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King of Kings

By Philip Yordan

And it is written that in the year 63 B. C...
the Roman legions,
like a scourge of locusts...
poured through the east...
laying waste the land of Canaan
and the Kingdom of Judea.
Rome's Imperial Armies,
a tumult in the hills...
struck Jerusalem's walls
in a three-month siege.
Breaching the gates, these legions laid
the dust of battle with a shower of blood.
Under the eye of General Pompey,
the Holy City fell...
her people strewn
like wheat in the harvest time of Rome.
While Pompey, triumphant...
dared take the last high place...
the still-living heart of the city...
the Temple.
Here, on this most sacred ground
in all Jerusalem...
now Pompey's horse took its way.
Where no pagan had ever set foot,
in the court of the priests...
most irreverent Pompey
stood himself down.
At last, here was the fruit of the harvest.
Here, it was said,
lay the treasure house of Jehovah...
great statues of gold,
as bright as the sun in this ancient land.
So Pompey,
burning for the touch of precious metals...
entered the sanctuary.
But entering, Pompey found
only a scroll of parchment...
a covenant with the one God,
handed down by Moses...
and venerated through the years.
Thus, for more than 50 years
after Pompey's invasion...
the history of Judea could be read
by the light of burning towns.

If gold was not the harvest...
there was a richness of people
to be gathered.
The battalions of Caesar Augustus
brought in the crop.
Like sheep from their own green fields...
the Jews went to the slaughter.
They went from the stone quarries
to build Rome's triumphal arches.
But Caesar could find no Jew
to press Rome's laws...
on this fallen land.
So Caesar named one Herod the Great,
an Arab of the Bedouin tribe...
as the new, false,
and maleficent King of the Jews.
But from the dust at Herod's feet,
rebellions of Jews rose up.
And Herod, in reply, planted evil seeds...
from which forests of Roman crosses
grew high on Jerusalem's hills.
And Herod the Great, passing pleased...
bade the forest multiply.
Yet, trapped in this darkness,
the Jews survived...

by one promise:

God would send the Messiah
to deliver them forth.
And it came to pass in those days...
that a decree went out
from Caesar Augustus...
that all the world should be taxed.
And all went to be taxed,
everyone into his own city.
So it was that Joseph, a carpenter...
went up from Galilee, unto Bethlehem...
to be taxed
with his espoused wife, Mary...
who was with Holy Child.
He found his own city
much corrupted by Rome.
Are you the innkeeper?
There is no room. No room,

not even for a fly to squeeze in.
Please, it's not for me. It's for my wife.
She's expecting a child.
You can find a place in the street!
She's expecting her child tonight.
Maybe I can give you a stall in the stable.
We will have to spend the night
in the stable.
Now, when this Holy Child was born
in Bethlehem of Judea...
three wise men came from the east.
These were Caspar,
Melchior and Balthazar...
of Mesopotamia, Persia and Ethiopia.
A King of Judea, born in a stable?
What kind of mockery is this?
Herod is the only King in Judea.
Who is this pretender?
Is there something in your scriptures...
about a new Messiah
being born at this time?
False messiahs are born
under every cloud, Your Majesty.
What shall we do, my son?
You are my king, Father.
It is for you to command.
Lucius...
order all newborn male children
in that town put to the sword.
That is my command, Lucius.
I am a Roman soldier.
I do not murder children.
You are in my service
by command of Caesar.
Dare you disobey Caesar?
Mary...
while I slept, I heard a voice saying:
'Take the child and his mother,
flee into Egypt...
'and stay there until you are told
to return.'
Then we will go.
And so, when Joseph and Mary
fled into Egypt...

Herod's men, seeking all newborn sons...
did slaughter the innocents of Bethlehem.
Not my son!
Help me!
I...
I cannot breathe.
Help me to my throne.
A king who cannot walk to his own throne
is no longer a king, Father.
Put me on my throne.
I will not die on my knees.
So Herod the Great,
crushed by his many murders...
self-crucified, fell dead.
And Herod Antipas
took murder for his crown.
And so it was that with Herod's death...
Joseph brought his family out of Egypt,
and he took them to Nazareth...
where the years passed, numbering 12.
- You are Joseph, the carpenter?
- Yes.
My camel litter needs repair.
I'll look at it.
- Peace be to you.
- And to you.
- Refresh yourself.
- Thank you.
- Your son?
- Yes.
And does he like being a carpenter?
Yes, he does.
There's a big world outside this garden,
do you want him to see it?
He will see it soon enough.
Let me take him with me. I'll pay you well.
I could use a lad like that
to help me with my caravan.
No. Someday he will leave me...
but someone else will call him.
And who will that be?
My son will know him when he comes.
I can mend it by tomorrow.
Good.

Have no fear.

We're simply checking the census
against the tax rolls.

Now, you are...

Joseph.

- And you live here with your wife, Mary.

- That is so.

Who's this boy?

My son, Jesus.

I have no record of his birth.

When was he born?

Twelve years ago.

- Where?

- In Bethlehem.

Bethlehem.

Count those in the next house.

See that the boy is registered
before the year is out.

Thus, Joseph's family
were once more forgotten.

Twenty years passed.

And Pontius Pilate,
new governor of Judea...

brought fresh armies south and east.

But in the hills,
10,000 rebel Jews lay hidden.

Their leader, Barabbas,
wanted as criminal and killer...

now baited his traps
for the Roman wolves.

There's too many of them, Barabbas.

We will divide them.

- There's a water sign on the hill.

- Make sure it's safe.

There's fresh water ahead, sir.

- Shall I give the men a rest?

- Not too long.

Take one column to the waterhole.

Column one, follow me.

Columns, rest!

