



Jesus is
stripped of
his garments





*They took Jesus's clothing
and divided it into four
shares*

John 19:23





Deprived of its oneness,
Stained with blood,
Seamless white robe,
Pulled at its four corners,
Tearing in the middle
Forming a cross.

Three Church leaders finely attired
Claiming ownership of the cloth,
Hold it tightly, even comfortably.
Misled in their belief –
Blind to one another,
Each thinks he owns the lot.

Bloodied.
And fluttering like a flag
The fourth corner.
A black figure,
Marching, striving ahead.
Eager to reach out?





At the foot of the cross
The seamless white robe
Each part weakened,
Divided, spread out –
Yet held together
By the shadow of that
same cross





We Pray

*Lord, our ways
Are not peaceful ways.*

*Fill us with your Spirit,
That we may truly
Become your people,
The one body of
Christ.*

*Heal our divisions
And give us courage
To work for unity
And peace.*





Jesus is nailed to the cross

*All who see me jeer at me,
They sneer and wag their heads*

Cf Pslm 22





The sunlight thickens
Colours fade,
The sky darkens.
Why?

What are the people looking at?
Or rather, who is looking at them?
The Man being crucified,
Lying below . . .

The Roman soldier's arm
Clad with armour,
Brandishing the hammer,
Relentlessly striking on the nail
Penetrating the flesh.





A reaction at each level below:
Compassion
Mockery
Grief
Condolence
Sneering
Dismay
Horror
Scorn.
Each face is different.

Some faces are shielded,
Unable to bear the sight.
Some scrutinize the scriptures
In an attempt to make some sense .
“Wild bulls encircle me
Strong bulls surround me” . .
All the while the sun darkens
And the sky grows dimmer.





We Pray

Lord of love

And compassion,

Help us to be true

To ourselves

And to others

Give us a

Sensitive heart

To ease the burden

Of those

*Who can't help
themselves.*



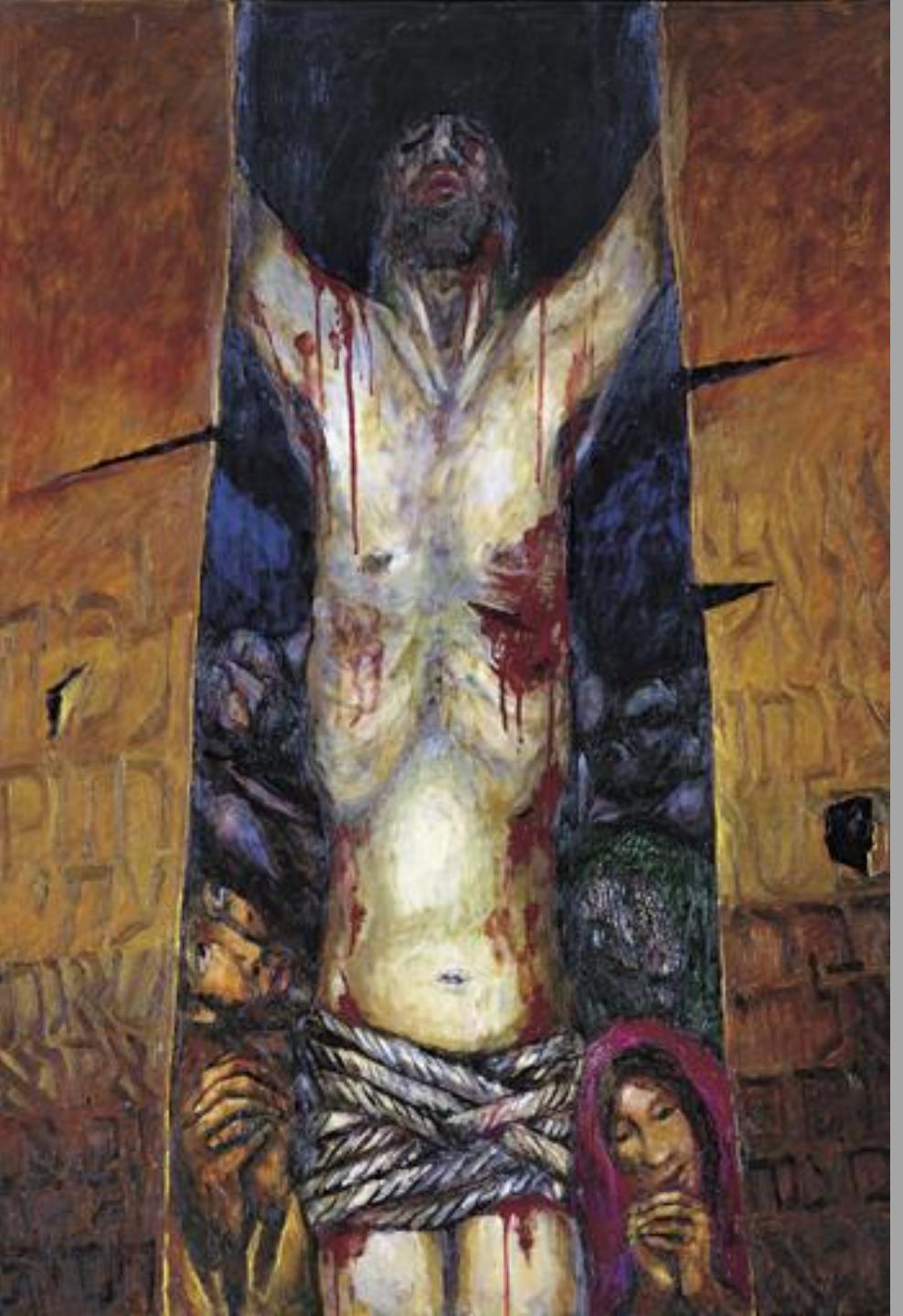
A painting depicting the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. He is shown on a cross, his body pale and tortured, with blood dripping from his hands and side. A woman, likely the Virgin Mary, is shown in grief at the foot of the cross, her head bowed. The background is dark and somber.

