

A Passion Play Skit Script

This script is written for students to read and perform as a class. The goal is to help them imagine what it would have been like to experience the passion and death of Jesus Christ. This script is based on Matthew 26–27 and Luke 22–23.

CAST

Narrator:

Jesus:

Peter:

John:

James:

Judas:

Apostles:

High Priest's Slave:

Servant-girl:

Man 1:

Man 2:

Pilate:

Barabbas:

Crowd:

Soldiers:

Simon of Cyrene:

Criminal 1:

Criminal 2:

MATERIALS NEEDED (OPTIONAL)

Scene 1: none

Scene 2: large paper circle, cup
(chalice), line of chairs or long table

Scene 3: swords, clubs

Scene 4: none

Scene 5: none

Scene 6: robe, crown of thorns, large
cross, King of the Jews sign

Scene 1: Preparations for Passover

Characters: Jesus, Peter, John

Narrator: Jesus and his disciples arrived in Jerusalem after a long journey through Israel. The feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, finally arrived. Like the rest of the Jews in Jerusalem, they were going to celebrate the covenant God made with the Israelites after freeing them from slavery in Egypt.

Jesus: Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it.

John: Where?

Peter: Yes, where do you want us to make preparations for it?

Jesus: Look for a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him into the house he enters. Ask the owner of the house to show you to the guest room where I will eat the Passover with my disciples. Make preparations in the upper room.

Narrator: So, the disciples did as he asked and they prepared the Passover meal.

Scene 2: The Last Supper

Characters: Narrator, Jesus, Peter, James, John, Judas, Apostles

In a line of desks, a large table, or in a row on the floor sit Jesus and the Twelve Apostles including Peter, John, and Judas who sit closest to Jesus. In front of Jesus is a large piece of paper cut into a circle. This is the bread. Also, there is a large chalice (cup) in front of him as well.

Narrator: When it was evening, Jesus took his place at the table with the Twelve Apostles.

Jesus: Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.

Apostles: *[Each Apostle states one after another.]* Surely not I, Lord?

Jesus: The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me.

Judas: Surely not I, Rabbi?

Jesus: You have said so.

Narrator: Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after giving thanks and blessing it he broke it, gave it to his disciples.

[Jesus picks up the paper and tears it into pieces and passes one to each of the Apostles and disciples sitting there.]

Jesus: Take this all of you and eat it. This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in memory of me.

[The Apostles and disciples eat the bread.]

Narrator: Then Jesus picked up the cup and gave thanks.

Jesus: This cup is the new covenant of my blood that is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of me.

Narrator: The disciples began to argue about which of them was the greatest.

James: I'm the greatest.

John: No, I'm the greatest.

Apostles: *[One after another.]* No, I'm the greatest.

Jesus: The greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

Narrator: The Apostles were all very sad for arguing with one another.

Jesus: You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, "I will strike the shepherd, and the flock will be scattered." But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.

Peter: I will never desert you.

Jesus: Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.

Peter: I will not deny you.

Apostles: [*One after another*] I will not deny you.

Scene 3: The Garden of Gethsemane

Characters: Narrator, Jesus, Peter, Judas, Slave, Apostles, Crowd

Narrator: Jesus went to a nearby place called Gethsemane. His disciples followed him there.

Jesus: Sit here while I go over there to pray.

Narrator: He walked a little farther and knelt on the ground to pray.

Jesus: My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.

Narrator: Jesus got up and returned to his disciples and found them sleeping.

Apostles: *[All yawn and lay on the ground very sleepy.]*

Jesus: Could you not stay awake with me for one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come to the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Narrator: Again Jesus went away for a second time and prayed.

Jesus: My Father, if this cup cannot pass unless I drink it, then your will be done.

Narrator: Again he got up and returned to his disciples and again he found them sleeping.

Apostles: *[All sleep, rub eyes, and show they are tired and sleeping.]*

Narrator: Jesus left them again and went away to pray for a third time.

Jesus: Father, not what I want, but let your will be done.

Narrator: Jesus returned to his Apostle and woke them up.

Jesus: Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See my betrayer is at hand.

Narrator: Then Judas arrived with a large crowd carrying swords and clubs.

Judas *[to the crowd]*: The one I will kiss is the man. Arrest him!

Narrator: Judas walked up to Jesus and blew him a kiss.

Judas: Greetings, Rabbi!

Jesus: Friend, do what you are here to do.

