

## **Devotional Readings for the Season of Lent, 2024**

**Day 45, Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>**

**HOLY WEEK – GOOD FRIDAY**

### **Centering**

Welcome to Daily Devotional Readings for the Season of Lent.

Today is Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Today is also marks the observance of Good Friday, the day was crucified.

May the peace of Christ be with you.

Thank you so much for joining us for a moment of centering and prayer as we hear God's Word read from the Old Testament, the Psalms, and the New Testament every day of Lent.

Take just a few moments to gather and focus yourself.

Stop what ever else you have going on.

Close the door, turn off the TV, mute the cell phone...make these next few moments about you and the Lord.

Take 3 deep breaths, each time, holding the inhale for 5 seconds, then slowly exhaling.

When you are centered, begin to read.

### **Psalm 22 (International Standard Version)**

1 My God! My God!

Why have you abandoned me?

Why are you so far from delivering me—  
from my groaning words?

2 My God, I cry out to you throughout the day,  
but you do not answer;  
and throughout the night,  
but I have no rest.

3 You are holy,  
enthroned on the praises of Israel.

4 Our ancestors trusted in you;  
they trusted and you delivered them.

5 They cried out to you and escaped;  
they trusted in you and were not put to shame.

6 But as for me,  
I am only a worm and not a man,  
scorned by mankind and despised by people.

7 Everyone who sees me mocks me;  
they gape at me with open mouths  
and shake their heads at me.

8 They say, "Commit yourself to the Lord;  
perhaps the Lord will deliver him,  
perhaps he will cause him to escape,  
since he delights in him."

9 Yet, you are the one who took me from the womb,  
and kept me safe on my mother's breasts.

10 I was dependent on you from birth;  
from my mother's womb you have been my God.

11 Do not be so distant from me,  
for trouble is at hand;  
indeed, there is no deliverer.

12 Many bulls have surrounded me;  
the vicious bulls of Bashan have encircled me.

13 Their mouths are opened wide toward me,  
like roaring and attacking lions.

14 I am poured out like water;  
all my bones are out of joint.  
My heart is like wax, melting within me.

15 My strength is dried up like broken pottery;  
my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth,  
and you have brought me down to the dust of death.

16 For dogs have surrounded me;  
a gang of those who practice evil has encircled me.  
They gouged my hands and my feet.

17 I can count all my bones.  
They look at me;  
they stare at me.

18 They divide my clothing among themselves;  
they cast lots for my clothing!

19 But as for you, Lord, do not be far away from me;  
My Strength, come quickly to help me.

20 Deliver me from the sword;  
my precious life from the power of the dog.

21 Deliver me from the mouth of the lion,  
from the horns of the wild oxen  
You have answered me.

22 I will declare your name to my brothers;  
in the midst of the congregation, I will praise you, saying,

23 "All who fear the Lord, praise him!  
All the seed of Jacob, glorify him!  
All the seed of Israel, fear him!

24 For he does not despise nor detest the afflicted person;  
he does not hide his face from him,  
but he hears him when he cries out to him."

25 My praise in the great congregation is because of you;  
I will pay my vows before those who fear you.

26 The afflicted will eat and be satisfied;  
those who seek the Lord will praise him,  
"May you live forever!"

27 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord;  
all the families of the nations will bow in submission to the Lord.

28 Indeed, the kingdom belongs to the Lord;  
he rules over the nations.  
29 All the prosperous people will eat and bow down in submission.  
All those who are about to go down to the grave  
will bow down in submission,  
along with the one who can no longer keep himself alive.  
30 Our descendants will serve him,  
and that generation will be told about the Lord.  
31 They will come and declare his righteousness  
to a people yet to be born;  
indeed, he has accomplished it!

