

The Servant Songs of Isaiah

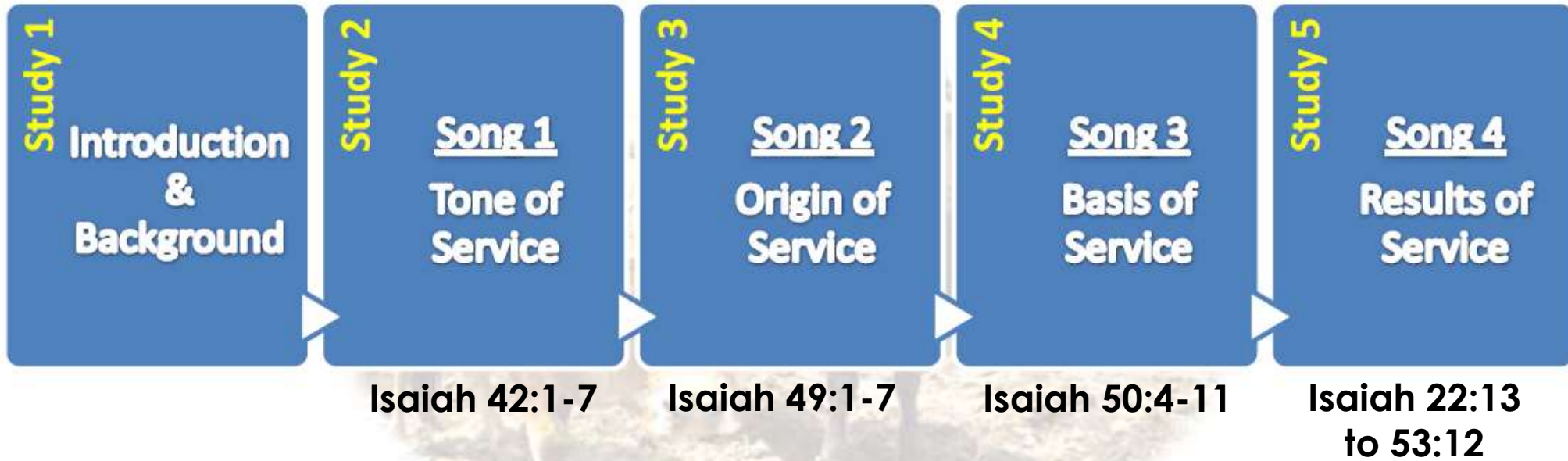
- Introduction & Background



Adapted from Simon Fuller <https://www.slideshare.net/LaindonEcclesia/servant-songs-isaiah-introduction>

THE SETTING

Luke 24:25-27 ESV - 25 And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.



What does it take to be God's servant?

Work of the Servant

Isaiah 61:1-3

Isaiah 63:1-6

Identifying the Four Songs

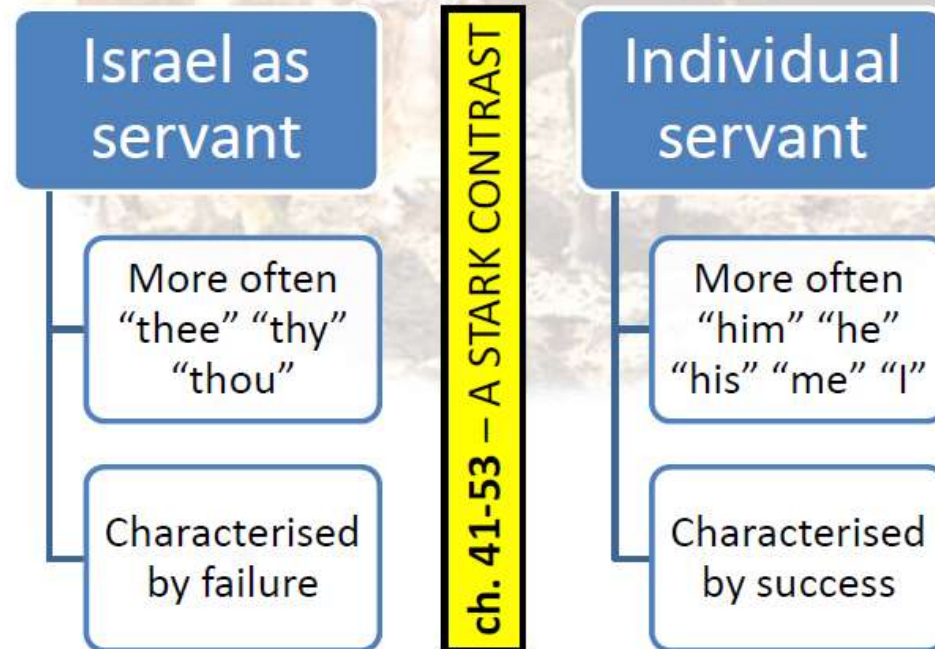
- First recorded separation was by the German Lutheran theologian Bernhard Lauardus Duhm (October 10, 1847 – November 1, 1928) in his 1892 commentary on Isaiah



