

# CRUCIFIXION



## THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF JESUS ON THE CROSS

Second Edition

Bentley C.F. Chan



CRUCIFIXION  
&  
THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF JESUS  
ON THE CROSS



Second Edition

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# Preface to the Second Edition

**T**he first edition of this book, at 60 pages, occupied a middle ground between a booklet on the one hand, and a full-length book on the other. It was meant to be a brief Good Friday meditation.

But after its release, a few readers have requested more material of an exegetical or technical nature. I hesitated over the request because I wanted to keep to the original goal of reflecting on the death of Jesus on the cross. Nonetheless, for this second edition, I added Scripture notes here and there, and expanded a few chapters, including the one on crucifixion. I added an Appendix containing the final chapters of the four Gospels, formatted optimally for Bible reading on Good Friday and Easter.

This second edition has 20% more material than the first edition, not counting the Appendix. I trust that it preserves the original goal of reflecting on the heart and mind of the One who died on the cross for our salvation.

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Good Friday, 2023

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# Contents

Preface to the Second Edition		iv
Introduction		1
Chapter 1	Crucifixion	5
Chapter 2	The Seven Sayings of Jesus on the Cross	19
Saying 1	Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing	22
Saying 2	Today you will be with me in Paradise	29
Saying 3	Behold your son! Behold your mother!	37
Saying 4	My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?	41
Saying 5	I am thirsty	51
Saying 6	It is finished	54
Saying 7	Father, into your hands I commit my spirit	59
Epilogue	A Poem on the Seven Sayings on the Cross	64
Appendix	The Four Gospels on the Trial, Crucifixion, Death, and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus	69

# Introduction

**I**t is a tradition among churches worldwide, in preparation for Good Friday and Easter, to reflect on the trial, crucifixion, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus, and on his seven sayings on the cross. The present book won't cover all these topics, but will only offer meditations on the crucifixion of Jesus and his seven sayings on the cross.

## The Term “Easter”

First I would like to clear away an obstacle: the word “Easter” itself. When I was a young Christian many years ago, I would sometimes wonder why the resurrection event is called Easter. To me it is a strange term that bears no obvious connection to the resurrection. Is it derived from the word *easterly*—in the eastward direction? (No, it is not.)

The word “Easter” is not found in any mainstream English Bible apart from the King James Bible, which uses “Easter” only once, in Acts 12:4, of the Passover. But KJV's use of “Easter” in Acts 12:4 is anomalous because KJV, outside this verse, never translates the Greek *pascha* again as “Easter” but always as “Passover” (28 times).

Years later I learned that “Easter” is derived from *Eostre*, the name of an Old English or Germanic goddess. This etymology bothered me, so I eventually adopted the term “Resurrection Day” which I find more biblical and meaningful. In fact, Resurrection Day is the term for Easter in a few languages such as Chinese (in which the term is 复活节), Vietnamese (Lễ Phục Sinh), Japanese (イースター), and Serbian (Backpc).

I will continue to use the term Easter in this book because all alternatives, including Resurrection Day, would not be understood by speakers of English.

As for the term “Good Friday,” it simply means “Holy Friday” because “good” can mean “holy” in Old English. That is why the Holy Bible is sometimes called the Good Book. I have no objections to the term Good Friday, but bear in mind that some believe that Jesus was crucified on a day different from Friday.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Scholars debate four aspects of the time of Jesus’ death: the time of the day, the day of the week, the day of the month, and the year. See Brad Arnett and James Flanagan’s “The Day, Hour, and Year of Jesus’ Crucifixion,” an essay included in *Harmony of the Gospels* compiled by Steven Cox and Kendell Easley. The essay says that of these four aspects, the day of the week is the least disputed.

All four Gospels indicate that Jesus was crucified the day before the Sabbath (Friday) and was raised the day after the Sabbath, the first day of the week (Matthew 27:62; 28:1; Mark 15:42; 16:1–2,9; Luke 23:54; 24:1; John 19:14,31,42; 20:1).

Some reject the view that Jesus died on Friday, and this is usually on the basis of Matthew 12:40: “For as Jonah was in the belly of the huge fish three days and three nights, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the

## Which Bible Chapters to Read for Easter?

Since the present book is a meditation on the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus and his seven sayings on the cross, it would be helpful to do a private reading of the relevant chapters in the four gospels.

If you want the whole Easter package—Jesus’ arrest, trial, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection—read the following chapters: Matthew 26, 27, 28; Mark 14, 15, 16; Luke 22, 23, 24; and John 18, 19, 20, 21. These 13 chapters—which are the final chapters of their respective gospels—contain a total of 618 verses if we include the longer ending of Mark (it makes a difference of only 11 verses).

The Appendix of this book contains the text of these 13 chapters, formatted optimally for personal Bible reading, with the utterances of Jesus on the cross highlighted in red.

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earth three days and three nights.” The point is that these are three full days and three full nights, which would take up a longer span of time than that between the death and the resurrection of Jesus in the traditional reckoning. This point is addressed by Arnett and Flanagan.

See also “Dating the Crucifixion,” a section under the article “Death of Jesus” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (ed. Joel B. Green). It discusses an apparent contradiction between the synoptic gospels and John’s gospel which in 19:14 says that the trial of Jesus took place on “the day of Preparation of the Passover,” which would be Thursday, not Friday. The article discusses the explanations that have been proposed to resolve this, e.g., that the synoptics use the Galilean meaning of “day” (sunrise to sunrise) but John uses the Judean meaning (sunset to sunset). I personally find this argument contrived.



But if all you want to read is Jesus' crucifixion and the seven sayings on the cross, here are the chapters: Matthew 26 and 27; Mark 14 and 15; Luke 22 and 23; John 18 and 19; for a total of 8 chapters and 469 verses.

In regard to the seven sayings, each gospel, notably Luke and John, offers details not found in the other gospels. For example, only Luke has, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing," and, "Today you will be with me in paradise." And only John has, "It is finished."

# Crucifixion

Since we are reflecting on the seven sayings on the cross, let us start with the cross itself—not the cross in terms of theology but as an instrument of capital punishment.

Crucifixion is an area of ongoing academic study, with more and more of its medical aspects coming to light and occasionally debated. But for the purposes of this book, we only aim to acquire a basic understanding of crucifixion without dwelling much on its medical details or grisly aspects—just enough detail for a proper understanding of the physical aspects of crucifixion.

I am writing this chapter on crucifixion because few Christians truly understand what it is, so they don't recoil with the same horror as did the ancients at hearing the words, "Bear your cross".

Everything I know about crucifixion comes from books (of course), so I will simply present information available from the standard references.

I believe that the film *The Passion of the Christ* gives an acceptably accurate portrayal of crucifixion even if scholars

have questioned the film's historical and biblical accuracy in some other areas.

*New Bible Dictionary*, 3rd edition, was published in 1996 almost three decades ago, yet its description of crucifixion in the article “Cross, Crucifixion” remains current with today's understanding of crucifixion apart from a few medical details that have come to light in recent scholarship. The following is my summary of this article, with additional details borrowed from more recent or more scholarly references.

The Greek word for “cross” (*stauros*) fundamentally means an upright stake or beam. Oxford Dictionary defines “stake” as a strong post or beam with a pointed end, driven into the ground like a fence post (or, in folklore, driven into the heart of a vampire). But the word *stauros* takes on a more specific meaning in the New Testament, namely, as an instrument of crucifixion.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The noun *stauros* occurs 16 times in the four gospels, of which 11 refer to the physical cross to which Jesus was nailed. The remaining five occurrences of *stauros* all refer to the cross a disciple is called to bear (Mt.10:38; 16:24; Mk.8:34; Lk.9:23; 14:27)—a cross that is both metaphorical (i.e. not a literal wooden cross) and real.

The verbal counterpart of *stauros* is *stauroō* (to crucify) which occurs 35 times in the gospels, of which 32 refer to the act of crucifying Jesus, or to a foretelling of crucifying him, or to a clamor to crucify him. The remaining three occurrences are found in Mt.23:34 (“I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify”); and Mt.27:38 and Mark 15:27 (the two robbers were crucified with Jesus).

The crucifixion of live criminals is not mentioned in the Old Testament (not even in Esther 7:9–10) because stoning was the prescribed method of execution among the Israelites. But the bodies of the executed were sometimes hung on trees as a warning to others (Dt.21:22–23); such victims were regarded as accursed (Gal.3:13). That is probably why in the New Testament, the word “tree” (which also means “wood”) is sometimes associated with crucifixion, and Jesus’ execution is sometimes depicted in terms of “hanging him on a tree” (Acts 5:30; 10:39). Here the Greek word for “tree” is *xulon*, which also occurs in Revelation 2:7 (“the tree of life”).

Crucifixion was first practiced by the Phoenicians and Carthaginians, and later extensively by the Romans. Under the Romans, only slaves, vile criminals, and provincials (people who come from undeveloped places away from Roman cities) were crucified but Roman citizens were seldom crucified (hence the strong tradition that Paul, a Roman citizen, was beheaded, not crucified).

Crucifixion can be carried out on a single upright post (the *crux simplex*), but there was also the cross, of which there were three types: *crux commissa* (shaped like a capital T), *crux decussata* (shaped like the letter X), and *crux immissa* (the traditional two-beam cross). The last of these, the traditional one, was probably the one used for crucifying the Lord Jesus, because the title “The King of the Jews,” written on a placard called the *titulus*, was nailed to the cross *over* his head (Mt.27:37;

Mk.15:26; Lk.23:38; Jn.19:19), though I think this may also be achieved with the *crux simplex*, the single upright stake.

It was the custom for the condemned man, prior to crucifixion, to be scourged with the *flagellum*, a whip with leather thongs, sometimes weighted with metal or glass, which in the case of Jesus greatly weakened him and hastened his death. The victim was often made to carry the cross to the place of his final torture and death, always outside the city. Jesus did not carry the whole cross, which would be too heavy for him to bear in his weakened condition, but only the crossbeam, the *patibulum*; but even that was too heavy for him, so Simon of Cyrene, a passerby, was forced into carrying it for him (Mt.27:32; Mk.15:21; Lk.23:26; but see John 19:17 for a different perspective).

At the crucifixion site, the condemned man would be stripped naked, and placed on the ground with his shoulders on the crossbeam, and his arms or hands tied or nailed to it. This crossbeam was then lifted and secured to an upright post. His feet, either tied or nailed, would be just clear of the ground (rather than high above the ground as depicted in many paintings). His body would often be supported by a projecting peg, the *sedile*, on which he “sat”.

There at the cross the condemned man would be left to die either of asphyxiation (oxygen deprivation), hunger, exhaustion, bodily injury, or some other cause. Death was sometimes hastened by the *crurifragium*, the breaking of the legs with an iron club, to bring about agonizing asphyxiation. This was done

to the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus, but not to the Lord himself, for he had already died.