### **Isaiah 52:13-53:12 (The Living Bible)**

13 See, my Servant[a] shall prosper; he shall be highly exalted.  
14-15 Yet many shall be amazed when they see him—yes, even far-off foreign nations and their kings; they shall stand dumbfounded, speechless in his presence. For they shall see and understand what they had not been told before. They shall see my Servant beaten and bloodied, so disfigured one would scarcely know it was a person standing there. So shall he cleanse many nations.  
53:1 But, oh, how few believe it! Who will listen? To whom will God reveal his saving power?  
2 In God's eyes he was like a tender green shoot, sprouting from a root in dry and sterile ground. But in our eyes there was no attractiveness at all, nothing to make us want him.  
3 We despised him and rejected him—a man of sorrows, acquainted with bitterest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way when he went by. He was despised, and we didn't care.  
4 Yet it was our grief he bore, our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, for his own sins!  
5 But he was wounded and bruised for our sins. He was beaten that we might have peace; he was lashed—and we were healed!  
6 We—every one of us—have strayed away like sheep! We, who left God's paths to follow our own. Yet God laid on him the guilt and sins of every one of us!  
7 He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he never said a word. He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he stood silent before the ones condemning him.  
8 From prison and trial they led him away to his death. But who among the people of that day realized it was their sins that he was dying for—that he was suffering their punishment?  
9 He was buried like a criminal, but in a rich man's grave; but he had done no wrong and had never spoken an evil word.  
10 But it was the Lord's good plan to bruise him and fill him with grief. However, when his soul has been made an offering for sin, then he shall have a multitude of children, many heirs. He shall live again,[d] and God's program shall prosper in his hands.  
11 And when he sees all that is accomplished by the anguish of his soul, he shall be satisfied; and because of what he has experienced, my righteous Servant shall make many to be counted righteous before God, for he shall bear all their sins.

12 Therefore, I will give him the honors of one who is mighty and great because he has poured out his soul unto death. He was counted as a sinner, and he bore the sins of many, and he pled with God for sinners.

### **Hebrews 10:16-25 (New Revised Standard Version)**

16 “This is the covenant that I will make with them  
after those days, says the Lord:

I will put my laws in their hearts,  
and I will write them on their minds,”

17 he also adds,

“I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”

18 Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

19 Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus,

20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh),

21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

22 let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful.

24 And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds,

25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

### **John 18:1-19:42 (New Testament for Everyone)**

1 With these words, Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden. He and his disciples went in.

2 Judas, his betrayer, knew the place, because Jesus often used it as a meeting-place with his disciples.

3 So Judas took a band of soldiers, with some servants of the chief priests and the Pharisees, and came there with torches, lights and weapons.

4 Jesus knew everything that was going to happen to him. He went out to meet them.

‘Who are you looking for?’ he asked.

5 ‘Jesus of Nazareth,’ they answered.

‘I’m the one,’ he said to them.

Judas, his betrayer, was standing there with them.

6 So when he said, ‘I’m the one,’ they went back a few paces, and fell down on the ground.

7 Jesus repeated his question.

‘Who are you looking for?’ he asked.

‘Jesus of Nazareth,’ they said.

8 ‘I told you, I’m the one!’ said Jesus. ‘So, if you’re looking for me, let these people go.’

(9 He said this so as to fulfil the word he had spoken, when he said, ‘I haven’t lost any of the people you gave me.’)

10 Simon Peter had a sword. He drew it and hit the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 'Put your sword back in its sheath!' said Jesus to Peter. 'Do you imagine I'm not going to drink the cup my father has given me?'

12 So the band of soldiers, with the officer and the Judaeans attendants, arrested Jesus and tied him up.

13 They led him off first to Annas; he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.

14 It was Caiaphas who had given advice to the Judaeans that the best thing would be for one man to die for the people.

15 Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. That other disciple was known to the high priest; he went in to the high priest's courtyard along with Jesus,

16 while Peter stood outside by the gate. So the other disciple, being known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the woman on the gate. Then he brought Peter inside.

17 The woman on the gate spoke to Peter.

'You're not one of that man's disciples too, are you?' she asked.

'No, I'm not,' he replied.

18 It was cold. The slaves and the attendants had made a charcoal fire, and they were standing round it, warming themselves. Peter was standing there with them and warming himself.

19 The high priest asked Jesus about his disciples, and about his teaching.

20 'I've spoken to the world quite openly,' replied Jesus. 'I always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple, where all the Judaeans gather. I didn't say anything in secret.'

