

PASSION PLAY

REVISED 1/7/16

Begin with **Curtains closed**. Set up seating angling stage.

Stage Crew: *Mary's house is set up for opening scene on lower stage/platform. Water well is stage right, boat is stage left of platform. Cross, Veronica's veil, etc. back of gym. Stretcher is next to the wall on the right side of the stage by the music.*

(Lights are dimmed/ Its dark.)

Shofar... blows 3 times.....

(Aisle Lights on)

Gabriel – “PREPARE YE” – *(Walks from back)*

(Aisle lights go off)

Act I **Scene I**

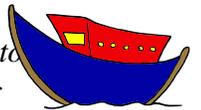
PRELUDE

Curtain still closed.

Opening: Narrator 1, Narrator 2, Peter, Woman at the Well, Matthew walks out; all in place but in freeze.

NARRATOR 1: *(coming from audience to front of lower stage/platform, then stepping to the right; gestures with hands while speaking)* Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became a man like us. He walked the hills, went to the cities, walked the seashore. He met people where they were, and one by one, changed their lives. *(Steps back)*

PETER: *(From stage left next to boat ,with fishing net on his shoulder; steps forward to speak)* My brother and I are fishermen. We don't know a lot about politics or religion ... we just know a lot about fishing. The first time I ever heard his name ... my brother came down and said, “You just have to meet this man.” So I went. I met him. He looked at me and said, “Come along. Come on along with me. *(pause)* There's just something about him. *(Shaking head, looking very puzzled; pause)* There's just something about him. We just gave it all up. We gave up the boats and the nets and the fishing, and just went with him, and I've been with him ever since. *(Steps back then returns to boat placing net on boat)*



MATTHEW: (*SC: large money pouch.*) (*From top stage right and steps forward*). I'm a business man here in Jericho. Well, really I'm a tax collector. He came to my house for dinner one day. We talked a while and ... well ... I don't know what happened, but I ended up giving half of everything I owned to the poor people and to those who I cheated I gave back four times the amount I took. (*Looking puzzled*) There's just something about him. (*Steps back*)

WOMAN AT THE WELL: (*Standing at well stage right holding a water jug on shoulder. She steps forward to speak and gestures while talking*). I was at the well drawing water when I first met him. Naturally, I offered him a drink. But he wasn't like the other men I knew. He told me everything I had ever done. I never met a man like this. (*Looking up emotionally*) He forgave me. (*"Puts her hand on her heart"*). That's how it was with people everywhere. Whether they were rich or poor, young or old, mighty, lowly..... (*moves hands up and down*) when they met this Jesus, things happened. Their lives were changed. (*Steps back*).

(*All walk off solemnly*)

(*Lights fade. Curtains remain closed.*)

SC: Bring bench and weaving basket to platform. At this time move the boat close to the piano. Move water well towards the stage right ramp entrance.

(*Spotlight on Angels*)

SCENE II

(*When lights come on we see Mary, who is sitting lower stage/platform in front of house. (other angels come out here). She is weaving a basket. (Mary falls to her knees when she sees Gabriel. Mary kneels before song begins with hands in prayer). Gabriel lifts arms as song begins. Other angels follow lifting their arms*)

NARRATOR 1: (*Stage right and steps forward to speak, (center stage) gesturing*). Yes, many lives were changed. This Jesus was no ordinary man. He was born under very unusual circumstances, but very special at that. God sent the word to a young woman who lived in a small village in Galilee. The girl's name was Mary. She was told in a vision that she was to have a baby, and that baby was to be the son of God.

GABRIEL: *sings, other angels join in ... "Hail O Blessed One." (Whole song)(Mary's hands raise at the words. "And you shall bring forth a Son." Gabriel faces audiences while speaking). Narrator 2 speaks during the song, at stage right (Angels and Mary freeze at song's end)*

NARRATOR 2: You can imagine the thoughts that must have raced through Mary's mind. Here she was, a young woman who had not known a man and the angel was telling her in a vision that she was going to have a baby. What would people say? Who would believe her? In her heart she knew that what was to happen to her was divine. She was filled with wonder. She was willing for God to use her.

(Narrator walks off, stage right, other angels leave, Gabriel and another angel stay, Mary turns toward the audience.)

MARY (Mother of Jesus): *(rises and faces audience to sing, lights darken).* **Song of Mary** *(Mary kneels at end of song.)*

NARRATOR 1: *(Comes from stage left, walking back & forth in front of Mary. Joseph comes out with baby! Joseph kneeling.)* And so, Mary gave birth to her first born son. You have heard the story many times before how Jesus was born in a stable in Bethlehem, not the way you would expect the Son the God to be born. And yet, as often as we have heard the Christmas story, you cannot help but wonder what it was like for Mary, when she fully realized the child she was holding truly was the Son of God!....

GABRIEL: *Sings "Mary did you know" (Duet with Another angel)*

NARRATOR 1: As a child He lived with his parents in Nazareth and helped His foster father Joseph, in his carpenter shop. He was obedient to His parents and progressed steadily in wisdom age and grace before God.

NARRATOR 2: But there came a time when Jesus was no longer a child but a grown man. What He came on earth to do could no longer be done within the walls of His family home in Nazareth. His work and Divine purpose would now lead him to places like Judea, to Capernaum and Jerusalem. But first, like all of us, He had to leave home.

(Lights go off for a moment)(Everyone exits except Mary mother of Jesus)

(A table and chair are brought out)

(Mary is at table. Jesus walks in with the chair, a hammer, and 3 nails)

JESUS: Mother, I have completed this chair that, before he died, father was to make for our neighbor Ezra. My work here at home is finished. I must go and begin my Heavenly Father's work.

MARY (Mother of Jesus): Oh Son, I knew this day would come but oh how I wish there was just another year, another month or even another day. But I know I cannot stand in the way of God. But tell me...Where will you start your mission?

JESUS: It is said that cousin John is in the wilderness baptizing people in the Jordan River. (*Saying confidentially*) John is preparing my way. I will go to him, be baptized as the others and begin my journey there.

NAOMI: Mary, Jesus, may we enter?

MARY (Mother of Jesus): Of course you can. Please come in.

RUTH: We heard that Jesus was leaving home and we just wanted to come and wish Him well.

NAOMI: Jesus, do not worry about your mother. You know we will watch over her and care for her.

JESUS: I thank you. My Father always sees and provides. Mother the time has come. You have prepared me well. You truly are blessed among women.

MARY (Mother of Jesus): Farewell Son. You know how much I love you.

JESUS: Farewell mother.

(Jesus and Mary embrace Ruth and Naomi bow their heads and Jesus walks off the stage)

(Mary picks up the nails and says)

MARY (Mother of Jesus): The redemption of Israel is about to happen. And when I think of how it will happen I shudder with fear.

RUTH: Mary, we will be right by your side.

(Lights go off)

SC: Take down Mary's house scene. Remove bench and table.

(Music from Ben Hur...)

SCENE III

(SC: Baptism scene; baptism font, and rocky background.)

(John the Baptist stands center: Stage left Matthew, Andrew and John are standing. Pharisees and Accuser are stage right with Martha, Mary, sister of Lazarus, and some crowd. Narrator comes from stage right)

NARRATOR 2: In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, during the high priesthood of Caiaphas, the Word of God came to John the Baptist. He went throughout the whole region preaching and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. As it is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah, *(pause)* “Behold I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way.”

Curtains Open.....

JOHN THE BAPTIST: *(Loud, dominating voice)* Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand! Every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire!

APOSTLE JOHN: What then shall we do?

JOHN THE BAPTIST: Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise.

APOSTLE MATTHEW: Teacher what should I do?

JOHN THE BAPTIST: Stop collecting more than what is required.

SARAH: Are YOU the Messiah? *(asking John the Baptist)*

JOHN THE BAPTIST: No, I am not the Messiah.

APOSTLE ANDREW: So, when will he come?

