

The Lord Jesus Christ: A Series of Ten Studies

Study 1: The Servant of God – Part 1

taken from
Bible Studies for Enquirers and New Believers
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Reading: Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Memory Verse: Isaiah 53:5

Note: Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is the fourth "servant song" in the book of the prophet Isaiah.

1. How many servant songs are there in the book of Isaiah? Read each of the servant songs. They are found in:
 - Isaiah 42:1-9
 - Isaiah 49:1-13
 - Isaiah 50:4-11
 - Isaiah 52:13- 53:12
2. In which verses in the fourth song is Jesus described as servant?

Note: The New Testament Greek word for 'servant' is 'doulos' meaning 'slave' or 'servant'. This Greek word is sometimes used in the LXX, the famous Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament for 'servant'.

3. Look up the following Biblical references in which Jesus Christ is called the servant (of God), and add other references in each section. In the gospels. Note that Jesus as the servant is the main theme of Mark's gospel:
 - Mark 10: 45
 - Acts 3:13,26; 4:27,30
 - Philippians 2:7
4. Look up the quotations from Isaiah's fourth servant song elsewhere in Scripture and make a note of how they are used.
 - Acts 8:26-39 (The early church regarded the servant song in Isaiah as prophetic, it seems.)
 - John 12:38 quotes Isaiah 53 verse ___?
 - Romans 10:16 quotes Isaiah 53 verse ___?
 - Matthew 8:17 quotes Isaiah 53 verse ___?
 - 1 Peter 2:20-25 (This gives an interpretive rendering of part of the song.)
 - Romans 15:21 quotes Isaiah 52 verse ___?
5. The theme of the fourth servant song is God's vindication of his suffering servant. How would you establish that the theme of this servant song is central throughout the Bible?

Note: This message of God's vindication of his suffering servant goes back in the Old Testament and forward into the New Testament.

The gospel according to Mark is summarized in Mark 10:45. Mark spends half of his gospel writing about the life of Jesus and the other half describing the events of the last week of Jesus' life, plus an account of his death and resurrection. According to 1 Peter 3:10-12 Isaiah clearly predicted the sufferings of our Lord and the consequent glory. The whole of the servant song is written in the prophetic past in Hebrew. The writer speaks as though the events had already happened. They actually did not occur until eight centuries after he wrote.

According to Revelation 15:3 two songs are sung in heaven – the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. The song of Moses commemorates the great deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt and the song of the Lamb commemorates the great deliverance brought about by the death and glorious resurrection of Jesus. These themes go right through Scripture and are continued in heaven because Jesus is "the lamb slain before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:8).

6. In preparation for the next study examine the structure of the song. There are 5 sections of 3 verses each.