- Different writing style, standing out in both form and content
- **Songs 1 and 4** are in **3rd person** (he, him, his) and both start with same introductory formula **“Behold[,] my servant”**
- **Songs 2 and 3** are in **1st person** (I, me, my) and both acknowledge **“the Lord”** or **“the Lord God”**

Locating the Four Songs

- Are all contained in **Isaiah – Section 3** (ch. 40-66)
- **Phrase “my servant” appears 12 times in ch. 41-53**, compared to only 3 times in the previous 40 chs. (and those 3 are specific – Isaiah, Eliakim, David)



Who is the servant?

Historical setting

The fulfilment

The importance of being a servant

PHILIPPIANS 2 V 5-7

⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

⁷ But made himself of no reputation, and **took upon him the form of a servant**, and was made in the likeness of men:

Q: How can we understand how Jesus was a servant?

A: By looking to places like Isaiah's Songs!

The importance of being a servant

Mark 10:42-45 42 And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be **great** among you must be your **servant**, 44 and whoever would be **first** among you must be **slave** of all. 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

diakonos
- attendant
- waiter

megas
- big
- significant

protos
- first
- foremost

doulos
- slave
- bondservant

The Four Servant Songs **table 1**

Song	Isaiah reference (minimum)	Service theme	Servant's situation ↓ Intensity	Servant's response ↓ Intensity	God's provision ↓ Intensity
One	ch. 42 v 1-4 [probably to v 7]	Tone	Divinely selected – v 1	Not discouraged – v 4	Delighted in – v 1
Two	ch. 49 v 1-6	Origin	Laboured/ spent – v 4	Submission – v 1 / 5	Strengthened – v 5
Three	ch. 50 v 4-9	Basis	Smitten/ ashamed – v 6	Resolve – v 7	Helped – v 7 / 9
Four	ch. 52 v 13 – ch. 53 v 12	Results	Cut off – v 8	Satisfaction – v 11	Prolonged – v 10

The Four Servant Songs **table 2**

Song	Isaiah reference (minimum)	Direct quotes in NT	Quotations
One	ch. 42 v 1-4 [probably to v7]	1	42 v 1-4 cited Matthew 12 v 18-21
Two	ch. 49 v 1-6	1	49 v 6 cited Acts 13 v 47
Three	ch. 50 v 4-9	Nil	<i>No citations</i>
Four	ch. 52 v 13 – ch. 53 v 12	9	52 v 15 cited Romans 15 v 21; 53 v 1 cited John 12 v 38; 53 v 1 cited Romans 10 v 16; 53 v 4 cited Matthew 8 v 17; 53 v 4-5 cited 1 Peter 2 v 24; 53 v 7-8 cited Acts 8 v 32-33; 53 v 9 cited 1 Peter 2 v 22; 53 v 12 cited Mark 15 v 28; 53 v 12 cited Luke 22 v 37
		<u>11</u> (/ 110 = 10%)	

The Fourth Servant Song **table 3**

Isaiah ch. 52 / 53	Part of OT passage particularly drawn on	Direct quotation NT
52 v 15	"...that which had not been told them shall they see..."	Romans 15 v 21
53 v 1	"Who hath believed our report?"	John 12 v 38
53 v 1	"Who hath believed our report?"	Romans 10 v 16
53 v 4	"...he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows..."	Matthew 8 v 17
53 v 4-5	"...with his stripes we are healed."	1 Peter 2 v 24
53 v 7-8	"...he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter..."	Acts 8 v 32-33
53 v 9	"...he had done no violence, neither... any deceit in... mouth."	1 Peter 2 v 22
53 v 12	"...he was numbered with the transgressors..."	Mark 15 v 28
53 v 12	"...he was numbered with the transgressors..."	Luke 22 v 37

Gentle

Patient

Song 1 – Tone of service

Quiet

Encouraging

Isaiah 42:1-7 ESV - 1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. 2 He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; 3 a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. 4 He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law. 5 Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it: 6 "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, 7 to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

Song 2 – Origin of service

Isaiah 49:1-6 ESV - 1 Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The LORD called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name. 2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away. 3 And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." 4 But I said, "I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my right is with the LORD, and my recompense with my God." 5 And now the LORD says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel might be gathered to him-- for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD, and my God has become my strength-- 6 he says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

Song 3 – Basis of service

Isaiah 50:4-9 ESV - 4 The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary. Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. 5 The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious; I turned not backward. 6 I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting. 7 But the Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame. 8 He who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who is my adversary? Let him come near to me. 9 Behold, the Lord GOD helps me; who will declare me guilty? Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

