

RISEN!

by Kay W. Camenisch



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Risen!

A dramatic Easter reading
with audience participation

by Kay W. Camenisch

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JESUS

NARRATOR

MISCELLANEOUS

(At least five men, for scenes on pages 15 and 16)

PRODUCTION NOTES

SETTING: The story is told with those reading the lines dispersed throughout the congregation. The Narrator and Jesus may stand unobtrusively at the front of the congregation, one on each side of the platform. You will need two stands to hold the scripts of Jesus and the Narrator.

COSTUMES: None are needed. Jesus and the Narrator may be dressed in biblical clothing if desired.

SOUND EFFECTS: Audio CD or cassette or off-stage sound effects, including thunder, hammering a spike in a block of wood, and a crowing rooster.

PREPARATION: It is recommended that the participants read the biblical accounts of the last week of Jesus' life daily for several weeks before the production, imagining what it would be like to be there. If the actors are familiar with the action, few practices are needed. They should also bathe the production in prayer.

NOTES: This remembrance of Jesus' last week on earth is intentionally written as a dramatic reading rather than a play so that the focus will be on the story rather than on the actors. The desire is for the hearers to encounter Jesus as the lamb who went to slaughter, and as the risen Lord who died so that we might live.

Even though this reading has many parts, it may be produced with a small cast because voices can effectively play several roles. Characters have been named only where it is needed for one voice to be consistent throughout a scene. Peter is a primary figure in two different scenes. If the cast is small, the voice of Peter may also be used in other scenes for other people without harm being done (though not for other characters immediately before or after his lines). Where miscellaneous voices are needed, a line appears for the assigned person to write his/her name.

Where the “Crowd” or the “Choir” has lines, written lines are only suggestions. Voices are to come from all over the congregation at one time, or closely after each other. One person can say the same lines several times, or sometimes borrow his/her neighbor’s lines. Other lines may also be added. The Narrator could be the “crowd director” to give a discreet signal for when it is time to end the crowd calls. (For these scenes the lines were grouped rather than strung out to further enforce the effect of the mob voices, with flexible lines.)

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(listed by page number)

To assist in assigning parts when it is necessary to use the same voice for various characters, the characters are listed as they appear on each page. The Narrator and Jesus are the only ones who should not speak any other parts. Those who speak as disciples in the first nine pages can then speak as centurion and soldiers later. Everyone can cry out in the Crowd or Choir voices. Most miscellaneous lines may be read by anyone who has not just spoken.

Characters Appearing *(Other than Jesus and Narrator)*

Pastor

Crowd

Miscellaneous, Disciple

Disciples, Judas

Peter, Miscellaneous

Disciples

Disciples

Peter, Disciples, High Priest

High Priest, Crowd

Female, Peter, Miscellaneous *(three or more)*, **Pilate**

Crowd, Pilate

Crowd, Female, Mary

Female, Mary, Crowd, Female 1 & 2

Crowd, Female 1 & 2, Soldier, Man, Centurion, Soldier X

Centurion, Soldier X, Simon, Soldier

Crowd

Crowd, Criminal 1 & 2, Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous

Angel, Choir

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous

PASTOR: *(After introductory and welcoming remarks)* In this presentation the action does not take place on the stage before us. The voices come from within our midst. Each voice isn't representative of one character. This was done intentionally because, in reality, almost every line spoken is reflective of words, attitudes, or actions expressed by each of us at some time during our lives.

The words of Jesus can be identified by the same voice each time. Humankind (you and I) is represented by the other voices as they represent the different attitudes we have had, do have, or will have toward our Lord. When the crowd is yelling (such as at the Triumphal Entry), feel free to join in, for the voices represent each of us.

Open your hearts to a greater understanding of the death and resurrection of your Lord. Open your hearts to rejoice at the resurrection of Jesus and the life you have through him. Open your hearts to be drawn into a closer relationship with him as you share in this dramatic reading of the days leading to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus.

