

## Reflection

Hymn #80 “Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley”

(Darken)

### Section 3: *Mark 15:1-15*

Very early in the morning the leading priests, the elders, and the teachers of religious law—the entire high council—met to discuss their next step. They bound Jesus, led him away, and took him to Pilate, the Roman governor.

Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?”  
Jesus replied, “You have said it.”

Then the leading priests kept accusing him of many crimes,

and Pilate asked him, “Aren’t you going to answer them? What about all these charges they are bringing against you?”

But Jesus said nothing, much to Pilate’s surprise.

Now it was the governor’s custom each year during the Passover celebration to release one prisoner—anyone the people requested.

One of the prisoners at that time was Barabbas, a revolutionary who had committed murder in an uprising.

The crowd went to Pilate and asked him to release a prisoner as usual.

“Would you like me to release to you this ‘King of the Jews’?” Pilate asked.

(For he realized by now that the leading priests had arrested Jesus out of envy.)

But at this point the leading priests stirred up the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus.

Pilate asked them, “Then what should I do with this man you call the king of the Jews?”

They shouted back, “Crucify him!”

“Why?” Pilate demanded. “What crime has he committed?”  
But the mob roared even louder, “Crucify him!”

So to pacify the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.

## Reflection

Hymn #82 “O Lamb of God Most Holy”

(Darken)

### Section 4: *Mark 15:16-20*

The soldiers took Jesus into the courtyard of the governor’s headquarters (called the Praetorium) and called out the entire regiment.

They dressed him in a purple robe, and they wove thorn branches into a crown and put it on his head.

Then they saluted him and taunted, “Hail! King of the Jews!”

And they struck him on the head with a reed stick, spit on him, and dropped to their knees in mock worship.

## Section 1: *Matthew 26:47-56*

And even as Jesus said this, Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived with a crowd of men armed with swords and clubs. They had been sent by the leading priests and elders of the people.

The traitor, Judas, had given them a prearranged signal: “You will know which one to arrest when I greet him with a kiss.”

So Judas came straight to Jesus. “Greetings, Rabbi!” he exclaimed and gave him the kiss.

Jesus said, “My friend, go ahead and do what you have come for.”

Then the others grabbed Jesus and arrested him.

But one of the men with Jesus pulled out his sword and struck the high priest’s slave, slashing off his ear.

“Put away your sword,” Jesus told him. “Those who use the sword will die by the sword.

Don’t you realize that I could ask my Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and he would send them instantly?

But if I did, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that describe what must happen now?”

Then Jesus said to the crowd, “Am I some dangerous revolutionary, that you come with swords and clubs to arrest me? Why didn’t you arrest me in the Temple? I was there teaching every day.

But this is all happening to fulfill the words of the prophets as recorded in the Scriptures.” At that point, all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Jesus before the Council

## Reflection

Hymn #97 “Go To Dark Gethsemane”

(Darken)

## Section 2: *Matthew 26:57-68*

Then the people who had arrested Jesus led him to the home of Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of religious law and the elders had gathered.

Meanwhile, Peter followed him at a distance and came to the high priest’s courtyard. He went in and sat with the guards and waited to see how it would all end.

Inside, the leading priests and the entire high council were trying to find witnesses who would lie about Jesus, so they could put him to death.

But even though they found many who agreed to give false witness, they could not use anyone’s testimony. Finally, two men came forward who declared, “This man said, ‘I am able to destroy the Temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’”

Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Well, aren’t you going to answer these charges? What do you have to say for yourself?” But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest said to him, “I demand in the name of the living God—tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”

Jesus replied, “You have said it. And in the future you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God’s right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Then the high priest tore his clothing to show his horror and said, “Blasphemy! Why do we need other witnesses? You have all heard his blasphemy.

What is your verdict?”

“Guilty!” they shouted. “He deserves to die!”

Then they began to spit in Jesus’ face and beat him with their fists. And some slapped him,

jeering, “Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who hit you that time?”

When they were finally tired of mocking him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him again. Then they led him away to be crucified.

## Reflection

Hymn #98 “O Sacred Head Now Wounded”

(Darken)

## Section 5: *Luke 23:26-43*

As they led Jesus away, a man named Simon, who was from Cyrene, happened to be coming in from the countryside. The soldiers seized him and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

A large crowd trailed behind, including many grief-stricken women.

But Jesus turned and said to them, “Daughters of Jerusalem, don’t weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

For the days are coming when they will say, ‘Fortunate indeed are the women who are childless, the wombs that have not borne a child and the breasts that have never nursed.’

People will beg the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and plead with the hills, ‘Bury us.’

For if these things are done when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

Two others, both criminals, were led out to be executed with him. When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left.

Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.” And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice.

The crowd watched and the leaders scoffed. “He saved others,” they said, “let him save himself if he is really God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.”

The soldiers mocked him, too, by offering him a drink of sour wine. They called out to him, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!”

A sign was fastened above him with these words: “This is the King of the Jews.”

One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, “So you’re the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you’re at it!”

But the other criminal protested, “Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die?

We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.”

Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.”

And Jesus replied, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

## Reflection

Hymn #102 “Were You There?”

(Darken)

Section 6: *Mark 15:33-39*

At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock.

Then at three o'clock Jesus called out with a loud voice, "*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*" which means "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

Some of the bystanders misunderstood and thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah.

One of them ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, holding it up to him on a reed stick so he could drink. "Wait!" he said. "Let's see whether Elijah comes to take him down!"

Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed his last.

And the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

When the Roman officer who stood facing him saw how he had died, he exclaimed, "This man truly was the Son of God!"

Reflection

Hymn #100/101 "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

(Darken)

Exit in silence.

Black  
Friday

March 29

2024