

## Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ

About 5 minutes, from Matt. 27:31-54 and Mark 15 20-39

Participants (*No need to memorize lines; the aim is to relive sacred events, not to perform*)

Centurion

Soldier

Scoffer

Voice (of Jesus)

Prompter Shout a brief line, and Echoes repeat it.

Echoes Children and all adults who want to take part. Echoes need no script.

Centurion I'm the Roman centurion in charge of our unit in Jerusalem.  
Accusers are saying absurd things about that man Jesus.  
I've heard that he's a good man.  
Even Governor Pilate has found no reason to execute him.

Prompter & Echoes He keeps silent!

Centurion Strange!  
Hey, you soldiers there, stop making fun of Jesus.

Soldier Yes sir.  
Look. Governor Pilate is begging the man to defend himself,  
but he doesn't; it is as though the Nazarene wants to die!

Scoffer (*Laugh fiendishly*)  
We have stirred up the people,  
so Governor Pilate fears they will stage a violent riot,  
if he doesn't crucify that blaspheming rabbi.

Prompter & Echoes Evil schemers!

Soldier Oh! Pilate is washing his hands in front of the crowd!  
He's letting the hateful, crazed mob have its way!

Centurion This means I will have to give the order to carry out the grisly task.  
I find my soldiers lashing the Nazarene cruelly, and I stop them.

Soldier We soldiers lead the man him out toward a hill called Calvary.  
That band of scoffers follows us, jeering at him.  
Women are weeping. No wonder! Look at him!

Prompter & Echoes Beaten and bleeding!

Soldier He's stumbling as he lugs that cross up this skull-shaped hill.

Centurion Especially after you soldiers lashed him so!  
Look how his back bleeds!  
I am not enjoying this. He's lost so much blood!

Soldier Hey you foreigner there. Carry the cross for the man.

Centurion Well, here we are. Soldier, here are the spikes.  
Nail him to the cross, and put up Pilate's sign,  
**THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

Soldier                    We also crucify two other criminals;  
                                  one of them keeps taunting Jesus.  
 I offer him wine mixed with bitter gall to deaden His pain,  
 but after tasting it, he refuses to drink it.  
 We soldiers sit and watch.

Centurion                Hours drag by.  
 Jesus is writhing in agony, and those insolent men mock him.  
 Listen to them!

Scoffer                    You there, if you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.

Soldier                    Oh, listen! He's praying for us! Imagine that!  
 For us! After all the pain that we caused him!

Voice                      Forgive them, Father. They do not know what they are doing!

Prompter & Echoes    Such loving forgiveness!

Centurion                That dying thief begged Jesus to remember him  
 when he enters his Kingdom.  
 Now he Jesus is answering him.

Voice                      Today you will be with me in Paradise.

Centurion                Amazing! Who is he? What is he?

Scoffer                    Ha! You said you'd destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days!  
 Well, save yourself! You trusted in God; let him rescue you!

Soldier                    Look! I won His cloak! We soldiers gambled for it,  
 and I threw the winning lot!

Centurion                Listen, men. This is wrong! All wrong!

Prompter & Echoes    Angry lightning flashes!

Soldier                    Sir, look! The rainwater is carrying away the blood.  
 So much blood! It seems as though it will cover the whole earth!

Scoffer                    Look at him! He saved others; he cannot save himself.  
 (*Laugh fiendishly*)  
 He is King of Israel; let him come down from the cross.  
 Then we will believe him!

Voice                      Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!

Scoffer                    He's calling for Elijah. Let's see if Elijah comes to save Him.

Centurion                I know what he said in Hebrew,  
 "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Voice                      It is finished!

Prompter & Echoes    Finished!

Centurion                This is no ordinary man!

Voice                      Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

Centurion	Amazing! He simply gave up His life!
Soldier	Oh, the earth is shaking violently!
Prompter & Echoes	Rumble! Rumble!
Centurion	Listen! Even from here I heard the massive veil in the temple ripping from top to bottom, opening the way into God's presence.
Scoffer	What's happening? Total darkness has come upon us! The sun quit shining during the daytime!
Centurion	What have we done? Surely, this man is the Son of God!
Prompter & Echoes	He has died for us all!