

SCRIBES

the Lord's dog

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By
Tim A. Cummins

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Hit and Run

It was dusty and hot and I was starving. It had been nearly two days since I had eaten. My matted fur clung tightly to my ribs. Suddenly, I smelled food, lots of it. I should have watched where I was going. I ran across the road. WHAM!!

An ox cart caught me from behind, My back leg was shattered. Human drivers! I hobbled over to the bushes to whine and lick my wounds. I'm not brave. I guess my howling got his attention. A large crowd surrounded me.

The leader looked down at me then told the crowd, "If you can hear me, listen! The Scribes are like this dog." The man's eyes were dark brown and sparkled with excitement. "Though man is wounded with sin, the Scribes and Pharisees work the salty law into the cuts. Unjust traditions break the legs of men trying to reach God. This creature is in pain. When a man is kept from God he hurts inside, The Son of man has come to heal your wounds."

With those words he reached down and touched my bleeding leg. I felt a surge of warmth through my body. My leg was healed! I could stand!

The Pharisees were shocked.

"Look! He has defiled himself by touching that dog. How could he be the Messiah?" A stern man wearing a long black robe shouted at Jesus. "Caiaphas is right!" another swore.

I was furious. The human in the long black robe taunted Jesus further. Snarling, I leaped for him. I caught the hem of his garment and pulled. Success! His robe tore off his body. The bearded one ran off in shame amid the laughter of the crowd.

"This dog is like the Scribes. He has no mercy!" Jesus laughed out loud.

I sidled up to Jesus. He was like no other man. He shone with a light that I could feel in my heart. I loved him. I would die for this man. I nuzzled my nose in his hand,

"Hmm. You seem hungry. Try this." Jesus pulled a piece of bread out from his robe. It was delicious, and still warm! How was this possible? I was too hungry to wonder.

"Slow down, little fellow."

He spoke with kindness rich in love. A big man came up to him.

"Lord, will you allow this dog to touch you? What will the people think?"

"Be at ease, Peter. The temple leaders already condemn me. I haven't had a dog since I was a boy in Nazareth."

Jesus looked down at me. He knew my heart! My tail nearly wagged off my body. At last I had a master!

"John!"

"Yes, Lord?"

"Take this dog to the pool and wash him."

John reached down to grab me. There was no way I was going to let this fishy-smelling fellow get his hands on me. I bolted to the left as I heard, "Scribes, stop!" I turned around and Jesus looked right at me. "You go with John."

John put a rope around my neck.

"Not too tight, John," Jesus instructed.

"He'll be fine, Master," John assured.

John loosened the collar a bit. I liked this fisherman. He had a gentle touch. I guess that came from baiting so many hooks. John led me down to the pool and scrubbed me from head to paw.

"Scribes! Stop shaking!"

I drenched him, but he was still smiling. John seemed to enjoy his work. Soon the job was done and the hot sun dried my fur. John put my collar back on and led me to camp. Jesus was waiting for us.

"Ah! John! You're back. And Scribes! My, you look like a Roman dog now!"
Jesus

grinned and tossed me a bone. "Here, chew on this."

Jesus looked back at his followers.

"Men, do you remember how this hound looked when we found him? Dirty, broken, bleeding. Yet see him now. How strong and healthy he is. Don't be deceived by the

people you see around you. Many of them are waiting to be shown a touch of love. John,

how did you feel as you washed the dog?"

"Soaked, Lord." John wrung out his cloak. A stream of water fell to the dry ground.

"Yes, but how did you feel?" Jesus insisted. "Well, I felt happy." John smiled

"Yes, my friend. When we help those who need it the most, we truly begin to help ourselves." Jesus looked at me and smiled.

I was happy. I was Jesus' dog.

Wake Up Call

It was still dark when Jesus woke up. My Master was always an early riser.

"Let's go, Scribes." Jesus waved for me to follow. I got up, shook myself and sauntered out of the court yard.

"Hurry up, boy. It's time to pray."

Jesus loved to be alone in the hills. He loved the time he spent with his Father. My Master picked his way through the trails as nimbly as a mountain goat. His favorite spot was a cliff overlooking the city. The first rays of the sun shone pink and the buildings

looked soft and warm. Jesus got on his knees and bowed his head.

