

15. ACT II. JESUS' TRIAL & DEATH John 18-19



Lyn Constable Maxwell MRBS
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Scene 1. Jesus is arrested (18:1-12)

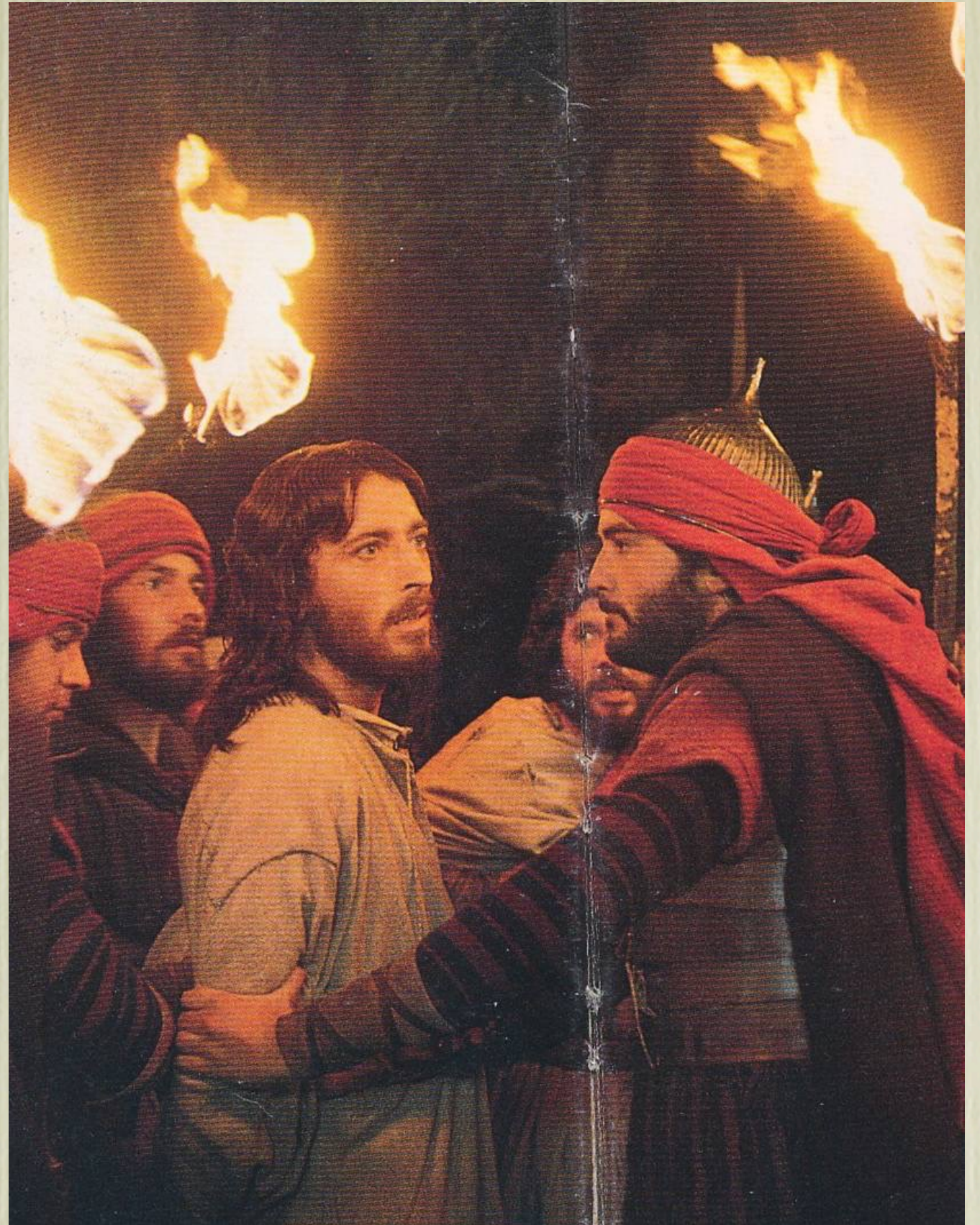
[Note the absence of Jesus' Agony in Gethsemane]

Let us look first at the scene of the arrest as found in Mark 14:43-50.

Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to them, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled." All of them deserted him and fled.

John 18:1-3

After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a **garden**, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a **detachment of soldiers** together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.



John 18:4-9

Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” They answered, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus replied, “**I am**” (ἐγώ εἰμι). Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, “**I am**,” they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus answered, “I told you that **I am**. If you are looking for me, let these men go.” This was to fulfil the word that he had spoken, “I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me” [John 6:39; 17:12].

John 18:10-12

Then **Simon Peter**, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his **right** ear. The slave's name was **Malchus**. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?" So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him.



Scene 2. Jesus taken to Annas, the high priest (John 18:13-27)

Mark 14:53

‘They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes (the Sanhedrin) were assembled.’

John 18:13-14 (no mention of the Sanhedrin!)

First they took him to **Annas**, who was the **father-in-law of Caiaphas**, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people (John 11:47-53 at a meeting of the Sanhedrin).

Peter's first denial

John 18:15-18 [Mark 14:54, 66-68]

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter, “You are not also one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.” Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Annas questions Jesus (John 18:19-24)

Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples (a revolutionary movement?) and about his teaching (a false prophet? - Deuteronomy 18:20). Jesus answered, “I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said.” When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face (compare Mark 14:65), saying, “Is that how you answer the high priest?”

