

PASSIONS

"He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again."

Mark 8.31

REFLECTION

In Mark's Gospel, this text is the first of Jesus' three predictions of his Passion, that is, his suffering and death by crucifixion.

In this modern day, the word *passion* is often associated with strong feelings and powerful sentiments. More so for Jesus' Passion.

Consider the narratives of Holy Week that are shot-through with intense emotions.

From the triumphal shouts as Jesus entered into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, to the powerfully-moving acts of foot-washing at the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday. From the terrible tortures of Good Friday, to the uncomfortable silence of Holy Saturday, culminating with the surprising joy of Easter's empty tomb.

Emotional. Powerful. Passionate.

Yet, the word *passion* is derived from the old Latin and Greek words which mean "to suffer". This is related to the modern word *passive* - to be acted upon rather than to act, to be a recipient rather than an agent. Yes, Jesus was a passive recipient of sorrows and suffering.

As that old hymn goes: *"He could have called 10,000 angels, to destroy the world and set him free; But he died alone, for you and me"*. Indeed, *the Son of Man must suffer many things*. This is Christ's Passion - to suffer for our sakes.

This Passion Week, we know that Jesus shares in our suffering. He is present.

This Good Friday, we know that Jesus suffers to win our redemption. He saves.

This Easter, we know that Jesus stands victorious over all suffering. He has the final word.

PRAYER

Almighty God,

Whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; Through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.

- Traditional Collect (Church of England)

SUPPLICATION

- Pray that, this Holy Week, God might move many hearts afresh. Pray for a fellow believer, for a backslider, and for a non-Christians - that all will experience the powerful emotions of Jesus' journey from Palm Sunday to Good Friday and Easter Sunday.
- Lift up a prayer of praise and thanks unto Jesus, who suffered for our sakes that we might be whole. Pray for family and friends who have not acknowledged this truth, that they may recognise the depth of God's love for them.
- Pray for those who are suffering, that they might encounter the close presence of Jesus amidst their suffering.
- Just as Jesus embraced suffering in order to fulfil God's purposes, pray that we will not shy away from suffering and sacrifices, as we follow Jesus in the world today.

*Who do people say I am?
Do you think they understand?
Messiah's suffering salvations
(Oh, Jesus, You're not that kind of King)
You'll come in power to take Your throne
You'll show Your glory in Jerusalem
It's what the crowds are clamouring
(Oh, but Jesus is not that kind of King)*

*He has come to suffer
And He has come to die
Crucified in weakness
And you may wonder why
Though He could call the angels
He will not say a thing
Because, you see, He's not that kind of King*

"Not that Kind of King" by Michael Card

If you need any prayer or pastoral care support, kindly contact the pastoral care team via:

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