



The Son of Man  
must undergo  
great  
suffering

MARK 8:31



It has long been a question for some of us (and by us, I mean me); just how much did the Old Testament believers know about the work of the Redeemer, the Lamb of God, the Son of Man? Did they have in their wildest imagination the horrifying bloody torture that would take place for the forgiveness of our sins? Did they see the Man on the Cross in advance of the event? Did they know this was what God had in mind when He promised a Messiah in the beginning of time as recorded in Genesis 3:15? I doubt they did. However, we benefit from knowing more of the story; we can see the picture of the Son of God being sacrificed for our salvation in promises and foreshadowing types throughout the Old Testament. It's all there.

One passage, penned centuries before it would happen by the prophet Isaiah, paints in vivid detail the image of the Suffering Messiah. When we read these words today, we can indeed see the crucified Savior hanging on the Cross. It's all right there.

All of the Bible, and perhaps Isaiah 52:13–53:12 more than most, are meant to be studied and pondered over and over again. With this deep dive into Isaiah 52 and 53, you have the opportunity to dwell inside of this passage for the 40 days of Lent. This kit is designed to accompany the Lenten Pathway resource found at the Visual Faith® Ministry website. The artist for that work, Ann Gillaspie, has provided a pathway to document your journey with a small drawing, doodle, or a few words. The haunting melody of *O Sacred Head Now Wounded* was her inspiration and will follow you through the days as the lyrics to the hymn evoke images and remind you of the work of your Savior, Jesus Christ. If you would like a larger experience, take the time to scribe the verses suggested for each week in a notebook, journal, or on an art project. Since there are only three or four verses per week, you could write them out in several different translations, as that often adds to our understanding or application of the text. [Also included are passages for you to scribe and ponder for Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Resurrection Day.] Then, when Resurrection Day has come and gone for this year, take some time to note any changes in your thinking or perhaps review some of what you've learned along the way. Give all the glory to God for what He has brought about through this Lenten season and the practices you employ to mark it. -- Carolyn

*Dear Lord God, thank You for bringing me to this time of meditation, study, creativity, and devotion. Inhabit this time, that I might draw closer to You. Teach me what I need to learn for this season of my life. Thank You for the opportunity to abide in Your Word, and allow me to see how Your love for Your children took You to the Cross, that we might have life with You forever. This time is Yours and I await Your bidding. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.*

Note: Most of the passages are 3–4 verses long. I suggest you write out all of those passages. Some of the passages are significantly longer. In those cases, write out the words that are bolded. If you want more to think about, write out the entire passage. There is not a verse for every day of Lent, thus giving you time to write out the passages in additional translations.



*Ash Wednesday*

**Psalm 51:1–4**

*<sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love;  
according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.*

*<sup>2</sup>Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!*

*<sup>3</sup>For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.*

*<sup>4</sup>Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You  
may be justified in Your words and blameless in Your judgment.*



Look around the world or even look around your neighborhood; if you're brave, look around your own life. It's a mess. Sin has created nothing but sorrow and trouble wherever you look. And after a sin has occurred, it hangs with you for the rest of the day, maybe the rest of the week, and possibly the rest of your life. The effects of sin cover everything; that fine powder of destruction can permeate everything we touch.

In the Old Testament, mourners would cover themselves with ashes as a symbol of the fact that they were in deep distress and sorrow. Our sin, when seen correctly, draws

us into that same place of sorrow, thus the ashes on the forehead. But the purpose of Lent is to move us toward Easter morning when we celebrate the fact that Jesus has died for all of those sins and we are no longer a people of mourning or sorrow. We are forgiven in the blood of Jesus. While recognition of our deep need for a Savior is vital, so is our acknowledgement that Christ died because of those sins and redemption is found only in His work on the Cross.

May you find yourself intentionally mindful today of the amazing work of Christ upon the cross, performed because our lives are a mess.



Week 1

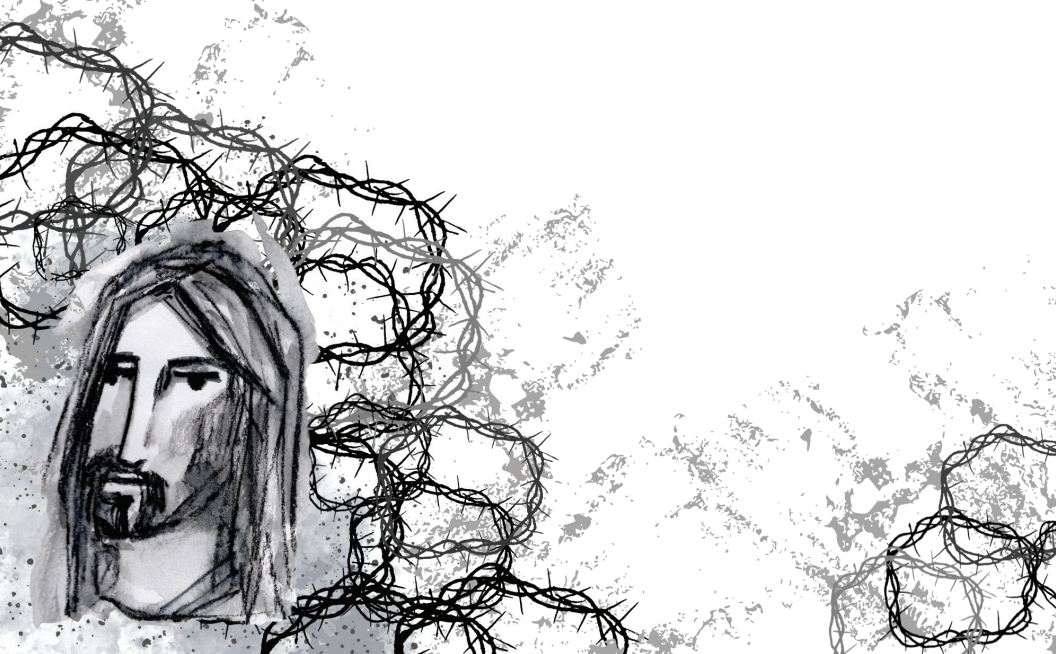
**Isaiah 52:13–15**


<sup>13</sup>Behold, my Servant shall act wisely; He shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted.

