

The Jewish Leaders Plan to Kill Jesus

It was almost time for the Jewish Festival of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover. The leading priests and teachers of the law wanted to kill Jesus. But they were trying to find a quiet way to do it, because they were afraid of what the people would do.



Judas Agrees to Help Jesus' Enemies

One of Jesus' twelve apostles was named Judas Iscariot. Satan entered him, and he went and talked with the leading priests and some of the soldiers who guarded the Temple. He talked to them about a way to hand Jesus over to them. The priests were very happy about this. They promised to give Judas money for doing this. He agreed. Then he waited for the best time to hand him over to them. He wanted to do it when no one was around to see it.



The Passover Meal

The Day of Unleavened Bread came. This was the day when the Jews always killed the lambs for the Passover. Jesus said to Peter and John, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us to eat." They said to him, "Where do you want us to prepare the meal?"



He said to them, “When you go into the city, you will see a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him. He will go into a house. Tell the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks that you please show us the room where he and his followers can eat the Passover meal.’ Then the owner will show you a large room upstairs that is ready for us. Prepare the meal there.” So Peter and John left. Everything happened the way Jesus said. So they prepared the Passover meal.



The Lord's Supper

The time came for them to eat the Passover meal. Jesus and the apostles were together at the table. Jesus said to them, "I wanted very much to eat this Passover meal with you before I die. I will never eat another Passover meal until it is given its full meaning in God's kingdom."



Then Jesus took a cup of wine. He gave thanks to God for it and said, “Take this cup and give it to everyone here. I will never drink wine again until God’s kingdom comes.” Then he took some bread and thanked God for it. He broke off some pieces, gave them to the apostles and said, “This bread is my body that I am giving for you. Eat this in memory of me.”



In the same way, after supper, Jesus took the cup of wine and said, “This wine represents the new agreement from God to his people. It will begin when my blood is poured out for you. Drink this in memory of me.”



Who Will Turn Against Jesus?

Jesus said, “But here on this table is the hand of the one who will hand me over to my enemies. The Son of Man will do what God has planned. But it will be very bad for the one who hands over the Son of Man to be killed.”

Then the apostles asked each other, “Which one of us would do that?”



Be Like a Servant

Later, the apostles began to argue about which one of them was the most important. But Jesus said to them, “The kings of the world rule over their people, and those who have authority over others want to be called ‘the great providers for the people.’ But you must not be like that. The one with the most authority among you should act as if he is the least important. The one who leads should be like one who serves. Who is more important: the one serving or the one sitting at the table being served?”



Everyone thinks it's the one being served, right? But I have been with you as the one who serves. "You men have stayed with me through many struggles. So I give you authority to rule with me in the kingdom the Father has given me. You will eat and drink at my table in that kingdom. You will sit on thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel.



Peter Will Be Tested and Fail

“Satan has asked to test you men like a farmer tests his wheat. O Simon, Simon, I have prayed that you will not lose your faith! Help your brothers be stronger when you come back to me.”

But Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, I am ready to go to jail with you. I will even die with you!”

But Jesus said, “Peter, before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will say you don’t know me. You will say this three times.”



Be Ready for Trouble

Then Jesus said to the apostles, “Remember when I sent you out without money, a bag, or sandals? Did you need anything?”

The apostles said, “No.” Jesus said to them, “But now if you have money or a bag, carry that with you. If you don’t have a sword, sell your coat and buy one. The Scriptures say, ‘He was considered a criminal.’ This Scripture must happen. It was written about me, and it is happening now.” The followers said, “Look, Lord, here are two swords.” Jesus said to them, “That’s enough.”



Jesus Prays Alone

Jesus left the city and went to the Mount of Olives.



His followers went with him. (He went there often.) He said to his followers, “Pray for strength against temptation.”



Then Jesus went about 50 steps away from them.



He knelt down and prayed, “Father, if you are willing, please don’t make me drink from this cup. But do what you want, not what I want.” Then an angel from heaven came to help him.



Jesus was full of pain; he struggled hard in prayer. Sweat dripped from his face like drops of blood falling to the ground.



When he finished praying, he went to his followers.



He found them asleep, worn out from their grieving. Jesus said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray for strength against temptation.”



Jesus Is Arrested

While Jesus was speaking, a crowd came up. It was led by Judas, one of the twelve apostles. He came over to Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said to him, “Judas, are you using the kiss of friendship to hand over the Son of Man to his enemies?” The followers of Jesus were standing there too. They saw what was happening and said to Jesus, “Lord, should we use our swords?”