JOHN THE BAPTIST: Time is at hand.

ACCUSER : Who are you then, so we can give an answer to those who sent us?

JOHN THE BAPTIST: *(said with passion)*. I am the voice of one crying out in the desert. Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths.

ABIGAIL: Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah or Elijah or the prophet?

*(Jesus enters from stage right....he is in the back of the line of people being baptized)
(As Jesus approaches the water font, John the Baptist sees him)*

JOHN THE BAPTIST: I baptize with water, but there is one among you whom you do not recognize. The one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire! You yourselves can testify that I said I am not the Messiah, but that I was sent before him. My joy, therefore, has been made complete. He must **increase** *(pause)* ... I must decrease *(stated matter-of-factly without sadness)*. In fact he is here.

JOHN THE BAPTIST: Why do you come out here in the wilderness Lord?

JESUS: Why? Well to be baptized, like everyone else.

JOHN THE BAPTIST: But you are the Lamb of God. You should be baptizing me, not me you.. I am not worthy.

JESUS: John, leave it be – it is my Father’s will.

JOHN THE BAPTIST: So be it, Lord *(he baptizes Jesus)*

(as Jesus is baptized...God speaks...)

VOICE OF GOD: “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”

JOHN THE BAPTIST: Behold the Lamb of God!...Jesus, may your mission be fruitful. *(Then they embrace)*

(2 disciples, Andrew & John, follow Jesus)

(Jesus begins to walk down stage turns and says):

JESUS: Why are you following me? What are you looking for?

JOHN THE APOSTLE: Teacher where do you stay?

ANDREW: We want to know if John is right.

JOHN THE APOSTLE: Are you the Promised One?

JESUS: Come and see

(Jesus is followed by the Apostles and walk towards the platform and exit stage right ramp)

WOMAN AT THE WELL: *(comes to center)* With His baptism in the river Jordan by his cousin John, Jesus' mission here on earth began. Almost from the start people realized that He was special....that He was sent from God....and so they followed Him. Andrew and John were the first and soon after there would be many more. Then from the many He chose 12 men to be His special followers. They were called Apostles.

(Lights fade out.)

...Curtains close

SC: Change of scene; Take down Baptism scenery and Bring in the temple and some rocks for the Apostles to sit on for the Miracle scene.

SCENE IV

SC: Bring in seashore/boat/nets scenery on platform in front of curtain.

Background the sound of seagulls and ocean water.

ANDREW: Simon: Oh I am so happy you came ashore!

PETER: Well, I'm glad you're happy. I'm not happy.

ANDREW: What's wrong?

PETER: Andrew, I have been fishing for hours, but the catch was very light today. Besides, where were you? I could have used your help.

ANDREW: Simon, I went out to hear the Baptist preach! And I was baptized while I was there. Something unusual happened. While he was baptizing me, John suddenly pointed to a man that was in line and he said, "Look! There's the Messiah!" John even called Him, "The Lamb of God." This man, whose name is Jesus invited us to dine with Him, and oh Simon! I really think He could be the Messiah!

PETER: You think that? Tell me, does He have a plan to overthrow the Romans if He is the Messiah?

ANDREW: Well no, but Simon if you could only hear His words! You would agree He is from God. In fact Simon, He is coming to meet you now. *(Andrew looks toward the approaching Jesus and says)* ...Rabbi, my brother Simon. Simon, Jesus of Nazareth.

PETER: Rabbi!

JESUS: Simon, I want you and Andrew to put down your nets and come and follow me.

PETER: But we are just fishermen. What can we do to help You to change the world?

JESUS: Precisely. You are fishermen, but you will now become fishers of men.

ANDREW: Simon, let us follow Him!

PETER: Andrew you've never been a good fisherman, but you have always been a good judge of character. If you are that sure, I'll take your word.

ANDREW: Put down your nets! Hurry, let's catch up to him!

(All exit stage right to go to the miracle scene)

SC: Remove seashore/boat/nets props

SCENE V

(Apostles and Jesus freeze on stage)

Narrator, Woman with affliction, Stretcher Bearer I & II, Accuser, Pharisees, Bartimeus, Woman in crowd, Mary Magdalene, Apostles, rest of cast is crowd. Crowd on both sides standing. Bartimeus and Stretcher Bearers (stage left), Pharisees and Accuser on stage right.

SC:; Big stick, blindfold, Stones in basket

FORESHADOWING NARRATOR (REBEKAH): *(in front of curtain stage right)* This Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. His fame spread to all of Syria, and great crowds far from beyond the Jordan followed Him. At the sight of the crowds, His heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned. *(pause and emphasize)* like sheep without a shepherd. I need to find this Jesus.

Curtains open...

(Aisle lights on for Jarius – Center Stage Lights)

(A ruler from a synagogue appears from back of gym, running up steps to Jesus. He falls at Jesus' feet, crying and sobbing).

JARIUS: Lord...Lord...Lord...*(once he has reached Jesus he says)* My daughter is at the point of death; Come lay thy hands upon her, that she may be saved and live.

ABIGAIL: Are you a doctor?

JUDITH: I did not hear him proclaim he was a doctor.

(Jesus puts his arm around Jarius and walks with him passing through the crowd. Jesus and Jarius walk down to bottom stage, Judas close behind) A woman appearing afraid and ashamed, a woman with an affliction had been standing alone on stage right, slowly but deliberately approaches Jesus.)

(The Crowd Gasps! Make disapproving sounds and words)

WOMAN WITH AFFLICTION: *(saying to herself but loudly)* If I touch JUST his cloak, I shall be saved! *(she reaches and touches his cloak)*

CHLOE: Augh! How can she be so bold!

(Woman slowly approaches Jesus (up steps right), slowing reaching her hand forward to touch his cloak. Jesus does not see her. After touching Jesus, the afflicted woman draws away at a short distance bowing her head in shame.)

JESUS: Who touched my clothes? *(looking around the crowd)*

JUDAS: You see the crowd is pressed upon you, and yet you ask, “Who touched me?”

(Crowd looks disgusted)

WOMAN WITH AFFLICTION: (*approaches Jesus*) It was I Lord. I have had this affliction for 12 years, twelve long humiliating years I have suffered. (*slowly*) I have no money; it has all gone to the many doctors I went to see in hopes of a cure. (*sighs*) But not one of those physicians was able to heal me. Instead I only grew worse! I have been labeled unclean ... my friends have all deserted me ... and my family no longer wants me around. When I heard that you, Jesus of Nazareth, were here today; I hurried to see you. You who can cure a leper! (*said with amazement*) (*pause*) I knew that if I but touched your cloak, I too would be made well. The moment I touched you I knew that I had been cured (*said smiling*).

JESUS: (*smiling*) Daughter your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be freed from your affliction.

(*Blessed Mother hugs woman with affliction*)

(*Mother of Child and Servant carrying Child, walk solemnly from back of room/gym*)

JARIUS: (*desperately impatient*) Hurry Lord! My Child!
(*Mother is with Servant*)

(*Aisle Lights on for servant carrying child*)

SERVANT (*carrying child*): Thy daughter is dead! The doctors tried every kind of medicine they knew...but it was of no help.

JAIROS WIFE: (*she is sobbing and wailing*) My child! My Baby! Please Oh Mighty God have mercy on us.

(*Jarius reacts with a wail and sobs*) (*Crowd sits sobbing and grieving*) (*Servant walks center to Jesus*)

SERVANT: Sir, please help if you can. I am afraid my master cannot go on with his life, if his daughter is dead..Please she is his only child.

MARIAM: Oh those poor parents! That poor child! Lord, have mercy (*crying*). Is there anything you are able to do?

JESUS: Do not be afraid, nor is there a need for tears.. only have faith (*Jesus walk toward servant and child, Peter and James follow*)

JESUS: *(holding child's hand)* Why do you make such a commotion and weep?
The girl is asleep NOT dead. *(He holds her hand)*

JARIUS WIFE: Oh Please Lord, Please Lord! *(Crying and weeping)* I can not
bear to loose my child!

