

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 18TH–20TH, 2025 // RESURRECTION WEEKEND

WHY IS THERE SO MUCH PAIN AND SUFFERING IN OUR WORLD?

- Sin brought brokenness into creation—pain, death, injustice, and separation from God.
- Every kind of suffering we experience today, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual, can be traced back to the same root problem: the curse of sin.

HOW CAN I BE MADE RIGHT WITH GOD?

- Beyond physical suffering, the greatest consequence of sin is being cut off from God, the source of life, joy, and peace.
- The question, “Why do we suffer?” is incomplete without also asking, “How can I be restored to God (the source of life, joy, and peace)?”

INSUFFICIENT SOLUTIONS TO BIG PROBLEMS

- No amount of good works, virtuous living, or religious observance is enough to rid the world of sin and make humanity right with God.
- So, God provided His solution—His servant, the Messiah, to take our suffering so we could be healed, forgiven, and given a way back to God.

A MAN OF SUFFERING (ISAIAH 53:1–3)

The prophet Isaiah wrote this about 700 years before the birth of Christ.

- When he wrote this, Israel was a nation in crisis, divided into two parts: the northern kingdom (Israel) and the southern kingdom (Judah).
- Both kingdoms were facing attacks from other nations, and they were turning away from God.
- Injustice, idolatry, immorality, and wickedness were pervasive among God's people.

Isaiah's calling as a prophet was to warn God's people that if they did not turn back to God, they would face even worse consequences.

- But Isaiah also promised God would send someone special, a Savior, who would help them, heal them, and bring them back to God.
- Isaiah 53 talks about that Savior and how He would suffer for the wrongs of the people, even though He did not deserve it.

“WHO HAS BELIEVED WHAT WE HAVE HEARD?” (V. 1)

When this Savior would appear, people would be surprised and have a hard time believing that He was God's servant.

- He wouldn't look special or powerful or have an appearance that seemed beautiful or physically attractive (v. 2).
- God's Servant would look normal, He'd be humble, and He would not be flashy or glamorous.

This promised Servant of God would be despised and rejected by humanity (v. 3).

- He would be called “a man of suffering who knew what sickness was.” This promised Servant would be overlooked, unvalued, treated poorly, and despised.
- If you have ever wondered if God cares about human suffering, consider for a moment the identity of this promised Savior.

God Himself entered human existence and was wrapped in flesh.

- Jesus lived as a man and had all the same experiences of humanity that you and I have (hunger, thirst, exhaustion, pain).
- God humbly came to the world He created to save His creatures who desperately needed saving. But they did not value Him, they treated Him poorly and despised Him.

PIERCED (ISAIAH 53:4–9)

“HE HIMSELF BORE OUR SICKNESSES...” (V. 4)

This Servant of God would take on all our pain, sadness, and suffering.

- But people would think He was being punished by God for something He did wrong, even though He was bearing our sickness.
- Jesus was sentenced to die because He was falsely accused of blasphemy and sedition, but He died as an innocent man.

“HE WAS PIERCED...” (V. 5A)

The most mysterious part of this prophecy was that God's servant would be “pierced.”

- This was written some 300–400 years before the practice of crucifixion was even invented.
- Yet the Gospel accounts tell us that Jesus was crucified. His hands and feet were “pierced” with 5–7 in. long iron nails as He was nailed to a Roman cross on the hill of Calvary.

...FOR OUR TRANSGRESSIONS... (V. 5B)

God's Servant would be “pierced” because of our sins—not His.

- We are the transgressors—not Him.
- He would be beaten and punished in our place so we could have peace with God.
- He would be wounded so we could be healed. Our greatest sickness (sin) can be dealt with through His sacrifice.

“WE ALL WENT ASTRAY LIKE SHEEP...” (V. 6)

All of us have done wrong and broken God's righteous commands, like sheep that wander off and get lost.

- We may try to hide it, ignore it, or explain it away, but the truth is we are all sinners, by both our very nature and our choices.
- But instead of punishing us, God put all of our sin and guilt on His suffering servant.

“LIKE A LAMB LED TO THE SLAUGHTER...” (V. 7)

Even though he was treated terribly and unfairly, He didn't fight back or complain.

- The Gospel accounts (Matthew 27:12; Mark 15:3–5; Luke 23:9) tell us that even as He was being falsely accused and sentenced to die, Jesus was quiet, like a lamb being taken to be killed. Jesus' silence and His death was a deliberate choice on His part.

