



"Golgatha" by Gebre Kristos Desta
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Good Friday

The Rev. Timothy Ensworth, Presider and Reflector

The Rev. Andrew Stoessel, Reader

April 18, 2025

Enter in silence.

Opening Sentence

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Prayer of Invocation

Congregation: **Lord Jesus, meet us here this night. As we gather to remember the darkest hours of your life, may you remember us in the darkest hours of our lives. Meet us in the shadows where fear and doubt dwell, where anger and frustration fester, where grief and death come close. Walk with us through the darkness and bring us into your light.**

First Lesson: Isaiah 52:13-53:12

The Lord says,

“My servant will succeed in his task;
he will be highly honored.

Many people were shocked when they saw him;
he was so disfigured that he hardly looked human.

But now many nations will marvel at him,
and kings will be speechless with amazement.

They will see and understand
something they had never known.”

The people reply,

“Who would have believed what we now report?
Who could have seen the Lord's hand in this?

It was the will of the Lord that his servant
grow like a plant taking root in dry ground.

He had no dignity or beauty
to make us take notice of him.

There was nothing attractive about him,
nothing that would draw us to him.

We despised him and rejected him;
he endured suffering and pain.

No one would even look at him --
we ignored him as if he were nothing.

“But he endured the suffering that should have been ours,
the pain that we should have borne.

All the while we thought that his suffering
was punishment sent by God.

But because of our sins he was wounded,
 beaten because of the evil we did.
We are healed by the punishment he suffered,
 made whole by the blows he received.
All of us were like sheep that were lost,
 each of us going his own way.
But the Lord made the punishment fall on him,
 the punishment all of us deserved.
“He was treated harshly, but endured it humbly;
 he never said a word.
Like a lamb about to be slaughtered,
 like a sheep about to be sheared,
 he never said a word.
He was arrested and sentenced and led off to die,
 and no one cared about his fate.
He was put to death for the sins of our people.
He was placed in a grave with those who are evil,
 he was buried with the rich,
even though he had never committed a crime
 or ever told a lie.”

The Lord says,
“It was my will that he should suffer;
 his death was a sacrifice to bring forgiveness.
And so he will see his descendants;
 he will live a long life,
 and through him my purpose will succeed.
After a life of suffering, he will again have joy;
 he will know that he did not suffer in vain.
My devoted servant, with whom I am pleased,
 will bear the punishment of many
 and for his sake I will forgive them.
And so I will give him a place of honor,
 a place among the great and powerful.
He willingly gave his life
 and shared the fate of evil men.
He took the place of many sinners
 and prayed that they might be forgiven.

Psalm 22

Leader: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?
I have cried desperately for help,
 but still it does not come.
During the day I call to you, my God,

but you do not answer;
I call at night,
but get no rest.

Congregation: **But you are enthroned as the Holy One,
the one whom Israel praises.**

**Our ancestors put their trust in you;
they trusted you, and you saved them.
They called to you and escaped from danger;
they trusted you and were not disappointed.**

Leader: But I am no longer a human being; I am a worm,
despised and scorned by everyone!
All who see me make fun of me;
they stick out their tongues and shake their heads.
“You relied on the Lord,” they say.
“Why doesn't he save you?
If the Lord likes you,
why doesn't he help you?”

Congregation: **It was you who brought me safely through birth,
and when I was a baby, you kept me safe.
I have relied on you since the day I was born,
and you have always been my God.
Do not stay away from me!
Trouble is near,
and there is no one to help.**

Leader: Many enemies surround me like bulls;
they are all around me,
like fierce bulls from the land of Bashan.
They open their mouths like lions,
roaring and tearing at me.

Congregation: **My strength is gone,
gone like water spilled on the ground.
All my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like melted wax.
My throat is as dry as dust,
and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth.
You have left me for dead in the dust.**

Leader: An evil gang is around me;
like a pack of dogs they close in on me;
they tear at my hands and feet.
All my bones can be seen.
My enemies look at me and stare.
They gamble for my clothes

and divide them among themselves.

Congregation: **O Lord, don't stay away from me!**

Come quickly to my rescue!

Save me from the sword;

save my life from these dogs.

Rescue me from these lions;

I am helpless before these wild bulls.

Leader: I will tell my people what you have done;

I will praise you in their assembly:

"Praise him, you servants of the Lord!

Honor him, you descendants of Jacob!

Worship him, you people of Israel!

He does not neglect the poor or ignore their suffering;

he does not turn away from them,

but answers when they call for help."

Congregation: **In the full assembly I will praise you for what you have done;**

in the presence of those who worship you

I will offer the sacrifices I promised.

The poor will eat as much as they want;

those who come to the Lord will praise him.

May they prosper forever!

Leader: All nations will remember the Lord.

From every part of the world they will turn to him;

all races will worship him.

The Lord is king,

and he rules the nations.

Congregation: **All proud people will bow down to him;**

all mortals will bow down before him.

Future generations will serve him;

they will speak of the Lord to the coming generation.

People not yet born will be told:

"The Lord saved his people."

Gospel: John 19:1-42

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him whipped. The soldiers made a crown out of thorny branches and put it on his head; then they put a purple robe on him and came to him and said, "Long live the King of the Jews!" And they went up and slapped him.

Pilate went back out once more and said to the crowd, "Look, I will bring him out here to you to let you see that I cannot find any reason to condemn him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Look! Here is the man!"

When the chief priests and the Temple guards saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Pilate said to them, "You take him, then, and crucify him. I find no reason to condemn him."

The crowd answered back, "We have a law that says he ought to die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid. He went back into the palace and asked Jesus, "Where do you come from?"

