

## Readings and Commentary Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion Year B

**Introduction by Glenn CJ Byer, MA SLD:** This day is named after the Gospel readings that we will hear. The account of the entry into Jerusalem and the Palms the people waved is put against the account of the passion of Christ, his death for us told in excruciating detail. What are we to make of this contrast? How are we to apply this to our own lives? The reading from Isaiah with the responsorial psalm and the famous Philippians hymn that is our second reading interpret these Gospels for us. God sees us as all the actors in the passion. We are the ones who wave the palms, the ones who drive the nails and the spear into the body of Christ, we are Mary and Peter and the apostles; but above all we are to be Christ for others, we are to lay down our life for the love of neighbor. And because of this call to accept the life of Christ with all its joy and pain, the glory and the suffering, we can expect to share in the lifting up of the Philippians hymn, sharing in the Lordship of Christ to the glory of the Father forever.

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### **Gospel at the Procession with Palms** John 12:12-16

#### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to John**

When the great crowd that had come to the feast heard  
that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

they took palm branches and went out to meet him, and cried out:

"Hosanna!

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel."

Jesus found an ass and sat upon it, as is written:

*Fear no more, O daughter Zion;*

*see, your king comes, seated upon an ass's colt.*

His disciples did not understand this at first,

but when Jesus had been glorified

they remembered that these things were written about him

and that they had done this for him.

#### **The Gospel of the Lord.**

**Commentary Mark 11:1-10, 1-10 by Tom Conry:** Mark 11:1-10 / alternate John 12:12-16 All of the gospels come out of what anthropologists call "high context" societies. The social situation is much more homogenous than in (for example) modern America. There are relatively few types of jobs, there is not a lot of variation in what people do and think, and in most situations everyone in a given community knows what everyone else is doing. In the literature of these kinds of societies, there is a lot taken for granted. There is typically no attempt to explain the nuances of insider literature to outsiders

because there are so few of them.

This is important in today's gospel as Jesus enters Jerusalem near the Mount of Olives (Mk 11:1 the traditional place for the final battle for the liberation of Jerusalem, cf. Zech 14:2-4) to bring his campaign of national renewal into its inevitable confrontation with the alliance of the temple elite and the Roman occupying forces. The cry that rings out from the crowd is an instantly recognizable quotation from Psalm 118, part of the Hallel, the account of Israel's liberation that is sung during the Passover festival. This is significant, even decisive, for a number of reasons that would be clear to first and second century audiences even if they are obscure to us now.

First of all, the Passover is the commemoration of Israel's liberation, and its celebration marked a politically charged time in occupied Jerusalem. In fact, both Mark and John recount this as a factor in the timing of when the temple elite would attempt to arrest Jesus: not during the festival of Passover, they worried, or there would be a riot (Mk 14:2; Jn 11:50, 18:14). Second, the song cycle that is attached to this festival of deliverance recounts the Exodus story and the entry into the land across the Jordan River. We know from the story of John the Baptizer and from other sources that the Jordan remained a potent symbol of popular identity. Third, the palms were the symbol of Israeli popular identity (cf. 2 Macc 10:7) and resistance. Finally, the entry of Jesus into the capital city would inevitably bring to mind the stories of other leaders who had made analogous entrances; Alexander on Bucephalus (the donkey is a kind of sarcastic non-violent rejoinder to the conqueror's war horse), Simon Maccabeus (1 Macc 13:51), and the Sicarius leader Menahem who entered into Jerusalem "in the state of a king." The cries naming Jesus as the "Son of David" were hardly the type to soothe the nerves of an already nervous Herodian guard, whose power depended on its ability to control the masses.

All of this rich context would be uppermost in the mind of those who heard this story. We need to remember that these stories were ordinarily performed and sung rather than read silently by individuals. Any audience would have understood this story not as a paean of praise prefiguring the resurrection, but rather as a threat to the temple establishment and the elite collaborators with the Roman occupation.

