**C - Palm Sunday of Jesus’s Passion, April 13, 2025**

**Visting the Temple and the Apostle’s Attitude**

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**Pietro Lorenzetti (c. 1280 – 1348) Fresco of Entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem (c. 1320) Basilica of San Francesco d ’Assisi.**

**Introductory Reflection** – Palm Sunday has the longest readings of the liturgical year. To shorten the readings for Palm Sunday, I have chosen to cover most of the story of Jesus’s passion over three years, on other days of Holy Week, and on other Sundays throughout the year. The detailed chronological found in Urantia makes this possible.

**At the Procession with Palms –** **Urantia, Part IV. The Life and Teachings of Jesus, Paper 172 – Going into Jerusalem, Section 3. The Start for Jerusalem, Paragraph 3 – 9**

172:3.3 (1881.1) Jesus did not decide to make this public entrance into Jerusalem as a last bid for popular favor nor as a final grasp for power. Neither did he do it altogether to satisfy the human longings of his disciples and apostles. Jesus entertained none of the illusions of a fantastic dreamer; he well knew what was to be the outcome of this visit.

172:3.4 (1881.2) Having decided upon making a public entrance into Jerusalem, the Master was confronted with the necessity of choosing a proper method of executing such a resolve. Jesus thought over all of the many more or less contradictory so-called Messianic prophecies, but there seemed to be only one which was at all appropriate for him to follow. Most of these prophetic utterances depicted a king, the son and successor of David, a bold and aggressive temporal deliverer of all Israel from the yoke of foreign domination. But there was one Scripture that had sometimes been associated with the Messiah by those who held more to the spiritual concept of his mission, which Jesus thought might consistently be taken as a guide for his projected entry into Jerusalem. This Scripture was found in Zechariah, and it said: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king comes to you. He is just and he brings salvation. He comes as the lowly one, riding upon an ass, upon a colt, the foal of an ass.”

172:3.5 (1881.3) A warrior king always entered a city riding upon a horse; a king on a mission of peace and friendship always entered riding upon an ass. Jesus would not enter Jerusalem as a man on horseback, but he was willing to enter peacefully and with good will as the Son of Man on a donkey.

172:3.6 (1881.4) Jesus had long tried by direct teaching to impress upon his apostles and his disciples that his kingdom was not of this world, that it was a purely spiritual matter; but he had not succeeded in this effort. Now, what he had failed to do by plain and personal teaching, he would attempt to accomplish by a symbolic appeal. Accordingly, right after the noon lunch, Jesus called Peter and John, and after directing them to go over to Bethpage, a neighboring village a little off the main road and a short distance northwest of Bethany, he further said: “Go to Bethpage, and when you come to the junction of the roads, you will find the colt of an ass tied there. Loose the colt and bring it back with you. If anyone asks you why you do this, merely say, ‘The Master has need of him.’” And when the two apostles had gone into Bethpage as the Master had directed, they found the colt tied near his mother in the open street and close to a house on the corner. As Peter began to untie the colt, the owner came over and asked why they did this, and when Peter answered him as Jesus had directed, the man said: “If your Master is Jesus from Galilee, let him have the colt.” And so they returned bringing the colt with them.

172:3.7 (1881.5) By this time several hundred pilgrims had gathered around Jesus and his apostles. Since midforenoon the visitors passing by on their way to the Passover had tarried. Meanwhile, David Zebedee and some of his former messenger associates took it upon themselves to hasten on down to Jerusalem, where they effectively spread the report among the throngs of visiting pilgrims about the temple that Jesus of Nazareth was making a triumphal entry into the city. Accordingly, several thousand of these visitors flocked forth to greet this much-talked-of prophet and wonder-worker, whom some believed to be the Messiah. This multitude, coming out from Jerusalem, met Jesus and the crowd going into the city just after they had passed over the brow of Olivet and had begun the descent into the city.

172:3.8 (1882.1) As the procession started out from Bethany, there was great enthusiasm among the festive crowd of disciples, believers, and visiting pilgrims, many hailing from Galilee and Perea. Just before they started, the twelve women of the original women’s corps, accompanied by some of their associates, arrived on the scene and joined this unique procession as it moved on joyously toward the city.

