

The Hand of the Lord Who Was Pierced

Good Friday

April 18, 2025

Pastor Matthew Ude

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 ¹³ Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. ¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men; ¹⁵ So shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider. ^{NKJ} **Isaiah 53:1** Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, *There is no beauty that we should desire Him.* ³ He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our faces* from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. ⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. ⁸ He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. ⁹ And they made His grave with the wicked-- But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor *was any* deceit in His mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put *Him* to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. ¹¹ He shall see the labor of His soul, *and* be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

What have you done with your hands today? Have you used them to serve others or to serve yourself? Have you raised them in the praise of the Lord or lowered them into sin?

Throughout our Lenten series we have discussed the hand of the Lord who did many things. His hands give, create, heal, and serve, but all these themes used active verbs. These are things which Jesus did and which he still does for us. Today for the first time we have a theme with a passive verb.

Not something which Jesus did but something which was done to him. The hand of the Lord who was pierced. Tonight, we consider not what Jesus' hand did, but what our hands have done to Him.

Isaiah reminds us:

Isaiah 53:3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;

After all those mighty acts which Jesus did with his hands, this is what was done to his hands. The soldiers drove the nails through his hands. Pilate sent him to the cross. The Jews delivered him to Pilate, and Judas's hands delivered him to the Jews. The hands of Jesus raised the dead, the hands of men crucified Jesus.

The works of our hands are no better than these people.

Isaiah 53:3 3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;

Isaiah 53:4 He has borne our griefs

Judas's hands betrayed Jesus for silver coins. How often have our hands chosen money over Jesus? How often have our hands clutched gold and silver to our breast rather than reach out to help others? How often have we betrayed a friend for our own personal advancement? For the sake of those sins Jesus died on the cross.

Peter's hands were busy warming themselves by the fire while Jesus was being falsely accused before Caiaphas. Have you seen injustice and kept quiet? Have you been too busy warming your hands to stand up for someone being bullied or falsely accused? For the sake of the sins of our hands Jesus was pierced.

The hands of the officers struck Jesus and put a crown of thorns on his head. Have you ever used your hands to strike out in anger or to belittle another person? Because of your anger Jesus died.

Isaiah 53:6 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

These are the things that we have done with our hands, yet all these things were laid on him. With his hands Jesus bore these sins, with his hands pierced to a tree Jesus made full atonement for our sins.

Despite what our hands have done, Jesus prays for us as he prayed for those guards, "Father forgive them, they do not know what they have done."

With his pierced hands Jesus accomplished our salvation.

Speaking by the Spirit the prophet Isaiah declares **"to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?"** Isaiah makes it clear that although it was men who put Jesus on the cross it was the hand of the Lord which accomplished this. He was **"stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted."** **"He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities."** This "chastisement" was done to bring us "peace" and healing by "His wounds" (53:5). This world's sin, our sin, "has [been] laid on Him" (53:6). It was the Lord who did it! "Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush Him; He has put Him to grief" (53:10).

This was the arm of the Lord all along! It is true that this sinful world did these things to Christ. However, it was the will of the Lord that this is how salvation would happen. **"He . . . makes intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12).** Christ has atoned for all our sin. In fact, He has atoned for the sin of the entire world. Every misdeed. Every hateful action. Every sinful thought. He has taken the punishment we deserve for the work of our hands. He willingly took our place to bring forgiveness and life and salvation to us sinners. Willingly remaining silent, like a sacrificial lamb, He took all our transgressions upon Himself (53:8). He took all of it to the cross and received in His body the full punishment that we deserved. The wrath of God and condemnation that this world has earned and deserved by its hands poured out upon Him. It was all nailed to the cross.

This is the passive obedience of Christ. He accepts the work of our hands upon his body. He accepts the flogging and the insults. He accepts the hammering of the nails and the piercing of the spear. He accepts the result of the sin of our hands upon his body. This is the work of the hands of sinful men, but this is the hand of God which through it accomplished our salvation.

It was our hands that put him on the cross. It was the Lord's hands that accomplished this. It was our hands that gave Jesus into death. It was Jesus pierced hands which give to us eternal life.