

# 2024.3.27 - Passion - Is suffering just?

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□ Christian Science Hymnal 441, 325, 134

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□ *King James Bible*

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## 1. Matt. 27:1, 2, 19, 20, 24–31

When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led *him* away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. ...

... ¶ When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. ...

... ¶ When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye *to it*. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children. ¶ Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of *soldiers*. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. ¶ And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put *it* upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify *him*.

## 2. Luke 23:33–43

And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. ¶ Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. ¶ And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If

thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

### 3. John 19:25–27

¶ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own *home*.

### 4. Matt. 27:45, 46

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

### 5. John 19:28–30

¶ After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

### 6. Mark 15:38–41

And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. ¶ And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God. There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

### 7. John 19:31–37

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

## 8. Matt. 27:57–60

When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

□ *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy

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### 1. SH 28:4

If the Master had not taken a student and taught the unseen verities of God, he would not have been crucified. The determination to hold Spirit in the grasp of matter is the persecutor of Truth and Love.

Help and hindrance

### 2. SH 20:14

Jesus bore our infirmities; he knew the error of mortal belief, and “with his stripes [the rejection of error] we are healed.” “Despised and rejected of men,” returning blessing for cursing, he taught mortals the opposite of themselves, even the nature of God; and when error felt the power of Truth, the scourge and the cross awaited the great Teacher. Yet he swerved not, well knowing that to obey the divine order and trust God, saves retracing and traversing anew the path from sin to holiness.

Perfect example

### 3. SH 53:25

Jesus bore our sins in his body. He knew the mortal errors which constitute the material body, and could destroy those errors; but at the time when Jesus felt our infirmities, he had not conquered all the beliefs of the flesh or his sense of material life, nor had he risen to his final demonstration of spiritual power.

Bearing our sins

### 4. SH 22:23–11

Final deliverance from error, whereby we rejoice in immortality, boundless freedom, and sinless sense, is not reached through paths of flowers nor by pinning one's faith without works to another's vicarious effort. Whosoever believeth that wrath is righteous or that divinity is appeased by human suffering, does not understand God.

Deliverance not vicarious

Justice requires reformation of the sinner. Mercy cancels the debt only when justice approves. Revenge is inadmissible. Wrath which is only appeased is not destroyed, but partially indulged. Wisdom and Love may require many sacrifices of self to save us from sin. One sacrifice, however great, is insufficient to pay the debt of sin. The atonement requires constant self-immolation on the sinner's part. That God's wrath should be vented upon His beloved Son, is divinely unnatural. Such a theory is man-made. The atonement is a hard problem in theology, but its

Justice and substitution

scientific explanation is, that suffering is an error of sinful sense which Truth destroys, and that eventually both sin and suffering will fall at the feet of everlasting Love.

### 5. SH 25:3

The spiritual essence of blood is sacrifice. The efficacy of Jesus' spiritual offering is infinitely greater than can be expressed by our sense of human blood. The material blood of Jesus was no more efficacious to cleanse from sin when it was shed upon "the accursed tree," than when it was flowing in his veins as he went daily about his Father's business. His true flesh and blood were his Life; and they truly eat his flesh and drink his blood, who partake of that divine Life.

True flesh  
and blood

### 6. SH 36:10–29

Jesus endured the shame, that he might pour his dear-bought bounty into barren lives. What was his earthly reward? He was forsaken by all save John, the beloved disciple, and a few women who bowed in silent woe beneath the shadow of his cross. The earthly price of spirituality in a material age and the great moral distance between Christianity and sensualism preclude Christian Science from finding favor with the worldly-minded.

A selfish and limited mind may be unjust, but the unlimited and divine Mind is the immortal law of justice as well as of mercy. It is quite as impossible for sinners to receive their full punishment this side of the grave as for this world to bestow on the righteous their full reward. It is useless to suppose that the wicked can gloat over their offences to the last moment and then be suddenly pardoned and pushed into heaven, or that the hand of Love is satisfied with giving us only toil, sacrifice, cross-bearing, multiplied trials, and mockery of our motives in return for our efforts at well doing.

Righteous  
retribution

### 7. SH 40:17

Was it just for Jesus to suffer? No; but it was inevitable, for not otherwise could he show us the way and the power of Truth. If a career so great and good as that of Jesus could not avert a felon's fate, lesser apostles of Truth may endure human brutality without murmuring, rejoicing to enter into fellowship with him through the triumphal arch of Truth and Love.

Suffering  
inevitable

### 8. SH 48:25–51:5

Pale in the presence of his own momentous question, "What is Truth," Pilate was drawn into acquiescence with the demands of Jesus' enemies. Pilate was ignorant of the consequences of his awful decision against human rights and divine Love, knowing not that he was hastening the final demonstration of what life is and of what the true knowledge of God can do for man.