JESUS: TALITHA KO UM!

(Little girl wakes up, stands, looks around and runs to her mother and father)

PHARISEE I: He told her to arise!

MARIAM: It's a miracle! *(Relieved and excited)*

LYDIA: Yes, it's a miracle! *(She reaches out and touches Mariam)*

APOSTLE JUDE: I can't believe it!

JARIUS WIFE: Oh...thank you O merciful one. *(hugging her child)* my
beautiful child, let me hold you.
(After they hold each other, Jarius wife tells her to go over and thank the Master)

JARIUS WIFE: Go over and thank the Master.

(Little girl hugs Jesus and then leaves)

JESUS: *(smiling and laughing)* Go now and get her something to eat!

(Jesus joins Apostles and remains standing)

*(Stretcher-bearers enter along with two women. They walk to center and lay stretcher at feet
of Jesus. Person on stretcher moans quietly)*

JOANNA: Master, please help our poor friend who has not been able to walk
from birth.

DEBORAH: Yes, Rabbi, her life has been one of misery, she begs for her food.

*(Jesus goes to lame person, bends down, placing his hands over her legs in a blessing
position, closes his eyes and silently prays).*

JESUS: Courage, child your sins are forgiven.

ACCUSER: *(stands)* this man is blaspheming! Only GOD can forgive sins!

JESUS: *(head turned slightly toward accuser)* Why do you harbor evil thoughts? Which is easier to say, “Your sins are forgiven,” or to say, “Rise and walk?” So that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins *(turning to the lame person, Jesus offers his hand and slowly pulls the person from the stretcher)*. Rise and take your stretcher.

HANNAH- WOMAN ON STRETCHER: *[stands unsteadily]*

I don't believe it. I can...I can walk! My legs..they no longer feel dead..I can stand...I can walk!!

(The cured person slowly stands to a full upright position, embracing and thanking Jesus. Pharisees and Accuser move to the side in a huff.)

LYDIA: Another miracle!

MARIAM: What a beautiful thing to witness!

PHARISEE III: There is only one way that a man who claims to forgive sins can cure. It is by the power of the Devil

PHARISEE I: Yes, but did you see how the crowds are attracted to him

PHARISEE II: What do they know. They are quick to follow wonder workers

PHARISEE III: He must be stopped!

(Stretcher-Bearers exit with stretcher at the same time Bartimeus enters from stage right))

Curtains remain opened.

BARTIMEUS: Who is it? Who is it? Can somebody please tell me who it is?
(Jesus center stage)

APOSTLE MATTHEW: It's Jesus. The Rabbi from Nazareth.

BARTIMEUS: *(coming from stage right)* Jesus. Son of David. Have pity on me!

SARAH: Keep quiet ... shut up! Be quiet. He's too busy for you!

CHLOE: What does he want?

BARTIMEUS: *(Louder)* Son of David, have pity on me!

JESUS: *(Stopping)* Call him here.

APOSTLE MATTHEW: *(Walks to Bartimeus, picking him up and escorting him to Jesus):* Courage ... get up! He is calling you!

(Bartimeus kneels)

JESUS: What do you want me to do?

BARTIMEUS: Rabbi ... Master ... that I may see. Let me see again.

JESUS: *(Placing His hands over Bartimeus' eyes looking up to heaven and uttering a prayer to the Father).* Go! Your faith has saved you! *(Jesus takes off the blindfold from bartimeus)*

BARTIMEUS: *(jumping and shouting)* I can see! I can see! I can see again! I forgot to thank Him. Come, let's catch up with Him. I must thank Him. Look, they are taking the road to Jerusalem. Let's go.

(Jesus picks up stick and some start to walk away, heading to back, stage left)

BARTIMEUS: I know you have things to do. I know you're busy ... but when did you ever see a man who could do such things? I was blind and now I can see. He must be from GOD.

(Pharisees center stage)

PHARISEE I: Could it be true? Could He be the Messiah? I mean I know those people their whole lives, they have been ill, crippled and now this child! How did He do it, if He is not from God????

PHARISEE II: *(exasperated)* NONSENSE!! Do you want to be one of His followers too? *(pauses, thinking)* He did by trickery, MAGIC or maybe even SATAN!!!!

(Mary Magdalene comes out sneaking into crowd stage right) (crowd listens, whispering among themselves)

RUTH: He must be from God!

NAOMI: I agree! *(looks up to heaven)* There's just something about Him!

JUDITH : Look she's a sinner! There she is! Why is she here?

(ALL HEADS BOW)

(Jesus and crowd walk up to center stage front. Lower crowd assembled around temple. He is talking, teaching them. The Pharisees come from stage right and shove Mary Magdalene She falls at the feet of Jesus.)

PHARISEE III: Look, there He is!

(Crowd spreads around Mary Magdalene and Jesus. Crowd looks back around and gathers around Mary Magdalene. She is crouched on ground. Other crowd members surround her in back.)

PHARISEE I: Well Master, you are a great teacher. You approve of the law of Moses, don't you?

PHARISEE II: Here's a case for you. See that filth at your feet. She's an adulteress. Now in the law, Moses says that a woman like that should be stoned to death. What do you say Master?

ABIGAIL: Stone her.

SARAH : It's the Law.

(He is to the left of Mary Magdalene. He looks slowly at each of the Pharisees).

JESUS: Yes, it is the Law of Moses; isn't it?

(The Pharisees pull the woman to her feet. Ready to stone her. Jesus stoops and writes in the sand for a moment.)

JARIUS WIFE : What is He writing?

(Slowly He stands)

JESUS: Proceed with the execution ... *(pause) (pointing at the Pharisees)* **JUST MAKE SURE** that the one who casts the first stone is without sin.

(Pharisees pause look at each other and, throw stones to ground and exit with heads down, exit stage right).

JESUS: Woman, has no one condemned you? *(Jesus helps her up)*

MARY MAGDALENE: *(She stands):* No one sir.

JESUS: Well then, neither will I. Go and sin no more.

(Jesus sits on rock or tree stump) (Friends of Mary Magdalene put arms around her shoulder and they exit stage right. Jesus takes His seat on center stage, and the Apostles and people begin to gather around Him to hear Him teach. Peter is on Jesus' right. Blind man is at His left with three Apostles.)

PETER: Why did you do that Rabbi? That woman deserves to die. She is a public sinner, is it not written in the law?

JESUS: *(Looks around)* What man among you, losing one sheep, would not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the missing one until he found it? And when he found it, would he not joyfully take it on his shoulders and say, "Rejoice with me. I have found my sheep that was lost." In the same way, I tell you ... there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine virtuous men who have no need of repentance.

(Apostles nod heads, looking at each other impressed by what Jesus said. As they begin to walk to lower stage platform, apostle James the lesser stops Jesus by saying:)

JAMES THE LESSER: Jesus let us make our way to Jericho. We have heard that many people there are waiting to see you.

JAMES THE GREATER: Yes Jesus, they have heard about your miracles and you're preaching and hope you will spend time with them.

JAMES THE LESSER: In fact, some of the Pharisees in the local Synagogue in Jericho want to invite you to dinner so that they can hear you speak. They have a lot of questions to ask you.

JESUS: let us go then.

Curtains Close...

SCENE VI

(AS CURTAIN IS CLOSING, Jesus and apostles walk down center to back of gym and arrive on left side of stage. Crowd scattered stage right (top and bottom steps).

As curtain closes SC: Bring Zacchaeus tree in front of curtain before closing it to right upper stage)(Be ready to set Tomb for Lazarus Scene while curtain is closed...)

Curtain remains closed.

(Upon Jesus' arrival, LIGHTS UP, CROWD IS EXCITED AND SHOUTING)

MARY MAGDALENE: “It is Jesus of Nazareth”.

RUTH: Jesus, stay with us!”