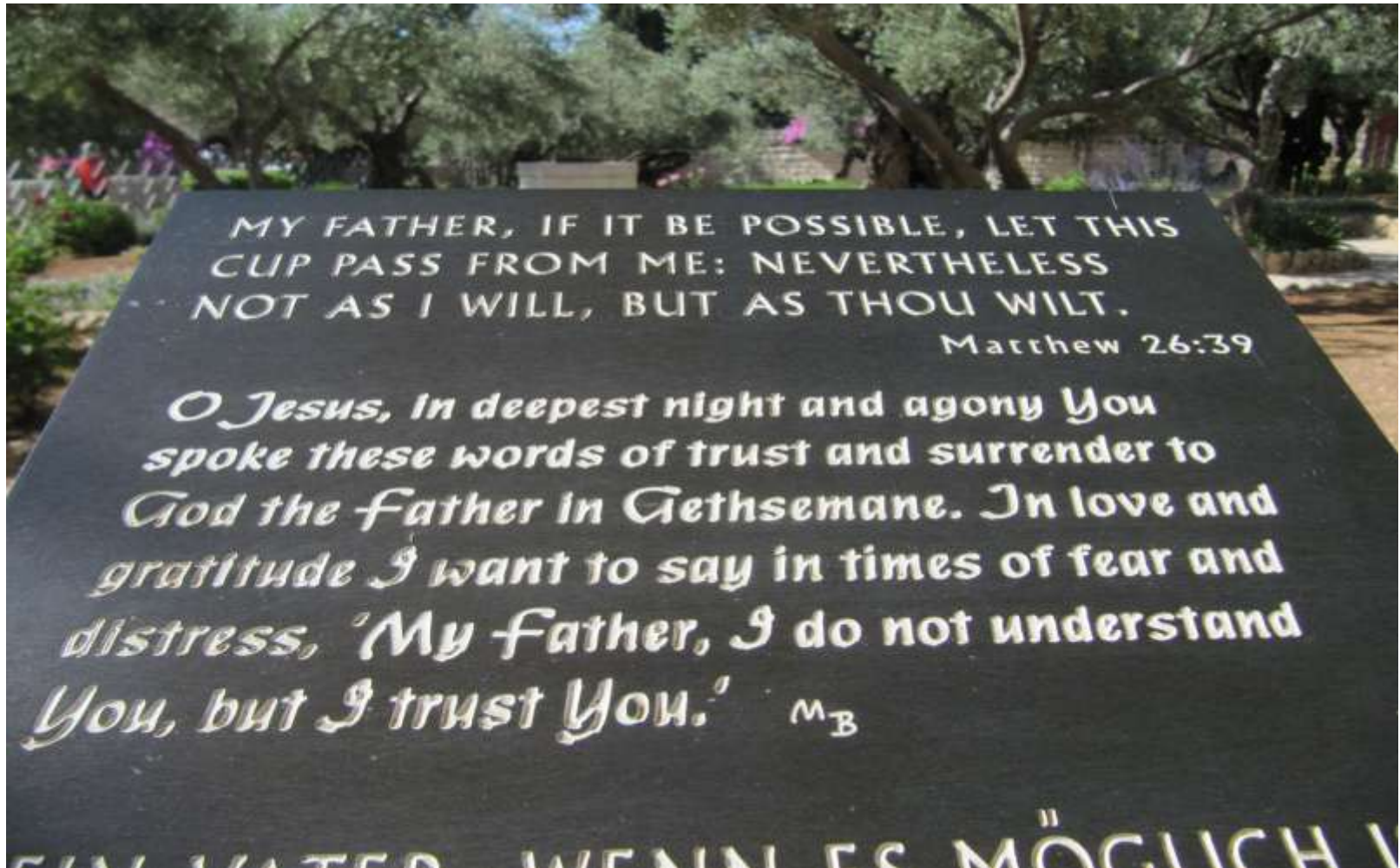
And one of them did use his sword. He cut off the right ear of the servant of the high priest. Jesus said, “Stop!” Then he touched the servant’s ear and healed him.

Jesus spoke to the group that came to arrest him. They were the leading priests, the older Jewish leaders, and the Jewish soldiers. He said to them, “Why did you come out here with swords and clubs? Do you think I am a criminal? I was with you every day in the Temple area. Why didn’t you try to arrest me there? But this is your time—the time when darkness rules.”



Peter Is Afraid to Say He Knows Jesus

They arrested Jesus.



