

an explanation of the reason for His suffering and its relation to the vital problem of sin.

This first division of Part 3 is actually the climax of this entire section of Isaiah. Here we see the divine solution toward which Parts I and 2 have been leading. It might be called the bleeding heart of the Old Testament. No other chapter, with the possible exception of Psalm 22, gives so vivid and meaningful a presentation of the supreme factor in the entire Scripture - the promised atonement to provide salvation for all the redeemed.

It is indeed unfortunate that the chapter and verse divisions, which were put in long after Isaiah wrote, break up the thought of the passage and have thus given many readers a false impression of some of its vital factors. Many fail to realize that Isaiah 52:13-15, though far less known among Christians, is just as important a part of the passage as the material contained in chapter 53. Worse still, the mistaken verse division that combines the end of the first paragraph with the beginning of the second paragraph (along with the placing of a chapter division in the middle of this second paragraph) has caused many to gain a false impression of some of its most vital points.

Although the entire portion is a unit, it divides naturally into five parts:

1. Summary of the accomplishments of the Servant - 52:13-15a (quoted on p. 131)
2. The distant outreach of the Servant's accomplishments - 52:15b- 53:2 (quoted on p. 133)
3. The changing perception of local observers - 53:3-6 (quoted on p. 136)
4. The perfect Servant's silent submission - 53:7-9 (quoted on p. 140)
5. The fulfillment of God's purpose - 53:10-12 (quoted on p. 144)

It might be helpful to read these sections consecutively, with the titles in mind, before beginning the detailed discussion of each.