

Bible Readings**Isaiah 53:1-6**

53 Who has believed our message

and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

² He grew up before him like a tender shoot,
and like a root out of dry ground.

He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.

Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

⁴ Surely, he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.

⁶We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

Matthew 8:5-17

The Faith of the Centurion

⁵When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. ⁶"Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralysed, suffering terribly."

⁷Jesus said to him, "Shall I come and heal him?"

⁸The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁹For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

¹⁰When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. ¹¹I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹²But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

¹³ Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that moment.

Jesus Heals Many

¹⁴ When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.

¹⁶ When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

"He took up our infirmities
and bore our diseases."

Sermon: The King's Power: Healing the Sick

27-Jun-21

G'Day Church Family

You have **Bibles in front of you** - and you should have received an **outline** in your bulletin - if you'd like to **take notes**.

Let me **ask God** to grant us **understanding** this morning

Let's pray...

Intro/Context

The **context** of our Bible passage is:

[PowerPoint 1-Context]

- **Jesus** has **finished** delivering His **Sermon on the Mount**
- And He **comes down the mountainside**
- And last week - He **healed a leper**
- And now this week - Jesus is asked to do more **healing**
- But before we look at this
- In our **Old Testament reading**
- From **Isaiah 53**
- We have a **prophecy** from the **prophet Isaiah** - which is about **700 years** before Jesus lived - the **prophecy** is that **God promises a Healer will come**

[So please turn with me to Isaiah 53:1-6]

A promised healer (Isaiah 53:1-6)

The prophecy of Isaiah is:

[PowerPoint 2-Promised Healer]

- There will be someone coming that the Lord God sends
- We know from the heading just before Isaiah 52:13 - that this promised someone will be a **Suffering Servant**
- As we read these verses - it becomes clear that this **promised suffering servant** is none other than God's Son, **Jesus**
- In v2 - He is **described** as a **tender shoot** - He **seems** to be **weak** and **insignificant** - but He is not weak because He is before the Lord and has the **Lord's strength**
- And He is **described** as being **like** a plant growing in **dry ground** v2 - like he is somehow disadvantaged
- Now remember **Jesus grew up** in Nazareth in **Galilee**, a region of Roman occupied Palestine; a place that was **spiritually, politically and financially dry ground** (v2); but God had other ideas for the man from Galilee - because with God nothing is impossible
- Still in v2 - this promised Jesus will **not** be a man of remarkable beauty or physical attractiveness. It doesn't mean Jesus was ugly; but that He will not have the "advantage" of good looks (like say - King Saul of Israel had)
- And v3 - He will be **despised** and **rejected by people** - even by His own people. Isaiah says - He will **suffer greatly** and **experience pain**.

- And still in v3 - He will be held in low esteem - many people will not understand who He really is - many people won't understand or accept that He is the Son of God
- But as well as suffering - v4 says - He will be someone who takes our pain and bears our suffering -
- What Isaiah is saying is Jesus takes our pain and suffering as though they were His. It's a picture of Jesus carrying people's burdens on His back. [As Jesus Himself says in Matthew 11:28 - Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.]
- Isaiah is saying: Jesus is someone who understands pain and suffering - because He went through all of that Himself - when He was rejected by His own people and falsely accused
- Isaiah - still in v4 - says - many will see Jesus as being punished and stricken and afflicted by God; which is certainly true; but many didn't see why Jesus was punished. It wasn't for His own sins but humankind's sin. And it was all part of God's plan. But most people in Jesus' time didn't get that either!
- Then in v5 - Isaiah gives a clear picture of what will happen to Jesus
- He will be pierced for our sins - a picture of what happened to Jesus on the cross
- He was crushed by our sin placed on Him at cross -
- But this punishment on the cross brought peace between humankind and God

