

## **Cosmic Confrontation in the Crucifixion**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

It has been a crazy day. You can see a wild scene behind me as the Romans have crucified three criminals. The one in the middle must be the worst because they beat him unmercifully. There are a lot of people in Jerusalem because of the Passover celebration. It seems like a good portion of them have come by Calvary. They were yelling at Jesus and mocking him. You might not be able to read the sign over his head; but it says, king of the Jews. This makes no sense.

Apparently, this Jesus has been causing quite the stir for many months now. Crowds were following him all around. He was doing signs and wonders, some said by Beelzebub and others by God. I found out in my investigation and took a lot of notes.

### **John 18:12–19:30 (NIV84) Jesus Arrested**

*Jesus was betrayed by one of his disciples, Judas, with a kiss in the Garden of Gethsemane.*

<sup>12</sup> Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him <sup>13</sup> and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. <sup>14</sup> Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it would be good if one man died for the people.

#### *Peter's First Denial*

<sup>15</sup> Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, <sup>16</sup> but Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the girl on duty there and brought Peter in.

<sup>17</sup> "You are not one of his disciples, are you?" the girl at the door asked Peter.

He replied, "I am not."

<sup>18</sup> It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.

#### *The High Priest Questions Jesus*

<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

<sup>20</sup> "I have spoken openly to the world," Jesus replied. "I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. <sup>21</sup> Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said."

<sup>22</sup> When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby struck him in the face. "Is this the way you answer the high priest?" he demanded.

<sup>23</sup> "If I said something wrong," Jesus replied, "testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?" <sup>24</sup> Then Annas sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

#### *Peter's Second and Third Denials*

<sup>25</sup> As Simon Peter stood warming himself, he was asked, "You are not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it, saying, "I am not."

<sup>26</sup> One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the olive grove?" <sup>27</sup> Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.

#### *Jesus Before Pilate*

<sup>28</sup> Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover. <sup>29</sup> So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What charges are you bringing against this man?"

<sup>30</sup> "If he were not a criminal," they replied, "we would not have handed him over to you."

<sup>31</sup> Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law."

“But we have no right to execute anyone,” the Jews objected. <sup>32</sup> This happened so that the words Jesus had spoken indicating the kind of death he was going to die would be fulfilled.

<sup>33</sup> Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

<sup>34</sup> “Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?”

<sup>35</sup> “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?”

<sup>36</sup> Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

<sup>37</sup> “You are a king, then!” said Pilate.

Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

<sup>38</sup> “What is truth?” Pilate asked. With this he went out again to the Jews and said, “I find no basis for a charge against him. <sup>39</sup> But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release ‘the king of the Jews’?”

<sup>40</sup> They shouted back, “No, not him! Give us Barabbas!” Now Barabbas had taken part in a rebellion.

#### *Jesus Sentenced to be Crucified*

**19** Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. <sup>2</sup> The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe <sup>3</sup> and went up to him again and again, saying, “Hail, king of the Jews!” And they struck him in the face.

<sup>4</sup> Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, “Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him.” <sup>5</sup> When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, “Here is the man!”

<sup>6</sup> As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, “Crucify! Crucify!”

#### *The Crucifixion*

But Pilate answered, “You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him.”

<sup>7</sup> The Jews insisted, “We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God.”

<sup>8</sup> When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, <sup>9</sup> and he went back inside the palace. “Where do you come from?” he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> “Do you refuse to speak to me?” Pilate said. “Don’t you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?”

<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered, “You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.”

<sup>12</sup> From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting, “If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.”

<sup>13</sup> When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge’s seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). <sup>14</sup> It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour.

“Here is your king,” Pilate said to the Jews.

<sup>15</sup> But they shouted, “Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!”

“Shall I crucify your king?” Pilate asked.

“We have no king but Caesar,” the chief priests answered.

<sup>16</sup> Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

#### *The Crucifixion*

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. <sup>17</sup> Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). <sup>18</sup> Here they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

<sup>19</sup> Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.

<sup>20</sup> Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. <sup>21</sup> The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be King of the Jews."

<sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

<sup>23</sup> When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

<sup>24</sup> "Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it."

This happened that the Scripture might be fulfilled which said,

"They divided my garments among them

and cast lots for my clothing."

So this is what the soldiers did.

<sup>25</sup> Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," <sup>27</sup> and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

#### *The Death of Jesus*

<sup>28</sup> Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." <sup>29</sup> A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. <sup>30</sup> When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Luke 23:44–45 (ESV)

#### **The Death of Jesus**

<sup>44</sup> It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour,

<sup>45</sup> while the sun's light failed.

Matthew 27:51–56 (ESV)

<sup>51</sup> And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. <sup>52</sup> The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, <sup>53</sup> and coming out of the tombs <sup>54</sup> When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

<sup>55</sup> There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, <sup>56</sup> among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

#### **MESSAGE**

I have learned of many mysterious sayings of Jesus to his disciples.

John 14:30 (NIV84) Jesus said,

<sup>30</sup> I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, Somehow, Jesus knew that Judas was to betray him. He knew that Satan entered into Judas.

It was reported by Jesus' disciples that he went through a terrific turmoil in the Garden of Gethsemane the night of His arrest. During Jesus' prayers, he actually sweated blood. They remembered what Jesus told them after His temptation in the desert. Luke 4:13 (NIV84) When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

Luke 22:31 (NIV84) Jesus said,

<sup>31</sup> "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat.

Luke 22:53 (NIV84) Jesus said,

<sup>53</sup> Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns.”

Matthew 26:53 (NIV84) Jesus said,

<sup>53</sup> Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?

So, where were those angels when Jesus was dying? Jesus had been saying that the kingdom of God was at hand, that the kingdom of God was near. Surely being nailed to a cross between two criminals cannot be what Jesus had planned. What went wrong? Over and over again, Jesus told his disciples to keep his identity secret. What was he trying to hide?

I looked for His disciples to ask them these questions; but, they were nowhere to be found. It seems that they have gone into hiding. There are only the women around. Was Jesus a fraud? Was Jesus insane?

Clearly, something is going on of which we are unable to see. The sun stopped shining and darkness covered the whole land. An earthquake; the ground shook! The veil on the Holy of Holies was torn from top to bottom. Graves were opened and the dead raised.

The centurion said, “Truly this was the Son of God!” But, he must be wrong. How can the Son of God die?

Wait a second. There are further developments.

John 19:31–42 (NIV84)

<sup>31</sup> Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. <sup>32</sup> The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup> Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. <sup>35</sup> The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. <sup>36</sup> These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken,” <sup>37</sup> and, as another scripture says, “They will look on the one they have pierced.”

BLACK THE SCREEN

*The Burial of Jesus*

<sup>38</sup> Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate’s permission, he came and took the body away. <sup>39</sup> He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. <sup>40</sup> Taking Jesus’ body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. <sup>41</sup> At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. <sup>42</sup> Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

CONCLUSION:

I have to say, “I am just stunned.” It’s over. It is all over. There is nothing more to report.