

He Was Pierced

Isaiah 51-53 • Leader Preparation Guide

SESSION OVERVIEW

DISCOVERY AIM

The sealed guesses open tonight, before a single verse is read. Then the group follows the phrase they guessed about to its detonation: Zion cries *“Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD”* (51:9); God *“has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations”* (52:10); and then 53:1 asks the question they wrote answers to weeks ago: *“To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”*, and answers it with a man: despised, rejected, pierced, silent, buried, and alive. God’s saving power, bared before the nations, turns out to look like the Suffering Servant. They discover Philip answering the Ethiopian’s exact question with Jesus, and they learn what *“an offering for sin”* means: the fourth Song’s own word for the sacrifice made present at every Mass.

CATHOLIC TOUCHSTONE

The atoning sacrifice of Christ, in full: expiation, propitiation, substitution, and priestly intercession, exactly as the Catechism reads this chapter (CCC 601, 615), and its perpetuation in the Sacrifice of the Mass, which the Council of Trent calls truly propitiatory (CCC 1367). Isaiah 53:10’s *‘asham*, the guilt offering of Leviticus, is the Old Testament type the Church has always seen fulfilled in what the altar makes present.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Run the reveal first. Before any reading: guesses out, unfolded, and shared around the table, including wrong ones, lost ones, and reconstructed ones; celebrate all of it. Then, and only then, walk the arm’s trail with them: 40:10, *his arm rules for him*; 51:5, *my arm will rule the peoples*; 51:9, where Zion prays to the arm as to a person, *“Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD... Was it not thou that didst cut Rahab in pieces?”*, the arm did the Exodus; 52:10, *“The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations”*, God rolling up his sleeve in public. Every expectation points to spectacular power. Then 53:1: *“Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”*, and what follows is not a thunderbolt but a man with *“no form or comeliness,”* despised and rejected. That is the reveal the Church has always read here, and it is bigger than any guess: the arm of the LORD is revealed in a person, and God’s baring of his saving power looks, to the eyes of the nations, like a marred and suffering Servant. The group’s guesses were probably right (many will have written *Jesus* or *God’s power*); the payoff is not gotcha but astonishment at *how* they were right: omnipotence revealed as self-gift.

The fourth Song (52:13-53:12) is built in five stanzas of three verses, and its frame matters: it opens and closes in exaltation. 52:13: *“Behold, my servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high”*, the same vocabulary as the throne of Isaiah 6, *high and lifted up*, and John sets this Song and that vision side by side, citing 53:1 and 6:10 in one breath and saying Isaiah saw his glory (John 12:38-41); the shared *high and lifted up* is the observation waiting inside his juxtaposition. The Song’s

middle descends through rejection (53:1-3), substitution (53:4-6, where the pronouns hammer: *our* griefs, *our* sorrows, *our* transgressions, *our* iniquities, and the summary, “*the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all*”), silent suffering and death (53:7-9, with two forensic details: “*stricken for the transgression of my people*”, the Servant distinguished from the people he dies for, and a grave “*with a rich man in his death*”), and then rises: 53:10-12, where after pouring out his soul to death he “*shall see his offspring, shall prolong his days*”, is satisfied, divides spoil, and “*made intercession for the transgressors*”. A dead man with a future: the Song asserts, without using the word, what 26:19 promised.