They took him away to the house of the high priest. Peter followed Jesus but stayed back at a distance.

Underground caves (Prison)

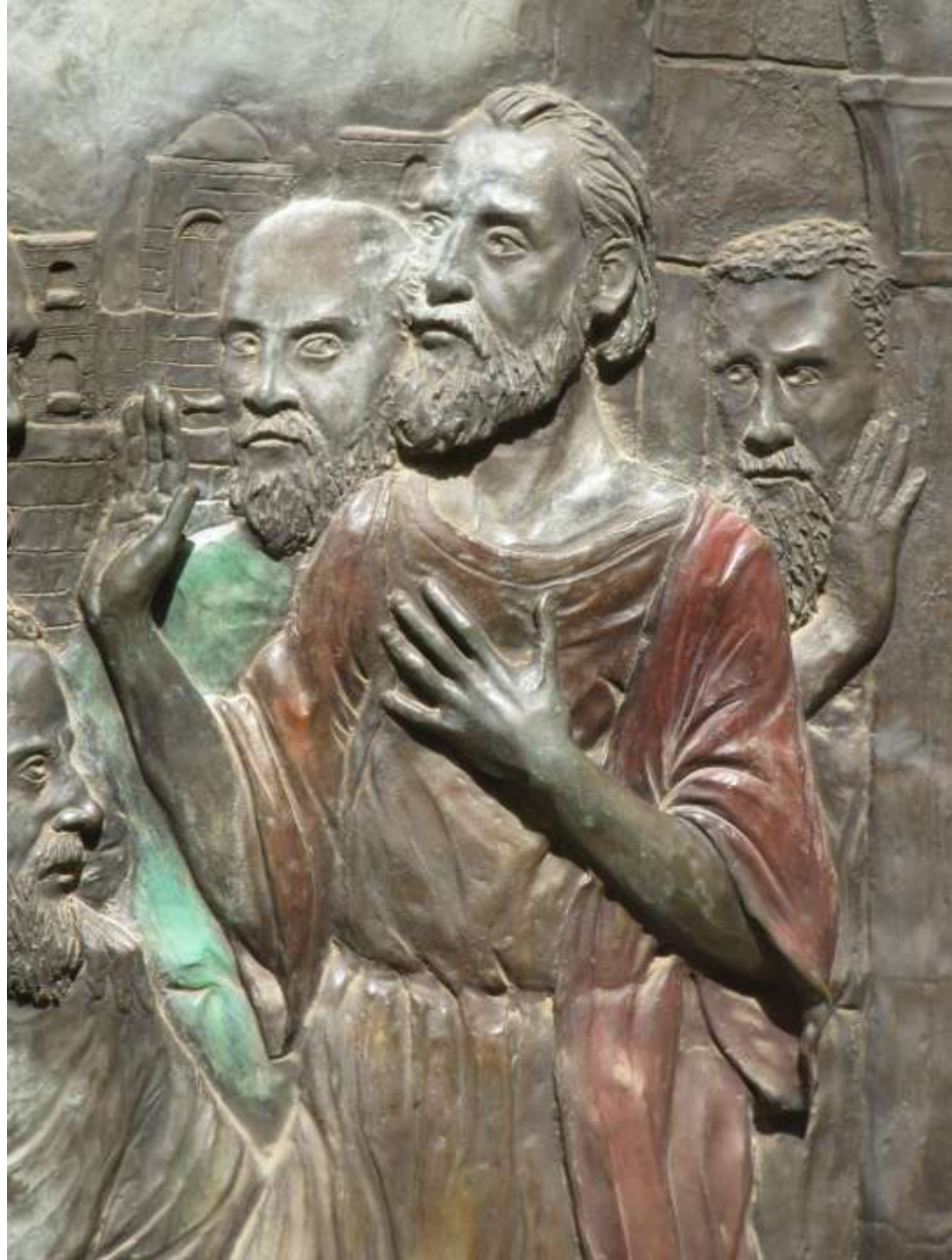
When these underground caves were rediscovered in 1889, their physical characteristics, their proximity to Caiaphas palace, and their contiguity with the Sacred Pit (dungeon), all suggested the public jail where, according to a 4th-century Jerusalem tradition not recorded in the gospels, Jesus would have been scourged not only by Pilate but also by Caiaphas, and where the apostles Peter and John would have been held and scourged for preaching the name of Jesus in the temple area after the resurrection (Acts 5:19-42).