But Jesus did not answer. Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Remember, I have the authority to set you free and also to have you crucified."

Jesus answered, "You have authority over me only because it was given to you by God. So the man who handed me over to you is guilty of a worse sin."

When Pilate heard this, he tried to find a way to set Jesus free. But the crowd shouted back, "If you set him free, that means that you are not the Emperor's friend! Anyone who claims to be a king is a rebel against the Emperor!"

When Pilate heard these words, he took Jesus outside and sat down on the judge's seat in the place called "The Stone Pavement." (In Hebrew the name is "Gabbatha.") It was then almost noon of the day before the Passover. Pilate said to the people, "Here is your king!"

They shouted back, "Kill him! Kill him! Crucify him!"

Pilate asked them, "Do you want me to crucify your king?"

The chief priests answered, "The only king we have is the Emperor!"

Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

So they took charge of Jesus. He went out, carrying his cross, and came to "The Place of the Skull," as it is called. (In Hebrew it is called "Golgotha.") There they crucified him; and they also crucified two other men, one on each side, with Jesus between them. Pilate wrote a notice and had it put on the cross. "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," is what he wrote. Many people read it, because the place where Jesus was crucified was not far from the city. The notice was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. The chief priests said to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am the King of the Jews.'"

Pilate answered, "What I have written stays written."

After the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. They also took the robe, which was made of one piece of woven cloth without any seams in it. The soldiers said to one another, "Let's not tear it; let's throw dice to see who will get it." This happened in order to make the scripture come true: "They divided my clothes among themselves and gambled for my robe." And this is what the soldiers did.

Standing close to Jesus' cross were his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there; so he said to his mother, "He is your son."

Then he said to the disciple, "She is your mother." From that time the disciple took her to live in his home.

Jesus knew that by now everything had been completed; and in order to make the scripture come true, he said, "I am thirsty."

A bowl was there, full of cheap wine; so a sponge was soaked in the wine, put on a stalk of hyssop, and lifted up to his lips. Jesus drank the wine and said, "It is finished!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Then the Jewish authorities asked Pilate to allow them to break the legs of the men who had been crucified, and to take the bodies down from the crosses. They requested this because it was Friday, and they did not want the bodies to stay on the crosses on the Sabbath, since the coming Sabbath was especially holy. So the soldiers went and broke the legs of the first man and then of the other man who had been crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs. One of the soldiers, however, plunged his spear into Jesus' side, and at once blood and water poured out. (The one who saw this happen has spoken of it, so that you also may believe. What he said is true, and he knows that he speaks the truth.) This was done to make the scripture come true: "Not one of his bones will be broken." And there is another scripture that says, "People will look at him whom they pierced."

After this, Joseph, who was from the town of Arimathea, asked Pilate if he could take Jesus' body. (Joseph was a follower of Jesus, but in secret, because he was afraid of the Jewish authorities.) Pilate told him he could have the body, so Joseph went and took it away. Nicodemus, who at first had gone to see Jesus at night, went with Joseph, taking with him about one hundred pounds of spices, a mixture of myrrh and aloes. The two men took Jesus' body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices according to the Jewish custom of preparing a body for burial. There was a garden in the place where Jesus had been put to death, and in it there was a new tomb where no one had ever been buried. Since it was the day before the Sabbath and because the tomb was close by, they placed Jesus' body there.

Hymn 172 *Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (in back of bulletin)*

Reflection "on a painting by Gebre Kristos Desta"

The Rev. Timothy Ensworth

The Reproaches

Congregation: **Holy God,
Holy and strange,
Holy and intimate,
have mercy on us**

Leader: O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you?
Answer me.

I brooded over the abyss,
With my words I called forth creation:
But you have brooded on destruction,
And manufactured the means of chaos.

O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you?
Answer me.

I breathed life into your bodies,
And carried you tenderly in my arms:
But you have armed yourselves for war,
Breathing out threats of violence.

O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you?
Answer me.

I made the desert blossom before you,
I fed you with an open hand:
But you have grasped the children's food,
And laid waste the fertile lands.

O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you?
Answer me.

I abandoned my power like a garment,
Choosing your unprotected flesh:
But you have robed yourselves in privilege,
And chosen to despise the abandoned.

O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you?
Answer me.

Congregation: **Holy God,
Holy and strange,
Holy and intimate,
Have mercy on us.**

Leader: I would have gathered you to me as a lover,
And shown you the ways of peace:
But you have desired security,
And you would not surrender your self.

O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you?
Answer me.

I have torn the veil of my glory,
Transfiguring the earth:
But you have transfigured my beauty,
And turned away your face.

O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you?
Answer me.

I have labored to deliver you,
as a woman delights to give life:
But you have delighted in bloodshed,
And labored to bereave the world.
O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you?
Answer me.

I have followed you with the power of my spirit,
To seek truth and heal the oppressed:
But you have been following a lie,
And returned to your own comfort.
O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you?
Answer me.

Congregation: **Holy God,
Holy and strange,
Holy and intimate,
Have mercy on us.**

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Response: *Jesus, remember me*

Benediction

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
for by your holy cross you have redeemed the world,
through your own body you have brought us peace.
Brothers and sisters, go in peace.

Please leave the sanctuary in silence.

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Were you there when they crucified my Lord *The Hymnal* 1982, #172

1 Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you
 2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? Were you
 *3 Were you there when they pierced him in the side? Were you
 4 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Were you

there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Oh!
 there when they nailed him to the tree? Oh!
 there when they pierced him in the side? Oh!
 there when they laid him in the tomb? Oh!

Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,
 Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,
 Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,
 Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,

trem-ble. Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord?
 trem-ble. Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
 trem-ble. Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
 trem-ble. Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

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