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**The Passion Narrative according to St. John**

Readers:

Evangelist 1

Evangelist 2

Jesus

Maid

Peter

One of the Police

Servant

Pilate

**Evangelist 1:** After these words, Jesus went out with his disciples, and crossed the Kedron ravine. There was a garden there, and he and his disciples went into it. The place was known to Judas, his betrayer, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. So Judas took a detachment of soldiers, and police provided by the chief priests and the Pharisees, equipped with lanterns, torches, and weapons, and made his way to the garden. Jesus, knowing all that was coming upon him, went out to them and asked,

**Jesus:**  Who is it you want?

**Congregation: Jesus of Nazareth.**

**Jesus: I am he.**

**Evangelist 2: And there stood Judas the traitor with them. When he said, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground. Again Jesus asked,**

**Jesus: Who is it you want?**

**Congregation: Jesus of Nazareth.**

**Jesus: I have told you that I am he. If I am the man you want, let these others go.**

**Evangelist 1: This was to make good his words, “I have not lost one of those whom thou gavest me.”**

**Evangelist 2: Thereupon Simon Peter drew the sword he was wearing and struck the High Priests’s servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter,**

**Jesus: Sheathe your sword. This is the cup the Father has given me; shall I not drink it?**

**Evangelist 2: The troops with their commander, and the temple police, now arrested Jesus and secured him. They took him first to Annas. Annas was father-in-law of Caiaphas, the High Priest for that year – the same Caiaphas who had advised that it would be to their interest if one man died for the
whole people.**

**Evangelist 1: So Annas sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas the High Priest. Jesus was followed by Simon Peter and another disciple. This disciple, who was acquainted with the High Priest, went with Jesus into the High Priest’s courtyard, but Peter halted at the door outside. So the other disciple, the High Priest’s acquaintance, went out again and spoke to the woman at the door, and brought Peter in. The maid on duty at the door said to Peter,**

**Maid: Are you another of this man’s disciples?**

**Peter: I am not.**

**Evangelist 2: The servants and the police had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and were standing round it warming themselves. And Peter, too, was standing with them, sharing the warmth. The High Priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about what he taught. Jesus replied,**

**Jesus: I have spoken openly to all the world; I have always taught in synagogue and in the temple, where all Jews congregate; I have said nothing in secret. Why question me? Ask my hearers what I told them; they know what I said.**

**Evangelist 1: When he said this, one of the police who was standing next to him struck him in the face, exclaiming,**

**One of the Police: Is that the way to answer the High Priest?**

**Jesus: If I spoke amiss, state it in evidence; if I spoke well, why strike me?**

**Evangelist 1: Meanwhile Simon Peter stood warming himself. The others asked,**

**Congregation: Are you another of his disciples?**

**Evangelist 1: But he denied it, saying,**

**Peter: I am not.**

**Evangelist 1: One of the High Priest’s servants, a relation of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, insisted,**

**Servant: Did I not see you with him in the garden?**

**Evangelist 1: Peter denied again; and just then a cock crowed.**

**Evangelist 2: From Caiaphas Jesus was led into the Governor’s headquarters.
It was now early morning, and the Jews themselves stayed outside the headquarters to avoid defilement, so that they could eat the Passover meal.
So Pilate went out to them and asked,**

**Pilate: What charge do you bring against this man?**

**Congregation: If he were not a criminal, we should not have brought him
before you.**

**Pilate: Take him away and try him by your own law.**

**Congregation: We are not allowed to put any man to death.**

**Evangelist 2: Thus they ensured the fulfillment of the words by which Jesus had indicated the manner of his death.**

**Evangelist 1: Pilate then went back into his headquarters, summoned Jesus, and asked him,**

**Pilate: Are you the king of the Jews?**

**Jesus: Is that your own idea, or have others suggested it to you?**

**Pilate: What! Am I a Jew? Your own nation and their chief priests have brought you before me. What have you done?**

**Jesus: My kingdom does not belong to this world. If it did, my followers would be fighting to save me from arrest. My kingly authority comes from elsewhere.**

**Pilate: You are a king, then?**

**Jesus: “King” is your word. My task is to bear witness to the truth. For this I was born; for this I came into the world, and all who are not deaf to truth listen to my voice.**

**Pilate: What is truth?**

**Evangelist 2: And with those words Pilate went out again to the Jews, saying,**

**Pilate: For my part, I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release one prisoner for you at Passover. Would you like me to release the king of the Jews?**

**Evangelist 1: Again the clamor rose:**

**Congregation: Not him; we want Barabbas!**

**Evangelist 2: (Barabbas was a bandit.)**

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**Evangelist 1:** Pilate now took Jesus and had him flogged; and the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns and placed it on his head, and robed him in a purple cloak. Then time after time they came up to him, crying,

**Congregation:** Hail, King of the Jews!

**Evangelist 2:** And they struck him on the face. Once more Pilate came out
and said,

**Pilate:** Here he is; I am bringing him out to let you know that I find no case against him.

**Evangelist 1:** And Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak. Pilate said,

**Pilate:** Behold the Man!

**Evangelist 2:** The chief priests and their henchmen saw him and shouted,

**Congregation:** Crucify! Crucify!

**Pilate:** Take him and crucify him yourselves; for my part I find no case
against him.

**Congregation:** We have a law; and by that law he ought to die, because he has claimed to be Son of God.

**Evangelist 1:** When Pilate heard that, he was more afraid than ever, and going back into his headquarters he asked Jesus,

**Pilate:** Where have you come from?

**Evangelist 2:** But Jesus gave no answer. Then Pilate asked,

**Pilate**: Do you refuse to speak to me? Surely you know that I have authority to release you, and I have authority to crucify you?

**Jesus**: You would have no authority at all over me if it had not been granted you from above; and therefore the deeper guilt lies with the man who handed me over to you.

**Evangelist 1**: From that moment Pilate tried to release him; but the crowd
kept shouting,

**Congregation**: If you let this man go, you are no friend to Caesar; any man who claims to be a king is defying Caesar.

**Evangelist 2**: When Pilate heard what they were saying, he brought Jesus out and took his seat on the tribunal at the place known as “the Pavement” (“Gabbatha” in the language of the Jews). It was the eve of Passover, about noon. Pilate said to the Jews,

**Pilate**: Here is your king.

**Congregation**: Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!

**Pilate**: Crucify your king?

**Congregation**: We have no king but Caesar.