

ST LUKE PASSION

The Prophet Isaiah

Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one, in whom I delight;

I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring justice to the nations.

*He will not shout or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street;
a damaged reed he will not break,
a low-burning wick he will not quench;
he will bring justice.*

He will not grow faint or be discouraged till justice is established on earth,

All the world awaits his teaching.

*Thus says the Lord who made the heavens, who spread out the earth with all
that comes from it, who gives its people breath and life:*

"I the Lord have called you in righteousness;

*I take you by the hand and will keep you;
I will give you as a covenant, a light to the nations,
to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, to
release those who sit in darkness.*

*I am the LORD; that is my name;
I give my glory to no other,
nor my praise to man-made idols.*

Behold I tell you what will happen."

The Good Friday narrative according to the Gospel of Luke chapters 22 and 23.

Judas agrees to betray Jesus

Narrator: Jesus has come to Jerusalem with his disciples.

He has been drawing large crowds with his teaching and miraculous signs.
And he has upset the religious authorities.

Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was
approaching, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for
some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people.

Then Satan entered Judas Iscariot.

He was one of the Twelve. And Judas went to the chief priests and the
officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray
Jesus.

Chorus: Traitor!

Narrator: They were delighted, and agreed to give him money.

*Oh foolish heart – life's joys are fleeting; pleasures will not last the day.
The traitor eyes the glistening silver horde, - riches beckon, wealth and
treasure.
Step away, cold heart relent, pull back, reject your evil plan.*

Narrator: Judas consented and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.
The traitor sets his trap and waits his chance.

The Last Supper

Narrator: Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.

Jesus: Peter and John, go and prepare things for us to eat the Passover.

Peter & John: Where do you want us to prepare for it?

Jesus: As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, and say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished. Make ready there."

Narrator: They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

When the hour came, Jesus and his disciples reclined at the table.

Jesus: I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfilment in the kingdom of God.

Narrator: He took the wine cup and gave thanks.

Jesus: Take this cup and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.

Narrator: And he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them.

Jesus: This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

Narrator: In the same way, after the supper he took the cup.

Jesus: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to the man who betrays him!

*Time is short, and little understanding
We savour a meal of everlasting joy.
The first-born son was spared when we first shared it;
The Passover meal will gain a new meaning;
We remember this day with thankfulness.*

*Bread and wine, simple symbols of everlasting joy;
Willing sacrifice to save us.
The first-born son was spared when we first shared this meal,
And now the eternal Son has come to rescue us.*

Narrator: And a dispute arose among them as to which of them was to be considered the greatest.

Jesus: The rulers of this world exercise control over people. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest; the one who leads should be the one who serves. You have stood by me in my trials and I am appointing you to be the leaders of my people in my kingdom. Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.

Peter: Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death.

Jesus: I tell you, Peter, before the cock crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.

*The fisherman is brave when battling storm and wave,
Surely you are one of them;
Yes this man was with them;
You're a Galilean,
But when the crowd is against you, and lonely faith is blown about,
beware the darkness of the night when confidence will flee.
I will go to prison and to death.
Before the cock crows you will deny me.*

Jesus: When I sent you out without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?

Disciples: Nothing.

Jesus: But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one. It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfilment.

Disciples: See, Lord, here are two swords.

Jesus: That's enough

Jesus Prays on the Mount of Olives

Narrator: Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him.

Jesus: Pray that you will not fall into temptation.

Narrator: He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down, and prayed,

Jesus: Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.

Narrator: An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

*Gethsemane cold and dark,
Gethsemane is cold and dark; choices flutter: flee or stay?
It seems there is no other way;
The Father's will demands he face the day.*

Narrator: When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow.

Jesus: Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.

*Lord, teach us how to pray (how we should pray)
in reverence and awe; we need your help.
Forgive our wretched selfish ways; on us your mercy pour.
Give patience as we watch and weep,
and to our minds your grace impart.
Strengthen our wills lest we should fall asleep;
keep truth and trust within our hearts.*

Narrator: While Jesus was speaking a crowd came up. Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him.

