

Readings for 2nd April 2021 – GOOD FRIDAY

A reading from Isaiah chapter 52 beginning at verse 13. [52.13-53.12]

¹³ See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high.

¹⁴ Just as there were many who were astonished at him

—so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals—

¹⁵ so he shall startle many nations;

kings shall shut their mouths because of him;

for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate.

53.1 Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

² For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground;

he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by others;

a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity;

and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.

⁴ Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases;

yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities;

upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way,

and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth;

like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,

so he did not open his mouth.

⁸ By a perversion of justice he was taken away.

Who could have imagined his future?

For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people.

⁹ They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich,

although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain.

When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days;

through him the will of the LORD shall prosper.

¹¹ Out of his anguish he shall see light;

he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge.

The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

¹² Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;

because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors;

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

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

A reading from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians chapter 1 beginning at verse 18. [1.18-31]

18 For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

¹⁹For it is written,

'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe?

Where is the debater of this age?

Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe.

²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom,

²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,

²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

26 Consider your own call, brothers and sisters:

not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise;

God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are,

²⁹so that no one might boast in the presence of God.

³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

³¹in order that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. [18.1-19.42]

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

18.1 After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.

²Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples.

³So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

⁴Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, 'For whom are you looking?'

⁵They answered, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'

Jesus replied, 'I am he.'

Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.

⁶When Jesus said to them, 'I am he', they stepped back and fell to the ground.

⁷Again he asked them, 'For whom are you looking?' And they said, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'

⁸Jesus answered, 'I told you that I am he.

So if you are looking for me, let these men go.'

⁹This was to fulfil the word that he had spoken, 'I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.'

¹⁰Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear.

The slave's name was Malchus.

¹¹Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?'

Jesus before the High Priest

12 So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him.

¹³First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year.

¹⁴Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

Peter Denies Jesus

15 Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus.

Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest,

¹⁶but Peter was standing outside at the gate.

So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out,

spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in.

¹⁷The woman said to Peter, 'You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?'

He said, 'I am not.'

¹⁸Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing round it and warming themselves.

Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

The High Priest Questions Jesus

19 Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching.

²⁰Jesus answered, 'I have spoken openly to the world; have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret.

²¹Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said.'

²²When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, 'Is that how you answer the high priest?'

²³Jesus answered, 'If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong.

But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?'

²⁴Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Peter Denies Jesus Again

25 Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself.

They asked him, 'You are not also one of his disciples, are you?'

He denied it and said, 'I am not.'

²⁶One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, 'Did I not see you in the garden with him?'

²⁷Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

Jesus before Pilate

28 Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters.

It was early in the morning.

They themselves did not enter the headquarters,

so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover.

²⁹So Pilate went out to them and said, 'What accusation do you bring against this man?'

³⁰They answered, 'If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.'

³¹Pilate said to them, 'Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law.'

The Jews replied, 'We are not permitted to put anyone to death.'

³²(This was to fulfil what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

33 Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

³⁴Jesus answered, 'Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?'

³⁵Pilate replied, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?'

³⁶Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews.

But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.'

³⁷Pilate asked him, 'So you are a king?'

Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.'

³⁸Pilate asked him, 'What is truth?'

Jesus Sentenced to Death

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, 'I find no case against him.'

³⁹But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover.

Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?'

⁴⁰They shouted in reply, 'Not this man, but Barabbas!' Now Barabbas was a bandit.

19.1 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.

²And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe.

³They kept coming up to him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and striking him on the face.

⁴Pilate went out again and said to them,

'Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him.'

⁵So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, 'Here is the man!'

⁶When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!'

Pilate said to them, 'Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.'

⁷The Jews answered him, 'We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.'

⁸ Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever.

⁹He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, 'Where are you from?' But Jesus gave him no answer.

¹⁰Pilate therefore said to him, 'Do you refuse to speak to me?'

Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?'

¹¹Jesus answered him, 'You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.'

¹²From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, 'If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor.'

Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.'

¹³ When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha.

¹⁴Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover;

and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, 'Here is your King!'

¹⁵They cried out, 'Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!'

Pilate asked them, 'Shall I crucify your King?'

The chief priests answered, 'We have no king but the emperor.'

¹⁶Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

The Crucifixion of Jesus

So they took Jesus;

¹⁷and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.

¹⁸There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them.

¹⁹Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross.

It read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.'

²⁰Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek.

²¹Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, 'Do not write, "The King of the Jews", but, "This man said, I am King of the Jews."'

²²Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written.'

²³When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier.

They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top.

²⁴So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.'

This was to fulfil what the scripture says,
'They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.'

²⁵And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

²⁶When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.'

²⁷Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.'

And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

²⁸ After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), 'I am thirsty.'

²⁹A jar full of sour wine was standing there.

So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth.

³⁰When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.'

Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Jesus' Side Is Pierced

³¹ Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity.

So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed.

³²Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him.

³³But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.

³⁴Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.

³⁵(He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe.

His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.)

³⁶These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'None of his bones shall be broken.'

³⁷And again another passage of scripture says, 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced.'

The Burial of Jesus

³⁸ After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus.

Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body.

³⁹Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.

⁴⁰They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.

⁴¹Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid.

⁴²And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.