New light has been thrown on the subject by archeological work in Israel. In 1968, a team of archeologists led by Vassilios Tzaferis discovered four Jewish tombs at Ammunition Hill near Jerusalem. They found an ossuary (a container for the bones of dead people) which contained the extant bones of a crucified man. The ossuary dates from between CE 7 and 66, judging from the Herodian pottery found at the site. A nail was found still embedded in the right heel bone.

The victim was a man named Jehohanan ben Hagqol, between 24 and 28 years of age when he was crucified by the Romans. (Jehohanan is a Jewish name that appears in the Old Testament, e.g., Jehohanan, a commander.) His arms rather than his hands were tied, not nailed, to the *patibulum*, the crossbeam, made of olive wood. The body's weight was supported by a plank (the *sedecula*) nailed to an upright beam (the *simplex*). His legs were bent at the knees and spread out such that his calves (the back of his legs below the knee) were parallel to the crossbeam. His legs had not been broken, as was initially thought. The contorted leg muscles would have caused severe pain with spasmodic contractions and rigid cramps.

The crucifixion of Jehohanan is different from the traditional depiction of Jesus' crucifixion. The gospels give no detailed description of his physical sufferings, for this was not their objective, and because the early Christians were familiar enough with crucifixion.

Crucifixion is meant to inflict not just physical torture but also public shame and humiliation. Hence Hebrews 12:2 says that Jesus “endured the cross, despising the shame”.

## Two Scholarly Bible Dictionaries

These two references are *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*—which is larger (5 volumes) and more recent (2006–2009) than *New Bible Dictionary* (1996)—and *Dictionary Of Jesus and the Gospels* (2013), a massive volume from a series of eight.

Their articles on crucifixion—respectively, “Crucifixion” and “Death of Jesus”—contain more information than *New Bible Dictionary*, but they offer nothing that corrects any major inaccuracy in the older work, only minor inaccuracies. Here are some more information about crucifixion from the two references, omitting the grisly details:

- Crucifixion was practiced by the Persians, Assyrians, Scythians, Carthaginians, Indians, Celts, and Britons before the Romans adopted it, probably from the Carthaginians.
- Alexander the Great employed crucifixion widely. For example, he had 2,000 survivors from siege of Tyre crucified.
- Prior to Roman rule, even the Jewish authorities were known to have practiced crucifixion. Josephus says that Alexander Jannaeus, who ruled Judea 102–76 BCE, crucified 800 Pharisees who had opposed him.
- In Roman crucifixion, the victim would be left to die on the cross, with death taking up to several days in some cases. Guards were

stationed at the cross until his death. In some cases, family and friends were allowed to feed the victim, and there had been attempts at rescue. Victims rescued from crucifixion would usually die anyway.

- The dead body was usually not buried, but left to rot or be picked apart by birds and animals. But in cities with a sizable Jewish population, no Jewish corpse would be left unburied, in keeping with the Mosaic law (Dt.21:23). That is why Pilate allowed Jesus' body to be removed on the day of his crucifixion for a Jewish burial.
- The main political and social purpose of crucifixion was deterrence, as noted by Josephus; hence crucifixion was often set up for public display on highways, hilltops, and city gates.



## From Wikipedia

Wikipedia article “Crucifixion” provides many technical details not found in the dictionaries I just cited. I will mention only a few:

- A whole cross typically weighed over 300 pounds, and the cross-beam itself about 100 pounds, in order to support the weight of a body.
- The length of time required to reach death ranged from hours to days depending on the method of crucifixion, the victim’s condition, and the environment.
- Maslen and Mitchell reviewed the literature on this subject, and identified scholarly support for various possible causes of death from crucifixion: asphyxia, cardiac rupture, heart failure, hypovolemic shock (in which the heart can no longer pump enough blood to the body due to blood loss), acidosis (excess acid in the body fluids), arrhythmia (abnormal heart beat), or pulmonary embolism (a blood clot in a blood vessel). Other possible causes of death include sepsis (due to infection from the crucifixion nails or prior scourging), dehydration, and animal predation.
- So appalling were the horrors of crucifixion that Cicero, the great Roman orator, branded it as “cruel and disgusting punishment,” and urged that “the very mention of the cross ought to be far removed not only from a Roman citizen’s body, but from his mind, his eyes, his ears.”

## An Archaeological Discovery in England

The skeleton of a man with a nail embedded in his heel was unearthed in 2018 at a housing development site in Cambridgeshire, England. It was the first known archaeological evidence of crucifixion in the British Isles.

England may seem an unlikely place for crucifixion, but we must remember that Britain was invaded by Julius Caesar in 55 and 54 BCE, and that large parts of Britain were under Roman rule from 43 to 410 CE, during which years the territory ruled by Rome was a Roman province called Provincia Britannia.

An article, *Crucifixion in the Fens*, on this archaeological discovery at Cambridgeshire can be downloaded free of charge from the January/February 2023 issue of *British Archaeology*.<sup>3</sup> This Open Access Article, made available for free and open public use, was written by archeologists David Ingham and Corinne Duhig in the form of a 12-page pdf file which contains dozens of images and a scholarly discussion.

Here is my summary, in the next few paragraphs, of the basic points of this article. For more details, refer to the article itself.

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<sup>3</sup> Full title, *Crucifixion in the Fens: Life & Death in Roman Fenstanton*, at <https://www.archaeologyuk.org/resource/free-access-to-crucifixion-in-the-fens-life-and-death-in-roman-fenstanton.html>.

The excavation site at Cambridgeshire unearthed the remains of 48 people, including five children, in cemeteries dating from the Iron Age. Skeleton 4926, almost complete, is a suspected victim of crucifixion, whose heel bone was found with an embedded nail. It is similar to the remains found in 1968 at Ammunition Hill near the Mount of Olives. In both cases, the nail was embedded in the calcaneum, the heel bone, which is the largest bone of the foot.



Excavation site in Fenstanton, Cambridgeshire, England  
Compare with the size of the cars on the highway



Heel bone and nail, Fenstanton, Cambridgeshire



Skeleton 4926

Skeleton 4926, dated to around 130 to 360 CE, is that of a man, 25 to 35 years old. At the burial site, the skeleton was surrounded by 12 nails. A 13th nail was driven into the right heel bone, with the bone showing a dent from a hammer that had missed its mark. His spine and ribs had been crushed, and his arms and legs show injuries from binding or shackling.

This was a significant discovery for showing that crucifixion was practiced all over the Roman Empire. It was also a rare discovery in the sense that crucifixion nails were seldom left embedded in bones, for it was the usual practice to remove a nail after crucifixion, either for reuse or to be kept as an amulet (an object, usually worn around the neck, that is believed to be a charm that wards off harm and evil).



Normand, a street preacher whom I met in downtown Montreal in 2020, and who gave me kind permission to take several photos of him and his cross

# The Seven Sayings of Jesus on the Cross

**I**t is a tradition among churches worldwide, in preparation for Good Friday, to reflect on the seven sayings of Jesus on the cross, so that we may fathom, if that is ever possible, the depths of his anguished soul, his love for humankind in the midst of dehumanizing torture, and his triumph by faith in his God and Father.

In the four gospels are nine instances of the Lord's utterances on the cross (the following are quoted from ESV and NIV):

1. **Matthew 27:46**, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?"
2. **Mark 15:34**, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?"
3. **Luke 23:34**, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."
4. **Luke 23:43**, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."
5. **Luke 23:46**, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!"



6. **John 19:26**, “Woman, behold, your son!”
7. **John 19:27**, “Behold, your mother!”
8. **John 19:28**, “I am thirsty.”
9. **John 19:30**, “It is finished.”

We refine this list in three steps. First, we combine statements 1 and 2. Second, we combine statements 6 and 7. Third, we re-order the list chronologically. Here is our final list of the seven sayings:

1. “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34)
2. “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43)
3. “Woman, behold, your son!” (John 19:26) and “Behold, your mother!” (v.27)
4. “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” (Matthew 27:46) or “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” (Mark 15:34)
5. “I am thirsty.” (John 19:28)
6. “It is finished.” (John 19:30)
7. “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” (Luke 23:46)

This is the traditional order, and I will simply follow it. But bear in mind that its chronology is not clear-cut. Although we are guided by the verse order within Luke, and that within John, the chronology is unclear when we combine the four gospels. For

example, it is unclear which comes earlier, “I am thirsty” or “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?”

Of these seven sayings, three are found in Luke, three in John, and one in the combination of Matthew and Mark. Two chapters, Luke 23 and John 19, account for six of the seven sayings.

Of these seven sayings, three are addressed to the God and Father of Jesus (statements #1, 4, 7); one is addressed to one of the criminals crucified alongside Jesus (#2); one is addressed to Jesus’ mother and the disciple Jesus loved (#3); one is addressed either to himself or the onlookers (#5); and one is a declaration of triumph (#6).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> A side issue: Do we say, “The sayings of Jesus *on* the cross” or “The sayings of Jesus *from* the cross”? Both make good sense, and both are found in the literature. There is a Wikipedia article titled “Sayings of Jesus on the Cross,” but also a book by Fleming Rutledge titled “The Seven Last Words from the Cross”. I will use “on the cross” but I admittedly find “from the cross” more intriguing for emphasizing that the sayings emanated *from* the cross.

## First Saying

# Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing

<sup>32</sup> Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. <sup>33</sup> When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. <sup>34</sup> Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:32–34, ESV)

**F**ATHER, FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY DO NOT KNOW WHAT THEY ARE DOING. These words, unique to Luke’s gospel, are among the most cherished and memorable words in Scripture, for they display Jesus’ magnanimous heart in the midst of torment and suffering.

It is not obvious from the context whom “they” refers to (“they do not know what they are doing”). Is Jesus asking his Father to forgive the Jewish religious leaders? Or the Roman

authorities? Or the crowds who clamored for his crucifixion? Or individuals such as Judas and Pilate?

If we ask this question in the hope of getting a specific answer, the consequences could turn toxic, for it would be a replication of the ancient question, Who killed Christ, the Jews or the Romans?

The present book does not have the space or the intention to tell the heart-rending story of how the Jewish people came to be branded as Christ killers or God killers, with all the possible consequences that one could imagine from that vilification.

I don't think our Lord would single out any specific group over all other groups to be the sole recipient of God's forgiveness. The vagueness of *them* and *they* in, "Father, forgive *them*, for *they* do not know what *they* are doing," could have been intended.

But when it comes to the matter of forgiveness, there are some factors that we might consider.

First, Jesus told Pilate that he has the lesser sin than the one who delivered Jesus to Pilate (John 19:11).

Second, the words "for they do not know what they are doing" indicate that the degree of culpability depends on the degree of one's awareness of the sinfulness of one's actions. Hence judgment takes knowledge into account: "But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating." (Luke 12:48)

Third, repentance is a condition for forgiveness. One chapter later, in Luke 24:47, the resurrected Lord speaks of “repentance for the forgiveness of sins”.

