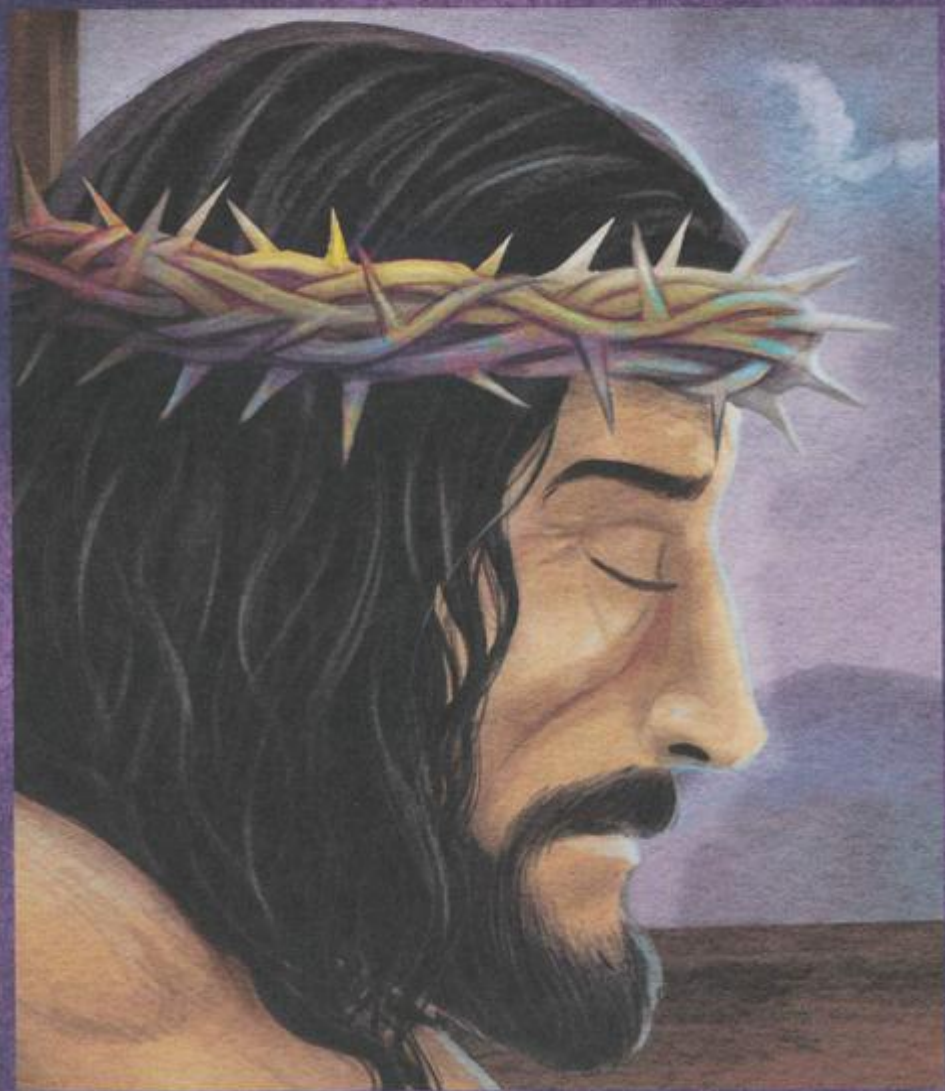


FOR US



ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

22130 Ottawa Rd. Apple Valley, CA. 92308
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1645, Apple Valley, CA 92307
Phone: (760) 247-7392, FAX: (760) 247-9014
Pastor@ascensionav.org; office@ascensionav.org
Website: www.ascensionav.org
Rev. James Harris, Pastor

GOOD FRIDAY 1:00 p.m. April 3, 2026 (Tenebrae Vespers)

Thoughts as we gather

His Dying Breath

Jesus is betrayed into the hands of sinners. He is mocked while wearing a purple robe and a crown of thorns. He must carry His own cross to Golgotha, the Place of a Skull. All of this happens until the last, when “for us He gave His dying breath” (LSB 544:5). It is completed. Salvation has been won for us. It is finished; He has loved us to the end.

The congregation and pastor enter in silence.

Stand

OPENING VERSICLES

- P** O Lord, open my lips,
C and my mouth will declare Your praise.
P Make haste, O God, to deliver me;
C make haste to help me, O Lord.
Praise to You, O Christ, Lamb of our salvation.

