

A script from



“The Last Days”

by
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- What** "The Last Days" is a collection of five reader's theatre style of scripts leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus. These scripts are perfect for incorporating into your sermon or worship service leading up to Easter. **Themes:** Easter, Passion Week, Worship, Disciples, Peter, Judas, Gethsemane, Jesus, Readers Theatre
- Who** Narrator 1
Narrator 2
- When** Present
- Wear (Props)** 2 Black Binders
Readers can wear black or coordinating outfits
- Why** Matthew 26; Mark 11:1-11
- How** Use these scripts during the 5 weeks leading up to Easter within your worship service. You can also create one service using all 5 scripts with worship songs in between.
- Time** Varying per script (2-6 minutes)

Riding Into Jerusalem

*The **Narrators** enter and address the audience.*

Narrator 1: Many in the crowd had seen Jesus call Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead, and they were telling others about it. That was the reason so many went out to meet him—because they had heard about this miraculous sign.

Narrator 2: He brought a dead man back to life? You saw this for yourself?

Narrator 1: I did! He had been dead for three days! Three whole days in the tomb shut up. Then this Jesus comes, he was friends with the man's sisters too, he comes and tells them to open the tomb! They looked at him like he was crazy! We all did. But they opened the tomb and he called out in a loud voice "Lazarus, come out!" And he did! He walked out of the tomb alive as you or me!

Narrator 2: It seems not even the grave could contain the power that this Jesus brought with him. The crowd was abuzz with stories about this man who they heard was coming to Jerusalem that day.

Narrator 1: Those who had seen him before, and many of those who had witnessed the miracles that happened at his hand were drawn out into the streets to welcome him.

Narrator 2: And they told their neighbors, their friends, their family. The streets were lined by the swells of souls who wanted to catch a glimpse of this Jesus, this-

Narrator 1: King! I heard he was destined to become our king! Surely he will ride in on a magnificent steed, sword by his side, an army behind him. He will save us from the oppressing hand of Rome that is crushing us. He will be our –

Narrator 2: Prophet. He's a prophet, like Elijah or Daniel or one of the others. He's here to bring us some divine news. He's here to bring us a message from God. He is-

Narrator 1: A man. Just a man. Flesh and bone and a whole lot of fanfare over nothing. In fact, I heard he's a Nazarene. Ha! Can anything good come out of Nazareth? But I know to the religious leaders he is –

Narrator 2: A threat. A very real, very dangerous threat. A threat that must finally be answered...and soon.

Narrator 1: The news that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem continued to sweep through the city and the large crowd of Passover visitors took palm

branches and went down the road to meet him and they cheered him saying (*waving palm*) "Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

Narrator 2: Most of the crowd spread their branches and garments on the road ahead of him. Jesus was in the center of the procession, and the people all around him were shouting, (*waving palm*) "Hail to the king of Israel! Praise God for the son of David!"

Narrator 1: And Jesus didn't come on horseback like a conquering king. He rode humbly on the back of a donkey's colt.

Narrator 2: And he didn't come in an opulent chariot brandishing a gilded sword. He came with the clothes on his back and the dust on his feet.

Narrator 1: And behind him? Not an army marching in rows by the thousands. He was trailed by a ragamuffin group of fishermen, and the poor, the outcasts, the nobodies.

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Washing the Disciples' Feet

Narrator 1: In a room just upstairs God sits among friends...and enemies. His disciples repose about him. On his left. On his right. Their feet engrossed by the same muck and mire caked upon his. Why wouldn't they be? They have walked the same streets. Trod the same paths. They have followed their Rabbi and the dust off his heels has covered their bodies telling of where they've been. Where he has led them. The dirt tells a story of the life God incarnate firsthand instructed them, inspired them to live by living it first.

Narrator 2: Their Rabbi stands. In the middle of their simple meal, in the middle of their peaceful repose he stands. The disciples have grown to know their Teacher to be abrupt, forthright, unusual even at times and once again they're about to witness something great and yet something so small.

