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GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Brit Hadasha: Affliction of the Messiah

TEACHING SUMMARY

This teaching answers the claim that Scripture describes Israel as despised and afflicted but does not describe Messiah that way. It begins with Isaiah 53, highlighting the servant's rejection, grief, wounds, oppression, and death. The descriptions of being pierced, crushed, and chastised are presented as unmistakable examples of suffering and affliction.

The discussion examines the Hebrew term *anah* and the Greek terminology cited from the Septuagint. The meanings presented include affliction, humbling, oppression, and ill-treatment. This word study reinforces the plain descriptions in Isaiah 53 rather than treating affliction as a category that excludes the sufferings named there.

The teaching then considers the claim that Isaiah's servant must be the nation of Israel because Israel is called a servant elsewhere in the book. The term can have more than one referent: Isaiah 20:3 explicitly calls Isaiah YHWH's servant. The word servant alone therefore does not settle the identity of the figure in Isaiah 53; each passage must be read in its own context.

The passage is read beginning at Isaiah 52:13–15. The teaching distinguishes Israel as the audience being addressed from the servant being described, using the contrast between “you” and “he” to support an individual Messianic reading. The servant is both marred and exalted, and the teaching understands his suffering as borne on behalf of others.

Additional passages are offered as evidence of Messianic affliction. Psalm 22 describes scorn, mockery, pierced hands and feet, and garments divided by lot. Psalm 69 speaks of reproach, Psalm 118 of the rejected stone, and Zechariah 12:10 of mourning over one who was pierced. These passages are presented as a broader scriptural pattern supporting the reading of Isaiah 53.

Finally, the teaching connects Messiah with the prophet like Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15 and recalls how prophets were opposed, threatened, and killed. Examples from Kings, Nehemiah, and Jeremiah show that prophetic faithfulness did not guarantee an easy life. The conclusion is that Messiah's affliction fits both the cited prophecies and the historical treatment of YHWH's prophets, even though he would also be loved.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The objection concerns whether the TANAKH describes Messiah as despised and afflicted.
- Isaiah 53 explicitly describes rejection, wounds, oppression, and death.
- The word study connects affliction with humbling and ill-treatment.
- The teaching rejects the assumption that every use of servant must refer to Israel.
- Isaiah 52:13–15 supplies the opening context for Isaiah 53.
- The contrast between the audience and the servant supports the teaching’s Messianic interpretation.
- Psalm 22 is presented as another description of Messianic suffering.
- Psalms 69 and 118 add the themes of reproach and rejection.
- Zechariah 12:10 describes mourning for the pierced one.
- The opposition faced by YHWH’s prophets is consistent with an afflicted Messiah.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Basic

1. The main chapter examined for the suffering servant is Isaiah _____.
2. Isaiah describes the servant as despised and _____ by men.
3. The servant is described as pierced for our _____.
4. The interpretation challenged by the teaching identifies the servant with the nation of _____.
5. The psalm describing pierced hands and feet and divided garments is Psalm _____.
6. Deuteronomy 18:15 describes the coming prophet as being like _____.

Challenging

1. The Hebrew term discussed as meaning afflicted or humbled is _____.
2. The suffering-servant passage begins, in the teaching’s reading, at Isaiah _____:13.
3. The teaching distinguishes the audience called “you” from the servant described as “_____.”
4. Psalm 69:9 speaks of zeal for YHWH’s _____ consuming the sufferer.
5. Psalm 118:22 says the stone rejected by the builders becomes the _____.
6. Zechariah 12:10 compares mourning for the pierced one to mourning for an only _____.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which descriptions in Isaiah 53 most directly answer the opening objection, and why?

2. How does the teaching use its Hebrew and Greek word study to clarify affliction?

3. Why does the teaching reject identifying the servant solely by other uses of that term in Isaiah?

4. How does beginning at Isaiah 52:13 affect the teaching's reading of the servant and the audience?

5. How do the additional passages from Psalms and Zechariah contribute to the argument?

6. Why does the treatment of YHWH's prophets matter to the expectation that Messiah would suffer?

ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. 53 — Isaiah 53
2. rejected — Isaiah 53:3
3. transgressions — Isaiah 53:5
4. Israel — Teaching's discussion of the national-servant interpretation
5. 22 — Psalm 22:16–18 in the translation quoted
6. Moses — Deuteronomy 18:15

Challenging

1. anah — Teaching word study of H6031
2. 52 — Isaiah 52:13–15
3. he — Teaching interpretation of Isaiah 52:13–15
4. house — Psalm 69:9
5. cornerstone — Psalm 118:22
6. child — Zechariah 12:10

FACILITATOR DISCUSSION NOTES

Suggested responses follow the teaching. Invite discussion and personal application; these are not additional required answers.

1. Isaiah 53:3–8 describes rejection, grief, wounds, oppression and being cut off from the living. Those descriptions answer the objection if the servant is identified as Messiah, as the teaching argues. Keep the description of suffering and the identification of the sufferer as distinct parts of the case.

2. The source uses Hebrew *anah* and the Greek terms it cites to connect affliction with humbling, oppression and ill-treatment. The plain descriptions in Isaiah 53 remain central; the word study supports rather than replaces reading the passage.

3. Isaiah uses servant language in different contexts. Isaiah 20:3 explicitly names the prophet Isaiah as servant, while Isaiah 49:3 explicitly names Israel. This prevents a rule that every occurrence has one referent, but does not by itself decide the identity in Isaiah 53.

4. Beginning at Isaiah 52:13 includes the servant's exaltation, marred appearance and effect on nations. The teaching understands the audience/servant pronoun contrast as support for an individual Messianic reading. Present that as its contextual argument, not as a conclusion established merely by a pronoun in isolation.

5. The source connects Psalm 22 with mockery and suffering, Psalm 69:9 with reproach, Psalm 118:22 with rejection, and Zechariah 12:10 with mourning for the pierced one. Ask participants to read each passage and explain its role in the teaching's broader Messianic pattern.

6. First Kings 19:10, Nehemiah 9:26 and Jeremiah 38:4 describe hostility toward prophets. The teaching argues that suffering is compatible with Messiah's prophetic role, not evidence against it. It also says he would be loved; avoid turning these examples into a claim that every person rejected every prophet.