Sit

PSALMODY

PSALM 22

Psalm 22; antiphon: v. 1

- ¹My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?
Why are You so far from saving Me, from the words of My
groaning?
²**O My God, I cry by day, but You do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.**
- ³Yet You are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
⁴**In You our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and You delivered them.**

⁵To You they cried and were rescued;
in You they trusted and were not put to shame.

**⁶But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.**

⁷All who see Me mock Me;
they make mouths at Me; they wag their heads;

**⁸“He trusts in the LORD; let Him deliver Him;
let Him rescue Him, for He delights in Him!”**

⁹Yet You are He who took Me from the womb;
You made Me trust You at my mother’s breasts.

**¹⁰On You was I cast from My birth,
and from My mother’s womb You have been My God.**

¹¹Be not far from Me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.

**¹²Many bulls encompass Me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround Me;**

¹³they open wide their mouths at Me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.

**¹⁴I am poured out like water,
and all My bones are out of joint;**

My heart is like wax;
it is melted within My breast;

**¹⁵My strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and My tongue sticks to My jaws;
You lay Me in the dust of death.**

¹⁶For dogs encompass Me;
a company of evildoers encircles Me;
they have pierced My hands and feet—

**¹⁷I can count all My bones—
they stare and gloat over Me;**

¹⁸they divide My garments among them,
and for My clothing they cast lots.

**¹⁹But You, O LORD, do not be far off!
O You My help, come quickly to My aid!**

²⁰Deliver My soul from the sword,
My precious life from the power of the dog!

**²¹Save Me from the mouth of the lion!
You have rescued Me from the horns of the wild oxen!**

²²I will tell of Your name to My brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise You:

- ²³**You who fear the LORD, praise Him!**
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify Him,
and stand in awe of Him, all you offspring of Israel!
- ²⁴For He has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and He has not hidden His face from Him,
but has heard, when He cried to Him.
- ²⁵From You comes My praise in the great congregation;
My vows I will perform before those who fear Him.
- ²⁶**The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;**
those who seek Him shall praise the LORD!
May your hearts live forever!
- ²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before You.
- ²⁸For kingship belongs to the LORD,
and He rules over the nations.
- ²⁹**All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;**
before Him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the One who could not keep Himself alive.
- ³⁰Posterity shall serve Him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;
- ³¹**they shall come and proclaim His righteousness to a people yet**
unborn,
that He has done it.

PSALM 2

Psalm 2

- ¹Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?
- ²**The kings of the earth set themselves,**
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD and against His anointed, saying,
- ³“Let us burst their bonds apart
and cast away their cords from us.”
- ⁴**He who sits in the heavens laughs;**
the Lord holds them in derision.
- ⁵Then He will speak to them in His wrath,
and terrify them in His fury, saying,
- ⁶**“As for Me, I have set My King**
on Zion, My holy hill.”
- ⁷I will tell of the decree:
The LORD said to Me, “You are My Son;

today I have begotten You.
**⁸Ask of Me, and I will make the nations Your heritage,
and the ends of the earth Your possession.**
⁹You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."
**¹⁰Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.**
¹¹Serve the LORD with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.
**¹²Kiss the Son,
lest He be angry, and you perish in the way,
for His wrath is quickly kindled.**
Blessèd are all who take refuge in Him.

PSALM 27

Psalm 27

¹The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
**The LORD is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?**

²When evildoers assail me
to eat up my flesh,
**my adversaries and foes,
it is they who stumble and fall.**

³Though an army encamp against me,
my heart shall not fear;
**though war arise against me,
yet I will be confident.**

⁴One thing have I asked of the LORD,
that will I seek after:
**that I may dwell in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,**
to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD
and to inquire in His temple.

**⁵For He will hide me in His shelter
in the day of trouble;**
He will conceal me under the cover of His tent;
He will lift me high upon a rock.

**⁶And now my head shall be lifted up
above my enemies all around me,**
and I will offer in His tent
sacrifices with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

⁷**Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud;
be gracious to me and answer me!**

⁸You have said, "Seek My face."
My heart says to You,
"Your face, LORD, do I seek."
⁹**Hide not Your face from me.
Turn not Your servant away in anger,
O You who have been my help.
Cast me not off; forsake me not,
O God of my salvation!**

¹⁰**For my father and my mother have forsaken me,
but the LORD will take me in.**

¹¹Teach me Your way, O LORD,
and lead me on a level path
because of my enemies.

¹²**Give me not up to the will of my adversaries;
for false witnesses have risen against me,
and they breathe out violence.**

¹³I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living!

¹⁴**Wait for the LORD;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the LORD!**

PSALM 51

Psalm 51

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

²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!

