

April 4, 2015
Good Friday
FBC Vancouver

Text: Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Title: "How Did He Endure It?"

How did He endure it?

That is the question that has gotten a hold on me this Good Friday.

How did Jesus endure what He endures on that Roman cross?

As He was literally "numbered with the transgressors" (53:12),
one on right, one on His left.

As He pours out His life unto death (53:12).

How did He endure it?

Without being angry.

Without ranting and raving against those torturing Him.

Without cursing the system.

How did He endure it?

Crucifixion is one of the cruelest forms of punishment
ever devised by humanity.

The crucified die a slow, agonizing death.

The pain is excruciating.

Flesh ripping.

Lungs grasping for air.

Bodily functions all shutting down.

Shame from being fully exposed in public.

Jesus is, of course, not the only one suffering that Good Friday.

Others are also being crucified.

As were hundreds before Him
and hundreds after Him.

Some bearing guilt for the crimes they committed.

Some bitter because they are, in their minds, hanging unjustly.

Some worried about what will happen to their loved ones.

But no one is suffering what Jesus is suffering.

No one ever has.

Nor, thank God, ever will.

He had been beaten a number of times
before being lifted up on the cross.

His back receiving the 39 lashes,
whipped over and over with leather straps
with piece of broken glass in them.

Blood flowing down His face
from the wounds of a crown to thorns
having been thrust on His head.

And more.

For unlike anyone else, He is bearing the sin of the world.

All the sin of the whole world.

My sin.

Your sin.

Your loved one's sin.

Your ancestor's sin.

Your neighbor's sin.

Your enemy's sin.

Everyone's sin.

As we read in Isaiah,

He "carried the iniquity of us all" (53:6).

Iniquity.

It means perverted-ness, twistedness.

He is bearing all the perverted-twistedness of the whole world.

All the deceit.

All the greed and theft.

All the violence and murder.

All the promiscuity and adultery.

All the envy and lust.

He is bearing it all.

How did He endure it?

And unlike anyone else,
He is taking upon Himself all our sickness.

The phrase “man of sorrows” in Isaiah,
is literally “a man of sickness” (53:3).

The phrase “acquainted with grief,”
is literally “acquainted with sickness” (53:3).

“Surely He has born our grief,”
is literally “surely He has born our sickness.”

“Surely our sorrows He carried,”
is literally “surely our sickness He carried.”

“The Lord was pleased to crush Him,
putting Him to grief,”
is literally,
“made Him sick, crushed with pain.”

He is bearing all our sickness.

My sickness.

Your sickness.

Your loved one’s sickness.

Your ancestor’s sickness.

Your neighbor’s sickness.

Your enemy’s sickness.

It is all on Him.

How did He endure it?

And He is taking on all that evil can throw at us.

All that evil wants to do it is doing to Him.

And He is taking on all that death can throw at us.

All that death wants to do it is doing to Him.

How did He endure it?

No anger.

No ranting and raving.

No bitterness.

Instead,

“Father, forgive them,
for they do not know what they are doing.”

How did He endure it?

Because He trusts His Father.

Because He trusts the Word of His Father.

The Father had told Him what would happen.

Indeed, Jesus had planned what would happen with His Father.

Long before Jesus came to earth as one of us.

Long before the eternal Son of God became a man.

He and His Father planned what would happen.

“The Lord was pleased,” says the text we read,
to have happen what happened on Good Friday.

Not in the sense of being happy with what happened.

Not at all!

The living God is not a masochist.

We are not talking about some kind of cosmic child abuse.

The Father ... and the Son ... are pleased
because a way has been found
to deal with sin and sickness and evil and death.

God is pleased there is a plan.

And Jesus endures the suffering of Good Friday the way He does
because He trusts the plan.

He trusts His Father.

He trusts the Word of His Father.

And that Word is Isaiah 53.

Isaiah 53 is the Father’s Word about and to His Son.

We know this because of what the Father said at Jesus’ baptism.

As Jesus is in the water, praying,
Heaven is opened,
the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus
in the form of a dove.

And a Voice comes out of heaven, saying to Jesus,

“You are My beloved Son,
in You I am well pleased” (Luke 3:22)>

It is the Father’s voice,
speaking to His Son.

Words the Father had spoken years ago.

“You are My Son.”

The Words the Father spoke in Psalm 2,
when He said to the Son who is the King:

“You are My Son, today I have begotten You.
Ask of Me and I will give You
the kingdoms of the earth as Your inheritance.”

