

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

by Mark & Karla Jensen



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GREAT EXPECTATIONS

A five-part Lenten journey

by Mark and Karla Jensen

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PRODUCTION NOTES

Blending traditional stories from the Bible with modern-day situations is our specialty. Utilizing biblical costumes for biblical characters and modern costumes and props (like rolling luggage) for other characters brings a new dimension to retelling important faith-filled stories.

In *Great Expectations*, the traditional stories of Lent take place in a commonplace setting that most people are familiar with: a stay at a hotel. The main characters, Hope and Chase, are much like their names: Hope, a true optimist who wants nothing more than to meet her dream Messiah, paired against Chase, who is skeptical of a Messiah who transforms lives.

The set is minimal, including a small table that may be easily moved On- and Off-stage that serves as the front desk of the hotel. A laptop or phone may be added as props. A three-panel poster board wrapped around a small table with the Great Expectations Hotel emblem emblazoned on the front easily represents the hotel grounds. Chairs moved On- and Off-stage easily transform a room from one scene to the next and most often, the congregation becomes the crowds with whom John the Baptist and Jesus interact. Actors may imply scenes Off-stage by casting their gaze into various parts of the congregation (as with the Palm Sunday procession) and use center or side aisles to accommodate entrances from a variety of players.

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Week 1: Repent for the Forgiveness of Sins

Based on Matthew 3:1-12

Characters:

Hope, an optimistic tourist

Chase, her skeptical husband

Clerk Mary

John the Baptist

Narrator or Pastor

Costumes:

Hope and Chase wear modern vacation attire. Chase should look a bit over the top, with a Hawaiian shirt, shorts, socks with sandals, a hat, and sunglasses. Clerk Mary should wear a simple biblical robe and headpiece. John the Baptist wears a tattered tunic. His hair may be mussed. His overall look should be wild and woolly.

Props:

A camera with a strap, rolling luggage or backpack, room keys, free passes, smartphone.

(The scene is a hotel lobby, with CLERK MARY in place at the registration desk at center. HOPE is the character who can't wait to see the Messiah and have her dreams come true. She enters, excited and thrilled about what's ahead. CHASE follows. He is low-key, somewhat skeptical about most things, wondering what the catch is and if the Messiah is as wonderful as others make him out to be. Other guests may be milling about also.)

NARRATOR: *(Reads introduction. You may use this at the beginning of each week or the first week only.)* **Welcome to Great Expectations Lodge and Resort, an unlikely place to spend your Lenten journey. Great Expectations is where faithful believers like you and I come to meet the Messiah face to face. During Lent, we anticipate a Messiah who will be our savior, yet we all come to the cross with a different picture in mind of who Jesus was,**

1 who he is, and who he will be after making the Lenten
2 journey. What kind of expectations do you bring during
3 Lent? Find out as we embark upon our weekly Lenten
4 series entitled *Great Expectations*.

5 CHASE: (*Enters with rolling luggage or backpack, camera around*
6 *neck, and sunglasses.*) Hi. Is this Great Expectations
7 Lodge and Resort? I'm looking for check-in.

8 CLERK MARY: You found it! Welcome to Great Expectations
9 Lodge and Resort. Our motto is "Ask, seek, and knock."
10 How many nights?

11 HOPE: Seven. And a double bed, non-smoking room will be
12 fine.

13 CLERK MARY: Haven't you heard? At Great Expectations
14 Lodge, all beds are king-size, every room is a suite, the
15 hotel restaurant only serves an all-you-can-eat buffet,
16 and every room has a gorgeous ocean view.

17 HOPE: (*To CHASE*) Oh, honey! This is beyond our
18 expectations!

19 CLERK MARY: Not only that, but you two have landed the
20 last room. It's a very busy week.

21 CHASE: We'll take it.

22 CLERK MARY: (*Hands them items.*) Here are your room keys
23 and free passes to the water park, spa, casino, and
24 indoor golf range.

25 CHASE: That sounds like a lot of value. We'll just see how
26 things go at Great Expectations and how good these
27 rooms really are.

28 CLERK MARY: I'm guessing ... what? Honeymoon?
29 Anniversary? Birthday? You look eager to celebrate.

30 CHASE: None of those things, actually. We heard that this
31 was the place to come to find happiness, fit in, and
32 make the most out of life. Like I said earlier ... we'll see.

33 HOPE: Someone posted on Facebook that Great
34 Expectations has already been preparing for the
35 Messiah and that we might meet him here. Just think
36 how our lives could change!

