

The Suffering Servant

Read Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

We've looked at two prophetic pictures of a Coming One. One was Messiah, who was presented as a great earthly king. The second was a heavenly, human "Son of Man". But a third figure emerges who is radically different than the other two.

Isaiah talks about a mysterious Suffering Servant. At times this Servant seems to be the nation of Israel, but other times it becomes clear that this is a single person, emerging from Israel. But who is the prophet talking about?

Isaiah's "Servant Songs", as the passages are called, are: 42:1-9; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13 – 53:12. Let's focus on just the last song. As you read it, what strikes you about this Servant?

- He will be highly exalted, like Messiah King and the Son of Man, but only after extreme humility (52:13; 53:11-12).
- He is not regal and glorious like the other two. Quite the opposite. He is so disfigured, unattractive, and despised that people reject Him and turn away from Him in disgust. They consider Him cursed of God (52:14; 53:2-4).
- But this disfigured one is suffering for *our* sins, not His own. He is being slaughtered as a sacrificial lamb for our salvation (53:4-7, 11).
- He dies unjustly and is buried with the wicked (53:8-9).
- His entire life is driven by God's will. It is God's will that crushes Him, and it is God's will that He accomplishes by His sacrifice (53:10).

These three figures are entirely separate in the Old Testament.

- Messiah, the great King
- the heavenly Son of Man
- the Suffering Servant

Each is coming to bring God's Kingdom and salvation, but no one seemed to connect them. But all three figures are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. They prove to be three pictures of the same person.

No names and no combination of human roles, offices, or descriptions, can fully capture all that Jesus did for us and all that He is for us.

Listen & Sing: [Isaiah 53](#) (from [LNWhymns.com](#))