172:3.9 (1882.2) Before they started, the Alpheus twins put their cloaks on the donkey and held him while the Master got on. As the procession moved toward the summit of Olivet, the festive crowd threw their garments on the ground and brought branches from the near-by trees in order to make a carpet of honor for the donkey bearing the royal Son, the promised Messiah. As the merry crowd moved on toward Jerusalem, they began to sing, or rather to shout in unison, the Psalm, “Hosanna to the son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed be the kingdom that comes down from heaven.” [[1]](#footnote-1)

**Reflection** – While this Urantia reading provides insight into the mind of Jesus not found in Luke (or the other Evangelists), it provides details of David Zebedee’s role, the role of the twelve women from the original women’s corps, and the role of the Alpheus twins. Pietro Lorenzetti’s fresco certainly captures the excitement of the scene in vibrant color. The “Hosanna” is from **Psalm 118:26**.

**At the Mass - Reading 1 -** **Urantia, Part IV. The Life and Teachings of Jesus, Paper 172 – Going into Jerusalem, Section 4. Visting about the Temple, Paragraph 10 – 11**

172:3.10 (1882.3) Jesus was lighthearted and cheerful as they moved along until he came to the brow of Olivet, where the city and the temple towers came into full view; there the Master stopped the procession, and a great silence came upon all as they beheld him weeping. Looking down upon the vast multitude coming forth from the city to greet him, the Master, with much emotion and with tearful voice, said: “O Jerusalem, if you had only known, even you, at least in this your day, the things which belong to your peace, and which you could so freely have had! But now are these glories about to be hid from your eyes. You are about to reject the Son of Peace and turn your backs upon the gospel of salvation. The days will soon come upon you wherein your enemies will cast a trench around about you and lay siege to you on every side; they shall utterly destroy you, insomuch that not one stone shall be left upon another. And all this shall befall you because you knew not the time of your divine visitation. You are about to reject the gift of God, and all men will reject you.”

172:3.11 (1882.4) When he had finished speaking, they began the descent of Olivet and presently were joined by the multitude of visitors who had come from Jerusalem waving palm branches, shouting hosannas, and otherwise expressing gleefulness and good fellowship. The Master had not planned that these crowds should come out from Jerusalem to meet them; that was the work of others. He never premeditated anything which was dramatic. [[2]](#footnote-2)

**Reflection –** Only **Luke 19:41–44** records anything like Jesus’ weeping over Jerusalem as he paused at the brow of Mount Olivet. The Urantia text exposes the emotional turmoil Jesus experienced in this well thought out moment of triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

**Responsorial Psalm -** [**Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24.**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/Psalms/22?8) [[3]](#footnote-3) **R. (2a)****“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**

“All who see me mock me. Their mouths fall in astonishment; they shake their heads in contempt. Whoever turns to God will find relief, for you will save them, taking pleasure in their faith.”   
**R. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?**

“Wild dogs surround me. A circle of the wrongful closes in, like a lion craving my hands and legs. I can count all my bones. The gaze at me, staring with greed.”   
**R.** **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**

“They divide my clothes among themselves, casting lots upon my garments. But you are God – don’t be distant! My ram of protection, rush to my help!”   
**R. “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**

“I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters. In the midst of an assembly I will shine out your praise. Those who hold you in wonder – give praise. All offspring of Jacob – give thanks to heavenly glory.”   
**R.** **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” [[4]](#footnote-4)**

**Reflection –** Jesus recited this psalm and others in his dying moments on the cross. It is difficult to reconcile Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Man lamenting “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” **Urantia 187:5.2** noted below provides the answer.

During this hour of approaching death the human mind of Jesus resorted to the repetition of many passages in the Hebrew scriptures, particularly the Psalms. The last conscious thought of the human Jesus was concerned with the repetition in his mind of a portion of the Book of Psalms now known as the twentieth, twenty-first, and twenty-second Psalms. While his lips would often move, he was too weak to utter the words as these passages, which he so well knew by heart, would pass through his mind. Only a few times did those standing by catch some utterance, such as, “I know the Lord will save his anointed,” “Your hand shall find out all my enemies,” and “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Jesus did not for one moment entertain the slightest doubtthat he had lived in accordance with the Father’s will; and he never doubted that he was now laying down his life in the flesh in accordance with his Father’s will. He did not feel that the Father had forsaken him; he was merely reciting in his vanishing consciousness many Scriptures, among them this twenty-second Psalm, which begins with “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” And this happened to be one of the three passages which were spoken with sufficient clearness to be heard by those standing by.