37 CHASE: And since we came with our own expectations of
38 who this Messiah will be, we knew this would be the

- 1 place to find our “ideal guy.” (*Says facetiously, rolls eyes at*
 2 *his wife’s optimism.*) I can’t wait.
- 3 CLERK MARY: You and every other couple are seeking the
 4 same thing: a Savior and Messiah to save the world. I’ll
 5 bet you have royalty in mind.
- 6 HOPE: Exactly. You’ve probably heard everyone’s
 7 expectations for weeks. I don’t know how a place like
 8 this can even begin to prepare for the coming of the
 9 Messiah. It’s so ... big!
- 10 CLERK MARY: We have staff for that. In fact, you need to
 11 meet John. He’s right behind you, preparing the way at
 12 every chance he gets. (*The couple walks toward JOHN THE*
 13 *BAPTIST who has entered across the stage, preaching to the*
 14 *congregation as if the crowd. HOPE and CHASE stand a*
 15 *distance away from JOHN THE BAPTIST at first. CLERK*
 16 *MARY exits.*)
- 17 HOPE: (*From afar*) Oh, John must be like a concierge. Give
 18 him any request, and he’ll fulfill it. I hope so.
- 19 CHASE: I just hope the staff doesn’t expect big tips. We’re on
 20 a budget.
- 21 JOHN THE BAPTIST: (*To congregation*) I baptize you with
 22 water for the repentance of sin, but one who is more
 23 powerful than I is coming after me.
- 24 HOPE: I think he’s referring to the Messiah, honey! I wonder
 25 if we’ll see the Messiah soon.
- 26 JOHN THE BAPTIST: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is
 27 near. (*Turns to stare at HOPE and CHASE.*)
- 28 CHASE: Is he talking to us? It looks as if he’s staring straight
 29 at me.
- 30 JOHN THE BAPTIST: I speak of the one Isaiah prophesied
 31 about when he said, “Hear the voice of one crying in the
 32 wilderness. Prepare the way of the Lord. Make his
 33 paths straight.”
- 34 CHASE: I’d like to make a straight path right to the golf
 35 range. Let’s go, honey. (*He tries to steer HOPE away from*
 36 *JOHN THE BAPTIST.*)
- 37 HOPE: The Wilderness? Isn’t that the hotel next door? I
 38 wonder if he works for both resorts. That’s dedication.

1 **JOHN THE BAPTIST:** (*Approaching HOPE and CHASE, then*
 2 *people in the congregation*) **I recognize you ... (To CHASE) ...**
 3 **and you ... (To HOPE) ... and you. (To others in the**
 4 *congregation)* **All of you have come to the River Jordan to**
 5 **be baptized. Remember how I baptized you with water?**
 6 **The one who comes after me, I am not worthy to untie**
 7 **his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit**
 8 **and with fire.**

9 **CHASE:** (*Aside to HOPE, while JOHN THE BAPTIST continues to*
 10 *walk among the congregation.*) **Now there's a Messiah I**
 11 **might even find worth following — one with a little flair**
 12 **and rock star status. If the Messiah's got a stage show**
 13 **with fire, then I might perk up and listen.**

14 **JOHN THE BAPTIST:** (*Still in congregation*) **Every tree that**
 15 **does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown**
 16 **into the fire, friends.**

17 **CHASE:** Oh, so now I'm confused. Is this guy in landscaping,
 18 **then? Because I could use the advice if he is.**

19 **HOPE:** No, I'm almost certain he's got something to do with
 20 **scheduling the Messiah's appearances. Like**
 21 **Ticketmaster, only with a face.**

22 **JOHN THE BAPTIST:** (*Approaching front stage where HOPE and*
 23 *CHASE wait*) **What my words mean is that if you are not**
 24 **changing your life for your own good or for the good of**
 25 **the kingdom of God, you won't be suitable for what's**
 26 **ahead.**

27 **HOPE:** What's ahead? I'm thinking a week of leisure,
 28 **swimming, buffets, and reading.**

29 **CHASE:** He said change, Hope. I'm thinking oil changes,
 30 **filter changes, changing cell phone service. There's a lot**
 31 **we could be doing to improve our lives, dear. He's got a**
 32 **point.**

33 **JOHN THE BAPTIST:** Those who don't feel like they need to
 34 **change are not truly repentant, brothers and sisters.**
 35 **You don't see a need for the one who is coming.**

36 **HOPE:** Oh, John guy ... you've misjudged us. We absolutely
 37 **see the need for a Messiah, right honey? (*Pokes him with***
 38 *her elbow so he answers.))* **Right honey?**

