

Way of the Cross – The Cross a transforming Meeting place
Scripture Reading for Each Stop

1. Isaiah 53:2-12

He was always close to the Lord. He grew up like a young plant, like a root growing in dry ground. There was nothing special or impressive about the way he looked, nothing we could see that would cause us to like him. People made fun of him, and even his friends left him. He was a man who suffered a lot of pain and sickness. We treated him like someone of no importance, like someone people will not even look at but turn away from in disgust.

The fact is, it was our suffering he took on himself; he bore our pain. But we thought that God was punishing him, that God was beating him for something he did. But he was being punished for what we did. He was crushed because of our guilt. He took the punishment we deserved, and this brought us peace. We were healed because of his pain. We had all wandered away like sheep. We had gone our own way. And yet the Lord put all our guilt on him.

He was treated badly, but he never protested. He said nothing, like a lamb being led away to be killed. He was like a sheep that makes no sound as its wool is being cut off. He never opened his mouth to defend himself. He was taken away by force and judged unfairly. The people of his time did not even notice that he was killed. But he was put to death for the sins of his people. He had done no wrong to anyone. He had never even told a lie. But he was buried among the wicked. His tomb was with the rich.

But the Lord was pleased with this humble servant who suffered such pain. Even after giving himself as an offering for sin, he will see his descendants and enjoy a long life. He will succeed in doing what the Lord wanted. After his suffering he will see the light, and he will be satisfied with what he experienced.

The Lord says, “My servant, who always does what is right, will make his people right with me; he will take away their sins. For this reason, I will treat him as one of my great people. I will give him the rewards of one who wins in battle, and he will share them with his powerful ones. I will do this because he gave his life for the people. He was considered a criminal, but the truth is, he carried away the sins of many. Now he will stand before me and speak for those who have sinned.”

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2. John 16:16-24

“In a little while you will not see me anymore, and then a little while later you will see me.”

Some of his disciples asked among themselves, “What does this mean? He tells us that in a little while we will not see him, and then a little while later we will see him; and he also says, ‘It is because I am going to the Father.’ What does this ‘a little while’ mean? We don't know what he is talking about!”

Jesus knew that they wanted to question him, so he said to them, “I said, ‘In a little while you will not see me, and then a little while later you will see me.’ Is this what you are asking about among yourselves? I am telling you the truth: you will cry and weep, but the world will be glad; you will be sad, but your sadness will turn into gladness. When a woman is about to give birth, she is sad because her hour of suffering has come; but when the baby is born, she forgets her suffering, because she is happy that a baby has been born into the world. That is how it is with you: now you are sad, but I will see you again, and your hearts will be filled with gladness, the kind of gladness that no one can take away from you.

“When that day comes, you will not ask me for anything. I am telling you the truth: the Father will give you whatever you ask of him in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your happiness may be complete.

3. Luke 23:39-43

One of the criminals hanging there hurled insults at him: “Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

The other one, however, rebuked him, saying, “Don't you fear God? You received the same sentence he did. Ours, however, is only right, because we are getting what we deserve for what we did; but he has done no wrong.” And he said to Jesus, “Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King!”

Jesus said to him, “I promise you that today you will be in Paradise with me.”

4. Mark 15:16-33

The soldiers took Jesus inside to the courtyard of the governor's palace and called together the rest of the company. They put a purple robe on Jesus, made a crown out of thorny branches, and put it on his head. Then they began to salute him: "Long live the King of the Jews!" They beat him over the head with a stick, spat on him, fell on their knees, and bowed down to him. When they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

On the way they met a man named Simon, who was coming into the city from the country, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross. They took Jesus to a place called Golgotha, which means "The Place of the Skull." There they tried to give him wine mixed with a drug called myrrh, but Jesus would not drink it. Then they crucified him and divided his clothes among themselves, throwing dice to see who would get which piece of clothing. It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The notice of the accusation against him said: "The King of the Jews." They also crucified two bandits with Jesus, one on his right and the other on his left.

People passing by shook their heads and hurled insults at Jesus: "Aha! You were going to tear down the Temple and build it back up in three days! Now come down from the cross and save yourself!"

In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the Law made fun of Jesus, saying to one another, "He saved others, but he cannot save himself! Let us see the Messiah, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him!"

And the two who were crucified with Jesus insulted him also.

At noon the whole country was covered with darkness, which lasted for three hours.

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5. Matthew 27:46-54

At about three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud shout, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?"

Some of the people standing there heard him and said, "He is calling for Elijah!" 48 One of them ran up at once, took a sponge, soaked it in cheap wine, put it on the end of a stick, and tried to make him drink it. But the others said, "Wait, let us see if Elijah is coming to save him!"

Jesus again gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

Then the curtain hanging in the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split apart, the graves broke open, and many of God's people who had died were raised to life. They left the graves, and after Jesus rose from death, they went into the Holy City, where many people saw them.

When the army officer and the soldiers with him who were watching Jesus saw the earthquake and everything else that happened, they were terrified and said, "He really was the Son of God!"

6. Matthew 27:57-62

When evening had come, a rich man from Arimathaea, named Joseph, who himself was also Jesus' disciple came. This man went to Pilate, and asked for Jesus' body. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given up. Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut out in the rock, and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed. Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb. Now on the next day, which was the day after the Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went together to Pilate.