JARIUS WIFE: “are you the Messiah? Are you the promised one of God?”

ABIGAIL: What will He do?

(A small man named Zacchaeus wants to see Jesus but the people push him away. He calls to Jesus.)

ZACCHAEUS: Jesus! Jesus!

(Spot light on Zacchaeus as he climbs the tree, Jesus is watching him).

JESUS: “Peter, find out who that man is”.

PHARISEE III: He is Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector of the town. He is a traitor to our faith. He cheats us of our money so that he can gain the favor of the Romans.

JESUS: Zacchaeus, come down from that tree. *(Zacchaeus comes down)* I want to stay at your home today.

PETER: Come the Master is calling you.

PHARISEE II: If He were a prophet he would come to my house not that mans. I follow the Lord, that man is a thief, a sinner.

ZACHEUS: He is right Lord, I am a thief. But Jesus, because you showed acceptance, despite my sins, I promise today that I will give back to all from whom I have stolen, four times the amount. I will give half my belongings to the poor.

JESUS: Today salvation has come to this house because this is what it means to be a Son of Abraham. For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost.

ACCUSER: Who are you? If you were a prophet of Israel you would realize this man is unholy. God would never enter a sinner's house.

JESUS: You who style yourself as teacher of the law, did you not read that the Messiah, the Son of God, would come from heaven to seek out the lost and restore them to the Father's house... Let us go to your house Zacchaeus.

JESUS: I say to all of you: Ask and you will receive: Seek, as this man has done, and you will find. Knock, and it will be open to you.

(As they start to walk away, two friends of Lazarus come rushing in from stage right).

MARIAM- FRIEND OF LAZARUS: Lord, Lord, we have terrible news to report to you. Your friend Lazarus is seriously ill.

ELISHABETH - FRIEND OF LAZARUS: Yes Lord, we fear that by now he may have died.

JESUS: Let us go back to Judea.

APOSTLE JOHN: *(Trying to stop Him, with his hand on Jesus' shoulder)* But Rabbi, with the Jews only recently trying to stone you, you are going back up there again?

JESUS: Our beloved Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to wake him

APOSTLE ANDREW: But Lord if he is asleep, his life will be saved.

JESUS: Lazarus is dead. For your sakes I am glad I was not there, that you may come to believe. In any event, let us go to him.

APOSTLE THOMAS: *(surprised and almost as if to shrug his shoulders)* "Let us go to die with Him".

(Friends of Lazarus lead the way to exit stage left, but Jesus and some Apostles are left behind for children scene.)

SC: Remove Zacchaeus' tree now!

(A few children come running from stage right)(May have Zacchaeus tree by the entrance of the stage right for the children to be hiding)

CHILD I “Oh Jesus, *(they all turn)* Jesus, my mother says you are the Son of God and I believe her.

CHILD II : My father said you can heal a blind man.

JUDAS: Come on children, stay away, Do you not see the Master is busy?

JESUS: Let the children come to me for I tell you, *(Jesus kneels to be eye-level with children as they run to Him, Jesus smiles and almost laughs)* unless you become like these little children, simple, accepting, without prejudice, you shall not enter the Kingdom of God.

(All exit Stage Left.)

(SC: Lazarus Tomb should be set now for Lazarus scene) (Lazarus should be in it)

SCENE VII

In a brief moment the curtains open...

(Jesus and others come in from stage left).

MARIAM- FRIEND OF LAZARUS: Martha, Mary, Jesus is here. *(comes ahead of Jesus and apostles, stage left)*

ELISHABETH - FRIEND OF LAZARUS: He is asking for you.

MARY: (Sister of Lazarus): Oh Lord, we are so glad you are here with us.

JESUS: Your brother will rise again.

MARTHA: I know he will rise again, in the resurrection on the last day. *(Stands, she had been kneeling in prayer. Mary stands with Martha too).*

MARTHA: Yes, Lord. I have come to believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God; he who is to come into the world.

JESUS: Where have you laid him?

MARY (Sister of Lazarus): Lord, come and see.

(Jesus walks over and kneels in front of tomb with head bent)

MARIAM: See how much he loved him!

LYDIA: He is weeping.

ABIGAIL: What is happening?

SARAH : He opened the eyes of that blind man, why could he not have done something to stop this man from dying?

JESUS: *(Stepping away from tomb):* Take away the stone.

MARTHA: Lord, it has been five days now, since we buried him.

MARY (Sister of Lazarus): Surely there will be a stench!

JESUS: Did I not assure you that if you believed you would see the glory of God displayed? *(Raises right arm) (Comes center, looks upward and raises both arms up)* Father, I thank you for having heard me. I know you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd, that they may believe that you sent me. *(He turns toward tomb with arms up, says loudly)* Lazarus, come out! *(Lazarus emerges: Crowd reacts with amazement)*

JESUS: Untie him – and let him go free!

Curtains remain opened.

(Everyone freezes. Narrator #1, Narrator #2 and the Woman at the Well come on stage).

NARRATOR 2: This event, this rising of Lazarus from the dead caused many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and Martha – and had seen what Jesus did, to put their faith in Him.

WOMAN AT THE WELL: Some others, however, went to the Pharisees and reported what Jesus had done. The result was that the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. What are we to do, they said, with this man performing all sorts of signs? If we let him go on like this, the whole world will believe in Him.

NARRATOR 1: *(Stepping forward to speak):* From that day onward there was a plan afoot to kill him.

(All walk off stage. Judas walks off last and is stopped by the Pharisees and the accuser).

PHARISEE I: Judas, Judas Iscariot – can we see you for a moment? *(Judas approaches the Pharisees, they meet center stage).*

PHARISEE II: Have you given any thought to our proposal? Remember – we offer you thirty pieces of silver if you will only tell us – when is the best time for us to arrest Him with his friends?

JUDAS: I remember – but I am not sure what to do. He is my friend – my Master!

PHARISEE I: Judas, I heard you say with my own ears that you were disappointed with him. You thought He was the Messiah, but no more.

JUDAS: That’s right. I had hoped by now he would have formed an army with all of his followers, made us his generals, and overthrown the filthy Romans. But all He keeps saying is things like, love your enemies..forgive your persecutors.

PHARISEE I: Judas..don;t be so hard on yourself.. we all make mistakes in judgement of character.

PHARISEE II: Do you know what you can do with thirty pieces of silver?

JUDAS: Well *(pause)* – it is a generous amount I must admit. let us say – it is agreed! Once I know his plans for Passover I will get back to you.

(Pharisees exit stage right and Judas exits stage left)

*Lights go off. ... **Curtain closes.***

SC: Scene change; Jerusalem Entrance Scene (Curtains open only to show Jerusalem) Once the Jerusalem prop is in place take the temple scene out and bring the last supper scene in.) Distribute the Palms! (Meanwhile, Stage Crew put up Last Supper Scene: Table, Tablecloth, Cup, plate with Pita bread, Candles (menorah?) The window panels and the pitcher with a rag is placed on the floor in front of table.

ACT II

SCENE I

Narrator center, crowd divided, Pharisees and Accuser off center left, Centurion at right, two soldiers at left. Crowd is sitting with palms in hands. Jesus and Apostles are in the back of the GYM they will walk through the center aisle with Judas behind Jesus.

(Center stage, spot light on Narrator.)

NARRATOR 1: Jerusalem is filled with religious pilgrims who have come to the holy city to celebrate the feast of Passover. It is a sacred time for the Jews. A time to look back – back to their delivery from Pharaoh. It is also a time to look forward – forward to the coming of the Messiah ... Jesus too will celebrate this feast along with his Apostles. While the people will be preparing their Passover lambs *(slight pause)* God will be preparing his. Then all of Jerusalem will behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Listen now and you will hear the crowds shouting joyfully to Jesus. In another day many of those in this crowd will sound very different as their cries will turn to hate ... *(dramatically)* Now Jesus' hour draws near.

Curtains Open slowly only to show Jerusalem.

