

Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion - April 13, 2025

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-9a

These verses come from the third of four Servant Songs in Isaiah.

The most famous of the Servant Songs is in Isaiah 53 –

He was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities.

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

Who was or is the servant?

The servant has been identified as the prophet himself, Israel, and the faithful in Israel.

Those who know Jesus recognize the Servant Songs as a description of Jesus.

What was most amazing and unexpected is that the Messiah – God’s Chosen One – would also be the Suffering Servant.

5 - I did not turn backward.

6 - I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

7 - The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced.

I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

8 - He who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me.

9 - It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

Certainly those verses must have been on Jesus’ mind at the time leading up to and the time of His crucifixion.

What are the Bible verses that have been most helpful for you during your most difficult of times?

Romans 8: 28 – All things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to His purpose.

Romans 8: 31 – If God is for us, who is against us?

Philippians 4: 13 – I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.

1 John 4: 4 – Greater is He that is in me than the one who is in the world.

All this shows the immense importance and value of memorizing Scripture – so that you know it and have it when you need it.

The time to memorize Scripture is before you need it.

One possibility – commit to memory one Bible verse a day.

Psalm: Psalm 31:9-16

12 - Like the dead I am forgotten, out of mind; I am as useless as a broken pot.

13 - I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is all around.

They put their heads together against me; they plot to take my life.

14 - But as for me, I have trusted in you, O LORD. I have said, You are my God.

15 - My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

16 - Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.

These verses also must have been of tremendous help to Jesus during the time of and the time leading up to the crucifixion.

Second Reading: Philippians 2:5-11

*It is generally thought that this might have been an early Christian hymn.
Cf. the Second Article of the Apostles Creed.
What a great way to teach and learn a basic outline of the life of Jesus.*

Steps of humiliation

6 - Though he was in the form of God, he did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited.

7 - He emptied himself, took the form of a slave, and was born in human likeness.

7-8 - Being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

Steps of exaltation

9 - Therefore God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,

10 - so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 - and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Processional Gospel: Luke 19:28-40

28 - Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

29-30 - When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here."

31 - "If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'"

32-34 - So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They said, "The Lord needs it."

35-36 - Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road.

37-38 - As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!"

39-40 - Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

41-44 - As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, "If you had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But they are hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you and hem you in on every side. They will crush you to the ground, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God."