

Easter

The Story of the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah

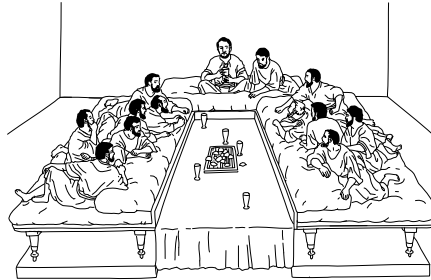
Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching. The chief priests and the experts in the law were trying to find some way to execute Jesus, for they were afraid of the people.

Then Satan entered Judas, the one called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve. He went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers of the temple guard how he might betray Jesus, handing him over to them. They were delighted and arranged to give him money. So Judas agreed and began looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus when no crowd was present.

The Passover

Then the day for the feast of Unleavened Bread came, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us to eat." They said to him, "Where do you want us to prepare it?" He said to them, "Listen, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters, and tell the owner of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"'" Then he will show you a large furnished room upstairs. Make preparations there." So they went and found things just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

The Lord's Supper



Now when the hour came, Jesus took his place at the table and the apostles joined him. And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took bread, and after giving 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." And in the same way he took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

"But look, the hand of the one who betrays me is with me on the table. For the Son of Man is to go just as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!" So they began to question one another as to which of them it could possibly be who would do this.

On the Mount of Olives

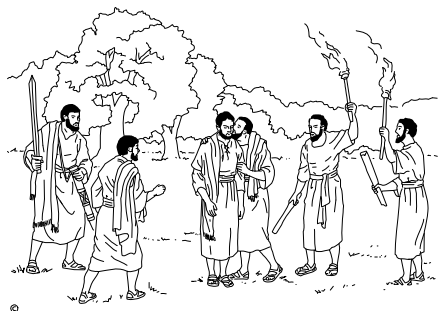
Then Jesus went out and made his way, as he customarily did, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. When he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." He went away from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me. Yet not my will but yours be done." [Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And



in his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.] When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping, exhausted from grief. So he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you will not fall into temptation!"

Betrayal and Arrest

While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd appeared, and the man named Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He walked up to Jesus to kiss him.



But Jesus said to him, “Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?” When those who were around him saw what was about to happen, they said, “Lord, should we use our swords?” Then one of them struck the high priest’s slave, cutting off his right ear. But Jesus said, “Enough of this!” And he touched the man’s ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders who had come out to get him, “Have you come out with swords and clubs like you would against an outlaw? Day after day when I was with you in the temple courts, you did not arrest me. But this is your hour, and that of the power of darkness!”

Jesus’ Condemnation

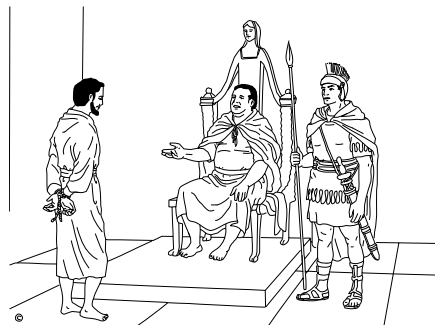
Then they arrested Jesus, led him away, and brought him into the high priest’s house. Now the men who were holding Jesus under guard began to mock him and beat him. They blindfolded him and asked him repeatedly, “Prophecy! Who hit you?” They also said many other things against him, reviling him.

When day came, the council of the elders of the people gathered together, both the chief priests and the experts in the law. Then they led Jesus away to their council and said, “If you are the Christ, tell us.”

But he said to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I ask you, you will not answer. But from now on *the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God.*” So they all said, “Are you the Son of God, then?” He answered them, “You say that I am.” Then they said, “Why do we need further testimony? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!”

Jesus Brought Before Pilate

Then the whole group of them rose up and brought Jesus before Pilate.



They began to accuse him, saying, “We found this man subverting our nation, forbidding us to pay the tribute tax to Caesar and claiming that he himself is Christ, a king.” So Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?” He replied, “You say so.” Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no basis for an accusation against this man.” But they persisted in saying, “He incites the people by teaching throughout all Judea. It started in Galilee and ended up here!”

Jesus Brought Before the Crowd

Then Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. When I examined him before you, I did not

find this man guilty of anything you accused him of doing. Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, he has done nothing deserving death. I will therefore have him flogged and release him.”

But they all shouted out together, “Take this man away! Release Barabbas for us!” (This was a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city, and for murder.) Pilate addressed them once again because he wanted to release Jesus. But they kept on shouting, “Crucify, crucify him!” A third time he said to them, “Why? What wrong has he done? I have found him guilty of no crime deserving death. I will therefore flog him and release him.” But they were insistent, demanding with loud shouts that he be crucified. And their shouts prevailed. So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, who had been thrown in prison for insurrection and murder. But he handed Jesus over to their will.