Narrator: Then the crowds came and grabbed Jesus to arrest him.

Peter: Lord, should we strike with the sword?

Narrator: Then Peter took a sword from one of the men and struck a slave of the high priest on the ear.

Slave: Ouch! That hurt!

Jesus: No more of this! All who take up the sword will die by the sword.

Narrator: Jesus touched the slave's ear and healed him.

Jesus: Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit? I was with you day after day in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.

Narrator: The crowd carried Jesus away. All the Apostles deserted him and ran away from there.

Scene 4: Peter Denies Jesus

Characters: Narrator, Peter, Servant-girl, Man 1, Man 2, Group by the Fire

Narrator: Peter sits by a fire warming his hands with a group of people around him talking to each other. Then a servant-girl notices him.

Servant-girl: This man also was with Jesus the Galilean.

Peter: Woman, I do not know him.

Narrator: Peter stood up and walked away until another person recognized him.

Man 1: You also are one of the followers of Jesus of Nazareth.

Peter: Man, I am not!

Narrator: Peter continued to walk away when a third person recognized him.

Man 2: Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean.

Peter: Man, I do not know what you are talking about!

Narrator: At that moment, the cock crowed. He remembered the words Jesus said to him at the Passover feast.

Peter: Oh no. He said before the cock crows, I would deny him three times.

Narrator: Peter broke down into tears and ran away from there.

Scene 5: Jesus Before Pilate

Characters: Narrator, Jesus, Pilate, Crowd, Barabbas

Narrator: The soldiers brought Jesus before the Roman governor Pontius Pilate for questioning while a crowd of people gathered nearby.

Crowd: This man is starting a rebellion! He refuses to pay taxes and he calls himself the Messiah and king.

Pilate: Are you the king of the Jews?

Jesus: You say so.

Pilate: I find no guilt in this man.

Crowd: He stirs up the people with his teachings from Galilee to Jerusalem.

Pilate: Do you not hear the claims they make against you?

Jesus: [*silent*]

Pilate: Guards! Bring out the prisoner Barabbas.

Narrator: The Roman governor sometimes released a prisoner during the festival. The crowds could choose who would be released. Barabbas was a prisoner charged with murder and starting a rebellion.

Pilate: Who do you want me to release for you: Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Crowd: Barabbas! Release Barabbas!

Pilate: Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Crowd: Crucify him!

Pilate: But what evil has he done?

Crowd: Crucify him!

Pilate: I am innocent of this man's blood. Release Barabbas, then have Jesus flogged. Do with him as they wish.

Scene 6: The Crucifixion

Characters: Jesus, Soldiers, Simon of Cyrene, Criminal 1, Criminal 2

Narrator: The Roman soldiers led Jesus away. They stripped him of his clothes and put on him a robe and a crown made of thorns.

Soldiers: [*laughing*] Hail, King of the Jews!

Narrator: The soldiers took the robe and placed a cross on his shoulders. Jesus carried the cross a long way. A man named Simon of Cyrene was there to watch.

Soldier: You there! What is your name?

Simon: I am Simon from Cyrene.

Soldier: Take up this cross and carry it for him. Now!

Narrator: So, Simon took up the cross and helped Jesus carry it for a short while. They came to a place outside the city called Golgotha, the “place of the skull.” The soldiers nailed him to the cross through his hands and feet, then they raised him up for all to see. Over his head they placed a sign that read “This is Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.” Two criminals were crucified with him, one on his left and one on his right.

Crowd: He saved others; let him save himself if he really is the Messiah.

Soldiers: Save yourself!

Criminal 1: Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!

Criminal 2: Do you not fear God? We are getting what we deserve, but this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus: Today you will be with me in paradise.

Narrator: It was about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.

Jesus: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

Narrator: And he breathed his last.

All should kneel down on one knee for a moment of silence.

Discussion & Reflection Questions

After performing the skit, ask the students to discuss the following questions.

1. What surprised you the most about how the Apostles reacted to what Jesus said during the Last Supper?
2. After the Last Supper, Peter and the Apostles deserted Jesus despite what they promised. Why do you think they ran away?
3. How did it feel to be a part of the crowd yelling “crucify him?” How do you think it made Jesus feel to be rejected by them?
4. Why didn’t Jesus save himself from the cross?
5. This performance seems to have a tragic ending, but what good came from the suffering and sacrifice that Jesus made for us?