- 1 CHASE: (*Agreeing reluctantly*) Oh, by all means. Yes. The
 2 Messiah can help us when the team needs a big win,
 3 when the budget is tight, when a snowstorm is coming,
 4 when —
- 5 JOHN THE BAPTIST: (*Interrupting*) The Messiah comes for
 6 those who are lost — for sinners who are broken and
 7 see the need for repentance.
- 8 CHASE: So what you are saying is ... the way I understand
 9 your words ... um ... (*Turns to HOPE.*) Honey, could you
 10 Google a translation of this?
- 11 HOPE: Sure, dear. Let me get my smartphone out. (*She does.*)
 12 Translations ... here we go ... what language?
- 13 JOHN THE BAPTIST: The language of Jesus, who is the
 14 coming Messiah.
- 15 HOPE: Jesus? Jesus of Nazareth? How do you know he's the
 16 promised Messiah?
- 17 JOHN THE BAPTIST: I heard what Jesus was doing when I
 18 was in prison: healing the sick, befriending sinners,
 19 raising the dead.
- 20 HOPE: You've been in prison? (*Turns to CHASE and pulls him*
 21 *away from JOHN THE BAPTIST.*) Honey, maybe we
 22 should let this man get back to work.
- 23 JOHN THE BAPTIST: Through Jesus' disciples I asked him,
 24 "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for
 25 another?"
- 26 CHASE: He could have meant a taxi ... like waiting for
 27 another taxi, not waiting for another Messiah. Let's go.
 28 (*They start to move away from JOHN THE BAPTIST again.*)
- 29 JOHN THE BAPTIST: Jesus told his disciples to come and
 30 tell me all the many miracles they had seen and heard
 31 to prove he is the Messiah.
- 32 HOPE: (*Stops mid-step and turns around to keep listening.*)
 33 Miracles? What miracles?
- 34 JOHN THE BAPTIST: That the blind receive sight. That the
 35 lame will walk. That lepers are cleansed.
- 36 CHASE: (*Aside to HOPE, poking fun*) Next he's going to say
 37 something totally outrageous, like "the dead are
 38 raised."

- 1 **JOHN THE BAPTIST:** How did you know? Yes, Jesus raised
 2 the dead and brought good news to the poor. Jesus said,
 3 “Blessed is everyone who takes no offense at me.”
- 4 **HOPE:** So, the Messiah comes to transform people?
- 5 **CHASE:** And make them whole and restored? (*JOHN THE*
 6 *BAPTIST nods his head and agrees.*)
- 7 **HOPE:** How will we recognize Jesus if in fact he *is* the
 8 Messiah?
- 9 **CHASE:** We thought that the Messiah would most definitely
 10 *not* be hanging out with the poor, the lepers, or the
 11 dead, but if I’m hearing correctly, you just told us the
 12 opposite.
- 13 **JOHN THE BAPTIST:** All who come to Great Expectations
 14 will have their own view of what the Messiah should be.
 15 Some will be right. Some will be wrong.
- 16 **HOPE:** Honey, we should find our room. If the Messiah is
 17 coming and John here has prepared for his arrival, I
 18 don’t want to be seen in my casual clothes. Let’s dress
 19 up.
- 20 **CHASE:** If John’s comfortable wearing camel’s hair with a
 21 leather belt, then I think my Hawaiian shirt, shorts, and
 22 sandals are fine.
- 23 **HOPE:** I guess you’re right. For someone who makes a path
 24 for the Messiah, John the Baptist isn’t exactly what I
 25 pictured.
- 26 **CLERK MARY:** (*Entering*) Still in the lobby, friends? Sounds
 27 like your expectations may be turned upside down here
 28 at Great Expectations Lodge and Resort. Guests often
 29 find their preconceived ideas about life and God don’t
 30 match up with what God is really doing in the world.
- 31 **HOPE:** (*Aside to CHASE*) Maybe we should stay somewhere
 32 else ... I’m not sure I want all my hopes and
 33 expectations dashed. I heard John mention the
 34 Wilderness. That resort has a good reputation.
- 35 **CLERK MARY:** You’re welcome to try one of our other hotel
 36 partners. However, if you’d like to stay here for the
 37 week, I promise you won’t regret your experience.
 38 Coming face to face with the Messiah, the promised one

who can change your life forever, is one experience guaranteed to make history.

Week 2: Entrance into Jerusalem

Based on Matthew 21:1-11

Characters:

Hope

Chase

Clerk Mary

George, a local bystander

Pharisee

Costumes:

Hope, Chase, and Clerk Mary are costumed as before. George and Pharisee wear biblical robes.

Props:

Signs saying “Hosanna” and “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,” palm branches (either real ones from a florist or fake ones from a craft and hobby store), iPod with ear buds, and a bag of silver coins.

(The scene is the same as last week, in the hotel lobby with the registration desk at center. GUESTS may be milling about. HOPE and CHASE have checked into their room and are now deciding what activities to do while hanging out for the week at Great Expectations Lodge and Resort. CLERK MARY is helping others on the phone.)

HOPE: Chase, look at this brochure of activities. Great Expectations Lodge and Resort hosts a daily parade, which passes directly outside the front entrance.

CHASE: Great. Just like Disney. Too bad the Messiah couldn’t be spotted in Florida, but noooo. You just had to come all the way to Jerusalem. And there are no cool rides here either, but who am I to squash your dream?

