

THE STORY of THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

Lesson 1

Matthew 26.1-5

THE WICKED PLOT TO KILL JESUS

Everyone has at least HEARD OF *The Passion of the Christ* by now.

Of course, it has been made into a movie.

There have been **PASSION PLAYS** for hundreds of years,
in which the events of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection are re-enacted and dramatized.

The word **PASSION** means "**to suffer.**"

(It has come to mean any one of a wide range of strong emotions,
but the original primary use referred to intense physical suffering, probably leading to death.)

When **PASSION** is used in a religious sense, the word means: "*The sufferings of Jesus in the period following the Last Supper and including the Crucifixion.*" (The American Heritage College Dictionary)

The word **PASSION** is used one time in the Original KJV in Acts 1.3:

"...to whom also He shewed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs..."

PASSION is translated from the common verb "to suffer", and in most other English translations, it is translated "suffering" or "sufferings."

That, of course, is what we are talking about.

The **PASSION OF THE CHRIST** refers to the story that is told in the Holy Scriptures
which records the **SUFFERINGS OF THE CHRIST**...
and of course, also, **THE GLORIES WHICH FOLLOWED**.

1 Peter 1.11-12

**Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently,
who prophesied of the grace that should come to you,
searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating
when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.**

This is not only JESUS CHRIST's story, but HE IS THE ONE WHO IS TELLING IT.
The Spirit of Christ was in the hearts, minds, and mouths of the prophets
when they prophesied beforehand that HE WOULD SUFFER.

And, if He is that intent on telling us the story,
and if the prophets themselves searched out diligently to try to understand it,
THEN I'M SURE WE SHOULD.

And so, that is what we want to do.

**THE STORY OF HIS SUFFERINGS IS THE STORY OF THE WORLD...
THE EVENT OF THE AGES.**

Revelation 13.8 describes the Lord Jesus Christ as "**the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**"

Which means, that, in the purposes of God, JESUS CHRIST's DEATH WAS FOREORDAINED, PREDESTINATED, AND PLANNED BEFORE GOD EVEN UNDERTOOK THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

THE STORY OF HIS SUFFERINGS IS THE STORY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

When the Lord Jesus explained the pivotal theme and event of ALL THE SCRIPTURES, it ALL related to HIS SUFFERINGS.

Luke 24.44-46

Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."

And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day..."

AND, THE STORY OF HIS SUFFERINGS IS THE GOOD NEWS WE HAVE BELIEVED TO BE SAVED FROM OUR SINS AND TO BE RIGHT WITH GOD.

1 Corinthians 15.1-4

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the Gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you -- unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received:

that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

THE PHYSICAL AND HUMAN EVENTS WHICH CULMINATED IN HIS DEATH BEGAN IN MATTHEW, CHAPTER 26.

The chief priests, scribes, and elders of the people all got together and made one last final commitment that Jesus had to go. And, they were willing to do what they had to do TO KILL HIM...and get rid of Him.

This animosity had been stirred up early...from the beginning of His ministry.

It was driven by jealousy and envy at the attention He was getting from the people.

He had offended them and insulted them by casting doubts on their authority...

contradicting their teachings which contradicted the Word of God...

and by amassing way too much influence for them to tolerate any longer.

He was a threat to their choke-hold on the people's faith.

John 12.19

The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!"

There was no question about it -- and there was no turning back: JESUS HAD TO GO!

And they would do what they had to do TO GET RID OF HIM FOR GOOD!

This is not the first time they had thought about killing Him.
They had even tried on other occasions before.

In fact, in **John 7.1**, Jesus had deliberately left the regions of Judea to go back to Galilee, because it was just getting too physically dangerous.
After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him.

The Feast of Tabernacles was coming up...and Jesus did attend the Feast.
But, the hatred and animosity of the Jewish leaders toward this Galilean rabbi were so well-known, Jesus had become known far and wide as **“He Whom they seek to kill.”** **John 7.25**

WHO ARE SOME OF THOSE WHO HAD TRIED TO KILL HIM ON PREVIOUS OCCASIONS?

Matthew 2.13

(Revelation 12.1-4)

Luke 4.28-29

John 5.18

**But, of course, JESUS’ SUFFERINGS AND DEATH WERE NO SECRET TO HIM...
AND IT DIDN’T COME AS A SHOCK OR SURPRISE TO HIM.**

When the Lord Jesus performed His first miracle and demonstrated His Deity...
He began talking about **“My hour”** -- (**John 2.4; 7.6, 30; 8.20; 12.23; 13.1; 17.1**)
and what He meant by that was **“MY PURPOSE FOR COMING INTO THE WORLD,
MY PURPOSE FOR EVERYTHING I AM DOING...
THE EVENT OF MY SUFFERINGS AND DEATH.”**

From the earliest moments of His self-consciousness,
when He learned as a Man Who He was and what He had come to do,
**HE SPENT EVERY WAKING MOMENT AND EVERY MOVEMENT OF HIS LIFE
WALKING TOWARD AND WORKING TOWARD HIS SUFFERINGS AND DEATH.**

Listen to what He told His disciples...over and over:

Matthew 16.21: From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

Matthew 17.22-23: Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

**WHAT KINDS OF LANGUAGE DID THE LORD JESUS USE
TO DESCRIBE HIS SUFFERINGS AND DEATH?**

John 12.27 (31-33) _____

John 10.18 _____

Matthew 20.28 _____

In all of these descriptions of His own LIFE PURPOSE AND MISSION, the Lord Jesus knew that the only way to accomplish what He had come to do was BY SUFFERING AND DYING.

Some of the evil enemies of the Lord Jesus we have already met are called by their group names: chief priests, scribes, elders of the people.

There are some others we will meet among them by name: Annas, Caiaphas, Judas Iscariot (Jesus' own trusted disciple who betrayed Him and sold Him into the hands of His enemies).

But, every where we look...and every turn we take -- we are also going to see the One Who sovereignly oversaw it all and superintended it all for His own gracious ends -- OUR SALVATION.

That One is THE SOVEREIGN FATHER OF LOVE AND GRACE.

The Lord Jesus' evil enemies were the human agents who did the "hands-on" dirty work to inflict upon Him His sufferings and put Him to death.

They did what their own evil hearts led them to want to do.

They fulfilled their own hateful and murderous desires against the Son of God.

And, God held them responsible for what they did out of the hatred of their dark hearts.

But, GOD IS THE ONE WHO FULFILLED HIS WILL AND PLEASURE
IN THE DEATH OF THE CHRIST.

GOD IS THE ONE WHO PREDESTINED THE EVENTS AND ARRANGED ALL THE
CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH BROUGHT THEM TO PASS.

Acts 2.22-23

GOD IS THE ONE WHO ORDERED THAT IT HAD TO BE DONE...

AND COMMANDED THAT IT BE DONE...AND HOW IT SHOULD BE DONE --

AND THAT HIS SON, THE CHRIST, WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD DO IT.

Acts 4.27-28

The prophet Isaiah saw much of this glorious and gracious purpose of God in the visions God gave him.

Isaiah 53.4: Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted...

verse 6: And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

verse 10: Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.

When You shall make His soul an offering for sin,

He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days,

and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.

**GOD PLANNED IT ALL AND PROVIDED IT ALL AND GIVES IT FREELY TO US.
WE MUST RECEIVE IT...THANK HIM FOR IT...AND STAND IN AWE OF HIS GRACE.**