The theological center is 53:10, and be precise with it: “*when he makes himself an offering for sin.*” The Hebrew is *'asham*: not a generic word for sacrifice but the specific *guilt offering* of Leviticus 5, the sacrifice of reparation, offered when guilt has incurred a debt that must be made good, with restitution attached. Isaiah has reached into the sacrificial system and selected the offering whose whole logic is *amends*. And note the voice of the English rendering, which the Gospel vindicates: he makes *himself* the offering (the Hebrew construction can also be heard as his life being made the offering; John 10:18 settles whose act it is). Not a victim seized; a priest self-offering, which 53:12 confirms: he “*made intercession*”, priestly work, with his own life as the matter of the sacrifice. This is where the Church's full vocabulary belongs, and the Catechism uses this very passage for it: Christ's death is the sacrifice that *expiates* sin (wipes it out), *makes satisfaction* to the Father (repairs the offense, as Anselm taught: offered by one who owed nothing on behalf of those who owed everything), is *truly propitiatory* (it avails before God for the forgiveness of sins, Trent's word for the Mass, which is this same sacrifice made present, CCC 1367), and is *substitutionary* in the precise sense the Song states: the chastisement we deserved rested on *him*, and by his stripes we are healed (CCC 601, 615). Tonight's steelman takes on the modern moral objection to all of this; prepare by holding one clause firmly: *he makes himself* the offering. The Catholic doctrine of the atonement has no unwilling victim in it anywhere.

One more braid to have ready: the Ethiopian eunuch of Acts 8 is reading this exact passage in his chariot, and his question to Philip is the sealed question in substance: “*About whom, pray, does the prophet say this, about himself or about some one else?*” Philip, “*beginning with this scripture,*” preached Jesus, and the man asked for baptism on the spot. Your group has spent weeks becoming Philip. And hold one thread quietly: the eunuch went home rejoicing, and Isaiah 56, two sessions of text away, contains a promise addressed to eunuchs by name. Say nothing tonight; Session 13 collects it.

OLD TESTAMENT ROOTS AND FULFILLMENT

Roots. The *'asham* guilt offering: Leviticus 5:14-6:7, reparation with restitution. The silent lamb: the Passover lamb (Exodus 12) and the daily offerings, now walking on two feet. The sprinkling of many nations (52:15) is priestly aspersion language (Leviticus 16). Sin-bearing (“*he shall bear their iniquities*”) is the scapegoat's verb (Leviticus 16:22). The Song gathers the whole sacrificial system into one biography.

Fulfillment. The New Testament returns to the fourth Song as often as to any passage in the prophets: Matthew 8:17 (he took our infirmities); Luke 22:37 (numbered with transgressors, cited by Jesus of himself; the longer text of Mark 15:28 carries the same citation); John 12:38 (who has believed); Acts 8:32-35 (the eunuch); Romans 10:16; 1 Peter 2:22-25, where the keeper of the keys walks the Song nearly line by line: “*He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree... By his wounds you have been healed.*” John the Baptist's “*Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29; CCC 608) is the

Song in one sentence, and the Church repeats it at every Mass, moments before Communion, over the 'asham made present.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Clement of Rome • *Letter to the Corinthians (1 Clement 16)*

Writing from Rome in the first generation after the apostles, St. Clement (1 Clement 16) holds up the humility of Christ and proves it by quoting Isaiah 53 at length as the Lord's own portrait. Among the earliest surviving Christian documents outside the New Testament, it already reads tonight's chapter exactly as your group will: this is he. The identification is there in one of the Church's earliest surviving writings.

St. Anselm of Canterbury • *Why God Became Man*

St. Anselm asks the question underneath the fourth Song: why must the repairer of sin be both God and man? Because the debt of sin is owed by man and yet exceeds what any creature can pay; only one who is man can offer it, and only one who is God can afford it. The Servant who makes himself an offering, owing nothing and paying everything, is Anselm's answer walking: satisfaction offered from inside our nature, worth more than all it repairs.

St. Thomas Aquinas • *Summa Theologiae III, q. 48*

St. Thomas teaches that Christ's Passion was not a bare penalty but a superabundant satisfaction: the love and obedience with which Christ suffered were greater than all the malice of all sin, so that his offering did not merely balance the ledger but flooded it. What the Father willed was not pain for its own sake but the love that shone in it; the Passion saves not because suffering is precious but because such love is.