(Aisle Lighting)

(Follow spot off, house lights on and narrator joins crowd. Jesus comes up the center aisle with Apostles and Judas behind Jesus, people of Jerusalem are waving palm branches and singing. A small child lays down his cloak at His feet.

CROWD: *(singing)* Jerusalem, Jerusalem, lift up your voice and sing, Hosanna, in the highest, Hosanna to your king *(chanting)* Hosanna to the Son of David! 3x

(Jesus walks up center steps. Crowd with palms follow up, split to sides.)

PHARISEE II: Teacher, tell your disciples to stop.

JESUS: If my disciples and these people are silent, the stones themselves would cry out.

PHARISEE I: Quick, let us report this to the members of the Sanhedrin.

PHARISEE III: Yes, let us to report how this Jesus claims he is the Son of God

PHARISEE I: Yes we have heard and witnessed enough Blasphemy for one day!! *(Both Pharisees and accuser exit) (Crowd exits stage-right)*

APOSTLE JOHN: Where do you want us to go to make the preparations for you to eat Passover?

JESUS: Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him and say to the owner of the house, which he enters, “The Master says, where is the dining room in which I can eat the Passover with my disciples?” He will show you a large upper room all prepared. Make the preparation for us there ...

(Jesus and Apostles sit on lower stage (steps))

JESUS: *(looking at all his Apostles)* who do people say that the Son of Man is?

APOSTLE JOHN: Some say John the Baptist.

APOSTLE MATTHEW: Others say Elijah.

JUDAS: Or Jeremiah or one of the prophets.

APOSTLE JUDE: To be honest some people just don't know who you are.

JESUS: But who do **you** say that I am?

PETER: *(Said with reverence and stepping toward Jesus)* You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.

JESUS: Blessed are you Simon, son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father ... *(puts hand on Peter's shoulder)* And so I say to you, you are **Peter**, and upon this rock, I will build my church.

Curtains close...

Stage Crew change scenery move temple over to window side and prepare the last supper scenery.

Curtains remain closed.

SCENE II

NARRATOR 2: Thus was given to Peter the keys of the kingdom, the shepherding of the church on Earth ... *(with arms raised at side)* This church for which the gates of hell will not prevail!

NARRATOR 1: But even so, Peter has still much more to learn. His faith would be challenged more than he could have ever imagined. But Jesus was patient, and He knew that if Peter was to really be a Rock on which He would build His Church, he had to first hit rock bottom.

JESUS: *(Addressing the Apostles)* So now, let us begin our ascent into Jerusalem. There, I will be arrested and tried by the Sanhedrin, and sentenced to die.

THOMAS: What? This cannot be!

JESUS: I will be crucified, but do not panic or despair, for on the third day I will rise again.

(The Apostles are looking at one another, with deep questioning. They go to Peter, and one of them says)

JAMES THE LESSER: Peter, speak to Him!

PETER: Jesus, come with me!*(Peter pulls Jesus aside.)* Master, why do You talk like this? You are frightening them! This cannot be! If God is Your Father as I just professed, God would never let his Son suffer, let alone die!

JESUS: Satan, get behind me! For you are thinking as man thinks, and not as God thinks. Oh Peter, do you really believe in Me? Then trust My Father!

PETER: Oh, Lord I believe! *(Peter then kneels)* Help my un-belief!

JESUS: Get up and go strengthen your brothers. Be a rock for them.

PETER: *(To the Apostles)* Take that look off your faces! This is not a time for fear, but for faith!

(Jesus and Apostles exit stage right to go right to the Last Supper table.)

SCENE III

Curtains Open...

SC: *(The last supper scene) (Menorah?)* Apostles are around table with Jesus in middle: Judas is two from his left)

JESUS: *(Looking right, then left, then at Judas)* I tell you solemnly, one of you is about to betray me – one of you eating with me.

(Everyone reacts shaking head, grumbling “No” in denial.)

APOSTLE JOHN: Is it I Lord?

APOSTLE JAMES THE GREATER: Not I Master.

APOSTLE PETER: Never me.

JESUS: It is one of you, one who is dipping into the same dish with me. Better for that man if he had never been born.

JUDAS: Would you excuse me? There is something I must attend to.

APOSTLE JOHN: Judas, where are you going? The Master needs us now

JUDAS: Oh Lord. I must go and...and..well you see, I must go and pay the merchant for this food. Please excuse me

JESUS: Judas..go and do what you have planned to do..

(Judas stares at Jesus for a moment and then runs out towards stage right passing right in front of the table looking back at all of them)

APOSTLES: *whispering to one another say:*

It's Judas!

I told you!

That scoundrel!

JESUS: Children....the hour is growing late and there is something very important I must share with you...

(Lights lowered, spotlight on Jesus)

JESUS: *(Jesus watches Judas leave and then takes some of the bread and breaks it into pieces)* Take and eat. This my body. *(Then taking a cup)* This is my blood. The blood of the covenant which is to be poured out for many.

(Angels enter from stage right)

SINGERS: *Angels?* *(Music begins: IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME)*

(During song, Jesus raises bread, Apostles raise bread and eat it. Jesus raises cup and passes it to all Apostles who drink it. Jesus looks lovingly at all)

JESUS: You will all loose faith.

PETER: Even if all loose faith --- I will not.

JESUS: I tell you solemnly this day – this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will have disowned me three times.

APOSTLES: Master, we will never disown you.

APOSTLE BARTHOLOMEW: I'll be loyal to the end.

APOSTLE SIMON: You can count on me Lord.

JESUS: Come let us recline. (*Apostles move and sit on stage steps at the same time Jesus picks up the water jug ,bowl and rag and goes to the platform*)

Curtains close...after all actors have reached stage steps.

SC: Remove last supper scene and bring out Garden Scene.

(Music begins as Jesus washes the feet of the Apostles, starting from stage left. Peter moves stage right to bottom step. Peter shakes his head, looking very puzzled. Jesus picks up bowl, jug and rag. He goes from one Apostle to the next washing their feet.)

PETER: Lord, you are going to wash my feet?

JESUS: You may not realize now what I am doing, but later you shall understand.

PETER: You shall never wash my feet!

JESUS: Peter, if I do not wash you, you will not have a share in my heritage.

PETER: Lord, then not only my feet, but my hands and head as well. (*Peter sits and removes sandals*).

JESUS: (*Walking back and forth – hand on chest and outward*). Do you understand what I just did for you? You address me as teacher and Lord – and fittingly enough, for that is what I am. But if I washed your feet – I who am teacher and Lord – then you must wash each other’s feet. What I just did was to give you an example as I have done, so you must do! Let us go to the garden, for my hour has come.

Curtain opens immediately after Jesus has said “let us go to the garden”.

(Garden background....an eerie atmosphere....sad and dark? Bring trees and stumps and rocks in to make the garden scene)

(Apostles are lying around)

JESUS: Sit here while I go off to pray. Peter, James and John, you come with me. Stay awake and pray with me.

(Jesus kneels at stump or rock and puts both hands up in prayer. Facing stage left, Peter, James and John kneel in back of him. Soft tape music begins.)

JESUS: *(As he speaks, Apostles begin to fall asleep).* My father, if it is possible, take this suffering away from me. But not my will, but yours be done.

(Jesus returns to his Apostles and finds them asleep. He awakens Peter, then turns and stands.)

JESUS: Peter, could you not stay awake and watch with me for just one hour? Stay awake and pray. Do not give into temptation. *(Jesus turns and kneels in prayer again.)*

SATAN: *(Encircling Jesus and speaking in a sarcastic demeaning way)* Do you really think they will keep you company? No, they will run. They will all run. Your mission is a failure Jesus. Why not admit it? Even God will abandon you. Save yourself from this cross. Tell the authorities you made a mistake. I told you before I rule this world!

