



For Further Study



Read and meditate on the passage below:

*4 Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.
5 But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:4-5)*

The above passage is from the prophetic oracles attributed to Isaiah, the eighth century prophet of Judah. Yet, it was likely written by his followers after the exile into Babylon. This passage speaks of a future deliverer who will come and restore the people back to God. The prophets of the exilic period offered hope to the people that destruction was not the end of their story. God redeems and restores.

The person described in these “suffering servant” passages of Isaiah is depicted as someone who suffers with the people. He is not above them; rather, he enters the pain and affliction alongside the people. This does not mean that God punishes him but that he willingly decides to participate in it with the people. He has great empathy.

When we look at these passages through the life of Jesus, we see the fulfillment of what was described 800 years prior. As Jesus anticipates what is to come as he draws nearer to Jerusalem and his execution. He willingly was crushed by the people who betrayed him, which led to his painful death.



REFLECTION:

Consider why Jesus chose a path that led to his own suffering and death.

PRACTICE:

Learn about someone who died for their faith. Reflect on why they would go through so much suffering.