

ISAIAH 52:13-53:12

The Suffering Servant

A study by Mark Paynter

The study that follows is divided into three readings with a set of questions following each reading. To get the most out of your study please read the text through several times and then reread the selected passage again several times before attempting to answer the questions. Answer each set of questions from the passage.

Section One

Read Isaiah 52:13-15

Who is the servant referred to in Isaiah 52:13? How will that servant act? Use your own words to explain the phrase “will act wisely”? In what way did the servant act wisely? One interpretation of the phrase “will act wisely” is will be successful? In what way does the wider passage describe the servant success?

What does Isaiah 52:14 speak of? How did the servant appear? What was the reaction of people to him? Do you think that there is a biblical figure/s who fulfilled this scripture, if so whom? When do you think that this scripture was fulfilled?

What does Isaiah 52:15 speak of? What is the meaning of the words “sprinkle many nations” mean? What do the words “kings will shut their mouths because of him” mean? Has Isaiah 53:15 been fulfilled? If so by whom and when was this verse fulfilled? If not, who do think will fulfill this verse and when?

Section Two

Read Isaiah 53:1-6

What two questions does Isaiah 53:1 ask? Why are these questions asked at this point in the text? What do these questions refer to?

Who is the “he” of Isaiah 53:2? Who does the “him” refer to? How did the “he” grow up? In what way is Isaiah 53:2 similar or different to Isaiah 11:1? What do we learn from this comparison? How does Isaiah 53:2b-3 compare to Isaiah 52:14? What do we learn from

that comparison? Who was he despised by and rejected by? Who are these “others”? How is he described in Isaiah 53:3b?

Who do the words “we”, “our” and “us” refer to in Isaiah 53:3-6 refer to? What has “he” done for the collective pronouns? How is the response of the collective pronoun described? In spite of the collective pronouns response what benefits has “his” actions bought for them?

Does the collective pronoun include anyone living today? If so whom and what are the benefits they have received from his actions?

Section Three

Read Isaiah 53:7-12

How is the suffering of the servant described in Isaiah 53:7-8? How did he respond to the suffering he received? What was the source of his suffering and in why did he suffer according to these verses (Please take into account Isaiah 53:10)? What lessons can we learn from the servant’s example of how to endure suffering? Are there times in our own lives when the Lord allows suffering into our own lives, if so how and why?

How is the servant’s death described in Isaiah 53: 8b? What happened to him after he had died (Isaiah 53:9)?

Since the servant is placed in a grave in Isaiah 53:9 how are we to interpret Isaiah 53:10b-12? Who are the servant’s offspring? What will happen to the Lords will in his servant’s hands (Isaiah 10b)? What does this verse suggest to you about how the Lord evaluates prosperity? How does this relate back to the words “my servant will act wisely” in Isaiah 52:13?

What will the servant see after he has suffered and why will he be satisfied (Isa 53:11a)? How is the servant described in Isaiah 53:11b? What will he achieve for many and what will be the means of him achieving this? How does Isaiah 53:12 describe his inheritance? Why will he receive this inheritance and what has he done for many?

Who is the servant referred to in Isaiah 52:13? How will that servant act? Use your own words to explain the phrase “will act wisely”? In what way did the servant act wisely? One interpretation of the phrase “will act wisely” is will be successful? In what way was the servant successful?