From a young age, throughout his life, and at his death the psalms were a great consolation to Jesus. As can be seen from the last two verses above, the psalm ends on a note of praise.

**Reading 2 -** **Urantia, Part IV. The Life and Teachings of Jesus, Paper 172 – Going into Jerusalem, Section 4. Visting about the Temple, Paragraph 1 – 3**

172:4.1 (1883.3) While the Alpheus twins returned the donkey to its owner, Jesus and the ten apostles detached themselves from their immediate associates and strolled about the temple, viewing the preparations for the Passover. No attempt was made to molest Jesus as the Sanhedrin greatly feared the people, and that was, after all, one of the reasons Jesus had for allowing the multitude thus to acclaim him. The apostles little understood that this was the only human procedure which could have been effective in preventing Jesus’ immediate arrest upon entering the city. The Master desired to give the inhabitants of Jerusalem, high and low, as well as the tens of thousands of Passover visitors, this one more and last chance to hear the gospel and receive, if they would, the Son of Peace.

172:4.2 (1883.4) And now, as the evening drew on and the crowds went in quest of nourishment, Jesus and his immediate followers were left alone. What a strange day it had been! The apostles were thoughtful, but speechless. Never, in their years of association with Jesus, had they seen such a day. For a moment they sat down by the treasury, watching the people drop in their contributions: the rich putting much in the receiving box and all giving something in accordance with the extent of their possessions. At last there came along a poor widow, scantily attired, and they observed as she cast two mites (small coppers) into the trumpet. And then said Jesus, calling the attention of the apostles to the widow: “Heed well what you have just seen. This poor widow cast in more than all the others, for all these others, from their superfluity, cast in some trifle as a gift, but this poor woman, even though she is in want, gave all that she had, even her living.”

172:4.3 (1883.5) As the evening drew on, they walked about the temple courts in silence, and after Jesus had surveyed these familiar scenes once more, recalling his emotions in connection with previous visits, not excepting the earlier ones, he said, “Let us go up to Bethany for our rest.” Jesus, with Peter and John, went to the home of Simon, while the other apostles lodged among their friends in Bethany and Bethpage. [[5]](#footnote-5)

**Reflection –** Matthew, Mark and Luke place the cleaning of the money-changers from the Temple at the conclusion of this triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Urantia pushes this to the next morning, Monday, and concludes the day with an anticlimactic quiet time in a nearly deserted Temple. Jesus points out the living parable of the poor widow giving to God “all that she had, even her living.” **Mark 12:41-44** and **Luke 21:1-4** record their versions of this incident happening later in the week.

**Verse Before the Gospel – Urantia 172:5.1**   **R.** **Praise to you our Father Brother, Path to Endless Glory!**

No twelve human beings ever experienced such diverse and inexplicable emotions as now surged through the minds and souls of these ambassadors of the kingdom. These sturdy Galileans were confused and disconcerted; they did not know what to expect next; they were too surprised to be much afraid. **R. Praise to you our Father Brother, Path to Endless Glory! [[6]](#footnote-6)**

**Gospel - Urantia, Part IV. The Life and Teachings of Jesus, Paper 172 – Going into Jerusalem, Section 5. The Apostles’ Attitude, Paragraph 10 – 13**

172:5.10 (1886.2) This Sunday started off as a great day for Simon Zelotes. He saw visions of wonderful doings in Jerusalem the next few days, and in that he was right, but Simon dreamed of the establishment of the new national rule of the Jews, with Jesus on the throne of David. Simon saw the nationalists springing into action as soon as the kingdom was announced, and himself in supreme command of the assembling military forces of the new kingdom. On the way down Olivet he even envisaged the Sanhedrin and all of their sympathizers dead before sunset of that day. He really believed something great was going to happen. He was the noisiest man in the whole multitude. By five o’clock that afternoon he was a silent, crushed, and disillusioned apostle. He never fully recovered from the depression which settled down on him as a result of this day’s shock; at least not until long after the Master’s resurrection.