³**For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.**

⁴Against 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.**

⁵Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

⁶**Behold, You delight in truth in the inward being,
and You teach me wisdom in the secret heart.**

⁷Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

- ⁸**Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that You have broken rejoice.**
- ⁹Hide Your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
- ¹⁰**Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.**
- ¹¹Cast me not away from Your presence,
and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.
- ¹²**Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.**
- ¹³Then I will teach transgressors Your ways,
and sinners will return to You.
- ¹⁴**Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of Your righteousness.**
- ¹⁵O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare Your praise.
- ¹⁶**For You will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;
You will not be pleased with a burnt offering.**
- ¹⁷The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.
- ¹⁸**Do good to Zion in Your good pleasure;
build up the walls of Jerusalem;**
- ¹⁹then will You delight in right sacrifices,
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then bulls will be offered on Your altar.

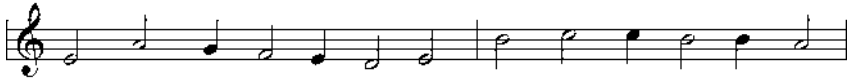
THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

450 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

sts. 1-3



1 O sa - cred Head, now wound-ed, With grief and shame weigh-ed down,
2 How pale Thou art with an - guish, With sore a - buse and scorn!
3 What Thou, my Lord, hast suf - fer-ed Was all for sin - ners' gain;



Now scorn - ful - ly sur-round-ed With thorns, Thine on - ly crown.
How doth Thy face now lan-guish That once was bright as morn!
Mine, mine was the trans-gres-sion, But Thine the dead - ly pain.



O sa - cred Head, what glo - ry, What bliss, till now was Thine!
Grim death, with cru - el rig - or, Hath robbed Thee of Thy life;
I, here I fall, my Sav - ior! 'Tis I de - serve Thy place;



Yet, though de - spised and gor - y, I joy to call Thee mine.
Thus Thou hast lost Thy vig - or, Thy strength, in this sad strife.
Look on me with Thy fa - vor, And grant to me Thy grace.

Text: attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, 1091-1153; German version, Paul Gerhardt, 1607-76; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.

Tune: Hans Leo Hassler, 1564-1612

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P The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. John, the 19th chapter.

¹Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged Him. ²And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head and arrayed Him in a purple robe. ³They came up to Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck Him with their hands. ⁴Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing Him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in Him." ⁵So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!" ⁶When the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him." ⁷The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law He ought to die because He has made Himself the Son of God." ⁸When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. ⁹He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰So Pilate said to Him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release You and authori-

ty to crucify You?” ¹¹Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over Me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered Me over to you has the greater sin.”

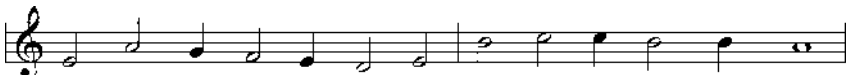
¹²From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this Man, you are not Caesar’s friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.” ¹³So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. ¹⁴Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” ¹⁵They cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” ¹⁶So he delivered Him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus,

A candle is extinguished.

450 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

sts. 4-7



4 My Shep - herd, now re - ceive me; My Guard - ian, own me Thine.
5 What lan - guage shall I bor - row To thank Thee, dear - est Friend,
6 My Sav - ior, be Thou near me When death is at my door;
7 Be Thou my con - so - la - tion, My shield, when I must die;



Great bless - ings Thou didst give me, O Source of gifts di - vine.
For this Thy dy - ing sor - row, Thy pit - y with - out end?
Then let Thy pres - ence cheer me, For - sake me nev - er - more!
Re - mind me of Thy pas - sion When my last hour draws nigh.



Thy lips have of - ten fed me With words of truth and love;
O make me Thine for - ev - er! And should I faint - ing be,
When soul and bod - y lan - guish, O leave me not a - lone,
Mine eyes shall then be - hold Thee, Up - on Thy cross shall dwell,



Thy Spir - it oft hath led me To heav'n - ly joys a - bove.
Lord, let me nev - er, nev - er, Out - live my love for Thee.
But take a - way mine an - guish By vir - tue of Thine own!
My heart by faith en - fold Thee. Who di - eth thus dies well.

Text: attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, 1091-1153; German version, Paul Gerhardt, 1607-76; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.
Tune: Hans Leo Hassler, 1564-1612
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Tune: Public domain

Stand

¹⁶So he delivered Him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus, ¹⁷and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. ¹⁸There they crucified Him, and with Him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. ¹⁹Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” ²⁰Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. ²¹So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This Man said, I am King of the Jews.’” ²²Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

²³When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took His garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also His tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, ²⁴so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfill the Scripture which says,

“They divided My garments among them,
and for My clothing they cast lots.”