- 1 CLERK MARY: Excuse me for interrupting. I don't mean to
2 eavesdrop, but today's parade is nothing like the
3 Disneyland parade. Not even close.
- 4 HOPE: No? How is it different?
- 5 CLERK MARY: The parade today welcomes Jesus of
6 Nazareth to Jerusalem. Many believe that Jesus is the
7 very Messiah for which John prepared the way. You
8 heard about Jesus when you checked in, remember?
9 (*GEORGE enters.*)
- 10 GEORGE: (*Approaching CLERK MARY*) Say, lady, what's the
11 big idea?
- 12 CLERK MARY: May I help you, sir?
- 13 GEORGE: My name is George Wilson. And yeah, you can help
14 me out. When I made my reservation with Great
15 Expectations Lodge last week, you told me you guys
16 had guaranteed parking.
- 17 CLERK MARY: Yes, sir. That's correct. Great Expectations
18 Lodge and Resort has plenty of reserved parking for
19 guests.
- 20 GEORGE: Then why did I have to park my donkey six blocks
21 away from the resort when I went for a donut run this
22 morning?
- 23 CHASE: (*To CLERK MARY*) Oh man, I'm sorry. I didn't even
24 ask if we could leave our animals in the parking garage.
25 We drove a Jaguar.
- 26 CLERK MARY: (*To CHASE*) Don't worry. The Jaguar is fine, I
27 promise. I let this gentleman park in the parking
28 garage with everyone else, but if you recall, (*Now looking*
29 *at GEORGE*) you requested street level parking. I'm sure
30 the problem is temporary. With the parade in town,
31 things are a little tight out front.
- 32 GEORGE: I hope it's temporary, or my family and I will head
33 over to the Mt. of Olives Wilderness Hotel. I hear they
34 serve awesome milk and honey.
- 35 CLERK MARY: I'm sure it won't be necessary for you to
36 relocate. In fact, I'll send one of the staff to fetch your
37 donkey right now.
- 38 GEORGE: I'll have to take a pass on your generous offer.

1 Two men approached me earlier and told me they
2 needed my donkey and my daughter's younger donkey
3 for their master.

4 HOPE: You surely didn't give the men your donkeys, did
5 you? How in the world will you get them back with this
6 huge crowd here for the parade?

7 GEORGE: Sure, I gave them to the men who asked. I figured
8 they must be talking about one of the pro golfers in
9 town for the Masters Golf Tournament. Isn't that why
10 the place is crawling with people?

11 CLERK MARY: Mr. Wilson, given those circumstances, the
12 hotel can't be held responsible for what happens to
13 your animals. You might not see them again. *(Loud crowd*
14 *noises are suddenly heard. Here, EXTRAS may hold up signs*
15 *for the congregation to create the crowd comments and noises*
16 *needed. Place words "Blessed is he who comes in the name of*
17 *the Lord" or "Hosanna" on poster board to encourage*
18 *participation.)*

19 HOPE: Hey, what's with all the noise?

20 CLERK MARY: That would be the start of the procession.
21 We'd like to encourage all guests to step outside. At
22 Great Expectations, we offer nothing but the best view
23 of the festival. *(All GUESTS move to the front entrance,*
24 *which can be the bottom steps of the front of sanctuary.*
25 *Standing in a line, all onlookers face the same direction and act*
26 *as if the procession passed by them, as their heads turn from*
27 *left to right, watching.) You'll need these to welcome the*
28 *Messiah. (CLERK MARY passes out palm branches to wave.)*

29 CHASE: *(Pointing)* Look, Hope. The one on the donkey. That
30 must be Jesus of Nazareth that everyone is talking
31 about.

32 GEORGE: Hey, the guy's riding my donkey, and that little
33 donkey beside him is my daughter's.

34 HOPE: Look at how people are throwing their coats at Jesus'
35 feet, as if he's royalty.

36 CHASE: And now they're laying the palm branches at his
37 feet as well, to make a path. And to think I spent all that
38 money on a brick path at our own house.

- 1 GEORGE: Hey, listen. The crowds ahead of us ... they're
2 yelling something.
- 3 CHASE: I'm pretty sure that's the score of the basketball
4 game. I'm listening through my ear buds. *(He takes one*
5 *out and shows everyone, offering one ear bud to GEORGE.)*
6 The game is really close.
- 7 HOPE: *(Grabs ear buds away.)* It is not! They're yelling,
8 "Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he who comes
9 in the name of the Lord."
- 10 ALL: *(Together)* Hosanna in the highest heaven. Hosanna to
11 the Son of David!
- 12 CLERK MARY: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the
13 Lord!
- 14 CHASE: Blessed is the team who is ahead in the first quarter!
- 15 HOPE: Chase, now is a perfect time to recognize that there
16 are more important things in life than the game, the
17 score, or the playoffs.
- 18 GEORGE: I agree with your wife, sir. The Messiah walked
19 right in front of us. We could practically reach out and
20 touch his robe. I heard he performs miracles.
- 21 CHASE: I know. I just thought Jesus would look more
22 majestic, more famous or something, like our sports
23 heroes. He didn't even give a great speech.
- 24 CLERK MARY: I'm sure Jesus will be guiding his followers
25 with some very important words throughout the week.
26 Why don't we head back inside?
- 27 CHASE: I just expected the Messiah to be some kind of great
28 leader, like Vince Lombardi, Tony Dungee, or John
29 Maxwell.
- 30 GEORGE: I agree. This guy wasn't any Nelson Mandela, JFK,
31 or Abraham Lincoln. I thought he'd be dressed in armor
32 or carrying a sword like a great warrior.
- 33 HOPE: Even though Jesus isn't any of those things, guys,
34 how could you miss the crowd's response to him? They
35 were in awe of him, they revered him, they loved him!
- 36 CLERK MARY: I know what you're all thinking. Things seem
37 backward at Great Expectations Lodge and Resort.
38 Jesus isn't like any of the people you mentioned, and