<sup>14</sup>As many were astonished at You—His appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and His form beyond that of the children of mankind—

<sup>15</sup>so shall He sprinkle many nations.

Kings shall shut their mouths because of Him, for that which has not been told them they see, and that which they have not heard they understand.





These words form the fourth passage of what are known as the Servant Songs (42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12). If you want to enhance or expand your understanding of this entire passage, you may want to take the time to read all of them with the following in mind. The first song speaks of the Children of Israel who failed time and again to live out lives of service to others and thus to God. Jesus, of course, succeeds where God's people failed. Songs two, three, and four are about Jesus. This fourth song tells of Christ's purpose on earth and describes His work.

Before we dive into these first three verses of our Lenten focus from Isaiah, remember what the Lord told Moses and the Children of Israel as He formed in them an understanding of what His relationship with them was going to be like. Deuteronomy explains in detail what God expects of His people and the consequences for disobedience.

### **Deuteronomy 28:58–61**

*<sup>58</sup>“If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the Lord your God, <sup>59</sup>then the Lord will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting. <sup>60</sup>And he will bring upon you again all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. <sup>61</sup>Every sickness also and every affliction that is not recorded in the book of this law, the Lord will bring upon you, until you are destroyed.”*

As you read this passage, you might find that it is alarmingly similar to what actually happens to the Suffering Servant as described in Isaiah! God always keeps His promises. What we have learned from the story of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ is that God kept those promises; but Jesus was the One who bore the consequences. All of our punishment was laid on Him, not on us.

### **“Lo! Behold! Look, now, see, surely”**

This prophetic passage begins at the end; “Behold ... He shall be high and lifted up.” Hope always rides through the message of the Bible, with the work of Jesus proving to be victorious. While these words seem too good to be true to a people beleaguered by their own sinful response to God, they are nonetheless fulfilled by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Since we know how the work of Jesus’ played out, we are able to walk with Him through the time of shadow during the days of Lent.



**Isaiah 52:13–15**

(write out in a different translation  
and/or journal your thoughts)



**Isaiah 53:1–3**

*<sup>1</sup>Who has believed what He has heard from us?*

*And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?*

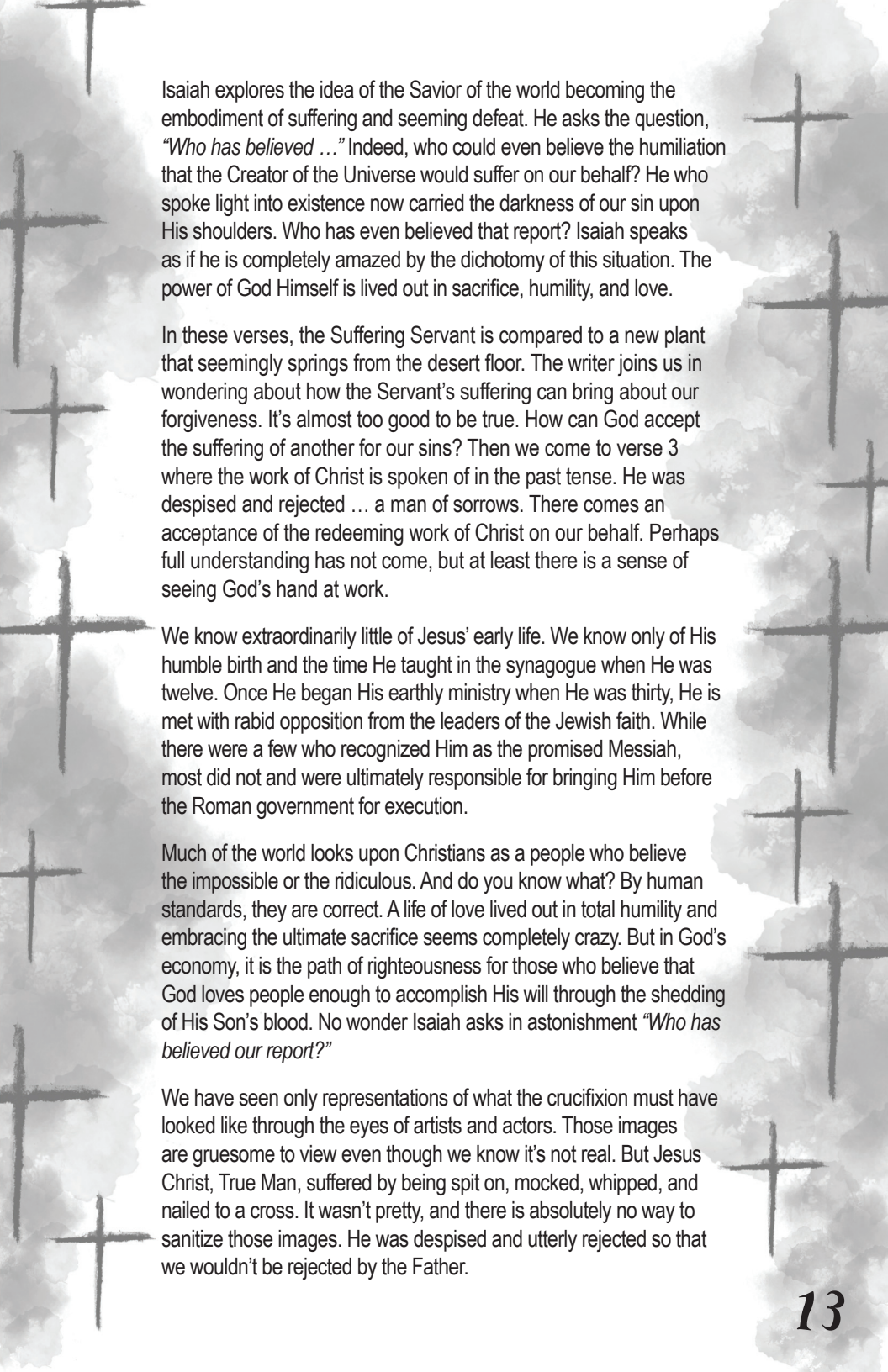
*<sup>2</sup>For He grew up before Him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; He had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire Him.*