JESUS: *(At first he puts his head down then slowly he rises with renewed strength and says with a bold command)* Be gone Satan! Prepare for the downfall of your kingdom! *(Satan covers his face in fear, bows low and slithers away. Jesus kneels again and an angel comforts him as he says)*

JESUS: Father, if this suffering cannot pass, I shall do it, for your will must be done. *(He puts his head down on stump or rock, pauses and returns to find disciples asleep again).*

JESUS: Wake up now. We must go. The person who is going to betray me is near.

(Apostles wake up).

APOSTLE PHILIP: *(loud and frightened)* Run! The soldiers! *(Apostles exit, except Peter)*

(Aisle Lights go on)

APOSTLE JAMES THE GREATER: I can not believe this is happening.

APOSTLE JOHN: What shall we do?

JAMES THE LESSER: Where can we go?

APOSTLE JAMES THE GREATER: Come to the upper room.

(Soldiers, Pharisee and Judas enter from stage right up the steps to the main stage.

Judas comes to left of Jesus with a group of soldiers. They surround Jesus. Pharisees and Peter are to the right of Jesus).

Stage Crew—30 pieces of silver for Pharisees and swords for soldiers)

JUDAS: There He is! *(Pretends to kiss Jesus)* Hail Master.

JESUS: Friend, have you come to betray me with a kiss?

SOLDIER I: Seize Him!

(Soldiers grab Jesus. Peter pushes forward waving a sword)

PETER: Leave it to me Master. I will save you.

(Peter strikes soldier with sword; Centurion goes down with wounded soldier.)

JESUS: Peter, put your sword away. If my Father wished, he would send armies of angels to defend me.

(Jesus turns to soldiers, looking upward. Peter and Pharisees are back.)

JESUS: You have come with swords and clubs to arrest me as if I were a robber. Yet, when I was teaching daily in the temple, you saw and stood close by and never laid a hand on me. But this is the hour, the time of darkness.

CENTURION: Tie up the prisoner.

SOLDIER II: But sir, Malachus is healed, there is no trace of his wound.

CENTURION: You heard me, away with him to Caiaphas. *(Soldiers secure him and then take him away).*

PHARISEE II: *(Moving toward center stage)* You've done well Judas. *(They hand him silver coins and start walking away)*

JUDAS: *(Trying to catch up)* Wait. I have done wrong to betray my Master.

PHARISEE I: What is that to us?

PHARISEE II: It is your affair.

JUDAS: But I never wanted it to come to this. See that they do no harm to him..He is a good man.

PHARISEE I: Judas , Judas Iscariot...you got your money...Now go spend it..Go on with your life!

JUDAS: Go on with my life? What life?

Judas looks at silver, throws the bag and exits stage left.

...Curtain closes

*SC: Pick up bag of silver. Remove garden scene., rocks, trees etc.
Set up Caiaphas court stage right: chair, platform, background, menorah, vase with scrolls.
Set up fire front center stage. Peter needs his cloak)*

SCENE IV

(On side are Caiaphas, CCI, CCII, Pharisees, Accuser (center stage), Peter and Woman by Fire on front center stage) Jesus is brought to Caiaphas by Centurion and 2 soldier, stand on left side of court)

WOMAN OF THE WELL: Those who had arrested Jesus led him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and elders were assembled. Here they try to obtain false testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death. Meanwhile, Peter follows from a distance ... but only as far as the high priest's courtyard. Here, cloaked in anonymity, Peter enters the yard and sits near a servant to warm himself by the fire ... and waits in fear.

(Peter comes out and lights fire and the woman by the fire comes out with him)

Curtains open....

(Spot light goes to stage right)

PHARISEE II: I heard you say that we must not pay taxes to Caesar. (*Caiaphas pauses while Jesus is silent.*)

CAIAPHAS: What does the prisoner answer?

(*Jesus remains silent*)
(*Spot light goes the stage center, woman by the fire*)

WOMAN BY THE FIRE: You were with the man Jesus!

PETER: I was not!

(*Spot light goes to stage right (court)*)

PHARISEE I: I was there when this man threw people out of the temple. He said he could destroy it and in three days build it up again.

ACCUSER I: He only associates with tax collectors and sinners!

(*Spot light goes to stage center, fire again*)

WOMAN BY THE FIRE: You are one of his followers. You talk like him!

PETER: I tell you, I don't know anything about this man.

(*Spot light goes to stage right, Caiaphas*)

CAIAPHAS: Once again, I ask you. **DO** you have anything to say? (*pause*)
Are you God's son?

(*Spot light goes to fire, stage center*)

WOMAN BY THE FIRE: I am sure you are one of his followers. I have seen you with him.

PETER: I tell you ... I don't know anything about this man!

(*Spot light goes to stage right*)

JESUS: You ask me if I am the Son of God. It is as you say.

CAIAPHAS: *(rises from his seat in outrage)* He has BLASPHEMED! *(He rips his robe in half)* What further need have we of witnesses? You have now heard the blasphemy. What is the verdict?

PHARISEE II: He must be put to death!

PHARISEE I: He must be put to death!

CAIAPHAS: Take him away.

Soldiers lead Jesus away.

Curtains Close.

(Woman takes the fire and exits. Peter stays.)

*(Cock crows ... Peter buries his face in shame ... lights out ...)
Peter sings....as Jesus Walks towards Pilate's court being taken by the Centurion, Pharisees, Accusers, Caiaphas and crowd is behind him, Peter and Jesus looking at each other. Jesus walks by and Peter is left singing by himself. Song: "**Lonely, Lonely Night**"*

(After the song...Peter leaves.)

SCENE V

(On the stage left stairs, Centurion, Pharisees, Accuser, Caiaphas with crowd behind him. Jesus and soldiers angled toward Pilate's chair, Pilate and Wife and servant waiting at right. Narrator enters)

WOMAN AT THE WELL: *(in front of curtain)* The land of Judea and its city of Jerusalem are occupied and governed by Rome. The Romans have authority over all these lands. The ruling council of the Sanhedrin did not recognize God made man, and see Jesus only as a man who made himself god and judged him as a blasphemer. The council declared Jesus guilty of blasphemy, a crime deserving of death. But they lost the right to put anyone to death ... so they hand him over to Pilate, the governor.

SC: *Pilate scene should be ready by now: red platform, chair, column/drape backdrop, basin and rag*

Curtains open...

(Narrator exists, trumpets for entrance of Pontius Pilate stage left)

CENTURION: *(after trumpet)* His majesty, Pontius Pilate, Governor of Judea.

(Pilate and wife enter. Pilate sits on chair and wife stays beside him)

PILATE: What charge do you have against him?

CAIAPHAS: He is a criminal, of course! *(walks off to main stage level)* Otherwise we would not have brought him to you.

PILATE: Take him and judge him according to your laws.

CAIAPHAS: We do not have the power to put anyone to death.

PILATE: Does he deserve death?

CAIAPHAS: He has roused the people by saying he is king.

PILATE: Bring the prisoner to me.

PILATE: *(to Jesus)* Are you a king? Are you the king of the Jews?

JESUS: My kingdom is not on earth. If it were, my servants would be fighting for me.

PILATE: Are you a king then?

JESUS: It is as you say. I am a king. I came into this world to proclaim the truth.

PILATE: Truth! What is truth? *(pause)* I find nothing wrong with this man. I will scourge him and that will be the end. Take him away!

(Jesus is led away, stage left, down stairs to back of gym to get ready for crucifixion)

PILATE'S WIFE- CLAUDIA: *(wait until Jesus is led away then on one knee looking at Pilate). Good husband, I beg you ... have nothing to do with this man. (Gets up and turns toward audience) I was tormented all night by a dream I had about him. There is something about this man. I do not know what it is. I do not know if it is good or bad, but I know one thing (pause) that you had better stay out of this affair!*

CAIAPHAS: If you let him go, you are no friend of Caesar.

PILATE: I can find no wrong with him. *(Motions for Centurion, who bends and listens while Pilate whispers).* You have a tradition of receiving back one prisoner at the feast of the Passover. Shall I release Jesus – or shall I release Barabbas?

