**“Said Plainly”**

#

Psalm 25:6

Isaiah 53

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Romans 5:1-11

Mark 8:27-38

 Lent 2

“As Jesus went on with His disciples, He began t teach them that the Son of Man **must** suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed. And He **said this plainly**.”

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and from our Lord, and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Bridge

I, obviously, read a different Old Testament text than what was prescribed. Genesis 17 delivers **the Gospel won through the suffering of the Christ**: it’s that all who (as Jesus put it) “take up their cross and follow Jesus, **losing what they think is their life for His sake and the Gospel’s**, actually **gaining it**”. Abram and Sarai became (for instance) **renamed by God** (becoming a **plurality** rather than just a **singular** … **many** children from God’s covenant of Sacrifice that He provided in His own Son, Jesus). I read that:

“When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, ‘I am God Almighty; walk before me, and **be blameless**, that I may **make my covenant between Me and you, and multiply you greatly**.’ Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, ‘Behold, My covenant **is with you**, and **you shall be the father of a multitude of nations**. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall **be Abraham**, for **I have made you the father of a multitude of nations**. **I will make you exceedingly fruitful**, and **I will make you into nations**, and **kings shall come from you**. And **I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you**.’…

“And God said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but **Sarah shall be her name**. **I will bless her**, and moreover, **I will give you a Son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations**; **kings of peoples shall come from her’**” …

… and we know **that** “**Son**” that Sarah will give-to-Abraham-by-her is **Jesus after Isaac and the lineage to get there** (the Savior, God, to **grant this abundance and salvation … this Good News … this gift**). Isaiah 53 describes **HOW, then,** Abraham and Sarah would gain all this blessedness through this Son and **become a “Holy nation”**. A “**suffering Servant**” (**that Son**) would “heal those who’d follow Him with stripes from a whip and His bruising upon a cross for iniquities **dumped upon Him**”. **He (the “Righteous One)** would **make many to be accounted then righteous, bearing their iniquities when they give them to Him in confession**.

What got **explicitly said** to Abraham (and we heard it last week) is that God would, Himself, provide the **appropriate “Sacrifice”**, yet Abraham had to **understand that** **(feel it experientially as from a father giving his own son)** to **have faith in the** **correct thing … and love the Giver**. What Peter **had forgotten**, Jesus **reminded him of**. **He (Jesus) was to be** **THE** **“Lamb of slaughter” (THE sacrificial “Scape-Goat”)** so as to **make “Holy nations”** **by His sacrifice**. The “Christ” (the Son of God) would end up **in a grave** (not staying there, but **allowing Himself to be put there after death for sure**). And **THIS** Jesus “**SAID PLAINLY**” to Peter and, really, all other disciples. If they and we can’t accept **THAT** and **ITS** **REASON**, then **we’ve got no business being “accounted righteous” from it (which is free to us if we accept THAT and of sin as cause … free to us, but a sacrificial and necessary gift of God)**. But **THAT GIFT**, though, is **not ours** **if we** deny it or its **reason** (that it’s also **our** sin which we give over to Jesus to carry to the cross and die with Him). **THAT GIFT** is **not ours** **if we** (like Satan) forbid the price paid for our sin and salvation. It is **OURS** **ONLY IF**, “**while we were still sinners, Christ died** **FOR US**” … and it’s **THAT** **which** **we follow**.

Text

Synonymous with the title: **“Lamb for slaughter”** is the **“Christ” (or Divine One anointed for that purpose)**. Peter got the **title right**, but not the **meaning**: he “took Jesus aside and began to rebuke Him” for this **suffering definition of the role of the “Christ”, but got it wrong … satanically wrong**. Which is why I switched the Old Testament reading of Genesis 17 to the defining one of Isaiah 53. **Both apply certainly**, but Genesis doesn’t get explained in any **eternal way** to a guy like Peter and you and I without what Isaiah **PLAINLY SAID (and we should understand)** **of the** **role of the “Christ”**.