CATECHISM CONNECTION

- **CCC 601.** The Scriptures had foretold the divine plan of salvation through the putting to death of the righteous one, my Servant, citing this Song by name: Jesus' redemptive death fulfills Isaiah's prophecy of the Suffering Servant.
- **CCC 615.** Jesus atoned for our faults and made satisfaction for our sins to the Father: the Suffering Servant who makes himself an offering for sin, bearing the sin of many and making intercession for them. The Catechism's atonement article is built on tonight's verses.
- **CCC 608.** John the Baptist's Lamb of God gathers the Passover lamb and the Servant who silently lets himself be led to the slaughter and bears the sin of the many.
- **CCC 1367.** The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice; in the Mass the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner is offered in an unbloody manner, and this sacrifice is truly propitiatory. Trent's words; tonight the group learns their Old Testament address.

THREAD WATCH

THREADS TONIGHT

The arm of the LORD: resolved. Run the trail (40:10; 51:5, 9; 52:10; 53:1) after the guesses open. The reveal: the arm is the Servant; omnipotence bared looks like self-gift.

Death swallowed (25:8, Session 5): tonight death swallows the Servant and finds him indigestible: he pours out his soul to death and then sees his offspring, prolongs his days, and is satisfied. Connect it aloud.

The Servant's offspring (53:10): who are the children of a man who died childless? Do not answer; Session 12 opens with a barren woman singing. Plant only the question.

Forgiveness banked (43:25, Session 9): the God who alone blots out transgressions has been walking toward this chapter; the Servant bearing sin is how the blotting is done.

The eunuch: if the group notices what the Acts 8 reader was, smile; Session 13 keeps a promise to him.

SESSION GOALS

1. Open the sealed guesses first, with celebration, and run the arm's trail to 53:1.
2. Walk the fourth Song stanza by stanza: exaltation frame, rejection, substitution, silent death, and the future after death.
3. Teach 53:10 precisely: the 'asham, self-offered; expiation, satisfaction, propitiation, substitution, intercession (CCC 601, 615), and their presence in the Mass (CCC 1367).
4. Discover Acts 8: the sealed-guess question asked again in substance, and answered with Jesus.
5. Run the moral objection to the atonement at full strength and answer it with the Song's own grammar of self-offering.

TIME NOTE (90 MINUTES)

SUGGESTED CLOCK

Gather and opening prayer, 5 min. Guess-opening ceremony, 10 min (this replaces Win tonight; the two Win questions below are woven into the ceremony). Build, 55 min. Send, 8 min. Live It, memory verse, Take-Home, closing prayer, 12 min.

Pre-chosen cuts if running long: cut Question 8 (52:7, beautiful feet) first; compress Question 2 (the arm trail can be three verses instead of five) second. Never cut the guess ceremony, 53:4-6, 53:10-12, the Acts 8 discovery, or the steelman.

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Isaiah 51-53 • Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer

Father, weeks ago we wrote our guesses and sealed them, and tonight we open them before the chapter your Church has treasured above every other page of the prophets.

Bare your holy arm before our eyes. And if what we see is not what we expected, give us the eunuch's honesty, Philip's clarity, and the joy of the man who rode home baptized.

Through Christ our Lord, wounded for our transgressions. Amen.

THE OPENING OF THE GUESSES

CEREMONY

Before any reading: everyone produces their sealed guess from Take-Home 1. Around the table, each person unfolds and reads exactly what they wrote, no edits, no apologies, to the question: *who, or what, is the arm of the LORD?* Lost guesses reconstructed from memory count; say so and share anyway.

Leader: receive every guess warmly and keep score of nothing. Then ask the two questions below, and only then start the Build.

1. What did you write, and what do you remember about why you wrote it?
2. Between then and now, ten sessions have happened. Has your answer changed, sharpened, or stayed put? No spoilers from anyone who peeked ahead.