"Good morning, Father."

"Hello, Son."

I heard a powerful voice. Jesus looked over at me. "You hear Him too, don't

you, Scribes?" I wagged my tail in agreement. "I wish my followers could be as sensitive."

"The time has come, my Son," the powerful voice spoke again.

"Yes, Father. We must continue what we have started. I have my twelve, and your power."

"Son, you knew the path would be hard when you came,"

"Is there no other way? Man is so hard to reach. At times it seems impossible,"

"The evil one has many in his grip. He knows you are their only hope. He uses their pride against you."

"And the Pharisees, Why do they hate me? What should I do?" "You know the answer: love them."

"Father, of course, you are right. Your will is perfect." "Be at peace, my child. I am always with you."

Jesus raised his head and looked at me.

"This is an evil generation, Scribes, yet I still love them. Let's go back to town. The men should be up by now."

As we climbed down the mountain, Jesus shook his head,

"Why are they so hard hearted? Why don't they see I came to save them? These Pharisees are like men drowning in the ocean refusing to get into the boat."

I nuzzled Jesus' hand. He smiled at me and whispered, "Thanks, Scribes. I needed that."

Wet Dog.

I liked Jesus' disciples. They were fun; that is when they weren't screaming at each other. They sure were loud. Especially James and John. They must have come from a really loud family.

Jesus wanted enthusiastic followers. I guess that's why He enjoyed John's company so much. He was like a pot just coming to a boil. John didn't walk; he bounced. He used to sneak me table scraps. That is, when Judas didn't get them first. Judas was the cheapest person I ever knew. He found a place where he could sell left-over food. I never did like Judas. I'll never understand why Jesus let him stay with us. Judas hated boats. The others enjoyed the water. Most of them had grown up around the lake. Once my master fed a hillside full of people. As the folks wandered off, Jesus sent us across the lake in the boat. I took my position in the bow, I could smell rain coming and started howling. All I got for my trouble was, "Be quiet, Scribes!" They should have listened.

Soon the wind picked up. The sail strained against the mast. Eight foot waves pounded the boat. We were in trouble. Even a champion swimmer couldn't survive in this surf. The boat lifted up and slammed straight down. Judas got really sick. The men whined and wailed in fear. Peter and John bailed water like madmen.

Suddenly, I caught sight of something in the surf. It was Jesus! I was sure of it! He was coming towards the boat. I barked greetings. Surely the men could see him, Perhaps Jesus was in trouble! I jumped into the water and paddled for all I was worth. Walls of water smashed into me. I swallowed a mouthful and went under. Everything went black. I felt a hand around my collar. It was Jesus.

"Go back to the boat, Scribes. This test isn't for you." The men had watched me swim off and they too, saw Jesus. Peter was the first to respond.

"Is that you, Lord?"

Of course it's him, I thought, who else can walk on water? Andrew yanked me up into the boat.

"Master, if it is you, command me to come," Peter shouted.

"Come!" Jesus motioned him forward into the surf.

Peter struggled out of the boat and into the waves. He rose out of the water and walked towards Jesus.

"I'm .doing it, Lord! I can do it!" Peter was astonished. "Andrew, look!"

The big man turned to call to his brother and sank like a rock. Peter couldn't swim. The waves were too strong. Jesus raced over and snatched him from the sea.

"Peter, keep your eyes on me!" Jesus helped him into the boat and then climbed in.

The waves still pounded our tiny craft. Jesus stood up and commanded, "Be still." The wind stopped. The lake was calm. The men were amazed. I heard James murmur, "What kind of man can do this?" I could smell their fear. Jesus just smiled. Somehow that helped them relax.

Peter rigged the sail and soon we were making good speed towards land. James question rang in my ears. Jesus' looked like other men, but he was so different. My master looked down at me and scratched my ear. Jesus was special. He did the impossible. He loved an ugly dog like me.

Rough Roof

Jesus loved people. They flocked to him wherever he went. Once, I thought the crowd was crushing him. I snapped and growled to make them stand back, but he told me, "Let them be, Scribes; it's what I'm here for,"

One afternoon, Jesus was preaching that God judges good and bad men. "Being good will not bring you to the kingdom. My Father in Heaven is perfect. Which one of you is worthy to enter His presence?"