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### **First Reading Isaiah 50:4-7**

#### **A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah**

The Lord GOD has given me  
a well-trained tongue,

that I might know how to speak to the weary  
a word that will rouse them.  
Morning after morning  
he opens my ear that I may hear;  
and I have not rebelled,  
have not turned back.  
I gave my back to those who beat me,  
my cheeks to those who plucked my beard;  
my face I did not shield  
from buffets and spitting.

The Lord GOD is my help,  
therefore I am not disgraced;  
I have set my face like flint,  
knowing that I shall not be put to shame.

### **The word of the Lord.**

**Commentary Isaiah 50:4-7 by Deacon Owen Cummings:** The church proclaims the story of the Lord's passion and death today, and we shall hear it again in St. John's account on Good Friday. We enter Holy Week with mixed emotions: sadness, because we know the cross is coming; joyful confidence, because we know that resurrection is coming too. This first reading from the prophet Isaiah is the harbinger of these mixed emotions. The "Servant of Yahweh" is speaking. He speaks first of his obediential posture. Morning after morning his ear is open to the word of God, a word that he will in turn speak to the weary to give them hope. He speaks secondly of his sufferings, from which he did not recoil: he gives his back and his cheeks to be beaten, he does not shield his face from buffets and spitting. However, despite all this, he is not finally done down because "The Lord God is my help." And so his joyful confidence emerges. The Lord Jesus has opened his ear morning after morning to the word of the Father, giving from this word hope to the weary. He has not recoiled from the sufferings we shall hear of shortly. As we begin this week with sad hearts, we know that "The Lord God is (Christ's) help," and slow, joyful confidence begins also to grow.

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**Responsorial Psalm** Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 18-19, 23-24  
**℟(2a)** My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

All who see me scoff at me;  
they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads:

"He relied on the LORD; let him deliver him,  
let him rescue him, if he loves him."

Indeed, many dogs surround me,  
a pack of evildoers closes in upon me;  
They have pierced my hands and my feet;  
I can count all my bones.

✠ My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

They divide my garments among them,  
and for my vesture they cast lots.  
But you, O LORD, be not far from me;  
O my help, hasten to aid me.

I will proclaim your name to my brethren;  
in the midst of the assembly I will praise you:  
"You who fear the LORD, praise him;  
all you descendants of Jacob, give glory to him;  
revere him, all you descendants of Israel!"

**Commentary Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 18-19, 23-24 by Tom Conry:** Psalm 22 is a psalm in two disparate parts. It includes both a graphic song of suffering and, beginning at verse 21b, a powerful hymn of thanksgiving and re-commitment to universal justice. It is noteworthy that, although the psalm clearly adopts the persona of a particular person who is suffering a life-threatening and painful illness, the singer appeals for deliverance on the basis of the whole community (Psa 22:4-5). Verses 22 and 25 seem to indicate a liturgical setting. Very early in the Jesus movement, Psalm 22 was identified with the suffering of Jesus. It is a recurring motif in the gospels of Mark, Matthew, and John. Still, there is no indication in the text itself that Psalm 22 deals with the idea of a messiah, nor does it ever claim to predict the future. Rather, the song is a profound recognition of the human need to make meaning out of pain, to transcend the absurdity of suffering. These themes do recur over and over in the New Testament, both in the stories of Jesus and in the story of the churches who try to follow his way.

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**Second Reading Philippians 2:6-11**

**A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians**

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
something to be grasped.  
Rather, he emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
coming in human likeness;  
and found human in appearance,  
he humbled himself,  
becoming obedient to the point of death,  
even death on a cross.  
Because of this, God greatly exalted him  
and bestowed on him the name  
which is above every name,  
that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue confess that  
Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

### **The word of the Lord.**

**Commentary Philippians 2:6-11 by John Paul Heil:** Main Theme: God exalted Jesus to universal LORDSHIP by his HUMBLE DEATH on the cross.

In hymnic fashion Paul presents us with the striking humility of Jesus as the preeminent model for our own humility. Jesus, though in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be exploited or grasped and held on to without relinquishing. Rather, he demonstrated an impressive, intensive threefold humility: (1) Though in the form of God, he "emptied" himself and took the form of a slave by being born in human likeness. (2) He further humbled himself by undergoing death as a human being. (3) But he suffered not an ordinary death--he was put to death on a cross. He thus endured the most humiliating form of public execution known to the world in which he lived.