Jesus dies on the Cross

*My God, My God
why have you forsaken me?*

Matthew 27:46





Tortured,
Bleeding,
Wracked by pain
And so stretched
That his bones can be counted.
Thick ropes
Securing his body
To it torments.

The head cast towards the darkness;
The mouth releasing
A loud scream against the sky.

the ancient cry,
Eli Eli lama Sabacthani?,
Will no longer be read –
It is now heard in the violent scream
That rips apart the sacred scroll.
Tearing the curtains of the temple
From top to bottom.





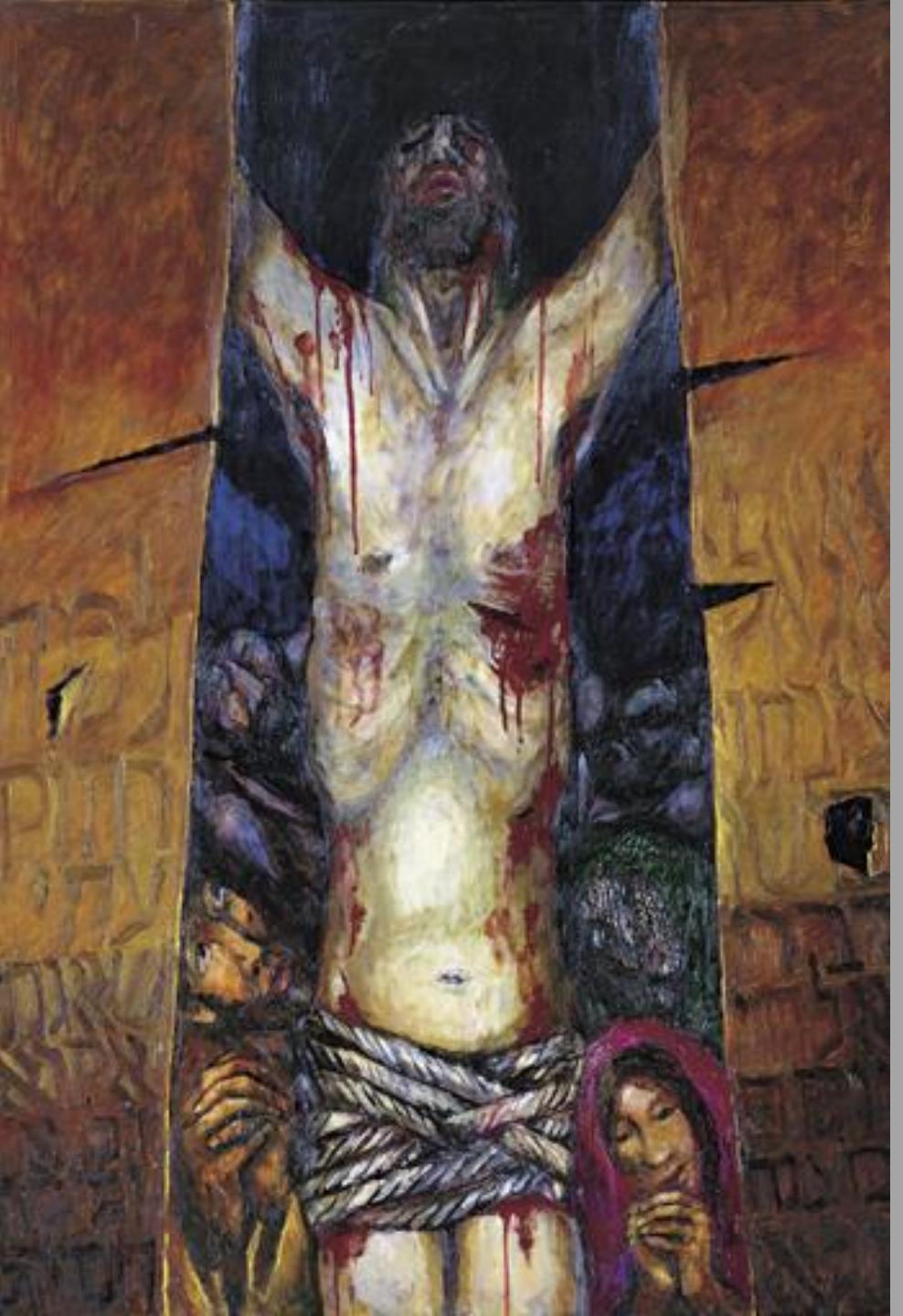
It is accomplished!
The ancient covenant,
Giving way to the new one,
In his blood.

The crowds appalled
Turning away from him –
So disfigured did he look
Seemingly no longer human . . .

Without beauty, without majesty,
A thing despised, rejected by people
Struck by God . . .

Who can bear this sight?
Who has the strength to stand by?
A mother
A friend
A disciple.





We Pray

Lord

Dying you destroyed

Our death,

Rising you restored

Our life.

Fill our hearts

With your courage

So that we no longer

Remain bystanders

But can be counted

Among those

Who work

For justice

And peace.