*<sup>3</sup>He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.*



*rejected alone*



The background of the page features a repeating pattern of faint, hand-drawn crosses. These crosses are set against a backdrop of soft, white, watercolor-style clouds. The overall aesthetic is ethereal and contemplative, with the crosses symbolizing the central theme of the text: the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Isaiah explores the idea of the Savior of the world becoming the embodiment of suffering and seeming defeat. He asks the question, *"Who has believed ..."* Indeed, who could even believe the humiliation that the Creator of the Universe would suffer on our behalf? He who spoke light into existence now carried the darkness of our sin upon His shoulders. Who has even believed that report? Isaiah speaks as if he is completely amazed by the dichotomy of this situation. The power of God Himself is lived out in sacrifice, humility, and love.

In these verses, the Suffering Servant is compared to a new plant that seemingly springs from the desert floor. The writer joins us in wondering about how the Servant's suffering can bring about our forgiveness. It's almost too good to be true. How can God accept the suffering of another for our sins? Then we come to verse 3 where the work of Christ is spoken of in the past tense. He was despised and rejected ... a man of sorrows. There comes an acceptance of the redeeming work of Christ on our behalf. Perhaps full understanding has not come, but at least there is a sense of seeing God's hand at work.

We know extraordinarily little of Jesus' early life. We know only of His humble birth and the time He taught in the synagogue when He was twelve. Once He began His earthly ministry when He was thirty, He is met with rabid opposition from the leaders of the Jewish faith. While there were a few who recognized Him as the promised Messiah, most did not and were ultimately responsible for bringing Him before the Roman government for execution.

Much of the world looks upon Christians as a people who believe the impossible or the ridiculous. And do you know what? By human standards, they are correct. A life of love lived out in total humility and embracing the ultimate sacrifice seems completely crazy. But in God's economy, it is the path of righteousness for those who believe that God loves people enough to accomplish His will through the shedding of His Son's blood. No wonder Isaiah asks in astonishment *"Who has believed our report?"*

We have seen only representations of what the crucifixion must have looked like through the eyes of artists and actors. Those images are gruesome to view even though we know it's not real. But Jesus Christ, True Man, suffered by being spit on, mocked, whipped, and nailed to a cross. It wasn't pretty, and there is absolutely no way to sanitize those images. He was despised and utterly rejected so that we wouldn't be rejected by the Father.



*Week 2*

**Isaiah 53:1-3**

(write out in a different translation  
or journal your thoughts)



Week 3

**Isaiah 53:4-5**

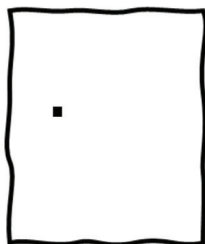
*<sup>4</sup>Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;  
yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.*

*<sup>5</sup>But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon  
Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed.*

HEALED



*"By His wounds, we are healed."* If you carry nothing else with you from today's writing, remember those words. You are healed. You are healed of every sin, secret and public, heinous, or minor (are there any minor sins?), against God or against others. Every sin leaves a scar on your psyche, on your soul. Even the smallest sin bars you from entry into the Kingdom of Heaven. You are wounded.



Imagine this box is your life and you were able to live sinlessly for your entire life, including every thought, every action, all of it. Except for one single incident where you went against the Law of God. See that tiny little speck on the page? That tiny little sin is a wound. That tiny little sin keeps you outside of God's presence—forever barring you from entering heaven.

That unholiness is enough for God to keep you out of heaven. Of course, we all know that our lives look nothing like that. Instead, we are a scribble of sin, darkness – wounds. Both lives are lost to God. Isaiah points us in a new direction. The Suffering Servant took all of that ugliness upon Himself. Down to the tiniest dot of shame. Now our pages are pure holiness before a Holy God. Jesus' blood covers it all. He was stricken, smitten, and afflicted so we don't have to be.





