

Jesus Dies

John 18:1-9

When Jesus had finished praying, he and his disciples crossed the Kidron Valley and went into a garden. Jesus had often met there with his disciples, and Judas knew where the place was.

Judas had promised to betray Jesus. So he went to the garden with some Roman soldiers and temple police, who had been sent by the chief priests and the Pharisees. They carried torches, lanterns, and weapons. Jesus already knew everything that was going to happen, but he asked, "Whom are you looking for?"

They answered, "We are looking for Jesus from Nazareth!"

Jesus told them, "I am Jesus!" At once they all backed away and fell to the ground.

Jesus again asked, "Who are you looking for?"

"We are looking for Jesus from Nazareth," they answered.

This time Jesus replied, "I have already told you that I am Jesus. If I am the one you are looking for, let these others go. Then everything will happen, just as I said, 'I did not lose anyone you gave me.'"

John 18:29

It was early in the morning when Jesus was taken from Caiaphas to the building where the Roman governor stayed. But the crowd waited outside. Any of them who had gone inside would have become unclean and would not be allowed to eat the Passover meal.

Pilate came out and asked, "What charges are you bringing against this man?"

They answered, "He is a criminal! That's why we brought him to you."

Pilate told them, "Take him and judge him by your own laws."

Storyteller: spreads out the round "hilltop" underlay a little distance over to the left. Spreads out garden underlay a little to the right making sure there is a space between them.

Jesus and his disciples went into a garden. *Place plants around the edges of the garden. Put the Jesus doll in the centre with some of the Apostle dolls nearby.* Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus, brought soldiers and police to arrest Jesus. They tied him up and took him away. *Pick up the Jesus figure and hold it in front of you.*

Early in the morning they brought Jesus to the Roman governor and told him "This man is a criminal. He says he is the King." The governor's name was Pontius Pilate. Pilate asked Jesus "Are you the king of the Jews?"

Jesus said "My Kingdom is not of this world. I was born into this world to tell about the Truth."

Then Pilate went to talk to the crowd outside his house. He said "Jesus has not done anything wrong. Because tomorrow is a festival, I usually free one prisoner. Should I release Jesus, the 'king of the Jews'? The crowd shouted "No!" So instead of setting Jesus free, Pilate ordered the soldiers to beat Jesus.

Put the crown of thorns on the doll. The soldiers made a crown out of thorn branches and put it on Jesus. *Put the purple robe on the doll.* Then they put a purple robe on him. They came up to him and said, "Hey, you king of the Jews!"

They also hit him with their fists.

Then Pilate made Jesus stand in front of the crowd. The crowd

Story Materials

- New testament figures:
 - Jesus
 - Judas
 - Apostles
 - Pilate
- Garden underlay
- Plants
- Hilltop underlay
- Crown of Thorns
- Purple robe
- Cross
- Nails
- Spices
- linen cloth
- Tomb

The crowd replied, "We are not allowed to put anyone to death." And so what Jesus said about his death would soon come true.

Pilate then went back inside. He called Jesus over and asked, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

Jesus answered, "Are you asking this on your own or did someone tell you about me?"

"You know I'm not a Jew!" Pilate said. "Your own people and the chief priests brought you to me. What have you done?"

Jesus answered, "My kingdom doesn't belong to this world. If it did, my followers would have fought to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. No, my kingdom doesn't belong to this world."

"So you are a king," Pilate replied.

"You are saying that I am a king," Jesus told him. "I was born into this world to tell about the truth. And everyone who belongs to the truth knows my voice."

Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?"

Pilate went back out and said, "I don't find this man guilty of anything! And since I usually set a prisoner free for you at Passover, would you like for me to set free the king of the Jews?"

They shouted, "No, not him! We want Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a terrorist.

Pilate gave orders for Jesus to be beaten with a whip. The soldiers made a crown out of thorn branches and put it on Jesus. Then they put a purple robe on him. 3 They came up to him and said, "Hey, you king of the Jews!" They also hit him with their fists.

Once again Pilate went out. This time he said, "I will have Jesus brought out to you again. Then you can see for yourselves that I have not found him guilty."

Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said, "Here is the man!"

When the chief priests and the temple

shouted "Kill him! Nail him to a cross!" That was how the Roman soldiers killed people that the governor said were criminals. Pilate told the soldiers to kill Jesus that way.

Pick up the cross, and hold it beside Jesus. They took Jesus away ... *put the doll back in the basket, and lie the cross down on the round underlay to your left ...* and he carried his cross to the top of "Skull Hill". *Pick up the nails and hold them out for the children to see.* They hammered a nail *put a nail down in front of the cross* through Jesus' right hand ... *put a second nail beside the first* and through his left hand to hold him to the cross. *Put down a third nail.* They hammered a nail through his feet. *Stand up the cross.* Then they left him hanging from the cross until he died.