Give me some wine.

How much farther is Jerusalem?

Another day's journey.

You should drink water, my husband.

Wine only increases the thirst.
I enjoy it.
Judea.
A fine wedding present
your father gave me.
My dear Pontius...
it is said whoever can govern Jerusalem
can govern anywhere, even Rome.
Do you think Tiberius really has me
in mind as his successor in Rome?
I wish I knew my father's mind...
as well as I know my husband's ambition.
And Herod Antipas
rode out to meet Pontius Pilate...
and show him the way to Jerusalem.
Another troublemaker. Who is this one?
This one is called John the Baptist.
He preaches to the people to repent
before the coming of the Messiah.
I baptize you with water.
But one mightier than I
shall come after me.
And he shall baptize you
with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
One more messiah on the way.
Will these Jews never tire
of inventing deliverers?
I have heard that name, John the Baptist.
I hear he speaks evil things of me
wherever he goes.
His heart should be ripped from his body.
Your daughter, Herodias,
grows more like her mother day by day.
Do I not please you?
My step-daughter
pleases me very much, Salome.
Lucius, keep your eye on this man.
One day you'll have to arrest him.
- On what grounds?
- On my orders.
I'm bound only to take orders from
the Roman governor when he arrives.
Tell me, Lucius,
what manner of man is Pontius Pilate?

How should I treat him?
What is his weakness?
The same as any man: Vanity.
Call the others to return!
Legions, all stand!
Barabbas!
Barabbas!
Who are these men? Bandits?
- They call themselves patriots.
- A man named Barabbas leads them.
Have you captured him?
This land is full
of caves and hidden valleys.
It'd take half the legions of Rome
to ferret them out.
I want him in chains
before the end of the year.
Putting him in chains would be easy...
but putting our hands on him...
that's what's difficult!
I baptize you with water.
But one mightier than I shall come.
And he shall baptize you
with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
Are you Elijah?
No, I am not.
Are you the Messiah?
No, I am not!
I am the voice of one
crying in the wilderness.
The Messiah is one
who will come after me.
You are welcome.
Peace be on this house.
What would you have of me?
I seek your son.
My son has gone into the desert.
Why did he come to the river?
For you to baptize him.
He is without sin.
How could I baptize him?
I preach in the wilderness...
but the Word must be brought
to Jerusalem.

Yet I know I am not the one to deliver it.
Only he can.
When his time comes...
he will be there.
You say that with sadness.
And joy!
And Jesus, baptized...
returned from Jordan,
and went into the wilderness.
And with the baptism,
the Holy Spirit came upon him...
and a voice said to Jesus:
"Thou art my beloved Son,
in thee I am well pleased. "
And Jesus knew the wilderness...
its day of heat...
its night of cold and solitude.
And stayed himself there
to commune with God...
and strengthen himself
for the times to come.
And ate nothing and hungered.
And brought his soul forth in the light...
to be seen of himself and known.
And was 40 days tempted of the devil.
Behold! I am here!
Come! I command you!
Come! Be tried and found wanting!
If you are the Son of God, command
these stones that they be turned to bread.
Man does not live by bread alone...
but by every word of God.
Behold!
I show you all the kingdoms of the world,
in a moment of time.
All this will I give you,
and the glory of them.
If you will worship me, all shall be yours.
Lo! Come to this high place.
If you are the Son of God,
cast yourself down from here.
For will not His angels save you
from falling and prevent your death?
Come to the high place.

Be gone!
I worship the Lord my God...
and only to Him do I do service.
Come!
Come, if you will...
but I shall not call upon
the Lord my God to stop you.
You shall not force me to put
the Lord my God to the proof.
And when the devil had ended
all his temptations, he departed away.
And Jesus came out of the wilderness,
and was seen by men.
There is your new rabbi.
He is the Lamb of God.
And Jesus called those of his choice.
And two of the chosen
were John and Andrew...
and they followed where he led.
And Jesus took himself down
by the Sea of Galilee.
And there did name his third apostle,
and summon him forth on land.
Simon! You have been chosen!
You are Simon.
You shall be called Peter, the rock...
upon which I will build.
What will you have me do, Rabbi?
I am just a fisherman.
Come with me...
and I will make you a fisher of men.
Attention.
I have just made a tour of the city.
I found no statues, no banners...
no emblems of Caesar anywhere.
Where are they?
The Jews have only one god.
Their law forbids
the presence of any image.
Where are the chests
I brought from Rome?
Open them.
A good likeness of Tiberius, is it not?
Surely they dare not object

to the Emperor's image.
These people can.
Their law is their religion.
Place them on the pillars of their Temple.
Behold! The sign of the pagan!
As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah...
so shall He send hosts
to destroy the idol-worshipers.
The day is coming when the sword
shall descend upon her legions.
Her mighty kings and princes
shall grow feeble.
Her stolen treasures made worthless.
Her cities shall crumble into dust.
We shall raise our voice...
and be heard.
Take down the plaques!
When He comes,
He will clear the threshing floor...
and gather the grain into His barns.
But the chaff...
He will burn with unquenchable fire.
The shepherds
who lead their flocks astray...
shall be cast out.
The high shall fall.
Make him stop.
And the fallen shall rise.
Draw the curtains.
The cry of the wicked shall fall upon...
It's a very strange voice. Who is that man?
Just another prophet.
An agitator.
Must he agitate beneath your
palace window? Send him away.
The harangue is directed against you...
for mounting graven images
on our Temple walls.
- The incidents in Caesarea were bad.
- The plaques stay.
Do something about this man.
He is harmless.
He gives the people
the type of entertainment they want.

