

Passion Play – 2025 Priest 2 Script (12.20.24)

ACT I—Scene 2: Guards at City Gates & Witnessing Mourner

ROMAN 1: *(on the ground)* Who goes there?

PILGRIM/WITNESS 1: Only a traveler from afar who comes to Jerusalem to celebrate the great feast.

ROMAN 2: *(on the top of the wall)* It's just another pilgrim! The city is already overflowing with them.

ROMAN 1: *(on the ground)* Come down from there. We'd better get back to our post, Pilate is due to return any time now. You'll be getting us both in trouble.

[Sheep run across set]

WITNESSING MOURNER: Good Masters, I have just come from Bethany where I was mourning the death of Lazarus and consoling his family. Many of you knew him and some here attended his burial four days ago. The man, Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee, came and stood before the tomb and called upon God and RAISED LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD!

(CROWD Noise with following voices overlapping)

PRIEST 2: What?! What are you talking about?!

PRIEST 3: Impossible! Why did you even come here?!

PRIEST 1: It can't be true!

PRIEST 2: Never!

WITNESSING MOURNER: He was dead; now He lives!

PRIEST 1: Guard, remove this man *(emphatically)*.

ANNAS: *(Interrupting)* Wait, *(Approaching the WITNESS)* You were there, and you believe this? *[MOURNER nods agreement]*

CAIAPHAS: Annas, that he believes it is all that matters, true or not. *(To the MOURNER)* Thank you; you may go.

JOSEPH: Caiaphas, this man has done many miracles.

PRIEST 2: Yes, Joseph, he has. And what are we going to do about it?

PRIEST 3: What can we do? It's a sign!

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PRIEST 1: A sign of what? If He continues, everyone will believe in Him, Him!
And declare Him as King! Then, the Romans will strip us of our privileges,
and disperse our nation!

NICODEMUS: I do not believe He has proclaimed Himself as King.

[ANNAS stands & all are quiet.]

ANNAS: His followers do say it, and He doesn't discourage it. Nicodemus, though
we've often disagreed, I have always respected you. You have believed in
His... miracles; do you believe in Him? Is He your Messiah?

CAIAPHAS: Do none of you know or see the real issue at hand? It's better that One
should die for all rather than the whole nation to perish. If we don't act, the
Romans will. He must be arrested, apart from His crowd, so we may question
Him. You may go.

[PRIESTS disperse.

CAIAPHAS & ANNAS proceed out of Sanhedrin with GUARDS 1 & 2.]

CAIAPHAS: *(Pausing & turning to GUARD 2)* Let it out that anyone who cooperates
in His capture will be rewarded.

ACT I—Scene 4e: Jesus teaches & Day scene resumes

MOTHER MARY: This all reminds me of the tremendous joy Simeon and Anna had
when they first saw Jesus. Joseph and I brought Jesus to this Temple to
present him to the Lord.

MARY MAG: What did they say to you?

MOTHER MARY: Oh Mary Magdalene, I won't ever forget how Simeon took Jesus in
his arms and praised God saying, "Sovereign Lord, My eyes have seen your
salvation: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people
Israel."

MARY MAG: And I remember you said that Anna never left the Temple, worshipping
God night and day.

MOTHER MARY: Yes, Anna told us that through this child, God would rescue Israel
and set Jerusalem free.

MARY MAG: This must be what she saw.

MOTHER MARY: Or maybe there was something more.

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SMALL GIRL: *(Returning, leading her DEAF & DUMB FATHER to JESUS,)* Excuse me Jesus, my dad can't hear your stories, he's deaf and can't talk. Will you heal him?

JESUS: Yes, my child. Yes. *(Placing His hand on the little girl and speaking to her)* Then let his tongue loosed and his ears be opened!

DEAF MUTE: Ohhh! Ohhh! Pra...Praise God! He's heard my cry!

SMALL GIRL: Thank you Jesus!

[CROWD reaction!]

PRIEST 2: On what authority do you act? And who gave you this authority?

JESUS: To answer, let me tell you a story. A landowner planted a vineyard; He built a tower, a winepress, and a wall all around it. Then, he rented it to some farmers and went away on a long journey.