ACCUSER: Barabbas – Not this one.

PILATE: But Barabbas is a robber and a murderer.

ALL: We want Barabbas. We want Barabbas.

PILATE: What shall I do with Jesus?

ALL: Crucify him! Crucify him!

PILATE: Shall I crucify **YOUR** king?

PHARISEE I: We have no king but Caesar.

(Pilate's wife picks up basin and rag behind her and brings it to Pilate. Pilate washes his hands and throws rag on floor.)

PILATE: I wash my hands of the blood of this innocent man.

PHARISEE II: Let his blood be on us and on all our children.

CENTURION: Lord governor, what are your orders?

PILATE: Release the criminal Barabbas.

CENTURION: But Pilate are you sure? He is an enemy of the state.

PILATE: Centurion, who is the real enemy?

CENTURION: And what of the man Jesus?

PILATE: Lead him to the praetorian where He is to be scourged and there be crucified.

NARRATOR 1: It happened just as Jesus said, they led away the Good Shepherd who with the greatest of all love, would lay down his life for his sheep.

... Curtains close.

SC: Set up Calvary scene. The Tomb and base of Cross. Nails....Sponge on stick, INRI sign and hand holders. Tomb is set towards the back on stage right corner with stone/door opened. Don't forget Jesus white burial shroud!

(Aisle Lighting)

MUSIC INTERLUDE

SCENE VI

*(Starting from back, **Spotlight** on Jesus with soldiers on either side. Centurion in front of him. Crowd behind Jesus, then Pharisees and Accuser side by side. Caiaphas behind him. Violin playing, Peter and Narrators speak while Jesus carries his cross)*

*(Peter and Narrators **SPEAKING VERY SLOWLY**, on stage)*

PETER: Jesus was led out of Pilate's house. He had a large cross placed upon His shoulders. People mocked and laughed at Him.

SARAH: You claim you are the son of God!

ABIGAIL: Yes, look at you now!

PETER: He began His walk on the road to Calvary. *(Start to walk, pause for cue)* His strength failed Him and Jesus fell for the first time. *(pause, cue to fall).*

NARRATOR 2: Jesus then meets His mother Mary, whose heart is aching and says:

MARY (Mother of Jesus): Oh, my Son! I feel your pain.

JESUS: “I will make all things new.”

NARRATOR 2: *(stop, wait for walk)* With Jesus’ strength beginning to fail, the soldiers force a passer-by from the town of Cyrene, named Simon, to help Jesus carry His cross. With hesitation, Simon did as he was told.

CENTURION: You! help him.

NARRATOR 1: A woman *(stop ... cue Veronica)* in the crowd named Veronica pushed her way through the crowd to wipe His face. She was filled with compassion for Jesus. For her kindness, Jesus left a picture of His face on her veil. *(Hold up veil)*

Curtains open slowly...

PETER: Jesus falls for the second time *(pause)*

RUTH: Oh, Jesus!

ELISHABETH: This is so unfair!

MATTHIAS: This man has done nothing wrong. Why do you treat him this way?

CENTURION: If you don’t move on you will be next.

MATTHIAS: Oh, Jesus!

(Mary cries out)

NARRATOR 1: Jesus then meets the women in the crowd and is moved by their pity for Him, but instead, Jesus consoles the women by telling them;

JESUS: Weep not for me but for yourselves and for your children.

SOLDIER: Move on! *(To the women)*

PETER: Jesus falls for the third time, and is barely able to go on. Simon, moved with pity for Jesus helps him up, and they continue on to Golgotha.

SCENE VII

NARRATOR 1: All of this was in fulfillment of the prophet Isaiah: “He was spurned and avoided by men, a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity. One of those from whom men hide their faces, spurned, and we held him in no esteem. Yet it was for our infirmities that he bore our sufferings that he endured. He was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins; upon Him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed.”

PETER: Once upon the hill, the soldiers hurriedly pulled His garments off (*pause*). They nailed Him like an animal to the cross. (*pause*) And, sad to say, all of us, His closest friends, except for John

(Mary, John and Mary Magdalene kneel at the feet of Jesus – left center. Crowd mourning and crying, some even cry a shrilling “Jesus!”)

PETER (continues) ... abandoned Him in His hour of need. Upon the cross was written the words, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews’.

ABIGAIL: (*stands*) Where are your miraculous powers now? (*sarcastically*)

(Centurion puts “INRI” sign on the cross..)

CAIAPHAS: (*to Centurion in a stern voice and pointing at the sign*) I want you to take that sign down! It says, “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.” This is an insult to our people.

CENTURION: The words on the sign were written by Pilate himself. If you find the Roman Governor to be wrong, you take up the matter personally with him.

CAIAPHAS: He’s no king. He’s an imposter. All hail King of the Jews!
(mockingly bows)

ACCUSER: (*angrily*) You were going to tear down the temple and build it back up in three days. Save yourself if you are God's Son! Come down from that cross.

JESUS: Father, forgive them, they don't know what they are doing – (*pauses and looks around*) (*looking at Mary, says lovingly ...*) Mother behold your Son, Son take care of your Mother! (*Mary moves towards Jesus but soldier hold her back*)

SOLDIER: Get back!

CENTURION: Let her go. (*Mary moves next to Jesus*)

(*House lights off ... follow spot on*)

PETER: At noon, the whole country side was covered with darkness (*lights out everywhere, except spotlight on Jesus*) which lasted three hours. At 3 o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud shout.

JESUS: Elai, Elai, lema sabachthani! (*loud with head up looking toward heaven – counting 1 ... 2 ... 3 ...*)

JARIUS WIFE: Listen (*slight hesitation to listen*), he's calling for Elijah!

JESUS: I thirst...I thirst.
(*soldier puts a sponge on a stick and holds it up to Jesus' mouth*)

JESUS: (*gives a loud sigh*) "It is finished – (*bows his head and dies*)

(*Lightning strikes, thunder, rain*)

(*Shortly after lightning strikes and thunder sounds*)

SATAN: I thought for sure you would give up and admit that your Father abandoned you. I could have saved you from this Jesus....if you just had worshipped me instead of HIM. But you love these people....even though they crucified you. And with that kind of love released into this world...my kingdom is DOOMED! It seems strange I should be so happy....but I am afraid. I am afraid....YOU won JESUS! It's over.....its over!

SOLDIER II: This man was truly the Son of God.

(Soldiers come out from stage right)

Angels singing: (*“Were You There?”*) 

(Lights out)

(crowd exits slowly)

Crowd exists ,but Mary, John, Mary Magdalene and Caiaphas remain)

SC: *Set up pilate’s court*

(Pilate is seated stage left, with a Centurion to his left.)

SCENE VIII

PILATE: And what can I do for you?

JOSEPH: *(Enters up steps, left of Pilate)* Your Excellency, I came to ask permission from you to take the body of Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified today and to bury him according to our Jewish customs.

PILATE: You mean he is dead already? I thought for sure that a man who claimed to be the Jewish Messiah would take more time to die than this. Centurion, is this true?

CENTURION: Yes, sir. I was there. He died at the ninth hour.

PILATE: Are you, too, one of his *(pause)* so-called Apostles?

JOSEPH of Arimathea: Sir, I am a friend. But his mother, she is a poor widow. She has no place to bury her son. As for his friends ... well, they have all, except one, abandoned him. I have a tomb and I would like to relieve his mother of this terrible burden.

COMPANION OF JOSEPH: Your majesty, you have nothing to fear about Jesus. He is dead. I saw him breathe his last breath. Please for the sake of his mother, let us give him proper burial.

(Pilate pauses... He thinks to himself during a moment of silence, then he rises from his throne and says:)

PILATE: Very well. You may have the body. Perhaps all the rest of Jerusalem can get back to normal. Yes, take his body and all of his crazy followers with it.