BUILD • INDUCTIVE STUDY

The Trail of the Arm (Isaiah 51:9; 52:10; 53:1)

1. Walk the trail together, out loud, in order: 40:10 (*his arm rules for him*), 51:5, then read 51:9 and 52:10 in full. What does Zion ask the arm to do, what did the arm do in the past, and what does 52:10 say God has now done with it, before whom?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Zion prays to the arm as to a person: “*Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD... Was it not thou that didst cut Rahab in pieces?*”: the arm did the Exodus, split the sea, defeated the dragon of chaos. And 52:10: “*The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.*” God rolling up his sleeve, in public, before the whole world. Every line of the trail sets one expectation: when the arm is revealed, expect the Exodus again, only bigger: spectacle, power, the enemy shattered. Hold that expectation tight as you turn the page.

2. Now read Isaiah 53:1-3 aloud, slowly. The question of verse 1 is the question you all guessed at: *“To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”* What does the text show us when the sleeve comes up? List every descriptor in verses 2-3.

ANSWER (share after the discussion)

A young plant; a root out of dry ground, stump language, one last time; *“no form or comeliness... no beauty that we should desire him”*; *“despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief”*; one from whom men hide their faces; *“we esteemed him not.”*

That is the reveal, and it is stranger and greater than any guess at the table: the arm of the LORD is revealed in *a person*: God's baring of his saving power looks, to human eyes, like a man being despised. Most of your guesses were right, *God's power, the Messiah, Jesus*, and the astonishment is *how* you were right: the omnipotence that split the sea is revealed as self-gift; the new Exodus is won not by drowning an army but by a Servant absorbing everything. Verse 1 doubles as a warning: *“Who has believed what we have heard?”* Power disguised as weakness is missable; the nations' kings shut their mouths at it (52:15), and plenty of eyes slide right past. Yours no longer can.

The Pronouns (Isaiah 53:4-6)

3. Read Isaiah 53:4-6 aloud twice, and the second time, have everyone tap the table at every first-person plural: *our, we, us*. Count them. Then state, in one sentence each, what he carried, what it accomplished, and what verse 6 says the LORD did.

ANSWER (share after the discussion)

The pronouns hammer ten times and more: *our* griefs, *our* sorrows, *our* transgressions, *our* iniquities, the chastisement that made *us* whole, *we* are healed, all *we* like sheep, every one to *his* own way, the iniquity of *us all*. The Song will not let anyone at the table stay a spectator; the grammar itself indicts and includes you.

What he carried: not only sins but their whole harvest, griefs and sorrows included. What it accomplished: *“upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed”*, an exchange: his wounds, our healing; his chastisement, our peace. This is substitution in the text's own words, and note that the chastisement is *medicinal* in its aim: it *made us whole*. And verse 6, the sentence at the Song's exact center: *“the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* The initiative is God's own; the remedy comes from the offended party. Session 1 promised scarlet made white and told us God does the whitening; tonight we watch what the whitening costs.

The Silent Lamb and the Rich Man's Tomb (Isaiah 53:7-9)

4. Read 53:7-9. What does the Servant not do, twice noted? What two details in verse 8 and verse 9 read like case-file entries, and what is strange about the burial?

ANSWER (share after the discussion)

He opens not his mouth, twice: *“like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb.”* The sacrificial system stands up and walks: Passover lamb, daily offering, now with a human face, which is exactly what the Baptist announces at the Jordan: *“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world”* (John 1:29; CCC 608), the sentence the Church repeats at every Mass. The case-file entries: *“stricken for the transgression of my people”*, the

Servant is distinguished from the very people he dies for, the corporate reading's last handhold gives way here, and "*they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death*": executed among criminals, buried in a rich man's tomb, an oddity with no obvious poetic reason, until a member of the council named Joseph, a rich man of Arimathea, asks Pilate for a body (Matthew 27:57-60). Nations are not buried in rich men's tombs. Individuals are.

