

THE SUFFERINGS AND CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS CHRIST



On the night of the betrayal, Jesus Christ was in the Garden of Gethsemane with His disciples. At one moment, Jesus isolated Himself and prayed to Father with anguish. When He returned to where the disciples were, He found them sleeping. Jesus woke them up and commanded them, saying: **“Watch and pray, lest you fall into temptation; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.”** And while Jesus was speaking with His disciples, Judas arrived with a great multitude that was armed with swords and bats. They had come to arrest Jesus.

Of course, since Jesus was almighty, He could have called a big group of angels from heaven and punish that crowd, if He wanted to. But Jesus willingly surrendered, because He had come into the world to be crucified and cleanse the sins of all mankind with His sacred blood.

Then those who had arrested Jesus led Him to Caiaphas, the high priest. Many officers were also assembled there. They had all sworn to kill Jesus by any means; they had even called false witnesses to make insulting accusations against Him. However, no matter how hard they tried to blame Him for His actions, they did not succeed because Jesus was just and innocent.

Then, Caiaphas, the high priest approached Jesus and asked: **“Are you the Christ, the Son of God?”** Jesus answered without hesitation: **“You said that I am, and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right side of the Most Powerful God and coming over the clouds of heaven.”**

When they heard these words, the Jew officers became so angry that they began beating and disgracing Jesus, because they did not believe Him and thought that He was lying and saying blasphemies against God.

While Jesus was going through these difficult moments, His disciples were scared and left Him; but Judas, the betrayer, witnessing Jesus’ sufferings, regretted his action, went away and hung himself.

The next morning, the Jews tied Jesus’ hands and took Him to a Roman officer named Pilate to be judged and crucified.

While interrogating Jesus, Pilate realized that He was innocent and that the Jews wanted to kill Him out of wickedness and jealousy. Pilate wanted to help Jesus; he even proposed to set Him free for the Passover. But the Jew officers and the multitude did not agree with Pilate and demanded that Jesus be crucified.

So, Pilate washed his hands in front of the crowd and then, delivering Jesus to the soldiers, he said: **“I am innocent of the blood of this just person; you see to it.”**

Pilate's soldiers were wicked and cruel men. They began to torture Jesus. They put a scarlet robe on Him and, placing a crown of thorns on His head, they were mocking him by saying: "**Hail, King of the Jews.**" After torturing Him for some time, they put a heavy cross on His shoulders and lead Him to a place called Golgotha, where they crucified Him.

The soldiers and Jews continued to mock Him, suggesting that if He was really the Son of God, let God save Him. Jesus did not respond to their mockery; instead, He prayed to God saying: "**Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.**"

Beside Jesus, there were two thieves who were also crucified. One of them believed in Jesus and said: "**Remember me, Lord, in Your Kingdom.**" Jesus answered: "**Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.**"

While Jesus was on the cross, there was darkness all around for three hours. And it was the hour of His death, Jesus cried out in a loud voice: "**Father, into Your hands I commit my spirit.**" After those words, Jesus breathed no more. And at that moment, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, the earth shook and the rocks were split. When the Roman soldiers, who were by the cross saw all that was happening they were terribly frightened and said: "**Truly, this was the Son of God.**"

In the evening, a pious Jew named Joseph of Arimathea took down from the cross Jesus' body, anointed it with fragrant oils and after wrapping it in clean cloths, placed it in a tomb dug out of a rock, where no one else had been buried. Joseph rolled a large stone against the entrance to close it.

Jesus loved man so much that He willingly suffered and was crucified for us, so that whoever believes in Him would be saved.

Jesus also gave us the most important commandment: that we love one another and forgive others as He forgave those who crucified Him.

QUESTIONS AND PROPOSALS

- 1) What did Jesus say to His disciples when he found them asleep in the garden?
- 2) How did they arrest Jesus?
- 3) Who wanted to kill Jesus and why?
- 4) What was Jesus' answer to Caiaphas?
- 5) What did Judas do after repenting?
- 6) Why did Pilate condemn Jesus?
- 7) How did the Roman soldiers treat Jesus?
- 8) Did Jesus forgive those who crucified Him?
- 9) What happened after the death of Jesus?
- 10) Where did Joseph of Arimathea place the body of Jesus?
- 11) Why did Jesus Christ endure sufferings and the crucifixion?
- 12) What is the most important commandment that Jesus gave?

LEARN BY HEART

Holy God, holy and magnificent,
Holy and Immortal,
You were crucified for our sake,
Have mercy on us.