**Sunday 19th July 2020**

**Online Zoom service at 10 am.**

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/564464275?pwd=QzUyNFRBUTZRN2dGemxzWlhtSG5XZz09

Meeting ID: 564 464 275

Password: 158647

Or you can join us by dialling in from your phone on

0203 481 5237 United Kingdom

And then inputting when asked the following:-

Meeting ID: 564 464 275

Password: 158647

**The Bible For Grown Ups!**

**Looking back, looking forward**

*Leviticus 18:6; Isaiah 53:3, 5–6, 8–9, 11; Galatians 4:4–5*

Leviticus 18:6

**6**“‘No one is to approach any close relative to have sexual relations. I am the Lord.

Isaiah 53:3, 5–6, 8–9, 11

He was despised and rejected by mankind,  
    a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.  
Like one from whom people hide their faces  
    he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

**5**But 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.  
**6**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.

8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away.  
    Yet who of his generation protested?  
For he was cut off from the land of the living;  
    for the transgression of my people he was punished.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+53%3A3%2C+5%E2%80%936%2C+8%E2%80%939%2C+11&version=NIV#fen-NIV-18720b)]  
**9**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.

After he has suffered,  
    he will see the light of life and be satisfied;  
by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many,  
    and he will bear their iniquities.

**Galatians 4:4-5**

**4**But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, **5**to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship

**Read Attached Sermon.**

**Questions to help you reflect**

1. Many people criticize the seemingly unsophisticated nature of the Sinai covenant and use it as a reason to abandon faith. In actuality, the Hebrew nation, because of the guidelines in Leviticus, was way ahead of its time.

Which of the following ideas is most surprising or meaningful to you? What do these ideas change about the way you see God? What do they change about your view of the *purpose of the Old Testament*?

* + The covenant represented a moral and civil code that ascribed inherent dignity to every person.
  + The covenant included a sexual ethic that protected the weak and vulnerable.
  + The covenant viewed humanity as the pinnacle of creation because every person is made in God’s image.
  + Women, servants, foreigners, and children all fared better under Hebrew law than did their counterparts in the surrounding nations.

1. Occasionally, a prophet would speak beyond their historical context to a future day when God would do something through a nation for all nations.

Read Isaiah 53:5–11. What is the most meaningful image to you in this passage?

1. Read Galatians 4:4–5. What does it mean that Jesus would redeem those under the law? What is different about the relationship we can have with God versus the relationship an ancient Jew could have with him?

The storyline of the Old Testament should cause us to drop to our knees in gratitude. There’s no need to tidy it up and sand off the rough edges. It’s not a spiritual guidebook. It’s the story of our God, who waded into the mess in order to write a story of redemption. This week, write Galatians 4:4–5 on a notecard and think about what these verses mean for you.

**Prayer**

Heavenly Father,

When we look at the story of your journey to our hearts, it is overwhelming and embracing.

Never have you left us, never have you abandoned us.

Thank you for the history, that has led us to today – that you are a living, loving God active in our word and in our lives.

Let your Holy Spirit be at work among us so that I can grow in faith and maturity as I strive to follow Christ with all I am.

In Jesus name. Amen.