Fourth, the people of Jerusalem were not guiltless. Yet when Peter rebuked the multitudes for crucifying the Lord (Acts 2:36), they were cut to the heart (v.37), and said to Peter and his fellow apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Three thousand souls were added that day.<sup>5</sup>

## **A Case of Forgiveness That Still Haunts Me**

Decades ago when I was working in Ottawa, I would occasionally read a newsletter published by a local United Church of Canada. I didn’t belong to this church, but I had a few friends who did. Its newsletter was plain-looking, with nothing but typewriter text and a few line drawings. Yet the newsletter had some remarkable sharings by the church people.

I still remember two sharings from that newsletter, the second of which still haunts me.

The first sharing was a plea by brother Jimmy W, whom I knew personally though not very well. He was about thirty years old, and had terminal cancer. He was pleading with God

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<sup>5</sup> I won’t address the question of what led to the crucifixion of Jesus. For a discussion on this topic, see “Why was Jesus Crucified?” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (ed. Joel B. Green *et al*). This article makes a case for the view that Jews and Romans were *both* responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus.

to spare his life so that he may continue to take care of his family. He died soon after.

The second sharing was by a brother I never knew. He said he had *totally* forgiven the man who broke into his family home, and raped and killed his sister when she was alone in the house. Two things about this story haunt me to this day, decades later. The first is the depravity of the crime. The second is the brother's total forgiveness of the rapist-murderer. My heart struggled to accept that a crime so heinous as this could be so easily forgiven. The irony is that I struggled harder over forgiving the rapist-murderer than did this brother even though I was not a victim of the crime in any way. This brother certainly had the mind of Christ, and has taught me to see that forgiveness is central to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## **The Story of Edgar S.**

In my final year (1981) of engineering studies in Montreal, one of my best friends was Edgar S. He originally lived in Nova Scotia and later moved to Montreal, probably in search of employment. He got a job at the Montreal head office of the Bank of Montreal where he took care of supplies and inventory (at least that was how I understood what his responsibilities were, from his occasional reference to them).

Edgar got along well with his colleagues and supervisor. This was to be expected because he was soft-spoken and had a generous heart.

He was also deeply reflective, and his soul would be tormented by the long history of hatred against the people of his race, seen in horrific lynchings, though he would also speak out against injustice done to anyone, black or white. In those days we had no Internet, so books were the best sources of historical information. I vividly recall that one of his books had a photograph of an angry mob, with smiling children standing among them, appeased by the hanging of a black man.

I would visit Edgar at his apartment once a week, usually mid-week, for coffee and chatting, though I would also see him on Sundays at our Montreal church.

One day Edgar told me something that had happened at his workplace. When his supervisor found out that Edgar had become a Christian, he told him that he was going to test his faith, and then expose it to everyone as phony and hypocritical. He specifically said he will provoke Edgar to lose his temper in the presence of his colleagues.

Today this would be seen as barbaric discrimination, both racial and religious. But in a world with no Internet or smartphones, there were few recourses for a quick remedial action.

The supervisor ordered Edgar to take a scouring pad, go down on his knees, and scrub the office floor. In this particular situation, there were two offending factors: scrubbing floors was not within Edgar's set of responsibilities (he did mainly low-level paperwork), and floor cleaning was normally done after office hours. The command to scrub the floors was clearly provocative, though I suppose that some might argue that the

supervisor had the right, within limits, to assign unpleasant tasks to his workers.

What would you do in such a situation? I honestly don't know what I would have done. And I don't think there is a fixed and prescribed course of action. The only means of arriving at the right decision would be the leading of the Spirit.

Edgar was muscular and unafraid of confrontation. Yet he took the scrub, went down on his knees, and scrubbed the floors in the presence of his colleagues. He did this a few hours a day, for several days. He determined to make this a victory for the name of Christ, so he scrubbed the floors *cheerfully*, without a trace of anger. Most importantly, he kept on praying, sometimes out loud in front of his colleagues, asking that his supervisor may be forgiven of his hostility to Christ. Edgar imitated the One who prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

A few days later, something happened. Edgar finished his lunch at the company cafeteria, and went back to work. Along the way, he saw a wallet sitting on an empty chair, and picked it up. In God's providence, it happened to belong to his supervisor. Edgar went to his supervisor's desk, and handed him the wallet. The supervisor grabbed the wallet, checked its contents, and didn't say a word. Yet from then on, he never again told Edgar to scrub the floors.

Within a few days, the workers noticed that the supervisor had become a changed man, for he was whistling Christian songs (!), and was nice to everyone. I don't know whether he



had become a Christian or was restored to a Christian faith that had lapsed, but this transformation had an immediate effect on the office. The tensions that used to arise daily in the office soon disappeared.

In hindsight, I think God may have led Edgar to this experience for a greater good, in order that God's love may come to those who are hostile to the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Second Saying

# Today you will be with me in Paradise

<sup>39</sup> One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” <sup>40</sup> But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? <sup>41</sup> And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” <sup>42</sup> And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” <sup>43</sup> And he said to him, “**Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.**” (Luke 23:39–43, ESV)

**T**RULY, I SAY TO YOU, TODAY YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE. The two men who were crucified with Jesus (that is, alongside Jesus) are called “criminals” in Luke and “robbers” in Matthew and Mark, at least in the ESV, but they are unlikely to be petty or common robbers (such robbers were seldom crucified) but criminals of a high order, probably regarded by the Romans as an incipient threat to their rule. Their criminal activities may

have been disruptive enough to border on insurrection or sedition, crimes which were often punished by crucifixion.

The trial of Jesus was a highly public event that convulsed all of Jerusalem. It entangled people from all strata of society—Pontius Pilate, Herod Antipas, Caiaphas, the Jewish populace—so we can be sure that only notorious criminals, not common robbers, would be crucified alongside Jesus as a public spectacle. Isaiah 53:12 says, the Lord “was numbered with the transgressors”.

Initially the criminals mocked Jesus (Mt.27:44). One of them continued mocking Jesus, but the other repented of it, and rebuked the first one: “Do you not fear God since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

He turned to the Lord, and said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” And Jesus said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

This criminal somehow knew that Jesus had a kingdom, possibly from the inscription “The King of the Jews” but more likely (since robbers were generally illiterate) from the mocking by the religious leaders: “He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.” (Mt. 27:42)

## Paradise

Then Jesus said to the criminal, “Today you will be with me in Paradise.” *Paradise*, a loanword from the Persian language, occurs three times in the New Testament: the present verse (“today you will be with me in Paradise”); 2 Corinthians 12:3 (Paul knows of a man caught up into paradise); and Revelation 2:7 (the tree of life which is in the paradise of God).

The Hebrew word for “paradise” (*pardes*) occurs three times in the Old Testament, but is never portrayed as an other-worldly and heavenly place that we might imagine when we see the word *paradise*. *Pardes* occurs in Nehemiah 2:8 (of the king’s forest), Ecclesiastes 2:5 (of the king’s parks), and Song of Solomon 4:13 (of an orchard). The notion that Paradise is the Garden of Eden stems from a mistranslation of the Hebrew by the Septuagint.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> In Genesis 2:8, in the statement, “Yahweh God planted a garden in Eden,” the word “garden” is not the Hebrew word *pardes* (paradise) but the Hebrew word *gan* (a garden). In other words, the Hebrew Bible does not speak of the Garden of Eden as Paradise but as a garden. But in this verse, the LXX (an important Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) translates *gan* (“garden”) into the Greek word *paradeisos* (paradise). This is more interpretation than translation, so there is no exegetical basis for equating Paradise with the Garden of Eden. This point is reinforced by 2 Corinthians 12:3 (Paul knows of a man caught up into paradise) and Revelation 2:7 (the tree of life which is in the paradise of God), which do not point to the earthly Garden of Eden located at (or near) the confluence of the Euphrates and the Tigris (Genesis 2:10–14).

I won't say anything more about Paradise because the spiritual focus of "today you will be with me in Paradise" is not on the time, the location, or the nature of Paradise, but on the salvation of a criminal who had such faith as to entrust his eternal well-being into the (nailed! bloodied!) hands of Jesus.

If we focus on the temporal meaning of "today," we will only get caught in endless speculations: Does "today" mean that when Jesus died, he was transported straight to Paradise, and that on the third day he was resurrected from Paradise? And is Paradise a special section of Hades?

Paradise in Luke 23:43 would certainly encompass the joy and blessing of fellowshiping with the Lord Jesus.

## **The Story of Hiroyuki Suzuki**

Talking of criminals, one of the things I have learned over the years is to take Christian conversion with a grain of salt when it takes place in a prison. The conversion can only be tested when the inmate is released from prison, for only time will tell whether he will use his new freedom to walk a Christian life worthy of his pledge to God.

My cautiousness may sound cynical, but I apply it to people from all walks of life, not just inmates. A struggling student depends on God for passing his exams, but will he continue in the faith after he graduates? A poor man depends on God for daily bread and rent, but will he continue in the faith after landing a good job? In many cases, he initially gives thanks to

God for the blessings, then he gradually stops going to church because of work priorities.

I have known or heard of inmates who were active Christians in prison, but lost their faith outside prison, sometimes immediately after release, sometimes in a process of spiritual decline. Some have returned to a life of crime, but some have continued in the faith, I am glad to say.

For this reason I am wary about the Christian conversions of notorious criminals like Ted Bundy and David Berkowitz, though I think Berkowitz's conversion is genuine.

Ted Bundy was a serial killer who kidnapped, raped, and murdered many women in the mid-1970s. He was executed in 1989 at the age of 42. I won't go into the grisly details of his crimes, and I avoid reading about them or even about him. But last year, someone told me that just before Bundy was executed, he expressed faith in Christ, and spent his final night in prayer with a minister. My hope is that his conversion was genuine, just as I am glad the robber at the cross had genuine faith in Jesus. But many who have studied Bundy's life are skeptical of his conversion.

The other person, David Berkowitz, who named himself "Son of Sam," was a serial killer who terrorized New York City in 1976 and 1977. I won't go into the details of his killing sprees which I learned about from the headline news that dominated the press. He received six life sentences for the murders, but not the death penalty.

In 1987, in prison, Berkowitz became a Christian after reading Psalm 34:6: “This poor man cried out, and Yahweh heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.” He is now an active Christian in prison, writing essays on faith and repentance, and giving spiritual counsel to fellow inmates. In a letter in which he requested the cancellation of his parole hearing, he wrote, “I believe that I deserve to be in prison for the rest of my life. I have, with God’s help, long ago come to terms with my situation and I have accepted my punishment.”

I believe that his conversion is genuine, but one could also say that the real test will come only after he is released from prison, if that should ever happen in his case.

But what about criminals who have been released from prison? The case of Hiroyuki Suzuki of Japan comes to mind. He was not a depraved criminal like Berkowitz and especially Bundy, but he committed enough crimes in his lifetime to merit the label “notorious”.