But from the depths of his intense and total threefold humility God highly exalted Jesus with a threefold universal homage: (1) homage from those in heaven from which he humbled himself by becoming human; (2) homage from those on earth on which he humbled himself as a slave; and (3) homage from those under the earth, the realm of the dead to which he descended by his humiliating death. Through his totally selfless humility Jesus was exalted by God as our Lord--the Lord over all. The example of Jesus assures us that, when we humble ourselves by regarding others and their interests as more important than ourselves and our interests (2:3), we too will be exalted by God.

### **Gospel Acclamation** Philippians 2:8-9

Christ became obedient to the point of death,  
even death on a cross.

Because of this, God greatly exalted him  
and bestowed on him the name which is above every name.

### **Gospel Mark** 14:1 - 15:47

#### **The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark**

The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread  
were to take place in two days' time.

So the chief priests and the scribes were seeking a way  
to arrest him by treachery and put him to death.

They said, "Not during the festival,  
for fear that there may be a riot among the people."

When he was in Bethany reclining at table  
in the house of Simon the leper,  
a woman came with an alabaster jar of perfumed oil,  
costly genuine spikenard.

She broke the alabaster jar and poured it on his head.

There were some who were indignant.

"Why has there been this waste of perfumed oil?

It could have been sold for more than three hundred days' wages  
and the money given to the poor."

They were infuriated with her.

Jesus said, "Let her alone.

Why do you make trouble for her?

She has done a good thing for me.

The poor you will always have with you,  
and whenever you wish you can do good to them,  
but you will not always have me.

She has done what she could.

She has anticipated anointing my body for burial.

Amen, I say to you,  
wherever the gospel is proclaimed to the whole world,  
what she has done will be told in memory of her."

Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve,  
went off to the chief priests to hand him over to them.

When they heard him they were pleased and promised to pay him money.  
Then he looked for an opportunity to hand him over.

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread,  
when they sacrificed the Passover lamb,  
his disciples said to him,

"Where do you want us to go  
and prepare for you to eat the Passover?"

He sent two of his disciples and said to them,

"Go into the city and a man will meet you,  
carrying a jar of water.

Follow him.

Wherever he enters, say to the master of the house,  
'The Teacher says, "Where is my guest room  
where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"'

Then he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready.

Make the preparations for us there."

The disciples then went off, entered the city,  
and found it just as he had told them;  
and they prepared the Passover.

When it was evening, he came with the Twelve.

And as they reclined at table and were eating, Jesus said,

"Amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me,  
one who is eating with me."

They began to be distressed and to say to him, one by one,

"Surely it is not I?"

He said to them,

"One of the Twelve, the one who dips with me into the dish.

For the Son of Man indeed goes, as it is written of him,

but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed.

It would be better for that man if he had never been born."

While they were eating,

he took bread, said the blessing,  
broke it, and gave it to them, and said,

"Take it; this is my body."

Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them,  
and they all drank from it.

He said to them,

"This is my blood of the covenant,  
which will be shed for many.

Amen, I say to you,

I shall not drink again the fruit of the vine

until the day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."  
Then, after singing a hymn,  
they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Then Jesus said to them,  
"All of you will have your faith shaken, for it is written:  
*I will strike the shepherd,  
and the sheep will be dispersed.'*

But after I have been raised up,  
I shall go before you to Galilee."

Peter said to him,  
"Even though all should have their faith shaken,  
mine will not be."

Then Jesus said to him,  
"Amen, I say to you,  
this very night before the cock crows twice  
you will deny me three times."

But he vehemently replied,  
"Even though I should have to die with you,  
I will not deny you."

And they all spoke similarly.

Then they came to a place named Gethsemane,  
and he said to his disciples,  
"Sit here while I pray."

He took with him Peter, James, and John,  
and began to be troubled and distressed.

Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death.  
Remain here and keep watch."

He advanced a little and fell to the ground and prayed  
that if it were possible the hour might pass by him;  
he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible to you.