It is not wise to molest him.
My husband is afraid of that madman.
He thinks he's a holy man.
A holy man who speaks words of treason.
Caiaphas! You are the High Priest
in that man's House of God.
Do you not punish such conduct?
Punishment does not dampen their ardor,
rather it increases their wrath.
We have found it wiser to ignore
the ravings of these false prophets...
than to persecute them.
In my opinion, this man seeks martyrdom.
I will put a stop to his voice tomorrow.
Tomorrow! You've been saying that
ever since he came from Jerusalem.
I have given my word.
The word of a king or a puppet?
And strip the clothes of the slaves,
and make them go naked.
Men groan...
and the souls of the oppressed...
Go away, you vile man!
Daughter of adultery...
there is but one that can save you.
Go seek Him out.
Kneel at His feet and ask forgiveness
for the sins of your mother.
That man is no prophet.
He wears the rags of a beggar.
- It is best to ignore him.
- Ignore him?
There is only one way
to deal with a beggar.
You! You, there! Speaker!
Step forward!
You have your alms. Now, be gone!
Bring the beggar in.
When Pompey's legions invaded our land,
they slew all the priests in the Temples.
Since then, we have received
our priesthood appointments from Rome.
The people have little love
for any man appointed by your emperor.

At night the thief goes out...
in darkness he digs under the house...
Stop! Hold your peace.
- Come with me.
- Take me...
but you cannot stop him
who comes after me.
We will worry about that when it happens.
Come, you foolish man.
Tell me, what is your occupation?
I do the bidding of the Lord, my God.
Judging from your appearance...
your God seems to be
a rather unprofitable master to serve.
I do not seek my reward
in the world you live in.
Nevertheless, you will find one here.
Yes, we do live in a very wicked world.
You frighten me, you angry man.
Salome, come back!
This beast amuses me.
Make him dance...
on a bed of hot coals.
It were better to cut
his vicious tongue from its roots.
Woman...
is not your cup of abominations
full enough?
You dare to say that to my face?
Get down on your knees
and beg my forgiveness!
You, woman?
Who has given herself
to the captains of Assyria?
To the young men of Egypt?
Who has deserted her first husband's bed
to live in incestuous lust with his brother?
Is there blood in your veins...
or poison?
Lucius, break his skin with your sword.
I want to see.
Our supper grows cold.
Do you intend to do nothing
with this man?

Herod, Pilate has asked you a question.
Lucius...
take this man to the dungeon.
Would you like me to come
and visit you in your new cave?
You are the seed of evildoers...
the child of corruption.
Leave this house of darkness.
Find your way into the light
while there is yet time.
But if some were imprisoned in this day...
yet many another was set free
from the illness of their bodies.
It was the time of miracles,
and Jesus put forth his hand...
and cleansed those who were vexed
with unclean spirits.
For there went virtue out of him,
and healed them all.
I thought you would
leave me here to starve.
What took you so long?
A new prophet has come to Jerusalem.
He has the same first name

as yourself:

We need more fighters
and fewer prophets...
except for John the Baptist.
If I had that man on my side...
I could wake up the people,
and we would rid ourselves...
of Antipas and the Romans.
This man is greater than John the Baptist.
In what way?
I talked with one of his disciples.
This Jesus...
was proclaimed by John the Baptist
as the man he was waiting for.
I need a prophet
to help me win over the people.
Can we convince this man?
His disciple says he speaks only of peace.
Peace?

There'll be no peace in Jerusalem,
unless it is won by the sword.
It's not safe for you on the street.
I must speak with this man.
What does a man profit,
if he shall gain the whole world...
and lose his own soul?
Could you explain
the parable of the tares of the fields?
He that soweth the good seed
is the Son of Man.
And the field is the world.
We are strangers in your city.
We seek one called John the Baptist.
Can you tell us where to find him?
She's evil. Stone her!
- Stone her!
- She's a harlot. She must die!
She's evil. Stone her!
- Let her be stoned. She must die.
- She's an adulteress.
What has this woman done?
She's been caught in adultery, and
she must be stoned according to the law.
She's a harlot. She must die!
- Let her be stoned!
- She must die!
She's a harlot. She must die!
Then let him who is without sin
amongst you cast the first stone.
Woman, where are they now
who condemned you?
Then neither will I condemn you.
Go and sin no more.
If you would find John the Baptist,
he lies in the palace dungeon.
- What was his crime?
- He told the truth.
He may be the one we have waited for.
I must speak with him.
And, Barabbas, so near to Jesus...
now turned and fled
from the Roman guards.
Leaving behind a man

seeking answers from one stone...
whether to run with Barabbas,
the messiah of war...
or walk with Jesus,
the new Messiah of peace.
What is it?
Another one wants
to see John the Baptist.
- Send him away.
- He will not go.
I mean, I do not know
how to send this one away.
Show him in.
The prisoner, John, is not allowed visitors.
If you wish to send him a message,
leave it with the guard.
I would see John.
Why?
I come to free John.
And just how do you propose
to break him free from his cell?
I come to free him within his cell.
Freedom? Behind stone walls?
You are free
to come and go as you please...
and yet you are still a prisoner because
you place faith in nothing but your sword.
Who are you? Where do you come from?
My name is Jesus. I come from Nazareth.
Nazareth?
I have not been there for many years...
yet your face is familiar.
You once came to our house
and spoke to my mother.
The house of the carpenter?
For some reason unknown to me,
I have favored your mother once before.
I will give you a moment
with the prisoner, John.
But remember this:
As you have your duty to your God,
so do I to my emperor.
Break Caesar's law...
and you shall find in me

