

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD ACCORDING TO ST. MARK
(Chapter 15, vv. 1-39, New International Version)
for Congregation and Choir

A simple setting
by
John Bertalot

*The congregation is invited to stand quietly before singing congregational hymns
and to sit thereafter.*

The Congregation and Choir sing:

My song is love unknown, my Saviour's love to me,
love to the loveless shown, that they might lovely be.
O who am I, that for my sake my Lord should take frail flesh, and die?

He came from his blest throne, salvation to bestow;
but men made strange, and none the longed for Christ would know.
But O, my Friend, my Friend indeed, who at my need his life did spend.

Choir:

Very early in the morning,
the chief priests with the elders,
the teachers of the Law and the whole Sanhedrin reached a decision.
They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.

Pilate asked, "Are you the king of the Jews?"
Jesus replied, "Yes, it is as you say."
The chief priests accused him of many things.
So again Pilate asked him,
"Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of."
But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

Now it was the custom at the Feast to release a prisoner
whom the people requested.
A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists
who had committed murder in the uprising.
The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

"Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate,
knowing it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him.
But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

Pilate asked them,
"What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?"
"Crucify him!" they shouted. "Why? What crime has he committed?"
But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify, him!"
Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them.
He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

The Congregation and Choir sing:

Why, what hath my Lord done? What makes this rage and spite?
He made the lame to run, he gave the blind their sight.
Sweet injuries! yet they at these themselves displease, and 'gainst him rise.

Choir:

The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace that is the Praetorium
and called together the whole company of soldiers.
They put a purple robe on him,
then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him.
And they began to call out to him, "Hail, king of the Jews!"

The Congregation and Choir sing:

I cannot tell how silently he suffered,
as with his peace he graced this place of tears,
or how his heart upon the cross was broken,
the crown of pain to three and thirty years.
But this I know, he heals the broken hearted,
and stays our sin, and calms our lurking fears,
and lifts the burden from the heavy laden,
for yet the Saviour of the world is here.

Choir:

Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him.
Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him.
And when they had mocked him,
they took off the purple robe
and put his own clothes on him.
Then they led him out to crucify him.

The Congregation and Choir sing:

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Choir:

A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus,
was passing by on his way in from the country
and they forced him to carry the cross.

They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha
(which means The Place of the Skull).
Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh,
but he did not take it.
And they crucified him.
Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

The Congregation and Choir sing:

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Choir:

It was the third hour when they crucified him.
The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS.
They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and the other on his left.
Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying,
"So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days,
come down from the cross and save yourself!"

In the same way the chief priests and teachers of the law
mocked him among themselves, and said,
"He saved others but he cannot save himself!
Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross,
that we may see and believe!".
Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

The Congregation and Choir sing:

Cross of Jesus, cross of sorrow,
where the blood of Christ was shed,
perfect man on thee was tortured,
perfect God on thee has bled.

Here the King of all the ages,
throned in light ere worlds could be,
robed in mortal flesh, is dying,
crucified by sin for me.

Choir:

At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.
And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice,
"ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?"
Which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'

When some of those standing near heard this, they said,
"Listen he's calling for Elijah."

One man ran, filled a sponge with vinegar, put it on a stick,
and offered it to Jesus to drink.
"Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah will come to take him down," he said.

With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

The curtain of the temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom.

And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus,
heard his cry and saw how he had died, he said,
"Surely, this man was the Son of God!"

A silence

The Congregation and Choir sing:

Here might I stay and sing, no story so divine;
never was love, dear King, never was grief like thine.
This is my Friend in whose sweet praise
I all my days could gladly spend. Amen.

Let there be a profound silence.