
WOUNDED, STRUCK DOWN BY GOD AND AFFLICTED**Sermon for Good Friday, 2022****Isaiah 52:13-53:12**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is our First Reading from before, Isaiah 52:13-53:12: ¹³ **“Look! My Servant will be successful. He will be high, be lifted up, and be highly exalted. ¹⁴ As there have been many who have been horrified because of You, — since His appearance has been more disfigured than any other man, and His form more than any other human being, — ¹⁵ so He will sprinkle many nations. Kings will shut their mouths because of Him. For they will see what they had not been told, and they will understand what they had not heard.”**

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¹ Who has believed our Message? To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² He grew up before Him like a young shoot, like a root out of dry ground. He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him. He had nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him. ³ He was despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom people hide their faces, He was despised, and we thought of Him as nothing. ⁴ Surely He has taken on Himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows. Yet we considered Him to be wounded, struck down by God and afflicted. ⁵ However, He was pierced for our rebellious acts. He was bruised for our wrongdoings. The chastisement that brought us peace was on Him, and through His wounds we have been healed. ⁶ We have all gone astray, like sheep. Each one of us has turned to his own way, and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ Although He was oppressed and He was afflicted, He did not open His mouth. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and, as a ewe is silent before those who shear off her wool, so He did not open His mouth. ⁸ He was taken away through oppression and without justice. As for His generation, who considered that He was cut off from the land of the living? Because of the rebellion of my people He was struck down. ⁹ He assigned His grave with wicked people, but He was with a rich man in His death, although He had done nothing violent, and there was no deceit in His

mouth. ¹⁰ Nevertheless, it was the will of the LORD to crush Him with suffering. When You make His life a sacrifice for guilt, He will see His offspring. He will have a long life, and the will of the LORD will be successful in His hand. ¹¹ Because of the anguish of His soul, He will see and be satisfied. “Through His knowledge My righteous Servant will justify many, and He will bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I shall divide Him a portion among great people, and He will divide the plunder with strong people, because He poured out His life to death, and He was numbered with wrongdoers. Nevertheless, He has carried the sin of many people, and He intercedes for the wrongdoers.”

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth, Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

On this most sacred and holy day, we stand in solemn silence and sublime awe at the foot of the cross. Perhaps we are reminded of the words from a verse from the hymn “Rock of Ages” that says, “*Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to the cross I cling.*” We stand at the foot of the cross, with our heads bowed to the ground, understanding that Christ’s suffering and death is a treasure and the price paid for our redemption.

The world has its constant noise and profane chatter, its blindness to the things of God, and its indifference to Christ and the cross, but today we shut the world out, for it has no place here. Today we open our eyes, our ears, and all our senses to the one great reality of Christ, who has been “**wounded, struck down by God and afflicted.**”

This was portrayed graphically by King David in Psalm 22. Written around 1000 BC, this psalm is a virtual photograph of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Listen again to some of the words: “*My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?*” “*However, I am a worm and not a man, scorned by human beings and despised by the people. All those who see Me ridicule Me. They open their lips wide. They shake their heads, saying, “Commit it to the LORD! Let Him rescue Him! Let Him deliver Him! For He takes pleasure in Him.”*” “*I have been poured out like water.*” “*My strength has dried up like baked clay. My tongue clings to My palate, and You are putting Me on the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me. A gang of evil-doers has encircled Me. Like a lion they have pierced My*

hands and My feet. I can count all My bones. People look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them and cast lots for My clothing.”

Also, Isaiah, who wrote roughly 700 BC, gives a photographic description of the events of Good Friday. Thus today, we meditate on the profound truth that on the cross, Jesus was **“wounded, struck down by God and afflicted”** so that we are accounted righteous, healed, and at peace with God.

Jesus was struck down so that we are declared righteous. The way in which Jesus was struck down is truly striking! He was struck down by God, His Father! Isaiah describes it this way: **“He was despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom people hide their faces, He was despised, and we thought of Him as nothing. ⁴ Surely He has taken on Himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows. Yet we considered Him to be wounded, struck down by God and afflicted.”**

Why would God strike down His own Son? In the mystery and marvel of God’s love for us sinners, He desired to place the punishment we had deserved upon His sinless Son. Isaiah continues, **“However, He was pierced for our rebellious acts. He was bruised for our wrongdoings. The chastisement that brought us peace was on Him, and through His wounds we have been healed.”** Only through Jesus’ passion, suffering, and death in our place and as our Substitute could God’s wrath against sin be appeased. Now in Jesus, we are accounted righteous before God the Father! Now that justice has struck Jesus, it can no longer strike us, and God accounts us righteous in His Son. What a mystery of unfathomable love we have before us!

