

7th April 2023 Good Friday

The Suffering and Glory of the Servant

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

¹³ See, my servant will act wisely;

he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.

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—

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.

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.

⁶ We 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.

⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away.
Yet who of his generation protested?
For he was cut off from the land of the living;
for the transgression of my people he was punished.

⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked,
and with the rich in his death,
though he had done no violence,
nor was any deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰ Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer,
and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin,
he will see his offspring and prolong his days,
and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

¹¹ After he has suffered,
he will see the light of life and be satisfied;
by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many,
and he will bear their iniquities.

¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,
and he will divide the spoils with the strong,
because he poured out his life unto death,
and was numbered with the transgressors.

For he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.

John 18:1-14

Jesus Arrested

18 When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it.

² Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. ³ So Judas came to the garden, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.

⁴ Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, **"Who is it you want?"**

⁵ "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied.

"I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) ⁶ When Jesus said, **"I am he,"** they drew back and fell to the ground.

⁷ Again he asked them, **"Who is it you want?"**

"Jesus of Nazareth," they said.

⁸ Jesus answered, **"I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, then let these men go."** ⁹ This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: **"I have not lost one of those you gave me."**

¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)

¹¹ Jesus commanded Peter, **"Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"**

¹² Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him ¹³ and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that

year. ¹⁴ Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man died for the people.

Jesus Sentenced to Be Crucified

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. ² The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe ³ and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they slapped him in the face.

⁴ Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews gathered there, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." ⁵ When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"

⁶ As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!"

But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him."

⁷ The Jewish leaders insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

⁸ When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, ⁹ and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?"

¹¹ Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore, the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

¹² From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar."

¹³ When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). ¹⁴ It was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about noon.

"Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews.

¹⁵ But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!"

"Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.

"We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered.

¹⁶ Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

The Death of Jesus

²⁸ Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." ²⁹ A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. ³⁰ When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

³¹ Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. ³² The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ Instead, one of the soldiers

pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. ³⁵ The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. ³⁶ These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," ³⁷ and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

The Burial of Jesus

³⁸ Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. ³⁹ He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. ⁴⁰ Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. ⁴¹ At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. ⁴² Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

The Suffering and Glory of the Servant (Isaiah 52:13-53:12; John 18 and 19)

G'Day Church Family

It would be good to have your Bibles opened at Isaiah 52:13-53:12 – which we will look at first – then we'll look at **John 18 and 19**.

There's the usual **outline** for you to **take notes** – if that helps you **concentrate**.

Let me ask **God** for His **help** and **guidance** first – let's **pray**...

Context

We're going to **begin the story - 700 years before that first Good Friday.**

Our Old Testament reading is from the Prophet Isaiah – who lived from 740-681 BC

[Slide 1-Context]

The **context** is:

The **prophet Isaiah prophesied** that the Southern Kingdom of Israel – aka Judah **would be taken away into exile to Babylon** (Isa 39:5-7).

The reason for this exile is because of **their sin and rebellion against God.**

Sin always separates sinful people from a Holy God – whether that's in Isaiah's time or TODAY.

[Slide 2-Spiritual Exile]

All of us are in spiritual exile – because of sin – and we need someone to bring us back out of spiritual exile and back into a right relationship with God

In our OT reading from - Isaiah promises that God will send a servant.

[Slide 3-Promised Servant]

This promised servant will bring a solution to the sin of people.

It's difficult to read Isaiah 52:13-53:12 – without seeing a clear picture of Jesus' suffering on the cross.

[Slide 3a-Suffering and Glory]

But we will see this morning – that as well as Jesus being a suffering servant – what Jesus does in His suffering – brings glory to God and glory to Himself.

Glory means - *deserving praise and honour and thanks.*

So, first let's look at the **Suffering of the Servant Jesus**

[Slide 4-Heading]

The Suffering of the Servant Jesus (Isaiah 52:14; 53:1-12)

The first point - *Jesus' suffering is offensive* – that's Isaiah 52:14 and 53:1-3

[Slide 4a-offensive]

Look at v14 of Isaiah 52 – People are **appalled at Jesus' appearance** as He is so **disfigured** on that cruel cross – and He is **barely recognizable!**

Look at v1 of Isaiah 53 – the **message of Jesus' suffering** on the cross is **difficult to believe.**

Since when does the hero in the story – actually die?

And worse still – in v3 – Jesus is going to be **despised and rejected** by most of His own people – and by the religious leaders

He's going to **suffer pain:** - **physical pain** through torture and crucifixion – and **emotional pain** – being disbelieved, misunderstood, rejected – betrayed by one close friend – and deserted by the rest – when the going got too tough!