Take this cup away from me,  
but not what I will but what you will."

When he returned he found them asleep.

He said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep?

Could you not keep watch for one hour?

Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test.

The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

Withdrawing again, he prayed, saying the same thing.

Then he returned once more and found them asleep,

for they could not keep their eyes open  
and did not know what to answer him.

He returned a third time and said to them,

"Are you still sleeping and taking your rest?  
It is enough. The hour has come.  
Behold, the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners.  
Get up, let us go.  
See, my betrayer is at hand."

Then, while he was still speaking,  
Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived,  
accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs  
who had come from the chief priests,  
the scribes, and the elders.  
His betrayer had arranged a signal with them, saying,  
"The man I shall kiss is the one;  
arrest him and lead him away securely."  
He came and immediately went over to him and said,  
"Rabbi." And he kissed him.  
At this they laid hands on him and arrested him.  
One of the bystanders drew his sword,  
struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear.  
Jesus said to them in reply,  
"Have you come out as against a robber,  
with swords and clubs, to seize me?  
Day after day I was with you teaching in the temple area,  
yet you did not arrest me;  
but that the Scriptures may be fulfilled."  
And they all left him and fled.  
Now a young man followed him  
wearing nothing but a linen cloth about his body.  
They seized him,  
but he left the cloth behind and ran off naked.

They led Jesus away to the high priest,  
and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together.  
Peter followed him at a distance into the high priest's courtyard  
and was seated with the guards, warming himself at the fire.  
The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin  
kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus  
in order to put him to death, but they found none.  
Many gave false witness against him,  
but their testimony did not agree.  
Some took the stand and testified falsely against him,  
alleging, "We heard him say,  
'I will destroy this temple made with hands  
and within three days I will build another

not made with hands."  
Even so their testimony did not agree.  
The high priest rose before the assembly and questioned Jesus,  
saying, "Have you no answer?  
What are these men testifying against you?"  
But he was silent and answered nothing.  
Again the high priest asked him and said to him,  
"Are you the Christ, the son of the Blessed One?"  
Then Jesus answered, "I am;  
and 'you will see the Son of Man  
seated at the right hand of the Power  
and coming with the clouds of heaven.'"  
At that the high priest tore his garments and said,  
"What further need have we of witnesses?  
You have heard the blasphemy.  
What do you think?"  
They all condemned him as deserving to die.  
Some began to spit on him.  
They blindfolded him and struck him and said to him, "Prophecy!"  
And the guards greeted him with blows.

While Peter was below in the courtyard,  
one of the high priest's maids came along.  
Seeing Peter warming himself,  
she looked intently at him and said,  
"You too were with the Nazarene, Jesus."  
But he denied it saying,  
"I neither know nor understand what you are talking about."  
So he went out into the outer court.  
Then the cock crowed.  
The maid saw him and began again to say to the bystanders,  
"This man is one of them."  
Once again he denied it.  
A little later the bystanders said to Peter once more,  
"Surely you are one of them; for you too are a Galilean."  
He began to curse and to swear,  
"I do not know this man about whom you are talking."  
And immediately a cock crowed a second time.  
Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had said to him,  
"Before the cock crows twice you will deny me three times."  
He broke down and wept.

As soon as morning came,  
the chief priests with the elders and the scribes,

that is, the whole Sanhedrin held a council.  
They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.  
Pilate questioned him,  
"Are you the king of the Jews?"  
He said to him in reply, "You say so."  
The chief priests accused him of many things.  
Again Pilate questioned him,  
"Have you no answer?"  
See how many things they accuse you of."  
Jesus gave him no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now on the occasion of the feast he used to release to them  
one prisoner whom they requested.  
A man called Barabbas was then in prison  
along with the rebels who had committed murder in a rebellion.  
The crowd came forward and began to ask him  
to do for them as he was accustomed.  
Pilate answered,  
"Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?"  
For he knew that it was out of envy  
that the chief priests had handed him over.  
But the chief priests stirred up the crowd  
to have him release Barabbas for them instead.  
Pilate again said to them in reply,  
"Then what do you want me to do  
with the man you call the king of the Jews?"  
They shouted again, "Crucify him."  
Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?"  
They only shouted the louder, "Crucify him."  
So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd,  
released Barabbas to them and, after he had Jesus scourged,  
handed him over to be crucified.