In Suzuki’s case, there is slight difference from what I just said, in that he became a Christian not while he was in prison but after he had come out. But the same question remains: will he will keep the faith in his freedom outside prison?

Suzuki’s life of crime can be summarized in a few sentences, which I reconstructed from three web articles.<sup>7</sup> For 17

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<sup>7</sup> One article is <https://www.tokyoreporter.com/japan-news/special-reports/former-yakuza-sees-the-light>. A few years ago, I wrote down notes about his life from an old article whose link I no longer have.

years he was a gangster with the Yakuza, Japan's equivalent of the Mafia. As a member of the Sakaume chapter of the Yakuza in Osaka, he took part in extortion, gambling rings, prostitution rings, and drug trafficking. He had been jailed twice.

His shoulders and upper arms are covered with tattoos of carp and monsters. The tips of his pinkies were cut off after he had shown disrespect towards a crime boss.

His life started to change after he married his third wife, Mariko, who encouraged him to attend church. But even while attending church, he continued to gamble and had a string of mistresses.

In 1990, he fled Osaka with a mountain of debt and an army of gangsters chasing after his back. He stumbled into a church in Tokyo's Shinjuku district, and spent three days there. For the first time, he was moved by the words of the Bible, and soon entered seminary, leaving the underworld for good.

Soon after completing his seminary studies, he started Mission Barabbas with seven other former gang members. In church they would sometimes take off their shirts when they preach, to display their tattoos of dragons, demons, and carp.

He now leads a congregation at Siloam Christ Church in Funabashi, east of Tokyo. The church has no fancy building, just a trailer with vinyl floor tiles.

Suzuki says, "Even the Yakuza can be born again. We are still essentially yakuza, but God is our new boss." Suzuki used to tote a gun but now carries a Bible. His ministry touched the



lives of other former Yakuza gangsters, including Tatsuya Shindo whose story is a revelation in itself.

## Third Saying

# Behold your son! Behold your mother!

<sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “**Woman, behold, your son!**” <sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, “**Behold, your mother!**” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. (John 19:26–27, ESV)

**H**E SAID TO HIS MOTHER, “WOMAN, BEHOLD, YOUR SON!” THEN HE SAID TO THE DISCIPLE, “BEHOLD, YOUR MOTHER!” This saying which consists of two clauses is unique to John’s gospel. The first clause is addressed to “his mother,” and the second to “the disciple whom he loved”. His mother is of course Mary, but there is less clarity about the identity of the disciple whom Jesus loved. In Christian tradition, this beloved disciple is the apostle John, son of Zebedee, a tradition that I accept for reasons I won’t go into. But some scholars are not confident that

John is the disciple whom Jesus loved, again for reasons I won't go into.<sup>8</sup>

At the cross Jesus addressed his mother as *woman*, which is also the term of address he used at the wedding in Cana:

When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." (John 2:3-5, ESV)

Addressing one's own mother as "woman" would be considered rude in English, but this instance must have been taken as respectful in the original circumstances that prevailed at the Cana wedding and at the cross, and in their native Aramaic conversation. When Jesus said, "Woman, behold, your son!" he was expressing something beyond respect, namely, love and concern for her welfare.

It just occurred to me that in English one could speak respectfully of one's own father as "my old man". Whether it is respectful or not will depend on the circumstances and the tone in which it is said. It would be respectful and even affectionate to say, "My old man will never let me down! Never!" even if the language may sound a bit rough. Hence a term of address

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<sup>8</sup> Lazarus is the only man in the Gospel of John who is identified by name as the direct recipient of Jesus' love: "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus." (John 11:5)

such as “woman” or “old man” must be judged by the intent behind the word, and not merely by the word divorced from its context.

Whenever Jesus addressed his mother as *woman*, whether in Cana or from the cross, there was a solemnity and higher purpose in his words that his mother understood.

In Cana, Jesus was drawing a demarcation—a separation—between his blood ties (in which Mary was his mother) and his ministry as the one sent by God (in which she was a follower of the Lord). Mary apparently caught this, so she said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

There was yet another higher purpose that the Lord had to fulfill in Cana: changing water into wine as the first of many signs of his ministry of salvation. John writes, “What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.” (John 2:11, NIV)

When the Lord Jesus addressed his mother as *woman* from the cross, it was for similar reasons. He was about to depart from the world; at death his blood ties with his mother will be terminated. So in anticipation of this new spiritual reality, Jesus addressed her as *woman*. Another reason may be that it would be confusing to say, “*Mother*, behold, your son!” and in the next breath to say to John, “Behold, your *mother*!”

In making Mary the mother of John, and John the son of Mary, the basis of this new relationship is not blood ties, which is the old sphere of kinship, but a spiritual family, which is the

new sphere of kinship. In the old sphere, John was not under obligation to provide for Mary's support in her old age, but all that changed in the new sphere by the Lord's decree. So it is written, "And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home." (John 19:27) <sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Nikephoros's *Ecclesiastical History* (Book 2, Chapter 3) says that Mary lived with the apostle John in Jerusalem for eleven years and then died. Other sources say that she went with him to Ephesus. But this historian, Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, died in 1335, more than a millennium after the birth of the church, so he was neither an early source nor a primary source of church history. Yet his information about Mary's later years does not seem fantastical or farfetched.

## Fourth Saying

# My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

<sup>45</sup> Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. <sup>46</sup> And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” <sup>47</sup> And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, “This man is calling Elijah.” <sup>48</sup> And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. <sup>49</sup> But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.” <sup>50</sup> And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. (Matthew 27:45–50, ESV)

<sup>33</sup> And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. <sup>34</sup> And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” <sup>35</sup> And some of the bystanders hearing it said, “Behold, he is calling Elijah.” <sup>36</sup> And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether

Elijah will come to take him down.”<sup>37</sup> And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. (Mark 15:33–37, ESV)

**J**ESUS CRIED OUT WITH A LOUD VOICE, SAYING, “ELI, ELI, LEMA SABACH-  
THANI?” THAT IS, “MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?”

This saying is found in Matthew and Mark but with one difference: Matthew has “Eli, Eli” whereas Mark has “Eloi, Eloi”. They both mean the same—“my God, my God”—with “Eli” coming from the Hebrew language, “Eloi” from the Aramaic.

Hebrew and Aramaic are related Semitic languages but are different enough to be mutually unintelligible without prior exposure to both. In Israel at the time of Jesus, Aramaic was the main spoken language of many Jews and of Jesus himself.

Though the New Testament was written in Greek, in it we see instances of Aramaic in Jesus’ most intimate words with his Father, such as “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” spoken from the cross, and “Abba Father” spoken at Gethsemane (Mk.14:36).<sup>10</sup>

Some bystanders understood “Eli, Eli” as the Lord’s cry to the prophet Elijah for deliverance, so they offered him a sponge soaked with sour wine. Among the people of Israel, there was a

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<sup>10</sup> Both Matthew and Mark have the Aramaic “Lema sabachthani”. In other words, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” is totally Aramaic in Mark, and *mostly* Aramaic in Matthew apart from “Eli”. But even Matthew’s saying could have been entirely Aramaic in its original sources. In fact some important Greek manuscripts such as the Sinaiticus and the Vaticanus have “Eloi” even for Matthew.

general belief that Elijah will come again (Mal.4:5; Mt.11:14; 17:10). Some even thought that Jesus was Elijah (Mt.16:14).

Darkness fell on the land of Israel for three hours, from the sixth hour to the ninth, that is, from noon to 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The darkness was unnatural and was not caused by a solar eclipse, for the Passover took place on the 14th day of the month, which is the day when the full moon appears. In a solar eclipse, we have a sun-moon-earth lineup, but at full moon, we have a sun-earth-moon lineup, so the darkness could not have been caused by a solar eclipse.<sup>11</sup> The darkness reminds us of Amos 8:9 in which Yahweh said in anger, "And on that day, I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight."

At about the ninth hour, when the darkness was about to be lifted, the Lord Jesus faced his most anguished moment on the cross, and cried out, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?"—"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Jesus said this with such a "loud voice" that the bystanders thought he was calling for Elijah. One of them took a sponge, soaked it with sour wine, put it on a reed, and gave it to Jesus to drink. Matthew and Mark do not say whether he accepted the drink, but John 19:30 says that Jesus "received" the sour wine when the sponge was held up to his mouth. He cried out a second time, again with a loud voice, and "yielded up his spirit".

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<sup>11</sup> See NASA's explanation of both at <https://moon.nasa.gov/moon-in-motion/phases-eclipses-supermoons/eclipses>



How do we understand Jesus' cry to the Father, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" These words come from Psalm 22:1. Here is the whole Psalm 22, a Psalm of David. If you prefer not to read the whole psalm, just read the words in red text; these words prophesied events that surrounded the Lord's crucifixion.

### Psalm 22 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> **My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?** Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

<sup>2</sup> O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.

<sup>3</sup> Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.

<sup>5</sup> To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

<sup>6</sup> But I am a worm and not a man, **scorned by mankind and despised by the people.**

<sup>7</sup> **All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;**

<sup>8</sup> **"He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"**

<sup>9</sup> Yet you are he who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother's breasts.

<sup>10</sup> On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God.

<sup>11</sup> Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help.

<sup>12</sup> Many bulls encompass me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me;

<sup>13</sup> they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion.

<sup>14</sup> I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast;

<sup>15</sup> my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.

<sup>16</sup> For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; **they have pierced my hands and feet—**

<sup>17</sup> I can count all my bones—they stare and gloat over me;

<sup>18</sup> **they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.**

<sup>19</sup> But you, O LORD, do not be far off! O you my help, come quickly to my aid!

<sup>20</sup> Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog!

<sup>21</sup> Save me from the mouth of the lion! You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!

<sup>22</sup> I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:

<sup>23</sup> You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

<sup>24</sup> For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him.

<sup>25</sup> From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will perform before those who fear him.

<sup>26</sup> The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD! May your hearts live forever!

<sup>27</sup> All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.

<sup>28</sup> For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations.

<sup>29</sup> All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep himself alive.

<sup>30</sup> Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;

<sup>31</sup> they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.

Psalm 22 is clearly a messianic psalm, for many of its verses were fulfilled in the crucifixion event: verse 1 (“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”); verse 6 (“scorned by mankind”); verse 7 (“all who see me mock me”); verse 8 (“He trusts in the LORD, let him deliver him”); verse 16 (“they have pierced my hands and feet”); and verse 18 (“they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots”).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Just now I noticed that verse 20 speaks of “the power of the dog” which is the title of a film nominated for Best Picture at the 2022 Academy Awards, though I haven’t watched the film and don’t know in what way it is related to Psalm 22.

If you do a Google search for “fifth gospel psalm,” you will discover that Psalm 22 is often called the Fifth Gospel for its many prophecies that were later fulfilled at the crucifixion of Jesus.

