

PASSION WEEK

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

 king's chapel

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ABOUT THIS DEVOTIONAL

Passion Week chronicles Jesus' last week on earth. It is an important week in the life of the Church because during this week, we witness the events that led Jesus to the cross and his glorious resurrection. This year instead of looking at each day of Jesus' last week our devotional will follow the stations of the cross which took place on Good Friday. Each day is broken down in two sections.

READ

First, spend time reading scripture. The scripture readings for each day will correspond with the station. Reading the accounts from each Gospel writer gives us a greater picture of what happened on that day. The gospel accounts work together to tell us Jesus's story.

REFLECT

After reading the scripture passages the reflection section will provide some insight on the text. From historical context to implications for our lives, this section is to help us digest the scripture that we've read.

We hope that this devotional will help with your personal study of Scriptures, deepen your understanding of the gospel, and enflame your affections for our matchless triune God.

Note: Monday, Thursday, and Friday are 2 pages.

PASSION WEEK SERVICES

PRAYER & MEDITATION SERVICE

March 28th
7:30pm
King's Chapel

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

March 30th
7:30pm
King's Chapel

EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE

April 1st
10:00am
RCS High School

Visit: www.kingschapel.net/passionweek

STATION I: JESUS PRAYS ALONE IN GETHSEMANE

Matthew 26:36 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."

REFLECT

Have you ever noticed that Jesus' suffering began in a garden? Often when we think about Christ's passion, images of rods and whips, a crown of thorns, large nails, and a wooden cross enter our minds. And that is certainly true. But we can easily forget the agony Jesus experienced in otherwise quiet, serene Gethsemane. There is a striking juxtaposition between the garden which is usually a place of peace and respite with Jesus' spiritual, emotional, and even physical turbulence.

It is reminiscent of another garden. This one, perfect and lavish and cool. A paradise, untouched by pest or disease. That is, until sin invaded God's creation, thereby subjecting it to the curse of futility, corruption, and death (Genesis 3:16-19, Romans 8:20). But the consequence didn't just fall on the impersonal created order. It fell on rebellious humanity, the shining jewel of God's creation. Only man and woman were created in the image and likeness of God. Adam and Eve's rebellion was nothing short of betrayal!

And what a betrayal! One of cosmic proportions!

Fast forward to Gethsemane. God has not forgotten the original garden. In fact, God is announcing in another garden that Jesus is the Redeemer of lost paradise. But God will pay a great cost - the life of his beloved Son. Jesus will procure the restoration of creation as well as reconciliation with humanity - God's betrayer - through his suffering. The suffering we should have experienced under the thumb of God's just wrath is being pressed on Jesus instead. That weight has begun to fall on Jesus in Gethsemane. But the good news is that the the loneliness, pain, stress, and blood sweating all evidence God's incredible plan of redemption being fulfilled in Jesus Christ. And that great, sovereign plan of God, formulated before the creation of the world, and engraved by God's Spirit in Scripture, secures our undeserved salvation.

READ



Matt. 26:36-46

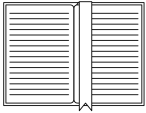
Mark 14:32-42

Luke 22:39-46

STATION II: JESUS IS ARRESTED

Mark 14:43–46 And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard." And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" And he kissed him. [46] And they laid hands on him and seized him.

READ



Matt. 26:47-56
Mark 14:43-50
Luke 22:47-54
John 18:3-12

REFLECT

Three times Jesus arose from his place of private prayer to jostle his disciples awake, and to encourage them to remain alert and prayerful. But their flesh proved weak, and they inevitably drifted back to sleep "for sorrow." Their sorrow was so great that sleep was their only way to cope and comfort. It gave them an escape from the painful reality of their Lord's inevitable departure (John 16:5-6).

We are told in this passage that in this passage that Jesus was also "greatly distressed", troubled, and "very sorrowful, even to death." Yet he handles his sorrow differently than his disciples. He shows us what the new man, the better man, the whole man, the perfect man does in the midst of great suffering. He clings to the Father for help and hope. Secured in that hope, Jesus rose to accomplish the Father's will (Hebrews 12:2), even though it meant his arrest, wrongful conviction, and murder at the hand of sinners.

You read that right. It was the Father's will that Jesus be arrested and eventually crucified. And he reminded his disciples and the hired battalion that this was all part of God's plan. Even though evil appears to have won the day, and the power of darkness has cast a gloomy shadow, God's plan and purposes will not be thwarted.

Jesus said:

"Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?" At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. (Matthew 26:53–55)."

Let these words comfort to you. Jesus willingly suffered in your place to purchase your soul from the vicious grip of sin and death. His arrest is the fulfillment of Scripture that was necessary to secure your freedom.