Pause for a moment.

Just before evening, a soldier stuck a spear into Jesus' side to make sure he was dead. Two of Jesus' friends took Jesus' body. *Unfold the linen cloth with the spices in it.* They wrapped it in a linen cloth with spices ... *roll up the linen cloth, and put it into the tomb ...* put it in a tomb, and rolled a big stone in front of the tomb's opening. *Roll the stone in front of the tomb.* That's how they buried Jesus.

police saw him, they yelled, "Nail him to a cross! Nail him to a cross!"

Pilate told them, "You take him and nail him to a cross! I don't find him guilty of anything."

The crowd replied, "He claimed to be the Son of God! Our Jewish Law says that he must be put to death."

When Pilate heard this, he was terrified. He went back inside and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus did not answer.

"Why won't you answer my question?" Pilate asked. "Don't you know that I have the power to let you go free or to nail you to a cross?"

Jesus replied, "If God had not given you the power, you couldn't do anything at all to me. But the one who handed me over to you did something even worse."

Then Pilate wanted to set Jesus free. But

the crowd again yelled, "If you set this man free, you are no friend of the Emperor! Anyone who claims to be a king is an enemy of the Emperor."

When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out. Then he sat down on the judge's bench at the place known as "The Stone Pavement." In Aramaic this pavement is called "Gabbatha." It was about noon on the day before Passover, and Pilate said to the crowd, "Look at your king!"

"Kill him! Kill him!" they yelled. "Nail him to a cross!"

"So you want me to nail your king to a cross?" Pilate asked.

The chief priests replied, "The Emperor is our king!" Then Pilate handed Jesus over to be nailed to a cross.

Jesus was taken away, and he carried his cross to a place known as "The Skull." In Aramaic this place is called "Golgotha." There Jesus was nailed to

the cross, and on each side of him a man was also nailed to a cross.

Pilate ordered the charge against Jesus to be written on a board and put above the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." The words were written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.

The place where Jesus was taken wasn't far from the city, and many of the Jewish people read the charge against him. So the chief priests went to Pilate and said, "Why did you write that he is King of the Jews? You should have written, 'He claimed to be King of the Jews.'"

But Pilate told them, "What is written will not be changed!"

After the soldiers had nailed Jesus to the cross, they divided up his clothes into four parts, one for each of them. But his outer garment was made from a single piece of cloth, and it did not have any seams. The soldiers said to each other, "Let's not rip it apart. We will gamble to see who gets it." This happened so that the Scriptures would come true, which say,

"They divided up my clothes
and gambled
or my garments."

The soldiers then did what they had decided.

Jesus' mother stood beside his cross with her sister and Mary the wife of Clopas. Mary Magdalene was standing there too. When Jesus saw his mother and his favorite disciple with her, he said to his mother, "This man is now your son." Then he said to the disciple, "She is now your mother." From then on, that disciple took her into his own home.

Jesus knew that he had now finished his work. And in order to make the Scriptures come true, he said, "I am thirsty!" A jar of cheap wine was there. Someone then soaked a sponge with the wine and held it up to Jesus' mouth on the stem of a hyssop plant. After Jesus drank the wine, he said, "Everything is done!" He bowed his head and died.

The next day would be both a Sabbath and the Passover. It was a special day for the Jewish people, and they did not want the bodies to stay on the crosses during that day. So they asked Pilate to break the men's legs and take their bodies down. The soldiers first broke the legs of the other two men who were nailed there. But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, and they did not break his legs.

One of the soldiers stuck his spear into Jesus' side, and blood and water came out. We know this is true, because it was told by someone who saw it happen. Now you can have faith too. All this happened so that the Scriptures would come true, which say, "No bone of his body will be broken" and, "They will see the one in whose side they stuck a spear."

Joseph from Arimathea was one of Jesus' disciples. He had kept it secret though, because he was afraid of the Jewish leaders. But now he asked Pilate to let him have Jesus' body. Pilate gave him permission, and Joseph took it down from the cross.

Nicodemus also came with about seventy-five pounds of spices made from myrrh and aloes. This was the same Nicodemus who had visited Jesus one night. The two men wrapped the body in a linen cloth, together with the spices, which was how the Jewish people buried their dead. In the place where Jesus had been nailed to a cross, there was a garden with a tomb that had never been used. The tomb was nearby, and since it was the time to prepare for the Sabbath, they were in a hurry to put Jesus' body there.