JESUS: It was written that the Messiah would suffer and rise again from the dead. Take courage, for through this I have conquered the world. I have come that you might have life, and have it more abundantly. Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, and you shall find rest for your souls.

Ask and it shall be given to you, for everyone who asks receives. Come to me, and I will in no way cast you out. Come to me, and you will receive power to become a child of God. Abide in me as I abide in the Father. Rest in the knowledge that I am with you always — even until the end of the age.

NARRATOR: Jesus went about the country with his disciples, healing the sick, casting out demons, teaching

1 and preaching. Crowds flocked to see him and to hear
2 what he had to say.

3 JESUS: We are nearing Jerusalem; you two go ahead. Just
4 as you enter, you will see a donkey tied there, with its
5 colt beside it. If anyone asks you what you are doing,
6 just say, "The Master needs it." Tell Jerusalem her King
7 is coming to her, riding humbly on a colt.

8 NARRATOR: The disciples did as Jesus said, and brought the
9 animals to him. They threw their garments over the colt
10 so Jesus could ride on a makeshift saddle. Most of the
11 crowd threw their coats on the road ahead of him. Others
12 cut branches from the trees and spread them in his path.
13 The crowd surged around, waving palm branches.

14 Just as the prophet Isaiah foretold, they shouted,
15 "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph,
16 O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your King is coming
17 to you; he is just and endowed with salvation, humble
18 and mounted on a donkey, even a colt, the foal of a
19 donkey."

20 CROWD: *(Loudly, with hope and rejoicing. They have been*
21 *oppressed and see that their deliverer has arrived! The voices*
22 *come from all over the congregation.)*

23 ____: Hosanna!

24 ____: Glory to the Son of David!

25 ____: Jesus! Jesus!

26 ____: Our deliverer is here!

27 ____: King Jesus!

28 ____: Hail to the Son of David!

29 ____: Hosanna!

30 ____: Bless him, Lord God!

31 ____: Our deliverer!

32 ____: Hosanna to the Son of David!

33 ____: Praise God in highest heaven!

34 ____: *(Last line in unison, with strength and excitement)* Hosanna!

35 Hosanna! Hosanna!

- 1 NARRATOR: Jerusalem welcomed a *king!*
 2 Some of the Pharisees were also in the throng. They
 3 said to Jesus:
 4 ____: Teacher, rebuke your disciples.
 5 JESUS: I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry
 6 out!
 7 NARRATOR: As Jesus approached the city, he wept over it.
 8 (*Short pause*) For four days Jesus walked among the
 9 people.
 10 He drove the moneychangers out of the temple.
 11 He taught his disciples and all who would hear
 12 concerning the kingdom of God.
 13 He healed the sick ... the blind saw ... the crippled
 14 walked.
 15 The children cried out in the temple, "Hosanna to the
 16 Son of David!"
 17 However, the religious leaders taunted and asked,
 18 "Who is this man?" They examined him closely, seeking
 19 to trap him and find fault so they could get rid of him.
 20 But as they sought to trap Jesus, he exposed *their*
 21 ignorance and the emptiness of their religion. He warned
 22 the people not to live as the religious leaders lived.
 23 Meanwhile, one of the Twelve, called Judas Iscariot,
 24 went to the chief priests and covenanted with them for
 25 thirty pieces of silver to betray his Master.
 26 JESUS: It is the feast of unleavened bread. Peter and John,
 27 go and prepare the Passover for us that we may eat it.
 28 DISCIPLE: Master, where would you have us prepare it?
 29 JESUS: When you have entered the city, a man will meet
 30 you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the
 31 house that he enters. Tell the owner of the house, "The
 32 Teacher says, 'Where is the guest room in which I may
 33 eat the Passover with my disciples?'" He will show you
 34 a large, furnished upper room. Prepare it there.
 35 NARRATOR: Peter and John followed Jesus' bidding. Jesus

1 and his disciples gathered together to eat the Passover
2 lamb. The hour had come, and they were reclining
3 together around the table.

