

Jesus' Sabbath Day of Burial Divides all Human History  
About 4 minutes, from Matt. 27:57-66

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

Joseph (of Arimathea)

Pilate

Centurion

Prompter Shout a brief line, and Echoes repeat it.

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

Joseph Governor Pilate, may I take the Galilean's body from the cross?  
I will embalm it, wrap it in linen, and lay it in my new tomb  
that I hewed out of rock.

Pilate Yes, Joseph of Arimathea, as soon as I make sure he's dead.  
Centurion, see if the Nazarene has died;  
I hope you can find your way in this weird darkness;  
it covered the whole land when they crucified that man.

Centurion Yes, Governor. It is more than the absence of light.  
I think God is casting complete shade over a terrible crime!

Prompter & Echoes God is hiding his face!

Pilate Joseph, the Centurion has affirmed that the Galilean has died.  
You may take the body.

Joseph Thank you, sir. This is the saddest day of my life.

Pilate Centurion, secure that grave.  
The priests claim that the Nazarene said he'd rise again after three days,  
They fear his disciples will steal him away, and say he rose  
from the dead. Take soldiers and guard the grave for three days.

Centurion Very well, Governor Pilate. Nobody will meddle with that grave.

Joseph Soldiers roll a huge stone against the tomb's entrance, and guard it.  
Mary Magdalene is watching, and other women come to mourn;  
they are sitting by the tomb, weeping.

Prompter & Echoes Beloved Jesus is dead.

Joseph Nighttime comes and passes. It is the seventh day, the Sabbath.  
Jesus' body lies, lifeless, in the devil's hands,  
deep in Satan's dark realm of death.  
The Old Dragon gleefully imprisons  
his captives in death's gloomy darkness!

Prompter & Echoes Satan clings to his captives!

Joseph This seventh day of Sabbath rest divides all history.  
Jesus' body lies in perfect rest and repose in death.  
God has ruled his people with the law of condemnation given to Moses,  
but after this day of Sabbath rest, God will write His law in our hearts,  
as Jeremiah foretold hundreds of years ago.

Prompter & Echoes Even Jerusalem lies in silence!

Pilate We Romans don't pay that much attention to Sabbath days.  
Now the first day of the week has come.  
I am relieved that the whole issue of that Galilean is finally over!  
Ah! It is the last we will hear of that man Jesus.

Joseph But on this third day the sun rises, and Jesus' Sabbath rest is over.  
Satan's chains cannot hold his captive.  
His power has been in his accusations,  
but they cannot touch this sinless man.  
Jesus rises from the dead, and frees death's captives  
along with himself.

Prompter & echoes A totally new beginning!

Joseph This first day of the week marks the beginning of the New Covenant  
foretold by Jeremiah: God would write His law in our hearts.

Prompter & Echoes The Covenant of Grace!

Joseph The seventh day looked back to the old creation and God's rest.  
This first day looks forward to the new creation of our risen Lord!  
During the intervening day of rest, Jesus kept the Sabbath to perfection!

Prompter & Echoes The old has ended; the new is here!

Centurion As Centurion, I was to see that no one stole the Galilean's body.  
My soldiers told me they slept, and His disciples took the body.

Prompter & Echoes Not true!

Centurion I was told not to punish those soldiers, and some money changed hands.  
I know that he rose from the dead. When I saw how he died,  
I knew that he was the Son of God.

Prompter & Echoes Risen Son of God!