

Gospel, Mark 14:1 – 15:47

¹ It was two days before the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread, and the chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by some trick and have him put to death.

² For they said, 'It must not be during the festivities, or there will be a disturbance among the people.'

³ He was at Bethany in the house of Simon, a man who had suffered from a virulent skin-disease; he was at table when a woman came in with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the ointment on his head.

⁴ Some who were there said to one another indignantly, 'Why this waste of ointment?

⁵ Ointment like this could have been sold for over three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor'; and they were angry with her.

⁶ But Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. Why are you upsetting her? What she has done for me is a good work.

⁷ You have the poor with you always, and you can be kind to them whenever you wish, but you will not always have me.

⁸ She has done what she could: she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial.

⁹ In truth I tell you, wherever throughout all the world the gospel is proclaimed, what she has done will be told as well, in remembrance of her.'

¹⁰ Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, approached the chief priests with an offer to hand Jesus over to them.

¹¹ They were delighted to hear it, and promised to give him money; and he began to look for a way of betraying him when the opportunity should occur.

¹² On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, his disciples said to him, 'Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?'

¹³ So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him,

¹⁴ and say to the owner of the house which he enters, "The Master says: Where is the room for me to eat the Passover with my disciples?"

¹⁵ He will show you a large upper room furnished with couches, all prepared. Make the preparations for us there.'

¹⁶ The disciples set out and went to the city and found everything as he had told them, and prepared the Passover.

¹⁷ When evening came he arrived with the Twelve.

¹⁸ And while they were at table eating, Jesus said, 'In truth I tell you, one of you is about to betray me, one of you eating with me.'

¹⁹ They were distressed and said to him, one after another, 'Not me, surely?'

²⁰ He said to them, 'It is one of the Twelve, one who is dipping into the same dish with me.

²¹ Yes, the Son of man is going to his fate, as the scriptures say he will, but alas for that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Better for that man if he had never been born.'

²² And as they were eating he took bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to them. 'Take it,' he said, 'this is my body.'

²³ Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he handed it to them, and all drank from it,

²⁴ and he said to them, 'This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, poured out for many.

²⁵ In truth I tell you, I shall never drink wine any more until the day I drink the new wine in the kingdom of God.'

²⁶ After the psalms had been sung they left for the Mount of Olives.

²⁷ And Jesus said to them, 'You will all fall away, for the scripture says: I shall strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered;

²⁸ however, after my resurrection I shall go before you into Galilee.'

²⁹ Peter said, 'Even if all fall away, I will not.'

³⁰ And Jesus said to him, 'In truth I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will have disowned me three times.'

³¹ But he repeated still more earnestly, 'If I have to die with you, I will never disown you.' And they all said the same.

³² They came to a plot of land called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, 'Stay here while I pray.'

³³ Then he took Peter and James and John with him.

³⁴ And he began to feel terror and anguish. And he said to them, 'My soul is sorrowful to the point of death. Wait here, and stay awake.'

³⁵ And going on a little further he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, this hour might pass him by.

³⁶ 'Abba, Father!' he said, 'For you everything is possible. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as you, not I, would have it.'

³⁷ He came back and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, 'Simon, are you asleep? Had you not the strength to stay awake one hour?

³⁸ Stay awake and pray not to be put to the test. The spirit is willing enough, but human nature is weak.'

³⁹ Again he went away and prayed, saying the same words.

⁴⁰ And once more he came back and found them sleeping, their eyes were so heavy; and they could find no answer for him.

⁴¹ He came back a third time and said to them, 'You can sleep on now and have your rest. It is all over. The hour has come. Now the Son of man is to be betrayed into the hands of sinners.

⁴² Get up! Let us go! My betrayer is not far away.'

⁴³ And at once, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, came up and with him a number of men armed with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

⁴⁴ Now the traitor had arranged a signal with them saying, 'The one I kiss, he is the man. Arrest him, and see he is well guarded when you lead him away.'

⁴⁵ So when the traitor came, he went up to Jesus at once and said, 'Rabbi!' and kissed him.

⁴⁶ The others seized him and arrested him.

⁴⁷ Then one of the bystanders drew his sword and struck out at the high priest's servant and cut off his ear.

⁴⁸ Then Jesus spoke. 'Am I a bandit,' he said, 'that you had to set out to capture me with swords and clubs?

⁴⁹ I was among you teaching in the Temple day after day and you never laid a hand on me. But this is to fulfil the scriptures.'

⁵⁰ And they all deserted him and ran away.

⁵¹ A young man followed with nothing on but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him,

⁵² but he left the cloth in their hands and ran away naked.

⁵³ They led Jesus off to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes assembled there.

⁵⁴ Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the high priest's palace, and was sitting with the attendants warming himself at the fire.

⁵⁵ The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus in order to have him executed. But they could not find any.

⁵⁶ Several, indeed, brought false witness against him, but their evidence was conflicting.

⁵⁷ Some stood up and submitted this false evidence against him,

⁵⁸ 'We heard him say, "I am going to destroy this Temple made by human hands, and in three days build another, not made by human hands." '

⁵⁹ But even on this point their evidence was conflicting.

