

God Promises a Savior Through the Prophets

Week 35 | Sunday, August 30, 2026 | For Teacher Study Only - Not Read Aloud

LESSON IDENTIFICATION

Week #: 35

Date: Sunday, August 30, 2026

Lesson Title: God Promises a Savior Through the Prophets

Primary Scripture Passages: Isaiah 9:1 to 7; Isaiah 52:13 through 53:12

Bible Timeline Placement: The divided kingdom, during the ministry of Isaiah the prophet, centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ

PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON

For many weeks, the children have watched God remain faithful while His people struggled to remain faithful to Him. They have seen kings fail, nations turn away, prophets speak the truth, and ordinary people discover that human strength cannot repair the deepest problem inside us.

This week brings all of that longing into focus.

God promised that Someone was coming.

Isaiah 9 shows us a promised Son who would bring light into darkness and rule with justice and peace. Isaiah 53 shows us a Servant who would suffer for the sins of others. The New Testament helps us see that these promises come together in one Person, Jesus Christ.

The children should leave this lesson understanding that Jesus was not God's emergency plan after everything else failed. God had promised the Savior long before Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

They should also begin to understand why Jesus came. He came not only to teach us how to live, but to save sinners who could not save themselves.

BOOK AND PASSAGE BACKGROUND

Book Name: Isaiah

Traditional Author: Isaiah, son of Amoz

Approximate Date: Isaiah ministered during the eighth century BC.

Original Audience: Primarily the people of Judah and Jerusalem, though Isaiah's message reaches beyond Judah to Israel, surrounding nations, and ultimately the whole world.

Purpose of the Book

Isaiah speaks both warning and hope.

God's people had sinned against Him, trusted human power instead of God, practiced injustice, and often continued religious activity while their hearts wandered far from Him. Isaiah warned that sin brings judgment because God is holy.

Yet judgment was not the end of the message.

God also promised rescue, restoration, a coming King, and a Servant through whom salvation would come. Isaiah 9:6 to 7 and Isaiah 52:13 through 53:12 are among the clearest places where that hope comes into view.

Isaiah 1:1 identifies Isaiah as the prophet who received visions concerning Judah and Jerusalem during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Historical study places Isaiah's prophetic ministry in Judah

during roughly the eighth century BC. (bibleodyssey.org)

There is scholarly debate concerning the composition and final form of portions of Isaiah, especially the later chapters. Teachers do not need to introduce that debate to young children, but we should know it exists.

There is also an important fact that does not depend upon settling that debate. We possess a copy of the entire book of Isaiah from well before the birth of Jesus. That becomes very important when we discuss Isaiah 53.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Isaiah lived during frightening years.

The people of Israel had already divided into two kingdoms. Israel was in the north, while Judah was in the south. Jerusalem was the capital of Judah.

During the reign of King Ahaz, Judah faced military threats from neighboring kingdoms. Isaiah 7:2 tells us that the hearts of the king and his people shook like trees blowing in the wind.

That picture matters.

These were not people sitting comfortably somewhere discussing prophecy as an interesting religious subject. War was possible. Powerful armies were moving. Nations were making alliances. Kings were deciding whom they could trust.

Isaiah kept bringing the people back to God.

Isaiah 9 begins by naming Zebulun and Naphtali, areas in the northern part of the land that had experienced the darkness of invasion and foreign domination. Against that very real darkness, God promised light.

Then comes the astonishing announcement of Isaiah 9:6.

A child would be born.

A Son would be given.

And this Son would rule.

The passage gives Him names that reveal an extraordinary identity, including Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

The promise reaches far beyond another ordinary king of Judah.

Hundreds of years later, Matthew 4:12 to 16 points directly back to Isaiah 9 when Jesus begins His public ministry in Galilee, in the region connected with Zebulun and Naphtali.

The place that had known darkness saw the Light arrive.

ISAIAH 53 AND THE SUFFERING SERVANT

Isaiah 53 gives us a very different picture, yet it belongs to the same hope.

