

**DAILY READINGS**

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Sunday    | Isaiah 53                                       |
| Monday    | Daniel 3:26-30; Psalm 89:42-52; Proverbs 18:4-6 |
| Tuesday   | Romans 2:12-3:8; Psalm 90:1-7; Proverbs 18:7-10 |
| Wednesday | Romans 3:9-31; Psalm 90:8-17; Proverbs 18:11-13 |
| Thursday  | Romans 4:1-12; Psalm 91; Proverbs 18:14-16      |
| Friday    | Romans 4:13-25; Psalm 92:1-6; Proverbs 18:17-19 |
| Saturday  | Romans 5:1-21; Psalm 92:7-15; Proverbs 18:20-22 |

**DEVOTIONAL: READ ISAIAH 53**

To see Jesus clearly, we must not only look at the New Testament (when He walked on earth as a man) but the Old Testament as well. From Genesis onward there are moments that point clearly to Jesus coming to redeem the world.

Sometimes it seems the entire Old Testament is filled with a strangely contradictory message. At times it paints a beautifully optimistic and redemptive picture about what God would do in the world through His people. Other times, the Scriptures scream out in despair concerning the human condition and God's plan to judge humanity. It is a growing tension between the hope of restoration and the promise of judgment.

This tension builds near the end of the book of Isaiah with a series of songs about the Servant of God. In Isaiah 53, this perfect Servant is rejected by all people and suffers humiliation. As He experienced extreme pain, Israel

concluded He was being judged by God for His sin. However, He was not being punished for His own sin but for theirs. He was pierced, stricken, afflicted, crushed, and punished in our place. His suffering would bring healing to God's people. Somehow, this was God's plan. The Servant would die in our place and for our salvation, and then after suffering death, He would live again.

This song is a sobering account of what the Servant would endure, yet it was written over 600 years before Jesus was born! God promised to redeem all of humanity through the line of Israel, but they were stubborn and rebellious. There was only one way for God to execute His rescue plan through Israel: God had to become an Israelite. The perfect Israelite. The ideal Servant. The two themes of restoration and judgment collide in the Suffering Servant of Israel, Jesus our Lord. And by His wounds, we are healed!

## REFLECTION

How is Jesus the hero of the Old Testament?

Have you ever struggled to connect the Old Testament stories to the New Testament faith in Jesus? How does seeing Jesus as the culmination of the story help to connect the dots?

How would it change the way you lived this week if you saw Jesus as the hero of your story and yourself as a supporting character in His story? How would you tell your story with Jesus as the main character?

## DISCUSSION

Did you grow up hearing stories from the Bible? What's your favorite?

## PRAYER

Father, You have had a plan since the beginning of time to redeem the world You have created! You are loving and sovereign over this world.

Thank You for bearing my sin and shame on the cross. Thank You for taking my punishment. I am sorry when I fail to remember what You accomplished for me. It is not because of anything I have done; it is because You freely gave Yourself in obedience to the Father and in love for those who rejected You.

Conform me to Your image, gracious Master. Teach me to be familiar with suffering, and help me consider it a joy to suffer on Your behalf. Teach me to not complain and help me trust that You, the Suffering Servant, will guide me to joy eternal. Amen.