Aided by the context, Christians traditionally recall here some of the painful sufferings endured by Jesus during his Passion, regardless of where they took place, as well as by the apostles, the first believers in his name.

The soldiers started a fire in the middle of the yard and sat together. Peter sat with them. A servant girl saw him sitting there. She could see because of the light from the fire. She looked closely at Peter's face. Then she said, "This man was also with Jesus." But Peter said this was not true. He said, "Lady, I don't know him".



A short time later, someone else saw Peter and said, “You are also one of them.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!” About an hour later, another man said, “It’s true. I’m sure this man was with him, because he is from Galilee.” But Peter said, “Man, I don’t know what you are talking about!”



Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed.



Then the Lord turned and looked into Peter's eyes. And Peter remembered what the Lord had said, "Before the rooster crows in the morning, you will say three times that you don't know me." Then Peter went outside and cried bitterly.



The Guards Treat Jesus Badly

The men guarding Jesus made fun of him and beat him. They covered his eyes so that he could not see them. Then they hit him and said, “Be a prophet and tell us who hit you!” And they shouted all kinds of insults at him.



Jesus Before the Jewish Leaders

The next morning, the older leaders of the people, the leading priests, and the teachers of the law came together. They led Jesus away to their high council. They said, “If you are the Messiah, then tell us that you are.”



Jesus said to them, "If I tell you I am the Messiah, you will not believe me. And if I ask you, you will not answer. But beginning now, the Son of Man will sit at the right side of God All-Powerful." They all said, "Then are you the Son of God?" Jesus said to them, "You are right in saying that I am." They said, "Why do we need witnesses now? We all heard what he said!"