- 1 yet he is charismatic, holy, and honored for his unusual
2 and kind ways of meeting people where they are.
- 3 CHASE: You're right. Jesus wasn't at all what we expected,
4 especially not after listening to John the Baptist. I
5 never once pictured the Messiah in a plain tunic and
6 sandals, riding on a puny donkey.
- 7 GEORGE: Hey, watch it, buddy.
- 8 CLERK MARY: We all know the feeling of being let down by
9 those we hold in high esteem. We hate to see our
10 favorite sports figures or politicians fall from grace. We
11 want them to be as good, as honest, and as wonderful as
12 we make them out to be.
- 13 PHARISEE: (*Enters.*) Hey, this hotel looks like the set of
14 *Pretty Woman*.
- 15 CLERK MARY: Oh, right ... the classic movie with Richard
16 Gere and Julia Roberts with the fairytale ending.
- 17 PHARISEE: Yeah, that one. The guests always slipped the
18 concierge an extra big tip for favors, right?
- 19 CLERK MARY: And what is this all about, sir? Aren't you a
20 Pharisee?
- 21 PHARISEE: You got it. Me and my cohorts — we need a few
22 favors. We need this beautiful lobby here to pray in
23 public so everyone can see our righteousness. We'd also
24 like to set up a little temple market out front during the
25 Passover this week.
- 26 CLERK MARY: A temple and a market usually don't go
27 together. They're like oil and water.
- 28 PHARISEE: We'd like to encourage folks to purchase some
29 clean animals for sacrifice, that's all. (*Looks around to see*
30 *if anyone is watching.*) Will a twenty do it, or how about a
31 nice heavy bag of thirty pieces of silver instead? (*Holds*
32 *a bag of money.*) Name your price.
- 33 CLERK MARY: Neither, sir. You Pharisees aren't jealous of
34 the Messiah entering Jerusalem today, are you? I'd hate
35 to see you steal Jesus' thunder.
- 36 PHARISEE: Never. I'm just a simple, righteous Pharisee,
37 following the rules. No healing, no work on the
38 Sabbath, no texting while driving, no breaking the

1 rules like Jesus.

2 CLERK MARY: So you've heard that Jesus doesn't play by
3 the rules? He's stirred things up. People — lots of
4 people, like most of our guests — (*Motions to CHASE and*
5 *HOPE*) are paying attention to Jesus.

6 PHARISEE: (*Approaching HOPE and CHASE*) Oh, people are
7 smart enough to realize who knows the laws around
8 here and who doesn't.

9 HOPE: Uh, Chase? Maybe we should head back to our room
10 for a while.

11 CHASE: We don't want to be in the way.

12 CLERK MARY: Jesus said, "You know the law but you don't
13 know the heart of the law." I wrote that down.

14 PHARISEE: Write this down, honey. Nobody rivals Rome.
15 Nobody challenges our teachings. We have six hundred
16 and thirteen laws. (*Turns to HOPE and CHASE again.*)
17 How about you two help us get rid of Jesus? Thirty
18 pieces of silver is a good tip for someone. (*HOPE and*
19 *CHASE are aghast.*)

20 CLERK MARY: (*Stands in front of HOPE and CHASE, protecting*
21 *them.*) Sorry, sir. We can't help you. I'm just here to
22 welcome people who are seeking a more fulfilling life. I
23 don't think your six hundred and thirteen laws will
24 help as much as seeking Jesus.

25 PHARISEE: Your loss. (*PHARISEE leaves.*)

26 HOPE: We know you said some interesting things would
27 happen over the course of the week, Mary.

28 CHASE: Yes, but we didn't think being asked to eliminate
29 Jesus would be one of them.

30 HOPE: And did that Pharisee really follow the no-texting-
31 while-driving rule? I don't trust him.

32 CLERK MARY: You will not understand many events that
33 you witness here at Great Expectations at first, but
34 later, you will.

35
36
37
38

Week 3: By What Authority?

Mark 11:15-19, 27-33

Characters:

Hope

Chase

Clerk Mary

Pharisee 1

Pharisee 2

Judas

Chief Priest 1

Chief Priest 2

Vendor Bystander

Jewish Bystander

Costumes:

All returning characters are costumed as before. The Pharisees, Judas, Chief Priests, and Bystanders all wear biblical robes and headpieces. Consider color-coding the Pharisees and Chief Priests.

Props:

Smartphone, card table.

(HOPE and CHASE enter the hotel and speak about all the things just witnessed or heard concerning Jesus' ministry. HOPE and CHASE are wowed by what they've seen and heard. Others may be entering and excitedly talking about something that has just occurred.)

HOPE: John was right. Jesus must be the Messiah we've been waiting for! He brought sight to the blind and healed the sick.

