

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN

NARRATOR

READERS:

A	Official	Servant	Crowd
B	Maidservant	Crowd	
C	Peter	Crowd	Soldier
D	Bystander	Pilate	

JESUS

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NARR Now, with his disciples, Jesus went out across the Kedron Valley. On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples entered it. Judas the traitor knew the place well, since Jesus had often met his disciples there. There, then, Judas came, together with a detachment from the Roman garrison, and temple police sent by the chief priests and Pharisees, all with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus, fully realising all that was going to happen to him, went out to meet them.

JESUS Who is it you're looking for?

A Jesus of Nazareth.

JESUS I am Jesus of Nazareth.

NARR Judas the traitor was standing there with them. When Jesus said, "I am Jesus of Nazareth", they all shrank back and fell to the ground. So once more Jesus asked them:

JESUS Who is it you're looking for?

A Jesus of Nazareth.

- JESUS I have told you I am he. If I am the one you are looking for, let these others go.
- NARR This was to fulfil the words he had spoken: “Not one of those you gave me have I lost.” Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, and struck the High Priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.
- JESUS Sheathe your sword. This is the cup my Father has given me; shall I not drink it?
- NARR The Roman officer and his men, together with the temple police, arrested Jesus and tied him up. They took him first to Annas. Annas was father-in-law to Caiaphas, the High Priest for that year – the same Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it was best to put one man to death for the sake of the people.
Behind Jesus followed Simon Peter, and one other disciple who was known personally to the High Priest. He went in with Jesus to the High Priest’s courtyard, but Peter was left standing at the door outside. So this other disciple, who was known to the High Priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter inside. The young woman at the door remarked to Peter –
- B Are you one of this man’s disciples, too?
- C No, I am not.
- NARR It was cold, and the servants and officials stood round a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter was standing with them, warming himself. And now the High Priest questioned Jesus about his disciples, and about his teaching.

JESUS I have spoken openly for all the world to hear; I have always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple where all the Jews meet together: I have said nothing in secret. But why ask me? Ask my hearers what I taught: they know what I said.

NARR When Jesus said this one of the officials nearby struck him in the face:

A Is that how you answer the High Priest?

JESUS If I said something wrong, produce the evidence, but if I spoke the truth, why hit me?

NARR So Annas sent him, bound, to Caiaphas the High Priest. Peter was still standing there keeping himself warm. Someone asked him –

D Aren't you another of his disciples?

C No, I am not.

NARR One of the High Priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him:

A But didn't I see you with him in the olive grove?

C No!

NARR And at that moment a cock began to crow. They took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters.
It was not morning. They did not go into the Praetorium themselves: there was the Paschal meal to be eaten, and they must not incur defilement. So Pilate came outside to them.

- D What charge do you bring against this man?
- A If he were not a criminal, we would not hand him over to you.
- D Take him yourselves, then; try him by your own law.
- A Jews are not allowed to put a man to death.
- NARR This was to fulfil what Jesus had said indicating the sort of death he had to die.
So Pilate went back into the Praetorium and called Jesus to him.
- D Are you the king of the Jews?
- JESUS Is that your own idea or have others suggested it to you?
- D Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me. What have you done?
- JESUS My kingship is not of this world; if my kingship were of this world my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews; but my kingship is not from the world.
- D So, then, you are a king?
- JESUS “King” is your word. Yes, I am a king.
The reason I was born, the reason I came into the world, is to testify to the truth.
And all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.

