perspective, however, we must correlate leadership with servanthood and glory with the lowly. In this passage we see three ways God weaves together these polarizing concepts through the revelation of the “arm of the LORD,” the Servant Jesus Christ:

First, He comes onto the scene in an unassuming way. Second, this “arm” has no extraordinary beauty to draw people to Him. Finally, the Lord’s “arm” would be rejected because He would be marked by suffering.

- **He comes onto the scene in an unassuming way.** Jesus was born into this world and lived most of His life without earthly fanfare. He was “like a root out of dry ground” (53:2). No farmer’s almanac would find this a promising scenario. God’s victory, however, comes in unassuming ways.

- **This “arm” has no extraordinary beauty to draw people to Him.** Since Jesus lived without an impressive form or majesty, no one had reason to take notice of Him (53:2). Our culture is so fixated on image that it seems impossible for us to accept a leader who is not polished and put together. God’s victory, however, comes in unassuming ways.

- **The Lord’s “arm” would be rejected because He would be marked by suffering** (53:3). Jesus took upon Himself the sin of the world. Who would ever guess victory would come through a man nailed to a cross? But God’s victory comes in unassuming ways.

**Commentary:** “The arm of the LORD” brought deliverance to the Israelites in the exodus (Ex. 6:6), and that same “arm” would defeat the mighty nation of Babylon (Isa. 48:14). God is a spirit and does not have a body like men, so His “arm” is a reference to His sovereignty and power to deliver His people. Yet the “arm” here is revealed to be a Suffering Servant—God in the flesh. As Paul wrote, the message of the cross is foolish and weak to the world, but to those who are being saved, this gospel of Jesus is the power of God (1 Cor. 1:18).

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

How should this prophecy about the Suffering Servant challenge our views about victory and success? (we should not necessarily equate suffering with losing; we should not necessarily equate success with winning; if we would follow Jesus’ example, then we should expect suffering as an indication that we are successfully walking in faith)
Point 2: The Suffering Servant is struck down as a substitute (Isa. 53:4-9).

READ Isaiah 53:4-9 (DDG p. 78), asking group members to underline every instance of “our” (used six times).

Yet he himself bore our sicknesses, and he carried our pains; but we in turn regarded him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced because of our rebellion, crushed because of our iniquities; punishment for our peace was on him, and we are healed by his wounds. We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the Lord has punished him for the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth. Like a lamb led to the slaughter and like a sheep silent before her shearers, he did not open his mouth. He was taken away because of oppression and judgment; and who considered his fate? For he was cut off from the land of the living; he was struck because of my people’s rebellion. He was assigned a grave with the wicked, but he was with a rich man at his death, because he had done no violence and had not spoken deceitfully.

EXPLAIN: Reference the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 78) to explain the terms used in the passage to describe the ways in which the innocent Servant suffered on our behalf.

Despite what many people would think when this prophecy was fulfilled—that the Servant deserved a punishment for His own doing—we see that an innocent Man would be killed due to “our” rebellion. The repetition of this first-person plural pronoun hammers home that the Servant would suffer in our place because in our sin, we have chosen to go our own way. His suffering would not be just any suffering either. We see four types of attacks against the Servant in verse 7: 1) He was oppressed; 2) He was afflicted; 3) He was a lamb led to slaughter; and 4) He was sheared.

- 1) He was oppressed. In the Books of Exodus and Isaiah, this word is used to describe taskmasters and overseers—oppressors—treating their slaves and people with cruelty.
- 2) He was afflicted. By definition, “affliction” means “something that causes pain or suffering.” A man of suffering (v. 3) doesn’t just describe blood and breathlessness but a mental and emotional burden as well.
- 3) He was a lamb led to slaughter. Jesus would bear a piece of wood on His back on the road to the cross—innocent yet afflicted, mocked, and spat upon, treated like nothing more than a dirty dog.
- 4) He was sheared. The Man who would bear the weight of our rebellion would be stripped of dignity, of life, of offspring, and of respect (vv. 8-9). He would do it all to fulfill His purpose—to save a world for a holy God.
INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

What are some reasons people object to the need for a substitute to pay the penalty for their sin? (we are prideful people who don’t want to rely on others in life; we think we can make our own way; it doesn’t seem fair for someone else to pay for our sins; we may consider ourselves to have done so much wrong that we are beyond saving, so why bother)

EXPLAIN: Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 78) to emphasize why the Servant suffered—as a substitute for our salvation, for our healing from sin.