4 **JESUS:** Truly I say to you, one of you will betray me — one
5 who is eating with me. I must die as the prophets
6 declared long ago.

7 **DISCIPLES:** *(Sorrowful and questioning. Each distinct, but*
8 *overlapped with interruptions.)*

9 ____: Betray *you*? No!

10 ____: One of us?

11 ____: Who could that be?

12 ____: Is it I?

13 ____: Is it I, Lord?

14 ____: Is it I?

15 **JESUS:** It is one of the Twelve, one who dips with me in
16 the bowl. For the Son of Man is to go, just as it is
17 written of him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of
18 Man is betrayed! It would be better for him if he had not
19 been born.

20 **JUDAS:** Master, is it I?

21 **JESUS:** You have said it. *(Change of voice. Praying, with eyes*
22 *toward heaven)* Father, I lift this bread to you, this
23 symbol of life, of my body. Bless it, Father, and bless
24 each one here with your life as they eat it.

25 *(Change tone of voice to address disciples. Address the*
26 *congregation as the disciples.)* Each of you, take this bread
27 and eat it. This is my body, which is broken for you.

28 *(Pause, giving a moment for scene to be visualized. Continue*
29 *with prayer, looking to heaven.)* Thank you, Father, for this
30 cup and for the life of the blood, which it symbolizes. As
31 we drink this, symbolizing the joining of two lives into
32 one, I pray that you would make it join our lives
33 together as one. *(Addressing disciples, he gestures toward the*
34 *congregation.)* This is my blood, poured out for many,
35 sealing the new covenant between God and man. Drink

1 all of it. *(Pause.)* Truly, I say to you, I shall never again
 2 drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink
 3 it new in the kingdom of God.

4 After they had sung a hymn, they went out to the
 5 Mount of Olives.

6 NARRATOR: This Jesus, wholly man — Jesus, truly God —
 7 entered into covenant with us. In doing so, he pledged
 8 that all he is and all he has belong to those of us who
 9 follow him and enter into covenant with him.

10 Jesus knew that he was going to lose his life in order
 11 that his blood would be spilled to seal the covenant he
 12 had just made.

13 JESUS: All of you will be offended tonight and will soon
 14 desert me, for my Father said, “I will kill the Shepherd,
 15 and the sheep will scatter.” But after I am raised to life
 16 again, I will go to Galilee and meet you there.

17 PETER: *I* will never desert you, no matter what the others do!

18 JESUS: Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you
 19 will deny me three times.

20 PETER: *No*, Master! Not even if I have to die with you! *I’ll*
 21 *never* deny you! Never!

22 ____: Me either, Lord.

23 ____: No, Lord. You have been my source of life; I could
 24 never forsake or deny you!

25 ____: Wherever you go, Lord, I will go.

26 PETER: *I’ll never* deny you! Never! Never! *(Pause)*

27 ____: Our Master never answered. He took us to the place
 28 called Gethsemane.

29 ____: He became very sorrowful and heavy.

30 JESUS: Friends, sit here in the olive grove and wait while I
 31 go and pray.

32 Peter, James, and John, you come with me. *(Pause.*
 33 *Change to more personal tone of voice, speaking to his three*
 34 *closest friends.)*

35 My soul is crushed by sorrow to the point of death;

1 stay here and watch with me. Pray with me for
 2 strength, for I am deeply distressed. (*Pause. Agonizing,*
 3 *personal address to the Father.*) Oh, Father! Must I follow
 4 through with your plan? Is there not some way that this
 5 hour can pass me by? Is there any other way possible?
 6 Father! Father! I don't know if I can go through with
 7 it — to take on the sin of the world! Can you take this
 8 cup from me? I know all things are possible for you! Yet,
 9 Father, I want your will, not my own.