Jesus answered, “If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?” Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Peter's second and third denials

John 18:25-27

[Mark 14:69-72]

Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They [Mark: a servant girl] asked him, “You are not also one of his disciples, are you?” He denied it and said, “I am not.” One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off [Mark: the bystanders] , asked, “Did I not see you in the garden with him?” Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed (13:38).

Scene 3. Jesus is handed over to the Romans

John 18:28 - 19:16

Mark 15:1

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.

Scene 3. Jesus is handed over to the Romans (John 18:28 - 19:16)

John 18:28-32

Then they (the chief priests and the police - see 19:6. No mention of a crowd!) **took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters.** It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have **handed him over** to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfil what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

John 18:33-38

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus answered, “Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?” Pilate replied, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?”

Jesus answered: ‘My kingdom is not from here.’ Pilate asked him, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.’ Pilate asked him, ‘What is truth?’ After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, ‘I find no case against him.’

John 18:39-40 [Mark 15:7-15]

“But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” They shouted in reply, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” Barabbas was a bandit.

John 19:1 [Mark 15:14]

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.



John 19:2-3 [Mark
15:15-20]

The soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and striking him on the face.



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John 19:4-6

Pilate went out again and said to them, “Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that **I find no case against him.**” So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Here is the man!” When **the chief priests and the police** saw him, they shouted, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him; **I find no case against him.**”



John 19:7-8

The Jews answered him, ‘We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die (Leviticus 24:16) because he has claimed to be the Son of God.’ Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever.

John 19:9-11

Pilate entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, “Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?” Jesus answered him, “You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you (the Jewish leaders, 18:30) is guilty of a greater sin.”

John 19:12-16

From then on Pilate tried to release him (Acts 3:13), but the Jews cried out, 'If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.' When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called 'The Stone Pavement', or in Hebrew 'Gabbatha'. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, 'Here is your King!' They cried out, 'Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!' Pilate asked them, 'Shall I crucify your King?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king but the emperor.' Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

'O Lord our God, other lords besides you have ruled over us, but we acknowledge your name alone' (Isaiah 26:13).

Scene 4. Calvary (19:16-42)

John 19:16-22

So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself [no mention of Simon of Cyrene], he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull [Mark 15:23], which in Hebrew is called Golgotha (Latin: Calvaria). There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them [Mark 15:27].

Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” [INRI] [Mark 15:26 ‘The King of the Jews’]. Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. The chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

John 19:23-24 [Mark 15:24]

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.' This was to fulfil what the scripture says, 'They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots (Psalm 22:18).' And that is what the soldiers did.

John 19:25-27

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were
his mother [compare Cana - John 2:1-11]
and his mother's sister [Salome (Mark 15:40), Zebedee's wife (Matthew 27:56)] ?
Mary the wife of Clopas [Joseph's brother; mother of James & Joseph (Mat 13:55)] ?
and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus saw his mother
and the disciple whom he loved
standing beside her,
he said to his mother,
'Woman (2:4), here is your son.'
Then he said to the disciple,
'Here is your mother.'

And from that hour the disciple took her into his own.



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At Cana Mary represents faithful Israel which is listening to the word of the Lord, waiting for the fulfilment of the promise and open to receive God's gift. Jesus could not meet her request then, for the wine for which the people were waiting was the wine of the Spirit, the full communion in the love of the Father and the Son, which Jesus could give only when his 'hour' had come. Now that the 'hour' is here, the mother of Jesus still stands as a symbol of expectant Israel, indeed of every people who welcome the Word of God and await the fulfilment of God's promises.

Jesus is about to die. He is about to depart and go to the Father. From the fullness of his glory, from the fullness of his communion with the Father, he will pour out his Spirit upon all who believe. His mother represents those who believe and Jesus entrusts her to the care of the Beloved Disciple, his chosen witness. He will witness to Jesus, and all who listen to the word of the beloved Disciple and live in communion with him will receive the outpouring of the Spirit.

John 19:28-30

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), “I am thirsty.”

A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine [Mark 15:36] on a branch of **hyssop** (see Exodus 12:22) and held it to his mouth.

When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.



John 19:31-34

Since it was the day of Preparation [= Mark 15:42, so Friday], the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the Sabbath, especially because that Sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.





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Moses striking the Rock (Numbers 20:11)

‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, “Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.” Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified’ (7:37-39).

John 19:35-37

(He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'None of his bones shall be broken.' (Psalm 34:20 & Exodus 12:46 - the Passover Lamb).

And again another passage of scripture says, 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced' (Zechariah 12:10 - 13:1)

Theodoret of Cyr is typical of ancient writers:

His side, like Adam's, was opened, not to reveal the woman who by her error brought death into the world, but to reveal the fountain of life, bringing life into the world with its double stream. One stream gives us new life in the baptistery and clothes us with the robe of immortality, while the other feeds those who have been reborn at the divine table, like infants being fed with milk' (On the Incarnation of the Lord nn 26-27).



‘From the Heart of Jesus
pierced on Calvary,
I see a new world coming forth
– a great and life-giving world,
inspired by love and mercy:
a world which the Church
must perpetuate
on the whole earth.’

(Jules Chevalier *‘The Sacred Heart’*
1900)

Mary at the Cross, Sculpture, St Mary’s Towers Retreat Centre

Jesus is buried John 19:38-42

Mark's Account: 15:42-46

When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time. When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.

Jesus is buried John 19:38-42

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.

Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

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