The Servant, Jesus, knew that His purpose was to be the perfect sacrifice, thus fulfilling a temporary sacrificial system the Israelites had practiced for centuries. All throughout the Old Testament we read about animal sacrifices given to bear the sins of the human offender. What repetitious and laborious work! There had to be a different way, and there was—the life and death of Jesus Christ. “We are healed by his wounds” (v. 5).

- At the time of Jesus, whips were made of braided leather with sharp stones attached to the end. During His flogging, every time a Roman guard lifted the whip, he would aim it at Jesus’ back to tear open His flesh. Jesus endured physical pain in the process of His crucifixion.

- Jesus experienced emotional anguish as well. In addition to the physical lashes Jesus received upon His back from Roman soldiers, God would lay the baggage of the sin of the world on His back, and although it was painful, Jesus determined to endure it in obedience and for our salvation (Phil. 2:5-11).

FILL IN THE BLANKS: Provide group members with the answers for the call-out in their DDG (p. 78).

Christ as Substitute: Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with humankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of humanity from sin.

Essential Doctrine “Christ as Substitute”: At the heart of the atonement is Jesus Christ substituting Himself for sinners as He died on the cross. This truth is seen against the backdrop of the Old Testament sacrificial system, which provided a picture of humanity’s need for sin to be covered and guilt to be removed by an innocent sacrifice. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with humankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of humanity from sin.
Point 3: The Suffering Servant is exalted and victorious (Isa. 53:10-12).

READ: Ask a volunteer to read Isaiah 53:10-12 (DDG p. 79).

10 Yet the LORD was pleased to crush him severely. When you make him a guilt offering, he will see his seed, he will prolong his days, and by his hand, the LORD’s pleasure will be accomplished. 11 After his anguish, he will see light and be satisfied. By his knowledge, my righteous servant will justify many, and he will carry their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will give him the many as a portion, and he will receive the mighty as spoil, because he willingly submitted to death, and was counted among the rebels; yet he bore the sin of many and interceded for the rebels.

EXPLAIN: Use the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 79) to state the Father and the Son’s aligned purpose in the pain that the Son experienced: the redemption of God’s people. Connect this to the purpose in our pain.

How are we to take the comment that the Lord was pleased to crush His Servant severely, or as we further understand the situation, that it was the Father’s will to crush His Son? The Father had a purpose for the pain, which the Son submitted to and agreed with: Through Jesus’ wounds would come the redemption of people, along with our every tear, every battle, and every heartache. Jesus willingly submitted to death because He also knew the plan and what His future would hold: reward for His obedience.

Voices from Church History

“The sorest afflictions... when we see them in the hand of GOD, Who dispenses them; when we know that it is our loving FATHER, Who abases and distresses us, our sufferings lose all their bitterness, and our mourning becomes all joy.”

—Brother Lawrence (c. 1614-1691)

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question. Do not force responses from the group, and emphasize that this is not a competition but rather an opportunity to “rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep” (Rom. 12:15).

• Just because we have accepted Jesus’ sacrifice does not mean we will be immune to pain. Pain and suffering will follow us to our earthly graves. For those in Jesus’ arms, however, there is a reason to endure the pain, just as Jesus had a reason to endure His. Because God is working all things for His glory, we can walk through trials and sufferings trusting that ultimately there is purpose to our pain (Rom. 8:18).