Despite the psalmist’s repeated plea to Yahweh God for deliverance especially from verse 19 onwards, it is not entirely clear from Psalm 22 that God had finally rescued him, though there are hints here and there of deliverance such as verse 23 (“You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!”) We might be tempted to look at David’s life as a parallel, and conclude from his life story that Yahweh did deliver David, and therefore also Jesus, from all the dangers mentioned in Psalm 22. But there is a limit to how much we can read the details of Psalm 22 into Matthew and Mark, which only quote the first verse of the psalm, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

## **Was Jesus Abandoned by God His Father?**

Over the decades, I have been wondering on and off whether Jesus was abandoned by the Father at the cross, and if so, in what sense. Many Christians feel that Jesus was never in any danger of being forsaken because of their trinitarian belief that God the Father can never abandon God the Son. But the biblical evidence, while not totally clear-cut, does not seem to support such a rosy conclusion.

The word “forsaken” in Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34 (“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”) comes from the Greek word *egkatalēipō*, which means to desert, forsake, leave behind. In both these verses, the word is in the aorist indicative, whose meaning is explained by a Greek grammar as follows:

The aorist indicative is used to express simple past time. It makes no reference to how long it took for an action to be completed—only that it happened. It views an action as a single, unitary event regardless of its duration and without any implication of lasting consequences: “she died”; “he lived”; “we ate”; “you left”.<sup>13</sup>

The aorist is sometimes tricky to analyze. It often defies rigid or formulaic analysis, and its meaning must never be divorced from its context. But from the general nature of the aorist indicative as explained above, and from the intensity of Jesus’ cry of being forsaken, I feel that he faced a real danger of being forsaken by God, or at least he perceived that the danger was real. We must bear in mind that he did actually say, “Why have you forsaken me?”

His cry to the Father, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” was not drama or play-acting, but stemmed from a real fear of abandonment. Hebrews 5:7 says, “In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud

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<sup>13</sup> *New Testament Greek: A Beginning and Intermediate Grammar*, J.A. Hewett et al, p.92, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, Massachusetts.

cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.”

In the end, Jesus was delivered, for the apostle Peter says that David as a prophet “foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.” (Acts 2:31)

The word “resurrection” indicates that Christ’s deliverance by the Father took place not so much at the cross as at his resurrection on the third day.

We may wonder why Acts 2:31—in which Peter says that Christ won’t be abandoned to Hades—offered no assurance to Jesus that he won’t be abandoned. That is because Peter is quoting Psalm 16:10 loosely,<sup>14</sup> and more importantly, Psalm 16:10 refers to David and not to Christ in the first instance: “For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.” (Psalm 16:10, ESV)<sup>15</sup> Here the word “my” refers to David, for Psalm 16 was composed by David (a Miktam of David).

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<sup>14</sup> In fact some Bibles such as ESV and NJB do not give Psalm 16:10 as a cross reference for Acts 2:31.

<sup>15</sup> In the Septuagint (LXX), this verse, which is numbered Psalm 15:10 rather than Psalm 16:10, says, “you will not abandon my soul to Hades or give your devout to see corruption” (ANETS). Since the Greek *Hades* is equivalent to the Hebrew *Sheol*, the Greek Psalm 15:10 does not deviate from the Hebrew Psalm 16:10, so it offers no new wording that might account for Peter’s wording in Acts 2:31. (ANETS stands for *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, a modern and scholarly translation of the Septuagint into English.)

Hence Peter in Acts 2:31 applied Psalm 16:10 to Jesus “retroactively” (proleptically) in hindsight *after* the resurrection. If at the cross Jesus had failed—God forbid—to fulfill the Father’s plan of salvation, there would be no reason for Psalm 16:10 to be applicable to Christ or to offer him any automatic or unconditional assurance.

**L**astly, here are two relevant statements by the apostle Paul, given here without comment for your reflection on Good Friday and Easter:

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.” (Gal. 3:13, ESV)

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor. 5:21, ESV)

## Fifth Saying

# I am thirsty

<sup>28</sup> Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “**I am thirsty.**” <sup>29</sup> A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. <sup>30</sup> When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (John 19:28–30, NIV)

**I AM THIRSTY.** These are very human words driven by an extreme need for water while Jesus was nailed on the cross. Our Lord was capable of being thirsty (of course) as seen in the story of the Samaritan woman in John chapter 4 in which Jesus was “wearied” from a journey, so he asked her for a drink.

John may have recorded the Lord’s seemingly mundane words “I am thirsty” to show us that Jesus was so brutally shackled to the cross that he was powerless to meet his own elemental need for water. These words are ironic for coming from the One who said, “but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again” (John 14:4).



But John also tells us that Jesus said “I am thirsty” in the knowledge that “Scripture would be fulfilled” (19:28). In John’s gospel, Jesus’s ministry was armed with purposeful knowledge: Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father (13:1). He knew that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was going back to God (13:3). He knew all the things that would happen to him (18:4).

An Old Testament verse that offers tangential correspondence to “I am thirsty” is Psalm 69:21: “They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink.” (ESV) But the Old Testament nowhere has the exact utterance “I am thirsty” or “I thirst” of prophetic import, though Sisera said “I am thirsty” (Judges 4:19) just before Jael drove a tent peg into his temple.

As we said in chapter 1, dehydration is one of the possible causes of death by crucifixion.

The term “sour wine” in John 19:29 is just one word *oxos* in the Greek. The BDAG Greek-English lexicon says that *oxos* “relieved thirst more effectively than water and, being cheaper than regular wine, it was a favourite beverage of the lower ranks of society and of those in moderate circumstances.”

Earlier on, as Jesus was being led to the crucifixion site, he was offered a different kind of drink of greater potency: wine mixed with “gall” (Matthew 27:34) or mixed with “myrrh” (Mark 15:23). But when he tasted it, he knew what it was, and refused to take it. This drink is different from the sour wine I just mentioned; it is a potion, often toxic, with anesthetic and painkilling

properties that would dull one's physical and spiritual alertness. Our Lord refused to take the narcotic drink in order to remain alert on the cross, rejecting the final opportunity to lessen his pain and torment on the cross, so that he may set his eyes on the salvation of the world.

## Sixth Saying

# It is finished

<sup>28</sup> Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” <sup>29</sup> A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. <sup>30</sup> When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “**It is finished.**” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (John 19:28–30, NIV)

**WHEN HE HAD RECEIVED THE DRINK, JESUS SAID, “IT IS FINISHED.” WITH THAT, HE BOWED HIS HEAD AND GAVE UP HIS SPIRIT.** I don’t recall that I have ever seen a person die, that is, at the moment of giving up one’s breath, or as John puts it here, at the moment of giving up one’s spirit. I would only see a lifeless body after the fact, sometimes a few minutes later (in the case of my mother) or a few hours later (in the case of my father) or a few days later (at funerals). I am not talking about a sudden violent death as when a person is struck by a car or a bank robber is shot dead.

But the apostle John gives us a snapshot—even a video—of the moment of Jesus’ death: He said “It is finished,” bowed his

head, and gave up his spirit. Luke has something similar: “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” Then he “breathed his last”.

These two sayings, one from John, the other from Luke, were probably uttered one after the other, which in the traditional order of the seven sayings would put “It is finished” just before “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!”

But something is striking about the death of our Lord Jesus: *his absolute clarity of mind maintained to the end*. He achieved this not only by refusing the intoxicating wine mixed with myrrh but also by his resolve to do his Father’s will: “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work” (John 4:34). He said to his Father, “I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.” (John 17:4)

In my experience, clarity of mind just before physical death is somewhat rare. My mother was in a coma before she died, and my father didn’t wake up from his afternoon nap.

But Jesus died after saying with a clear mind, “It is finished.” He bowed his head and “gave up his spirit”—a phrase that is found nowhere else in the Bible, though it might remind us of Ecclesiastes 12:7: “the dust returns to the earth as it once was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.”

What does “it is finished” mean? That the end has arrived? That one’s travails have ceased? That a lifelong anticipation of finality has reached its terminus?

In the Greek text, the word “finished” is *teleō*, which is also found two verses earlier, in verse 28: “Jesus, knowing that everything had now been *finished* ...”

The BDAG Greek-English lexicon gives several definitions of *teleō*, and groups them under three headings, with John 19:30 listed under the first heading: “to complete an activity or process, *bring to an end, finish, complete*”. This definition is couched in language that is active, not passive. When Jesus said, “It is finished,” he did not simply mean that the end had arrived, but that he had completed the work of doing his Father’s will.

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). And by his death the ruler of the world is defeated:

“Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. (John 12:31–33, ESV).

His work will continue on after his death. By his resurrection there is a new community of God’s people, the body of Christ, the temple of God empowered by the Spirit. Jesus told the religious leaders that the temple which is his body will be destroyed and then raised in three days (John 2:19-22).

Jesus bowed his head before uttering, “It is finished”. These are not words of anguish but peaceable words that come from

knowing that one's death was not for nothing, but accomplished the Father's will, notably the salvation of human. Here the word for "bowed" is the Greek verb *klinō* which is also found in Matthew 8:20: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to bow his head." Most Bibles have "nowhere to lay his head" but the Greek text literally says "nowhere to bow his head". Here the words "bow his head" mean having a home for a restful sleep.

**I** will never forget the handwritten words, "Unfinished? Will this be the story of your life?" These words were written on my assignment paper by Mrs. Hruska, my grade seven teacher, in response to an excuse I had inserted into my assignment to explain to her why I didn't finish it.

Unfinished lives come and go in this world, cut short by the vagaries of life but also by recklessness. When I was a young boy, I was shocked by the news that my father's friend, a Chinese laundry owner, had committed suicide over a gambling debt of \$30,000.

Years later, at night time, I heard a loud bang outside my home in Montreal. The next day I learned from the news that a young man, 18 years old, was driving his brand new Corvette at high speed on the wide stretch of Park Avenue just before it narrows. As he approached Mont Royal Avenue, he lost control of the car, crashed into a brick wall, and died instantly. He was flung so hard from the car that his socks came off his feet. He had owned the car for only a few hours when he died.

It is not only non-Christians but also Christians who end up living unfinished lives. In the parable of the talents (Mt. 25:14–30), a slave was given one talent—twenty years’ wages for a common laborer (ESV note)—but he was too lazy to invest it. When his master returned from a journey and saw that the slave had been negligent, he cast him into the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

I have many stories to tell you about failed Christian lives, but I prefer to conclude this chapter on a positive note. Here is a true story in one sentence: In their twenties or thirties, they dedicated their life to serve God and help people in their spiritual need, and they continued doing this for years right up to their death from illness. I am using the singular “they”.

I omitted the biographical details of their life because I wanted to get to the kernel of a life well lived before God. I know of a few persons who fit this story *exactly*, so I did not mention any names. Will they not hear the words, “Well done, good and faithful servant”?

