Death and Resurrection of Jesus

Bible text from the New International Readers Version. (NiRV)

Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

Matthew 21:1-11

As they all approached Jerusalem, they came to Bethphage. It was on the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent out two disciples. He said to them, "Go to the village ahead of you. As soon as you get there, you will find a donkey tied up. Her colt will be with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them. The owner will send them right away."

This took place so that what was spoken through the prophet would come true. It says,

"Say to the city of Zion,
'See, your king comes to you.
He is gentle and riding on a donkey.
He is riding on a donkey's colt.' " (Zechariah 9:9)

The disciples went and did what Jesus told them to do. They brought the donkey and the colt. They placed their coats on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their coats on the road. Others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Some of the people went ahead of him, and some followed. They all shouted,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!"
"Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Psalm 118:26)
"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up. The people asked, "Who is this?"

The crowds answered, "This is Jesus. He is the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

The Lord's Supper

Matthew 26:17-30

It was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The disciples came to Jesus. They asked, “Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover meal?”

He replied, “Go into the city to a certain man. Tell him, ‘The Teacher says, “My time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover at your house with my disciples.” ’ ” So the disciples did what Jesus had told them to do. They prepared the Passover meal.

When evening came, Jesus was at the table with his 12 disciples. While they were eating, he said, “What I’m about to tell you is true. One of you will hand me over to my enemies.”

The disciples became very sad. One after the other, they began to say to him, “Surely you don’t mean me, Lord, do you?”

Jesus replied, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will hand me over. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But how terrible it will be for the one who hands over the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”

Judas was the one who was going to hand him over. He said, “Surely you don’t mean me, Teacher, do you?”

Jesus answered, “You have said so.”

While they were eating, Jesus took bread. He gave thanks and broke it. He handed it to his disciples and said, “Take this and eat it. This is my body.”

Then he took a cup. He gave thanks and handed it to them. He said, “All of you drink from it. This is my blood of the covenant. It is poured out to forgive the sins of many people. Here is what I tell you. From now on, I won’t drink wine with you again until the day I drink it with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

Matthew 26:36-46

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane. He said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." [3]He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him. He began to be sad and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is very sad. I feel close to death. Stay here. Keep watch with me."

He went a little farther. Then he fell with his face to the ground. He prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, take this cup of suffering away from me. But let what you want be done, not what I want."

Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. "Watch and pray. Then you won't fall into sin when you are tempted. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

Jesus went away a second time. He prayed, "My Father, is it possible for this cup to be taken away? But if I must drink it, may what you want be done."

Then he came back. Again he found them sleeping. They couldn't keep their eyes open. [44] So he left them and went away once more. For the third time he prayed the same thing.

Then he returned to the disciples. He said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look! The hour has come. The Son of Man is about to be handed over to sinners. Get up! Let us go! Here comes the one who is handing me over to them!"

Jesus Is Arrested

Matthew 26:47-50

While Jesus was still speaking, Judas arrived. He was one of the 12 disciples. A large crowd was with him. They were carrying swords and clubs. The chief priests and the elders of the people had sent them. Judas, who was going to hand Jesus over, had arranged a signal with them. "The one I kiss is the man," he said. "Arrest him." So Judas went to Jesus at once. He said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" And he kissed him.

Jesus replied, "Friend, do what you came to do."

Then the men stepped forward. They grabbed Jesus and arrested him.

Jesus Is Taken to the Sanhedrin

Matthew 26:57-67

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas, the high priest. The teachers of the law and the elders had come together there. Not too far away, Peter followed Jesus. He went right up to the courtyard of the high priest. He entered and sat down with the guards to see what would happen.

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for something to use against Jesus. They wanted to put him to death. But they did not find any proof, even though many false witnesses came forward.

Finally, two other witnesses came forward. They said, "This fellow claimed, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God. I can build it again in three days.' "

Then the high priest stood up. He asked Jesus, "Aren't you going to answer? What are these charges that these men are bringing against you?" But Jesus remained silent.