With Peter’s original “**misunderstanding**”, Abram and Sarai’s plural expansion **could be** just a **ancestry on earth**. But Abraham’s **count** was to be of the **“many” for whom Christ died**, the ones for whom **“our griefs” and “our sorrows” and “our iniquities” (“like sheep who have gone astray”) acknowledged and confessed**. Jesus barked back to that misunderstanding: “Get behind me, Satan! **You** are not setting your mind on the **things of God**, but on the **things of man**.”

And Paul to the Romans **“SAID THIS PLAINLY” as well**. “**While we were still weak**, at the right time **Christ died for the ungodly” (and that better be you and I admittedly)**. “For one will scarcely die for a **righteous person**—though perhaps for a **good person** one would dare even to die—but **God shows His love for us in that** **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us** … **while we were enemies** we were **reconciled to God by the death of His Son**”. “You **are** the Christ”, Peter **should have said, but shown** **understand of what that meant** by adding: “have mercy on **ME**”, because “**I**” have to be **dealt with in that**.

Application

And all of this means, in application, that followers (who want to be followers of Christ) can **misunderstand what following Him means … unless always corrected when misunderstanding**. Peter **did follow Jesus (having been corrected) to the cross … and to face it and himself in the face of it**. **He** was **there in the courtyard where he saw how far he, too, was shown as an “enemy / sinner” by his denials**. He was **there at the crucifixion by his absence, huddled behind locked doors hiding in the poverty of his faithlessness, aware and probably only barely hopeful for what ought to have always been SAID PLAINLY upon his lips about what Christ’s death could mean for him: “by Jesus’ wounds he (Peter as a humbled transgressor) would be healed”**. ….

“**Humbled transgressors**” **still** huddle together to follow the Christ Jesus to His cross. Maybe **we do it too** **somewhat locked behind doors for fear of retribution or shame and protective of our self-image chipped away too hard to face**. We are **where Jesus asks for our confession of Him, yet are prepared for Him and His saving of us** (**we** **hear His Words and eat of His body and drink of His blood) understanding His role and ours I in this (growing in that) and being forgiven and renewed (constantly in receipt of new names and new futures and new abundant fruitfulness)**. **We’re** **faced with His cross with His body hanging on it). And we know that we need to be because WE want reminded of His love for US**.

And (that way, as the way that dictates all other ways) **WE follow** **as we must:** **expecting nothing from this life but suffering since our Savior and Lord did**. “We **stand**, and we **rejoice in hope of the glory of God, rejoicing even in sufferings, knowing that**” (as Romans promises), “suffering **produces** endurance, and endurance **produces** character, and character **produces** hope, and **hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (and that’s Baptism and the hearing of His Words)**.” We’re being **changed (names changed even to the plurality of God’s name and blessedness that we’re melded into … formed into)**.

Jesus **called to Him** **the crowd** **with His disciples** (something He does with us every opportunity in the preaching of His Word) and **SAID TO THEM PLAINLY**, ‘If anyone would **come after Me**” / “**follow Him**”, let him **deny himself**” (**humility**) “and **take up his cross**” (**duty**) “and **follow Me**” … **in every way that’s necessary**. ….

There is one more huge chunk of Gospel **SAID PLAINLY** by Jesus to disciples. Of that entire **descriptive transaction** between Jesus and the disciples and the crowd (where He said that **we could “gain life”, having it “saved” because of the rest of the story that’s in Him**), verse 31 of Mark 8 Jesus concludes the sacrificial work with this **wonderful news** **SAID PLAINLY: “AND AFTER THREE DAYS RISE AGAIN”**: “He began to **teach them that** the Son of Man **MUST** suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed … and **after three days rise again**. And **HE SAID THIS PLAINLY!**”

See, **LIFE follows HIS DEATH … that’s the point**. It’s **because of it** and our linkage to it in Baptism that **we have lost our life in order to gain ours with His**. **SAID PLAINLY** is both the **reason-for** and the **benefit-of** of the suffering of Jesus which makes us call a particular Friday “**Good**”.

Happy **resurrection** **Easter** **(of course)** … but all of that **because of Good Friday**. **SAID PLAIN ENOUGH?** In +Jesus’ name, Amen.