

**The Servant's Atoning Work:
Isaiah 52:13-53:12**

THE REMAINDER of this section of Isaiah looks far into the future, tying together various threads that have been gradually introduced. Part 1 reached its climax in the promise that the Babylonian oppressor would be destroyed. Part 2 reached its climax in the remarkable description, given in the form of a command, of the fact that the exiles would leave Babylonia and return to Jerusalem unhindered.

In Part 1 the Servant of the LORD was introduced, and his great work of bringing light to all the world was vividly depicted. In Part 2 the individual Servant of the LORD was differentiated from the nation of Israel, and His humiliation and suffering were briefly described. Part 3 deals with the fulfillment of the promised work of the Lord's Servant, and with the results that will flow from this work.

In chapter 49 it was shown that the Servant, though from Israel, can be distinguished from the nation. He is an Israelite and represents Israel; yet He does a work for Israel as well as for the whole world.

In earlier passages the thought has been tactfully but definitely presented that Israel's suffering is the result of sin. Now the LORD tells how the sin question is to be dealt with. The extended passages about the Servant of the LORD in chapters 42 and 49 described His exaltation and the outreach of His work to the most distant nations; the passage in chapter 49 gave a hint of His humiliation and suffering, and this was clearly presented in 50:6. Now the two thoughts are to be brought together, with