STATIONS III – V

STATION III: JESUS TRIED BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN

STATION IV: JESUS TRIED BEFORE HEROD AND PILATE

STATION V: PILATE CONDEMNS JESUS

REFLECT

If there is one thing we can learn from Jesus' trials before the Sanhedrin, Herod, and Pilate it's that human religion and government have no need for Jesus. The same is true today. Jesus doesn't fit neatly within the confines of religion or the systems and structures of government. But Jesus is not merely odd man out or incompatible. He is entirely unwelcome. His rule and reign is a detriment to the pyramids of power that both religion and politics wield over citizens of the world.

This is a common theme in Scripture. The first community that that defies God's reign is the first family, Adam and Eve. Continue throughout the pages of Scripture and you'll read about a corrupt society that God destroyed by flood waters. A few chapters later, you discover a city named Babel whose residents engineered a tower for purpose of glorifying humanity and dethroning God.

Psalm 2 echoes this refrain:

"Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, 'Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us'" (Psalm 2:1-3).

There are countless other examples from Scripture that point to the humanity's rejection of their Creator. But perhaps there is none more alarming and incriminating than the descriptions of Jesus' trials in all four Gospels.

The very Word of God has come in the flesh. The one who created the world and all that is in it, both seen and unseen, has entered into the landscape that he constructed out of nothing. The clearest manifestation of God's glory had visited them. He announced and authenticated his identity and mission to them through many signs and wonders. And he urged them to repent and believe. But still, they condemned their rightful Messiah and the rightful King to death. Ironically, the one who had come to condemn no one, but to offer them salvation (John 3:17).

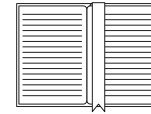
And we are no different. Go ahead and read yourself into the story. We're all there. In fact, here's the last paragraph restated with "we" rather than "they".

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All of us - the religious and irreligious, the political and nonpolitical - are culpable for our rebellion. We are a single, multigenerational society of old world order of God haters. And if not for God's grace through Jesus Christ, we are in danger of God's righteous fury. Jesus willingly suffered the consequences not only of your sin, but the sin of the entire world. Add to that, he was the most sinned against person in history. And no one came to his defense. And he didn't defend himself either, or hurl insults in return for the lies and slander heaped on him. Instead he "continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly" so that his sure plan would accomplish its intended results: "by his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:22-24).

By the way, Psalm 2 ends with this statement of God's grace to rebels. "Blessed are all who take refuge in him." Take refuge in Jesus!

READ



Station III

Matt. 26:57-68

Mark 14:53-65

Luke 22:66-71

John 18:13-14

John 18:19-24

Station IV

Matt. 27:1-2

Mark 15:1-5

Luke 23:1-22

John 18:28-19:15

Station V

Matt. 27:24-26

Mark 15:6-15

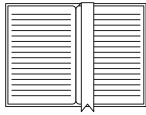
Luke 23:23-25

John 19:16

STATION VI: THE CROWN OF THORNS AND SCOURGING

John 19:1–3 Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. They came up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and struck him with their hands.

READ



Matt. 27:24-31

Mark 15:15-20

John 19:1-3

REFLECT

It's hard to miss the thick irony in these passage. The soldiers drug the battered, beaten Jesus into the governor's palace. And they covered him in a finely threaded, regal robe. And a crown of sharp thorns they pressed into his brow. And they paraded him before an entire battalion of Roman soldiers (that's 600 men) who struck him, spit on him, and knelt in mock reverence to the King of the Jews. They couldn't see that beneath the robe and crown and shackles, true, other-worldly royalty was present.

This scene follows Pilate's final conversation with Jesus. A poignant moment when Jesus breaks his silence to disclose his identity one last time before his crucifixion.

Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" (John 19:36-38)

Notice again the irony that John employs. Pilate, the one who is responsible for uncovering the truth in Jesus' criminal case is blind to the fact that the God of all truth standing in front of him (John 14:6).

Despite what Pilate, the soldiers, and the Jewish people thought, Jesus is their King. He's the King that reigns above all earthy kings. All corners of the earth, and every inch of the solar system, the galaxy, and all universes are under his jurisdiction. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, made up of people of all tribes, nations, and languages which no earthy kingdom can stand against (Daniel 2:44, 7:14, 7:27).

And yet, this great and mighty king intentionally humbled himself by coming to earth in human form. More than that, he was born in obscurity and even surrendered himself into the hands of corrupt human government to be brutally beaten and die. And it was all a part of his awesome plan.

Isaiah prophesied this about Jesus.