The Offering He Makes Himself (Isaiah 53:10-12)

5. Read 53:10-12, the summit. Three questions. First: verse 10 says "*when he makes himself an offering for sin*"; who is the subject of that verb, and why does it change everything? Second: what does a dead man do in verses 10-11 that dead men do not do? Third: verse 12 ends the Song with what ongoing activity?

ANSWER (share after the discussion)

First: *he makes himself* an offering, as our translation rightly renders a disputed Hebrew construction, and the Gospel removes the ambiguity about whose act it is. The Servant is not a victim seized by God or man; he is the priest of his own sacrifice, which Jesus states as his own self-understanding: "*No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord*" (John 10:18). The Hebrew word for the offering is precise: '*asham*, the guilt offering of Leviticus 5, the sacrifice of *reparation*, offered when sin has incurred a real debt that must be made good. Isaiah reached into Israel's whole sacrificial system and chose the one offering whose entire logic is *amends*. Here the Church's full vocabulary belongs, and every word of it is doing a different job: his death *expiates* sin (wipes it away), *makes satisfaction* (repairs the offense: St. Anselm's insight, offered from inside our nature by one who owed nothing, worth more than all it repairs), is *propitiatory* (it avails before God for the forgiveness of sins), and is *substitutionary* exactly as verses 4-6 said: the chastisement we deserved rested on him (CCC 601, 615). And St. Thomas adds the measure (Summa Theologiae III, q. 48, a. 2): a *superabundant* satisfaction, because the love and obedience in the offering outweighed all the malice of all sin; the Passion saves not because pain is precious but because such love is.

Second: after pouring out his soul *to death* (v. 12), "*he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days*"; he shall see the fruit of his travail and be satisfied. A dead man with descendants, a future, and satisfaction: the Song asserts resurrection without pausing to argue it, exactly as 25:8 and 26:19 promised. File one question for next week: who are the offspring of a man who died childless?

Third: the Song's last clause: he "*made intercession for the transgressors*." Priestly work the New Testament shows still in progress, "*he always lives to make intercession for them*" (Hebrews 7:25). And now say the Mass connection plainly, because tonight is its home: the sacrifice of the cross and the sacrifice of the altar are *one single sacrifice*; the same Christ who offered himself once in blood is offered in an unbloody manner, and this sacrifice, Trent's own words, is *truly propitiatory* (CCC 1367). When you kneel at Mass, the '*asham* of Isaiah 53:10 is not remembered from a distance; it is made present, and the Intercessor of 53:12 is on the altar interceding. This chapter is why the Mass is called the Holy *Sacrifice*.

DIG DEEPER • The '*Asham*: Anatomy of a Guilt Offering

Leviticus 5:14-6:7 legislates the offering Isaiah names in 53:10. It is the most juridical sacrifice in the system: prescribed when guilt has created a measurable debt, against God's holy things or a

neighbor, and it uniquely requires restitution plus a fifth: the wrong must actually be made good, not merely regretted. By selecting the *'asham*, Isaiah says something exact: the Servant's death is not a tragedy God salvages nor a gesture of solidarity only; it is reparation, the debt of the world made good, with interest. When the Catechism says Christ *made satisfaction* for our sins (CCC 615), it is speaking fluent Leviticus.

LIVE DISCOVERY

About a decade after the resurrection, a foreign official rides home from Jerusalem reading tonight's exact passage aloud in his chariot, and he asks a passing deacon the very question this study sealed in an envelope. Find the scene in Acts 8, and note carefully: what is his question, word for word, and what does Philip do with it? Pairs, 4 minutes.

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Acts 8:26-39. An Ethiopian court official, returning from worship in Jerusalem, is reading Isaiah 53:7-8. His question to Philip is your sealed question in substance: *"About whom, pray, does the prophet say this, about himself or about some one else?"* And the answer: *"Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this scripture he told him the good news of Jesus."* Beginning with this scripture: the fourth Song is, on the New Testament's own record, a complete on-ramp to the entire Gospel. The man's response is the only sane one: *"See, here is water! What is to prevent my being baptized?"* And he went on his way rejoicing.