INTERACT: What is your personal story of purposeful suffering, past or present? (be prepared to give an answer of your own to jump-start the conversation)
EXPLAIN: Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 79) to show that a satisfied life on this earth comes through faith-filled servanthood in the pattern of Jesus, the Suffering Servant.

Just as the Servant, Jesus, came in the most unassuming way, so does a satisfied life. Our culture will lure us in with tactics of living for oneself and the glory that comes with it. But God’s economy is different and true. It is in serving by faith that we will be the most fulfilled. It is in laying down our lives that we will find satisfaction. Ultimately, it is in our participation in the redemption of souls that we will find eternal joy.

• We live in a “me” culture where satisfaction is believed to come from fulfilling the desires of one’s sinful heart. “Look out for number one,” as the saying goes. But if we have accepted by faith the offering of the Suffering Servant, then we too have a responsibility to live like servants. We too must bear the burdens of those around us: We bear the sadness of those in our local church bodies as well as our brokenhearted neighbors. We carry the weight of concern for aborted children, the sex-trafficked, and the homeless. Social injustices weigh on us because we know they are signs of our broken world, evidence of ongoing rebellion against God.

• As we serve others, both near and far, we will always face the reality that we will be taken advantage of and possibly taken for granted. But we can find comfort in remembering that while the Servant was despised by men, the Father was pleased with His Son, and the triune God loves and supports us even if our acts of service go unnoticed or are rejected by others.

• If we are to live successfully as servants, we must know beyond a shadow of a doubt that our inheritance as sons and daughters of God is sure (Rom. 8:16-17). God is sovereign, God keeps His promises, God rewards His children—faith in these truths will allow us to flourish despite the weight of suffering servanthood, just as they did with the Suffering Servant. “God wins in the end!” must become our battle cry. “We will persevere because of Jesus” becomes our banner.

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

What temptations of the world distract us from following the pattern of the Suffering Servant? (the desire for worldly acceptance; ease and comfort; greed and the accumulation of stuff for our personal benefit; the boastful pride of life; hatred and rejection for those who are not like us)
**My Mission**

**PACK ITEM 10: MAN OF SORROWS:** Reference the Bliss quote on this poster to help you connect the Servant’s suffering to our reason for the praise of His name.

- The Suffering Servant that was prophesied has come. He died carrying our sin, but that is only half of the gospel. Our sin was transferred to Him, and His righteousness was transferred to us. Not only does this elicit a lifetime of praise, but it also sends us out to live as servants to the world, just as Jesus did. Only through belief in Jesus can one be saved, but His example to us reveals how we bring a dying world His message of hope. Rather than running from a life of discomfort, we can find joy in knowing “blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs” (Matt. 5:10). We can live lives of sacrifice while on earth, all for the glory and honor of the One who died while we were His enemies (Rom. 5:8). May we find great satisfaction in our own personal redemption, covered by the blood of the Suffering Servant—Jesus!

**READ** the following missional application statement in the DDG (p. 80), and encourage group members to choose at least one of the options below as a way to respond to the truth of God’s Word.

Because we have received life through the sacrifice of Jesus, we embrace a life of service and suffering on His behalf as we share the gospel with others.

- How will you respond in faith to the Servant who suffered to justify sinners?
- What are some ways your group can serve and intercede for the rebels in your community?
- How will you sacrifice so you can share the good news of the Suffering Servant with others?

**Voices from the Church**

“The Lord’s solution to sin is for his servant to take human sin on himself and to offer himself as a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of others. He will be sinless, but by offering himself as a sacrifice, he will be the one through whom all others can receive forgiveness and salvation. Victory will come through suffering.”

—Paulson Pulikottil

**CLOSE IN PRAYER:** Father, You were pleased to crush Your Son, Jesus, not because He deserved it but because we did on account of our sin. We thank You that because of Jesus’ death for us, we share in His resurrection and victory. Help us by the Spirit to embrace our role as servants and to endure faithfully our condition as sufferers, as the Servant did. Amen.