The soldiers led him away inside the palace,  
that is, the praetorium, and assembled the whole cohort.  
They clothed him in purple and,  
weaving a crown of thorns, placed it on him.  
They began to salute him with, "Hail, King of the Jews!"  
and kept striking his head with a reed and spitting upon him.  
They knelt before him in homage.  
And when they had mocked him,  
they stripped him of the purple cloak,  
dressed him in his own clothes,  
and led him out to crucify him.

They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon,  
a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country,  
the father of Alexander and Rufus,  
to carry his cross.

They brought him to the place of Golgotha  
—which is translated Place of the Skull—.

They gave him wine drugged with myrrh,  
but he did not take it.

Then they crucified him and divided his garments  
by casting lots for them to see what each should take.

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him.

The inscription of the charge against him read,  
"The King of the Jews."

With him they crucified two revolutionaries,  
one on his right and one on his left.

Those passing by reviled him,  
shaking their heads and saying,  
"Aha! You who would destroy the temple  
and rebuild it in three days,  
save yourself by coming down from the cross."

Likewise the chief priests, with the scribes,  
mocked him among themselves and said,  
"He saved others; he cannot save himself.

Let the Christ, the King of Israel,  
come down now from the cross  
that we may see and believe."

Those who were crucified with him also kept abusing him.

At noon darkness came over the whole land  
until three in the afternoon.

And at three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice,  
*"Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?"*  
which is translated,

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Some of the bystanders who heard it said,  
"Look, he is calling Elijah."

One of them ran, soaked a sponge with wine, put it on a reed  
and gave it to him to drink saying,

"Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to take him down."

Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

Here all kneel and pause for a short time.

The veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom.  
When the centurion who stood facing him  
saw how he breathed his last he said,  
"Truly this man was the Son of God!"  
There were also women looking on from a distance.  
Among them were Mary Magdalene,  
Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joses, and Salome.  
These women had followed him when he was in Galilee  
and ministered to him.  
There were also many other women  
who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

When it was already evening,  
since it was the day of preparation,  
the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea,  
a distinguished member of the council,  
who was himself awaiting the kingdom of God,  
came and courageously went to Pilate  
and asked for the body of Jesus.  
Pilate was amazed that he was already dead.  
He summoned the centurion  
and asked him if Jesus had already died.  
And when he learned of it from the centurion,  
he gave the body to Joseph.  
Having bought a linen cloth, he took him down,  
wrapped him in the linen cloth,  
and laid him in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock.  
Then he rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb.  
Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses  
watched where he was laid.

### **The Gospel of the Lord.**

**Commentary Mark 14:1 - 15:47 by John Paul Heil:** Main Theme: The DEATH of Jesus demonstrates his OBEDIENCE as the true SON OF GOD. Mark's passion narrative provides us with many models for action: The anonymous woman who anointed Jesus for burial serves as a model for us to accept the necessity of the death of Jesus as the definitive act of God's salvation. Judas's betrayal of Jesus warns us to remain in close communal fellowship with Jesus as we follow his way of suffering and death. Jesus's last Passover meal invites us to celebrate the Eucharist as our sacramental participation in the saving death and resurrection of Jesus and anticipation of sharing with Jesus in the final banquet of God's kingdom. The disciples' desertion and Peter's denial of Jesus warn us against a presumptuous

overconfidence in our ability to remain faithfully united with Jesus as we follow his way of suffering and death. In his Gethsamane prayer Jesus exemplifies and empowers our authentic praying to God by humbly submitting our own wills to God's salvific will.

The way that Jesus died as the obedient Son of God by "breathing" his last, that is, by "expiring," literally breathing out the Spirit, enables the promise of John the Baptist at the beginning of Mark's Gospel to be fulfilled: "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (1:8). The Spirit that issues from the obedient death of Jesus is the Spirit that empowers us, as the Christian community, to be the new temple of God's presence "not made with hands" but established on the death and resurrection of Jesus.