- **It cost Jesus His life - but because of His wounds - Isaiah says in v5 - **we are healed of the worst disease anyone can have - the **disease of sin** - which separates us from God and causes all of us to die****
- **It's hard to read these first five verses from Isaiah 53 without seeing they relate to Jesus**
- **Why did God promise, through Isaiah, to send this suffering servant Jesus?**
- **Well verse 6 tells us why**
- **Because - We are ALL like sheep that have gone astray**
- **We are ALL lost sheep - lost from God**
- **Even though we may not mean too - we've all at times gone our own way and not God's way**
- **Being like lost sheep - we ALL need a **Shepherd** to find us and take care of us**
- **That shepherd is **Jesus** - He **describes Himself** as the Good Shepherd (John 10:11) - a shepherd that came to seek and save people, lost from God (Luke 19:10) - a shepherd that was willing to lay down His life for His sheep - to be saved (John 10:11)**
- **Everyone on this planet needs **Jesus** - the **Good Shepherd****
- **And so, we fast forward 700 years from Isaiah's time to Jesus' time**

Amazing faith in Jesus' healing (Matthew 8:5-13)

[Please turn to Matthew's Gospel - chap 8 from verse 5]

- We see a **Roman centurion** comes to Jesus

[PowerPoint 3-Amazing Faith]

- Now remember **Romans are non-Jews** - and therefore Gentiles
- **Jews and Gentiles** don't generally mix with each other - because Jewish customs saw Gentiles as not being God's people and saw Gentiles as being unclean
- We learn something about the centurion - in v6- He, a Gentile, is not too proud to ask Jesus, a Jew, for help
- And the **centurion shows compassion and concern** for his servant who is **paralysed and suffering terribly**
- **Roman law** allowed the centurion to dispose of a sick servant who could not work - He was **quite within his rights** to have the servant killed - but NO - this **centurion really cares about his servant**
- So, in v7 - Jesus offers to go to the Centurion's home to heal the servant
- It was **against Jewish custom** for a Jew to enter a Gentile's house; yet it was not against God's Law! As we saw last week, when Jesus healed the leper; Jesus does not have a problem with breaking convention to help someone who is sick.
- With Jesus - compassion trumps rules - every time
- But look at the response of the **centurion** in verse 8
- The **centurion is well aware of Jesus' power** and says: Jesus does not need to be present in the centurion's home to accomplish His miracle of healing.
Jesus only needs to say a word to heal the servant.

- Not only that - the **centurion sees himself and his home as unworthy to have someone of Jesus' stature come to his home**
- The **centurion also realizes** that if Jesus were to come to his home, it would put Jesus (a Jew) in the awkward position of entering an unclean Gentile home
- What we have here is a centurion who is "other-person" minded - he's considerate of his sick servant and he's respectful of Jesus' position
- The **centurion also recognizes Jesus' authority** - in v9 - just like the centurion can give commands to the soldiers under his authority - **so too Jesus has authority** - not just over people - but authority over sickness - and can command sickness to leave people
- **Jesus is amazed at the centurion's faith** because even though he was a Gentile - he **showed more faith in Jesus' power than most of the Jews!**
- **Jesus is so amazed** that He makes two radical statements in v11 and v12
- 1st radical statement in v11 - is that **many non-Jews** (that is **Gentiles** - like the centurion) because of their faith - **will be included at the Feast in the Kingdom of Heaven**. **This is radical** - because the Jews saw themselves as the only race who were God's people - and **never for a minute expected any non-Jews [Gentiles] to be included in the feast in Heaven**
- 2nd radical statement in v12 - is that being identified as a Jew and having a Jewish passport - **doesn't mean automatic entry to the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven**. **Many Jews would be excluded** (thrown out) from the

feast into darkness (i.e., Hell) where there would be **weeping and gnashing of teeth** (a picture of regret and of suffering).

- Because of the centurion's amazing faith in Jesus - **Jesus simply says in v13** - "Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would!"
- Here - **Jesus heals the centurion's servant** - from a distance - and just by speaking
- This should remind us how God created everything - just by speaking - and **shows that Jesus has the same power as God Himself**
- And it also shows that **Jesus has come to fix the brokenness of creation** - He's come to fix the consequences of sin - things like **sickness** - and **broken relationships** - and **He's come to make it possible for sins to be forgiven and for the relationship between God and humankind to be restored**
- It's like Jesus' mission - is a **Mission of Re-creation** - to put things back to the way they were in the Garden of Eden - before Adam and Eve sinned.
- There are a few ways we can apply the story of the healing of the **centurion's servant to our lives today:**