And as people see Him on the cross – they hide their face from Him – and He's **looked at as though a criminal** – just like the men crucified on either side of Him

Jesus' suffering is offensive

(pause)

My second point – *Jesus' suffering is for us* – that's verses 4 to 9

[Slide 4b – for us]

See v4 – He took our pain and suffering – He was punished by God **for our sins**

V5 – He was pierced on his hands and feet on that cross – **for our disobedience against God** – not His own – **He never sinned.**

But His suffering brought peace in the relationship between God and humankind – **so that we are able to come out of spiritual exile**

V6 – **tells us why we are in spiritual exile** – and it's because we're like lost sheep – people lost from God

But Jesus is **prepared to be afflicted for us** – v7 – and **He doesn't even say a word to defend Himself.**

At any stage He could have stopped the crucifixion – commanded His angels to come and minister to Him – but He didn't

Instead v8 – He's arrested – taken away – and crucified for our sins!

And verse 9 – **He is assigned a grave with other wicked men** – but thankfully – **given a rich man's grave** – as our NT reading tells us

How vivid is Isaiah's description of Jesus' suffering

Yet Isaiah is describing it 700 years before it happened!

(pause)

[Slide 4c-effective]

My 3rd point - Jesus' suffering is effective – that's in verse 15 of Isaiah 52 and verses 10 to 12 of Isaiah 53

In v15 of Isaiah 52 – **Jesus will sprinkle the nations** – His blood will allow people from all different nations to be cleansed of their sins – if they care to believe in Him

Jesus suffered because it was **the will of God** – see Isaiah 53 - v10 – **it was God's plan** – even though the Jews thought they were killing Jesus because He lied about being God – and even though the Romans thought they were killing Jesus for saying He was/is a King – **it was God's plan for Jesus' death to be the ultimate offering for sin and to accomplish the forgiveness of sins**

But He's not going to stay dead – still in v10 – He **will be raised to life** – and He **will see His spiritual offspring** – that's US – **death can't hold him down**

V11 – He will see the light of life again – and His suffering will justify many.

Justify means – **God sees us as not guilty of our sin** – just as if we'd never sinned – and instead we're made right with God – and approved by God – **and our spiritual exile is finished**

And this will amount to a victory for Jesus in v12 – that's what it means to share the spoils – that only happens if someone wins the battle – **Jesus wins the battle over sin and death**

Jesus' suffering is effective – to all who care to believe.

The **most terrible suffering of the Servant Jesus.**

It's **hard not to be moved to tears by this** – isn't it?

(pause)

The Glory of the Servant Jesus (John 18 & 19)

But now I **want to focus on our NT reading** for a few minutes

Because - From our NT reading from John 18 and 19 – we see the **Glory of the Servant Jesus** – also!

[Slide 5-Heading]

To see this, we're just going to **look purely at the spoken words of Jesus** –if you have a Bible with **Jesus' words in RED** – it makes it a bit easier

[Slide 5a-compassionate and willing]

My first point is – ***Jesus deserves glory*** [praise, honour and thanks] ***because He is compassionate and willing to suffer***

When the soldiers and officials come to arrest Jesus – **He is willing to face His ordeal** – see chapter 18 – v4 – He asked them ***“Who is it you want?”***

And when they say – v5 – they want Jesus of Nazareth – Jesus simply says ***“I am He”***

The arresting party is taken aback by Jesus' boldness and aura –so much so that they fall to the ground – **Jesus must have had such an air of authority and presence!**

Jesus is not going to use this as a way of escaping – because in v7 – He asked them again ***“Who is it you want?”***

And when they say again - Jesus of Nazareth - **Jesus again confirms** in v8 ***“I told you; I am He”***

Not only is Jesus willing to suffer - but He also shows compassion for His disciples – in v8 – when Jesus says ***“If you are looking for me, let these men go”***. Jesus does not want His followers to get caught up in what will happen to Him!

Even when hot-headed Peter – **whips out his sword and takes off a servant's ear** (v10).

Jesus tells Peter – v11 - “*Put your sword away*”.

And then Jesus confirms His willingness to suffer – by saying “*Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?*”

What does **Jesus mean** here by “**drink the cup**”?

Often God’s anger or wrath is **described** – in the Bible - as a **cup of wrath**

(Jeremiah 25:15-17; 51:17; 49:12; Lam 4:21; Hab 2:16; Zech 12:2-3; Rev 14:10; 16:19)

Jesus is saying **He is willing to take the wrath**, God will pour out on Him on the cross – **when Jesus pays for the sin of the world!**

Later on, when questioned by Pilate – Jesus tells Pilate He could have avoided being arrested if He wanted – see v36 - “*My Kingdom is not of this world, if it was, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place*”

Jesus is saying – **He could avoid all this suffering** – but He willingly goes to the cross – because that’s the only solution for sin!

Even when Jesus is in the height of His suffering - from the cross - Jesus organizes that His mother Mary is taken care off by the disciple whom Jesus loved (presumably John) - by saying to His mother in 19: v26 “*Woman, here is your son*” – and by saying to the disciple John in v27 “*Here is your mother*”.