21 Why are you asking me? There were people who listened to me. Ask them what I said to them. Don't you see? They know what I said.'

22 When Jesus said that, one of the attendants standing there gave him a slap on the face. 'Is that how you answer the high priest?' he said.

23 'If I've said something wrong,' replied Jesus, 'give evidence about what was wrong with it. But if what I said was true, why are you hitting me?'

24 So Annas sent him off, still tied up, to Caiaphas the high priest.

25 Simon Peter, meanwhile, was standing there and warming himself.

'You're not one of his disciples, are you?' they asked him.

He denied it. 'No, I'm not,' he said.

26 Then one of the high priest's slaves, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, spoke up.

'Didn't I see you in the garden with him?' he said.

27 Peter denied it once more. Instantly, the cock crowed.

28 So they took Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, the governor's residence. It was early in the morning. They didn't themselves go inside the Praetorium. They were anxious not to pollute themselves, so that they would still be able to eat the Passover.

29 So Pilate went outside and spoke to them.

'What's the charge, then?' he asked. 'What have you got against this fellow?'

30 'If he wasn't doing wicked things,' they replied, 'we wouldn't have handed him over to you.'

31 'Take him yourselves,' said Pilate to them, 'and judge him by your own law.'

'We're not allowed to put anyone to death,' replied the Judaeans.

32 (This was so that the word of Jesus might come true, when he had indicated what sort of death he was going to die.)

33 So Pilate went back in to the Praetorium and spoke to Jesus.

‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ he asked.

34 ‘Was it your idea to ask that?’ asked Jesus. ‘Or did other people tell you about me?’

35 ‘I’m not a Jew, am I?’ retorted Pilate. ‘Your own people, and the chief priests, have handed you over to me! What have you done?’

36 ‘My kingdom isn’t the sort that grows in this world,’ replied Jesus. ‘If my kingdom were from this world, my supporters would have fought, to stop me being handed over to the Judaeans. So then, my kingdom is not the sort that comes from here.’

37 ‘So!’ said Pilate. ‘You are a king, are you?’

‘You’re the one who’s calling me a king,’ replied Jesus. ‘I was born for this; I’ve come into the world for this: to give evidence about the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.’

38 ‘Truth!’ said Pilate. ‘What’s that?’

With those words, he went back out to the Judaeans.

‘I find this man not guilty!’ he said to them.

39 ‘But look here: you’ve got this custom that I should let someone free at Passover-time. So what about it? Would you like me to release “The King of the Jews”?’

40 ‘No!’ they shouted. ‘We don’t want him! Give us Barabbas!’ Here’s the Man!

1 So Pilate then took Jesus and had him flogged.

2 The soldiers wove a crown of thorns, put it on his head, and dressed him up in a purple robe.

3 Then they came up to him and said, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ And they slapped him.

4 Pilate went out again.

‘Look,’ he said to them, ‘I’m bringing him out to you, so that you’ll know I find no guilt in him.’

5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak.

‘Look!’ said Pilate. ‘Here’s the man!’

6 So when the chief priests and their attendants saw him, they gave a great shout.

‘Crucify him!’ they yelled. ‘Crucify him!’

‘Take him yourselves and crucify him!’ said Pilate. ‘I find him not guilty!’

7 ‘We’ve got a law,’ replied the Judaeans, ‘and according to that law he deserves to die! He made himself the son of God!’

8 When Pilate heard that, he was all the more afraid. 9 He went back into the Praetorium and spoke to Jesus.

‘Where do you come from?’ he asked.

But Jesus gave him no answer.

10 So Pilate addressed him again.

‘Aren’t you going to speak to me?’ he said. ‘Don’t you know that I have the authority to let you go, and the authority to crucify you?’

11 ‘You couldn’t have any authority at all over me’, replied Jesus, ‘unless it was given to you from above. That’s why the person who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.’

12 From that moment on, Pilate tried to let him go.

But the Judaeans shouted at him.

'If you let this fellow go,' they said, 'you are no friend of Caesar! Everyone who sets himself up as a king is speaking against Caesar!'