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:3–5)

Astonishingly the Conquering King accomplished and eternally secured our redemption by taking the path of the Suffering Servant. He underwent the humiliating and bloody scourging for your sin, and the sins of the whole world, so that you would experience healing. The mighty King set aside his divine prerogatives in heaven and travelled to earth in order to bring us back with him to heaven (Philippians 2:6-11). Citizens of Jesus' kingdom bow their knees in holy reverence to the King, and experience eternal life, peace, love, comfort, joy that proceed from his gracious hand.

The truth is we all had a hand in Christ's suffering. No one is blameless. No will stand in the day of judgement when King Jesus will return to take vengeance on the guilty. No will will dodge the consuming fire of his wrath. Except for those who trust in Christ's sufficient sacrifice for sins. That's the gospel. The good news is that the King who had every right to executive his just judgement on sinful humanity instead offers grace. The God of all grace extends his mercy to all who will accept it, even to those who beat and crucified him (Luke 23:34, Mark 15:39).

STATIONS VII – VIII

STATION VII: JESUS CARRIES THE CROSS

STATION VIII: SIMON HELPS CARRY THE CROSS

REFLECT

After Jesus was scourged he was led outside the city of Jerusalem to the hill called Calvary (or Golgotha, “the place of the skull”). John is the only Gospel writer that mentions Jesus carrying his own cross. Likely, the scourging made it impossible for him to carry the load alone. So Roman soldiers grab a bystander named Simon to bear the cross in order to keep Jesus alive long enough for his crucifixion.

Why do the writers specific reference Simon’s name? We don’t know for sure. It might be that he was a later convert to Christianity or that he was the source of this part of the account (remember, the disciples had abandoned Jesus). Either way, details like this should remind us of the reality of Jesus’ suffering. It’s easy to remember the story of Christ’s passion, and file it along with other stories (fact or fiction) we’ve heard but never seen with our own eyes.

Jesus was a real person. His suffering is a real, verifiable, historical fact. His trek down the Via Dolorosa (“Way of Suffering”) to the cross was viewed by “a great multitude” of people, even passers-by like Simon. And it likely remained in their memory for the rest of their lives. It’s also recorded in Scripture so that we, generations later (and for generations to follow us) will not forget what occurred on that day. Sin put the innocent, God-man on the cross.

READ



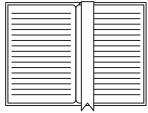
Station VII
John 19:17

Station VIII
Matt. 27:32
Mark 15:21
Luke 23:26

STATION IX: JESUS SPEAKS TO THE WOMAN

Luke 23:27–31 And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. But turning to them Jesus said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

READ



Luke 23:27-31

REFLECT

Among those who followed him was a band of women who openly wept for Jesus. Their cries were loud enough for Jesus to hear, and he speaks directly to them. He tells them that weeping is the appropriate response, but not on account of his suffering. They should mourn God’s impending judgement. Jerusalem, the city set on a hill to be a light to the nations, will soon crumble. God’s judgement toward rebellious Israel will be so severe, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem will plead to the mountains and hills to put them out of their misery (Hosea 10:8).

This is the consequence of Israel’s rejection of their Messiah and King. Because of Israel’s their willful unbelief, God used Rome in 70 A.D. as an instrument of his judgement. They brutally attacked the city and destroyed the Temple. Jerusalem became a city in ruin. The city that was built to reflect the glory of God became a warning to the world that God detests sin.

It’s possible to believe the reality of Christ’s sufferings and death, and even to feel sorrowful, without believing the gospel. We can easily miss the point of Jesus’ suffering in the first place.

He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed (1 Peter 2:22–24).

Scripture teaches us that Jesus is unlike any other innocent person unjustly executed. He is the only perfect man. And while his death came at the hands of wicked men, he is God - the Author of life - who willingly laid down his life to atone for sin (John 10:18). His suffering and death purchased the salvation of all who repent of sin and believe in him and his message.

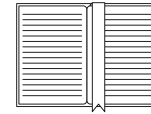
STATION X: JESUS NAILED TO THE CROSS

John 19:16–18 So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.

REFLECT

READ

When they had marched Jesus through the streets of Jerusalem and up the hill to Golgotha, they crucified him. After nailing his hands and feet to the wooden cross, the Roman soldiers lifted Jesus' body for all to see. Like all those who had been crucified before him, Jesus became a bleeding illustration of the brutality of Roman tyranny.



Matt. 27:33-44

Mark 15:22-32

Luke 23:32-33

John 19:18-22

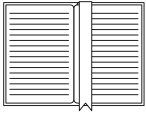
Crucifixion was a form of capital punishment devised by the Romans. It was designed to defer death long enough so as to inflict as much pain as possible in the final moments of the criminal's life. And it also elicited terror in those those looking on.