Narrator 1: Removing his outer robes their Rabbi exchanges them for a towel. Tying it around his waist his hands reach with designed purpose for a large bowl and a pitcher of water. With resolve he moves back to the table where these twelve men now sit silently watching him. Wondering at him. He never ceases to amaze them. Well, most of them.

- Narrator 2:** Dropping to his knees he sits at the feet of Andrew. He reaches out, and without a word takes his foot up in his hands and begins washing Andrew's feet. Andrew is frozen by his own confusion. His brow furrows and his body tenses at the sight of his Rabbi kneeling just below him performing the work of a common servant. A slave even. His Rabbi looks up at him. Smiles. Andrew's tension lessens by his friends reassuring face. Turning his head to the eyes he knows are watching him Andrew communicates his confusion back to his fellow disciples with the same face they convey to him. Looking down his feet are clean but the Rabbi is not finished.
- Narrator 1:** He moves to James and taking up the same posture begins to wash his feet. James too is still and silent as his Teacher, his friend, washes away the dirt and dinge crusted to his feet. All eyes are on their Rabbi as he finishes and does not stop with these two.
- Narrator 2:** No. He moves to Philip with the same determination and then Bartholomew followed by James, son of Alphaeus, washing their feet too. Still no one has spoken except one, who leaned in closely to the man beside him to whisper (*leaning toward Narrator 1 and whispering*), "What is he doing?"
- Narrator 1:** Only to be met with an answer in the form of the shrugging of his shoulders. (*Shrugs shoulders.*)

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The Garden of Gethsemane

- Narrator 1:** It was a still, cool night. Jesus led his Disciples through the darkness up a narrow path on the Mount of Olives to a garden called Gethsemane. As they reach the spot Jesus turned to them and said, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."
- Narrator 2:** He asked Peter, James and John to go just a little further with him. They could see a sort of sadness and trouble written in the furrowed brow of their Rabbi and then he turned to them and said, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here. Keep watch with me."
- Narrator 1:** They stayed where Jesus had asked them to stay. They watched him as he withdrew from them about a stone's throw away into the garden until he was just out of sight. How long would he be?

Jesus often prayed alone and for a long time with his Father. So they sat down and rested from the walk wearied by their own sorrow.

- Narrator 2:** Jesus fell with his face to the ground. With his face to the ground he prayed most earnestly, "My Father, if it is possible...if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me." In anguish he prayed and his sweat fell like drops of blood to the ground.
- Narrator 1:** The cup was bitter. Jesus prayed for that dreadful cup to be taken away. He prayed that if it were possible the lamb didn't have to be slain.
- Narrator 2:** Rising, Jesus returned to where he asked his disciples to remain vigilant with him and he found them...dead asleep.
- Narrator 1:** "Could you keep watch with me for one hour?" He asked then added again, "Watch. Pray so that YOU will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."
- Narrator 2:** Again, after entreating them once more he went back to pray saying, "Abba, Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done. Your will be done."
- Narrator 1:** And coming to his feet again he returned to his disciples. Would they be alert for him? Praying for him? Standing guard for him, their friend?
- Narrator 2:** Sound asleep again. Unable or unwilling to stay awake. Perhaps they don't understand what's at stake.
- Narrator 1:** Jesus pleads with his friends again to keep watch with him to the end.

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Judas' Betrayal

Narrators enter and address the audience.

- Narrator 1:** On the darkest of nights a plot was thickening. And on this deepening night a certain character was being revealed. One that would for all earthly time reign in history as a character known for his turned heart, his thorough misunderstanding of God.

Narrator 2: Judas Iscariot. A name synonymous with betrayal on its most profound level. Judas Iscariot. Chosen by the Messiah to follow him, learn from him, be brother to him. Judas Iscariot. Judas Iscariot. Not many children today running around with the name Judas Iscariot.