Instead of seeing the promised ruler sitting upon a throne, we see God's Servant rejected, wounded, suffering, and eventually associated with death and a grave.

Then Isaiah tells us why.

Isaiah 53:5 explains that He was pierced because of our transgressions. A transgression is an act of disobedience against God.

Isaiah 53:6 goes deeper. We are compared with sheep wandering away from their shepherd, each turning toward our own way, while the Lord places our sin upon the Servant.

That is the heart of the gospel already beginning to appear centuries before the cross.

Someone innocent would suffer because of the guilt of others.

The New Testament does not leave Christians guessing about the identity of this Servant. In Acts 8:32 to 35, a man from Ethiopia is reading Isaiah 53 and asks Philip whom the prophet is describing. Philip begins with that very passage and tells him the good news about Jesus.

Peter also uses the language of Isaiah 53 when explaining the death of Christ in 1 Peter 2:22 to 25.

Scripture is interpreting Scripture for us.

IMMEDIATE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

WHAT COMES BEFORE ISAIAH 9?

Isaiah 7 and 8 describe fear, political danger, unbelief, judgment, and darkness.

King Ahaz is urged to trust God, but he chooses another path. The surrounding chapters make the contrast clear between depending upon human power and trusting the Lord.

Then Isaiah 9 opens with hope.

Darkness will not have the final word.

WHAT COMES AFTER ISAIAH 9?

Isaiah continues describing God's judgment against sin and the pride of nations.

Yet hope continues to appear.

Isaiah 11 describes another promised ruler from the family line of Jesse, the father of King David. God's Spirit rests upon Him, and His kingdom is marked by righteousness and peace.

God is steadily showing us that a King is coming unlike every king who came before Him.

WHAT COMES BEFORE ISAIAH 53?

The section actually begins in Isaiah 52:13, where God introduces His Servant.

Isaiah describes this Servant as one who will ultimately be exalted, yet His path to that exaltation passes through terrible suffering.

WHAT COMES AFTER ISAIAH 53?

Isaiah 54 turns toward joy, restoration, and God's faithful love.

The suffering Servant is not the end of God's work. His suffering opens into the hope of restoration.

WHY THIS MOMENT MATTERS IN GOD'S PLAN

Isaiah allows us to hold two pictures together.

The promised Savior is a King.

The promised Savior is also a suffering Servant.

Jesus fulfills both.

He is not merely a victim who dies. He is the King who willingly gives His life.

And He is not merely a powerful King standing far away from sinful people. He comes near, bears our sin, dies in our place, rises from the dead, and will reign forever.

KEY THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS APPLIED TO THIS WEEK'S LESSON

CORE TRUTH 1: GOD HAD A PLAN TO SAVE

The coming of Jesus was not an afterthought.

Long before Bethlehem, God was revealing what He intended to do.

Isaiah 9 speaks about the promised Son. Isaiah 53 describes the Servant who suffers because of the sins of others.

This helps children understand the Bible as one connected account of God's rescue rather than a collection of unrelated events.

God knew what humanity needed, and He promised the Savior before Jesus was born.

CORE TRUTH 2: OUR DEEPEST PROBLEM IS SIN

Isaiah 53 does not describe humanity as basically fine but needing better advice.

It describes us as wandering sheep.

Isaiah 53:6 says that each of us has turned to our own way.

That is a simple picture children can understand. Sin is more than making an occasional mistake. Sin includes our desire to choose our way instead of God's good way.

We need more than instruction because we cannot remove our own guilt.

We need a Savior.

CORE TRUTH 3: JESUS TOOK THE PLACE OF SINNERS

Isaiah 53:5 to 6 is central to this lesson.

The Servant suffers because of the wrongdoing of others.

The Christian word for this is substitution. It simply means that one person stands in the place of another.

Jesus did not die because He had sinned. He had no sin.

He willingly carried our sin and received the judgment our sin deserved. First Peter 3:18 explains that Christ suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God.

This is not merely an example of love.

This is rescue.