the most merciless of all men.
Ichebious!
Let him take a look at the baptizer.
John.
Give me your blessing!
The name of Jesus
moved through the land...
and yet others came to walk with him.
And they were Philip and Bartholomew.
And one more joined them near the city.
Take me with you, Rabbi.
Come!
What is your name?
Judas.
- And yours?
- John.
- He's mad!
- He's a madman! Madman!
You are his mother?
Yes. Who has sent you?
I have journeyed from Jerusalem
to see where he lives.
Come, I will show you.
I am alone, now. Share my table.
I am a woman of sin.
You will share my table.
I have done much evil.
Child, God knows evil exists,
as well as good.
Just as there is light and darkness.
Evil exists that we may be
the better for it.
Will you speak to your son for me?
Intercede.
Has not my son said:
'What man having 100 sheep,
if he lose one of them...
'does not leave the 99 in the wilderness...
'and go after that which is lost,
until he find it?
'And when he has found it,
he lays it upon his shoulders, rejoicing.
'And when he comes home, he calls
his friends and neighbors together...

'and sayeth unto them:
'Rejoice...
'for I have found the sheep...
'which I lost.'
You would not have sought out this house
if God had not wanted you to.
Come.
Share my table.
'Noble Pilate,
the day before the ides of April...
'the man Jesus left Jerusalem,
accompanied by five of his disciples:
'Peter, Andrew, John, Philip...
'...and Nathaniel.
'Outside the walls of the city...
'they were joined by a sixth disciple...
'a man called Judas Iscariot.
They traveled north.
'The fourth day after the nones of May...
'the man Jesus and his disciples
entered the town of Capernaum.
'There Jesus laid hands on a madman
and cast out the demon in him.
'The same evening, the man Jesus
brought a dying child back to health.
'Two miracles in one day! '
But, Lucius...
These things...
Can they really be true?
I do not know, my lady.
I, myself, have never seen a miracle.
There are no such things as miracles.
Only fools who believe in them. Continue.
'The day after the nones of June...
'at the crossroads...
'a Roman tax collector
by the name of Matthew saw Jesus pass...
'and promptly left
his tax collecting duties...
'and has joined up with the man Jesus
and become the seventh disciple.
'A harlot from Jerusalem
by the name of Magdalene...
'is also residing in the same house.'

Tax collectors and harlots!

'The day before the nones of July...

'the man Jesus spoke to a crowd of over
5,000 people at the foot of Mount Tabor...

'near Lake Galilee.

'It is reported that
with a basket containing...

'two fish and five loaves of bread...

'the man Jesus fed the entire multitude.'

I never heard such absolute nonsense!

'The day after the ides of July, Jesus was
seen to walk on the water of Lake Galilee.'

Ridiculous!

'That evening a storm ravaged the lake,
threatening the lives of fishermen.

'The man Jesus raised his arm...

- Does our Lucius mock me?

- '...the wind died, the storm ceased.'

So it is reported.

Then Lucius, thinking on Nazareth,
the long years...

the mother, the child, and the miracles...
did go to see John the Baptist.

You have treated me well.

I should like to ask
just one more kindness.

Ask!

Before I leave this world...

I would send a message to Jesus.

What is the message?

Ask of him, in these words:

'Was it your coming that was foretold...

'...or are we to expect another? '

You doubt him?

I do not doubt him.

But I would like to hear it
from his own lips.

You are always looking at her.

You are sick with jealousy.

Dance for me, Salome!

Salome.

Drink a little wine!

Taste it...

so that I may drain the cup.

I am not thirsty.
Come and sit next to me.
I will give you the throne of your mother.
You are not enough of a king.
You keep the man
who reviled my mother in a dungeon...
when he should have died months ago.
Why do you let him live?
I have had talks with him.
John is a very great prophet.
He's a madman, and you are afraid of him.
I am afraid of no man!
Salome, dance for me.
I command you to dance!
I will not dance.
You cannot refuse me.
Salome will now dance for us!
I do refuse!
Salome, I beg of you.
I will give you anything you want.
- Anything?
- Even unto the half of my kingdom.
Do you swear?
By my life, by my crown,
and before the Governor of Judea.
Whatever it is you want,
I will give it to you...
even if it is the throne of your mother.
You have given your word.
I'm the slave of my word...
and my word is the word of a king.
Anything I want?
Now, Salome,
what would you have for your dance?
I want...
on a silver platter...
What on a silver platter?
A ruby? A diamond? A pearl?
I want the head of John the Baptist.
Have you gone mad?
What can you want
with the head of a man?
I want to look at it.
Salome, listen to me.

I have jewels hidden in this palace...
jewels that thy mother even
has never seen.
Jewels that are marvelous to look at.
Great topazes!
Opals that burn with a fire as cold as ice!
Give me the head of John the Baptist...
or let it be known to everyone here...
that the word of the king is worthless.
Give her what she asks.
John the Baptist
has sent a message to ask me:
"Is it your coming that was foretold,
or are we to expect another?"
My answer to John is your testimony.
What you people here have witnessed:
How the blind see once more.
How the lame walk.
The lepers are made clean.
The deaf now hear.
I say to John,
"What was it you expected to see...
"when you went out into the desert?"
Was it a reed trembling in the wind?
No, that is not what you expected to see.
Was it a man, clad in fine garments?
No! You must look in king's palaces for
proudly-dressed men who live in luxury.
Why, then, did he go out?
To see a prophet?
I say to John the Baptist:
"Blessed is he who keeps his faith."
And I further say to all of you:
"God has raised up
no greater son of woman...
"than John the Baptist."
All over Galilee the disciples of Jesus are
calling for a gathering to hear him speak.
This new prophet, Jesus,
he speaks like John the Baptist.
How do we know it's not the same man?
Perhaps John has risen from the dead.
Why did I do it?
I am not an evil man.