The high priest said to him, "I am commanding you in the name of the living God. May he judge you if you don't tell the truth. Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God."

“You have said so,” Jesus replied. “But here is what I say to all of you. From now on, you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One. You will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Then the high priest tore his clothes. He said, “He has spoken a very evil thing against God! Why do we need any more witnesses? You have heard him say this evil thing. What do you think?”

“He must die!” they answered.

Then they spit in his face. They hit him with their fists. Others slapped him.

The Death of Jesus
Matthew 27:27-65

The Soldiers Make Fun of Jesus

The governor's soldiers took Jesus into the palace, which was called the Praetorium. All the rest of the soldiers gathered around him. They took off his clothes and put a purple robe on him. Then they twisted thorns together to make a crown. They placed it on his head. They put a stick in his right hand. Then they fell on their knees in front of him and made fun of him. "We honor you, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him. They hit him on the head with the stick again and again. After they had made fun of him, they took off the robe. They put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him away to nail him to a cross.

Jesus Is Nailed to a Cross

On their way out of the city, they met a man from Cyrene. His name was Simon. They forced him to carry the cross. They came to a place called Golgotha. The word Golgotha means the Place of the Skull. There they mixed wine with bitter spices and gave it to Jesus to drink. After tasting it, he refused to drink it. When they had nailed him to the cross, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. **36** They sat down and kept watch over him there. Above his head they placed the written charge against him. It read,

THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Two rebels against Rome were crucified with him. One was on his right and one was on his left. Those who passed by shouted at Jesus and made fun of him. They shook their heads and said, "So you are going to destroy the temple and build it again in three days? Then save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!" In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders made fun of him. "He saved others," they said. "But he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross! Then we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him. He's the one who said, 'I am the Son of God.' " In the same way the rebels who were being crucified with Jesus also made fun of him.

Jesus Dies

From noon until three o'clock, the whole land was covered with darkness. About three o'clock, Jesus cried out in a loud voice. He said, "*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*" This means "My God, my God, why have you deserted me?" (Psalm 22:1)

Some of those standing there heard Jesus cry out. They said, "He's calling for Elijah."

Right away one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar and put it on a stick. He offered it to Jesus to drink. The rest said, “Leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him.”

After Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, he died.

At that moment the temple curtain was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook. The rocks split. Tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs. After Jesus was raised from the dead, they went into the holy city. There they appeared to many people.

The Roman commander and those guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened. They were terrified. They exclaimed, “He was surely the Son of God!”

Not very far away, many women were watching. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to take care of his needs. Mary Magdalene was among them. Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, was also there. So was the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

Jesus Is Buried

As evening approached, a rich man came from the town of Arimathea. His name was Joseph. He had become a follower of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. Pilate ordered that it be given to him. Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. He placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb. Then he went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there across from the tomb.

The Guards at the Tomb

The next day was the day after Preparation Day. The chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. “Sir,” they said, “we remember something that liar said while he was still alive. He claimed, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ So give the order to make the tomb secure until the third day. If you don’t, his disciples might come and steal the body. Then they will tell the people that Jesus has been raised from the dead. This last lie will be worse than the first.”

“Take some guards with you,” Pilate answered. “Go. Make the tomb as secure as you can.”

Jesus Rises From the Dead

Matthew 28:1-10

The Sabbath day was now over. It was dawn on the first day of the week. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

There was a powerful earthquake. An angel of the Lord came down from heaven. The angel went to the tomb. He rolled back the stone and sat on it. His body shone like lightning. His clothes were as white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, "Don't be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here! He has risen, just as he said he would! Come and see the place where he was lying. Go quickly! Tell his disciples, 'He has risen from the dead. He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

So the women hurried away from the tomb. They were afraid, but they were filled with joy. They ran to tell the disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings!" he said. They came to him, took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. There they will see me."