CORE TRUTH 4: THE PROMISED SON IS MORE THAN AN ORDINARY MAN

Isaiah 9:6 speaks of a child being born and a Son being given, yet this promised Son is also called Mighty God.

That matters greatly.

The Savior God promised would truly enter human life, while His identity would be greater than that of any ordinary human king.

The New Testament reveals this fully in Jesus Christ.

The current Christian and Missionary Alliance Statement of Faith teaches that Jesus Christ is true God and true man, that He died for sinners, rose from the dead, and will come again to establish His kingdom. The Alliance itself points to Isaiah 9:6 to 7 when speaking of Christ's coming kingdom. (cmalliance.org)

CORE TRUTH 5: JESUS IS THE COMING KING

Isaiah 9:7 says that the promised ruler's government and peace will have no end.

Every human government changes. Every earthly ruler eventually leaves office, loses power, or dies.

Jesus is different.

His kingdom lasts forever.

This fits naturally with the Christian and Missionary Alliance emphasis upon Jesus as our Coming King. The Alliance describes Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King, and teaches that His return will be personal and visible. (cmalliance.org)

CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE CONNECTION

This lesson connects especially strongly with two parts of the Fourfold Gospel.

CHRIST OUR SAVIOR

Isaiah 53 belongs at the center of this truth.

Jesus died for our sins and rose again. Salvation does not come because we become good enough for God. It comes through Christ.

The Alliance teaches that salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ and that those who repent and believe in Him receive salvation by grace through faith. (cmalliance.org)

CHRIST OUR COMING KING

Isaiah 9 gives us a beautiful foundation for this truth.

The promised Son rules with justice and righteousness, and His kingdom has no end.

Jesus came once as our Savior, and He will come again as King.

CHRIST OUR HEALER

Isaiah 53:4 to 5 also appears in the Alliance Statement of Faith concerning Christ our Healer. The Alliance teaches that Christ's redemptive work provides for the healing of the whole person and encourages the church to pray for the sick. (cmalliance.org)

Teachers need to handle this carefully.

Isaiah 53 should never be used to tell a child that enough faith guarantees immediate physical healing. Scripture does not promise that every sickness will disappear in this life.

We pray because Jesus is compassionate and powerful. We trust Him whether His answer comes through immediate healing, medical care, strength during suffering, or the final complete healing believers will know in resurrection.

CHRIST OUR SANCTIFIER

Sanctifier means that Jesus continues working in His people through the Holy Spirit and helps us become more like Him.

That truth belongs to the whole gospel, but it does not need to become a major teaching point from Isaiah 9 or 53 this week.

The strongest emphasis in these passages is Jesus our Savior and Jesus our King.

GOD AS TRINITY

The Trinity should be handled carefully in this lesson.

God is one God in three Persons.

The Father is God.

The Son is God.

The Holy Spirit is God.

There are not three gods, and there is not one Person pretending to be three different Persons.

The current Alliance Statement of Faith expresses this clearly, teaching that the one God exists eternally as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (cmalliance.org)

Isaiah 9:6 gives us an important truth about Jesus because the promised Son is called Mighty God.

Yet teachers should notice something else.

Isaiah 9:6 also calls Him Everlasting Father. This does not mean Jesus is God the Father. The rest of Scripture clearly distinguishes the Father from the Son.

We should not use one title to erase truths that Scripture makes clear elsewhere.

Likewise, Isaiah 53 speaks about the Lord and His Servant in ways that distinguish them.

The Holy Spirit is not a major focus of the assigned passages, so there is no reason to force Him artificially into the text. We can teach the fuller Trinity truth from Scripture while honestly explaining what this particular passage reveals.

RELIABILITY OF SCRIPTURE

This week's lesson gives us an unusually helpful opportunity to show children and teachers something we can actually see from history.

The Great Isaiah Scroll was discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The Israel Museum dates this manuscript to about 125 BC and describes it as the only complete ancient copy of a biblical book among the Dead Sea Scrolls. It contains the entire book of Isaiah, including the passages we are studying. (dss.collections.imj.org.il)

That matters.