10 NARRATOR: And he came and found Peter, James, and
 11 John sleeping ...

12 JESUS: Simon Peter, are you asleep? Could you not watch for
 13 just one hour? Watch with me and pray, lest the tempter
 14 overpower you. For though the spirit is willing, the flesh
 15 is weak. (*Pause. Agonizes to the Father. Does not whine.*)
 16 Father, Father! My soul is crushed within me! Already
 17 my closest friends have let me down. Abba! Abba! Is there
 18 no other way?! Take this cup away from me! Oh, Abba!
 19 Though I don't know how I will endure, I do want your
 20 will, not my own! (*Pause. Exasperated and impatient*) John!
 21 Peter! James! Are you asleep again? I *need* you! I need
 22 your support! I am in agony — can't you pray with me?

23 DISCIPLES: (*Sputtering from guilt and lack of words*)

24 ____: Oh, Master ... Forgive us ... Forgive us, Lord.

25 ____: We *meant* to be praying ... We *want* to stand with you ...

26 ____: We ... Forgive us, Master.

27 NARRATOR: What can you say when you've failed your
 28 Master?

29 JESUS: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
 30 Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.
 31 O my God, I cry by day, but thou dost not answer;
 32 And by night, but I have no rest.
 33 Yet thou art holy,
 34 O thou who art enthroned upon the praises of Israel.
 35 In thee our fathers trusted; they trusted, and thou didst

- 1 deliver them.
 2 To thee they cried out, and were delivered;
 3 In thee they trusted, and were not disappointed.
 4
 5 But I am a worm, and not a man,
 6 A reproach of men and despised by the people
 7 Yet *you* are my portion and my cup.
 8 *You*, oh Father, art my rock and my strength.
 9 My *rock* in whom I take refuge. I will trust in you, O
 10 Father.
 11 I will trust in you. (*Pause*)
 12 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in
 13 heaven.
 14 I commit myself into your mighty hands.
 15 May your will be done.
 16 NARRATOR: He came a third time to his disciples.
 17 JESUS: (*The struggle within is over. He speaks with resignation.*)
 18 Are you still sleeping? Sleep on. Get your rest.
 19 But no! The hour has come! Behold! I am betrayed
 20 into the hands of wicked men!
 21 Get up! Let's go. The one who will betray me is here.
 22 NARRATOR: Judas came into the garden, leading a mob
 23 sent by the religious leaders and carrying clubs and
 24 swords. Judas went up to Jesus, saying, "Master," and
 25 kissed him, betraying him in a great show of
 26 friendliness.
 27 JESUS: Friend, why have you come? Have you come with
 28 swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were some
 29 kind of robber? Every day I was with you in the temple
 30 teaching, and you did not seize me; but this has
 31 happened that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.
 32 DISCIPLES: (*With fear and frustration*)
 33 ____: They are arresting him like a criminal!
 34 ____: They are taking him away!
 35 ____: Why doesn't he *do* something?

- 1 ____: Or *say* something?
- 2 ____: He's going with them *willingly*!
- 3 ____: What's going on? I don't understand!
- 4 ____: We need to help him! We've got to help! We brought
- 5 our swords!
- 6 PETER: Swords won't help! There is *nothing* we can do!
- 7 When I cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest,
- 8 he told me to stop!
- 9 ____: He even healed the man. He said that all who take up
- 10 the sword will perish by the sword!
- 11 ____: We can't do *anything*!
- 12 ____: Nothing?
- 13 ____: (*Attitude changes to fear and self-protection.*) *He* may want
- 14 to get arrested, but *I* don't! If we hang around here,
- 15 they'll take us too!
- 16 ____: You're right! We'd better get out of here!
- 17 ____: (*Sympathetic and imploring*) But *Jesus*! Can't we help Jesus?
- 18 ____: He doesn't want our help! What can we do?
- 19 ____: Hey, *I* don't want to get arrested!
- 20 ____: We'd better get out of here before they come for *us*!
- 21 ____: Come on! Let's get outta here!
- 22 NARRATOR: Jesus was taken to the home of Caiaphas, the
- 23 high priest, to be questioned by the chief priests and
- 24 the Council. They sought a reason to condemn him to
- 25 death.
- 26 Their efforts were in vain because even the false
- 27 witnesses contradicted each other. Finally, after many
- 28 witnesses, two came forward with the same story.
- 29 ____: I heard this man say that if the temple of God is
- 30 destroyed, he is able to rebuild it in three days!
- 31 HIGH PRIEST: Do you make no answer? What is it that
- 32 these men are testifying against you?
- 33 NARRATOR: (*Pause*) The Master said nothing to defend
- 34 himself.
- 35 HIGH PRIEST: I adjure you by the living God, that you tell