## Seventh Saying

# Father, into your hands I commit my spirit

<sup>44</sup> It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, <sup>45</sup> while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. <sup>46</sup> Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. (Luke 23:44–46, ESV)

**T**HEN JESUS, CALLING OUT WITH A LOUD VOICE, SAID, "FATHER, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT!" AND HAVING SAID THIS HE BREATHED HIS LAST. In the traditional chronology of the seven sayings, this is considered the last saying, probably because it is followed immediately by his last breath with nothing happening in between, not even the bowing of the head.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Luke, in agreement with Matthew and Mark, says that darkness came upon the land for three hours, from the sixth hour to the ninth. But whereas Matthew and Mark clearly situates Jesus' death at the terminus of the darkness, the ninth hour, Luke's wording is less precise, such that some readers may think that Luke situates Jesus' death at the *start* of the



Just before Jesus breathed his last, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, an event that is also recorded in Matthew and Mark. It is unclear to some scholars whether Luke is referring to the outer curtain at the temple courtyard or the inner curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. That is because Luke does not explicitly state which. I believe he was speaking of the inner curtain located at the holiest sanctum of the temple, for its rending would be a most powerful emblem of the smashing of the barrier between God and humankind through the mediating work of Jesus Christ (cf. 1Tim.2:5).

Jesus' final words, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" come from Psalm 31:5. Here are the first five verses of Psalm 31, a psalm of David and a prayer for God's deliverance:

<sup>1</sup> In you, O LORD, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me!

<sup>2</sup> Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily! Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me!

<sup>3</sup> For you are my rock and my fortress; and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me;

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darkness, the sixth hour. This is actually a minor issue of wording that arises only if we read Luke's passage as one block of events that takes place all at the same point in time, the sixth hour. It is not necessary to read the passage that way. The Greek words *de* in v.45 and *kai* in v.46 allow for Jesus' death to be placed at a later time after the time of v.44.

<sup>4</sup> you take me out of the net they have hidden for me, for you are my refuge.

<sup>5</sup> **Into your hand I commit my spirit**; you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God. (ESV)

Jesus commits himself into the “hands” of God, for God’s hands represent great power. Psalm 89:13 says, “You have a mighty arm; strong is your hand, high your right hand.” What Jesus commits into God’s hands is his own “spirit,” essentially his very person.

**I** conclude my book here. The main spiritual lesson I learned in writing it is that we must entrust ourselves to God in a world roiled by pandemic, economic turmoil, geopolitical tension, wars and rumors of wars, climate change, and the emerging AI threat.

1 Peter 4:19 says, “Let those who suffer according to God’s will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.”

But entrusting ourselves into God’s hands is not something that we leave to the last minutes of our lives, on our deathbeds. The Lord Jesus committed himself to God not just at the cross but all through his life. There is no way for us to commit ourselves to God at death if we have not been doing it all our lives.

Let me give one last story reported by the news media. A Sherpa guide was escorting another man, a hopeful mountain climber, to conquer Mount Everest. But near the summit they found a woman lying unconscious. The hopeful male climber

decided to abandon his plan to conquer Everest so that he and his Sherpa guide may rescue this woman. The two managed to move her down the mountain but only for a short distance, 200 meters, due to the weather conditions. They decided that the Sherpa guide will stay with her while the other man will look for his friend on the mountain. This other man also had his own Sherpa guide, so the four men worked together to save the woman. The second Sherpa was the strongest, so he carried her on his back while the other three took turns to lift her legs to increase her blood circulation. Eventually she was brought down to a base camp where she was treated to full recovery a few days later.

When the Sherpa guide asked her for the promised rescue fee of \$8,000 to \$10,000, she refused, and only paid him \$4000. She didn't even say thank-you to the Sherpa guide who risked his life to save her, or to the two hopeful mountain climbers who abandoned their dream climb to Everest at the last stage. It is far more dangerous to rescue an incapacitated climber than to climb a mountain on one's own.

Her ingratitude was made known to millions of people on social media, with many criticizing her behavior.

But isn't this a parable of many Christians, even if the parallels are inexact? My point is that we easily condemn the woman for her ingratitude but are blind to the same behavior in us, in the way we show ingratitude to the Lord Jesus who died for us. Even if it was for money, the Sherpa guide did genuinely and heroically risk his life to save a helpless person. The Lord Jesus

did far more for us at the cross, yet we are routinely ungrateful and indifferent to the Lord in the way we live our daily lives.

But the Lord Jesus obeyed his Father unto death at the cross on Good Friday.

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

## Epilogue

# A Poem on the Seven Sayings on the Cross

The following poem on the seven sayings on the cross is found at <http://frjoeshomilies.net/04-06-12.html>, and composed by Monsignor Joseph Pellegrino who at <http://frjoeshomilies.net> wrote, “These homilies are my gifts to you,” and “you do not need to ask for permission to view or use this site,” but use of the material requires inserting the statement, “This material is used with the permission of its author, Rev. Msgr. Joseph A. Pellegrino, Diocese of St. Petersburg, Florida.”

Thank-you Monsignor Pellegrino for your splendid and striking poem. And no, your attempts at poetry are not “feeble” but magnificent and inspiring.

# Good Friday: Some Feeble Attempts at Poetry on The Seven Last Words

Msgr. Joseph A. Pellegrino

## The First Word:

“Father, Forgive them for they do not know what they do!”

All were included: the indifferent, those who slapped his face,  
The Chief Priests, hidden by the cruel Centurion’s chariot.  
In the distance, an incredible ultimate grace  
Was besought for the self-hung Judas Iscariot.

## The Second Word:

“This day you shall be with me in paradise!”

A common thief, that’s all he was  
Good for nothing, useless crook  
Suffering excruciating pain, yet deserving his fate.  
Dismiss

The King of the Jews, that’s what he is,  
The creator of the heavens, his Father,  
Suffering excruciating pain, the Innocent One  
Jesus

Never too late to confess the Lord  
The thief hears the Innocent mocked  
In one last chance for charity, he calls:  
Have you no fear of God?  
A living faith  
Life eternal.

### The Third Word:

“Woman, Behold your son! Behold your mother.”

All night long in the hospital,  
She holds her child’s hand,  
The doctors say it looks grim,  
We’ll do whatever we can.

He feels her warmth, her presence  
Her love makes the pain go away  
Her sorrow is not important now  
All that matters is making it to the day.

O Mary, the presence that you give,  
To Jesus on the Cross,  
Give now to John and all of us  
Our suffering is no loss.

The One on the throne calls out to you  
Proclaims you to be our mother  
Help us embrace our crosses with him  
Replace your son with another.

### The Fourth Word:

“My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?”

All can be endured when there is warmth within,  
The sacrifice is little when the presence is great  
But when abandonment is total, the soul calls out in pain  
Jesus concludes the Work of the Father.

### The Fifth Word: “I thirst”

A woman of Samaria  
of repute quite deserved  
heard a Jew once ask of her  
for water from a well preserved.

He really didn't want to drink  
He wanted her to see  
the life that she was living  
was destroying reality.

She believed his words  
and changed her ways  
and opened a new life  
that Jew had all the water he needed  
from a lady who had been in strife.

So also to us  
The Lord calls out  
from the crucified throne  
He wants water from our wells,



It's our hearts he wants for his own.

### The Sixth Word:

“Father, into your hands I commend my Spirit!”

It was his hands that created the world,  
and separated the waters from the land.

It was his hands that fashioned humans,  
and gave them the capacity to love.

It was his hands that delivered the people,  
and sent the evil into the sea

It was his hands that carved the law  
and gave the path to his own,

It was into his hands that Jesus completed his work,  
the work of the Father.

### The Seventh Word: “It is finished”

Finished? Completed?

Yes

Beaten? Conquered?

No

Accomplished! Triumphant!

Jesus!

# Appendix

The Four Gospels on  
the Trial, Crucifixion, Death, and  
Resurrection of the Lord Jesus

This Appendix contains the text of the final chapters of the four Gospels that are relevant to Good Friday and Easter. It consists of the following chapters:

Matthew 26, 27, 28

Mark 14, 15, 16

Luke 22, 23, 24

John 18, 19, 20, 21

for a total of 13 chapters and 607 verses, if we exclude the longer ending of Mark.

All utterances of Jesus on the cross are **highlighted in red**.

Scripture is taken from English Standard Version, which grants permission to quote up to 1,000 verses. See the ESV copyright statement at the beginning of this book. For ease of reading, this Appendix uses large-print text and omits the ESV footnotes.

# The Gospel of Matthew

Chapters 26, 27, 28

## The Plot to Kill Jesus

**Matthew 26** When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, <sup>2</sup> “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”

<sup>3</sup> Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, <sup>4</sup> and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. <sup>5</sup> But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.”

## Jesus Anointed at Bethany

<sup>6</sup> Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, <sup>7</sup> a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table. <sup>8</sup> And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? <sup>9</sup> For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor.” <sup>10</sup> But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. <sup>11</sup> For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. <sup>12</sup> In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial. <sup>13</sup> Truly, I say

to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.”

## **Judas to Betray Jesus**

<sup>14</sup> Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests <sup>15</sup> and said, “What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?” And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. <sup>16</sup> And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him.

## **The Passover with the Disciples**

<sup>17</sup> Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?” <sup>18</sup> He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.’” <sup>19</sup> And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover.

<sup>20</sup> When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve. <sup>21</sup> And as they were eating, he said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.” <sup>22</sup> And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, “Is it I, Lord?” <sup>23</sup> He answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. <sup>24</sup> The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.” <sup>25</sup> Judas, who would betray him, answered, “Is it I, Rabbi?” He said to him, “You have said so.”

## **Institution of the Lord's Supper**

<sup>26</sup> Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." <sup>27</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, <sup>28</sup> for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>29</sup> I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

## **Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial**

<sup>30</sup> And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. <sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' <sup>32</sup> But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." <sup>33</sup> Peter answered him, "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away." <sup>34</sup> Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." <sup>35</sup> Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" And all the disciples said the same.

## **Jesus Prays in Gethsemane**

<sup>36</sup> Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." <sup>37</sup> And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. <sup>38</sup> Then he said to them, "My

soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.”<sup>39</sup> And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”<sup>40</sup> And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour?<sup>41</sup> Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”<sup>42</sup> Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.”<sup>43</sup> And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.<sup>44</sup> So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again.<sup>45</sup> Then he came to the disciples and said to them, “Sleep and take your rest later on. See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.<sup>46</sup> Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”

## **Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus**

<sup>47</sup> While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people.<sup>48</sup> Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; seize him.”<sup>49</sup> And he came up to Jesus at once and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” And he kissed him.<sup>50</sup> Jesus said to him, “Friend, do what you came to do.” Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him.<sup>51</sup> And behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword and struck the

servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. <sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. <sup>53</sup> Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? <sup>54</sup> But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?” <sup>55</sup> At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. <sup>56</sup> But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples left him and fled.