Jesus paused to look around. The house was hot and unbearably stuffy. He saw the restlessness in the crowd. They had heard of his miracles and they wanted to see one.

Hearing the truth alone never satisfied them. They longed for the spectacular.

Jesus was frustrated. The sweltering crowd pressed in. A smelly fat man stepped on my tail. I howled in pain and ran out of the house. As I waited near the front door, I noticed four men struggling up the side stairs carrying a stretcher. Being the curious dog that I am I decided to follow.

"Eli, we must take Joseph to see the Jesus." The man was insistent.

"It is impossible. The crowd is too thick."

Joseph looked up from the stretcher hopelessly.

"We'll wait up here on the roof until the crowd leaves," Jacob decided.

The men sat in the hot sun and listened to Jesus.

As I laid down, I heard a scratching noise. A rat! I hate rats! I saw him go down his little rat hole. "You won't get away that easily." I dove for the hole and dug. Roofs never stopped me from getting a rat. I guess I got a bit excited

because I kicked some straw on the men.

"Eli, look! The dog is digging through the roof! We can lower him down to see Jesus. Get some rope. Joseph, you'll soon see Jesus."

Jacob started digging wildly. I guess the humans hated rats, too. We had a grand time widening the hole. Soon we could see the people below. They started yelling at us.

"Stop that! You're getting us filthy!" The crowd was hot and dirty. They didn't appreciate us catching rats. Jesus looked up and saw me. He shook his head in amazement. The four men lowered their friend down through the hole. My master recognized their love. Jesus was touched by people giving of themselves to help their friends.

The crowd was very upset. The owner of the house screamed, "You vagabonds will pay for wrecking that roof." He shook his fist at us as his face turned bright red.

"Look at this! Jesus incites people to crime." The Pharisees cursed my master.

"Let them be!" Jesus looked at the crowd and they became quiet. He looked down at the man. "What do you wish from me?"

"Master, I know you can heal me." Joseph grabbed Jesus' hand and wept.

"Your sins are forgiven." Jesus touched the man's forehead.

The Pharisees were outraged. "How can you say that? Only God can forgive sins!" Their eyes flashed with hatred. "Do you think you are God? You, a common carpenter from Nazareth!"

"Which is more difficult, to forgive sins or heal this man?" Jesus waited to let the thought sink in. "To show you that I have the power to forgive sins I will heal this man. Friend, rise and walk. Your faith has made you whole."

Joseph stood up shakily. The crowd was amazed. They had seen this cripple beg for alms many times.

"How can this be?" An older man stroked his beard and wondered.

"Only a true prophet can do such miracles," another man asserted.

"He must be the Messiah," the crowd decided. "Hosanna! Israel's new king," they shouted.

Joseph strolled out of the building, his bedroll under his arms. His friends on the roof praised God and jumped with joy. I was glad they were so happy. As for me, where did that rat go?

Fast Food

Jesus was a great cook. He could make something out of nothing: literally! And he did it so fast.

One afternoon Jesus had been preaching to thousands of people. We were a long way from town and everyone was hungry. Peter realized this first.

“Lord, I’m starving.” The big fisherman rubbed his grumbling stomach.

“Me, too, Rabbi.” Thomas and the rest of the men gathered around their leader. “The people are hungry, too. Why look. Even your dog is famished.” Andrew pointed at me. I was on my back with my legs in the air. I’d do just about anything to get fed.

“Dear friends, man cannot live by bread alone.” Jesus said this seriously, then broke into a wide grin.

“That’s right, Lord. We need fish, too!” John laughed and squeezed Jesus’ shoulder.

“Perhaps you’re right. It’s a bad plan to send these people home hungry. They might faint on the way home. So! Let’s see what we have?” Jesus motioned for his men to scour the crowd for food.

“The Rabbi is hungry. Did you bring any food for him?” James politely.

“Wait a second. I thought this Rabbi was going to feed us!” A burly spectator was not amused.

“Just answer the question, please,” James repeated. “We didn’t bring a thing,” he replied.

“Well, thanks anyway.”

It was obvious that superior canine talent was called for. It is impossible for a herring to escape my nose. I walked through the crowd sniffing carefully. Yes! I found what I was looking for. A young lad held a bag which reeked of fish. I barked and pawed the ground near him.