172:5.11 (1886.3) To the Alpheus twins this was a perfect day. They really enjoyed it all the way through, and not being present during the time of quiet visitation about the temple, they escaped much of the anticlimax of the popular upheaval. They could not possibly understand the downcast behavior of the apostles when they came back to Bethany that evening. In the memory of the twins this was always their day of being nearest heaven on earth. This day was the satisfying climax of their whole career as apostles. And the memory of the elation of this Sunday afternoon carried them on through all of the tragedy of this eventful week, right up to the hour of the crucifixion. It was the most befitting entry of the king the twins could conceive; they enjoyed every moment of the whole pageant. They fully approved of all they saw and long cherished the memory.

172:5.12 (1886.4) Of all the apostles, Judas Iscariot was the most adversely affected by this processional entry into Jerusalem. His mind was in a disagreeable ferment because of the Master’s rebuke the preceding day in connection with Mary’s anointing at the feast in Simon’s house. Judas was disgusted with the whole spectacle. To him it seemed childish, if not indeed ridiculous. As this vengeful apostle looked upon the proceedings of this Sunday afternoon, Jesus seemed to him more to resemble a clown than a king. He heartily resented the whole performance. He shared the views of the Greeks and Romans, who looked down upon anyone who would consent to ride upon an ass or the colt of an ass. By the time the triumphal procession had entered the city, Judas had about made up his mind to abandon the whole idea of such a kingdom; he was almost resolved to forsake all such farcical attempts to establish the kingdom of heaven. And then he thought of the resurrection of Lazarus, and many other things, and decided to stay on with the twelve, at least for another day. Besides, he carried the bag, and he would not desert with the apostolic funds in his possession. On the way back to Bethany that night his conduct did not seem strange since all of the apostles were equally downcast and silent.

172:5.13 (1887.1) Judas was tremendously influenced by the ridicule of his Sadducean friends. No other single factor exerted such a powerful influence on him, in his final determination to forsake Jesus and his fellow apostles, as a certain episode which occurred just as Jesus reached the gate of the city: A prominent Sadducee (a friend of Judas’s family) rushed up to him in a spirit of gleeful ridicule and, slapping him on the back, said: “Why so troubled of countenance, my good friend; cheer up and join us all while we acclaim this Jesus of Nazareth the king of the Jews as he rides through the gates of Jerusalem seated on an ass.” Judas had never shrunk from persecution, but he could not stand this sort of ridicule. With the long-nourished emotion of revenge there was now blended this fatal fear of ridicule, that terrible and fearful feeling of being ashamed of his Master and his fellow apostles. At heart, this ordained ambassador of the kingdom was already a deserter; it only remained for him to find some plausible excuse for an open break with the Master. [[7]](#footnote-7)

**Reflection -** The Urantia gospel reading completes the last four portraits of how the various apostles responded to what we call Palm Sunday. Each is true to form.

Simon Zelotes indulged in his nationalistic, materialist visions, only to have them crushed at the end of the day. Simon remained depressed for months, even after the resurrection.

The Alpheus twins in their blissful innocence, perhaps their chief characteristic, “enjoyed every moment of the whole pageant.” Thankfully, “they fully approved of all they saw and long cherished the memory.” They are truly representative of so many of us on this planet.

Judas’s underlying character came to the forefront as he found the whole spectacle disgusting, seeing Jesus more as “a clown than a king.” The midwayers’ balanced psychological insights into Judas’s mind and character I find astounding and compassionate.

1. **Replaced - At the Procession with Palms – Gospel** [**Luke 19:28-40**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/luke/19?28)

   Jesus proceeded on his journey up to Jerusalem. As he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples. He said, "Go into the village opposite you, and as you enter it you will find a colt tethered on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here. And if anyone should ask you, 'Why are you untying it?' you will answer, 'The Master has need of it.'" So those who had been sent went off and found everything just as he had told them. And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying this colt?" They answered, "The Master has need of it." So they brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks over the colt, and helped Jesus to mount. As he rode along, the people were spreading their cloaks on the road; and now as he was approaching the slope of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of his disciples began to praise God aloud with joy for all the mighty deeds they had seen. They proclaimed: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest." Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." He said in reply, "I tell you, if they keep silent, the stones will cry out!" [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. **Replaced at the Mass – Reading 1 -** [**Isaiah 50:4-7**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/Isaiah/50?7)