CHASE: I know! Lepers cleansed. The dead raised. I should consult him about my toenail fungus. We should go and tell John what we've seen and heard. It was all true!

CLERK MARY: You two guests certainly sound enthused. What's all the commotion?

HOPE: Chase thinks he's finally getting rid of that toenail

1 fungus.

2 CHASE: Not that, dear. We thought the Messiah would enter
3 as a king, with servants to wait upon him. We were so
4 wrong.

5 HOPE: Jesus surprised us from the very beginning. He
6 serves others! Does nothing for the glory of himself. He
7 doesn't just have Facebook friends, either. He has
8 disciples!

9 CHASE: Jesus has fed the five thousand, performed
10 exorcisms, and walked on water. This Great
11 Expectations vacation has been so different than what
12 we anticipated. You were right.

13 CLERK MARY: Glad to hear it. But there's something else
14 you may not know. Have you heard Jesus foretell his
15 own death and resurrection yet? Some of our other
16 guests say that Jesus predicts his own demise — and
17 soon.

18 CHASE: Tell Jesus and the guests that I said the Mayan
19 calendar is all a hoax and not to worry.

20 HOPE: Jesus, dying? But how could this be? Jesus' ministry
21 is hardly underway. I hear he's teaching at the temple.

22 CLERK MARY: Jesus said, "The Son of Man must undergo
23 great suffering and be rejected by the elders and chief
24 priests and be killed and on the third day be raised."

25 CHASE: I heard someone repeating his words, saying, "If any
26 want to become my followers, let them deny themselves
27 and take up their cross and follow me."

28 CLERK MARY: Yes. And for those who want to save their life,
29 he said, they must lose it, and those who lose their life
30 for his sake will save it.

31 CHASE: That's good. My wife has a knack for losing things ...
32 car keys, her purse, important messages, bills.

33 HOPE: Just ignore him. Jesus went on to say, "Those who
34 are ashamed of me and my words, of them the Son of
35 Man will be ashamed." I'd never be ashamed of Jesus.
36 His whole life represents serving and loving others.

37 CHASE: I've never talked to anyone who heard or saw that
38 Jesus was ever even angry. If I could only say the same

1 thing about my wife!

2 CLERK MARY: You're just in time, then. Jesus is about to get
3 angry over the unfair practices of the temple next door.

4 HOPE: I wondered why those delivery trucks with the cows,
5 sheep, and doves stopped on the street out front.
6 Neighbors' pets are pretty annoying sometimes.

7 CHASE: Come on. Let's go see. *(They exit. Switch to new scene at*
8 *the temple with JESUS and VENDOR BYSTANDER with*
9 *table.)*

10 JESUS: You, selling the doves — take those things out of
11 here. Stop making my Father's House a marketplace!

12 VENDOR BYSTANDER: Watch out! Jesus is making a whip
13 of cords and driving us all out of the temple. Look, he
14 turns over tables and pours out the coins of the
15 moneychangers. *(Folds up table and retreats before JESUS*
16 *umps his table.)*

17 JESUS: Is it not written, "My house shall be called a house of
18 prayer for all the nations, but you have made it a den of
19 robbers"?

20 JEWISH BYSTANDER: *(Approaches JESUS.)* What sign can
21 you give us for ravaging the temple like this? You're
22 destroying everything!

23 JESUS: Destroy this temple and in three days, I will raise it
24 up.

25 JEWISH BYSTANDER: *(Moves across stage as if to show vastness*
26 *of the temple.)* This temple has been under construction
27 for forty-six years, and you will raise it in three days? I
28 think not.

29 PHARISEE 1: By what authority are you doing these things?
30 Who gave you the authority to take such actions?

31 JESUS: I will ask you one question. Answer, and I will tell
32 you by what authority I am doing what I do.

33 PHARISEE 2: Very well. What is your question?

34 JESUS: Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it
35 of human origin? *(The PHARISEES gather around and*
36 *huddle up.)*