But crucifixion also had a spiritual dimension to the people of Israel. Anyone who was put to death for a capital offense and was hung on a tree was cursed by God (Deuteronomy 21:22-23). And the implications of the curse extended beyond the person. The entire nation was effected. It defiled the land that God had given his people to enjoy and to steward for his glory.

The apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 3:13 that Jesus intentionally became the cursed man on the tree.

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"—so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Jesus laid down his life and received the hangman's curse, so that we would receive the undeserved benefit of God's grace. He took on the curse for the entire world, even the Gentiles, and unleashed the Holy Spirit into the world. So that all who believe in him will be forgiven of sin and become sons and daughters of God. Once enemies now beloved children.

STATION XI: JESUS FORGIVES HIS ENEMIES**STATION XII: THE CRIMINALS SPEAK TO JESUS****READ****Station XI**
Luke 23:34-38**Station XII**
Matt. 27:44
Mark 15:32
Lue 23:39-43**REFLECT STATION XI**

Does that astound you? Jesus took upon himself the death penalty of our sins, so that we who are enemies should be welcomed into God's family. And he didn't bite his lip or retract his original plan as the nails pierced his hands and feet. In those most excruciating moments of his crucifixion, Jesus publicly interceded for his enemies. It's as if he could not bear to hold back his grace and love at the moment humanity needed it most. "And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Although it appeared to many that Jesus and his message had been utterly defeated, some recognized his death for what it really was - the spectacular triumph over sin (Colossians 2:13-15).

REFLECT STATION XII

A criminal who hung on his own cross saw his King and Redeemer beside him. And humbly, he cried out for mercy. Jesus heard his cry and forgave his sin.

The criminal suffered for final hours or minutes of his life, but know this. When all breath left his lungs, he passed from death to life (John 5:24). He entered into eternal the paradise where there is no pain or sorrow or crying.

The same grace is extended to us as well. Jesus promises that all who believe will not experience the torments of hell, but will enjoy the paradise of God's eternal loving presence (Psalm 16:11). That's our hope. The gospel is our hope that needs regular rehearsing, and which comforts us amidst the trials of this life (Romans 8:18-39).

STATIONS XIII – XIV

STATION XIII: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

STATION: XIV: JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

REFLECT

These passages teach us that the culmination of God's masterful plan of redemption was accomplished with Jesus' death on the cross. Jesus himself announced this fact with his victorious cry, "It is finished" (John 19:30). In a single event Jesus took on the sins of the world, endured the wrath and punishment of God for sin, and was accepted by God as the all sufficient atoning sacrifice for sin. There is nothing further for Jesus to perform. No further suffering needed. His death marks the death of sin, Satan's defeat, and death's demise.

This means for the Christian - those who faithfully trust in Jesus' atoning sacrifice on Calvary - is that sin no longer has power over us. Sinners saved by God's grace are people who have been remade, reborn, recreated by no effort of their own. No longer enslaved to sin, we have the abiding Holy Spirit who empowers to live in accordance with our new identities as God's children and instruments of this righteousness (Romans 6).

It also means that although Satan tempts us, God has given us the supernatural ability to resist him (James 4:7). For a little while longer, Satan "prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." But, again, we can "resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world" (1 Peter 5:8-9). Satan remains dangerous but because of Christ's atoning death, we have been given great weapons of defense and offense for battle until our King returns to toss our adversary into the great lake of fire for eternity (Ephesians 6:10-20, Revelation 20:10).

Jesus' death and subsequent resurrection also guarantees that death itself (the consequence of sin) has been defeated. In his letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul cites Old Testament passages that promised a day when death will be destroyed. The he celebrates the fact that God's promise (and the millennia long hope of God's people) has finally been realized in Jesus Christ.

"Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:54-57).

Why did Jesus do all of this? Why did he go to such great lengths to sacrifice himself in the place of the undeserving? In a word, love.

In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation (wrath absorbing sacrifice) for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

Scripture is replete with reminders, like the one above, that the purpose behind God's mission to reconcile the world to himself is love. It pleases God to extend his love to sinners and redeem them from their deserved destruction. The Triune God decided long ago, in eternity past, that he would bestow grace on rebellious sinners, including you and me.

And most incredibly, we who have experienced salvation, and the life-giving power of the Spirit Spirit are called to proclaim this to the world. We have been invited to participate in the on-going mission, to tell and show people the love of God. And we do it in the strength of the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead. May we never forget that God's love is as real as Christ's atoning death and as certain as his bodily resurrection on Easter Sunday!

READ

**Station XIII****Matt. 27:45-56****Mark 15:33-41****Luke 23:44-49****John 19:28-37****Station XIV****Matt. 27:57-61****Mark 15:42-47****Luke 23:50-56****John 19:38-42**