CENTURION: Sir, you need not worry, only his mother and a few other brave souls were at the cross. They all abandoned him.

*(Joseph hands Pilate a **scroll**, which Pilate signs. Joseph follows Centurion to cross)*

PILATE: And what is your business here? Are you still not satisfied even with his death?

PHARISEE I: Lord Governor, we are concerned. The tomb that this man Joseph has offered must be properly sealed.

PHARISEE II: You see, this Jesus prophesied that three days after his execution he would rise from the dead.

ACCUSER: We fear his followers will come, steal his body and then claim he has risen. That would cause all of us even greater problems.

PILATE: I agree. I will place a large stone over the entrance of the tomb and I will post 24 hour guard for three days. Now are you satisfied?

PHARISEE I: Lord Governor we are. *(Lights go down on the scene)*

CENTURION: *(Approaching the cross and accompanied by Joseph of Arimathea and his companion he says)* Pilate has given permission for this man to take his body. Remove it from the cross.

*Mary sings "CARRY HIM GENTLY". Mary sings behind body. Two kneeling Centurions are on both sides of her. Mary Magdalene has her hand on Mary's shoulder. John is at Jesus' head. Mary puts Jesus' hands on His stomach. She strokes His head. Mary covers Jesus' body with a **white shroud**. Jesus' body is carried away into the tomb. Soldiers close tomb. and stay to guard the tomb.*

(Lights go out)

Or Dim lights and then raise them for children's scene..

SC: Tomb and cross stay for children's scene.

(children scene with music)

(children exit stage right)

...Curtain closes.

(SC: Now go ahead and remove cross and the base but leave tomb opened and Gabriel should be inside of the tomb.)

Curtain opens...

SCENE IX

Soldiers are on the floor sleeping. (Centurion is standing) (Women enter from stage left)

MARY MAGDALENE: Who will roll back the stone for us?

MARY (Mother of Jesus): *(Calling...with her arms around Mary Magdalene):* Do not worry my child, God will provide.

CENTURION: Wait! Where are you going?

(Soldiers jump up)

MARY MAGDALENE: *(Walking toward Centurión)* We came to anoint the body. This is His mother.

CENTURION: Very well.

SOLDIER I: Who rolled back the stone?

SOLDIER II: I don't understand. We were here at our post all night.

RUTH AND NAOMI: (*Peering into the tomb*) The body (*pause*) – it's gone!!

GABRIEL: (*Coming from within the tomb. Her arms are lifted: Centurions are on their knees in fear; Mary Magdalene has her arm around Mary*) Why look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here. He has risen. Remember what He told you when he was still in Galilee ... that the Son of Man has to be handed over into the power of sinful men and be crucified, and then (*angel puts hands up together*) rise on the third day?

MARY MAGDALENE: Mary could it be true?

MARY (Mother of Jesus): He said he would rise.

RUTH AND NAOMI: Let us go and tell the others. Hurry, I don't know if they will believe us! (*Exit*)

CENTURION: Soldiers, come here. (*soldiers walk closer*) Were you here at the midnight hour? Did you ever leave your post even for a minute?

SOLDIER I: No, Sir. We never left. We followed your orders.

SOLDIER II: We were here the entire night.

CENTURION: I can't understand it. His followers were in hiding. The women could not do it. Who or what (*as he looks up*) could have moved that stone? (*Centurion keeps looking up*)

Curtain closes.

SC: Remove tomb and set up the upper room and door.

SCENE X

(This scene takes place in front of the closed curtains)

(Mary Magdalene, VBM, Martha, and Mary sister of Martha walk down the ramp stage right. As the lights fall on them the scene begins with:)

MARY MAGDALEN: Oh Mary, I can not wait to see the faces of Jesus' Apostles when we tell them that he is risen.

MARTHA: I doubt that they will believe us. Especially when we tell them that an angel appeared to us. In fact, when I asked Peter and John to come with me to anoint Jesus' body they told me that I was crazy.

MARY SISTER OF MARTHA: They thought that it was ridiculous to put ourselves in danger of being accused of being His followers.

MARY (Mother of Jesus): Oh give them time. Faith does not always come easy for people.

(Thomas is drawing water from the well. His head is covered out of fear of being recognized)

MARTHA: Look that is Thomas over there.

MARY SISTER OF MARTHA: Let's go and tell him the good news.

MARY MAGDALENE: Thomas, why aren't you with the others in the upper room?

THOMAS: Shhhh! Be quiet. Watch out, the High Priest has spies. We hear he wants to catch and imprison Jesus' followers. I was the only one brave enough to leave the upper room to go and get water and supplies for the rest of them.

MARY (Mother of Jesus): Thomas, there is no need to be afraid or locked up anymore. We are on our way to the upper room to announce that my Son is risen from the dead.

THOMAS: Mary, I respect you, you are His mother, but unless I see the nail marks, unless I put my hands into His side, the side where He was pierced. I'm sorry, I just can not believe.

MARY (Mother of Jesus): Thomas, come with us and you will see.

THOMAS: No, not now. You go on along. Perhaps I will join you later. It's too dangerous.

MARY (Mother of Jesus): Very well.

(All the women leave Thomas behind and proceed to the upper room)

Lights out and when ready curtain opens on scene IX (upper room)

SCENE XI

Curtain opens...

(Apostles are in the upper room. They are nervous. Peter is pacing and looking anxious. The mood is somber. They worry the Romans will kill them, too)

RUTH, NAOMI, AND MARY MAGDALENE: *(knock on door)*

APOSTLE PHILLIP: *(jumps from sitting)* Who could that be?

APOSTLE BART: Be careful, it could be the Romans!

(Simon approaches the door and slides the window to see who it is)

APOSTLE SIMON: It's Mary Magdalene and the women

APOSTLE JAMES THE LESSER: Be careful it could be trap!

APOSTLE JAMES THE GREATER: *(the one at the door)* What should we do?

PETER: Let them enter.

WOMEN AND MARY: *(come through door excitedly)* We have wonderful news!
(Ruth and Naomi are smiling and giggling showing great joy)

APOSTLE ANDREW: What is it?

NAOMI: We went to the tomb and an angel appeared!

MARY MAGDALENE: He told us that Jesus has risen!

(Big reaction)(Peter ashamed, walks away) (Philip leads the women to the door)

APOSTLE PHILIP: Women, you are tired- you must be dreaming-go home and get some sleep.

PETER: Wait!! Don't let them go!!! *(turns around dramatically)*

APOSTLE ANDREW: Peter, you BELIEVE them??? *(almost outraged)*

PETER: I do! *(humbly)*

APOSTLE MATHIAS: But, you were the one that denied Him, three times.

PETER: Yes, I denied Him and I don't know how he could ever forgive me or any of us, except John, for running away that night, the night he needed us to be with Him. But I believe because He said He would arise.

(Peter kneels down and weeps)

(BVM rushes to his side and says:)

MARY (Mother of Jesus): Oh, Peter you know my Son, you all know Him. He will always take you back.

JESUS APPEARS (comes through door with banner)

JESUS: Peace be with you

ALL: Rabbi!!!! Master!!!! Teacher!!!! *(some fall to their knees)*

*(Apostles and women stay way back and freeze. Jesus – standing)
(Spotlight on Jesus)*

(Spotlight on both Jesus and Thomas)

(Thomas appears at the door. He is awestruck at what he sees and stares at Jesus.)

JESUS: Thomas, come here put your fingers in my nail marks and your hand in my side. Stop doubting and believe.

(Thomas walks over to Jesus, he touches the nail marks and falls to his knees with arms outstretched and says;)

THOMAS: My Lord, and my God.

(Jesus and Thomas freeze)

(Mary Magdalene walks to center stage and shouts with joy:)

MARY MAGDALENE: He is alive!!!

Curtains close.

(Actors assemble on stage Jesus stays behind the door)

Curtains open....

GABRIEL and ALL: Sing “*Prepare Ye*”

CURTAIN CALL