37 PHARISEE 1: OK, from heaven or humans? Who's got a
38 smartphone to Google the answer?

- 1 JEWISH BYSTANDER: (*Trying phone*) Ohhhh ... Network's
 2 down. Anyone else?
- 3 PHARISEE 2: (*Quietly, still huddling*) If we say, "From heaven,"
 4 Jesus will say, "Why did you not believe him?" But if we
 5 answer, "Of human origin," then the crowd will revolt.
 6 They all believe John is a prophet. (*Pauses to think.*) Then
 7 we shall say, "We don't know."
- 8 PHARISEE 1: (*Turns back to others.*) We do not know.
- 9 JESUS: Then neither will I tell you by what authority I am
 10 doing these things. (*Back to CLERK MARY and HOPE and*
 11 *CHASE.*)
- 12 CLERK MARY: See? Jesus has a righteous anger.
- 13 HOPE: If he's not careful, Jesus might anger the Pharisees.
- 14 CLERK MARY: That's one thing about Jesus, friends, that
 15 you will discover. He recognizes injustice.
- 16 CHASE: I didn't see anything that terrible out there by the
 17 temple. What did I miss?
- 18 HOPE: If it's anything like the outrageous prices at the mall,
 19 I'm right there with Jesus.
- 20 CLERK MARY: The trading that takes place in the temple is
 21 often unfair. I've heard stories of people entering the
 22 temple with perfectly good sheep only to be told that it
 23 had some blemish. It had to be exchanged for one of the
 24 temple sheep. That would cost the farmer dearly.
- 25 CHASE: I can see how the temple could do very well in that
 26 situation.
- 27 HOPE: That sounds like only the religious leaders and
 28 temple treasury is what benefits.
- 29 CLERK MARY: Exactly. Another guest told me that Roman
 30 coins can't be used in the temple, either. You must have
 31 "temple coins." They must be exchanged — only the
 32 exchange value is never high.
- 33 HOPE: Hmmmm. We'd better look through our currency. I
 34 don't want to get cheated when we go back home. Come
 35 on, Chase. We've got work to do.
- 36 CLERK MARY: (*JUDAS enters and approaches front desk. CLERK*
 37 *MARY notices.*) I'm sure we'll see each other later. Enjoy
 38 today's visit. I've got some other customers to attend to.

- 1 (*HOPE and CHASE exit.*) Good day, sir. May I help you?
- 2 **JUDAS:** I'm here to meet with the chief priests.
- 3 **CLERK MARY:** Very well. The chief priests are expecting
- 4 you. Just down the hall and to the left.
- 5 **JUDAS:** Thanks. I can find that myself. (*Looks around and finds*
- 6 *a couple of guys who are waiting for him.*)
- 7 **CHIEF PRIEST 2:** It's an exciting week at Great
- 8 Expectations, don't you agree?
- 9 **CHIEF PRIEST 1:** If you like tourists invading our space and
- 10 our city, I suppose you're correct.
- 11 **JUDAS:** There's an excitement in the air. Everyone's talking
- 12 about the Messiah, the promised one who will carry on
- 13 David's lineage. God's kingdom come.
- 14 **CHIEF PRIEST 2:** After that temple incident, your rabbi is in
- 15 a great deal of trouble, Judas.
- 16 **CHIEF PRIEST 1:** Jesus has yet to explain himself. Why is he
- 17 doing these things?
- 18 **CHIEF PRIEST 2:** The questions and answers we seek, we
- 19 cannot achieve in public. We need to ask Jesus in
- 20 private, away from the crowds.
- 21 **CHIEF PRIEST 1:** Are you the man who can set up such a
- 22 conversation with your rabbi?
- 23 **JUDAS:** I have the master's ear. Of course. He will listen to
- 24 me. I'm one of the beloved twelve. But you already knew
- 25 that.
- 26 **CHIEF PRIEST 2:** You should receive something for your ...
- 27 work, Judas.
- 28 **CHIEF PRIEST 1:** Will thirty pieces of silver do?
- 29 **JUDAS:** For what this will mean for my sake and for the sake
- 30 of the world, thirty pieces of silver sounds just right. In
- 31 fact, it's beyond my expectations. (*They shake on the*
- 32 *agreement and hold it as the last scene of the drama freezes.*)
- 33
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Week 4: The Last Supper

Based on John 13:1-16, Mark: 14:12-25

Characters:

Hope

Chase

Peter

Judas

Jesus

Clerk Mary

Extras as disciples and guards

Costumes:

All returning characters should be costumed as before. All others should wear biblical robes and headpieces except the guards, who may wear helmets and carry fake swords.

Props:

Towel, basin, water, bread, cup, bowl.

Sound Effects: Rooster crowing.

(HOPE and CHASE are still spending the week at Great Expectations. They are roaming the halls as the scene begins. Off to one side, JESUS is washing the DISCIPLES' feet. The Last Supper will take place around the altar or altar table. If you do not have one, place a long table at one side of the stage.)

HOPE: I know Great Expectations has a salon somewhere in here. I saw it advertised in our room.

CHASE: We've been walking these halls for hours, Hope. Can't you get your hair done when you get home?

HOPE: You're right. Everything else has been just perfect. I shouldn't complain about not getting in to see a hairdresser.

CHASE: Finally, now you sound reasonable.

HOPE: I'd like to get a manicure or pedicure instead. *(Sees JESUS washing DISCIPLES' feet.)* Oh, my goodness. What luck! Do you see that? The nail place must be open for