Narrator 1: Judas was with Jesus dining in Mary and Martha's home. He reclined at the table with him. Then Mary took a pint of an expensive perfume and poured it on Jesus' feet, wiping his feet...with her hair. Judas objected, disgusted saying...

Narrator 2: "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? Why, it's worth a year's wages at least! What a waste. A waste!"

Narrator 1: Judas didn't say any of these things because he was in the least bit concerned about the poor. No. He said these things because he was a thief.

Narrator 2: As keeper of the money bag, Judas used it as his own personal banking vestibule helping himself to what was put into it.

Narrator 1: So as Judas sat at that last supper he sat with evil's darkness already solidly entangled with his being.

Narrator 2: Just hours before Judas had sought out the chief priests asking them:

Narrator 1: "What are you willing to give me if I finally give you what you want? If I deliver Jesus over to you? What will you give me?"

Narrator 2: "Thirty pieces of silver."

Narrator 1: And with the sound of the promised riches tinkling in his ears Judas watched for an opportunity to hand over his Rabbi, his faithful friend. Until then, he returned to his side finding himself sharing a meal in an upper room.

Narrator 2: The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas to betray Jesus when Jesus spoke.

Narrator 1: "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me."

Narrator 2: The disciples looked at one another with surprise and something like horror. Betray him! Who would betray Jesus? Who would betray their Rabbi, their friend? Certainly never one of those closest to him. One of those who sat in that very room.

Narrator 1: Judas said, "Surely you don't mean me, Rabbi?"

Narrator 2: And Jesus answered, "You have said so."

Narrator 1: Satan entered Judas. And Jesus, resigned to the fateful choices of his friend, spoke to Judas saying, "What you are about to do, do quickly."

Narrator 2: Judas slinked out of the room returning to his conspirators on the sly. Into the night he stole, the sound of thirty pieces of promised silver jingling in his ears soon to be jingling in his pockets. The priests and elders had promised him that much. And he watched as around him a mob quickly assembled and he explained where to find Jesus. He knew where they might be going.

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Peter's Denial

Narrators enter and address the audience.

Narrator 1: It's night. A dark, ominous night. The Disciples sit with their Lord, their Teacher, reposing after a very confusing, very foretelling meal. Their last supper together. Jesus continues with his prophecies.

Narrator 2: He spoke saying, "My children, I will be with you only a little longer. So I tell you now; where I am going...you cannot come."

Narrator 1: Cannot come? What does he mean? The Disciples sat confused and wondering. We've followed him everywhere! The dust on his feet is the dust on ours. The sweat on his brow is the sweat on ours! We have left everything. We have given up everything to follow our Rabbi and now he says we cannot go with him?

Narrator 2: Peter, of course, had something to say to this asking, "Lord, where are you going? Why can't I follow you now? After everything we've been through. You are everything that is most important to me. You are why I breathe. I will lay down my life for you!"

Narrator 1: Jesus heard his friend speaking with the passion he often displayed throughout their time together. Jesus knew Peter spoke with sincerity but would act quite differently and he responded to Peter softly, tenderly with a sort of sorrow in his voice saying, "Peter, will you really lay down your life for me?"

Narrator 2: "Lord, I will die for you!"

Narrator 1: And I think it hurt Jesus to say, "Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!"

Narrator 1: Now a few hours have passed since Jesus spoke this truth to Peter. The calm of supper in an upper room has turned to torches and spears and angry enemies marching toward Jesus. They arrest him, bind him and drag him away. And where are his Disciples? Where are his closest friends? Those who said they would follow him to the end?

Narrator 2: They've run away. They're hiding. They're scared that they may be next to be dragged away. And most hide deep. They hunker down. They leave town. But Peter? He couldn't hide from God's prophecy.

Narrator 1: Peter followed at a distance the crowd who dragged Jesus to the house of the High Priest. He had to stand outside, he was unable to go in. So he went to a fire burning in the courtyard to warm his hands while he waited.

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