

## The Passion Gospel According to Mark [14:1-15:47]

**Narrator** Peach Warren  
**Jesus** Touie Jackson  
**Male Voice** Kevin Keppler  
**Female Voice** Lucille Clinkman

Each reader in turn says This is our story.

**Peach** This is our story - the final chapter in the life of Jesus. Without this story, and the story that follows on Easter Sunday morning, nothing else in the Christian story makes sense. It is a painful story. But without this painful story, the resurrection story which we will hear next Sunday, the joy of resurrection simply isn't there.  
So listen. Listen carefully, and weep.  
The story of Jesus' final hours, as it is told in the gospel of Mark.

### ***Musical interlude:***

*Were you there when they crucified my Lord? / Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
Oh sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble / Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*

It was two days before the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the religious scholars were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. They agreed that they should not act during the Passover because they did not want to attract the attention of the crowds.

**Peach** Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the Leper. While he was eating dinner, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive ointment, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. But some of the other guests were angry, bursting out with indignation:

**Lucille** "Why was the ointment wasted in this way?"

**Kevin** This ointment could have been sold for more than a year's wages, and the money given to the poor!"

**Peach** But Jesus said,

**Touie** "Let her alone; why are you giving her a hard time? She has just done something wonderfully meaningful for me. You always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told with admiration."

**Peach** Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in

order to betray Jesus to them. When they heard this they were greatly pleased, and promised to pay him well. So he began to look for just the right moment to betray Jesus.

On the first day of Passover, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to Jesus:

**Kevin** "Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for the Passover meal? "

**Peach** So Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them,

**Touie** "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there."

**Peach** So the disciples went to the city, and found everything as Jesus had told them; they prepared the Passover meal. After sunset, Jesus came with the twelve. When they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus spoke to them.

**Touie** "I have something hard but important to say to you. One of you will betray me, one who is eating with me."

**Peach** The disciples became distressed.

**Kevin** "Surely, not I?" Surely, it's not me?"

**Touie** "It is someone who is dipping bread into the bowl with me. Scripture has foretold this, but woe to the one who betrays the Son of Man! It would have been better for that person not to have been born."

**Peach** While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them.

**Touie** "Take; this is my body."

**Peach** Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it.

**Touie** This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many people. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink wine until that day when I drink it in the kingdom of God."

- Peach** After dinner, Jesus and the disciples went out to the Mount of Olives. Again, Jesus spoke to them.
- Touie** "You will all become deserters; you are going to feel that your world is falling apart and that it's my fault. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee."
- Peach** Peter was horrified. He blurted out:
- Kevin** "Even though everyone else become deserters, I will not."
- Touie** Don't be so sure. "Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times."
- Kevin** "Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you."
- Peach** All the others said the same thing. They went to a place called Gethsemane. Jesus said to them:
- Touie** "Sit here while I pray."
- Peach** Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated.
- Touie** "I feel badly enough right now to die. Stay here and keep vigil with me."
- Peach** Going a little farther, Jesus threw himself on the ground and prayed for a way out.
- Touie** "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; And yet, not what I want, but what you want."
- Peach** Jesus came back and found the three disciples sleeping.
- Touie** "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake a single hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."
- Peach** Again Jesus went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came back and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy and they just could not stay awake. They did not know what to say to him. Jesus came to the disciples a third time.
- Touie** "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let's get going. See, my betrayer has arrived."