Why did I do it?
You should've done it
the day you imprisoned him.
He's John the Baptist.
He's come back as Jesus.
Superstition! Tell him it is not true!
I knew John the Baptist
and I have met Jesus.
They are not the same man.
Stop him. Call your soldiers.
Arrest him!
And start a rebellion?
All Rome wants is peace and taxes.
I don't intend to spend
all my life in this miserable country.
Where is this gathering
taking place, Lucius?
A mount in the hills of Galilee.
Have you any suggestion?
Not until I hear what the man speaks.
Go to this meeting, Lucius.
Let the man talk. Listen to him.
If he utters a single word
treasonable to Rome...
you'll have to act.
I tell you,
it is John the Baptist rising again!
And so much was the fame
that went abroad of Jesus...
that there was a gathering of people,
like flocks from the hills.
Great multitudes came
out of all Judea and Jerusalem...
and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon...
which came to hear him, and to be healed.
My lady, it is not safe
for Pilate's wife to be here.
I must hear this man.
Will you stay with me, Lucius?
They have all gathered,
and are awaiting your word.
Blessed are you who are poor...
for yours is the kingdom of Heaven.
Blessed are the meek,

for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are you who do
hunger and thirst after righteousness...
for you shall be filled.
Blessed are those who are merciful,
for they shall obtain mercy.
And blessed are those who are mourners,
for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are those who are pure in heart...
for they shall see God.
And blessed are you
who are the peacemakers...
for you shall be called the children of God.
And blessed are you who are persecuted
for righteousness' sake...
for yours is the Kingdom of Heaven.
Give us a sign from Heaven!
Prove to us who you are.
Blessed are you
when men shall curse you...
and separate you from their company,
and reproach you...
and cast out your name as evil...
for the Son of Man's sake.
When?
When is the Kingdom of God coming?
Watch as you may,
you will not see it come.
No one will say,
'Here it is,' or, 'There it is.'
For the Kingdom of God is within you.
Rabbi!
What must I do to inherit eternal life?
What is written in the law:
To love the Lord, your God,
with all your heart...
with all your soul...
with all your power and all your mind.
And love your neighbor
as you love yourself.
Do that and you shall live eternally.
I'm a camel driver.
Who can I call neighbor?
He to whom you show mercy

and compassion...
whether you know him or not.
Are you the Messiah?
I am the Good Shepherd.
The Good Shepherd lays down his life
for his sheep.
Do you speak against
the law of the prophets?
I come not to destroy
the law or the prophets...
but to fulfill them.
For I say unto you:
Love your enemies,
bless them who curse you...
and pray for those
who despise and persecute you.
For if you love only those who love you...
what reward shall you have?
If you are a holy man...
why do you eat and drink
with sinners and tax collectors?
The healthy have no need of a physician,
but the sick do.
I come not to call the righteous,
but sinners, to repentance.
I am a tax collector.
I worship in the Temple every day,
yet they despise me.
What can I do?
No man can serve two masters.
Either he will hate the one
and love the other...
or cling to the one and despise the other.
You cannot serve God and Mammon.
And I say unto you:
Be not anxious for your life...
for the food you eat...
or for your body or the clothes you wear...
for is not life greater than food?
And your bodies more than the clothing?
Behold the birds of the sky.
They neither sow nor reap,
nor take their harvest to the barns.
And yet God feeds them.

How much more are you than they?
Consider the lilies of the field
and how they grow.
They toil not, neither do they spin.
And can anyone of you, by worrying...
add a moment to your years?
My wife and I believe in you,
but we are poor.
We have nothing to give.
How can we show you our faith?
You have, by what you have said.
Come to me,
all of you who labor and are heavy-laden...
and I will refresh you.
Rabbi!
Rabbi, I believe you're the Messiah.
How can I serve you?
The Son of Man comes to serve,
not to be served.
Whoever among you who would be great
must be a servant.
And whoever will be first
must be the slave of all.
We have heard the voices
of false messiahs before.
How do we know
you are not sent by Satan?
If a kingdom is divided against itself,
the kingdom cannot stand.
If Satan also be divided against himself,
how then can his kingdom stand?
How can Satan cast out Satan?
I see before me flesh and blood.
You are only a man.
Why do you make yourself
out to be the Son of God?
If I am not doing the deeds of my Father,
do not believe me.
But if I am doing them
and you will still not believe in me...
believe in the work I do.
If you can do miracles,
call upon God to send hosts...
to destroy the Romans

and free our people from bondage.
Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God.
The Romans are conquerors.
To conquer them would make you
no different than they.
Rabbi, what is faith?
If you have faith that is no greater
than this grain of mustard seed...
and say to the mountain,
'You shall move'...
the mountain will move.
Nothing is impossible.
How judge a transgressor?
Judge not, lest you be judged.
For you will be judged by the standards
you yourself shall apply.
Why do you note the speck
in your brother's eye...
and take no notice
of the beam in your own eye?
You hypocrites,
first remove the beam from your own eye.
Then you will see clearly enough
to remove the speck from your brother's.
Give not that which is holy to dogs.
Neither cast your pearls before swine,
lest they trample them under their feet...
and then turn and tear you to pieces.
Ask, and you shall receive.
Seek, and you shall find.
Knock, and the door
shall be opened unto you.
For everyone who asks receives.
And every seeker finds.
And to all those who knock,
the door is opened.
Is there a man among you...
who would hand his son a stone
if he asked for bread?
Or a serpent if he asked for fish?
If, then, you who are evil...
know how to give your children
what is good...
think how much more

your heavenly Father...
will give good things
to those who ask Him?
Therefore, treat your fellow man
as you would have him treat you.
For this is the law of the prophets.
Teach us to pray.
Our Father, who art in heaven...
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses...
As we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom...
and the power, and the glory...
for ever and ever.