- 1 us whether or not you are the Christ, the Son of God.
 2 **JESUS:** I am, and you will see me sitting at the right hand of
 3 God, and returning to earth in the clouds of heaven.
 4 **HIGH PRIEST:** What more do we need? Why wait for
 5 witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy. What is your
 6 verdict?
 7 **CROWD:** *(Clamoring from throughout congregation, repeating*
 8 *their pleas for death)*
 9 ____: Blasphemy!
 10 ____: You're deserving of death!
 11 ____: Do away with him!
 12 ____: Who do you think you are?!
 13 ____: Death! Death to him!
 14 ____: Guilty! Guilty!
 15 ____: Kill him!
 16 ____: You're no Messiah!
 17 **NARRATOR:** The religious leaders spit on him while they
 18 jeered and mocked. They covered his head and beat him
 19 with their hands and their fists.
 20 **CROWD:** *(Taunting and jeering from throughout congregation with*
 21 *voices overlapping but distinct)*
 22 ____: Who was *that*, prophet? Who hit you?
 23 ____: Yeah, Son of God, who was it? Huh?
 24 ____: Who hit you?
 25 ____: Surely you know who hit you!
 26 ____: You act like you know so much! Talk to us!
 27 ____: You don't seem so wise now, what happened?
 28 ____: Cat got your tongue? Come on, tell us who is hitting
 29 you, oh wise one!
 30 ____: Hit him harder! Maybe he'll tell us then!
 31 ____: Harder! Hit him harder!
 32 ____: Ha! Ha! Ha! Son of God! Sitting beside God!
 33 ____: You don't look like God to me!
 34 *(Sudden stop of jeering. Slight pause for change of scene.)*
 35 **FEMALE:** Didn't I see you with Jesus, the Nazarene?

- 1 PETER: Me? Why, I don't know what you are talking about!
 2 ____: Hey, see that big man by the fire? The one that looks
 3 like a fisherman. He was with Jesus; I saw him.
 4 ____: I *think* he is one of the followers of Jesus.
 5 ____: Hey, man! I saw you with Jesus. You are one of his
 6 men!
 7 PETER: I am not! You are mistaken! You are lying!
 8 ____: You are from Galilee!
 9 ____: You *are* one of them!
 10 ____: Yes, I saw you in the garden with him!
 11 PETER: *Leave me alone!* I don't even know the man!
 12 NARRATOR: (*Brief pause*) And the rooster crowed. (*Or play*
 13 *recording of rooster crowing. Pause for introduction of new*
 14 *scene.*)
 15 In the morning, our humble Lord was bound and
 16 taken by the religious leaders before Pilate, before
 17 Herod, and again before Pilate. They insulted him. They
 18 mocked him. He was falsely accused and abused, but he
 19 in *no way* defended himself. Even Judas's admission
 20 that he had sinned in that he had betrayed innocent
 21 blood made no difference to those seeking his death.
 22 ____: He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he did not
 23 open his mouth.
 24 ____: Like a lamb that is led to slaughter ...
 25 ____: And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so
 26 he did not open his mouth.
 27 ____: By oppression and judgment he was taken away.
 28 ____: And as for his generation, who considered that he was
 29 cut off, out of the land of life?
 30 NARRATOR: Pilate and Herod both said, "I find no fault in
 31 this man." Pilate sought to release him. He summoned
 32 the chief priests and the rulers and the people.
 33 PILATE: You brought this man to me as one who incites the
 34 people to rebellion, and behold, having examined him
 35 before you, I have found no guilt in this man regarding

1 the charges which you make against him. No, nor has
2 Herod, for he sent him back to us. Behold, he has done
3 nothing deserving death. I will therefore punish him
4 and release him.