- Peach** No sooner were the words out of his mouth when, Judas arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Now Judas had worked out a signal with them:
- Kevin** "The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard so that he doesn't get away."
- Peach** So Judas went straight to Jesus:
- Kevin** "Rabbi!"
- Peach** Then Judas kissed Jesus. At that moment, priests and scribes grabbed him and arrested him. One of the men who stood near swung his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear.
- Touie** "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 his disciples ran away.
- Musical Interlude:*
- Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?*  
*Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?*  
*Oh sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble*  
*Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?*
- Peach** They took Jesus to the High Priest, where all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes had gathered. Peter had followed him at a safe distance, right into the same courtyard of the High Priest, where he mingled with the servants and warmed himself at the fire.
- Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for evidence against Jesus so they could sentence him to death; but they found none. A lot of people gave false testimony against Jesus, but nothing could be substantiated.
- Lucille** "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'"
- Peach** But their testimony did not agree. Then the High Priest stood up.
- Kevin** "What do you have to say to these accusations? Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?"
- Peach** But Jesus was silent. He said nothing. The High Priest asked again:

**Kevin** "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?"

**Touie** "I am; and you will see for yourself. I am the Son of Man who will be seated at the right hand of the Mighty One,' and arriving on the clouds of heaven."

**Peach** The High Priest lost his temper and shouted:

**Kevin** Did you hear that? "Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?"

**Peach** All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some spit on him, they blindfolded him, and hit him, taunting him:

**Kevin** "Prophecy!"

**Lucille** Yeah. Prophecy. Who just hit you?

**Peach** Meanwhile Peter was below in the courtyard. One of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him.

**Lucille** "You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth."

**Kevin** "I don't know what you are talking about."

**Peach** And Peter went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. And the servant-girl, on seeing him, spoke again to the bystanders.

**Lucille** "This man is one of them."

**Kevin** I don't know what you're talking about.

**Peach** Then after a little while another one of the bystanders pointed at Jesus.

**Lucille** "Certainly you are one of them; you have a Galilean accent."

**Peach** But Peter got nervous and began to curse.

**Kevin** "I do not know this man you are talking about."

**Peach** At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said to him. And Peter broke down and wept.

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 a way, and handed him over to Pilate, who was the Roman Governor.

**Kevin** "Are you the King of the Jews?"

**Touie** "You say so."

**Peach** Then the chief priests accused him of many crimes.  
Pilate asked again:

**Kevin** "Have you no answer? Look at how many charges they bring against you."

**Peach** But Jesus made no further reply, which confused Pilate. Now it was Pilate's custom at Passover to release a prisoner, anyone the people called for. A man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. So a group came to petition Pilate to release a prisoner according to his custom.

**Kevin** "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?"

**Peach** But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead.

**Kevin** "Then what do you want me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?"

**Lucille** "Crucify him!"

**Kevin** "Why, what crime has he committed?!"

**Lucille** Nail him to a cross!

**Peach** So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them. After flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace. They clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him and made fun of him, jeering:

**Kevin** "Hail, King of the Jews!"

**Peach** They struck his head with a stick, spit on him, and knelt down in mock homage to him. They stripped Jesus of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

*Musical Interlude:*  
*Were you there when they pierced him in the side?*  
*Were you there when they pierced him in the side?*  
*Oh sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble*  
*Were you there when they pierced him in the side?*

**Peach** The soldiers compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross. It was Simon of Cyrene. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha - the place of a skull. The soldiers offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take. It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription on the top of the cross said: "The King of the Jews." And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed shouted insults at him.

**Kevin** Hey you! You said you would destroy the temple and build it in three days. If you could do that, save yourself, and come down from the cross!"

**Lucille** Yeah! If you're the King of the Jews, jump down from that cross.

**Kevin** "Isn't it amazing. He saved others, but he can't save himself. If you're the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe."

**Peach** When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. Then Jesus cried out with a loud voice!

**Touie** "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

**Peach** Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.  
**(SLIGHT PAUSE)**

And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Then the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way Jesus breathed his last.

**Kevin** "Truly this man was God's Son!"

*Musical Interlude:*  
*Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?*  
*Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?*  
*Oh sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble*  
*Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?*

**Peach** There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. These women used to follow him and provided for him

when he was in Galilee. There were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

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 summoned the centurion, and asked him whether Jesus was dead. Finding that he was indeed dead, Pilate 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. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where the body was laid.