   The Lord GOD has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them. Morning after morning he opens my ear that I may hear; and I have not rebelled, have not turned back. I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. After and inspired by Pamela Greenberg’s **The Complete Psalms – The Book of Prayer Songs in a New Translation.** [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. **Replaced** **Responsorial Psalm -** [**Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24.**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/Psalms/22?8)  **R. (2a)  My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?**

   All who see me scoff at me; they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads: "He relied on the LORD; let him deliver him, let him rescue him, if he loves him."  
   **R. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?**

   Indeed, many dogs surround me, a pack of evildoers closes in upon me; They have pierced my hands and my feet; I can count all my bones.  
   **R.** **My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?**

   They divide my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots. But you, O LORD, be not far from me; O my help, hasten to aid me.  
   **R. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?**

   I will proclaim your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise you:  
   "You who fear the LORD, praise him; all you descendants of Jacob, give glory to him;  
    revere him, all you descendants of Israel!"  
   **R.** **My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?** [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. **Replaced Reading 2 -** [**Philippians 2:6-11**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/Philippians/2?6)

   Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness;  
   and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death,  
   even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. **Replaced** **Verse Before the Gospel** [**Philippians 2:8-9**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/Philippians/2?8) **R. Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of Endless Glory!**

   Christ became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name. **R. Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of Endless Glory!** [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. **Replaced Gospel -** [**Luke 22:14—23:56**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/luke/22?14) *[Portion in brackets may be omitted.]*

   [When the hour came, Jesus took his place at table with the apostles. He said to them,  
   "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for, I tell you, I shall not eat it again until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you that from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you. "And yet behold, the hand of the one who is to betray me is with me on the table; for the Son of Man indeed goes as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed." And they began to debate among themselves who among them would do such a deed. Then an argument broke out among them about which of them should be regarded as the greatest. He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them and those in authority over them are addressed as 'Benefactors'; but among you it shall not be so. Rather, let the greatest among you be as the youngest, and the leader as the servant. For who is greater: the one seated at table or the one who serves? Is it not the one seated at table? I am among you as the one who serves. It is you who have stood by me in my trials; and I confer a kingdom on you, just as my Father has conferred one on me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and you will sit on thrones  
   judging the twelve tribes of Israel.   
     
   "Simon, Simon, behold Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed that your own faith may not fail; and once you have turned back, you must strengthen your brothers." He said to him, "Lord, I am prepared to go to prison and to die with you." But he replied, "I tell you, Peter, before the cock crows this day, you will deny three times that you know me." He said to them, "When I sent you forth without a money bag or a sack or sandals, were you in need of anything?" "No, nothing, " they replied. He said to them, "But now one who has a money bag should take it, and likewise a sack, and one who does not have a sword should sell his cloak and buy one. For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me, namely, *He was counted among the wicked;* and indeed what is written about me is coming to fulfillment." Then they said, "Lord, look, there are two swords here." But he replied, "It is enough!"  
     
   Then going out, he went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. When he arrived at the place he said to them, "Pray that you may not undergo the test." After withdrawing about a stone's throw from them and kneeling, he prayed, saying, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done." And to strengthen him an angel from heaven appeared to him. He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground. When he rose from prayer and returned to his disciples, he found them sleeping from grief. He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test."  
     
   While he was still speaking, a crowd approached and in front was one of the Twelve, a man named Judas. He went up to Jesus to kiss him. Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" His disciples realized what was about to happen, and they asked, "Lord, shall we strike with a sword?" And one of them struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said in reply, "Stop, no more of this!" Then he touched the servant's ear and healed him. And Jesus said to the chief priests and temple guards and elders who had come for him, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? Day after day I was with you in the temple area, and you did not seize me; but this is your hour, the time for the power of darkness."  
     
