

## The Passion According to St. Matthew

Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, that He said to His disciples, *“You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”* Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him. But they said, **“Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.”** And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, **“Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor.”** But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, *“Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”* Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, **“What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?”** And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him. Now on the first day of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus,

saying to Him, **“Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?”** And He said, *“Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, ‘My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.’”* So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover. When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. Now as they were eating, He said, *“Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.”* And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, **“Lord, is it I?”** He answered and said, *“He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.”* Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, **“Rabbi, is it I?”** He said to him, *“You have said it.”* And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, *“Take, eat; this is My body.”* Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, *“Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.”* And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, *“All of you will be made to stumble 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 have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.”* Peter answered and said to Him, **“Even if all are made to stumble**

**because of You, I will never be made to stumble.”** Jesus said to him, *“Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.”* Peter said to Him, **“Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!”** And so said all the disciples. Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, *“Sit here while I go and pray over there.”* And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, *“My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.”* He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, *“O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”* Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, *“What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”* Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, *“O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.”* And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then He came to His disciples and said to them, *“Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”* And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, **“Whomever I kiss,**

**He is the One; seize Him.**” Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, **“Greetings, Rabbi!”** and kissed Him. But Jesus said to him, *“Friend, why have you come?”* Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. And suddenly, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. But Jesus said to him, *“Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?”* In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, *“Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.”* Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled. And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest’s courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end. Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward and said, **“This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.’”** And the high priest arose and said to Him, **“Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?”** But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to

Him, **“I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!”** Jesus said to him, *“It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.”* Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, **“He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! What do you think?”** They answered and said, **“He is deserving of death.”** Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, saying, **“Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?”** Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, **“You also were with Jesus of Galilee.”** But he denied it before them all, saying, **“I do not know what you are saying.”** And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, **“This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth.”** But again he denied with an oath, **“I do not know the Man!”** And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, **“Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you.”** Then he began to curse and swear, saying, **“I do not know the Man!”** Immediately a rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, *“Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.”* So he went out and wept bitterly. When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful

and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, **“I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”** And they said, **“What is that to us? You see to it!”** Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, **“It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood.”** And they consulted together and bought with them the potter’s field, to bury strangers in. Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, **“And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, and gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord directed me.”** Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, **“Are You the King of the Jews?”** So Jesus said to him, *“It is as you say.”* And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then Pilate said to Him, **“Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?”** But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly. Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, **“Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?”** For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, **“Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered**

**many things today in a dream because of Him.**” But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, **“Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”** They said, **“Barabbas!”** Pilate said to them, **“What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?”** They all said to him, **“Let Him be crucified!”** Then the governor said, **“Why, what evil has He done?”** But they cried out all the more, saying, **“Let Him be crucified!”** When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, **“I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it.”** And all the people answered and said, **“His blood be on us and on our children.”** Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, **“Hail, King of the Jews!”** Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified. Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He

would not drink. Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: “They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.” Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: This is Jesus the King of the Jews. Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left. And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, **“You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”** Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, **“He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”** Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing. Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, *“Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?”* that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, **“This Man is calling for Elijah!”** Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. The rest said, **“Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him.”** And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

*KneelPause for silence and meditation. The large bell is tolled 33 times for the years of Our Lord's humiliation.*

Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, **“Truly this was the Son of God!”** And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons. Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb. On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, **“Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise.’ Therefore command**

**that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first."** Pilate said to them, **"You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how."** So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.