*Week 3*

Isaiah 53:4–5  
(write out in a different translation  
or journal your thoughts)



**Isaiah 53:6–7**

*<sup>6</sup>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.*

*<sup>7</sup>He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not His mouth.*

Both Leviticus 16 and Acts 8 demonstrate how Jesus was the one spoken of in this Isaiah passage. During the time the Children of Israel were wandering in the wilderness, learning the ways of the Lord, God prescribed the events of Yom Kippur, the most holy of Jewish celebrations each year – The Day of Atonement. It is here that we learn of the scapegoat – the goat that was symbolically anointed with the sins of the people and chased out into the wilderness as a live offering for Azazel. (The meaning of Azazel is uncertain, possibly the name of a place or a demon, traditionally a scapegoat.)

**Leviticus 16:6–10**

*<sup>6</sup>“Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering for himself and shall make atonement for himself and for his house. <sup>7</sup>Then he shall take the two goats and set them before the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting. <sup>8</sup>And Aaron shall cast lots over the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel. <sup>9</sup>And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the Lord and use it as a sin offering, <sup>10</sup>but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel.”*

This sacrifice is what Isaiah refers to as he declares “and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” In Acts 8, several centuries later, church Elder Philip is sent to share the Gospel with the Ethiopian eunuch who as it happens is reading Isaiah 53:6–7 while riding in his chariot back to Ethiopia after making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.



### **Acts 8:26–39**

<sup>26</sup>Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert place. <sup>27</sup>And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship <sup>28</sup>and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup>And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.” <sup>30</sup>So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” <sup>31</sup>And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. <sup>32</sup>Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this:  
“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter  
and like a lamb before its shearer is silent,  
so he opens not his mouth.

<sup>33</sup>In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth.”

<sup>34</sup>And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” <sup>35</sup>Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup>And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” [Some manuscripts add all or most of verse <sup>37</sup>: And Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he replied, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”]

<sup>38</sup>And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. <sup>39</sup>And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.

Can you even imagine reading these words in Isaiah but having absolutely no understanding as to who or what they are about? God cared enough about that eunuch to make sure there was someone miraculously available to help him understand. And tradition holds that Ethiopia became a Christian nation after that man returned home. They were renowned for their faith in Jesus for over 1,000 years!

The Biblical narrative is all encompassing, and from Genesis to Revelation, all completely connected. God’s plan was perfect. And it is the same plan we lean into today, with our hope in the salvation of Jesus Christ for each of us. Just like the Ethiopian, we are included in the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.



**Isaiah 53:6-7**

(write out in a different translation  
or journal your thoughts)

A crown of thorns, a hammer, and nails are arranged on a speckled background. The crown of thorns is on the left, the hammer is in the center, and the nails are on the right. The word "oppressed" is written in white cursive script in the upper right corner.

*oppressed*

*judged*

*afflicted*



**Isaiah 53:8–9**

*<sup>8</sup>By oppression and judgment he was taken away;  
and as for his generation, who considered  
that He was cut off out of the land of the living,  
stricken for the transgression of my people?*

*<sup>9</sup>And they made His grave with the wicked  
and with a rich man in His death,  
although He had done no violence, and  
there was no deceit in His mouth.*

One of the ways we describe God is just. He is the very definition of justice. Yet when it came to the multiple trials of the Son of Man, justice did not prevail. During the hours before His crucifixion, Jesus stands before several tribunals, all of them corrupt in one way or another. The Pharisees are looking for an execution, King Herod is looking for a few entertaining magic tricks, and Pilate is looking for a way out of this mess. Justice plays no part for any of these leaders as they deal with Jesus. Through all of it, Jesus says nothing in His own defense. In fact, the only conversation He has is with Pilate, and that one borders on the philosophical rather than on justice.

With His humiliation over, Jesus completes His work of forgiving our sins—an innocent Man shedding blood for the sins of the world. For most, it's almost too difficult to even ponder. Who among us could look upon the crucified Savior with anything but horror. As horrifying as the story is, the end is beyond beautiful, for in His death, we are handed life. We don't deserve it, nor can we earn it. New life is handed to us by a holy God who loves His children. Jesus hung on the cross knowing the joy that stood before Him. He knew the final outcome, and He would be triumphant.



**Isaiah 53:8-9**

(write out in a different translation  
or journal your thoughts)