Jesus was born long after this manuscript was copied.

So someone may disagree about what Isaiah 53 means, but they cannot reasonably claim that Christians invented Isaiah 53 after Jesus died and inserted it into the Bible to make a prophecy fit Him.

We have a copy from before Jesus' earthly life.

That is genuine historical evidence.

We should also be careful about what this evidence does not prove.

The existence of an ancient manuscript does not, by itself, prove that Jesus is the Messiah. Archaeology cannot prove a theological conclusion for us.

What the manuscript establishes is much narrower and still very important.

The prophecy existed before Jesus.

Then we can open the New Testament and ask what happened.

Matthew connects Isaiah 9 with Jesus.

Jesus connects Isaiah 53:12 with Himself in Luke 22:37.

Philip explains Isaiah 53 as good news about Jesus in Acts 8:32 to 35.

Peter uses Isaiah 53 to explain Jesus bearing our sins in 1 Peter 2:22 to 25.

That is a much stronger and more honest apologetics approach than claiming archaeology proves Christianity.

APOLOGETICS FOUNDATION

This is an excellent week to teach the children our three questions.

1. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE REALLY SAY?

Isaiah says a Son is coming who will rule.

Isaiah says God's Servant will suffer because of the sins of others.

The New Testament identifies Jesus with these passages.

2. WHAT DO WE KNOW FROM HISTORY?

We possess an ancient copy of Isaiah from about 125 BC.

It contains these prophecies.

Therefore, these words existed before the life, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus.
(dss.collections.imj.org.il)

3. WHAT ARE WE ONLY GUESSING ABOUT?

We do not know everything Isaiah personally understood about the future events God showed him.

We cannot tell children exactly what every ancient reader expected the Messiah to do.

We should also not claim that every person who reads Isaiah 53 agrees about its meaning.

Those are places where honesty strengthens faith rather than weakens it.

We know what the text says.

We know the text existed before Jesus.

And as Christians, we have the New Testament explaining that Jesus is the One to whom these promises ultimately point.

ANTICIPATED CHILD QUESTIONS

QUESTION: HOW COULD ISAIAH KNOW ABOUT JESUS HUNDREDS OF YEARS BEFORE JESUS WAS BORN?

Isaiah did not figure out the future by himself. God revealed His message to the prophets. Second Peter 1:21 explains that prophets spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. Prophecy is not fortune telling. God knows the whole of history, and He can reveal what He chooses about what is coming.

QUESTION: DID CHRISTIANS WRITE ISAIAH 53 AFTER JESUS DIED?

No. We have a copy of Isaiah from about 125 years before Jesus was born, and it contains Isaiah 53. (dss.collections.imj.org.il) Christians did not add those words afterward.

QUESTION: WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO DIE?

Because our sin is real, and sin separates us from God. Isaiah 53:6 says that we have all wandered away like sheep, but the Lord placed our wrongdoing upon the Servant. Jesus took our sin upon Himself so that those who trust Him can be forgiven and brought back to God.

QUESTION: IF JESUS IS GOD THE SON, WHY DOES ISAIAH CALL HIM EVERLASTING FATHER?

That title does not mean Jesus is the Person we call God the Father. Scripture teaches both that Jesus is God and that Jesus is distinct from the Father. Jesus speaks to the Father, is sent by the Father, and returns to the Father. God is one God in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

QUESTION: DOES ISAIAH 53 MEAN JESUS WILL HEAL EVERY SICK PERSON RIGHT NOW?

Jesus can heal, and we should pray when people are sick. But Scripture does not promise that every believer will always be healed immediately. Sometimes faithful Christians remain sick. Sometimes they suffer. Jesus still loves them, hears them, and stays with them. Every believer will finally be completely healed when Christ makes all things new and death is no more.

QUESTION: COULD THE SERVANT IN ISAIAH 53 MEAN ISRAEL?