Jesus: Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?

*Now is the moment of truth;
Judas sells his soul for a bag of coins.
He has walked with Jesus, he has heard his message,
he has seen the signs,
But chooses fleeting pleasure over everlasting life.*

Disciples: We can see what's going to happen. Lord, should we ...?

Narrator: And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear.

Jesus: No more of this!

Narrator: And Jesus touched the man's ear and healed him.

Jesus: Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns.

*Gethsemane, cold and dark;
Darkness shields the evil purpose here.
Now it seems the Devil's way is clear;
The shadow of the cross is drawing near.*

Narrator: Seizing Jesus, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest.

*How can this be? Gethsemane.
Olive groves where King David wept - they must watch and wait once more as
evil men usurp the kingdom;
The Prince of Peace betrayed by a friend.
Thirty pieces of silver was all it took;
Betrayed with a kiss and led away.*

*How can this be? These priests should understand
for they are men awaiting the Son of David.
Here he is! They need watch and wait no more.
He has shown them his miracles, taught them in parables,
a son of Jacob, from the tribe of Judah.
They should know just who he is, but they do not care;
They will not see; they will not accept him.
Take him away.*

*How can this be? This should not be.
Evil men set to get their way.
He's done no wrong; he's the one who should go free.
Planets, stars and constellations sing praises to their maker as they spin,
but now the universe looks on aghast as its creator, bound, is led away.*

The Trial of Jesus

Narrator: Peter followed them at a distance to the high priest's house. And when someone had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard Peter sat down with them. A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him.

Servant girl: This man was with him.

Peter: Woman, I don't know him.

Narrator: A little later someone else recognised him.

A man: You also are one of them.

Peter: Man, I am not!

Narrator: About an hour later another asserted:

Another man: Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean.

Peter: Man, I don't know what you're talking about!

Narrator: Just as he was speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the cock crows today, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly.

*Now is the moment of truth;
Peter hides in shadows to avoid the crowd.
He has walked with Jesus, heard his message, seen the signs,
But chooses to deny him when the spotlight's on.*

Narrator: The men who were guarding Jesus began mocking and beating him.
They blindfolded him and demanded:

Guards: Tell us: who hit you?

Narrator: And they said many other insulting things to him.

Narrator: At daybreak the council of the elders of the people, both the chief priests and the teachers of the law, met together. And Jesus was led before them.

Priests: If you are the Messiah, tell us.

Jesus: If I tell you, you will not believe me. And if I asked you, you would not answer. But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.

Priests: Are you then the Son of God?

Jesus: You say it as it is.

Priests: Why do we need any more testimony? We have heard it from his own lips.

Narrator: Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate. And they began to accuse him.

Priests: We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Messiah, a king.

Pilate: Are you the king of the Jews?

Jesus: You say it as it is.

Pilate: I find no basis for a charge against this man.

Priests: He stirs up the people all over Judea by his teaching. He started in Galilee and has come all the way here.

Narrator: On hearing this, Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean. When he learned that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform a sign of some sort. He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer.

The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, vehemently accusing him. Then Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked him.

Dressing him in an elegant robe, they sent him back to Pilate. That day Herod and Pilate became friends—before this they had been enemies.

Pilate: You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I, Pilate, have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death. Therefore, I will punish him and then release him.

Crowd: Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!

Narrator: Barabbas had been thrown into prison for an insurrection in the city, and for murder. Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. But they kept shouting,

Crowd: Crucify him! Crucify him!

Narrator: For the third time he spoke to them:

Pilate: Why? What crime has he committed? I have found no grounds for the death penalty. So I will have him punished and then release him.

Crowd: Crucify him! Crucify him!

Narrator: With loud shouts they insistently demanded that he be crucified, and their shouts prevailed. So Pilate decided to grant their demand. He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, the one they asked for, and surrendered Jesus to their will.

Now is the moment of truth;

Pilate bows to the baying of the mob.