“CUT OFF FROM THE LAND OF THE LIVING...” (V. 8)

Jesus was unfairly oppressed and judged (beaten and whipped), taken away out of Jerusalem, and crucified on the hill of Golgotha (Latin, Calvary).

- Even though He had done nothing wrong, Jesus suffered on the cross for six hours in agony.
- Most people did not understand that he was suffering and dying for their sins (Lk. 23:34).

“ASSIGNED A GRAVE WITH THE WICKED...BUT HE WAS WITH A RICH MAN AT HIS DEATH.” (V. 9)

Jesus was executed like a wicked man and died between two criminals, even though he had never done anything wicked, violent, or deceitful.

- Unexpectedly, Jesus was buried in a rich man's grave (Matthew 27:57–60), which was surprising for someone treated like a criminal.

Jesus did not die as a victim or a martyr: He went willingly as the only innocent, sinless One to the cross for you, the guilty.

- Jesus' death satisfied the demands of God's perfect justice and shed His blood in our place.
- This gospel (“good news”) invites you to trust the reality that Jesus got what you deserved so you can have freedom, forgiveness, and eternal life.

THE LIGHT OF LIFE (ISAIAH 53:10–12)

“...THE LORD WAS PLEASED TO CRUSH HIM....” (V. 10)

As horrifying, bloody, and brutal as the crucifixion was, it was an event of glorious victory.

- On the cross, God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:19). This work that was accomplished pleased the LORD.
- The Father and Son worked together on the cross to deal with the problem of sin and death once and for all!

“...WHEN YOU MAKE HIM A GUILT OFFERING...” (V. 10)

In the Old Testament, God required a type of animal sacrifice to make amends for intentionally violating the law and commands of God, the guilt offering.

- The guilt offering atoned for sin and was offered as a way of seeking reconciliation with God.
- Jesus was offered up as the ultimate guilt offering for the sins of God's people!

“...HE WILL SEE HIS SEED...” (V. 10)

The death, burial, and offering of God's suffering Servant is not the end of the story. Somehow, God's Servant would live on to see His spiritual descendants.

- God's Servant would “prolong his days” and not be under the curse of death.
- God's plan all along was for His Servant to triumph over death through a resurrection.

“AFTER HIS ANGUISH, HE WILL SEE LIGHT...” (V. 11)

Some of the women who had followed Jesus went to His tomb on the Sunday morning after His death.

- What the Bible records them finding could be the most outrageous, audacious, and unbelievable claim ever made in all human history.
- The tomb was empty, and the body was gone.
- Luke 24:4–6a

“BY HIS KNOWLEDGE, MY RIGHTEOUS SERVANT WILL JUSTIFY...” (V. 11)

To be justified before God is to be made right with God. God's servant was promised to make many people right with God as He carried their iniquities upon Himself.

- It is in knowing the Messiah (who He is and what He has done) that we are made right with God.

THE MESSIAH'S WORK AND REWARD (V. 12)

Because of the Messiah's willing submission even unto death, His reward would be “the many as a portion”—people from every tribe, tongue, and nation who are now given eternal life, forgiveness of sins, and entrance into the family of God because of their faith in Jesus!

- He *willingly suffered for our sins* so that we could be received by Him as His reward.

INTERCESSION FOR THE REBELS

Jesus “bore the sin of many”—He suffered willingly on behalf of and in the place of guilty sinners.

- Jesus “interceded”—He acted on our behalf and pleaded our cause when we could not do anything to fix or save ourselves.
- Jesus did this for “rebels”—those who, through their sin and wicked deeds, have broken God's law and commands (you and me).

LIFE'S BIG PROBLEMS

- The two questions (Why do we suffer? How can I be made right with God?) meet at the cross.
- Jesus took our suffering so we could be healed, He took our sin so we could be forgiven, and because He rose again, He guarantees an eternal future free from both.
- God deeply cares about human suffering so much He became human and suffered in our place.

THE PERFECT SOLUTION

- Jesus does not just answer the *why* of suffering, He provides the solution.
- Because of His sacrifice, anyone who trusts in Him is made right with God now and given the promise that one day, all suffering will end.
- Revelation 21:4 promises that in eternity God will wipe away every tear, and there will be no more pain or death.

THE GOSPEL (GOOD NEWS)

- Jesus died on the cross to pay the sin debt you owed God and could never repay on your own.
- Jesus rose from the grave victorious over the power of sin and death, proving that He is God and that His sacrifice was sufficient.
- Jesus lives and has invited you to *know* Him as you surrender every part of your life to Him as a disciple/student/apprentice of Jesus.