Pilate's  
question

The women at the cross could have answered Pilate's question. They knew what had inspired their devotion, winged their faith, opened the eyes of their understanding, healed the sick, cast out evil, and caused the disciples to say to their Master: "Even the

devils are subject unto us through thy name.”

Where were the seventy whom Jesus sent forth? Were all conspirators save eleven? Had they forgotten the great exponent of God? Had they so soon lost sight of his mighty works, his toils, privations, sacrifices, his divine patience, sublime courage, and unrequited affection? O, why did they not gratify his last human yearning with one sign of fidelity?

Students'  
ingratitude

The meek demonstrator of good, the highest instructor and friend of man, met his earthly fate alone with God. No human eye was there to pity, no arm to save. Forsaken by all whom he had blessed, this faithful sentinel of God at the highest post of power, charged with the grandest trust of heaven, was ready to be transformed by the renewing of the infinite Spirit. He was to prove that the Christ is not subject to material conditions, but is above the reach of human wrath, and is able, through Truth, Life, and Love, to triumph over sin, sickness, death, and the grave.

Heaven's  
sentinel

The priests and rabbis, before whom he had meekly walked, and those to whom he had given the highest proofs of divine power, mocked him on the cross, saying derisively, “He saved others; himself he cannot save.” These scoffers, who turned “aside the right of a man before the face of the Most High,” esteemed Jesus as “stricken, smitten of God.” “He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.” “Who shall declare his generation?” Who shall decide what truth and love are?

Cruel  
contumely

The last supreme moment of mockery, desertion, torture, added to an overwhelming sense of the magnitude of his work, wrung from Jesus' lips the awful cry, “My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” This despairing appeal, if made to a human parent, would impugn the justice and love of a father who could withhold a clear token of his presence to sustain and bless so faithful a son. The appeal of Jesus was made both to his divine Principle, the God who is Love, and to himself, Love's pure idea. Had Life, Truth, and Love forsaken him in his highest demonstration? This was a startling question. No! They must abide in him and he in them, or that hour would be shorn of its mighty blessing for the human race.

A cry of  
despair

If his full recognition of eternal Life had for a moment given way before the evidence of the bodily senses, what would his accusers have said? Even what they did say, — that Jesus' teachings were false, and that all evidence of their correctness was destroyed by his death. But this saying could not make it so.

Divine  
Science mis-  
understood

The burden of that hour was terrible beyond human conception. The distrust of mortal minds, disbelieving the purpose of his mission, was a million times sharper than the thorns which pierced his flesh. The real cross, which Jesus bore up

The real  
pillory

the hill of grief, was the world's hatred of Truth and Love. Not the spear nor the material cross wrung from his faithful lips the plaintive cry, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*" It was the possible loss of something more important than human life which moved him, — the possible misapprehension of the sublimest influence of his career. This dread added the drop of gall to his cup.

#### 9. SH 597:10

The martyrdom of Jesus was the culminating sin of Pharisaism. It rent the veil of the temple. It revealed the false foundations and superstructures of superficial religion, tore from bigotry and superstition their coverings, and opened the sepulchre with divine Science, — immortality and Love.

#### 10. SH 38:21–9

Jesus experienced few of the pleasures of the physical senses, but his sufferings were the fruits of other people's sins, not of his own. The eternal Christ, his spiritual selfhood, never suffered. Jesus mapped out the path for others. He unveiled the Christ, the spiritual idea of divine Love. To those buried in the belief of sin and self, living only for pleasure or the gratification of the senses, he said in substance: Having eyes ye see not, and having ears ye hear not; lest ye should understand and be converted, and I might heal you. He taught that the material senses shut out Truth and its healing power.

Material  
pleasures

Meekly our Master met the mockery of his unrecognized grandeur. Such indignities as he received, his followers will endure until Christianity's last triumph. He won eternal honors. He overcame the world, the flesh, and all error, thus proving their nothingness. He wrought a full salvation from sin, sickness, and death. We need "Christ, and him crucified." We must have trials and self-denials, as well as joys and victories, until all error is destroyed.

Mockery  
of truth

#### 11. SH 28:22

Remember, thou Christian martyr, it is enough if thou art found worthy to unloose the sandals of thy Master's feet! To suppose that persecution for righteousness' sake belongs to the past, and that Christianity to-day is at peace with the world because it is honored by sects and societies, is to mistake the very nature of religion. Error repeats itself. The trials encountered by prophet, disciple, and apostle, "of whom the world was not worthy," await, in some form, every pioneer of truth.

Persecution  
prolonged