Amen.

Words.

The Rabbi is calling you.
Your friend is one of those
who did not understand.

What did the man say?

He spoke of peace...

Iove...

and the brotherhood of man.

Is that all?

That is all.

What is the matter?

The look on Lucius' face.

He had a long journey. He looked tired.

He looked more than tired to my eyes.

Good night, Caiaphas.

- Do you believe in him?

- I do.

Self-appointed saviors like your Jesus...

might stir the people up

against the Romans.

- But he is a good man.

- You are a fool, Nicodemus.

Good or bad, he's a threat.
If Pilate could use Jesus and his followers
as an excuse...
he would massacre our people.
What do you intend to do, Caiaphas?
For the present, we will bide our time.
Then Jesus called unto him his disciples,
the chosen 12...
whom he also named Apostles...
and led them into the wilderness.
And these were Simon, called Peter,
and Andrew...
James and John, the sons of Zebedee...
Philip and Bartholomew,
Matthew and Thomas.
And James, the son of Alphaeus.
Thaddaeus, Simon the Canaanite.
And among them, Judas Iscariot.
Now, none of these chosen
were most learned.
None was a teacher of great truths.
None was rich and powerful.
They but knew the waters of Galilee,
the shores and fields beyond.
But knowing this,
they were most rare, simple and precious.
For they were the pure in heart
and but needed instruction.
For Jesus saw his own disciples
doubt him.
Awed by his miracles, faithful to him.
Still they wondered why the Messiah...
could not raise up miraculous armies
to strike Judea free.
Could simple love and brotherhood
be weapons against Rome?
For the disciples, like the multitudes...
were troubled
by the Sermon on the Mount.
They had come seeking
earthquakes and whirlwinds...
the word of Jesus to smite the heavens...
drop fiery swords in their upraised hands...
drown Caesar's chariots in the sea.

This, then, was Jesus' task:
To keep his disciples
from the doubting cities.
To give them fresh wisdom wherewith
to cleanse themselves, as with water.
To make them men of God.
Peace and love he taught them,
in many tongues.
And the days passed,
and the time of teaching was at an end.
And those we help,
how shall they reward us?
You receive without payment,
give without payment.
Take neither gold, nor silver, nor copper
under your belts.
Nor staffs.
You send us out sheep among wolves.
Then be as wise as the serpent,
and as harmless as the dove.
And at the appointed time,
I will join you in Jerusalem.
And he blessed them and
sent them two by two before his face...
into every city and place to heal the sick,
to preach the Kingdom of God...
and to have authority over evil.
Yes, there is rust.
And the water is too warm.
It can only mean one thing:
Someone is forging weapons.
Blacksmiths can operate only
in the western end of the city.
These waters come from
the underground cellar in the eastern end.
Can you locate this cellar?
The eastern end
is honeycombed with cellars.
Some we could never find.
You should not have killed this man.
You should have saved him
for questioning.
Go on!
Make more weapons to kill more people.

That is what I intend.
But while the metal cools, think!
- You saw Jesus, you heard him speak.
- He speaks only of peace!
I am fire. He is water.
How can we ever meet?
The day after the next Sabbath,
Jesus comes here to join his disciples.
- Here, in Jerusalem?
- In Jerusalem.
To preach
at the greatest Temple in all the land!
Such crowds will gather,
the Romans will not dare touch him.
Then, Barabbas, is the time.
Move your men to stand by Jesus,
but keep their swords sheathed.
Let your strength be known, but silent.
Let Jesus speak.
When his message of peace
sweeps the city...
let the people proclaim him King of Judea.
How can he refuse?
If he can free the Jews
without spilling blood...
he deserves the crown.
I'll shape the crown myself,
and place it on his brow.
You will stand beside him
in the Temple, then?
You will give him time to speak?
Yes.
That will be a day to be remembered.
- It will be remembered.
- Barabbas!
Judas dreams.
And all dreamers are fools!
This is the hour that we have waited for.
Yes!
Jesus comes to the Temple. Let him!
He brings us our audience.
We'll borrow them.
We'll run them through the streets
to the fortress.

This way, and that.

- Your people, Seth, will storm the gates!

- Yes.

- Yours, Enoch, will breach the north wall.

- Right.

I will scale the wall to the south.

Quickly done and over,

we will lend the crowd back to Jesus.

- Is that fair or not?

- Yes, fair!

No one but Barabbas would attempt
such a thing!

You speak of Barabbas with respect?

I always respect the enemy.

Men like Lucius keep our empire together.

Your tour of duty in Jerusalem
ended years ago, Lucius.

- Why do you stay here?

- Where else would I go?

But Rome is brilliant.

I seem to have a talent
for surviving small wars.

Politics and brilliant society
would destroy me.

Personally, I suspect you found
our Roman gods too cruel.

Are you also awaiting the coming
of the local Messiah?

To believe in the Messiah,
one must believe in God.

What I've witnessed in my years on earth
is proof enough that there can be no God.

How many followers has he?

Who? God? Jesus? Or Barabbas?

Barabbas.

How many dissatisfied Jews
are there in Jerusalem?

Have you considered the possibility
of Jesus' and Barabbas' followers...
joining forces?

I have.

Where would it happen?

Since we are here, here.

