

# Swedenborgian Sunday School Notes for the Revised Common Lectionary

## Luke 22:14–23:56 • Passion/Palm Sunday

Prepared by the Rev. Lee Woofenden

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Luke 22:14–23:56. . . . . Jesus' passionate way  
Psalm 31:9–16 . . . . . A passionate cry

### Overview

Our lesson today focuses on the passion and crucifixion rather than the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. We learn about the events that led up to the Lord's crucifixion, and through it, to his resurrection, which we celebrate next week on Easter Sunday. The selection from Luke is much too long to read all of it. Summarize the events it covers, and pick a shorter section to read, such as Luke 23:33–49.

### Key Points

- The Lord will do whatever it takes to reach us with his message of love and truth.
- God loves us no matter how we treat God.
- The crucifixion was the Lord's last temptation struggle in the process of becoming completely one with the "Father," meaning the infinite divine.

### Example for Teaching Children

On Palm Sunday, we usually read about the Lord entering Jerusalem with the people shouting and spreading palm branches before him. But today our reading is about what happened later in the week.

The ancient Jews and Romans did a terrible thing to Jesus. He spent his life loving them and trying to save them from their own evil and destructive ways, and in return they killed him in a very painful and humiliating way. Did he become angry and curse them? No! He forgave them! (*Read Luke 23:34.*)

We can think about this when someone does something to hurt us. Jesus shows us that we should not hate that person or hit back, but should forgive them for what they did to us, and try to be good and kind to them even if they are being mean to us.

The Lord never hated anyone. In fact, he was "zealous," or *passionate*, for our happiness. He was willing to do anything—even die—to show us what love really is. Since the Lord was willing to die for us, we know how much the Lord loves us.

No matter what we do, and no matter how much we reject God by not being kind to each other, the Lord keeps on loving us, and keeps on reaching out to us, trying to get us to be more kind and loving. Do you know why the Lord does this? Because the Lord

knows that only way we can be truly happy is by loving each other instead of being selfish.

The crucifixion was the worst struggle Jesus had to go through to save us from evil and hell. After he had overcome in that struggle, hell had no more power over him, and he became completely united with the divine, or the "Father," that he came from. The "veil" that once separated us from God has been torn away. Now we can always turn to the Lord for help in our own struggles against living the wrong way.

### Basic Correspondences

- the chief priests = selfishness in our hearts
- Pilate = our thinking minds
- the people = our self-interest
- Barabbas = evil and false things
- veil of temple = Jesus' finite humanity

### Thoughts from Swedenborg

In Ezekiel:

This is what the Lord Jehovih says: "I will now bring Jacob back from captivity, and will have compassion on the whole house of Israel. I will be zealous for my holy name. (Ezekiel 39:25)

"Being zealous" means having compassion.

In David:

Zeal for your house consumes me. (Psalm 69:9)

This refers to the Lord. "The zeal of Jehovah's house" means love for those who receive goodness and truth—for they are Jehovah's house.

*Arcana Coelestia #8875.5*

The passion on the cross was the last temptation the Lord went through as the greatest prophet. This was the means by which he glorified his humanity—that is, united it with his Father's divinity. So it was not in itself redemption. The Lord had two purposes for coming into the world: redeeming us, and glorifying his humanity. Through these, he saved both people and angels. These two purposes are distinct from each other, but they work together in bringing about our salvation. Redemption . . . is a battle against the hells, getting them under control, and afterwards putting the heavens in order. Glorification, however, is uniting the Lord's human side with his Father's divinity. This took place step by step, and was completed through his passion on the cross.

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