**INSTRUCT:** As your group departs, encourage group members to read and respond to the Daily Study devotions in their DDG (pp. 81-83), which build and expand upon the group study. Also advocate for small groups or families to use Encourage One Another (p. 84) for mutual accountability and fellowship grounded upon the foundation of God’s Word.
Daily Discipleship

Throughout the week following the session, use the ideas below to remind and encourage your group members to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. The Daily Study devotions in the DDG (pp. 81-83) will help group members get into God’s Word and study it for themselves. Encourage One Another (p. 84) will help group members and families fellowship with one another with purpose.

Daily Study

Brief daily devotions in the DDG (pp. 81-83) will help group members take initiative in their own discipleship.

- Make sure all group members have access to a Bible to read. Have some Bibles available to give to guests who may need one, or offer to get one and arrange a time to meet to give it and show how to navigate it for the devotions.

- Share the following idea from the devotion for Day 3 as a part of point 2 in the session: Like it or not, we have been called to carry a divine reputation. We will only be able to do this through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Consider leading by example and reading the daily devotions yourself with your own DDG. Based on your study, use brief messages throughout the week (group text, email, social media) to encourage your group to keep up with their daily time in God’s Word and to live it out. Here are a couple of examples you can use:

- Day 2: “Suffering and persecution are part of our story, but the weight of glory outweighs our earthly woes.”

- Day 4: “Jesus gave of Himself once and for all, and God immediately exalted Him so that many could be exalted through Him.”

Visit www.GospelProject.com/Blog for additional content and resources you can use to help group members gain more insight into their daily studies. Send group members a link or a portion of a blog post or other content that you believe will be helpful and encouraging for their time in God’s Word.

Encourage One Another

This brief plan for fellowship and accountability in the group member’s DDG (p. 84) will help groups of 2-4 people to meet sometime during the week to reflect on the session and to share how God is working and they are responding. It could also be used for family discipleship with students and children who are using The Gospel Project in their groups.

- Encourage group members to challenge each other to speak about the Suffering Servant with those around them who appear to be suffering.

- See yourself as a member of the group who also needs encouragement in the faith, and participate in such a group this week.
Additional Commentary

Point 1: The Suffering Servant is despised and rejected (Isa. 52:13–53:3).

“Who was the Servant of the songs [see Isa. 42:1-9; 49:1-7; 50:4-9; 52:13–53:12]? Those who examine these passages usually embrace one of three responses. The Servant is either: 1) the prophet himself, 2) the nation Israel personified, or 3) the anticipated Messiah. While all three options have merit, perhaps the best answer is to say that the identity of the Servant involves all three. The text provides ample evidence for the personal trials of the Prophet, and an extra biblical source provides evidence of his martyrdom. Many Old Testament books, including Isaiah, relate the suffering and annihilation of Israel as well as the siege and near starvation of the people of Jerusalem … Although the identity of the Suffering Servant was partially fulfilled in both the prophet Isaiah and the nation Israel, ultimately, through the lens of God’s revelation in the Person and work of Jesus Christ, the third alternative came to the forefront.”

“Now the report about the Servant begins by referring to His origins (2a) and His appearance (2b). He is compared to a young ‘shoot’ (yônēq) and a ‘root’ (šōreš) coming out of the ground, a metaphor that stands in stark contrast to other metaphors that could be used (a stately grand oak). The use of this term suggests that the author may be attempting to interlink this servant with the messianic king in 11:1. There He is called a ‘shoot’ (hōter) from the stump of Jesse, and in 11:10 he is the ‘root’ (šōreš) of Jesse, a kingly Davidic figure (cf. 4:2; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8; 6:12).”

Point 2: The Suffering Servant is struck down as a substitute (Isa. 53:4-9).

