

The Final Hours (Including Isaiah 53)

Choral reading

CHARACTERS: A, B, C, D, Jesus

COSTUMES: Bright, happy clothing covered by black, floor length, hooded cloaks for A, B, C, D and white clothing for Jesus

PROPS: none specified

SETTINGS: none specified

RUN TIME: 9-10 minutes (depending on how quickly reader's pick up their cues)

SCRIPTURES: Matthew Mark 14-15, Luke 22-23, John 19-20, Acts , Romans 1, 6, 8; Ephesians 1, 2 Timothy 2, 1 Peter 1, Colossians 1 & 2, 1 Thessalonians 5, Isaiah 53

A: He was sorrowful, deeply distressed and horrified.

B: He was in anguish, praying fervently, and His sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground.

A: His soul was swallowed up in sorrow

A & B: to the point of death.

C: The angel strengthened Him

D: Judas betrayed Him

C: Peter denied Him

D: Soldiers arrested Him

C: By oppression and judgment he was taken away.

D: for the transgression of our people, for all of us, he was punished.

C & D: All the disciples deserted Him and ran away

C: He was despised and rejected by men, a man of suffering

D: He was like someone people turned away from;

C & D: He was despised, and we didn't value Him.

A: The high priest questioned Him

B: The Sanhedrin condemned Him,

A & B: blindfolded Him, spit in His face and beat Him

A: The temple police slapped Him and mocked Him

B: The chief priests and scribes vehemently accused Him.

A: Pilate questioned Him

B: He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth.

A: Like a lamb led to the slaughter, like a sheep silent before her shearers,

A & B: He did not open His mouth.

B: Herod treated Him treated Him contemptuously

A & B: mocked Him, dressed Him in a brilliant robe, and sent Him back to Pilate.

A: He Himself bore our sicknesses, and He carried our pains;

B: but we in turn regarded Him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted.

C: The crowd cried "Crucify Him"

D: Pilate had Him flogged

C & D: and then washed his hands of Him

D: The governor's soldiers put a crown of thorns on His head,

C & D: mocked Him, spit on Him, slapped and hit Him on the head.

C: Pilate handed Him over to them to be crucified.

D: Crowds followed Him.

C: Women mourned and lamented Him

A: They divided His clothes by casting lots

B: Those who passed by insulted Him

A: The women who had followed Him watched from a distance

B: The chief priests, scribes and elders scoffed Him

ALL: Jesus forgave them and breathed his last. (*A, B, C and D remove black hoods*)

C: One of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear

D: He was pierced because of our transgressions,

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C: crushed because of our iniquities;
 D: punishment for our peace was on Him,
 C & D: and we are healed by His wounds.
 C: The centurion declared Him the son of God
 D: Joseph and Nicodemus buried Him.

A: We killed the source of life; but on the third day,
 ALL: God raised Him from the dead (*A, B, C and D throw off black cloaks to reveal bright clothing*)
 B: When we were dead in our sins God made you alive with Christ.
 A: He forgave us all our sins,
 B: having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness,
 A: which stood against us and condemned us;
 A & B: he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.

D: God demonstrated His power by raising Him from the dead
 ALL: and seating Him at His right hand in the heavens
 C: Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead
 ALL: and the ruler of the kings of the earth,
 D: the one who loves us and has set us free from our sins by His blood
 ALL: has been declared the powerful Son of God by the resurrection from the dead
 C: God, through him, reconciled to himself all things by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.
 D: Once you were alienated from God and were enemies because of your evil behavior.
 C: But now he has reconciled you by Christ's death
 D: to present you holy in his sight,
 C & D: without blemish and free from accusation

A: Christ, having been raised from the dead, will not die again.
 B: Death no longer rules over Him.
 C: If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you,

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ALL: Then He who raised Christ from the dead will also bring your mortal bodies to life

D: God did not appoint us to suffer wrath

A: but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

B: He died for us so that we may live together with him.

C: He has given us a new birth into a living hope

D: through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (*JESUS joins the Readers on stage as they sweep their hands toward Him*)

ALL: so keep your attention on Him as risen from the dead.