[PowerPoint 4-Application]

- 1st - **It's faith** (like the centurion) that gets people entry into the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven; not their nationality! **Faith gets us into His Kingdom** - not colour or race or status. **Jesus came for all people** - not just for the Jews
- 2nd - Like the centurion's servant - we are **paralysed with a sickness** - it's a **spiritual sickness called sin** - and it causes us to have a broken

relationship with God - and that relationship needs to be fixed. Jesus heals that broken relationship - by taking our sins upon Himself on the cross - so we can be forgiven. Like the centurion - we need to come to Jesus and ask for healing of our spiritual sickness.

- 3rd - It was Jesus' words that healed the servant. But Jesus' Words do more than heal physically. Jesus' Words also heal us spiritually. As we read God's Word (and remember Jesus is God's Word - as John's Gospel describes Jesus as the Word made flesh). As we read Jesus' Words - they are sharper than a double-edged sword. His Words in the Bible - transform our hearts and minds - and help us to come to faith in Jesus. His Words transform how we behave; they convict us when we're saying or doing the wrong thing; they encourage us when we are discouraged - His Words transform us to handle suffering in our lives and encourage us to persevere through sickness and through many trials in our lives - His Words teach us how we respond to others in love - and His Words show us how we share our faith

Response to Jesus' healing (Matthew 8:14-17)

Let's look at the 2nd incident of healing in vv14-15

[PowerPoint 5-Response]

- Jesus comes to the Apostle Peter's house
- Where Peter's mother in-law is sick in bed with a fever

- Peter having a home and a mother in-law - **shows us** that the **Apostles did have homes and they did marry** - and that Peter's mother in-law lived with him
- This time Jesus' healing is not by Word but by touch
- And again, it's immediate healing
- **Yes, some of the sicknesses that Jesus healed in His day - we can heal today with surgery or medication** (like antibiotics)
- The **difference is Jesus only has to speak or touch** - and healing is immediate - only God can do that!
- Look at the response from Peter's mother in-law
- She is able to get up and in gratitude waits upon Jesus - and **serves Him** - **presumably with a meal!**

[PowerPoint 6-Application]

- Applying that to us today
- When we come to believe in Jesus - and express our faith in Him
- There **needs to be** a **response of gratitude and thanks to Jesus** - just like Peter's mother in-law
- And with that comes an obligation to serve Him with our lives
- As Paul puts it in Romans 12:1
- In view of God's mercy [which is Jesus' death on the cross for our sins to be forgiven] – in view of God's mercy – offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship

- Our response to Jesus' grace and mercy - is for us to **offer our lives to serve the Lord**
- That's going to look different for each one of us - depending on our age, our **health**, our **circumstances** and the **gifts** that God has blessed us with
- But at the very least -it should be a **daily examination and repentance of the sin in our lives** - and a daily thanksgiving for what God has done for us, through Jesus
- As news of Jesus' power spread
- We see in v16 that there were many who were **demon-possessed** [many people were possessed by evil spirits because Satan was very active in the time of Jesus - because the Son of God was living with His people] - and so in v16 - many **demon-possessed and sick** were brought to Jesus for healing
- Matthew tells us in v17 - that **Jesus' healing of all these people** - was a **fulfilment** of what the **prophet Isaiah** said 700 years earlier - which we read in our **OT reading** - from Isaiah 53:4 - **He took up our infirmities and bore our diseases.**

Conclusion

[PowerPoint 7-Conclusion]

To finish up then

- What we can say from our look at Isaiah 53 and Matthew 8 - is that **Jesus is the One promised by Isaiah** - And He heals people **physically** as we saw last week with the **leper**, and this week with the **centurion's servant, Peter's mother in-law** and those who were **demon-possessed and sick**
- But He also heals spiritually - He **bore our sins on that cruel cross** - and **gave forgiveness to all who have faith in Him**
- Both physical and spiritual healing require faith
- But it's the spiritual healing that is of the utmost importance - because that **makes our relationship right with God** - and gives us a place at the feast in Heaven - where we can be with God forever.

Let's pray...