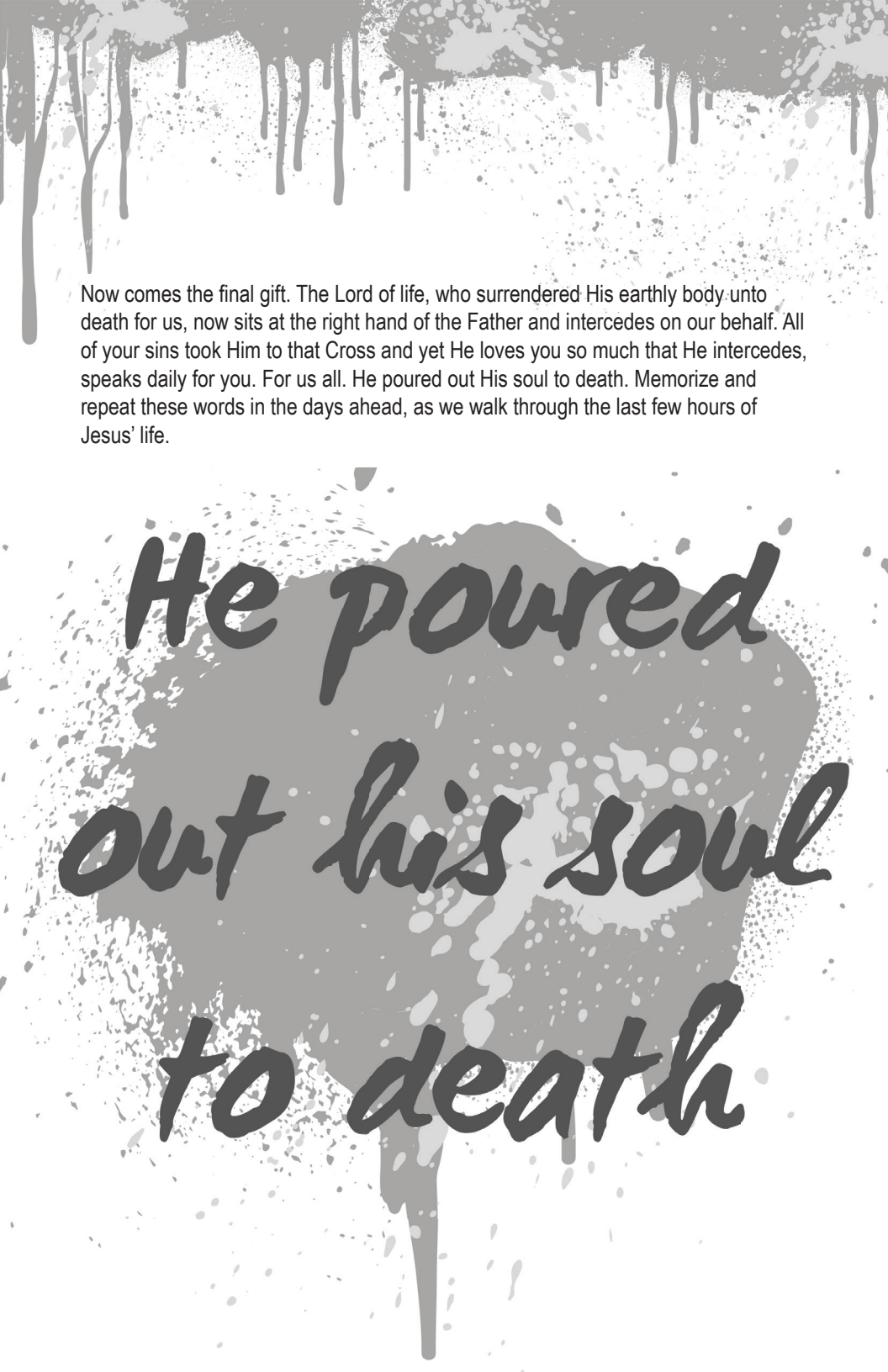
Week 6

**Isaiah 53:10–12**

<sup>10</sup>Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush Him; He has put Him to grief;  
when His soul makes an offering for guilt, He shall see His offspring;  
He shall prolong His days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.

<sup>11</sup>Out of the anguish of His soul He shall see and be satisfied;  
by His knowledge shall the righteous one, my Servant,  
make many to be accounted righteous, and He shall bear their iniquities.

<sup>12</sup>Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the many,  
and He shall divide the spoil with the strong,  
because He poured out His soul to death and  
was numbered with the transgressors;  
yet He bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.



Now comes the final gift. The Lord of life, who surrendered His earthly body unto death for us, now sits at the right hand of the Father and intercedes on our behalf. All of your sins took Him to that Cross and yet He loves you so much that He intercedes, speaks daily for you. For us all. He poured out His soul to death. Memorize and repeat these words in the days ahead, as we walk through the last few hours of Jesus' life.

He poured  
out his soul  
to death



### **Matthew 21:1–11**

*<sup>1</sup>Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup>saying to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup>If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.” <sup>4</sup>This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, <sup>5</sup>“Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’” <sup>6</sup>The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. <sup>7</sup>They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. <sup>8</sup>**Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.** <sup>9</sup>And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” <sup>10</sup>And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, “Who is this?” <sup>11</sup>And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.”*

Palm Sunday conjures up the use of one word – Hosanna! The only time we find this word used in the entire Bible is in three of the four Gospels as the events of what we now call Palm Sunday are told. In fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies, Jesus rides into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, colt for He is the true King. [Had he ridden in on a horse, that would have signified conquest. Kings who had conquered another nation rode into town on a horse. A King who came in peace rode in on a donkey.]



LOOK: Betty LaDuke (American, 1933–), *Guatemala: Procession*, 1978. Acrylic on canvas, 72 × 68 in.





**Matthew 21:8–9**

<sup>8</sup>Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup>And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”



