

When film director Christopher Nolan brilliantly reimagined the Batman character in his “Dark Knight” trilogy, it was only a matter of time before DC Entertainment and its film partners would join to reboot the Superman franchise. In 2013, *Man of Steel* was released and the legendary son of Krypton was in action once again.

In an interview prior to the film’s release, Amy Adams (who portrayed Lois Lane in *Man of Steel*), made this insightful statement about the enduring appeal of the Superman mythology. She said it was about a basic human longing, and asked, “Who doesn’t want to believe that there’s one person who could come and save us from ourselves?”

That is the right question. In our most desperate moments, we look for someone to come to our rescue—and someone who is referred to as a “Man of Steel” sounds like a great candidate for the job. But the Scriptures tell a different story. In prophesying about the coming Messiah, Redeemer, and Rescuer, the prophet Isaiah wrote:

“He was despised and forsaken of men,
A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
And like one from whom men hide their face
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.
Surely our griefs He Himself bore,

And our sorrows He carried;
Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten of God, and afflicted.”- Isaiah 53:3–4

Man of steel? Not exactly. Only in an upside-down kingdom would the king come, not as a man of steel, but as the “Man of Sorrows.”

This Hebrew phrase (*’ish makh’ovot*) means, literally, “man of pains,” and refers to both physical and emotional suffering. God’s Servant would not be immune from difficulties. In fact, he would be “acquainted with deepest grief.”

Jesus is this man of sorrows. In his full humanity, he suffered the pains of this life. No doubt he sometimes hit his thumb with a hammer. Moreover, it’s most likely that he experienced the death of his earthly father, Joseph. Jesus knew the emotional pain of rejection as the very people he came to save denied him. Most of all, Jesus experienced the sorrows of the cross, feeling unbearable physical pain as well as the emotional and spiritual suffering of being forsaken by his Heavenly Father.

When we hurt, we find comfort in the fact that Jesus is a man of sorrows. He knows what it’s like to feel as we do. Thus his empathy isn’t theoretical. God the Son knows and shares in our suffering. He is with us, even when we are overcome by grief and despair. In time, he will deliver us from the pains of this world. In the meanwhile, our hearts are encouraged by the knowledge that Jesus is with us, that he understands, that he feels with us.