From that point on, Mary will be like John’s mother and John will take Mary into his home.

Jesus deserves glory because He is compassionate and willing to suffer!

[Slide 5b-Truth]

My second point is – ***Jesus deserves glory because He is the TRUTH.***

In a world of lies, fake news, alternative truth and people’s own version of the truth – **isn’t it fantastic to know Jesus is the TRUTH**

See chapter 18 – v20 – when Jesus is questioned by the High Priest

Jesus says: *“I have spoken openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret”*.

Jesus’ point is – because He’s telling the absolute truth – **He’s willing to go public with it** – and **not hide it!**

V21 – Jesus even tells the High Priest *“Ask those who heard me. Surely, they know what I said”*

In other words, **check it out for yourselves!**

For that answer – **Jesus earned Himself a slap in the face (v22)**

Jesus was not put off

See v23 – Jesus replied *“If I said something wrong, testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?”*

For Jesus – the **truth is paramount** – He **cannot lie!**

Later on –18: v33 – when Pilate asks Jesus if He is King of the Jews

Jesus wants to get to the truth behind Pilate’s question – see v34 – Jesus asked *“Is that your own idea or did others talk to you about me?”*

Don’t you just love how Jesus answers questions – by asking His own - **sometimes more difficult - questions?**

Jesus confirms He is a King – but a different kind of King – see v36 where He says “*My Kingdom is not of this world*” and still in v36 “*my Kingdom is from another place*”

Jesus’s Kingdom is a **spiritual kingdom** – the **Kingdom of God**

Jesus has not come to **kick out the Roman rule** – nor to **establish a new King of Israel**. Jesus’ Kingdom is in **Heaven** – and He is **the means to get to Heaven**. And He’s **telling the TRUTH!**

In fact, **His whole mission is to deliver the TRUTH** – see v37 – where Jesus says: “*You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.*”

Jesus came to testify to the truth – about God and His Kingdom – and how we get to join Him in Heaven one day!

And if we always listen to Jesus – **we’ll always be on the side of truth!**

And that’s the **best side** and only side to be on!

Even when later, Pilate says he has the power to decide if Jesus should be freed or crucified.

Jesus corrects Pilate’s thinking– **with a most telling truth** – see chapter 19 – verse 11 “*You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.*”

Jesus deserves glory because He is the absolute TRUTH

[Slide 5c-fulfils prophecy]

My third point is – ***Jesus deserves glory because He fulfils prophecy.***

Not only does Jesus' suffering and death fulfil the prophecy of our OT reading Isaiah 52:13-53:12 – but it also fulfils Psalm 22 [which we could read this afternoon at home]- and it also fulfils many other Old Testament prophecies.

But let's again - **just focus on Jesus spoken words from John 18 and 19**

See v9 of chapter 18

When Jesus was arrested –**He asked that His disciples be let go.**

In doing so – he **fulfilled what He said earlier in chapter 6:39** – *“I have not lost one of those you gave me”*

As Jesus was about to breathe His last – in 19:28 – He said *“I am thirsty”* – and Jesus was given a sponge with wine vinegar in v29 – **this fulfilled Psalm 69:21**

Even Jesus' last words in v30 *“It is finished”* fulfil what the last verse of Psalm 22 says – *“He has done it”* – **Jesus had done the job The Father had assigned Him to do**– the penalty for sin is finally paid for!

Conclusion

[Slide 6-Conclusion]

The conclusion we can draw from all of this is that –

Yes! – Jesus is a suffering servant – but this suffering - leads to glory

As our OT reading from **Isaiah 52:13** says –

My servant will act wisely – He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.

[Slide 6b-Phil 2:9]

Isn't that what the Apostle Paul says in Phil 2:9 - *Therefore God exalted him*

[Jesus] to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name

Response to Good Friday

[Slide 7-Heading]

Jesus' suffering and glory on that first Good Friday demands a response from us this morning.

Our first response is something we won't necessarily enjoy...

[Slide 7a-suffer]

Like Jesus - **we too - must suffer** – as 1 Peter 2:19-23 says:

¹⁹ For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. ²⁰ But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. ²¹ To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

[Slide 7b-thanks for the glory]

Our second response is more positive

We must forever give thanks because - like Jesus - **we too gain glory**

Jesus was willing to wear a crown of thorns- so that we receive a crown of glory – in Heaven – a crown that will last forever (1 Cor 9:5) and never fade away (1 Peter 5:4)

Thank you – Jesus!

Let's pray

Heavenly Father, as much as the suffering of Jesus is sad and terribly offensive – His suffering was for us – and it was effective for us to be saved for Heaven. Glory to Jesus because He is compassionate and willing to suffer – He is the TRUTH – and He fulfils all of scripture. Thank you, Jesus! Amen.

Benediction (2 Cor 5:21)

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. Amen.