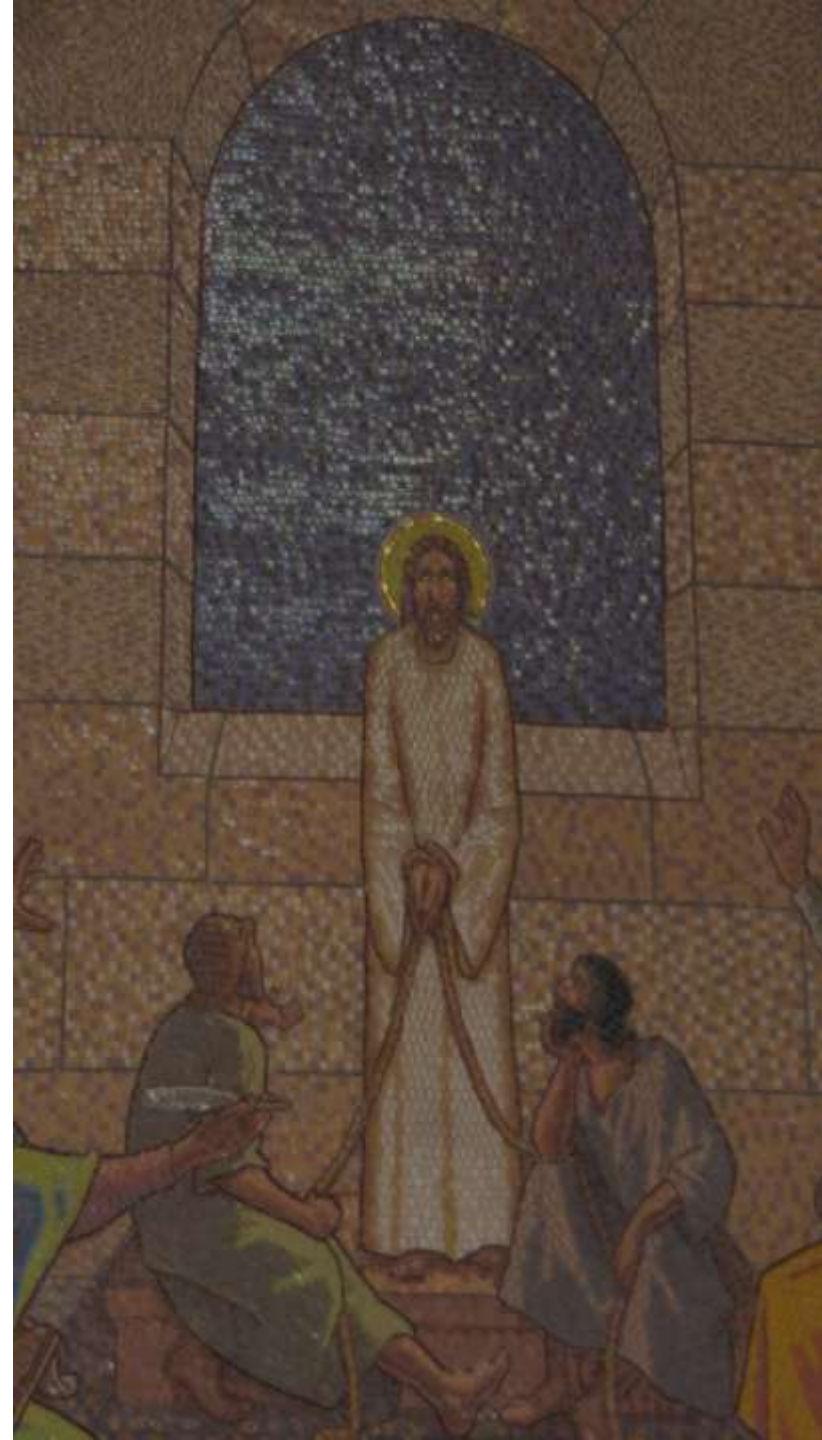
Governor Pilate Questions Jesus

Then the whole group stood up and led Jesus away to Pilate. They began to accuse Jesus and said to Pilate, “We caught this man trying to change the thinking of our people. He says we should not pay taxes to Caesar. He calls himself the Messiah, a king.”

Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

Jesus answered, “Yes, what you say is true.”

Pilate said to the leading priests and the people, “I find nothing wrong with this man.” But they kept on saying, “His teaching is causing trouble all over Judea. He began in Galilee, and now he is here!”



Pilate Sends Jesus to Herod

Pilate heard this and asked if Jesus was from Galilee. He learned that Jesus was under Herod's authority. Herod was in Jerusalem at that time, so Pilate sent Jesus to him. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very happy. He had heard all about him and had wanted to meet him for a long time. Herod wanted to see a miracle, so he was hoping that Jesus would do one. He asked him many questions, but Jesus said nothing.



The leading priests and teachers of the law were standing there shouting things against Jesus. Then Herod and his soldiers laughed at him. They made fun of him by dressing him in clothes like kings wear. Then Herod sent him back to Pilate. In the past Pilate and Herod had always been enemies. But on that day they became friends.



Pilate Tries but Fails to Free Jesus

Pilate called all the people together with the leading priests and the Jewish leaders. He said to them, “You brought this man to me. You said he was trying to change the people. But I judged him before you all and have not found him guilty of the things you say he has done. Herod didn’t find him guilty either. He sent him back to us. Look, he has done nothing bad enough for the death penalty. So, after I punish him a little, I will let him go free.”



But they all shouted, “Kill him! Let Barabbas go free!” (Barabbas was a man who was in jail for starting a riot in the city and for murder.) Pilate wanted to let Jesus go free. So again Pilate told them that he would let him go. But they shouted again, “Kill him! Kill him on a cross!” A third time Pilate said to the people, “Why? What wrong has he done? He is not guilty. I can find no reason to kill him. So I will let him go free after I punish him a little.”



But the people continued to shout. They demanded that Jesus be killed on a cross. Their shouting got so loud that Pilate decided to give them what they wanted. They wanted Barabbas to go free—the one who was in jail for starting a riot and for murder. Pilate let Barabbas go free. And he handed Jesus over to be killed. This is what the people wanted.



Jesus Is Nailed to a Cross

The soldiers led Jesus away. At that same time there was a man from Cyrene named Simon coming into the city from the fields. The soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross and walk behind him.



A large crowd followed Jesus. Some of the women were sad and crying. They felt sorry for him. But Jesus turned and said to the women, “Women of Jerusalem, don’t cry for me. Cry for yourselves and for your children too. The time is coming when people will say, ‘The women who cannot have babies are the ones God has blessed. It’s really a blessing that they have no children to care for.’ Then the people will say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ They will say to the hills, ‘Cover us!’ If this can happen to someone who is good, what will happen to those who are guilty?”



There were also two criminals led out with Jesus to be killed.
They were led to a place called "The Skull."

ROCK OF
CALVARY



There the soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross. They also nailed the criminals to crosses beside Jesus—one on the right and the other on the left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they are doing.”



The soldiers threw dice to divide Jesus' clothes between them.



