



## JESUS CHRIST – THE LAST SEVEN DAYS

By John Collings

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# Jesus Christ

(the last seven days)

by John Collings

Adapted from the Bible.

## Characters.

(All characters wear traditional dress from the period.)

Jesus

James

Chief Priest

Scribe

Widow

Disciple

Judas

Servant Girl

Peter

Pilate

Soldier

Angel

Mary Magdalene

The Other Mary

Thomas

(Narrator wears modern day dress)

Narrator

## Act 1

**Scene 1 - Jesus and the disciples are standing center stage.**

**(Narrator sits at the side of the stage and reads from an old book.)**

**Narrator:** Two processions entered Jerusalem on a spring day in the year 30. It was the beginning of the week of Passover, the most sacred week of the Jewish year.

One was a peasant procession, the other an imperial procession.

From the east, Jesus rode a donkey down the Mount of Olives, cheered by his followers.

On the opposite side of the city, from the west, Pontius Pilate the Roman governor of Idumea, Judea, and Samaria, entered Jerusalem at the head of a column of imperial cavalry and soldiers. Jesus's procession proclaimed the kingdom of God; Pilate's the proclaimed the power of empire. Pilate's military procession was a demonstration of both Roman imperial power and Roman imperial theology. Imagine the imperial procession's arrival in the city. A visual panoply of imperial power: cavalry on horses, foot soldiers, leather armor, helmets, banners, golden eagles mounted on poles, sun glinting on metal and gold. Sounds: the marching of feet, the creaking of leather, the clinking of bridles, the beating of drums. The swirling of dust. The eyes of the silent onlookers, some curious, some awed, some resentful.

**(Narrator looks towards the stage.)**

**Jesus:** Go into the village ahead of you and you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her, untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say, "the lord needs

them” If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for make sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Those who are ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power. See we are going up to Jerusalem,

**(James and John come forward.)**

**James:** Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.

**Jesus:** What is it you want me to do for you?

**James:** Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.

**Jesus:** You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

**James:** We are able.

**Jesus:** The cup that I drink you will drink, and the baptism with which I am baptized, but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for whom it has been prepared.

**(The rest of the disciples become angry.)**

**Jesus:** You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their ruler’s lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many

**(The disciples exit stage left.)**

**(Blackout.)**

**Scene 2 - Center stage is a money-changer, changing money with another man at a table, with people standing round. And a lame man is sat on the floor.**

**(Jesus enters stage right with one of his disciples.)**

**Narrator:** Jesus and his followers arrive in Jerusalem and enter the "temple", not meaning the sanctuary itself (which was quite small), but the large open-air courts and porticoes of the temple platform. This area was often the scene of teaching, and during Passover week it was thronged with pilgrims. The authorities and their associates challenge Jesus with a series of questions intended to entrap and discredit him in the presence of the crowd. Jesus responds in an equally challenging way, sometimes turning the questions back upon them, sometimes directly indicting them.

**(Jesus over turns the table.)**

**Jesus:** My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a den of robbers.

**(The money-changer and the other man runs off. As the Chief Priest enters stage left.)**

**Chief Priest:** By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?

**Jesus:** I will also ask you one question, if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin.

**Chief Priest:** I do not know.

**Jesus:** Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

**Chief Priest:** Teacher, I know you are sincere, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to emperor, or not? Should we pay or should we not?

**Jesus:** Why are you putting me to the test? Give me a denarius.

**(The Chief Priest gives Jesus a coin.)**

**Jesus:** Whose head is this, and whose title?

**Chief Priest:** The emperor's.

**Jesus:** Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's.

**Chief Priest:** Which commandment is the first of all?

**(A Scribe enters.)**

**Jesus:**

The first is, hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandments greater than these.

**A Scribe:** You are right, Teacher, you have truly said that, he is one, and besides him there is no other, and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, this is much more important than all burnt-offerings and sacrifices.

**Jesus:** You are not far from the kingdom of God. **(Pause.)** Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the market-places, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widow's houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater

condemnation.

**(A woman enters stage left dressed in black and puts two copper coins in to the scribes bowl.)**

**Jesus:** Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.

**(Blackout.)**

**Narrator:** Jesus and his disciples now leave the temple. Standing outside the temple platform, they can see the massive stones used in the construction of its walls.

**Scene 3 -**

**Disciple:** Look Jesus, what large stones and what large buildings.

**Jesus:** Do you see these buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another, all will be thrown down.

**Disciple:** Tell us, when will this be and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?

**Jesus:** Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, I am he, and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed, this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, there will be earthquakes in various places, there will be famines. This is but the beginnings of the birth pangs. As for yourselves, beware, for they will hand you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them. And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations. When they bring you to trial and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Brother will betray brother to death, and father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. If anyone says to you, look. Here is the Messiah. Or look, there he is, do not believe it. False messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But be alert, I have already told you everything. But after the suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds, with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. When you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert, for you do not know when the time will come.

**(Blackout.)**