

Dear Pilgrims of Faith,

I pray you are well.

Please review **Isaiah 40–55** (so-called Deutero-Isaiah or Second Isaiah) and focus on **Isaiah 53** and see what seems familiar and also different about the “suffering servant.” Here are some questions to ponder while trying to remember that Jesus, the (Christian) church, and the New Testament do not exist in the time of the Babylonian exile—we will revisit Isaiah 53 later when we read the New Testament:

How might Isaiah 53 help you understand human life and life of faith as seen through biblical lenses?

How might Isaiah 53 help you with your walk of faith in our world?

When did Israelites expect God to save-deliver-rescue them from evil (e.g., while alive, after death, after the Day of the Lord)?

What are some ways we can understand the frustrations of injustice: rewarding of the wicked and punishment of the innocent?

How do you understand the long theological developments since the Mosaic covenant (e.g., Ten Commandment: punishment of the living, during life)?

Herewith is a helpful reminder of the historical-theological context:

As we linger a while in the most tragic period of Israelite history to see Judaism emerge in a remarkable way, especially as it paves the way to John the Baptizer and Jesus, please review **Isaiah 40–55** (so-called Deutero-Isaiah or Second Isaiah). Please note all that seems new or fresh, even surprising, in the light of the Mosaic and Davidic covenants, both of which seem to have failed by the time the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem along with the temple, i.e., the center of the Israelite universe—586 BC: destruction of the southern kingdom of Judah; the temple rebuilt 515 BC). As you do, please focus on **Isaiah 53** and see what seems familiar and also different about the “suffering servant.”

As always, I look forward to **your observations and questions**, and please never hesitate to **suggest any biblical, theological, or life topics** along the way. We can be flexible and take detours on our journey through the Bible. Please see the “syllabus” online for where we are headed: Bible intro 2021-04 Ann’s Choice (printed copies also available in front of my office in Resident Life, Liberty Commons).

For Zoomers, here are the instructions:

Zoom (online or using an app):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82395191045?pwd=TTRiQklwR2RhRzZkNFNxU2RRbGRoUT09>

Meeting ID: 823 9519 1045

Meeting Password: annschoice

Dial in by telephone: nearest phone access in New York City

Dial 1 (929) 205 6099

Enter Meeting ID: 823 9519 1045, followed by “#”

Enter Passcode: 394871 if requested

See you in class or via Zoom. Have a wonder-ful evening.

With prayer and best wishes,