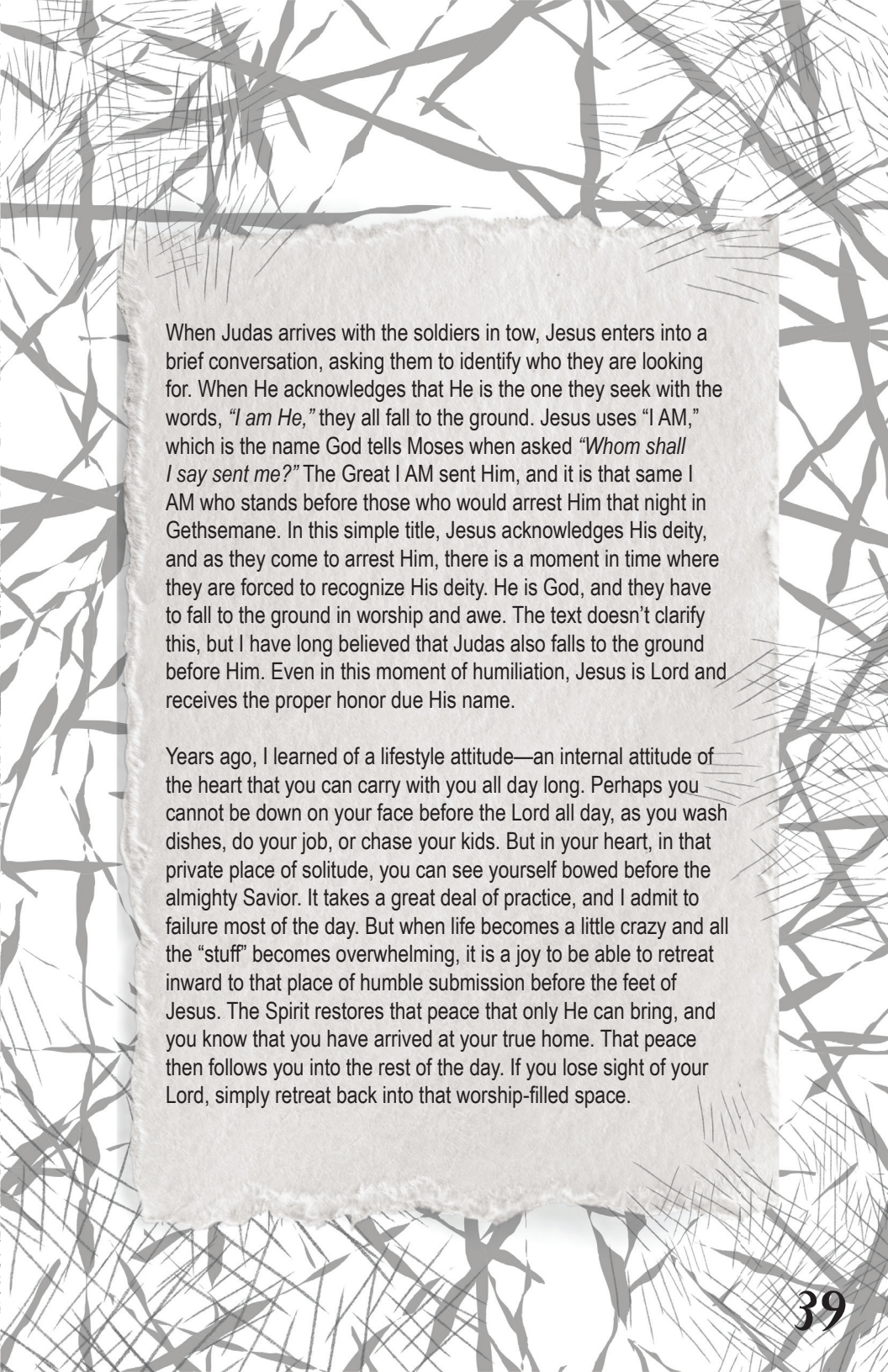


Mandy Thursday

### John 18:1–11

*<sup>1</sup>When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. <sup>2</sup>Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with his disciples. <sup>3</sup>So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons. <sup>4</sup>Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, “Whom do you seek?” <sup>5</sup>They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. <sup>6</sup>**When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground.** <sup>7</sup>So he asked them again, “Whom do you seek?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” <sup>8</sup>Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let these men go.” <sup>9</sup>This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: “Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one.” <sup>10</sup>Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.) <sup>11</sup>So Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?”*

John’s record of the arrest of Jesus includes details that do not appear in the other Gospels. It also leaves out details that seem important to us. John makes no mention of the excruciating time of prayer that Jesus spends before the arrest. Had I fallen asleep when my best friend really needed me, I might not want to dwell on that either. The detail that John does share involves the soldiers who came to arrest Jesus. This points not only to the grace and mercy of Jesus but also to His ultimate authority and power.



When Judas arrives with the soldiers in tow, Jesus enters into a brief conversation, asking them to identify who they are looking for. When He acknowledges that He is the one they seek with the words, “*I am He,*” they all fall to the ground. Jesus uses “I AM,” which is the name God tells Moses when asked “*Whom shall I say sent me?*” The Great I AM sent Him, and it is that same I AM who stands before those who would arrest Him that night in Gethsemane. In this simple title, Jesus acknowledges His deity, and as they come to arrest Him, there is a moment in time where they are forced to recognize His deity. He is God, and they have to fall to the ground in worship and awe. The text doesn’t clarify this, but I have long believed that Judas also falls to the ground before Him. Even in this moment of humiliation, Jesus is Lord and receives the proper honor due His name.

Years ago, I learned of a lifestyle attitude—an internal attitude of the heart that you can carry with you all day long. Perhaps you cannot be down on your face before the Lord all day, as you wash dishes, do your job, or chase your kids. But in your heart, in that private place of solitude, you can see yourself bowed before the almighty Savior. It takes a great deal of practice, and I admit to failure most of the day. But when life becomes a little crazy and all the “stuff” becomes overwhelming, it is a joy to be able to retreat inward to that place of humble submission before the feet of Jesus. The Spirit restores that peace that only He can bring, and you know that you have arrived at your true home. That peace then follows you into the rest of the day. If you lose sight of your Lord, simply retreat back into that worship-filled space.



Viktor Dovnar (Belarusian, 1952–), *Kiss of Judas*, 2014. Egg tempera and gilding on gessoed board.