## **Jesus Before Caiaphas and the Council**

<sup>57</sup> Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. <sup>58</sup> And Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. <sup>59</sup> Now the chief priests and the whole Council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, <sup>60</sup> but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward <sup>61</sup> and said, “This man said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.’” <sup>62</sup> And the high priest stood up and said, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?” <sup>63</sup> But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” <sup>64</sup> Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from



now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”<sup>65</sup> Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy.”<sup>66</sup> What is your judgment?” They answered, “He deserves death.”<sup>67</sup> Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him,<sup>68</sup> saying, “Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?”

## **Peter Denies Jesus**

<sup>69</sup> Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came up to him and said, “You also were with Jesus the Galilean.”<sup>70</sup> But he denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you mean.”<sup>71</sup> And when he went out to the entrance, another servant girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.”<sup>72</sup> And again he denied it with an oath: “I do not know the man.”<sup>73</sup> After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you.”<sup>74</sup> Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “I do not know the man.” And immediately the rooster crowed.<sup>75</sup> And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly.

## **Jesus Delivered to Pilate**

**Matthew 27** When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to

death.<sup>2</sup> And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.

## **Judas Hangs Himself**

<sup>3</sup> Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders,<sup>4</sup> saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself."<sup>5</sup> And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself.<sup>6</sup> But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money."<sup>7</sup> So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers.<sup>8</sup> Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.<sup>9</sup> Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel,<sup>10</sup> and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."

## **Jesus Before Pilate**

<sup>11</sup> Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You have said so."<sup>12</sup> But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer.<sup>13</sup> Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?"<sup>14</sup> But he gave him no

answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

## **The Crowd Chooses Barabbas**

<sup>15</sup> Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. <sup>16</sup> And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. <sup>17</sup> So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” <sup>18</sup> For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. <sup>19</sup> Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.” <sup>20</sup> Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. <sup>21</sup> The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.” <sup>22</sup> Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said, “Let him be crucified!” <sup>23</sup> And he said, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”

## **Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified**

<sup>24</sup> So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.” <sup>25</sup> And all the people answered, “His blood be on

us and on our children!”<sup>26</sup> Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.

## **Jesus Is Mocked**

<sup>27</sup> Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor’s headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. <sup>28</sup> And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup> and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” <sup>30</sup> And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. <sup>31</sup> And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.

## **The Crucifixion**

<sup>32</sup> As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross. <sup>33</sup> And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), <sup>34</sup> they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. <sup>35</sup> And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots. <sup>36</sup> Then they sat down and kept watch over him there. <sup>37</sup> And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.” <sup>38</sup> Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. <sup>39</sup> And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads <sup>40</sup> and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save

yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”  
<sup>41</sup> So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, <sup>42</sup> “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. <sup>43</sup> He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” <sup>44</sup> And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

## The Death of Jesus

<sup>45</sup> Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. <sup>46</sup> And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, **“Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?”** that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” <sup>47</sup> And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, “This man is calling Elijah.” <sup>48</sup> And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. <sup>49</sup> But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.” <sup>50</sup> And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

<sup>51</sup> And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. <sup>52</sup> The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, <sup>53</sup> and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. <sup>54</sup> When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took

place, they were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

<sup>55</sup> There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, <sup>56</sup> among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

## **Jesus Is Buried**

<sup>57</sup> When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. <sup>58</sup> He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. <sup>59</sup> And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud <sup>60</sup> and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. <sup>61</sup> Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

## **The Guard at the Tomb**

<sup>62</sup> The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate <sup>63</sup> and said, “Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise.’ <sup>64</sup> Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.” <sup>65</sup> Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.”

<sup>66</sup> So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

## The Resurrection

**Matthew 28** Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup> And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup> His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup> And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup> But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” <sup>8</sup> So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup> And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

## The Report of the Guard

<sup>11</sup> While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. <sup>12</sup> And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers <sup>13</sup> and said,

“Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’<sup>14</sup> And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.”<sup>15</sup> So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

## **The Great Commission**

<sup>16</sup> Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup> And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”



# The Gospel of Mark

Chapters 14, 15, 16

## The Plot to Kill Jesus

**Mark 14** It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, <sup>2</sup> for they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people.”

## Jesus Anointed at Bethany

<sup>3</sup> And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head. <sup>4</sup> There were some who said to themselves indignantly, “Why was the ointment wasted like that? <sup>5</sup> For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.” And they scolded her. <sup>6</sup> But Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. <sup>7</sup> For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. <sup>8</sup> She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. <sup>9</sup> And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.”

## **Judas to Betray Jesus**

<sup>10</sup> Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. <sup>11</sup> And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him.

## **The Passover with the Disciples**

<sup>12</sup> And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, “Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?” <sup>13</sup> And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, <sup>14</sup> and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ <sup>15</sup> And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us.” <sup>16</sup> And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

<sup>17</sup> And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. <sup>18</sup> And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.” <sup>19</sup> They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, “Is it I?” <sup>20</sup> He said to them, “It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. <sup>21</sup> For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”

## **Institution of the Lord's Supper**

<sup>22</sup> And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." <sup>23</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. <sup>24</sup> And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. <sup>25</sup> Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

## **Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial**

<sup>26</sup> And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. <sup>27</sup> And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' <sup>28</sup> But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." <sup>29</sup> Peter said to him, "Even though they all fall away, I will not." <sup>30</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." <sup>31</sup> But he said emphatically, "If I must die with you, I will not deny you." And they all said the same.

## **Jesus Prays in Gethsemane**

<sup>32</sup> And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." <sup>33</sup> And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. <sup>34</sup> And he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch." <sup>35</sup> And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour

might pass from him. <sup>36</sup> And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.” <sup>37</sup> And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? <sup>38</sup> Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” <sup>39</sup> And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. <sup>40</sup> And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. <sup>41</sup> And he came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>42</sup> Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”

## **Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus**

<sup>43</sup> And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. <sup>44</sup> Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard.” <sup>45</sup> And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!” And he kissed him. <sup>46</sup> And they laid hands on him and seized him. <sup>47</sup> But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. <sup>48</sup> And Jesus said to them, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? <sup>49</sup> Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching,

and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled.”  
<sup>50</sup> And they all left him and fled.

## **A Young Man Flees**

<sup>51</sup> And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, <sup>52</sup> but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.

## **Jesus Before the Council**

<sup>53</sup> And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. <sup>54</sup> And Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire. <sup>55</sup> Now the chief priests and the whole Council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. <sup>56</sup> For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. <sup>57</sup> And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, <sup>58</sup> “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’” <sup>59</sup> Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. <sup>60</sup> And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?” <sup>61</sup> But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” <sup>62</sup> And Jesus said, “I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” <sup>63</sup> And the high priest tore his

garments and said, "What further witnesses do we need? <sup>64</sup> You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?" And they all condemned him as deserving death. <sup>65</sup> And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophesy!" And the guards received him with blows.

## **Peter Denies Jesus**

<sup>66</sup> And as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came, <sup>67</sup> and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with the Nazarene, Jesus." <sup>68</sup> But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you mean." And he went out into the gateway and the rooster crowed. <sup>69</sup> And the servant girl saw him and began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." <sup>70</sup> But again he denied it. And after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean." <sup>71</sup> But he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know this man of whom you speak." <sup>72</sup> And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

## **Jesus Delivered to Pilate**

**Mark 15** And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole Council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over

to Pilate. <sup>2</sup> And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” <sup>3</sup> And the chief priests accused him of many things. <sup>4</sup> And Pilate again asked him, “Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you.” <sup>5</sup> But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

## **Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified**

<sup>6</sup> Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. <sup>7</sup> And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. <sup>8</sup> And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. <sup>9</sup> And he answered them, saying, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” <sup>10</sup> For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. <sup>11</sup> But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. <sup>12</sup> And Pilate again said to them, “Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” <sup>13</sup> And they cried out again, “Crucify him.” <sup>14</sup> And Pilate said to them, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him.” <sup>15</sup> So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

## **Jesus Is Mocked**

<sup>16</sup> And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor’s headquarters), and they called together the whole

battalion. <sup>17</sup> And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. <sup>18</sup> And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>19</sup> And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. <sup>20</sup> And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

## **The Crucifixion**

<sup>21</sup> And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. <sup>22</sup> And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). <sup>23</sup> And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. <sup>24</sup> And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. <sup>25</sup> And it was the third hour when they crucified him. <sup>26</sup> And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." <sup>27</sup> And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>29</sup> And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, <sup>30</sup> save yourself, and come down from the cross!" <sup>31</sup> So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. <sup>32</sup> Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.



## The Death of Jesus

<sup>33</sup> And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. <sup>34</sup> And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, **“Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?”** which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” <sup>35</sup> And some of the bystanders hearing it said, “Behold, he is calling Elijah.” <sup>36</sup> And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.” <sup>37</sup> And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. <sup>38</sup> And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. <sup>39</sup> And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

<sup>40</sup> There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. <sup>41</sup> When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered to him, and there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.

## Jesus Is Buried

<sup>42</sup> And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, <sup>43</sup> Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the Council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. <sup>44</sup> Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. <sup>45</sup> And when he learned

from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. <sup>46</sup> And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. <sup>47</sup> Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

## The Resurrection

**Mark 16** When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. <sup>2</sup> And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. <sup>3</sup> And they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” <sup>4</sup> And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. <sup>5</sup> And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. <sup>6</sup> And he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. <sup>7</sup> But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.” <sup>8</sup> And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

[SOME OF THE EARLIEST MANUSCRIPTS DO NOT INCLUDE 16:9-20.]

# The Gospel of Luke

Chapters 22, 23, 24

## The Plot to Kill Jesus

**Luke 22** Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover. <sup>2</sup> And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put him to death, for they feared the people.

## Judas to Betray Jesus

<sup>3</sup> Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve. <sup>4</sup> He went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them. <sup>5</sup> And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. <sup>6</sup> So he consented and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd.

## The Passover with the Disciples

<sup>7</sup> Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. <sup>8</sup> So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it." <sup>9</sup> They said to him, "Where will you have us prepare it?" <sup>10</sup> He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he

enters <sup>11</sup> and tell the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ <sup>12</sup> And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there.” <sup>13</sup> And they went and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

## **Institution of the Lord’s Supper**

<sup>14</sup> And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. <sup>15</sup> And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. <sup>16</sup> For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” <sup>17</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. <sup>18</sup> For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” <sup>19</sup> And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” <sup>20</sup> And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. <sup>21</sup> But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. <sup>22</sup> For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!” <sup>23</sup> And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.

## **Who Is the Greatest?**

<sup>24</sup> A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. <sup>25</sup> And he said to them, “The kings of

the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. <sup>26</sup> But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. <sup>27</sup> For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.

<sup>28</sup> “You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, <sup>29</sup> and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, <sup>30</sup> that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

## **Jesus Foretells Peter’s Denial**

<sup>31</sup> “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, <sup>32</sup> but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” <sup>33</sup> Peter said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.” <sup>34</sup> Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.”