That is Jesus enters His earthly ministry
knowing Himself to be King.

The Father had declared Him so.

“With whom I am well-pleased.”

The Word the Father spoke in Isaiah 42,
when He said to the Son who is the Servant:

“Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold;
My chosen one in whom My soul delights.”

The first of a series of Words in Isaiah
spoken to and about the Servant of the Lord.

Culminating in the text we have been reading today,
Isaiah 52:13-23:12.

From the beginning of His earthly ministry
 Jesus knew Himself to be Servant.

The Father had declared Him so.

The King.

Who is Servant.

From the beginning, Jesus lives His life as the Servant of Isaiah 53.

It is, if you will, His “life text.”

Many of you have chosen texts of Scripture as your “life text.”

Jesus’ “life text” is the song of the Servant.

Which is why, from the beginning,
 Jesus said He “must” go to the cross.

A number of times He told His disciples,
 that He “must” go to Jerusalem,
 He “must” be rejected by the religious leaders,
 He “must” be killed,
 AND He “must” be raised on the third day.

It is the plan.

The Father’s plan.

Which He wholeheartedly embraces.

And that is why He endures what endures on Good Friday.

As awful as it is,
 as terrifying as it is,
 as agonizing as it is,

it is what He and Father determined had to happen.

And He knows ...

and this is what I want to emphasize this Good Friday ...
He know the plan will succeed.

His Father promises that the plan will succeed.

Did you hear the word “will” as we read Isaiah?

Jesus did.

And as He hangs on the cross He hangs on to the word “will.”

The Father speaks the “will.”

“Behold, My Servant will prosper” (52:13).

“My Servant will be high and lifted up” (52:13).

“He will sprinkle many nations” (52:15).

His blood will cover the sins of the nations!

“Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him” (52:12).

Yes, as they witness the depths of suffering,
they will not know what to say.

But when they see that our to the depths came new life,
they will stand in stunned wonder.

“My Servant will justify the many” (53:11).

“He will see His offspring” (53:10).

His death will bear the fruit of born-again human beings.

We wandered off as lost sheep,
but will be brought home as sons and daughters.

“He will prolong His days” (53:10)..

The Father will prolong the days of His Servant
Who lays down His life for the life of the world.

Bearing sin and sickness,
absorbing evil and death,
is not the end.

“The good pleasure of the Lord will prosper” (53:10).

Do you hear the Father?

My Servant will.

My Servant will.

My Servant will.

My Servant will.

53:11 –

“He will see and be satisfied.”

My Servant will be satisfied.

My Servant will be satisfied
that what the suffering was to accomplish
it did accomplish.

My Servant will see the fruit of the anguish of His soul.

That is how He endures that Good Friday.

He knows that it is all going to work.

He trusts the Father's plan.

He trusts the Father's Word.

He trusts His Father.

“Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.”

And so too we who follow Jesus.

In relationship with Jesus,
we too can endure.

Good Friday tells us that the Father can be trusted.

The Father's Word about us and to us can be trusted.

In the face of suffering.

Our own suffering.

Our loved one's suffering.

The suffering of the world.

We too can trust the Fathers' Word.

“I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

“I am with you and for you.”

“If I am for you, who is against you?”

“If I did not spare My own Son,
but gave Him up for you,
you can count on Me to give you with Him all things?”

“Who can condemn you before Me?

Only Jesus.

But He died for you,
He rose for you,
He lives at My right hand for you,
He prays for you.”

“Who can separate you from the love of Jesus?

Can tribulation,
or distress,
or persecution,
or famine,
or nakedness,
or peril,
or sword?

“Neither death,
nor life,
nor angels,
nor principalities,
nor things present,
nor things to come,
nor powers,
nor depth,
nor any other created thing,
shall be able to separate you from My love
in Jesus Christ your Lord.”

The Father kept His Word to His only-begotten Son.

Will.

Will.

Will.

Will be satisfied.

And He is.

Jesus the Servant King is satisfied.

His death did accomplish all He and His Father planned.

And we who now belong to Him will be satisfied.

We will enter into Jesus' satisfaction.

“This is My Father’s world,
Oh, let me ne’er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.
This is My Father’s world:
The battle is not done;
Jesus who died shall be satisfied,
And earth and heaven be one.”

“Father, into Your hands I commit my spirit.”