So the soldiers did these things, ²⁵but standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” ²⁷Then He said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

²⁸After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.” ²⁹A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to His mouth. ³⁰When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished,” and He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

³¹Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. ³²So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. ³³But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. ³⁴But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. ³⁵He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. ³⁶For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of His bones will be broken.” ³⁷And again another Scripture says, “They will look on Him whom they have pierced.”

³⁸After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away His body. ³⁹Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. ⁴⁰So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. ⁴¹Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and

in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴²So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

A candle is extinguished.

RESPONSORY

P We have an advocate with the Father; Jesus is the propitiation for our sins.

C **He was delivered up to death; He was delivered for the sins of the people.**

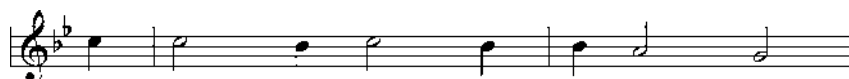
P Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven and whose sin is put away.

C **He was delivered up to death; He was delivered for the sins of the people.**

P We have an advocate with the Father; Jesus is the propitiation for our sins.

C **He was delivered up to death; He was delivered for the sins of the people.**

Sit



1 O love, how deep, how broad, how high,
 2 He sent no an - gel to our race,
 3 For us bap - tized, for us He bore
 4 For us He prayed; for us He taught;
 5 For us by wick - ed - ness be - trayed,



Be - yond all thought and fan - ta - sy,
 Of high - er or of low - er place,
 His ho - ly fast and hun - gered sore;
 For us His dai - ly works He wrought,
 For us, in crown of thorns ar - rayed,



That God, the Son of God, should take
 But wore the robe of hu - man frame,
 For us temp - ta - tion sharp He knew;
 By words and signs and ac - tions thus
 He bore the shame - ful cross and death;



Our mor - tal form for mor - tals' sake!
 And to this world Him - self He came.
 For us the tempt - er o - ver - threw.
 Still seek - ing not Him - self but us.
 For us He gave His dy - ing breath.

Text: attr. Thomas à Kempis, 1380-1471; tr. Benjamin Webb, 1819-85, alt.
 Tune: English, 15th cent.
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A candle is extinguished.

SERMON

A candle is extinguished.

986 Song of Habakkuk

Refrain: I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

¹ O LORD, I have heard the report of You,
 and Your work, O LORD, do I fear.

**² In the midst of the years revive it; in the midst of the years
make it known;
in wrath remember mercy.**

Refrain

³ God came from Teman,
and the Holy One from Mount Paran.

**⁴ His splendor covered the heavens,
and the earth was full of His praise.**

⁵ His brightness was like the light; rays flashed from His hand;
and there He veiled His power.

**⁶ Before Him went pestilence,
and plague followed at His heels.**

⁷ He stood and measured the earth;
He looked and shook the nations;

**⁸ then the eternal mountains were scattered; the everlasting
hills sank low.
His were the everlasting ways.**

Refrain

⁹ You went out for the salvation of Your people,
for the salvation of Your anointed.

**¹⁰ You crushed the head of the house of the wicked,
laying him bare from thigh to neck.**

¹¹ Yet I will rejoice in the LORD;
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

**¹² God, the LORD, is my strength; He makes my feet like the
deer's;
He makes me tread on my high places.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

Text: Habakkuk 3:1-6, 13, 18-19
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A candle is extinguished.

PRAYERS

P Lord, have mercy.
C Lord, have mercy.

P Christ, have mercy.
C Christ, have mercy.

P Lord, have mercy.
C Lord, have mercy.

P The Lord be with you.
C And also with you.

P Let us pray.
Almighty God, graciously behold this Your family for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and delivered into the hands of sinful men to suffer death upon the cross; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C Amen.

P Let us pray.
Almighty and everlasting God, You willed that Your Son should bear for us the pains of the cross and so remove from us the power of the adversary. Help us so to remember and give thanks for our Lord's passion that we may receive forgiveness of sin and redemption from everlasting death; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C Amen.

A candle is extinguished.

C Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

The final candle is extinguished.

The congregation leaves in silence and minimal light.

Acknowledgments

Good Friday, Tenebrae Vespers from Lutheran Service Book

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THE DEATH OF JESUS



Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, "This man is calling Elijah." And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to Him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him." And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up His spirit.

And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

• • •

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

—Matthew 27:45–54, 57–61