## **Scripture Must Be Fulfilled in Jesus**

<sup>35</sup> And he said to them, “When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?” They said, “Nothing.” <sup>36</sup> He said to them, “But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one. <sup>37</sup> For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the

transgressors.' For what is written about me has its fulfillment."<sup>38</sup> And they said, "Look, Lord, here are two swords." And he said to them, "It is enough."

## **Jesus Prays on the Mount of Olives**

<sup>39</sup> And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. <sup>40</sup> And when he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." <sup>41</sup> And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." <sup>43</sup> And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. <sup>44</sup> And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. <sup>45</sup> And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, <sup>46</sup> and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

## **Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus**

<sup>47</sup> While he was still speaking, there came a crowd, and the man called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He drew near to Jesus to kiss him, <sup>48</sup> but Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" <sup>49</sup> And when those who were around him saw what would follow, they said, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" <sup>50</sup> And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. <sup>51</sup> But Jesus said, "No

more of this!" And he touched his ear and healed him. <sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? <sup>53</sup> When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

### **Peter Denies Jesus**

<sup>54</sup> Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. <sup>55</sup> And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. <sup>56</sup> Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him." <sup>57</sup> But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." <sup>58</sup> And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." <sup>59</sup> And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean." <sup>60</sup> But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. <sup>61</sup> And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." <sup>62</sup> And he went out and wept bitterly.

## Jesus Is Mocked

<sup>63</sup> Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him. <sup>64</sup> They also blindfolded him and kept asking him, “Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?” <sup>65</sup> And they said many other things against him, blaspheming him.

## Jesus Before the Council

<sup>66</sup> When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led him away to their council, and they said, <sup>67</sup> “If you are the Christ, tell us.” But he said to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe, <sup>68</sup> and if I ask you, you will not answer. <sup>69</sup> But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.” <sup>70</sup> So they all said, “Are you the Son of God, then?” And he said to them, “You say that I am.” <sup>71</sup> Then they said, “What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips.”

## Jesus Before Pilate

**Luke 23** Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate. <sup>2</sup> And they began to accuse him, saying, “We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king.” <sup>3</sup> And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” <sup>4</sup> Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no guilt in this man.” <sup>5</sup> But they



were urgent, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place.”

## **Jesus Before Herod**

<sup>6</sup> When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. <sup>7</sup> And when he learned that he belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. <sup>8</sup> When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. <sup>9</sup> So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer. <sup>10</sup> The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. <sup>11</sup> And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate. <sup>12</sup> And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.

<sup>13</sup> Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, <sup>14</sup> and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him. <sup>15</sup> Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by him. <sup>16</sup> I will therefore punish and release him.”

## **Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified**

<sup>18</sup> But they all cried out together, “Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas”— <sup>19</sup> a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder. <sup>20</sup> Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, <sup>21</sup> but they kept shouting, “Crucify, crucify him!” <sup>22</sup> A third time he said to them, “Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him.” <sup>23</sup> But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. <sup>24</sup> So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. <sup>25</sup> He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will.

## **The Crucifixion**

<sup>26</sup> And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. <sup>27</sup> And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. <sup>28</sup> But turning to them Jesus said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. <sup>29</sup> For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’ <sup>30</sup> Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ <sup>31</sup> For if

they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

<sup>32</sup> Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. <sup>33</sup> And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>34</sup> And Jesus said, **"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."** And they cast lots to divide his garments. <sup>35</sup> And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" <sup>36</sup> The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine <sup>37</sup> and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" <sup>38</sup> There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

<sup>39</sup> One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" <sup>40</sup> But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?" <sup>41</sup> And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." <sup>42</sup> And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." <sup>43</sup> And he said to him, **"Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."**

## The Death of Jesus

<sup>44</sup> It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, <sup>45</sup> while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. <sup>46</sup> Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, **"Father, into your hands I**

**commit my spirit!**” And having said this he breathed his last. <sup>47</sup> Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, “Certainly this man was innocent!” <sup>48</sup> And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. <sup>49</sup> And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

## **Jesus Is Buried**

<sup>50</sup> Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, <sup>51</sup> who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. <sup>52</sup> This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. <sup>53</sup> Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. <sup>54</sup> It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. <sup>55</sup> The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. <sup>56</sup> Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments.

On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

## **The Resurrection**

**Luke 24** But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. <sup>2</sup> And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup> but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. <sup>4</sup> While they were

perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. <sup>5</sup> And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? <sup>6</sup> He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup> that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.” <sup>8</sup> And they remembered his words, <sup>9</sup> and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. <sup>10</sup> Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, <sup>11</sup> but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. <sup>12</sup> But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

## **On the Road to Emmaus**

<sup>13</sup> That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, <sup>14</sup> and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. <sup>15</sup> While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. <sup>16</sup> But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. <sup>17</sup> And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. <sup>18</sup> Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” <sup>19</sup>

And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, <sup>20</sup> and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. <sup>21</sup> But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. <sup>22</sup> Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, <sup>23</sup> and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. <sup>24</sup> Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." <sup>25</sup> And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" <sup>27</sup> And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

<sup>28</sup> So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, <sup>29</sup> but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup> When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup> And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup> They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" <sup>33</sup> And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, <sup>34</sup>

saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"  
<sup>35</sup> Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

## **Jesus Appears to His Disciples**

<sup>36</sup> As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" <sup>37</sup> But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. <sup>38</sup> And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? <sup>39</sup> See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." <sup>40</sup> And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. <sup>41</sup> And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" <sup>42</sup> They gave him a piece of broiled fish, <sup>43</sup> and he took it and ate before them.

<sup>44</sup> Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." <sup>45</sup> Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, <sup>46</sup> and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, <sup>47</sup> and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup> You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup> And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

## **The Ascension**

<sup>50</sup> Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. <sup>51</sup> While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. <sup>52</sup> And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, <sup>53</sup> and were continually in the temple blessing God.



# The Gospel of John

Chapters 18, 19, 20, 21

## Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

**John 18** When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. <sup>2</sup> Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with his disciples. <sup>3</sup> So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons. <sup>4</sup> Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, “Whom do you seek?” <sup>5</sup> They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground. <sup>7</sup> So he asked them again, “Whom do you seek?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” <sup>8</sup> Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let these men go.” <sup>9</sup> This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: “Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one.” <sup>10</sup> Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.) <sup>11</sup> So Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?”

## **Jesus Faces Annas and Caiaphas**

<sup>12</sup> So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound him. <sup>13</sup> First they led him to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. <sup>14</sup> It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people.

## **Peter Denies Jesus**

<sup>15</sup> Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest, <sup>16</sup> but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in. <sup>17</sup> The servant girl at the door said to Peter, “You also are not one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.” <sup>18</sup> Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves. Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.

## **The High Priest Questions Jesus**

<sup>19</sup> The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. <sup>20</sup> Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. <sup>21</sup> Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them; they know what I said.” <sup>22</sup> When he had said these things,

one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered him, "If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong; but if what I said is right, why do you strike me?" <sup>24</sup> Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

### **Peter Denies Jesus Again**

<sup>25</sup> Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, "You also are not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." <sup>26</sup> One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" <sup>27</sup> Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.

### **Jesus Before Pilate**

<sup>28</sup> Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. <sup>29</sup> So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" <sup>30</sup> They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." <sup>31</sup> Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." <sup>32</sup> This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

## My Kingdom Is Not of This World

<sup>33</sup> So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” <sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” <sup>35</sup> Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?” <sup>36</sup> Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.” <sup>37</sup> Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.” <sup>38</sup> Pilate said to him, “What is truth?”

After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, “I find no guilt in him. <sup>39</sup> But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?” <sup>40</sup> They cried out again, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a robber.

## Jesus Delivered to Be Crucified

**John 19** Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. <sup>2</sup> And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. <sup>3</sup> They came up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and struck him with their hands. <sup>4</sup> Pilate went out again and said to them, “See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him.” <sup>5</sup> So Jesus came

out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" <sup>6</sup> When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." <sup>7</sup> The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God." <sup>8</sup> When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. <sup>9</sup> He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" <sup>11</sup> Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."

<sup>12</sup> From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." <sup>13</sup> So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. <sup>14</sup> Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" <sup>15</sup> They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." <sup>16</sup> So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

## The Crucifixion

So they took Jesus, <sup>17</sup> and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. <sup>18</sup> There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. <sup>19</sup> Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” <sup>20</sup> Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. <sup>21</sup> So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” <sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

<sup>23</sup> When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, <sup>24</sup> so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfill the Scripture which says,

“They divided my garments among them,  
and for my clothing they cast lots.”

So the soldiers did these things, <sup>25</sup> but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, **“Woman, behold, your son!”** <sup>27</sup> Then he said to the

disciple, **“Behold, your mother!”** And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

## The Death of Jesus

<sup>28</sup> After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), **“I thirst.”** <sup>29</sup> A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. <sup>30</sup> When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, **“It is finished,”** and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

## Jesus’ Side Is Pierced

<sup>31</sup> Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. <sup>32</sup> So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup> But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. <sup>35</sup> He who saw it has borne witness —his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth —that you also may believe. <sup>36</sup> For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken.” <sup>37</sup> And again another Scripture says, “They will look on him whom they have pierced.”

## Jesus Is Buried

<sup>38</sup> After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. <sup>39</sup> Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. <sup>40</sup> So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. <sup>41</sup> Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. <sup>42</sup> So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

## The Resurrection

**John 20** Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. <sup>2</sup> So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” <sup>3</sup> So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. <sup>4</sup> Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, <sup>7</sup> and the face cloth, which had



been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. <sup>8</sup> Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; <sup>9</sup> for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went back to their homes.

## **Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene**

<sup>11</sup> But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. <sup>12</sup> And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. <sup>13</sup> They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." <sup>14</sup> Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). <sup>17</sup> Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" <sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"—and that he had said these things to her.

## **Jesus Appears to the Disciples**

<sup>19</sup> On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." <sup>20</sup> When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." <sup>22</sup> And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."

## **Jesus and Thomas**

<sup>24</sup> Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

<sup>26</sup> Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

## The Purpose of This Book

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup> but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

## Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples

**John 21** After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. <sup>2</sup> Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. <sup>3</sup> Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

<sup>4</sup> Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup> Jesus said to them, “Children, do you have any fish?” They answered him, “No.” <sup>6</sup> He said to them, “Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. <sup>7</sup> That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. <sup>8</sup> The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.

<sup>9</sup> When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to them, “Bring

some of the fish that you have just caught.”<sup>11</sup> So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn.<sup>12</sup> Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord.<sup>13</sup> Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish.<sup>14</sup> This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

## **Jesus and Peter**

<sup>15</sup> When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.”<sup>16</sup> He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.”<sup>17</sup> He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.”<sup>18</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.”<sup>19</sup> (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”

## **Jesus and the Beloved Apostle**

<sup>20</sup> Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who had been reclining at table close to him and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” <sup>21</sup> When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about this man?” <sup>22</sup> Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!” <sup>23</sup> So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?”

<sup>24</sup> This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

<sup>25</sup> Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