And for many months

Jesus preached through Judea...
and angered the scribes
and the Pharisees...
who thought how they might kill him,
and numbered his days.
Knowing the sum thereof...
Jesus came to spend time
with his mother.
Blessings on this house!
Welcome, Peter, John.
We have done all you asked.
It is time we leave for Jerusalem.
The chair will have to wait until I return.
The chair will never be mended.
I am going with you!
Now the Jewish Passover was near...
and many went from the country
to Jerusalem...
to purify themselves and make holiday.
He's coming!
And Jesus, come from Bethany
and the Mount of Olives...
did enter Jerusalem on that day
to preach in the Temple...
for the Temple was Judea.
His words, spoken here...
would echo in
Tiberias, Samaria and Caesarea.
From here he might speak to the world,
if the world might listen...
and the waves be still.
As the city prepared
for the Passover killing of the lamb...
the men of Barabbas
planned stranger celebrations...
made ready more terrible sacrifices.
And Jesus went into the Temple.
And the great doors
shut up one multitude...
and within was peace...
while outside
was the sea that would not be stilled.
The tongue which spoke not peace,
but the sword.

Long live Judea!
Judea!
Come.
Get back!
Now!
Come on!
Help me.
We will never rise again.
The glory of Judea is dead.
The Romans were waiting for us.
We had no chance.
So many of us dead, for nothing.
We must escape into the desert and hide.
It was you who told Barabbas
the new rabbi would show us the way.
He does nothing but pray in the Temple.
The Rabbi will help us.
How will he help us?
He has the power of miracles.
He will not use his power,
except to heal the sick.
He can call down hosts
to destroy the fortress of Pilate.
He preaches against violence.
He can, with a look, rock the foundations
of Herod Antipas' palace...
and bring the walls down
on the tyrant's head.
He has never done these things before.
Why will he change now?
I will force his hand.
Not with us!
I will force his hand.
Once he feels
the Roman sword at his throat...
he will strike them down
with the wave of one arm.
Now came the days of unleavened bread.
And Jesus...
knowing these to be
his final hours on earth...
did send to prepare a Passover feast.
And there, a last time,
stood with and among his disciples.

And gathered them in, all 12.
Blessed are you, O Lord, our God,
King of the Universe...
who bids us eat bitter herbs.
Tonight, one among you will betray me.
What you must do, do quickly.
I will be with you for only a short time.
Where are you going?
Where I go, you cannot go,
but you will follow me afterwards.
We'll follow you to the ends of the earth.
Tonight you will all lose courage
and desert me.
Impossible.
I would not desert you.
I would go to prison. I would die first.
Believe me, Peter, this night,
before the cock crows twice...
you will deny knowing me three times.
- Never!
- No. Impossible!
We'd never desert you.
Never.
My last wish...
is that you love one another
as I have loved you.
The greatest gift a man can give
is to lay down his life for his friends.
When I am gone you will be grieved.
But your grief will turn into joy.
A woman in childbirth feels pain.
But when her child is born,
she does not remember the pain.
For a child has been born into the world.
And one day I will see you again,
and when I do...
your joy will be such...
that no one can take it from you.
For you have the faith.
And you believe in me
and in Him, from whom I was sent.
Blessed are you, O Lord, our God,
King of the Universe...
who brings forth bread from the earth.

Take!

Eat!

For this is my body.

Do this in remembrance of me.

Blessed are you, O Lord, our God...

King of the Universe...

who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink!

For this is my blood of the covenant,
which is shed for you...

and for many...

for the remission of sins.

- I wish to see the High Priest Caiaphas.

- It is late.

He will see me.

So Judas Iscariot went his way...

to betray Jesus

to the chief priests and the captains...

to say how Jesus and Barabbas...

were the left and the right hands

of the same body.

Thus Judas thought

to test and prove forever...

the divine power of the Messiah.

Then Jesus went forth

to the Mount of Olives...

and the garden called Gethsemane...

there to await the dark night ahead...

there to consider the dark days to follow...

there to prepare for his trial and his death.

Keep watch and pray!

Why must we wait?

What can I say?

' 'Father, save me from this hour? ' '

It is for this very reason

that I am coming to this hour.

My Father.

My Father.

All things are possible to you.

Take away this cup from me.

And yet...

not as I will...

but as You will.

You were with the man Jesus.

You are wrong, woman.
I do not know the man Jesus.
Are you one of the disciples?
No, I am not.
- How long will Jesus be in there?
- I don't know.
You're a disciple.
I saw you in the olive grove.
I am not. I was not in the olive grove.
I could swear you were with this man.
I do not know what you are talking about.
I am not a follower of this man.
You have been interrogated by Caiaphas.
They've judged you guilty on two counts:
Blasphemy and sedition.
This court takes no cognizance
of your blasphemy.
But the charge of sedition
is a major offense.
The rules of Roman law will prevail.
I, Pontius Pilate, Governor of Judea...
by grace of Emperor Tiberius of Rome,
will judge your case.
No matter what you've done up to now,
no matter what others accuse you of...
I, and I alone, have the authority...
to sentence you
to be crucified or flogged...
or to set you free.
How you conduct yourself here
will determine your fate.
Do you understand?
I am offering you an opportunity
to state your defense.
Silence can only serve
to militate against you.
I'm now offering you a second opportunity.
In view of the continued
and obstinate silence of the accused...
the court appoints Lucius Catanus
Advocate of the Defense.
I wish it emphasized in the record
that the accused has representation.
I cannot undertake your defense

unless you are willing to confide in me.
Does the accused
desire to confer with his advocate?
The trial will proceed.
For the benefit of the accused...
so that he comprehends
the gravity of his case...
I request the charge against him
be repeated.
The defendant is accused of
claiming to be a leader sent by their God...
to liberate the Hebrew nation.
The accused, by neither deed nor word,
has ever challenged Rome's jurisdiction.
During the past three years,
the accused has in acts and speeches...
disturbed the people...
condemned the payment of tribute,
and claimed himself king.
And spread the word that his kingdom...
has precedence over and above
Roman jurisdiction.
The defendant has only spoken
of the Kingdom of God.
He's never attempted to usurp
Roman jurisdiction over Judea.
The implication is the same. There can be
no division of authority in Judea.
A nation can have only one master.
I repeat, my lord.
The defendant's claim
to a divine mission...
does not challenge the authority of Rome.
The performance of miracles
is beyond the jurisdiction of this court.
The accused does not stand trial
for miracles...
but for setting up a kingdom.
Advocate for the Defense
will confine his argument to the issue.
The charge is a secular issue.
By treaty with Judea,
Rome obligated itself...
not to interfere in religious matters.

