

THE SUFFERING SERVANT
Isaiah 53 (52:13-53:12)

Intro: This is one of the grandest of all the OT passages which have to do with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Although there have been many ideas as to whom Isaiah was referring, yet the NT leaves no doubt but that it speaks prophetically of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Cf. John 12:37-41 and Acts 8:26-36.

In addition, when we consider the description that is given in this passage, there is no one else that it would fit. It has to be Christ.

This passage traces our Lord throughout His earthly ministry, to glory, and to His ultimate victory.

There are five paragraphs--with three verses in each one:

- 1) 52:13-15.
- 2) 53:1-3. *Here we see Isaiah as an Evangelist,*
- 3) 53:4-6. *a preacher of the true Gospel of the grace*
- 4) 53:7-9. *of God.*
- 5) 53:10-12.

The five sections deal with the following themes:

I. THE PRESENTATION OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT (52:13-15).

The whole course of His redemptive career is viewed here. In a sense we have the 53rd chapter here in miniature.

A. His glory (v. 13). How like the Lord to show us the end before we have the details of how He reached that end!

B. His indescribable suffering (v. 14).

No one ever suffered like He did!

C. Here we see the results (v. 15). Cf. 1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

II. THE REJECTION OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT (53:1-2).

A. Isaiah's question (v. 1).

Isaiah anticipated from his own ministry that the mission of the Servant could be in vain! Cf. Rom. 10:16.

B. His twofold rejection (vv. 2, 3).

1. In His humanity (v. 2).

2. In His sufferings (v. 3).

III. THE NECESSITY FOR THE SUFFERING SERVANT (53:4-6).

Two things stand out in these verses:

- 1) That his sufferings which were introduced in v. 3 are now seen to be substitutionary, and vicarious.
- 2) That in His death God was dealing with Him for the sins of His people.

Cf. also v. 10a.

IV. THE SUBMISSION OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT (53:7-9).

His submission was to His Father's will.

His submission was for His people's sake.

He was submissive in spite of His innocence.

No one ever came from greater heights to experience the lowest depths.

Cf. Phil. 2:5-11. Remember His prayer in Gethsemane. See also John 10:17, 18. His submission was not inescapable, but voluntary. See also our Lord's words to Pilate in John 19:10, 11.

V. THE REWARD OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT (53:10-12).

A. The pleasure of the Lord (the Father) (v. 10).

B. The satisfaction of the Servant (v. 11).

Many see in this a reference to particular redemption. How could the Lord Jesus Christ be satisfied if He died to save all men, but only some are saved? The answer is that all were saved whom He came to save.

C. The ultimate triumph and glory of the Servant.

Concl: What should be our response to such an amazing passage of Scripture?

- 1) As so often is the case in Scripture, we should bow before Him in loving adoration--that such a Person as He should willing endure such sufferings for our salvation. How great our need is to require such a Saviour, and for the Saviour to have to pay such a price!
- 2) We should marvel at the sovereign way in which the Father accomplished His eternal purpose in the death of His Son. If the God of heaven can do this, then He can turn all things for our benefit. And Paul used this argument in Rom. 8:32. See also Rom. 8:28.
- 3) We should not hesitate to trust such a Saviour.
- 4) We should rejoice in the hope that this guarantees for us. *What comfort we have in this passage - assurance.*