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### **Gospel (longer form)**

*The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**The priest and/or readers proclaim the Passion according to St. Mark. Speakers in Passion Narrative are represented by these abbreviations:**

**N. – Narrator**

**V. – Voice**

**† – Christ**

**C. – Crowd**

**N.** The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were to take place in two days' time. So the chief priests and the scribes were seeking a way to arrest him by treachery and put him to death. They said,

**C. "Not during the festival, for fear that there may be a riot among the people."**

**N.** When he was in Bethany reclining at table in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of perfumed oil, costly genuine spikenard. She broke the alabaster jar and poured it on his head. There were some who were indignant.

**C. "Why has there been this waste of perfumed oil? It could have been sold for more than three hundred days' wages and the money given to the poor."**

**N.** They were infuriated with her. Jesus said,

**†.** "Let her alone. Why do you make trouble for her? She has done a good thing for me. The poor you will always have with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them, but you will not always have me. She has done what she could. She has anticipated anointing my body for burial.

Amen, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed to the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

**N.** Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went off to the chief priests to hand him over to them. When they heard him they were pleased and promised to pay him money. Then he looked for an opportunity to hand him over.

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him,

**V.** "Where do you want us to go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?"

**N.** He sent two of his disciples and said to them,

**†.** "Go into the city and a man will meet you, carrying a jar of water. Follow him. Wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"'" Then he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready. Make the preparations for us there."

**N.** The disciples then went off, entered the city, and found it just as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover.

When it was evening, he came with the Twelve. And as they reclined at table and were eating, Jesus said,

**†.** "Amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me."

**N.** They began to be distressed and to say to him, one by one,

**V.** "Surely it is not I?"

**N.** He said to them,

**†.** "One of the Twelve, the one who dips with me into the dish. For the Son of Man indeed goes, as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that man if he had never been born."

**N.** While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, and said,

**†.** "Take it; this is my body."

**N.** Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them,

**†.** "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many. Amen, I say to you, I shall not drink again the fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

**N.** Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Then Jesus said to them,

**†.** "All of you will have your faith shaken, for it is written:

*I will strike the shepherd,  
and the sheep will be dispersed.*

But after I have been raised up, I shall go before you to Galilee."

N. Peter said to him,

V. "Even though all should have their faith shaken, mine will not be."

N. Then Jesus said to him,

†. "Amen, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows twice you will deny me three times."

N. But he vehemently replied,

V. "Even though I should have to die with you, I will not deny you."

N. And they all spoke similarly.

Then they came to a place named Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples,

†. "Sit here while I pray."

N. He took with him Peter, James, and John, and began to be troubled and distressed. Then he said to them,

†. "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch."

N. He advanced a little and fell to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass by him;

he said,

†. "Abba, Father, all things are possible to you. Take this cup away from me, but not what I will but what you will."

N. When he returned he found them asleep. He said to Peter,

†. "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

N. Withdrawing again, he prayed, saying the same thing. Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open and did not know what to answer him. He returned a third time and said to them,

†. "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough. The hour has come. Behold, the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners. Get up, let us go. See, my betrayer is at hand."

N. Then, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs who had come from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. His betrayer had arranged a signal with them, saying,

V. "The man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him and lead him away securely."

N. He came and immediately went over to him and said,

V. "Rabbi."

N. And he kissed him. At this they laid hands on him and arrested him. One of the bystanders drew his sword, struck the high priest's servant, and cut

off his ear. Jesus said to them in reply,

†. "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs, to seize me? Day after day I was with you teaching in the temple area, yet you did not arrest me; but that the Scriptures may be fulfilled."

N. And they all left him and fled. Now a young man followed him wearing nothing but a linen cloth about his body. They seized him, but he left the cloth behind and ran off naked.