Two notes to land. First: your group has just spent eleven weeks becoming Philip; you can now do from this chapter what he did, and someone in your life is currently the man in the chariot. Second, notice quietly what Luke tells us the reader was: a eunuch, a man whom the old law barred from the assembly (Deuteronomy 23:1), riding home from worship at Jerusalem. Hold that detail gently; this book has not forgotten him, and neither will this study. Say no more than that.

STEELMAN • BUILD IT AT FULL STRENGTH

Now the modern moral objection, and it is felt sincerely by many, including many Christians. Build it with real force:

The atonement, as described tonight, is monstrous. An innocent man is tortured to death so that a deity can forgive other people: that is not justice, it is the miscarriage of it; punishing the innocent to acquit the guilty is the definition of injustice in every human court. Worse, if the Father *willed* to bruise him (53:10), then the doctrine puts violence at the heart of God: a Father venting wrath on his Son, which critics have bluntly called cosmic child abuse. A truly loving God would simply forgive, as Jesus told us to do, freely, without demanding blood first. The whole apparatus of wrath, debt, and substitution is ancient legal mythology projected onto God, and morally serious people should say so.

Let it land with its full weight; someone at your table has felt it. Then answer from the Song's own grammar.

6. Answer it from the texts already on the table: (a) who, grammatically and theologically, offers this sacrifice; (b) what is the relationship between the Father's will and the Son's in the Passion; (c) what does the objection get right that the Church also insists on; (d) what does *simply forgive* actually cost, even among humans?

ANSWER (share after the discussion)

(a) Begin where the Song itself blocks the caricature: *he makes himself an offering* (53:10); *he poured out his soul to death* (53:12). There is no unwilling victim anywhere in the Catholic doctrine of the atonement. Jesus says it in the first person: “*No one takes my life from me... I lay it down of my own accord*” (John 10:18). A third party punished against his will for others' crimes would indeed be injustice; a person freely offering his own life for those he loves is the thing every human culture recognizes as the *summit* of justice's older sister, love. Greater love has no man than this.

(b) And the offerer is not a creature drafted by God; he is God the Son, one in being and one in will with the Father. The cross is not the Father doing something *to* someone else; it is God, in the person of the Son, taking the cost of sin into his own life. The Trinity is why *cosmic child abuse* misfires as a description: there is no unwilling third party because there is no third party at all: the Judge is serving the sentence, the offended party is paying the debt. St. Anselm's logic, from the leader's guide, holds: only man owes it, only God can pay it, so the payer became man. And what the Father *willed*, as St. Thomas teaches (ST III, q. 48), was not suffering for its own sake but the obedient love that shone in it, permitting the violence men freely chose: the Passion saves because such love is infinite, not because suffering is currency (CCC 615, which says Jesus *makes satisfaction*, the language of repair, not of venting).

(c) Concede what is true in the objection, because the Church herself insists on it: any account that makes the Father bloodthirsty and the Son his appeasement is a heresy, not the Catholic faith. “*God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us*” (Romans 5:8): the cross is the Father's love in action, not the price extracted before he could love. The initiative in 53:6 is God's: *the LORD laid on him*: the offended party providing the remedy, the same movement as 1:18. The chastisement was *medicinal*: *it made us whole*.

(d) Finally, interrogate *simply forgive*. Even among humans, forgiveness is never free for the forgiver: to forgive a real wrong is to absorb its cost yourself, to eat the debt rather than collect it. Scale that to the sin of the world, and the cross is what *simply forgiving* looks like when God does it: the wronged One absorbing, in his own body, the full weight of everything he pardons, so that mercy is not the pretense that evil did not matter but the defeat of evil at the pardoner's expense. Isaiah saw it whole seven centuries early: with his stripes we are healed. The objection wanted a God who forgives without cost; the Gospel gives us something better: a God who pays the cost himself.