“Looks like the Lord’s dog has found something.” Andrew pointed in my

direction. Peter closed in,

"What do you have in the bag, boy?" Peter was rather an imposing figure.

"Just five biscuits and two fish, sir." The boy was visibly frightened.

"Relax, lad. The Lord needs your meal. You want to give it to him, don't you?" Peter asked.

"Of course. He's welcome to all I have."

"Wonderful. Come along. We'll let you give it to Jesus in person." Andrew smiled and took the youngster by the hand. I barked and nudged the boy forward, I think he liked me. He patted my head as we walked to Jesus.

"What do we have here, Andrew?" Jesus cocked his eye at us. "Show him, son."

Andrew pushed the boy forward.

"Master, I have five biscuits and two fish. I'd be glad for you to have them if you're hungry." The boy smiled meekly.

"What's your name, my young friend?" Jesus inquired.

"Timothy, sir. My mother and grandmother Eunice brought me." His family came and stood by the boy.

"I hope the boy hasn't caused any trouble, Rabbi." Lois looked at Jesus with admiration.

"Not at all. In fact, he's been rather a help." Jesus turned and faced the crowd.

"Friends. If you can hear me, listen. God has provided us with food today. He knows your every need. Let us thank Him for his gifts. Heavenly Father, we praise your goodness to us. Thank you for the miracle you are about to work. Amen."

Then the most amazing thing occurred. Jesus broke the biscuits into halves. Each time he did more appeared. The crowd was amazed.

"Eli, did you see that? The Rabbi has produced over a thousand of those biscuits."

"We must be in the presence of the Messiah!"

Jesus continued to break up the bread and fish. He looked at Timothy and asked, "How about you? Aren't you hungry?"

"Thank you, Master." The boy took a piece of bread. "This is delicious! I don't remember mama cooking this well." The boy smiled at Jesus.

My master broke out laughing. "You're right. Everything tastes better from scratch."

Soon the crowd was gone and it was up to the men to gather the remaining food. It took most of the afternoon. When they had finished, there were twelve baskets full of fish and bread. I led the way as the men loaded the food into the boat. Jesus could really cook!

I loved the way my master took care of people. He was always concerned with how they felt. He saw their needs and met them.

Dirty Demon

Jesus helped anyone in need. The more the challenge, the better he liked it. We were sitting under a tree one day and he mentioned, "You know, Scribes, it's a curious thing. The better people think they are, the less they listen to me. The Pharisees believe they're wonderfully holy, but they're the ones who give me the most trouble."

Jesus was serious. The Pharisees chased us out of Jerusalem every time we came around. They were jealous. Jesus was incredibly popular. This was especially true during the religious holidays.

No matter what the Pharisees threatened, my master still did what he knew was right. We took a boat trip one day to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. I hopped out of the boat and heard the strangest sound. The noise came from the graves. Dogs can smell death. It scares us. I didn't want any part of this place.

"Don't be scared, Scribes." Jesus motioned for me to relax. I figured as long as Jesus was around we were safe. I followed him up the hill, but I sure wasn't happy about it. The disciples felt the same way. John was the first to speak out.

"Lord, I've heard about a man who lives here. It's said no chains can bind him. Are you sure this is a good place for a meal?" John looked around nervously.

"Don't worry, John. This is a nice view, don't you agree?" Jesus waved his arm across the vast expanse of water. The men nodded their heads somewhat reluctantly. They kept glancing towards the graves.

"W0000poaaaaaaauuuuuuuu!!" A terrifying wail came from around the hill.

"What was that, Lord?" Thomas squealed.

"Sounds like someone wants to join the party," Jesus grinned.

"That's not funny, Lord. This crazy man is bad business," Peter stated flatly.

"Here he comes, Jesus!" James shrieked and pointed towards a huge, hairy man dragging chains behind him. He smelled like rotten meat. His wild eyes jumped constantly. The men ran for cover. I was too scared to move.

"What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the most high God?" the demon hissed.

"Tell me your name, demon!" Jesus demanded. I had never seen my master like this. He seemed to grow larger. His face shone like the sun.

"My name is Legion, for we are many." His voice was dry as dust.