- D Truth? What's that?
- NARR With this Pilate went out again to the Jews.
- D For my part, I find no case against him.
But you have a custom that I release one prisoner
for you at Passover. Would you like me to release
the king of the Jews?
- A No, not him! We want Barabbas!
- B & C We want Barabbas!
- NARR Barabbas was a terrorist.
Pilate now took Jesus and had him flogged. The
soldiers plaited a crown of thorns and placed it on
his head, and robed him in a purple cloak.
Then time after time they came up to him –
- C - Hail! King of the Jews! –
- NARR - and struck him on the face.
Once again Pilate went out to the crowd.
- D Look, I am going to bring him out to you, to let you
see that I find no case against him.
- NARR And Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns
and the purple cloak.
- D Look! Here is the man!
- NARR As soon as the chief priests and the temple police
saw him they shouted –

- A Crucify him!
- A,B,C Crucify him!
- D Take him yourselves and crucify him.
I find no case against him.
- A He claimed to be Son of God!
- C We have a Jewish law!
- B The law says he must die!
- A,B,C He claimed to be Son of God!!
- NARR When Pilate heard that, he was more afraid than ever. He went back into the Praetorium.
- D Where do you come from?
- NARR But Jesus made no answer.
- D Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have the power to release you and the power to crucify you?
- JESUS You would have no power over me at all if it had not been given you from above. That is why the man who gave me up to you has the greater guilt.
- NARR From that moment Pilate tried hard to release him, but the Jews kept shouting –
- C If you let this man go, you're no friend of Caesar!
- A,B,C A man who claims to be king is a man defying Caesar!

- NARR When Pilate heard what they were saying he brought Jesus out and seated himself on the chair of judgement at a place called The Pavement, in Hebrew Gabbatha.
It was the eve of Passover, about noon.
He spoke to the Jews.
- D Here is your king.
- B Away with him!
B,C Away with him!
A,B,C Crucify him!
- D Do you want me to crucify your king?
- A,B,C We have no king except Caesar!
- NARR So in the end Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified, and they, once he was in their hands, led him away.
They took Jesus, carrying his cross, out of the city to a place called Skull Hill, in Hebrew Golgotha. There they crucified him, and two others, one on either side of him with Jesus in the middle. Pilate wrote out a notice and had it fixed to the cross. It read –
- D “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews”.
- NARR This notice, in Hebrew, Latin and Greek, was read by many of the Jews since the place where Jesus was crucified was not far from the city.
The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate.
- A You should not write, “King of the Jews”, but “This man said: ‘I am King of the Jews.’”

- D What I have written I have written.
- NARR After the soldiers had crucified Jesus they took his garments and divided them four ways, one for each soldier. There was also his tunic, but this tunic was woven in one piece from top to bottom and had no seam. So they said to one another –
- C We shouldn't tear it. Let's toss for it.
- NARR Thus the text of Scripture came true: "They shared my garments among them, and cast lots for my clothing." That is what the soldiers did.
Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala.
Seeing his mother, and the disciple he loved standing near her, Jesus spoke to his mother –
- JESU Woman, this is your son.
- NARR And then to the disciple –
- JESUS This is your mother.
- NARR And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his home.
After that Jesus, aware that all had now come to its appointed end, spoke in fulfilment of Scripture –
- JESUS I thirst.
- NARR A jar stood there full of sour wine; so they soaked a sponge with the wine, fixed it on a javelin, and held it up to his lips.
When Jesus had received the wine he said –

JESUS It is accomplished.

NARR His head fell forward, and he died.

NARR The Jews would not let the bodies remain crucified on the Sabbath, because that Sabbath day was a solemn one; and since it was now the eve, they asked Pilate that the bodies might have their legs broken, and be taken away.

Consequently the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then of the other. When they came to Jesus they found he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and at once blood and water came out.

This is vouched for by an eye witness, whose evidence is to be trusted. He knows that he speaks the truth, so that you, too, may believe. Because all this happened to fulfil the words of Scripture: "Not one bone of his will be broken." And again, in another place Scripture says: "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

When it was all over, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but in secret, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him leave; so Joseph came and took the body away. He was joined by Nicodemus (the man who had first visited Jesus by night), who brought with him a mixture of myrrh and aloes, more than half a hundredweight.

NARR Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. At the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in this garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been buried. Since it was the day before the Sabbath, and because the tomb was close by, they placed Jesus' body there.

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