Despised

Rejected

Song 4 – Results of service

Smitten

Cut off

Isaiah 52:13- 53:12 ESV-13 Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted. 14 As many were astonished at you-- his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind-- 15 so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they see, and that which they have not heard they understand. 1 Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

Despised

Rejected

Song 4 – Results of service

Smitten

Cut off

Isaiah 52:13- 53:12 ESV-5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. **6** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned--every one--to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. **7** He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. **8** By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? **9** And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Despised

Rejected

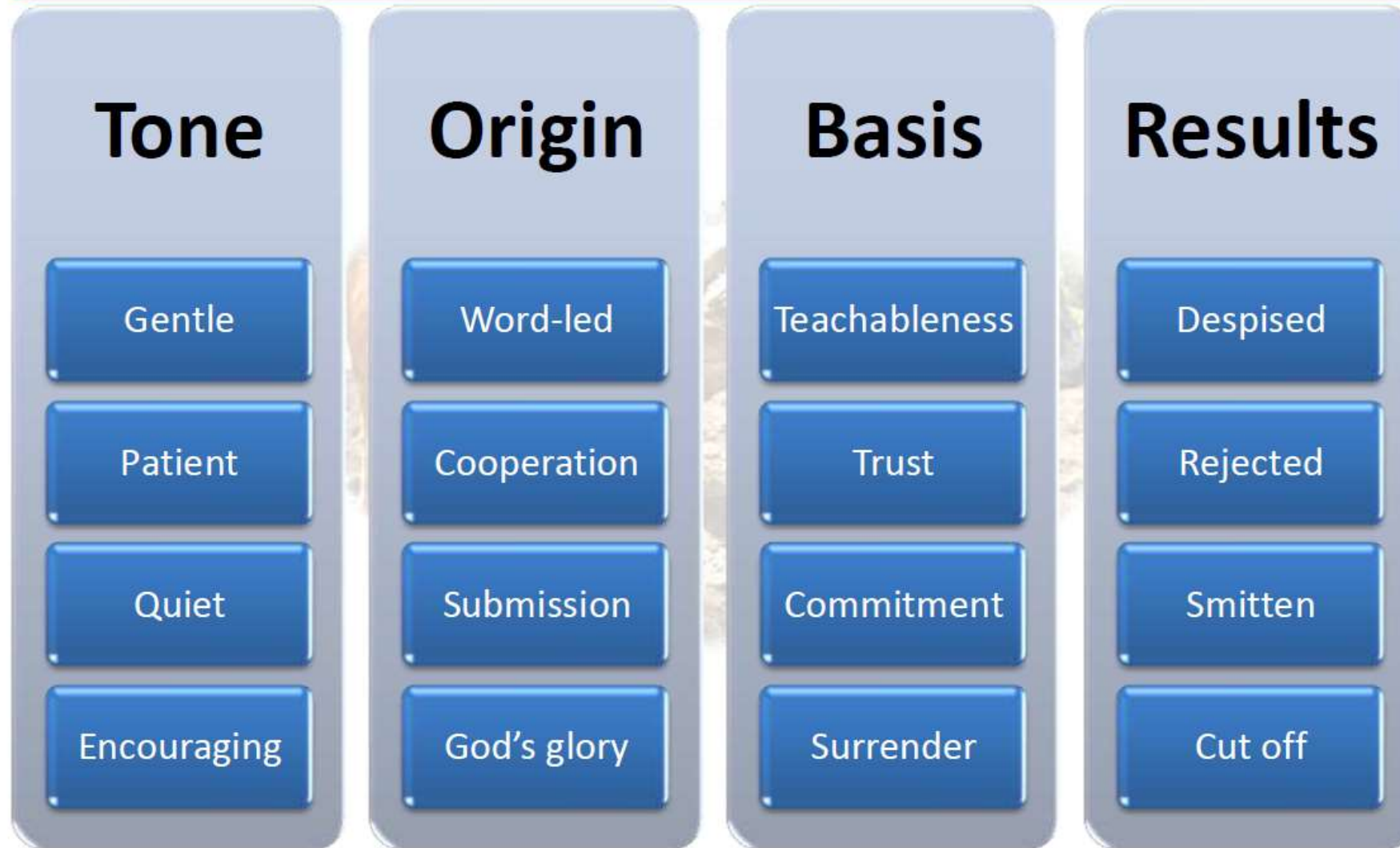
Song 4 – Results of service

Smitten

Cut off

Isaiah 52:13- 53:12 ESV-10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

What does it take to be God's servant?



Today's final thought **the prospect**



“Well done, thou good and faithful
servant: thou hast been faithful
over a few things, I will make thee
ruler over many things: enter thou
into the joy of thy lord.”
(Matthew 25 v 21)