The people stood there watching everything. The Jewish leaders laughed at Jesus. They said, “If he is God’s Chosen One, the Messiah, then let him save himself. He saved others, didn’t he?” Even the soldiers laughed at Jesus and made fun of him. They came and offered him some sour wine. They said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!” (At the top of the cross these words were written: “ THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”)



One of the criminals hanging there began to shout insults at Jesus: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Then save yourself, and save us too!” But the other criminal stopped him. He said, “You should fear God. All of us will die soon. You and I are guilty. We deserve to die because we did wrong. But this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you begin ruling as king!” Then Jesus said to him, “I promise you, today you will be with me in paradise.”



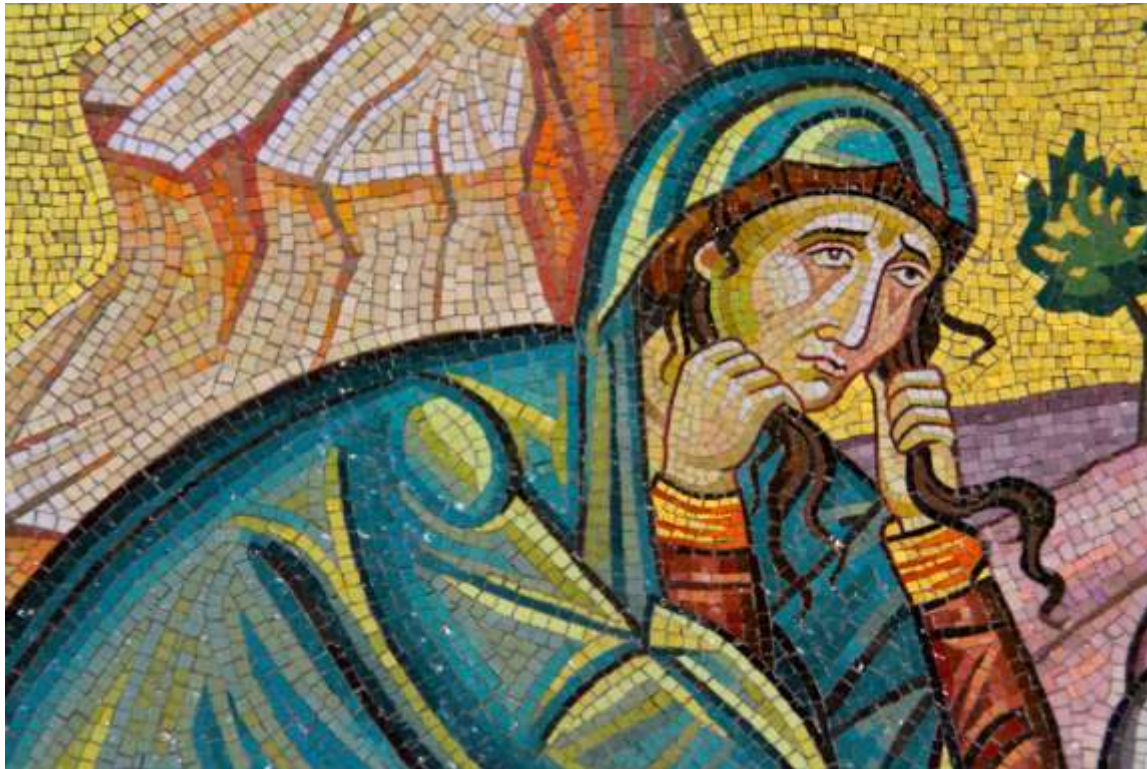
Jesus Dies

It was about noon, but it turned dark throughout the land until three o'clock in the afternoon, because the sun stopped shining. The curtain in the Temple was torn into two pieces. Jesus shouted, "Father, I put my life in your hands!" After Jesus said this, he died.



CALVARY IN
CHURCH OF
HOLY
SEPULCHRE

The army officer there saw what happened. He praised God, saying, “I know this man was a good man!” Many people had come out of the city to see all this. When they saw it, they felt very sorry and left. The people who were close friends of Jesus were there. Also, there were some women who had followed Jesus from Galilee. They all stood far away from the cross and watched these things.



Jesus Is Buried

A man named Joseph was there from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a good man, who lived the way God wanted. He was waiting for God's kingdom to come. Joseph was a member of the Jewish council. But he did not agree when the other Jewish leaders decided to kill Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. He took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in cloth.



Then he put it in a tomb that was dug in a wall of rock.



This tomb had never been used before. It was late on Preparation day. When the sun went down, the Sabbath day would begin.



The women who had come from Galilee with Jesus followed Joseph. They saw the tomb. Inside they saw where he put Jesus' body. Then they left to prepare some sweet-smelling spices to put on the body. On the Sabbath day they rested, as commanded in the Law of Moses.

