

# LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

## 26 FEBRUARY 2021

Lent Devotion/Day 10/Friday, February 26, 2021

Isaiah 53:3-6

He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. 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. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

**Meditation:** The human condition is desperate. It is for this reason that Jesus had to suffer. Just as foolish sheep wander off, we too turn our backs and walk away from God to our own detriment. We all do it. This is why it was important for Jesus to bear the sin of "us all" on his shoulders. But suffering was not the end of his story. Isaiah speaks in the future tense as well, beyond the excruciating torment of the cross, about a time when Jesus would "see the light of life" and the satisfaction in seeing his reward: our justification.

Jesus is the perfect fulfillment of this Old Testament prophecy. It was Jesus' clear purpose in coming to this earth that he would not be served, but would do the serving and give his life as a ransom for us – because we were held in captivity, wandering sheep penned up by an evil captor, but now freed by a gentle Savior. Jesus did not suffer on the cross in spite of who he was, but rather precisely because of who he was. Our redemption was his mission. Service and sacrifice were (and are) part of his nature, as they should become part of ours. The example Jesus set of servanthood transcends any example people have ever seen before or ever will see. This other-centeredness, as it was so clearly modeled by our Savior, is now our foremost calling. And he promises that this is how we will find true life.

**Prayer:** *God of eternity, you saw the beginning and you see the end. Your plan has always been good, though I often fail to recognize it as such. As I look to you with love and awe, I am learning to view my circumstances and challenges in this life with courage, knowing that you have my destiny in your hands. My confidence is in your promises. I know that my future is secure in you. I ask for a greater understanding of your purpose for me on this earth and your guidance as I share your Good News with the people I encounter during this earthly pilgrimage as I await my eternal home with you. I pray this in the name of the One who loves me and gave himself for me. Amen.*

from **once a day/40 Days to Easter**, Kenneth Boa and John Allen Turner, Zondervan