

ISAIAH: THE SUFFERING SERVANT

Disfigured and Marred

Isaiah 52:13-15

March 15, 2026

Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the exposition of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless culture, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.” - Karl Marx, 1843

Three Reminders of What is Ultimately Real

1. The Servant of the Lord’s SUCCESS (Isaiah 52:13)

See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. (Is 52:13)

Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. (Jos 1:7–8)

“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.” (Je 23:5)

Listen, High Priest Joshua, you and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my SERVANT, the Branch. (Zec 3:8)

And say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Behold, the MAN whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD.” (Zec 6:12)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your KING is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (Zec 9:9)

Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, “Behold your GOD!” (Is 40:9)

2. The Servant of the Lord’s SUFFERING (Isaiah 52:14)

Just as there were many who were appalled at him— his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being and his form marred beyond human likeness— (Is 52:14)

3. The Servant of the Lord’s SIGNIFICANCE (Isaiah 52:15)

So he will sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand. (Is 52:15)

And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed of the leprous disease. Then he shall pronounce him clean... (Le 14:7)

And he shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy seat on the east side, and in front of the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times. (Le 16:14)

What Difference does this Make?

We endure in times of suffering with hope (Romans 5:1-5)

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. (Ro 5:1–5)

We do not lose heart in times of trouble (John 16:33)

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (Jn 16:33)

We joyfully give up everything for the sake of Jesus Christ (Luke 9:23-25)

Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?" (Lk 9:23–25)