13 So when Pilate heard them saying that, he brought Jesus out and sat down at the official judgment seat, called The Pavement (in Hebrew, 'Gabbatha').

14 It was the Preparation day of the Passover, and it was about midday.

'Look,' said Pilate, 'here is your king!'

15 'Take him away!' they shouted. 'Take him away! Crucify him!'

'Do you want me to crucify your king?' asked Pilate.

'We have no king,' the chief priests replied, 'except Caesar!'

16 Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus away.

17 He carried his own cross, and went to the spot called 'Skull Place' (in Hebrew, 'Golgotha').

18 That was where they crucified him. They also crucified two others, one on either side of him, with Jesus in the middle.

19 Pilate wrote a notice and had it placed on the cross:

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS

20 Lots of the Judaeans read this notice, because the place where Jesus was crucified was close to the city. It was written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek.

21 So the chief priests said to Pilate, 'Don't write "The King of the Jews"! Write that he said, "I am the King of the Jews"!'

22 'What I've written,' replied Pilate, 'I've written.'

23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, giving each soldier one part. When they came to his tunic, they found that it was a single piece of cloth, woven from top to bottom.

24 'Let's not tear it,' they said to each other. 'Let's throw lots for it, to see who's going to have it.'

This was so that the Bible would be fulfilled, when it says,

They took my clothes and divided them up,  
they threw the dice to decide on my garments.

And that's what the soldiers did.

25 Jesus' mother was standing beside his cross. So was her sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, with Mary Magdalene too.

26 Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple he specially loved, standing there.

'Mother,' he said. 'Look! there's your son.'

27 Then he spoke to the disciple.

'Look!' he said. 'There's your mother.'

From that time, the disciple welcomed her into his own home.

28 After this, Jesus knew that everything had at last been completed.

'I'm thirsty,' he said (fulfilling what the Bible had said).

29 There was a jar there full of sour wine. So they put a sponge filled with the sour wine on a hyssop rod and lifted it to his mouth. 30 Jesus drank it.

'It's all done!' he said.

Then he let his head drop, and gave up his spirit.

31 It was the day of Preparation. The coming sabbath was a very special one, and the Judaeans were anxious that the bodies should not remain on the cross during the sabbath.

So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken, and their bodies taken away.

32 So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the men who were crucified with Jesus, first the one, then the other.

33 But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they didn't break his legs.

34 Instead, one of the soldiers thrust a spear into his side, and blood and water came out.

35 (The one who saw it is giving evidence, and his evidence is true. He knows he's speaking the truth, so that you too may believe.)

36 These things, you see, came about so that the Bible might come true: 'No bone of his will be broken.'

37 And, again, another passage in the Bible says, 'They shall look on the one whom they pierced.'

38 After this, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate if he could take Jesus' body away. He was a disciple of Jesus, but he kept it secret because he was afraid of the Judaeans. Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took his body.

39 Nicodemus came too (the man who, at first, had visited Jesus by night). He brought a concoction of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds in weight.

40 They took Jesus' body, and wrapped it up in cloths with the spices, according to the normal Judaeian burial custom.

41 There was a garden in the place where he was crucified. In the garden, there was a new tomb in which nobody had ever been buried.

42 So, because the tomb was nearby, and because of the Judaeian day of Preparation, they buried Jesus there.

### **Prayer**

*(Pray this prayer or use your own words.)*

God the Father of Jesus, with grief and shame weighed down,  
I know the night is darkest just before the dawn...but from where I stand, it's pretty dark.  
For 40 days, we've walked with the Savior, observing his final days of ministry,  
His last nights of teaching to his disciples,  
His grueling punishment and crucifixion.  
And even though, I now have full access confidence to enter into Your presence,  
To come into the most Holy of Holies,  
the cost by which it came seems too great, too much to bear.  
But it was not mine to bear, nor my choice to make.  
The covenant made was only as good as the word of He who made it.  
And He kept His word.  
And for these 3 days, these 2 lonely nights, I will wait with Jesus in the tomb.  
Cold. Alone. Waiting.  
Amen.