- 1 business right now, and so close to the lobby. How did I
2 miss that before?
- 3 CHASE: Say, that can't be who I think it is. What is Jesus
4 doing working at the salon? *(They watch JESUS remove*
5 *his outer robe, and tie a towel around himself while pouring*
6 *water into a basin.)*
- 7 PETER: Lord, are you going to wash my feet?
- 8 JESUS: Oh, Peter. You do not know what I am doing, but
9 later you will understand.
- 10 PETER: You will never wash my feet.
- 11 JESUS: If you want to be a part of me and a part of my
12 kingdom, let me wash your feet.
- 13 PETER: Then don't stop with just my feet, master. Wash all
14 of me as well.
- 15 HOPE: Jesus, wait! Is this where the line forms? I have a free
16 coupon.
- 17 CHASE: Hope, I don't think this is the salon. It looks more
18 like a party with foot washing and a meal — and we
19 weren't invited.
- 20 HOPE: *(To Jesus)* But I just heard you say that we could
21 become part of your kingdom. Why would we not want
22 that? After hearing stories of your miracles and
23 teachings all week, I want you to wash my feet — and
24 my husband's, please.
- 25 JESUS: Of course. *(He motions to wash their feet.)* Let me wash
26 your feet. And as I do, I ask all of you: Do you know
27 what I've done to you? You call me teacher and Lord,
28 and you are right, for that is what I am.
- 29 PETER: Yes, Lord. We love you.
- 30 JESUS: So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your
31 feet, you also ought to wash one another's.
- 32 HOPE: *(To Chase)* See, honey? I told you — you should be
33 washing my feet.
- 34 CHASE: Oh look, Hope, they're moving toward the food. We
35 should go.
- 36 JESUS: No, friends. All are welcome at the Lord's table.
- 37 JUDAS: Come. There's a large room upstairs, furnished and
38 ready. *(CHARACTERS take their places, kneeling around the*

1 *altar.*)

2 HOPE: How did you find such a wonderful room? Groupon?
3 Travelocity?

4 JUDAS: We asked Jesus, “Where do you want us to go and
5 make preparations for the Passover?” He said, “Go into
6 the city and a man carrying a jar of water will meet
7 you.”

8 CHASE: I wonder if he’s talking about John. Sounds just like
9 him.

10 JUDAS: Our master told us to follow this man and wherever
11 he entered, the owners of the house would show us
12 where to eat the Passover — and here we are!

13 HOPE: Jesus is a wonderful Messiah. I’ll bet he’s an optimist
14 all the time. I’ll bet he never says a harsh word toward
15 anyone, except for those folks at the temple who turned
16 it into a marketplace.

17 CHASE: By all means, then, be more like Jesus. I’d enjoy it.

18 JESUS: Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me. One who
19 is eating with me.

20 ALL: *(Murmuring in disbelief)* Surely not I!

21 CHASE: There go your great expectations again, Hope. Will
22 this convince you that maybe Jesus isn’t the perfect
23 Messiah you thought he was?

24 JESUS: The one who betrays me is one of the Twelve.

25 HOPE: Oh, my goodness. It’s one of his disciples. How could
26 that be? *(JESUS and JUDAS dip bread in a bowl.)*

27 JESUS: The one who dips bread into the bowl with me.

28 CHASE: Hope, it’s Judas!

29 JESUS: For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him. “But
30 woe to that man for whom the Son of Man is betrayed.
31 It would have been better for that one not to have been
32 born.”

33 HOPE: Chase, I’ve lost my appetite.

34 CHASE: Who could eat, knowing that one of Jesus’ own
35 followers might betray him?

36 JESUS: *(Taking the bread)* Take, this is my body. *(Distributes*
37 *bread while everyone takes a bite. Then JESUS takes the cup.)*
38 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out

1 for many. Truly I tell you, I will never drink again of the
2 fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in
3 the kingdom of God.

4 **PETER:** Jesus, your words weigh heavy upon us. Perhaps we
5 should all go to the garden and pray. (*JUDAS exits Stage*
6 *Left. The rest all move away from Center Stage to Stage Right,*
7 *as if to garden area.*)

8 **HOPE:** Chase, did you see that? Judas left quickly in the
9 opposite direction. I take it that means he won't be
10 joining us for prayer in the garden.

11 **CHASE:** I have a bad feeling that Judas could meet anyone
12 in the garden, but not for prayer. This may not end well
13 for anyone.

14 **JESUS:** You will become deserters, for it is written, "I will
15 strike the shepherd and the sheep will scatter. But after
16 I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee."

17 **HOPE:** Deserters? At Great Expectations? I would expect
18 that at home, where we're bombarded by celebrities
19 and sports figures and politicians who disappoint us
20 every day. I thought here with the Messiah, it would be
21 different.

22 **CHASE:** The story's not over yet. I'm sure Jesus' supporters
23 will be there for him. We'll stand with him. We're
24 faithful.

25 **PETER:** Lord, even though all the others may desert you, I
26 will not.

27 **JESUS:** Truly I tell you, this very night before the cock crows
28 twice, you will deny me three times.

29 **PETER:** Even though I must die with you, I will not deny
30 you.

31 **JESUS:** Peter, James, John. Come with me. The rest of you,
32 sit here while I pray.

33 **HOPE:** We should pray with the others.

34 **CHASE:** I don't even know what to pray.

35 **HOPE:** Maybe we should simply pray that whatever ordeal
36 Jesus faces tonight, that God would give him strength.
37 (*They move to kneeling on a couple chairs at Center Stage.*
38 *JESUS stands in center aisle, not far from front of sanctuary.*)



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