The court is fully aware of this evidence.
The court is also aware
of the unlawful assembly...
the accused created
with his Sermon on the Mount.
I was present at that sermon.
I submitted a report of his statements.
Not once did he speak a word
that would incite violence.
On the contrary, he spoke only of peace.
The court has also read
the report of the sermon.
He advised people to dispose
their possessions and follow him.
How can Rome levy taxes on the people
if they follow his teaching?
Then the charge should be reduced
to one of evading the tax.
The charge stands as read.
Are you a king?
It is your own lips
that have called me King.
My kingdom is the Kingdom of God.
Then you are a king.
I was born and came into this world
to give testimony to the truth.
Whoever believes in the truth
will listen to me.
What is truth?
Everyone that is of the truth
heareth my voice.
Different people have different feelings.
Can there not be more than one truth?
There is only one truth,
and it is written in the Commandments:
'Be true to God.'
My lord, the court deviates from the issue.
Truth is not on trial here...
but a man named Jesus, from Nazareth.
Nazareth.
You are a Galilean, then?
In that case,
Herod Antipas has jurisdiction over you.
He just returned to Jerusalem.

Send him to Herod Antipas...
My lord, please.
Herod is prejudiced against this man.
He could not be tried fairly there.
It is so ordered by this court.
The trial has ended. Caesar is satisfied.
Are you John the Baptist,
come back to life?
Can you not see he is not
John the Baptist?
Let him speak for himself!
I have heard you are
a very great miracle-worker.
I'd be very happy to witness
a simple demonstration of your power.
Here is a vase of clay.
It's only a small vase.
Turn it into gold.
Surely that is not a great feat
for a man of your powers.
Still made of clay.
Perhaps it was too difficult for you.
Shall I ask of you something simpler?
Make it thunder.
Should be very easy for a messiah.
Make it thunder.
I hear nothing.
It seems the great miracle-worker
has lost his touch.
Do not let it be said Herod
does not know how to receive royalty.
Does he not look like a king?
Take this faker back to Pilate.
Tell him Herod was not pleased
with his performance.
Scourge him! Loosen his tongue.
Make him confess.
What would you want him
to confess, Pilate?
- His conspiracy.
- What conspiracy?
Take the miracles.
What is his crime there?
He is different

and refuses to behave like the others.
If he can influence even Caesar's daughter,
he is dangerous.
What do you want?
A king should wear a crown.
If only the sun would set quickly.
What difference does it make?
Passover begins at sunset.
They cannot crucify us
during the holy days.
I would rather get it over with today.
How does it feel
to be about to die, Barabbas?
I only object to the company
that I will have to keep.
We are only thieves. You're a murderer.
It is we who should object
to your company.
Let him be.
So, I have been given
the honor of going last?
You know the man named Jesus,
from Nazareth?
I know the man.
Does he deserve to die?
No more than I.
You compare yourself in the same breath?
We both seek the same thing. Freedom!
Only our methods differ.
The freedom he spoke of
is not the same you killed for.
When is the man Jesus to die?
He carries his cross now.
Why do you tell me all this?
Why don't you take me with him?
Get it over with.
Go. You're free.
The man Jesus is dying in your place.
One prisoner is freed each year
at this time.
Pilate offered that mob a choice.
Me? They chose me?
Your followers yelled the loudest.
Go. Look at him who is dying for you.

You. Cyrenaican. Take the cross.
Do not weep for me.
That man is dying in my place.
Why should he do that?
I never did anything for him.
Forgive them, Father,
for they know not what they do.
If you are the Messiah...
then save yourself and us.
Have you no fear of God?
We are guilty!
But this man has done no wrong.
Remember me, when we have come
into the glory of your kingdom.
I promise...
you will be with me...
this day, in paradise.
Woman...
behold your son.
My God.
My God, why have you forsaken me?
It is finished.
Father...
into Your hands I commend my soul.
He is truly the Christ.
And the body of Jesus
was begged from Pilate, and given over.
And in the place where he was crucified,
there was a garden.
And in the garden a new sepulcher,
hewn from stone.
And Jesus was placed there.
Sir!
Sir, have you hidden him?
Tell me where, and I will take him away.
Woman, why do you weep?
Because you have taken away my Lord.
I know not where.
- Magdalene.
- Master!
Touch me not,
for I am not yet ascended to my Father.
But go to my disciples.
Tell them I ascend to my Father

and your Father.
To my God and your God.
But first, I go before them into Galilee.
There shall they see me.
He is arisen.
And when the tomb was found empty,
some days passed...
and Christ was seen at Emmaus
and in Jerusalem.
And those who saw him
knew he was the Lord God.
And then a final time he came
among his disciples...
by the shore of Galilee.
Do you know and love me?
Feed my sheep,
for my sheep are in all the nations.
Go you into all the world
and preach the Gospel...
to every creature who hungers.
I am with you always.
Even until the end of the world.
English