

Suffering

Welcome to this time of Quiet Reflection. Take your time reading to yourself (or out loud) some or all of these bible passages, and then pausing for a few minutes after any that you wish to reflect on.

The Taizé chants between readings can be sung in your head as often as you like, or out loud, or listened to from these links, pausing as you wish:

Bless the Lord my soul - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4Svh-9ohg4>

Nothing can trouble - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRsxU_3-fpk

O Lord hear my prayer - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nCy2j07ECM>

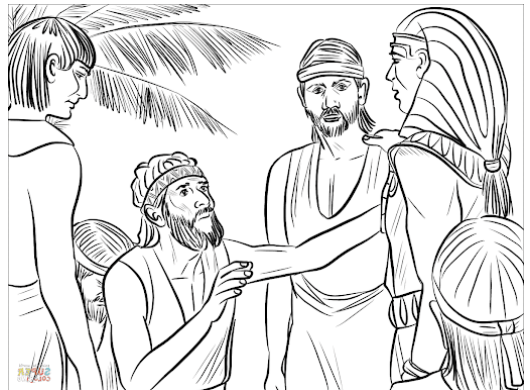
Beginning

*Bless the Lord, my soul,
and bless God's holy name.*

*Bless, the Lord, my soul,
who leads me into life.*

Genesis 44.34

After the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, Judah said to Joseph, 'Now therefore, please let your servant remain as a slave to my lord in place of Benjamin; and let the boy go back with his brothers. For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? I fear to see the suffering that would come upon my father.'



Exodus 3.7

Then the Lord said, 'I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings'

Judges 10.16

So they put away the foreign gods from among them and worshipped the Lord; and he could no longer bear to see Israel suffer.

2 Kings 5.1

Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man and in high favour with his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Aram. The man, though a mighty warrior, suffered from leprosy.

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2 Chronicles 6.23-33

Solomon said to the Lord 'If there is famine in the land, if there is plague, blight, mildew, locust, or caterpillar; if their enemies besiege them in any of the settlements of the lands; whatever suffering, whatever sickness there is; whatever prayer, whatever plea from any individual or from all your people Israel, all knowing their own suffering and their own sorrows so that they stretch out their hands towards this house; may you hear from heaven your dwelling-place, forgive, and render to all whose heart you know, according to all their ways, for only you know the human heart.

Nehemiah 2.17

Then Nehemiah said to them, 'You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burnt. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, so that we may no longer suffer disgrace.'

Nehemiah 9.27

Therefore you gave them into the hands of their enemies, who made them suffer. Then in the time of their suffering they cried out to you and you heard them from heaven, and according to your great mercies you gave them saviours who saved them from the hands of their enemies.

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Psalm 22

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?
O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;
and by night, but find no rest.
Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
In you our ancestors trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
To you they cried, and were saved;
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

Psalm 38

I am utterly bowed down and prostrate;
all day long I go around mourning.
I am utterly spent and crushed;
I groan because of the tumult of my heart.

O Lord, all my longing is known to you;
my sighing is not hidden from you.
My heart throbs, my strength fails me;
as for the light of my eyes—it also has gone
from me.

But it is for you, O Lord, that I wait;
it is you, O Lord my God, who will answer.

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Psalm 88

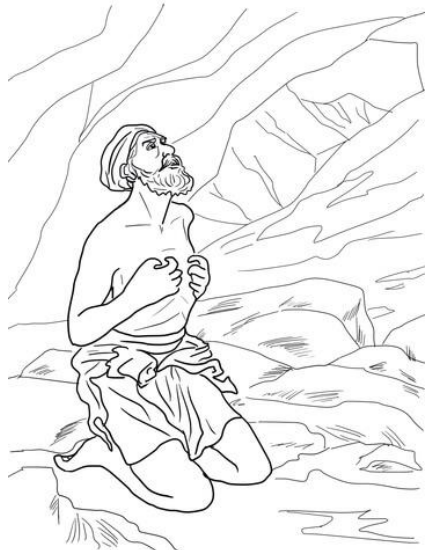
O Lord, why do you cast me off?
Why do you hide your face from me?
For I am ready to fall,
and my pain is ever with me.

Do not forsake me, O Lord;
O my God, do not be far from me;
make haste to help me,
O Lord, my salvation.
But I, O Lord, cry out to you;
in the morning my prayer comes before you.
O Lord, why do you cast me off?
Why do you hide your face from me?

Psalm 116

I love the Lord, because he has heard
my voice and my supplications.
Because he inclined his ear to me,
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.
The snares of death encompassed me;
the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;
I suffered distress and anguish.
Then I called on the name of the LORD:
'O Lord, I pray, save my life!'
Gracious is the Lord, and righteous;
our God is merciful.
The Lord protects the simple;
when I was brought low, he saved me.
Return, O my soul, to your rest,
for the Lord has dealt bountifully with
you.

For you have delivered my soul from
death,
my eyes from tears,
my feet from stumbling.



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Proverbs 19.23

The fear of the Lord is life indeed;
filled with it one rests secure
and suffers no harm.

Isaiah 52.13-53.8

He was despised and rejected by others;
a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity;
and as one from whom others hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him of no account.

Surely he has borne our infirmities
and carried our diseases;
yet we accounted him stricken,
struck down by God, and afflicted.
But he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his bruises we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have all turned to our own way,
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

By a perversion of justice he was taken away.
Who could have imagined his future?
For he was cut off from the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people.

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Zechariah 10.2

The dreamers tell false dreams,
and give empty consolation.
Therefore the people wander like sheep;
they suffer for lack of a shepherd.

Manasseh 1.7

For you are the Lord Most High,
of great compassion, long-suffering, and very merciful,
and you relent at human suffering.
O Lord, according to your great goodness
you have promised repentance and forgiveness
to those who have sinned against you,
and in the multitude of your mercies
you have appointed repentance for sinners,
so that they may be saved.

*Nothing can trouble,
nothing can frighten.
Those who seek God
shall never go wanting.
Nothing can trouble,
nothing can frighten.
God alone fills us.*

Matthew 16.21

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

Luke 13

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, 'Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.'

Luke 22

When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, 'I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, 'Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.'



Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.'

Luke 24

They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not

necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?’ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

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Romans 5

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

Romans 8.18

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.

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Romans 12

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.

Hebrews 2.18

Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

James 5.13

Are any among you suffering? They should pray.

1 Peter 5.9

Be steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering.

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Passage to be read slowly – imagine being with Jesus....

The Garden of Gethsemane

From Matthew's gospel.

When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Then Jesus said to them, 'You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written,

"I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."

But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.'

Peter said to him, 'Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you.'

Jesus said to him, 'Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.'

Peter said to him, 'Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.'

And so said all the disciples.

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.'

He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated.

Then he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.'

And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed,

'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.'



Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping.

And he said to Peter, 'So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.'

Again he went away for the second time and prayed, 'My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.'

Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words.

Then he came to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.'

Time for Silent Prayer

O Lord hear my prayer.

O Lord hear my prayer.

When I call, answer me.

O Lord hear my prayer.

O Lord hear my prayer.

Come and listen to me.

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Ending Prayer

Heavenly Father,
give us patient faith in times of darkness,
and strength to meet any troubles in the days to come.
May we may ever draw closer to you,
and find strength within the shelter of your love.
Amen.