That is a thoughtful question because Isaiah does sometimes call Israel God's servant, as we see in Isaiah 41:8. Christians do not need to pretend that nobody has ever understood Isaiah 53 differently. Our strongest answer comes from Scripture itself. In Acts 8:32 to 35, Philip begins with Isaiah 53 and explains the good news about Jesus. First Peter 2 also uses the words and ideas of Isaiah 53 to explain what Jesus did on the cross. So we follow the way the New Testament teaches us to understand this passage.

COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS

MISUNDERSTANDING 1: JESUS WAS GOD'S BACKUP PLAN

Correction:

Jesus was never Plan B. God promised the Savior long before Bethlehem. The cross did not surprise God.

MISUNDERSTANDING 2: JESUS CAME ONLY TO SHOW US HOW TO BE GOOD

Correction:

Jesus certainly teaches us how to live, but our problem is deeper than poor behavior. We are sinners who need forgiveness. Isaiah 53 shows us a Savior who bears sin, not merely a teacher who gives advice.

MISUNDERSTANDING 3: PROPHECY IS LIKE PREDICTING THE FUTURE WITH A CRYSTAL BALL

Correction:

Biblical prophecy comes from God. The prophet speaks the message God gives. Second Peter 1:21 anchors that truth.

MISUNDERSTANDING 4: ISAIAH 53 WAS WRITTEN AFTER JESUS

Correction:

The Great Isaiah Scroll shows that the passage existed before Jesus' birth. (dss.collections.imj.org.il)

MISUNDERSTANDING 5: IF JESUS IS OUR HEALER, CHRISTIANS SHOULD NEVER STAY SICK

Correction:

Jesus is our Healer, and Christians may pray confidently for healing. Yet Scripture never gives us permission to blame sick people for remaining sick or to promise a result God has not promised. Our final hope is not that Christians avoid every painful thing in this life. Our hope is Jesus Christ, who died, rose again, remains with His people, and will one day remove death itself.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

This lesson should make the gospel unusually clear.

Isaiah 9 tells us who is coming.

Isaiah 53 begins explaining why He must come.

God is holy and good, while every one of us has sinned and wandered away from Him.

We cannot repair that separation ourselves.

God sent Jesus, God the Son.

Jesus lived without sin.

He willingly went to the cross, where He bore our sins and received the judgment we deserved. Isaiah had described the Servant suffering for the sins of others centuries earlier.

Jesus truly died and was buried.

Then He rose from the dead.

Those who turn from sin and trust Jesus are forgiven, brought back to God, and given new life.

And the Savior who suffered is also the King Isaiah promised.

Jesus is alive, and His kingdom will never end.

TEACHER HEART PREPARATION

There is something beautiful about where this lesson falls in our year.

For thirty five weeks, the children have traveled through much of the Old Testament. They have watched humanity sin, wander, fight, fear, fail, repent, and wander again.

I suspect we recognize ourselves somewhere in that journey because the human heart has not changed very much.

Then, right here, before we open Luke next week and begin talking about Bethlehem, God gives us a promise.

Someone is coming.

I have wondered what it must have been like to hear Isaiah speak these words when the world around Judah looked so uncertain. The people could see armies. They could see weak kings. They could see

problems they could not solve.

God could see farther.

He saw Bethlehem.

He saw Galilee.

He saw the cross.

He saw the empty tomb.

And none of it surprised Him.

Before teaching, spend a few quiet moments with Isaiah 53:6. We are not standing outside this verse explaining what went wrong with everyone else. We are among the sheep who wandered.

And Jesus came for us.

That is what gives this lesson its tenderness.

We are not telling children that good people finally received a Savior because they deserved one. We are telling them that God loved wandering people enough to send His Son to rescue them.

Pray that the children will not simply remember that Isaiah predicted Jesus.

Pray that they will begin to see why they need Him.

And pray that when they meet the baby in Bethlehem next Sunday, they will already know something wonderful about the child lying in that manger.

He is the promised King.

He is the suffering Savior.

And He came for sinners like us.