   After arresting him they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest;  
   Peter was following at a distance. They lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat around it, and Peter sat down with them. When a maid saw him seated in the light, she looked intently at him and said, "This man too was with him." But he denied it saying, "Woman, I do not know him." A short while later someone else saw him and said, "You too are one of them"; but Peter answered, "My friend, I am not." About an hour later, still another insisted, "Assuredly, this man too was with him, for he also is a Galilean." But Peter said, "My friend, I do not know what you are talking about." Just as he was saying this, the cock crowed, and the Lord turned and looked at Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." He went out and began to weep bitterly. The men who held Jesus in custody were ridiculing and beating him. They blindfolded him and questioned him, saying, "Prophesy!  Who is it that struck you?" And they reviled him in saying many other things against him. When day came the council of elders of the people met, both chief priests and scribes, and they brought him before their Sanhedrin. They said, "If you are the Christ, tell us, " but he replied to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I question, you will not respond. But from this time on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." They all asked, "Are you then the Son of God?" He replied to them, "You say that I am." Then they said, "What further need have we for testimony? We have heard it from his own mouth."]  
     
   Then the whole assembly of them arose and brought him before Pilate. They brought charges against him, saying, "We found this man misleading our people; he opposes the payment of taxes to Caesar and maintains that he is the Christ, a king." Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He said to him in reply, "You say so." Pilate then addressed the chief priests and the crowds, "I find this man not guilty." But they were adamant and said, "He is inciting the people with his teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to here."  
     
   On hearing this Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean; and upon learning that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod who was in Jerusalem at that time. Herod was very glad to see Jesus; he had been wanting to see him for a long time, for he had heard about him and had been hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at length, but he gave him no answer. The chief priests and scribes, meanwhile, stood by accusing him harshly. Herod and his soldiers treated him contemptuously and mocked him, and after clothing him in resplendent garb, he sent him back to Pilate. Herod and Pilate became friends that very day,  
   even though they had been enemies formerly. Pilate then summoned the chief priests, the rulers, and the people and said to them, "You brought this man to me and accused him of inciting the people to revolt. I have conducted my investigation in your presence and have not found this man guilty of the charges you have brought against him, nor did Herod, for he sent him back to us. So no capital crime has been committed by him. Therefore I shall have him flogged and then release him."  
     
   But all together they shouted out, "Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us." — Now Barabbas had been imprisoned for a rebellion that had taken place in the city and for murder. — Again Pilate addressed them, still wishing to release Jesus, but they continued their shouting, "Crucify him!  Crucify him!" Pilate addressed them a third time, "What evil has this man done? I found him guilty of no capital crime. Therefore I shall have him flogged and then release him." With loud shouts, however, they persisted in calling for his crucifixion, and their voices prevailed. The verdict of Pilate was that their demand should be granted. So he released the man who had been imprisoned for rebellion and murder, for whom they asked, and he handed Jesus over to them to deal with as they wished.  
     
   As they led him away they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country; and after laying the cross on him, they made him carry it behind Jesus. large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.' At that time people will say to the mountains, 'Fall upon us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' for if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?" Now two others, both criminals, were led away with him to be executed.  
     
   When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." They divided his garments by casting lots. The people stood by and watched; the rulers, meanwhile, sneered at him and said, "He saved others, let him save himself if he is the chosen one, the Christ of God." Even the soldiers jeered at him. As they approached to offer him wine they called out, "If you are King of the Jews, save yourself." Above him there was an inscription that read, "This is the King of the Jews."  
     
   Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us." The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied to him, "Amen, I say to you, 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 of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"; and when he had said this he breathed his last.  
     
    *Here all kneel and pause for a short time.*  
     
   The centurion who witnessed what had happened glorified God and said, "This man was innocent beyond doubt." When all the people who had gathered for this spectacle saw what had happened, they returned home beating their breasts; but all his acquaintances stood at a distance, including the women who had followed him from Galilee and saw these events.  
     
   [Now there was a virtuous and righteous man named Joseph who, though he was a member of the council, had not consented to their plan of action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea and was awaiting the kingdom of God. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. After he had taken the body down, he wrapped it in a linen cloth and laid him in a rock-hewn tomb in which no one had yet been buried. It was the day of preparation, and the sabbath was about to begin. The women who had come from Galilee with him followed behind, and when they had seen the tomb and the way in which his body was laid in it, they returned and prepared spices and perfumed oils. Then they rested on the sabbath according to the commandment.] [↑](#footnote-ref-7)