

THAT'S FROM THE BIBLE



Sermon 3 – Isaiah 53:7, “Like a lamb to the slaughter”

1. What are some of ways you've heard this phrase used?
2. What insights have you gained from Mark's talk? Did the talk raise questions for you?
3. Why is it important for us to deal with such passages as Isaiah 53? What are the dangers if we don't?

Mark made three points. First, we note that when Jesus was led like a lamb to the slaughter he was:

Innocent

4. Read Hebrews 4:14-16. What are some of the implications in this particular verse, of the fact Jesus was without sin?
5. Theologically, why was it necessary for Jesus to be literally innocent, to bear our sin?
6. Read Isaiah 53:5-6 and v8 and reflect on the reason Jesus died.
7. On Good Friday this year, the Dean of Grafton cathedral, Greg Jenks, said: “Jesus was martyr, not a sacrifice” and “we reject any notion that God wanted Jesus to die as a human sacrifice” ([See at 3 minutes into this video](#)). Why would a Christian minister reject the notion of Jesus dying as a sacrifice for sin? Does it matter that he doesn't believe or teach this?

(Note well each week, this minister will repeat in the communion service these words : “By his death on the cross and rising to new life, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people” and “Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded: proclaiming his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross....” Thank the Lord for our liturgy which helps guard doctrine!)

Mark's second point was that when Jesus was led like a lamb to the slaughter he was:

Silent

8. Read Matt 26:62-63, Mark 15:4-5 and Luke 23:9 and reflect on why Jesus didn't answer the questions put to him.
9. What does Jesus' silence indicate about the way he understood and approached his impending death?

Mark's third point was that when Jesus was led like a lamb to the slaughter he was:

NOT ignorant

10. What is obviously incorrect about the Cambridge Dictionary's understanding of the phrase 'Led like a lamb to the slaughter'?
11. How do we know that Jesus knew exactly what was to happen to him? (See for example John 10:17-18, Philippians 2:5-11, and Luke 22:41-43).
12. How was Jesus able to be so calm in facing his death? See for example 1 Peter 2:23 and Hebrews 12:1-3
13. What did Mark say are the implications for believers of Jesus having been led like a lamb to the slaughter?
14. And for those who are not?

Pray that we might more fully grasp both the BAD news and the GOOD news of the Bible

Give thanks for Jesus for all he faced for us. And pray for ministers and others who cannot grasp the significance of Jesus' sacrificial death for us.

Pray for grace to endure suffering for the Lord Jesus, with Jesus as our model and example.

Date: 18 November 2018
Services: 730, 930 P and 930 T (via video)
Series: That's from the Bible!?
Passage: Isaiah 53:7
Title: Like a lamb to the slaughter
Outline

1. Innocent
 2. Silent
 3.but not Ignorant
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INTRODUCTION

"Led like a lamb to the slaughter...."

A very common place phrase today... used for anyone going into a situation where they have no idea about the ordeal they are about to face...

Might be a footballer heading for a judiciary hearing that springs some surprise video footage... and they get slammed...

It might be a cricketer going out to bat being slammed by the a fast bowler on an unpredictable wicket

It may be a couple who for the past 12 years have run a magazine called *White* about marriage which provided practical tips and helpful articles. In the last 12 months since the marriage laws changed in this country the couple who publish the magazine have been targeted by a social media campaign simply because they have not yet published any articles relating to same sex marriage. As a result they are closing down their magazine... because advertisers have withdrawn and they have been personally threatened. They were led like a lamb to the slaughter.

The phrase was used by Roald Dahl in a short story about a man who told his pregnant wife he was leaving her... She pulls out a leg of lamb from the freezer she was going to cook for dinner, and even surprising herself, she took the piece of frozen meat and whacked her husband over the head with it, thereby killing him.

She went to the shops to get some veggies and claimed to the police that when she returned she found her husband bludgeoned to death.

She proceeded to cook the roast lamb and served it to the investigating officers, thereby destroying the weapon.

In a typical Roald Dahl type of way, there is a multiplicity of plays on words... but the husband was led like a lamb to the slaughter that day... having no idea what was coming!

But the phrase of course, originates from the Bible which is why we're looking at it this morning in a four week series called "That's from the Bible!?"

Although also found in Jeremiah, we'll concentrate on its occurrence in Isaiah 53... and we know - because of the way the NT itself refers to this passage - that it speaks of Jesus... Jesus led like a lamb to the slaughter.