*Mandy Thursday*

**John 18:6**

*<sup>6</sup>When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.*



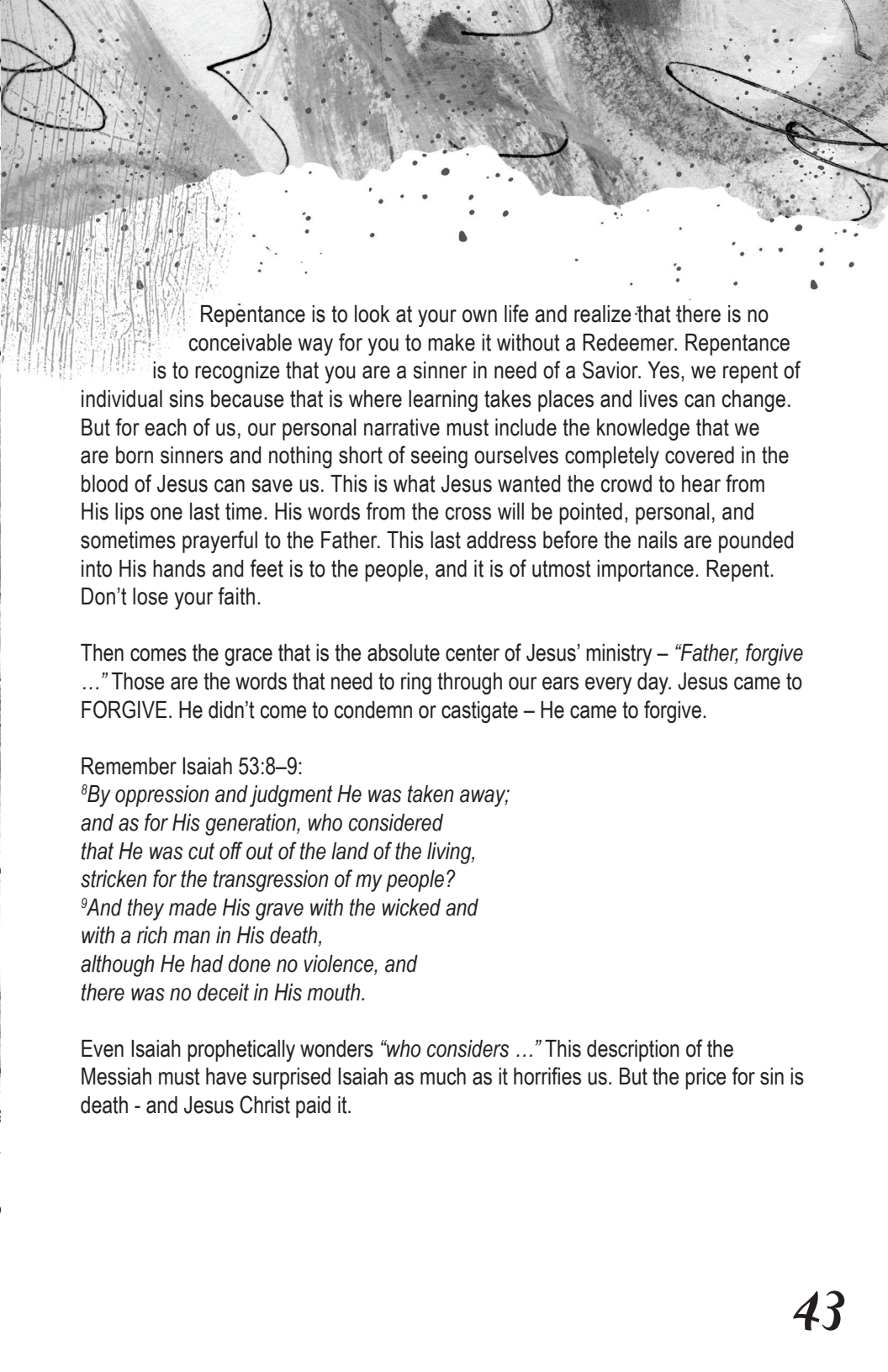
Good Friday

**Luke 23:32-34**

<sup>32</sup>Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. <sup>33</sup>And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>34</sup>And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Luke is the only Gospel writer who chronicled Jesus' final hours on the cross and also His trek from the court of Pilate to Golgotha. It is from Luke alone that we learn of Simon of Cyrene who is forced to carry Jesus' cross to the hill. It makes sense that Jesus was physically unable to carry that cross as He had been beaten so badly. The fact that He could even make the walk was amazing. Also only in Luke's account are the words that Jesus spoke to the crowd while on that death march. The words are incredibly important because they are Jesus' final plea to the people to repent and believe in Him.

While much has been taught and preached about Jesus' final words from the cross, little attention is paid to these words spoken on that torturous march to Calvary. But we cannot overlook these words for they are packed with strength and truth. If you were to have only a few words left to say to your loved ones, what would they be? I once sat at the bedside of a dying friend who was surrounded by his family, and I was privileged to hear what he had to say to them. "Don't lose your faith." He repeated these words over and over to all of them with tears in his eyes and those were his last words. Jesus' final words to the crowd are similar. In metaphorical terms He tells them to repent – the same message they had heard for thousands of years from the prophets. As His blood runs through the street He is warning the people one last time – "REPENT".