Today, we also see that Jesus is wounded so that we are healed. John writes, *“Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. ¹⁷ Jesus went out, carrying His own cross, to the place that was called “the Place of the Skull,” which is called “Golgotha” in Aramaic. ¹⁸ There they crucified Him with two other men, one on each side, with Jesus in the middle. ¹⁹ Pilate also wrote a notice and put it on the cross. It read: “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews” (John 19:16-19).*

The details of Christ’s suffering are well-known to us all: the spitting, the scourging, the blows, the crown of thorns, the nails in hands and feet, and the pierced side. Many years before Christ’s crucifixion, the Old Testament had clearly stated that *“a hanged man is under God’s curse”* (Deut. 21:23). Being wounded by the hands of the Jews and the Romans was not a pretty sight.

However, the real wounding was from God the Father, so that now we are healed! The healing for us is complete; it is done. We did not bring it about. Jesus did! Saint Paul quoted the passage from Deuteronomy regarding a hanged man under God's curse in his letter to the Galatians, applying it to our Lord when he said, "*Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse for us. For the Scriptures have said, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"*" (Galatians 3:13). Just as the exposed corpse of a condemned criminal had carried God's curse, so the Father had allowed His Son to be put on public display as the One who had carried God's curse over sin. As Paul put it in another letter, "*God made Him who did not know sin to be sin for us, that in Him we might become the righteousness of God*" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Christ's crucifixion on Calvary with the world's sins upon Him was no accident. As Isaiah writes, "**it was the will of the LORD to crush Him with suffering.**" The LORD had the world's good in mind. On Calvary, Christ's triumphant "*It is finished*" communicated clearly that the death penalty that the world's sin merited had been paid in full by another.

So today, we see that Jesus is "**wounded, struck down by God and afflicted,**" so that we are at peace. In Hebrews 4, we learn that "*since we have a great High Priest, who has gone through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us cling to what we confess!*"¹⁵ *For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses. However, we have One who has been tempted in every way like us. Yet He was without sin.*¹⁶ *Therefore let us come boldly to the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace to help us when we need it!"* (14-16).

How can the affliction of Jesus bring us peace? Since Jesus has passed through life, death, resurrection, and ascension into the heavens at God's right hand, we have a High Priest who pleads our case at the throne of grace. As our Brother, He sympathises with our frail natures. As our Lord, He offers us mercy in every situation and place. He Himself is our peace.

Isaiah knew the meaning of Jesus' sacrifice for all people, for all time. He wrote, "**We have all gone astray, like sheep. Each one of us has turned to his own way, and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**"

David knew the meaning of Jesus' sacrifice for all people, for all time. He wrote, "*All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD. All the families of the nations will worship before You. For the kingship belongs to the LORD, and He rules over the nations... Descendants will serve Him. The coming generation will be told about the Lord. They will come and tell about His righteousness to a people yet to be born. For He has accomplished it*" (Psalm 22:27-28, 30-31).

John knew the meaning of Jesus' sacrifice for all people, for all time. He wrote, "*But one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.* ³⁵ *He who has seen it has been testifying about it. His testimony is true, and he knows he is telling the truth, in order that you also may believe... They will look at the One whom they have pierced*" (John 19:34-35, 37).

The writer of Hebrews knew the meaning of Jesus' sacrifice for all people, for all time. He wrote, "*Although Jesus is the Son, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered.* ⁹ *When He was perfected, He also became the Source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him*" (5:8-9).

You and I know the meaning of Jesus' sacrifice for all people, for all time. He did this for you and me!

So it is, that on this most sacred and holy day, we stand in solemn silence and sublime awe at the foot of the cross, for it was on the cross where Jesus was "**wounded, struck down by God and afflicted**" so that we are declared righteous, healed, and at peace with God.

From the altar called Calvary, God touches us with the Servants' blood-bought forgiveness. The font seals it. The absolution declares it. The Sacrament of the Altar celebrates it. "*How will He not, who did not spare His own Son but handed Him over for us all, along with Him, also freely give us all things?*" (Romans 8:32).

All. Total, complete, everything. He had it. He gave it. He delivers it because it is part of the plan. This is why we stand in solemn silence and sublime awe at the foot of the cross and thank Jesus Christ for taking our punishment upon Himself. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

PRAYER FOR GOOD FRIDAY

O God the Father Almighty, we praise You for Your eternal wisdom and mercy, in which You ordained that Your SON should be the sacrifice for our sin. We praise You that, by His being lifted up on the cross, He draws all people to Himself, taking away their iniquity, and granting them peace.

In this holy hour we thank and praise You for His sacrificial love, for His perfect obedience, for His patience in suffering, for His willingness to endure even the cross, and for His submission to death.

Help us to see, in the darkness that accompanied His dying, in the shaking of the earth, and in the splitting of the rocks, how great an evil was done by sinful people, how great a life was ended, and how great a death was inflicted. But through the tearing open of the veil of the Temple, and the opening of the graves of the saints, show us our sure entrance into the heavenly Holy of holies.