⁶⁰ The high priest then rose before the whole assembly and put this question to Jesus, 'Have you no answer to that? What is this evidence these men are bringing against you?'

⁶¹ But he was silent and made no answer at all. The high priest put a second question to him saying, 'Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?'

⁶² 'I am,' said Jesus, 'and you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.'

⁶³ The high priest tore his robes and said, 'What need of witnesses have we now?'

⁶⁴ You heard the blasphemy. What is your finding?' Their verdict was unanimous: he deserved to die.

⁶⁵ Some of them started spitting at his face, hitting him and saying, 'Play the prophet!' And the attendants struck him too.

⁶⁶ While Peter was down below in the courtyard, one of the high priest's servant-girls came up.

⁶⁷ She saw Peter warming himself there, looked closely at him and said, 'You too were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.'

⁶⁸ But he denied it. 'I do not know, I do not understand what you are talking about,' he said. And he went out into the forecourt, and a cock crowed.

⁶⁹ The servant-girl saw him and again started telling the bystanders, 'This man is one of them.'

⁷⁰ But again he denied it. A little later the bystanders themselves said to Peter, 'You are certainly one of them! Why, you are a Galilean.'

⁷¹ But he started cursing and swearing, 'I do not know the man you speak of.'

⁷² And at once the cock crowed for the second time, and Peter recalled what Jesus had said to him, 'Before the cock crows twice, you will have disowned me three times.' And he burst into tears.

¹ First thing in the morning, the chief priests, together with the elders and scribes and the rest of the Sanhedrin, had their plan ready. They had Jesus bound and took him away and handed him over to Pilate.

² Pilate put to him this question, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' He replied, 'It is you who say it.'

³ And the chief priests brought many accusations against him.

⁴ Pilate questioned him again, 'Have you no reply at all? See how many accusations they are bringing against you!'

⁵ But, to Pilate's surprise, Jesus made no further reply.

⁶ At festival time Pilate used to release a prisoner for them, any one they asked for.

⁷ Now a man called Barabbas was then in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the uprising.

⁸ When the crowd went up and began to ask Pilate the customary favour,

⁹ Pilate answered them, 'Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?'

¹⁰ For he realised it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over.

¹¹ The chief priests, however, had incited the crowd to demand that he should release Barabbas for them instead.

¹² Then Pilate spoke again, 'But in that case, what am I to do with the man you call king of the Jews?'

¹³ They shouted back, 'Crucify him!'

¹⁴ Pilate asked them, 'What harm has he done?' But they shouted all the louder, 'Crucify him!'

¹⁵ So Pilate, anxious to placate the crowd, released Barabbas for them and, after having Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.

¹⁶ The soldiers led him away to the inner part of the palace, that is, the Praetorium, and called the whole cohort together.

¹⁷ They dressed him up in purple, twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on him.

¹⁸ And they began saluting him, 'Hail, king of the Jews!'

¹⁹ They struck his head with a reed and spat on him; and they went down on their knees to do him homage.

²⁰ And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple and dressed him in his own clothes. They led him out to crucify him.

- ²¹ They enlisted a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross.
- ²² They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means the place of the skull.
- ²³ They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he refused it.
- ²⁴ Then they crucified him, and shared out his clothing, casting lots to decide what each should get.
- ²⁵ It was the third hour when they crucified him.
- ²⁶ The inscription giving the charge against him read, 'The King of the Jews'.
- ²⁷ And they crucified two bandits with him, one on his right and one on his left.
- ²⁸
- ²⁹ The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said, 'Aha! So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days!
- ³⁰ Then save yourself; come down from the cross!'
- ³¹ The chief priests and the scribes mocked him among themselves in the same way with the words, 'He saved others, he cannot save himself.
- ³² Let the Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, for us to see it and believe.' Even those who were crucified with him taunted him.
- ³³ When the sixth hour came there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.
- ³⁴ 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?'
- ³⁵ When some of those who stood by heard this, they said, 'Listen, he is calling on Elijah.'
- ³⁶ Someone ran and soaked a sponge in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink saying, 'Wait! And see if Elijah will come to take him down.'
- ³⁷ But Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.
- ³⁸ And the veil of the Sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom.
- ³⁹ The centurion, who was standing in front of him, had seen how he had died, and he said, 'In truth this man was Son of God.'
- ⁴⁰ There were some women watching from a distance. Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary who was the mother of James the younger and Joset, and Salome.
- ⁴¹ These used to follow him and look after him when he was in Galilee. And many other women were there who had come up to Jerusalem with him.
- ⁴² It was now evening, and since it was Preparation Day -- that is, the day before the Sabbath-
- ⁴³ there came Joseph of Arimathaea, a prominent member of the Council, who himself lived in the hope of seeing the kingdom of God, and he boldly went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.
- ⁴⁴ Pilate, astonished that he should have died so soon, summoned the centurion and enquired if he had been dead for some time.
- ⁴⁵ Having been assured of this by the centurion, he granted the corpse to Joseph
- ⁴⁶ who bought a shroud, took Jesus down from the cross, wrapped him in the shroud and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb.
- ⁴⁷ Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Joset took note of where he was laid.