“The people have behaved like stubborn sheep and gone astray (53:6). By contrast, the servant is submissive. He had the right to protest, but he did not do as he was led like a lamb to the slaughter (53:7). This image would have reminded the people of Isaiah’s day of the perfect lambs that were sacrificed to atone for sin (Lev. 4:32; 5:1-6). To us today, it speaks of the one whom John the Baptist described as ‘the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world’ (John 1:29) … Like the lamb in Isaiah, he remained silent in the presence of his oppressors (Matt. 27:12-14; Mark 15:3-5; Luke 23:7-9). Isaiah’s message, given hundreds of years before the event, was that the Lord will save his people by willingly offering himself as the only perfect sacrifice that can atone for sins.”

“The Servant Songs of Isaiah, along with similar passages from the Psalter, provide the primary Old Testament foundation for a substitutionary understanding of the atonement (see Isa. 53:4-5). These Old Testament verses present an image of the coming Suffering Servant who would bear in His body the just retribution that should have been borne by sinful humankind. His vicarious suffering and substitutionary atonement would overcome the unbelief and unfaithfulness of fallen man (Isa. 53:5;12; 1 Pet. 2:24).”
Point 3: The Suffering Servant is exalted and victorious (Isa. 53:10-12).

“God wants the reader to know that the rather strange things recorded in this tragic message about the Servant did not occur just as a regrettable accident or without some predetermined forethought. In fact, to the surprise of some, God’s purposeful desires will be fulfilled through all these events. Thus the earlier hints about God’s involvement in individual aspects of the life of the Servant applies also to the ‘crushing’ (53:5) and the ‘grief, sickness, suffering’ of the Servant. God’s punishment of sin, his love for others, and his plans to ultimately establish his worldwide kingdom required the removal of guilt to form a holy people.”

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“the will of the LORD. A divine purpose underlay the human oppression of the servant (cf. Luke 24:26; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28). His soul. He suffered not just in his body but in his deepest inner self. An offering for guilt. The servant’s sacrificial death compensated for human sin by setting sinners free from their guilt before God (cf. Lev. 5:15-16). The Septuagint translates ‘offering for guilt’ as ‘offering for sin,’ which explains why Paul could say that Christ’s death ‘for our sins’ was ‘in accordance with the Scriptures’ (1 Cor. 15:3). He shall see his offspring. Those who strayed like sheep (Isa. 53:6) return as children. He shall prolong his days. Death is not the servant’s end; he will receive everlasting life. Although resurrection is not explicit here, it is the natural inference (hence 1 Cor. 15:4 can speak of the resurrection as being ‘in accordance with the Scriptures’). The will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. The servant becomes the executor of God’s will and plan.”

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“The first positive result will be that the Servant will see His offspring (lit. ‘seed’), a promise that implies that the Servant will live a long time in the future and see many spiritual children as 54:13-14 confirms. These ‘seed, descendants’ are the same group of people who are the ‘many’ who are justified in 53:11. In earlier chapters the Servant’s role was to bring back the sons of Jacob to God and to be a light to the Gentiles (49:5-6). Then in 45:22-25, God calls on people from all nations to turn and be saved and predicts that all the ‘descendants, seeds’ of Jacob will be righteous. Later chapters picture the nations coming to worship God in Zion (60:1-11) and the many descendants of Jacob functioning as ‘my servants’ who will inherit God’s wonderful kingdom blessings (54:17; 65:8-16).”

References

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The prophetic books of the Old Testament can be confusing, both to the newcomer to the Bible and the longtime reader. Where do these prophets fit in the overall narrative of Israel and Judah? What messages did they communicate? What was God doing in and through their work? The benefit of this volume of The Gospel Project is that it gives you a glimpse of the prophets right at the point their message was going forth to God’s people. We can ask questions of God with Habakkuk, look forward to the coming Suffering Servant with Isaiah, stand amazed at the stunning picture of relentless love in Hosea, and learn something of God’s extravagant love with Jonah.

As you work through the sessions in this volume, keep an eye on all the different ways God reveals Himself and communicates His messages of judgment and grace. Fall to your knees in awe, and then stand up and boldly proclaim the love of this great God, who inspired the prophets to deliver His word.