We thank You, O Father, for all that Jesus Your Son, our Lord, has done, for all that He has suffered, for all that He has given us, and for all that He has promised us. We bow in adoration, and offer our prayers from the depths of grateful hearts. We join with the angels and with all Your redeemed people of every race, tribe, nation, and language in raising our song of thanksgiving: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, and praise for ever.”

As we remember our Saviour’s passion, grant that we may treasure the things that belong to our salvation. As we remember His suffering, make us ready to pass through many troubles to enter the kingdom of God. As we remember His wounds, equip us to cope with every painful struggle. As we remember His crucifixion, teach us to crucify our worthless passions and desires. As we remember His death, help us to be ready to place our spirit in Your hands. As we remember His burial, help us to remember that He has transformed the graves of all His believers.

We rejoice, O Father, that we have received Your mercy and seen Your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Give us Your continuing grace through Him who died and rose again for us, and who reigns as the Lamb on the throne for ever and ever. Amen.

GOOD FRIDAY

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

¹³ “Look! My Servant will be successful. He will be high, be lifted up and be highly exalted. ¹⁴ As there have been many who have been horrified because of You, — since His appearance has been more disfigured than any other man and His form more than any other human being, — ¹⁵ so He will sprinkle many nations. Kings will shut their

mouths because of Him. For they will see what they had not been told and will understand what they had not heard.”

^{53:1} Who has believed our Message? To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² He grew up before Him like a young shoot, like a root out of dry ground. He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him. He had nothing in His appearance that we should desire

Him. ³ He was despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom people hide their faces, He was despised, and we thought of Him as nothing. ⁴ Surely, He has taken on Himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows. Yet we considered Him to be wounded, struck down by God and afflicted. ⁵ However, He was pierced for our rebellious acts. He was bruised for our wrongdoings. The chastisement that brought us peace was on Him, and through His wounds we have been healed. ⁶ We have all gone astray, like sheep. Each one of us has turned to his own way, and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ Although He was oppressed and afflicted, He did not open His mouth. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter and, as a ewe is silent before those who shear off her wool, so He did not open His mouth. ⁸ He was taken away through oppression and without justice. As for His generation, who considered that He was cut off from the land of the living? Because of the rebellion of my people He was struck down. ⁹ He assigned His grave with wicked people but was with a rich man in His death, although He had done nothing violent, and there was no deceit in His mouth. ¹⁰ Nevertheless, it was the

will of the LORD to crush Him with suffering. When You make His life a sacrifice for guilt, He will see His off-spring. He will have a long life, and the will of the LORD will be successful in His hand. ¹¹ Because of the anguish of His soul, He will see and be satisfied.

“Through His knowledge, My righteous Servant will justify many and bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore, I shall divide Him a portion among great people, and He will divide the plunder with strong people, because He poured out His life to death and was numbered with wrongdoers. Nevertheless, He has carried the sin of many people and intercedes for the wrongdoers.”

Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great High Priest, who has gone through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us cling to what we confess! ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathise with our weaknesses. However, we have One who has been tempted in every way like us. Yet He was without sin. ¹⁶ Therefore, let us come boldly to the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace to help us when we need it! ...

^{5:7} During His days in the human nature, Jesus offered prayers and

petitions, with loud cries and tears, to the One who could save Him from death; and, because He feared God, He was heard. ⁸ Although Jesus is the Son, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered. ⁹ When He was perfected, He also became the Source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him, ¹⁰ after He had been proclaimed by God to be the High Priest, “just like Melchizedek.”

John 19:17-30

¹⁷ Jesus went out, carrying His own cross, to the place that was called “the Place of the Skull,” which is called “Golgotha” in Aramaic. ¹⁸ There they crucified Him with two other men, one on each side, with Jesus in the middle.

¹⁹ Pilate also wrote a notice and put it on the cross. It read: “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”

²⁰ Therefore, many Jews read this notice, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city. The notice had been written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek.

²¹ Therefore, the High Priests of the Jews told Pilate, “Do not write: ‘The King of the Jews,’ but: ‘He said, ‘I am the King of the Jews’!”

²² Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

²³ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took His outer garments and divided them into four parts, one

part for each soldier, and the undergarment. The undergarment was without a seam, woven from the top in one piece. ²⁴ Therefore, they said to one another, “Let us not tear it but let us throw dice for it, to decide who will get it!”

This happened that the Scripture might be fulfilled that says: “They divided My outer garments among them and cast lots for My clothing.”

So, that is what the soldiers did.

²⁵ Jesus’ mother, His mother’s sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene were standing near the cross of Jesus.

²⁶ Therefore, when Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, “Woman, there is your son.” ²⁷ Then He said to the disciple, “There is your mother.”

From that time on, this disciple took her into his own home.

²⁸ After this, knowing that everything had now been finished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.”

²⁹ A jar full of sour wine had been placed there. So, they put a sponge full of the sour wine on hyssop and lifted it to His mouth.

³⁰ When Jesus had taken the sour wine, He said, “It is finished.”

Then He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.