



The Day Jesus Died

A reading of Mark 14:53-72, 15:1-47 (adapted from Richard Swanson's translation) with tableaux. The tableaux may be still photos taken ahead of time and displayed on the TV.

5 Readers: Narrator, Roman Soldiers, Jesus, Crowd, Religious Leaders

Part 1: Jesus before the Religious Authority

Mark 14:53-72

Tableau 1: Jesus stands before a semi-circle of Judean leaders.

Part 2: Jesus before the Civic Authority

Mark 15:1-15

Tableau 2: Jesus before Pilate. Pilate well-dress in a Judge's stand or throne. Jesus looking beat-up already.

Part 3: Jesus' Death

Scene 3: The Crown of Thorns

Mark 15:16-20

Tableau 3: Jesus dressed in purple robe (military looking or pastor's stole?) and crown of thorns. Soldiers mocking him.

Narrator: The soldiers led him away into the courtyard, which is called the praetorium, and they called together the whole troupe, and they clothe him in a purple robe and after they wove a crown of thorns, they place it around his head. They begin to salute him:

Soldier: Hail, king of the Jews.

Narrator: They were hitting him on the head with a reed; they were spitting on him; they bowed down and worshiped him. When they had finished mocking him, they stripped the purple robe off him and put his own clothes back on him.

Scene 4: Simon of Cyrene Carries Jesus' Cross

Mark 15:21

Tableau 4: Soldiers forcing Simon of Cyrene away from his kids to carry Jesus' cross.

Narrator: They are leading him out to nail him to a cross. They force a passerby, Simon of Cyrene who was coming in from out of the country, Simo the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.

Scene 5: They Nailed Him to the Cross

Mark 15:22-27

Tableau 5a: Close-up tying a wrist to a piece of wood. Or hammering nails on wood taken during Creation string project.

Narrator: They bring him to the place called Golgotha, which means “Skull Place.” They tried to give him a painkiller, wine mixed with myrrh, which he did not take.

[Pause 10 seconds for live sound effects (3x pounds from the back)]

They are nailing him to a cross and dividing his clothing, throwing dice to see who would win them.

Tableau 5b: Sign reading “the King of the Jews”

It was nine o’clock in the morning and they nailed him up. The inscription of the charge against him was written: The king of the Jews. And with him they are crucifying two bandits, one on his right and one on his left.

Scene 6: Mocking on the Cross

Mark 15:29-32

Tableau 6: Three crosses.

Narrator: Those passing by were laughing at him, wagging their heads and saying:

Crowd: Oo, the Destroyer of the Temple, Build it again in three days!
Save yourself. Climb down from that cross.

Narrator: Likewise even the high priests mocked him to each other, with the scribes, saying:

Leaders: Others he’s saved. Himself? He’s not able.
O Christ, O King of Israel, Climb down now from the cross, so that we may see and believe.

Narrator: Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

Scene 7: Death of Jesus, Son of God

Mark 15:33-39

Tableau 7: Zoom into single cross. Or Black.

Narrator: At noon, darkness came upon the whole earth until three o’clock, and at three o’clock Jesus bellowed in a great voice:

Jesus: eloi eloi lema sabachthani

Narrator: Which means, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” Some of those standing by when they heard him, were saying:

Crowd: Look! He’s calling Elijah.

Narrator: Someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed, and gave it to him to drink. He said:

Crowd: Wait, let’s see whether Elijah will come to take him down.

Narrator: Jesus let loose a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain in the Temple was ripped in two, from top to bottom.

[Rip a piece of paper in half.]

But when the centurion, standing by opposite him, saw thus he breathed his last, he said:

Soldier: No doubt: If ever there was a son of God, this guy was it.

Scene 8: Women Watching from a Distance

Mark 15:40-41

Tableau 8: A group of people watching and grieving from a distance.

Narrator: Women were watching. Among them Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses, and Salome. These women, ever since he was in Galilee, had followed him and served him. There were many other women watching. All of them had come up with him into Jerusalem.

Scene 9: They Laid Him in a Tomb

Mark 15:42-47

Tableau 9: A body wrapped in cloth and laid in a tomb.

Narrator: It was already evening, the evening which is the preparation for the Sabbath, so Joseph came, Joseph from Aramathea, a respected member of the council, he was himself watching expectantly for the dominion of God. Joseph went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate was amazed that he should be already dead, so, after calling the centurion, he asked if he had been dead a long time. When he learned from the centurion that Jesus was dead, he presented the corpse to Joseph.

Joseph bought a burial cloth, took the corpse down, wrapped it in the burial cloth, and placed it in a tomb which was hewn from the rock. He rolled a stone in front of the tomb.

[Pause 6 seconds for live sound effects (1x banging from behind)]

Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were watching where the corpse was laid.