They led Jesus away to the high priest, and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. Peter followed him at a distance into the high priest's courtyard and was seated with the guards, warming himself at the fire. The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they found none. Many gave false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. Some took the stand and testified falsely against him, alleging,

**C. "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands and within three days I will build another not made with hands.'"**

N. Even so their testimony did not agree. The high priest rose before the assembly and questioned Jesus, saying,

V. "Have you no answer? What are these men testifying against you?"

N. But he was silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him and said to him,

V. "Are you the Christ, the son of the Blessed One?"

N. Then Jesus answered,

†. "I am;  
and 'you will see the Son of Man  
seated at the right hand of the Power  
and coming with the clouds of heaven.'"

N. At that the high priest tore his garments and said,

V. "What further need have we of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?"

N. They all condemned him as deserving to die. Some began to spit on him. They blindfolded him and struck him and said to him,

**C. "Prophesy!"**

N. And the guards greeted him with blows.

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the high priest's maids came along. Seeing Peter warming himself, she looked intently at him and said,

**C. "You too were with the Nazarene, Jesus."**

N. But he denied it saying,

V. "I neither know nor understand what you are talking about."

N. So he went out into the outer court. Then the cock crowed. The maid saw him and began again to say to the bystanders,

**C. "This man is one of them."**

N. Once again he denied it. A little later the bystanders said to Peter once more,

**C. "Surely you are one of them; for you too are a Galilean."**

N. He began to curse and to swear,

V. "I do not know this man about whom you are talking."

N. And immediately a cock crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had said to him, "Before the cock crows twice you will deny me three times." He broke down and wept.

As soon as morning came, the chief priests with the elders and the scribes, that is, the whole Sanhedrin, held a council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him,

V. "Are you the king of the Jews?"

N. He said to him in reply,

†. "You say so."

N. The chief priests accused him of many things. Again Pilate questioned him,

V. "Have you no answer? See how many things they accuse you of."

N. Jesus gave him no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now on the occasion of the feast he used to release to them one prisoner whom they requested. A man called Barabbas was then in prison along with the rebels who had committed murder in a rebellion. The crowd came forward and began to ask him to do for them as he was accustomed. Pilate answered,

V. "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?"

N. For he knew that it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed him over. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate again said to them in reply,

V. "Then what do you want me to do with the man you call the king of the Jews?"

N. They shouted again,

**C. "Crucify him."**

N. Pilate said to them,

V. "Why? What evil has he done?"

N. They only shouted the louder,

**C. "Crucify him."**

N. So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas to them and, after he had Jesus scourged, handed him over to be crucified.

The soldiers led him away inside the palace, that is, the praetorium, and assembled the whole cohort. They clothed him in purple and, weaving a crown of thorns, placed it on him. They began to salute him with,

**C. "Hail, King of the Jews!"**

**N.** and kept striking his head with a reed and spitting upon him. They knelt before him in homage. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him out to crucify him.

They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.

They brought him to the place of Golgotha — which is translated Place of the Skull —. They gave him wine drugged with myrrh, but he did not take it. Then they crucified him and divided his garments by casting lots for them to see what each should take. It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." With him they crucified two revolutionaries, one on his right and one on his left. Those passing by reviled him, shaking their heads and saying,

**C.** "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself by coming down from the cross."

**N.** Likewise the chief priests, with the scribes, mocked him among themselves and said,

**C.** "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe."

**N.** Those who were crucified with him also kept abusing him.

At noon darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And at three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

**†.** "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?"

**N.** which is translated,

**†.** "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

**N.** Some of the bystanders who heard it said,

**C.** "Look, he is calling Elijah."

**N.** One of them ran, soaked a sponge with wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying,

**V.** "Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to take him down."

**N.** Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

*Here all kneel and pause for a short time.*

**N.** The veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. When the centurion who stood facing him saw how he breathed his last he said,

**V.** "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

**N.** There were also women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joses, and

Salome. These women had followed him when he was in Galilee and ministered to him. There were also many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

When it was already evening, since it was the day of preparation, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a distinguished member of the council, who was himself awaiting the kingdom of God, came and courageously went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate was amazed that he was already dead. He summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus had already died. And when he learned of it from the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. Having bought a linen cloth, he took him down, wrapped him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses watched where he was laid.

### **The Gospel of the Lord.**

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