Repentance is to look at your own life and realize that there is no conceivable way for you to make it without a Redeemer. Repentance is to recognize that you are a sinner in need of a Savior. Yes, we repent of individual sins because that is where learning takes place and lives can change. But for each of us, our personal narrative must include the knowledge that we are born sinners and nothing short of seeing ourselves completely covered in the blood of Jesus can save us. This is what Jesus wanted the crowd to hear from His lips one last time. His words from the cross will be pointed, personal, and sometimes prayerful to the Father. This last address before the nails are pounded into His hands and feet is to the people, and it is of utmost importance. Repent. Don't lose your faith.

Then comes the grace that is the absolute center of Jesus' ministry – *“Father, forgive ...”* Those are the words that need to ring through our ears every day. Jesus came to FORGIVE. He didn't come to condemn or castigate – He came to forgive.

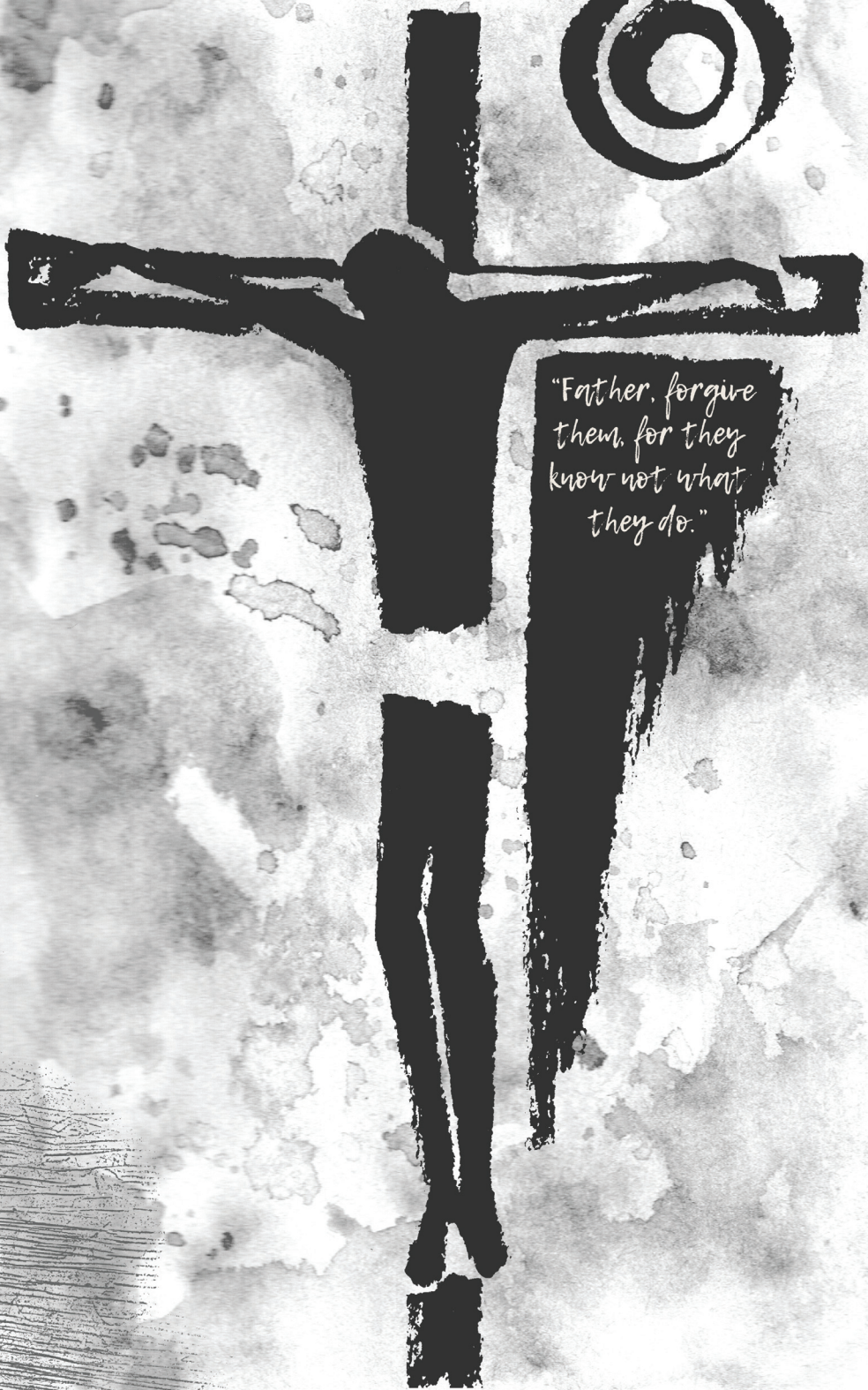
Remember Isaiah 53:8–9:

*<sup>8</sup>By oppression and judgment He was taken away;  
and as for His generation, who considered  
that He was cut off out of the land of the living,  
stricken for the transgression of my people?*

*<sup>9</sup>And they made His grave with the wicked and  
with a rich man in His death,  
although He had done no violence, and  
there was no deceit in His mouth.*

Even Isaiah prophetically wonders *“who considers ...”* This description of the Messiah must have surprised Isaiah as much as it horrifies us. But the price for sin is death - and Jesus Christ paid it.





*"Father, forgive  
them, for they  
know not what  
they do."*



**Luke 23:32-34**

<sup>32</sup>Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. <sup>33</sup>And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>34</sup>And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

**John 20:1**

*Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.*



Craig Goodworth (American, 1977–), *Playa Studies*, 2017. Site-specific land-based artwork, Great Basin Desert, Oregon. Photograph by the artist.

# Post Resurrection Day Reflections