*He has talked with Jesus, heard his message, seen the signs,
But chooses murder over justice for an easy life.*

The Crucifixion of Jesus

Narrator: As the soldiers led him away they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wept for him.

Jesus: Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. Weep for the days which are coming when people will wish that the mountains would fall on them, and the hills would cover them.

Narrator: Two other men, both criminals, were led out with him to be executed.

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals - one on his right, the other on his left.

Jesus: Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing.

Narrator: And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. The people stood watching, and the rulers sneered at him.

Crowd: He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One.

Narrator: The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar.

Soldiers: If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.

Narrator: There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him:

Criminal 1: Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!

Narrator: But the other criminal rebuked him.

Criminal 2: Don't you fear God since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus: Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.

*Now is the moment of truth;
A villain saves his future with his final breath.
He now hangs with Jesus, hears his message, sees the signs,
And chooses saving faith over mockery and pride.*

Narrator: It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.

*Should we not weep; injustice reigns –
for innocence and guilt hang side by side?
Are there no tears of anger when
Godless pride and godly love collide?*

Narrator: Then Jesus called out with a loud voice

Jesus: Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

Narrator: When he had said this, he breathed his last.

*The pain is past; the eternal Son hangs lifeless and alone.
The Devil's scheme he does defeat,
His Father's will is now complete. Our liberty is won.*

Narrator: The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God:

Centurion: Surely this was a righteous man.

*Even the corrupt judge can see that he's not guilty.
This man Jesus has done no wrong.
But the crowd is stronger, stronger than the governor Pilate.
Crucify him! Release Barabbas.
Barabbas is a murderer, we're sure he is guilty -
Jesus, it seems, has done no wrong.
But the crowd in the end; they win the day; they get their way.
Crucify him! Release Barabbas.
He is condemned.*

Father, forgive them, they don't know what they're doing.

*He saved others, let him save himself.
If you are king of the Jews then save yourself.
Two criminals and an innocent man hung out to die in the midday sun.
One knows he's guilty but has faith to cry out:*

Jesus remember me when you come in your kingdom.

Today you will be with me in paradise.

*Now it's gone dark in the middle of the day.
Even the soldiers can see they've got it wrong.
But the crowd in the end; they think they win, they get their way.
Crucify him! Release Barabbas.
A murderer walks free.*

Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

Narrator: When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

The Burial of Jesus

Narrator: Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he himself was waiting for the kingdom of God.

Going to Pilate, Joseph asked for Jesus' body. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

*Now is the moment of truth;
Joseph shows his faith and plays his part.
He has trusted Jesus, heard his message, he now heeds the signs,
and chooses humble service over standing on the side.*

Narrator: The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.

The Prophet Isaiah

*My servant will prosper. He will be highly exalted.
Just as many were appalled at him -
marred beyond human likeness,
so he will purify many nations,
and kings will be silenced because of him.*

*For they will see what they were not told;
what they have not heard they will understand.*

*Who believed our message
and to whom was the arm of the LORD revealed?
He grew up before him like a tender shoot,
like a root out of dry ground.
He had nothing to attract us;
we saw no majesty or beauty; nothing appealed.*

*He was despised and rejected,
a man of suffering, familiar with pain.
Like one from whom people hide their face.*

*Surely he took our pain and bore our suffering;
yet we considered him condemned by God,
oppressed, tormented.
He was pierced because we broke God's law,
and he was crushed for our rebellion.
He bore the punishment that brought us peace,
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 guilt of us all.*

*He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth.
He was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.
He was snuffed out by injustice.
Yet no one ever protested.
He was cut off from the land of the living;
punished for the sins of my people.
Assigned a grave with the wicked,
and with the rich in death,
though he had done nothing violent,
nor was there deceit in his mouth.*

*It was the LORD's will to crush him;
his life an offering for sin.
He will prolong his days; he will see his offspring;
the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.
He will see the light of life;
and he will justify many,
for he will bear their every fault.
My righteous servant will receive the highest honour,
for he freely gave his life; numbered with the criminals;
poured out so the guilty might go free.*