5 **CROWD:**

6 ____: No! No!

7 ____: Away with this man!

8 ____: Barabbas! Barabbas!

9 ____: Release Barabbas!

10 ____: We want Barabbas!

11 ____: Barabbas!

12 **PILATE:** But I find no fault in Jesus!

13 **CROWD:** *(With a few loud, scattered voices, strong in their conviction)*

14 ____: Crucify him!

15 ____: Away with him!

16 ____: Crucify Jesus!

17 ____: Crucify Jesus!

18 ____: Crucify him!

19 ____: Crucify him!

20 **PILATE:** Why? What evil has this man done?! I find no guilt
21 in him demanding death; I will therefore punish him
22 and release him.

23 **CROWD:** *(With a swelling chorus of relentless cheers for
24 crucifixion. All PLAYERS join the chorus.)*

25 ____: Crucify him!

26 ____: Crucify him!

27 ____: Away with Jesus!

28 ____: Crucify him!

29 ____: Hang him on a tree!

30 ____: Crucify him!

31 ____: Let him hang!

32 ____: Crucify him!

33 ____: Crucify him!

34 **NARRATOR:** *(Slowly and with feeling, one line at a time.)* The
35 cries of the people prevailed. Pilate pronounced

1 sentence to grant their demands, then he washed his
 2 hands before the mob, declaring his own innocence of
 3 the blood of this just person.

4 ____: His blood be on us, and on our children.

5 NARRATOR: Barabbas was then released.

6 Jesus was whipped for all to see, until his back was
 7 in shreds. He was then delivered to the soldiers to be
 8 crucified. He was stripped and a purple robe was put on
 9 him. A crown of thorns was pressed on his head, and a
 10 staff placed in his right hand.

11 They knelt before him and mocked, "Hail, King of the
 12 Jews!"

13 They spat on him, and took the staff and began to
 14 beat him on the head.

15 ____: He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of
 16 sorrows and acquainted with grief.

17 ____: Like one from whom men hide their face.

18 ____: He was despised, and we did not esteem him.

19 NARRATOR: After they had mocked Jesus, they took the
 20 robe off and put his own garment on him, and led him
 21 away to crucify him.

22 JESUS: I gave my back to those who strike me,

23 And my cheeks to those who pluck out the beard,

24 I did not cover my face from humiliation and spitting,

25 For the Lord God helps me, therefore I am not
 26 disgraced;

27 Therefore I have set my face like flint,

28 And *I know* I shall not be ashamed. (*Pause for change of*
 29 *focus*)

30 FEMALE: Mary, dear Mary, you must go home. How can you
 31 stay and see this terrible thing happen to your own son?

32 MARY: (*Thoughtful, contemplative, full of pain, yet resigned*) My
 33 son. When he was small, I washed and fed him; I dressed
 34 him and combed the rings of his hair. When he cried, I
 35 comforted him. When he was hurt, I kissed away the