When the harvest came, he sent his servants to collect his portion. But the tenants took his servants and beat them, even killing one and stoning another. The owner sent others, but they were treated the same. At last, he sent his own son to them, thinking, "They will respect my son." But when the tenants saw the son they said, "We should kill the heir and take the inheritance for ourselves."

So they took him, dragged him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

(Turning to PRIEST 2)

When the owner returns, what will he do?

He will destroy those wicked men and give the vineyard to others!

PRIEST 2: God forbid!

PRIEST 3: May this never be!

JESUS: *(Turning to Nicodemus)* Then what does the Scripture mean when it says, "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone?"

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Healing of Dead Child

FATHER: We've come to see Jesus; our child has just died, and we heard He raised Lazarus of Bethany from the dead.

LAZARUS: Yes, have faith! I am Lazarus of Bethany. I was dead, and now I'm alive!
(Turning toward JESUS) Jesus! This man needs your help!

MOTHER: Help us, please!

JESUS: *(Taking dead CHILD)* Father! Glorify Your Name!

PRIEST 1: *(Stepping forward as JESUS moves toward Temple)* Master! You are a teacher come from God; your miracles are proof of that, and you speak truth plainly without respect of persons. Will you tell us, then, is it lawful for us to pay the tribute to Caesar?

JESUS: You are hypocrites. Why do you try to trap me? Show me the tribute coin. Whose name on this coin?

CROWD: Caesar's!

JESUS: Whose image?!

CROWD: Caesar's!

JESUS: Then give back to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, but to God what is God's.

PRIEST 2: Master, of all the commandments, which one is the greatest?

JESUS: Do you still test me? The greatest commandment is this, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One, and you shall love Him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength" The second is like it, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." All the Law and the Prophets come from these commandments.

JOSEPH: You have answered well.

[WIDOW drops in her two coins.]

JESUS: *(Speaking to JOSEPH, watching the WIDOW)* Joseph, you are not far from the Kingdom of God.

JESUS: Do you see this widow? She's given more than anyone today!

PRIEST 4: She's only put in two copper coins!

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CROWD: *(Reaction.)*

Act II—Scene 4: Gather a Crowd

[PRIEST 2 & SANHEDRIN GUARDS appear from Temple doors and come to steps at center.]

PRIEST 2: (To GUARD 2) Go get Malchus. Make sure Caiaphas is informed. We will need to know where to bring Him and how.

PRIEST 2: Secure a Roman detachment for the arrest.

PRIEST 2: *(To GUARD 4)* Gather some men, our crowd. We need enough to deter any ideas about resistance, but be quiet; we must not take the chance of alerting the city, YET. We must be sure we have enough show of support to put fear into the Nazarene's followers.

ANNAS: *(To MALCHUS)* When you take Him, bind Him and bring Him here first, as well as any of His followers who would stand up for Him. We must prevent them from gathering resistance.

CAIAPHAS: Do not let Judas know our plans I will go to the Sanhedrin. We will convene and have the Nazarene to Pilate by morning.

Act II—Scene 6: Arrest Scene

JESUS: *(To the THREE)* Are you still sleeping? Look, the hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed to sinful men. My betrayer is upon us. Let us go to meet him.

JUDAS: The one I kiss is your man. Seize him....Master! *(JUDAS embraces JESUS with kiss of greeting.)*

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

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JESUS: JUDAS, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss? *(To PRIEST 2)* Who is it you want?

PRIEST 2: *(Coming up by JUDAS, who has moved back toward the bridge)* Jesus of Nazareth.

JESUS: I am. I AM HE!

JESUS: *(Stepping closer to them)* Do you take me for a bandit that you have come with swords and cudgels to arrest me?

PETER: Lord, shall we use our swords?

JESUS: No, Peter! You must let them have their way!

[Peter cuts off Malchus's ear] [Malchus screams]

JESUS: Put up your sword!

PETER: But my Lord!

JESUS: All who take up the sword, die by the sword.

PETER: But how are we to protect you?

JESUS: Do you suppose that I could not appeal to my Father who would at once send to my aid more than twelve legions of angels?!

PETER: Then do it Lord! Save yourself and save us!

JESUS: This is the cup my Father has given me. Shall I not drink it?

JOHN: Lord, save yourself!

JESUS: But how shall the Scripture be fulfilled which says, "This must be." If I am the man you want, let these others go!