7. (Optional, first cut for time.) Read Isaiah 52:7. Before the Song descends, one verse about feet. Whose feet, doing what, and where has this study heard the job description before?

ANSWER (share after the discussion)

“*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace... who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'*” The herald of Session 8 (40:9) is back, and Paul quotes this verse of every preacher of the Gospel (Romans 10:15). The feet are beautiful because of the cargo. After tonight, your feet qualify: you now carry, from this chapter, the news Philip carried to the chariot. The study's title has been a job posting all along.

SEND • TAKING IT OUT

1. Read 53:4-6 once more silently, and put one specific transgression of yours, this year's, not childhood's, inside the pronouns: *he was wounded for this*. What happens in you when the atonement stops being a doctrine and becomes an address? If it has been a while, the confessional is where this chapter is applied by name.
2. Who is your Ethiopian: the person in your life closest to the chariot, reading, wondering, one honest conversation from joy? Philip's whole method was to walk up and ask what they were reading. What is your version of that opening move, and when this month?

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

- Attend one Mass this week, or this Sunday, with Isaiah 53:10-12 in your pocket, and at the elevation, pray the verse where it lives: *he makes himself an offering for sin... he made intercession for the transgressors*.
- Go to Confession and bring the pronouns with you: name what he was wounded for. Leave healed: his stripes, our healing, is the exchange the chapter publishes.
- Read the fourth Song aloud once, alone, replacing *our* and *we* with *my* and *I*. It will take four minutes and you will not forget it.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed."

Isaiah 53:5 (RSV2CE)

Closing Prayer

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: we wrote our guesses, and you exceeded all of them.
The arm of the LORD has hands, and they are wounded, and our names are graven on the palms.
You made yourself the offering; you bore what was ours; you make intercession for us at this hour.
Receive our gratitude, our confession, and our commission: send us to the chariots.
By your stripes we are healed. Amen.*

Before next session: read Isaiah 54:1-10 and 55:1-3, and carry one question with you: who are the offspring of the man who died childless?

Leader Reference Card

Every passage used tonight, in order

Primary Text

- Isaiah 40:10; 51:5, 9; 52:10 (the trail of the arm)
- Isaiah 53:1-3 (to whom revealed; the descriptors of the despised)
- Isaiah 53:4-6 (the pronouns; the exchange; the LORD laid on him)
- Isaiah 53:7-9 (the silent lamb; stricken for my people; the rich man's tomb)
- Isaiah 53:10-12 (the 'asham self-offered; offspring after death; ongoing intercession)
- Isaiah 52:13-15 (exalted and lifted up; sprinkling many nations; kings shut mouths)
- Isaiah 52:7 (beautiful feet; optional)

Live Discovery Target

- Acts 8:26-39 (the eunuch's verbatim question; Philip begins with this scripture)

Supporting Passages

- Leviticus 5:14-6:7 (the 'asham guilt offering; Dig Deeper)
- Leviticus 16:22 (sin-bearing; the scapegoat's verb)
- John 1:29 (Behold, the Lamb of God); John 10:18 (I lay it down of my own accord)
- John 12:38-41 (the Song and the throne vision cited together)
- Matthew 27:57-60 (the rich man's tomb); Matthew 8:17; Luke 22:37 (Jesus cites the Song)
- 1 Peter 2:22-25 (Peter walks the Song line by line)
- Romans 5:8; 10:15-16; Hebrews 7:25 (love demonstrated; the feet; the living Intercessor)

Catechism

- CCC 601 (the redemptive death foretold: the righteous one, my Servant)
- CCC 615 (atonement and satisfaction; the offering for sin)
- CCC 608 (the Lamb of God)
- CCC 1367 (one single sacrifice; the Mass truly propitiatory)

Session Logistics

- Guess ceremony FIRST, before any reading. Every guess honored; reconstructed guesses count.

Memory Verse

- Isaiah 53:5 (RSV2CE)