- 1 pain. And when darkness fell, I sang him to sleep.
 2 Now he stumbles fain and fasting in the dust, his hair
 3 tangled with blood and thorns. And there is nothing I
 4 can do. Nothing at all.
- 5 This is the worse thing: to conceive beauty in your
 6 heart and bring it forth into the world, and then to
 7 stand by helplessly and watch it suffer.
- 8 FEMALE: Mary, don't watch. Let's go home. I'll go with you.
- 9 MARY: But this must be. Simeon the Prophet spoke to me
 10 when Jesus was only an infant. He said:
 11 "This child will divide all Israel, and his name shall
 12 be a scandal and an offense. Yes, and a sword shall
 13 pierce through your own soul also." You see, it has come
 14 true, just as the prophet spoke.
- 15 FEMALE: How can you speak so calmly?
- 16 MARY: When we know something is going to happen, we're
 17 uneasy, waiting to see how it will be. When it finally
 18 happens, even though it is difficult, we are quiet
 19 because we know it is the fulfillment.
- 20 This is what I have been prepared for — though I still
 21 don't understand.
- 22 CROWD: (*Jeering begins as MARY is finishing.*)
 23 ____: Here comes Jesus, the King!
 24 ____: Hail King Jesus!
 25 ____: Madman!
 26 ____: Hail to the crazy Messiah!
 27 ____: Boooo! Boooo!
 28 ____: Carpenter King!
 29 ____: Look at his crown!
 30 ____: King Jesus!
 31 ____: Here comes the crazy king!
- 32 FEMALE 1: (*With sympathy*) Poor soul! He can hardly stagger
 33 along!
- 34 FEMALE 2: (*Taunting*) He's got no spirit! Give me a man
 35 who'll walk tall to the cross!

- 1 CROWD: (*Taunting*)
 2 ____: Come on, King of Israel! Show your might!
 3 ____: Hey, great king! You forgot your donkey!
 4 ____: Prophecy, Son of God! Prophecy!
 5 ____: Hail, King Jesus!
 6 ____: Palms to the mad king!
 7 FEMALE 1: Why does everyone go on so?
 8 FEMALE 2: Why, just a week ago nothing was too good for
 9 him. He acted like he *was* a king!
 10 SOLDIER: (*Roughly*) Come on, man. Move faster. Put your
 11 back into it and get moving!
 12 FEMALE 1: Poor thing!
 13 FEMALE 2: I *hate* a weakling. Get on with you! Be a man!
 14 MAN: (*Addressing FEMALE 2. MAN, FEMALE 1, and FEMALE 2*
 15 *need to be sitting in close proximity to one another.*) Hold your
 16 tongue, you shrieking maniac! You don't know a man
 17 when you see one. To bear the unbearable, to go on
 18 when the thing is impossible — that's courage! (*In a*
 19 *great shout, with sincerity*) Hosanna! Son of Man!
 20 ____: Oh! He's fallen.
 21 ____: What happened?
 22 CENTURION: Come on! Come on! What's the matter now?!
 23 SOLDIER X: Prisoner's down again, Centurion.
 24 CENTURION: Well, don't stand there staring! Get him back
 25 on his feet again!
 26 ____: Throw a bucket of water on him!
 27 ____: Let him get his breath back!
 28 ____: Give him a drink!
 29 ____: He's faking it!
 30 ____: Take the whip to him!
 31 CENTURION: Stand back! Stand back!
 32 ____: (*Brutal voice*) Come, magician! Do your stuff! Take up
 33 your cross and walk!
 34 SOLDIER X: Centurion, he's all in. Let me have a look at him.
 35 CENTURION: (*Short pause*) You're right. Let him be for a

