

## For Reflection:

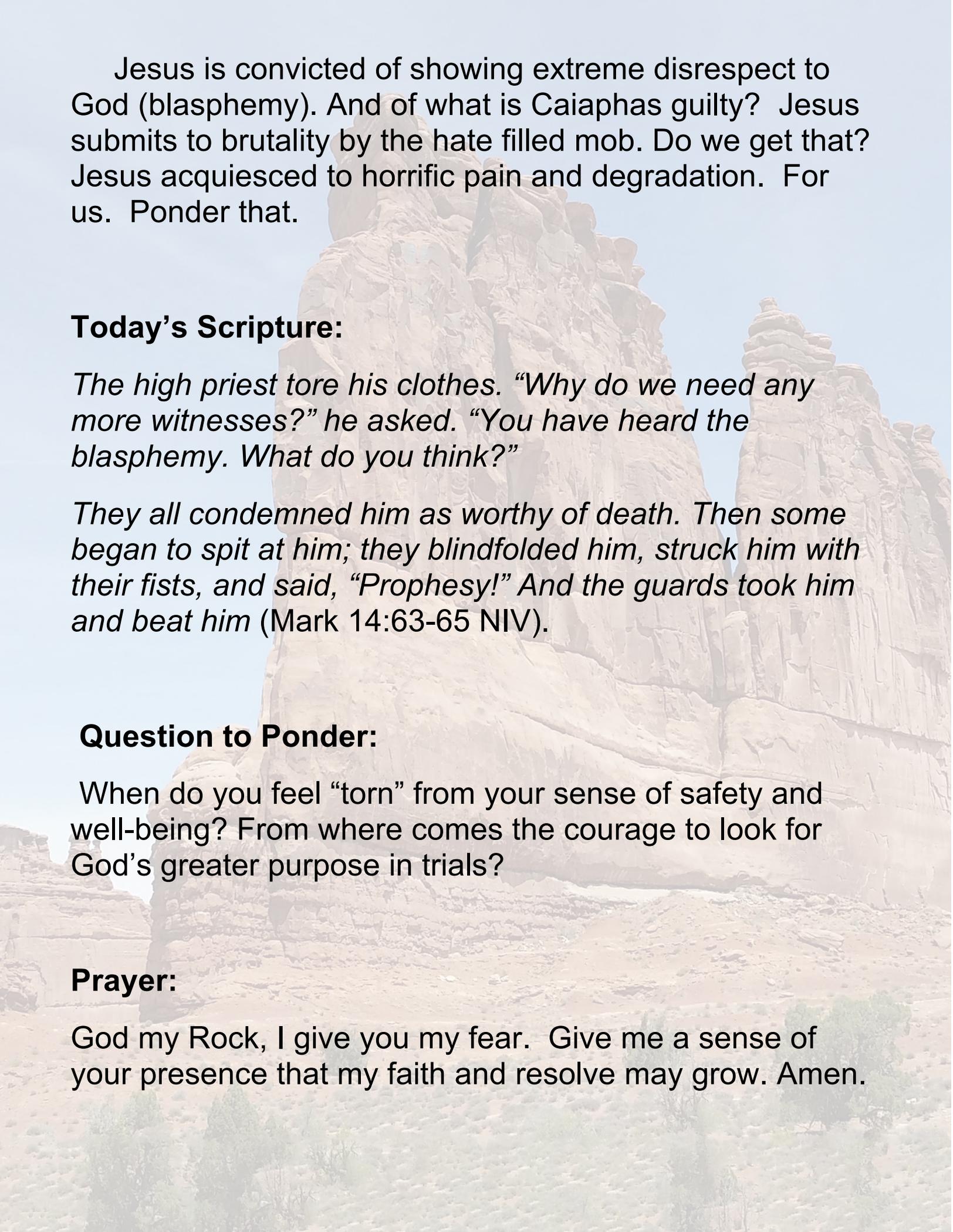
The saga continues.

Caiaphas has put on his Sunday-going-to-meeting clothes (his high chiefly robes). Since this wasn't an "official" gathering and the priestly garments were not needed, we have to wonder if Caiaphas was dressing up for the sake of intimidation or to instill some resolve in himself.

Jesus has entered a plea of "guilty" (so to speak) to the charges claiming he is The Messiah. Caiaphas is outraged. The "rending" of his clothes has many nuances. Caiaphas is displaying an ancient sign of grief. He is also passing judgement similar to the modern court gesture of the hammer hitting a gavel.

Another allusion takes us to Old Testament Saul as he is being relieved of his kingship. Begging to hold onto his position, Saul grabbed the priest Samuel's mantle and tore it. "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to one of your neighbors—to one better than you..." Samuel pronounced (1 Sam 15:27-28). The neighbor Samuel is referring to is the shepherd, David.

There is, too, a foreshadowing here of the tearing of the veil to the holy of holies (Mk. 15:38). The duties of the high priest will be usurped by Jesus' which is exactly what the temple elite feared most.



Jesus is convicted of showing extreme disrespect to God (blasphemy). And of what is Caiaphas guilty? Jesus submits to brutality by the hate filled mob. Do we get that? Jesus acquiesced to horrific pain and degradation. For us. Ponder that.

### **Today's Scripture:**

*The high priest tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?"*

*They all condemned him as worthy of death. Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophecy!" And the guards took him and beat him (Mark 14:63-65 NIV).*

### **Question to Ponder:**

When do you feel "torn" from your sense of safety and well-being? From where comes the courage to look for God's greater purpose in trials?

### **Prayer:**

God my Rock, I give you my fear. Give me a sense of your presence that my faith and resolve may grow. Amen.

## **Practice: The Prayer of Examen**

Examen is the practice of discerning the voice and activity of God within the flow of the day. At the end of the day, come into the Lord's presence asking two questions:

- When today did I have the deepest sense of connection with God, others, myself?
- When today did I have the least sense of connection?

(Adapted from *The Spiritual Discipline Handbook*, Adele Ahlberg Calhoun/Examen)