PRIEST 2: No, hold them all!

MALCHUS: Stop! Release them. *(MALCHUS ties JESUS' hands.)*

PETER: Lord!

JESUS: Peter, this has all happened to fulfill what the Prophets wrote.

GUARD 2: We have orders to arrest you and take you to the high priest. Will you come peacefully?

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JESUS: Yes. This is your moment, the hour when darkness reigns.

Act III—Scene 1: Peter's Denial

PRIEST 2: We have taken Him.

ANNAS: How many of His followers did you take?

PRIEST 2: There were only a few; we could've taken them, but Malchus released them.

ANNAS: *(To MALCHUS)* You released His followers?

MALCHUS: There were only a few, and they will not do anything; Jesus told them not to.

ANNAS: And why is it you believed Him? Word will get out now; you should have followed orders.

MALCHUS: One of Jesus' disciples began to attack, cutting off my ear. *(Removing helmet so all can see)* Jesus stopped him and...healed me. They will not fight.

ANNAS: Indeed.... I see.

(ECHOING AND SPECTACULAR AUDIO EFFECTS)

SERVANT WOMAN: He is one of them. One of that man's disciples!

JESUS: Before the rooster crows, you will have denied me three times...

PETER: *(As he is leaving)* What have I done!

Act III—Scene 4a: Pilate Private Trial

PILATE: You are of the Sanhedrin? I have been expecting you. What of the prisoner?

PRIEST 1: *(From the ground @ porch steps)* One Jesus of Nazareth, a self-proclaimed teacher who subverts the traditions of our nation. He has gained a radical following; you witnessed it five days ago when He came to the festival.

PILATE: If He breaks your traditions, judge Him yourselves, by your Law.

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PRIEST 2: It's come to more than that. He has proclaimed Himself our Messiah, our King.

PILATE: Are you the king of the Jews?

JESUS: The words are yours.

PILATE: The words are mine. Yes, indeed they are. *(To Claudia)* What an extraordinary reply. *(Now to priests)* What charge do you bring against him?

PRIEST 1: We believe He's a danger to the peace of Rome as well as our own nation.

PRIEST 2: His followers are encouraged against Rome in matters of taxes and rule.

PRIEST 1: His crimes are worthy of death by our Law and by Rome's.

PILATE: DEATH? You wish to put this man to death over those matters you've accounted?

PRIEST 2: That is our desire, his teaching has caused discontentment among the people all through Judea. It started in Galilee and has spread as far as this city.

PILATE: Is this man then a Galilean?

PRIEST 2: Yes, he is your Excellency *(realizing he has made a mistake)*.

PILATE: Why did you bring him to me then?

PRIEST 2: For trial, your Excellency.

PILATE: For trial? But is he not under Herod's jurisdiction? ...*(They debate among themselves)*... Answer my question!

PRIEST 2: This man is under Herod's jurisdiction, but...

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PILATE: Herod is here in Jerusalem at this very time! Take him to Herod. Don't trouble me further. I (have no time) (don't have time) for such foolishness.

Act III—Scene 4b: Jesus tried by Herod

HEROD: What is this? What do we see here? Do we see John the Baptist here? Salome, Herodias, look this is John the Baptist. He's risen from the dead.

[LAUGHTER]

PRIEST 2: Your Excellency.

HEROD: Silence! No one must speak. We must examine this man more closely. Are you John come back from the grave to haunt us? No, no, no...this is not John, we know that. *(almost laughing with amusement)*. This is the man called Jesus.

Thank you for bringing him to us. We are greatly pleased to meet him at long last. So, you are Jesus of Nazareth. We hear that you perform miracles...that you heal the sick and the lame...that you make the blind see. The deaf hear. The dead live again!

[LAUGHTER]

Is all of this true? As you are a Galilean and under my jurisdiction, we are indeed very interested in seeing these miracles performed in our presence.

Salome, wouldn't you like to see a miracle performed?

SALOME: Yes! Oh yes! *[SALOME clothes Jesus with purple mantle.]*

HEROD: Oh, and you Herodias?

HERODIAS: Very well.

HEROD: You see we are not alone in our curiosity. So perform for us! Entertain us with your miracles.