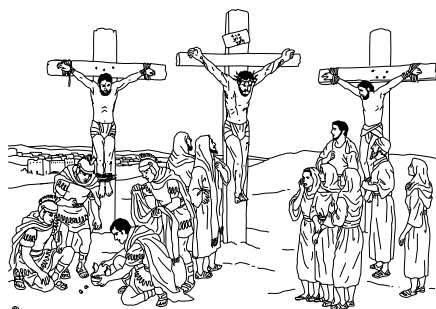
The Crucifixion

As they led him away, they seized Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country. They placed the cross on his back and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, among them women who were mourning and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For this is certain: The days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore children, and the breasts that never nursed!’ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the

hills, 'Cover us!' For if such things are done when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Two other criminals were also led away to be executed with him. So when they came to the place that is called "The Skull," they crucified him there, along with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [But Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."] Then they threw dice to divide his clothes. The people also stood there watching, but the rulers ridiculed him, saying, "He saved others. Let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, his chosen one!" The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!" There was also an inscription over him, "This is the king of the Jews."

One of the criminals who was hanging there railed at him, saying, "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Don't you fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we rightly so, for we are getting what we deserve for what we did, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."



It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, because the sun's light failed. The temple curtain was torn in two. Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, *into your hands I commit my spirit!*" And after he said this he breathed his last.

Now when the centurion saw what had happened, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent!" And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. And all those who knew Jesus stood at a distance, and the women who had followed him from Galilee saw these things.

Jesus' Burial

Now there was a man named Joseph who was a member of the council, a good and righteous man. (He had not consented to their plan and action.) He was from the Judean town of Arimathea, and was looking forward to the kingdom of God. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and placed it in a tomb cut out of the rock, where no one had yet been buried. It was the day of preparation and the Sabbath was beginning. The women who had accompanied Jesus from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they returned and prepared aromatic spices and perfumes.

On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

The Resurrection

Now on the first day of the week, at early dawn, the women went to the tomb, taking the aromatic spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men stood beside them in dazzling attire. The women were terribly frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them,



"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has been raised! Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." Then the women remembered his words, and when they returned from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles. But these words seemed like pure nonsense to them, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb. He bent down and saw only the strips of linen cloth; then he went home, wondering what had happened.

Jesus Walks the Road to Emmaus

Now that very day two of them were on their way to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking to each other about all the things that had happened. While they were talking and debating these things, Jesus himself approached and began to accompany them (but their eyes were kept from recognizing him). Then he said to them, "What are these matters you are discussing so intently as you walk along?" And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that have happened there in these days?" He said to them, "What things?" "The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene," they replied, "a man who, with his powerful deeds and words, proved to be a prophet before God and all the people; and how our chief priests and rulers handed him over to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. Not only this, but it is now the third day since these things happened. Furthermore, some women of our group amazed us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back and said they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of those who were with us went to the tomb, and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him." So he said to them, "You foolish people – how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Wasn't it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into his glory?" Then beginning with

Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things written about himself in all the scriptures.

So they approached the village where they were going. He acted as though he wanted to go farther, but they urged him, "Stay with us, because it is getting toward evening and the day is almost done." So he went in to stay with them.

When he had taken his place at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. At this point their eyes were opened and they recognized him. Then he vanished out of their sight. They said to each other, "Didn't our hearts burn within us while he was speaking with us on the road, while he was explaining the scriptures to us?" So they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven and those with them gathered together and saying, "The Lord has really risen, and has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how they recognized him when he broke the bread.

Jesus Makes a Final Appearance

While they were saying these things, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." But they were startled and terrified, thinking they saw a ghost. Then he said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; it's me! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones like you see I have." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they still could not

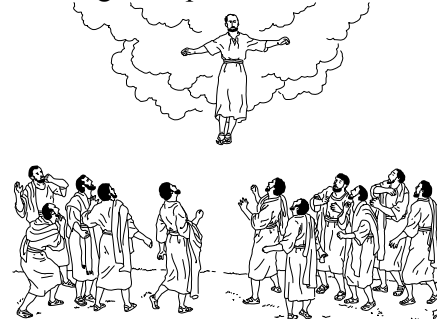
believe it (because of their joy) and were amazed, he said to them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" So they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in front of them.

Jesus' Final Commission

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." Then he opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it stands written that the Christ would suffer and would rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And look, I am sending you what my Father promised. But stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Jesus' Departure

Then Jesus led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands, he blessed them. Now during the blessing he departed and was taken



up into heaven. So they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple courts blessing God.

- Luke 22:1-23, 39-54, 63-71;
23:1-5, 13-16, 18-56; 24:1-53