Now what is fascinating is the way that dictionaries define the phrase... and if you read the reading notes this week, you will have seen that the Cambridge dictionary defines the phrase this way: *If someone does something or goes somewhere 'like a lamb to the slaughter', they do it without knowing that something bad is going to happen and therefore act calmly and without fighting against the situation.*

Or dictionary.com says: *innocently and helplessly, without realising the danger.*

Now some of you will already be thinking - "mmmm is that right??" And we'll come back to that a little later...

But first... a question. Why spend time looking at such passages... you may want to say to me Mark - please - can we deal with something more **positive**... do we have to look at Jesus' death once again...??

Can we skip **this** week's message and can to **next** week's which is on 'eat, drink and be merry'... really - that's more my kind of thing!!

Come on Mark - the days are getting longer and warmer - Christmas is getting closer... plans are being made... why such a **bleak** verse this morning....? ////

Because we have to be **real** about Jesus....

And we have to be real about our **lives**...

If I only ever told you positive stuff about Jesus I wouldn't be presenting the whole counsel of God and NOR would I be preparing you for life's winters.

Summer's coming... yes... but everyone here will face a winter.... through illness, surgery, hardship, anxiety...

And I want you to see how understanding Jesus' suffering, helps us face **our** suffering...

A Christianity which has no understanding of the place of suffering... the place of illness... the place of hardship - simply doesn't reflect the reality of the Bible...

A Christianity which expects all the end time blessings of the new creation HERE and NOW - hasn't understood and wrestled with the fact that we still live in a fallen world... and that the best is yet to come!

The Bible has the **worst news ever** - that we have rebelled against God and done our own thing... and that means we are **cut off from God**

But the Bible had the **best news ever**... that *because* Jesus was led like a lamb to the slaughter... and then yes - slaughtered in **your** place and mine... then we can be **forgiven** and **restored** to God... **now** and for **eternity**.

So let's see if we can understand what it meant for Jesus to be led like a lamb to the slaughter and what it means for us...

here is where we are heading this morning: that Jesus faced death; yes

1. **Innocent**
2. **yes Silent**
3. **But NOT ignorant**

- So first:

1. INNOCENT

- the whole 'led like a lamb' thing suggests innocence.
- A little lamb going to slaughter... unsuspecting...
- Yet the sense in which Jesus was innocent is much more **profound**...!
- For he was **sinless**... he was innocent in **THAT** sense... **literally, actually** innocent...
- In Hebrews 4, "We have a high priest who was tempted in every point like we are, **yet without sin.**"
- 2 Corinthians 5 - **he who knew no sin** was counted as sin in order that we might become the righteousness of God." So **he knew no sin!**
- 1 Peter 2:22: "In him there was no deceit." "When he was reviled he did not revile in return," and "there was no deceit in his mouth."
- One of the thieves that hung with Jesus on the cross said that he was getting what he deserved, but that Jesus had done **nothing** wrong... (Luke 23:40-43)
- **Jesus was without sin.** He needed to be a **spotless** lamb, and he was a spotless lamb.
- A sinless Jesus is possible because **He is the Son of God.**
- And the **sinless** state of Jesus **proved** that He was from God.
- Right here Isaiah 53 v9 – have a look with me - we read Jesus, the Messiah and Christ would live a

life without sin. "He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, **though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.**"

- So let's remind ourselves why this innocent one was slaughtered?
- It's right here in Isaiah 53 vv5-6 - *he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.* We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
- Or v12 – *he bore the sin of many...*
- He went to the cross as an **innocent** man – but was crushed with the weight of **your** sin – **my** sin...
- *Led like a lamb to the slaughter... !*
- Let's look **second**:

2. SILENT

- ...have a look with me at v7 - *He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.*
- At the mock trial in the middle of the night at Caiaphas' house when Jesus was accused by false witnesses, the high priest said, "Do you make no answer, what is this that these men are testifying against you?" **And Jesus was silent** (Matthew 26:62–63).
- Then later, early in the morning, Pilate said to Jesus in the Roman headquarters, "Do you make no answer? See how many charges they bring against you." **But Jesus made no further answer**, so that Pilate was amazed (Mark 15:4–5).
- Pilate sent Jesus to Herod, and Luke tells us that Herod "questioned him at some length, **but he answered him nothing**" (Luke 23:9).
- ... now – Jesus did go on to say a couple of things.... We read that in the gospels... yet – generally – Jesus went – **willingly** – without **resistance**... no **violence** – no **threat** – no **fighting back**... //
- Once he had wrestled with God in the Garden of Gethsemane – 'Father if there is any other way'... and then submitted to his Father's will – nevertheless not my will but yours be done... then he submitted to all that was to come... //
- Led like a lamb the slaughter //
- So Jesus was **innocent**; he was **silent**; and **finally**:

3. HE WAS NOT IGNORANT

- Jesus knew his **prophecy**. He knew his **calling**.
- He was the **Servant of the Lord**.
- He was the **Messiah**.
- He was the **Lamb of God** that takes away the **sin** of the **world**.
- Therefore when he was reviled, he did not **revile in return** and when he **suffered**, he did not **threaten** (1 Peter 1:23).
- Philippians 2 - *being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself, by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!*
- John 10 - *The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life – only to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again.*
- Jesus knew **exactly** what was happening... !!
- The Cambridge dictionary definition of this phrase is simply **wrong** when it comes to Jesus.
- Let me remind you – it says: If someone does something or goes somewhere 'like a lamb to the slaughter', they do it without knowing that something bad is going to happen and therefore act

calmly and without fighting against the situation. //

- "Without knowing something bad is going to happen"?
- Oh - Jesus **knew** all right...
- Knew **exactly** what was to happen...
- It was the very reason he left the **comfort of eternity** and **glory** with the **Father** and stepped into our **world!**
- This was his **mission!** His **purpose!**
- This was his **love...!** //
- But he went **calmly** and without **fighting** not because he had **no idea** what was **going on** but because he **trusted** his **Father...**
- 1 Peter 2:23 again - *When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.*
- That's why he was **calm...** and without **fighting...** ? //
- And let's be clear...
- "He was cut off out of the land of the living."
- He was not just **led** to the slaughter.
- He was **slaughtered**.
- And like all the other lambs of the Passover or the sin offerings of Israel, he was slaughtered not for his **own transgressions**.
- He was slaughtered for the transgressions of **his people**.
- We deserved to be **slaughtered** for our sin, but he was slaughtered **instead**.
- This is the **heart** of the **gospel** of God: Jesus the Servant of God was cut **off** out of the land of the living NOT for his **own** transgressions, but **US - for his people!**
- It runs all through **Isaiah 53**.
- The Lord laid on **him** the iniquity of us **all**. //
- And now verse 8 makes it crystal clear: he **died**.
- This is why 1 Corinthians 15:3 sums up the gospel with these simple words: "Christ died for us according to the scriptures."
- "Christ died" – "he was cut off out of the land of the living."
- "For us" – "for the transgression of my people."
- "According to the scriptures" – just as Isaiah 53:8 said, 700 years before. //
- Led like a lamb to the slaughter!

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- Jesus **died**
 - **Innocent...**yes – without sin
 - **Silent...** yes – in love for you and obedience to his Father
 - But not **ignorant** – oh no. He knew **exactly** what he was doing – for the **rescue** – the **salvation** of the world... so that **anyone** who **wants** to can be **forgiven** and **restored** to God!

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- What then is the take home for us this morning?
 - If you are a **believer** here this morning.... It's very clear...

Your sin is gone - In other words, his death was not like any other human death.

The LORD crushed him; NOT because of his own sins, but because of **our** sins.

What God desired was that we **NOT** bear our own sins!

Seven hundred years before Good Friday, God announced why his Son was going to be put to death: to bear the sins of many – to take our place.

Sins are not borne **twice**. //

God does not sentence his **Servant** and **us** to death for the same **sins**.

If **he** bears them, **we** don't.

He **bore** our **sins**.

He rose **again**.

He **intercedes** for us!

And **that** is the **glorious gospel of Jesus**.

(and for when you face **your** suffering – especially that suffering which comes as a direct result of following Jesus... may you be **strengthened** in your **resolve** by Jesus' example – to **endure** it – to stay **true** and **strong** – knowing what Jesus endured in **silence** for **you**!) //

- If you are **NOT** a believer here this morning.... It's very clear...

Your sin is NOT gone – and one day – unless you turn to God or return to him - **you** will bear them **yourself!** //

So – why not turn and believe / this **morning**?

Come into the sheer **joy** of knowing that your sin has been **paid** for you and your **future is secure**.

Say '**sorry**' to God for living your own way without him for way too long

...and he will immediately **welcome** you... **forgive** you... restore... and give you the **free gift of eternal life**...!

Stop holding **out** on him. Stop with your **excuses**.

...come find **life** and **love** today...

For Jesus was **led like a lamb to the slaughter** – for **you**!

Some parts of this sermon, were inspired by a sermon by John Piper