[Crowd voices of affirmation]

What's wrong? Why is he not doing anything?

Wait, I have it. Is there water in that jug?

HEROD SERVANT: Yes, Excellency!

HEROD: Well, then bring it to us. Set it there in front of him. Now, step back! Change this water into wine for us. Can you do that?

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Well, we're waiting! *(waits a moment for Jesus)* You, taste it!.....Well?

WITNESS 2/TASTER: Excellency, it's still water!

HEROD: AHHH! Send him back to Pilate.

Act III—Scene 5: It is Time!

CAIAPHAS: Is everything set then?

PRIEST 1: Yes, Caiaphas, there will be a mob gathering at Pilate's porch shortly. Word of punishment for His followers is out, and our guard will be watching the crowd.

ANNAS: Pilate will release a prisoner for the feast, and Jesus' followers may cry out for Him. Who else stands condemned?

PRIEST 2: There are three, one Gastas, another Dysmas, and Barabbas. Of the three, Barabbas is the most known. He has ties with the Zealots and our own guard.

ANNAS: Then spread the word to ask for him.

CAIAPHAS: It is time.

Act III—Scene 6: Pilate Public Trial

PILATE: This man, Jesus, has been brought to me by your own chief priests and charged with rebellion against the authority of Rome. I've questioned Him and found no grounds for the charges against Him certainly nothing worthy of death. As is custom at this feast, I will release Him to you.

PRIEST 1: If you want to release someone, then give us Barabbas!

PILATE: Barabbas? Would you have me release a murderer into your very midst. Centurion, have Barabbas brought forth *(to the Centurion)*. Quickly! *(to Claudia)* I shall show them what type of man they would release.

CROWD: *(Cries louder)*

PILATE: *(To Crowd)* Then, if I release Barabbas, who stands condemned, I'll also release Jesus, un-condemned!

CROWD: *(Various cries,)* "No!" "He must not be released!" Etc.

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PILATE: But why? What's He guilty of?
[BARABBUS is brought out.]

CROWD: *(Roars louder)*

ANNAS: By our Law, He has committed blasphemy by claiming to be the Son of God. And, according to our Law, He must be put to death!

PILATE: *(To Barabbas)* Look at this man! He's a thief! A murderer! Now which would you have me release to you? Barabbas? Or Jesus called Messiah?

PRIEST 2: Release Barabbas *(Voices rise crying out for BARABBAS.)*

PILATE: Speak to me! Don't you know I have the power to release you, or have you crucified?

JESUS: You would have no power over me if it hadn't been given you from above.

PILATE: *(To the Roman with JESUS)* Remove him. *(To the ROMAN with BARABBAS)* Release Barabbas. *(To CENTURION)* Have Him flogged; humiliate Him; perhaps that will satisfy them.

[JESUS is brought to the flogging post.]

LONGINUS: Lysimus, now!

5 pairs of hits, break, and then 3 pairs of hits.

LONGINUS: Hold!

(Roman laughter)

MOTHER MARY, MARY MAGDALENE, AND JOHN SCENE

RECORD WITH JESUS VOICE AS WELL IN FIRST PERSON ISAIAH 50:6

JOHN: The prophet Isaiah wrote of this:

(JESUS FIRST PERSON) "He/I will offer his/my back to those who beat him/me...

MOTHER MARY/(JESUS FIRST PERSON: his/my cheek to those who pull out his/my beard...

MARY MAG: He/I will not hide his face from mocking and spitting.

JOHN: Sovereign Lord, help him.

ROMAN 1: We crown you King of the Jews!

ROMAN 2: Hail O great and mighty king!

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[Roman laughter]

PILATE: Enough! Behold your king!! He's been flogged, beaten, ridiculed, spit on. What more do you want!

CROWD: Crucify him! *(etc.)*

PILATE: Crucify him? Bring water! I am washing my hands. My hands are clean of this innocent man's blood.

Let it be recorded that it is on the eve of your Jewish Passover, it is the 6th hour as I sit here on my tribunal, my seat of judgment. Behold here is your King, the man called Jesus. I ask you one last and final time, what would you have me do with him?

PRIEST 2: Crucify him, Pilate! Crucify Him!

PILATE: Crucify Him yourselves! I hold no charge against Him. I would release him.