- 1 moment.
- 2 SOLDIER X: I think we flogged him too much.
- 3 CENTURION: That's the problem with those tough ones.
- 4 They stick it out and you think they can take it, and
- 5 then they collapse on you.
- 6 SOLDIER X: He's coming around.
- 7 CENTURION: Good! If he died on our hands, we'd be in for
- 8 it. Law says they must be crucified alive. Poor devils.
- 9 SIMON: (*Shouting in response to CENTURION*) And a wicked
- 10 law it is! Roman law. Bloody and cruel.
- 11 CENTURION: Quiet there!
- 12 SIMON: I come back to Jerusalem, and you are defiling the
- 13 feast!
- 14 CENTURION: That's enough! (*With contempt*) *You* sentence
- 15 them to death, and let *us* do the dirty work.
- 16 *Then* you blame it all on us!
- 17 Can he walk now? Wait ... Steady ... Give him a hand.
- 18 Can't he see where he is going?
- 19 SOLDIER X: What's he groping about for?
- 20 SOLDIER: He's stretching out his hands for the cross.
- 21 SOLDIER: Well, I'll be! (*SOLDIERS laugh in unbelief, not*
- 22 *mockingly.*)
- 23 CENTURION: This is the most willing prisoner I ever saw.
- 24 Goes like a lamb to the slaughter.
- 25 SIMON: Slaughter's the word for it!
- 26 SOLDIER: All right, prisoner, let's go.
- 27 CENTURION: Nonsense. He can't carry it. We'll have to find
- 28 somebody — somebody with a hefty pair of shoulders.
- 29 Where's that fellow with the big mouth? Yes, you.
- 30 What's your name?
- 31 SIMON: Simon. I come from Cyrene.
- 32 CENTURION: Well, carry this for him. By the time you've
- 33 lugged it up the hill, you'll have no breath for all your
- 34 smart talk. That'll teach you to be so sympathetic ...
- 35 (*To JESUS*) We've taken the weight off of you now.

1 Move it!

2 **NARRATOR:** And when they came to Golgotha, to the place
3 called “The Skull,” they crucified him.

4 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall.
5 After tasting it, he would not drink.

6 *(Just after JESUS starts talking, begin sound in the*
7 *background of slow and deliberate hammering of spikes in*
8 *large block of wood.)*

9 **JESUS:** Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is
10 none to help.

11 Many bulls have surrounded me;

12 Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me.

13 They open wide their mouth at me, as a ravening and
14 a roaring lion.

15 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out
16 of joint;

17 My heart is like wax; it is melted within me.

18 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my
19 tongue cleaves to my jaws.

20 And thou dost lay me in the dust of death.

21 For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers
22 has encompassed me;

23 They pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all
24 my bones. They look, they stare at me. *(Sound of*
25 *hammering stops.)* They divide my garments among them,
26 and for my clothing they cast lots.

27 **CROWD:** *(Mocking and jeering continues.)*

28 ____: You who can destroy the temple and build it back in
29 three days, save yourself!

30 ____: If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross!

31 ____: He saved others, but he can't save himself!

32 ____: If you're the King of Israel, come down now from the
33 cross!

34 ____: Come down and we'll believe you!

35 ____: Where is God now? You say you trust God. Where is

1 he?

2 ____: Hey! You said you were the Son of God. Where is God
3 now?

4 NARRATOR: Two criminals were hanged alongside of him,
5 fulfilling the Scripture that Jesus would be counted
6 among transgressors.

7 CRIMINAL 1: Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!

8 CRIMINAL 2: Do you not even fear God, since you are under
9 the same sentence of condemnation? It is a just
10 sentence for us, for we are receiving what we deserve
11 for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.
12 *(Slight pause. Changes tone to address JESUS.)*

13 Jesus, remember me when you come in your
14 kingdom!

15 JESUS: Truly I say to you, today you shall be with me in
16 Paradise.

17 NARRATOR: As he hung in agony on the cross, with “This is
18 the King of the Jews” hanging over his head, the
19 leaders sat down to watch him. The mocking continued.
20 Our Savior, even in the midst of his suffering, looked
21 with love on his persecutors.

22 JESUS: Father, forgive them; for they do not know what
23 they are doing. *(Begin recording of loud thunder claps in*
24 *background.)*

25 NARRATOR: An oppressive darkness fell upon the land
26 about noon, and it remained until about three o’clock.
27 It seemed as if the Father himself had deserted his only
28 Son.

29 ____: The god is dying. His nostrils are pinched and his face
30 is hollow and sunken about the temples.

31 ____: His skin is dry and dusty like parchment.

32 ____: The countenance of death.

33 ____: It has gotten so dark I can hardly see.

34 ____: Perhaps the gods are angry after all. Is the Nazarene
35 dead?



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