

Good morning, today we begin a six-day study of one of the most beautiful portions of the Old Testament, the fourth 'Servant Song' of Isaiah. The song is five stanzas of poetry, so today we have an overview, then one stanza each day. It begins at Isaiah 52:13 and ends at Isaiah 53:12, links to these chapters are below.

Isaiah wrote around 700 years before the birth of Jesus. God's people had largely rejected God, and through Isaiah God warns that he will judge his people for their sin – there is a lot of judgment in the book! But he also offers hope that through the judgment for sin there will come the hope of restoration to their relationship with God.

In Isaiah 50-52 this work of the Lord to restore his people, and indeed people of all nations, to a right relationship with himself is referred to as 'the arm of the Lord' – an image of God's incomparable power (50:2, 51:5, 51:9, 52:10).

In our section we find the revelation that the 'arm of the Lord' (53:1) is a person, a servant of God. But after an exalted start (52:13), we discover that God's intervention to restore his people to himself comes not through a conquering hero who is hailed, but through someone who is despised, rejected, suffers and is killed.

The New Testament writers were clear that God's promise of this servant was fulfilled in Jesus. There are seven direct quotes of this passage in the NT and a further 34 verbal links or allusions. (For example: [1 Peter 2:21-25](#)).

For this morning, read through the five stanzas to get the flow rather than understand the detail. Note how the song begins and ends with the exaltation of the servant (52:13, 53:12), but in between the servant is despised by the world and dies a seemingly pointless death. There are very strong echoes of the shape of this song in [Philippians 2: 6-11](#). After each stanza take a moment to thank God for Jesus and ask God to help you grow in your love of Christ through our study of these precious words.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+52&version=NIVUK>

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