CROWD: *(Cries louder.)*

CAIAPHAS: Anyone who makes Himself a King defies Caesar! You cannot release Him!

PILATE: Should I crucify Your King?

CROWD: *(Cries for Caesar)* We have no King but Caesar! We have no King but Caesar! Caesar! Caesar!

PILATE: Then away with Him!

Act III—Scene 7a: Carry the cross

PRIEST 1: Do you see what is written there?

GUARD 2: King of the Jews?

PRIEST 2: You must tell the high priest; Go!

PILATE: What is it, Caiaphas?

CAIAPHAS: Pilate, the charges on His cross read, "King of the Jews." Many of the people are reading it; it should say that He only "claimed" to be the King of the Jews.

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PILATE: What I have written, I have written.

Act III—Scene 8a: Crucifixion

LONGINUS: (*To SCRIBE*) (2:45) Record this: Three crucified at nine o'clock this morning, Gastas and Dysmas for theft and rebellion, and one Jesus, King of the Jews! Nail him to the cross.

NICODEMUS: (3:00-3:05) It's as He told me.... Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness...

(*NAIL, NAIL.*)

MOTHER MARY: (3:15) so the Son of Man must be lifted up...

(*NAIL, NAIL.*)

NICODEMUS: (3:22) This is what he meant.

(*NAIL, NAIL, NAIL.*)

JOHN: (3:28-48) For God so loves the world that He has given His Only Begotten Son... (Record as well He has given His One and Ony Son for redundancy)

JESUS: (4:01) Father, forgive them! They do not know what they do!

GASTAS: (4:05) Are You not the Messiah? Save yourself...and us!

DYSMAS: (4:17) Have you no fear of God? You are under the same sentence as He, for it is plain justice. We are paying the price for our misdeeds, but this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom!

JESUS: (4:40) I tell you the truth. Today, you will be with me in Paradise.

PRIEST 1: (4:56) You said you were The Son of God; if You are, come down from the cross!

PRIEST 2: Are You, our King? Come down, and then we will believe!

PRIEST 3: (5:07) He has saved others; why can't He save himself?

PRIEST 1: (5:11) Why won't God rescue Him, if He is God's Son?

MARY LAZ: (5:30) What are they doing? What's happening?

SIMON OF CYRENE: (5:35) The Roman soldiers are dividing his garments.

JOSEPH: (5:37) How can this be? How can they know? Is this David's prophecy?

NICODEMUS: (5:43) It must be. "They have pierced his hands and his feet. They divided his clothes among them and cast lots for his garments."

JESUS: (6:00) Mother, see your son! (6:07) John, here is your mother!

JESUS: (6:20-23) (*Record two versions: One with a loud voice and another with a very soft voice*) My GOD! My GOD! Why have You forsaken Me?

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ROMAN 1: (6:33) *(To ROMAN 2)* What is this? A Storm?

ROMAN 2: I don't know. It's midday, but the sun is going dark.

LONGINUS: I can feel this darkness. Report this to Pilate.

JESUS: (6:50) ...I...I am thirsty.

JESUS: *(With a loud voice)* (7:06) It is finished! (7:17) Father! Into Your Hand, I commit my Spirit!

Act IV—Scene 1: Sanhedrin Fear

CAIAPHAS: What is it you called us here for?

PRIEST 1: About the earthquake; it's damaged the curtain in the Temple. It's entirely torn!

PRIEST 2: Top to Bottom! And, it happened precisely at the same time Jesus died!

PRIEST 1: Many are saying it was a sign from God, and that Jesus was a righteous man!

ANNAS: This is most unfortunate. It will give momentum to the cause of His followers.

CAIAPHAS: We have heard how He said He would rise after three days. If His disciples hid the body; this superstitious mob would be out of control!

ANNAS: Then we must guard his tomb; hold his body until after the three days. Then his words will mean nothing!

Act IV—Scene 4: Posting the Guards

PRIEST 1: Check to see that the body is there.

ROMAN 2 (possibly instead of Guard 2): The body is there.

PRIEST 1: Very well, seal the stone.

PRIEST 2: *(To the GUARDS)* The high priest said no one is to enter until after the third day.

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PRIEST 1: *(To the GUARDS)* Keep a close watch and don't let anyone enter the Tomb.