"Evil one, you are finished. Leave this man. I command it!" Jesus' voice rumbled like thunder.

God's power shook the demon. The air seemed thick and stuffy. My hair stood on end.

"Let us go into the swine, Jesus," the demon pleaded. "Be gone!" Jesus pointed his finger at the man.

The air stank. My eyes stung and I whined in fear. looked up and a huge herd of pigs ran down the mountain and

leaped off the cliff. The man in chains sat down calmly. The men came out from behind the bushes.

"What is your name? ,Jesus asked.

"My name is Jacob. Do I know you?"

"I am Jesus of Nazareth. A demon had you in his grip. Now you have a new chance. Sin no more."

"Thank you, Jesus. Please, let me come with you," Jacob implored.

"No, my friend, Stay here and tell the people what God has done for you. John, Peter. Help Jacob out of his chains," Jesus called, "Why do we get all the good jobs,

John?" Peter murmured sarcastically.

"I don't know." John leaned over and helped the man out of his shackles. Jesus led Jacob to the food. "Are you hungry?"

"Yes." The hairy man ate greedily.

We finished eating and returned to the boat.

"Goodbye, Jacob. Be kind to those around you. And Jacob. Take a bath. People don't understand your unique odor."

The hairy man sniffed the air. "I see what you mean."

The men got into the boat and soon we were sailing swiftly along. The spray in my face felt wonderful.

John moved closer to Jesus. "Lord, weren't you afraid of Jacob?"

"John, God loves even that hideous man. There is evil in you that my Father cannot stand, yet He sent me to you as well as Jacob."

My master was fearless, and so was I. That is as long as He was around!

No Quarter Notes

Jesus loved to sing. There were many times when his deep bass voice filled the valleys with music. Whenever he sang, people stopped to listen. It was easy to tell when Jesus was happy: just listen for his music.

My master made a lyre and played around the campfire for hours. His songs told stories that helped us know how to act in times of trouble. James and John often sang along with him. They clapped and added harmony. I enjoyed howling with them, but no one appreciated a good howl. Peter threw sticks, but never really tried to hit me.

One evening, Jesus sang especially well. All the notes were right from the heart. He usually used the words from a scroll he carried. I remember him singing about God's great love for us. The men listened, and tried to hold back their tears.

As we enjoyed the music, I heard a noise down below, recognized the sharp smell of incense that clung to priest's clothing. I crept down the hill to investigate. A man slowly made his way up the path. He stopped every few steps, cocked his ear and listened intently. I recognized him. He followed Jesus around town. He usually stood at the back of the crowds rocking from heel to toe. I stayed in the shadows and waited for him to pass. He soon made his way into the campsite.

Jesus saw him first. He never lost a beat. He waved him on over. The men seemed surprised but opened the circle to let him in. Jesus kept singing.

He was despised and they left him, A sad man,
with grief.

They were scared to look at him, Because of

their deeds.

He carried our sickness and sadness
inside.

To save us from death, Our evil to
hide.

They forced God
To strike him,
Because of their sins.

He was wounded And
crushed

For the wrongs They had
done.

He took the whole blame,
By his wounds we are healed.

James and John repeated the chorus. Andrew added the high notes. The camp was quiet for a moment. Jesus looked at the man in the black robe.

"Good to see you, Nicodemus. You're a long way from home." "I'm happy to see you, Jesus. I recognized the song. isn't it from the prophet Isaiah?" Nicodemus asked.

"Indeed," Jesus replied.

"You have a beautiful voice, Rabbi. I'm sure Isaiah would have been proud of you." Nicodemus stroked his beard and smiled at Jesus.

"Why do you stay so far from the city? It's quite a trip for an old man."

Nicodemus rubbed his aching back.

"Your friends the Pharisees have made Jerusalem a dangerous place for me to live," Jesus answered.

This man seemed different than the other temple priests.

But I still didn't trust him. I moved closer and growled. My teeth stood ready for work.

"It seems your dog doesn't like me." Nicodemus moved back.

"Scribes! Be kind to our visitor. Sorry, Nicodemus. He's afraid you'll try and hurt me, He's extremely protective."

"Yes, so it seems. Jesus, let me be frank. You are causing a great deal of trouble in the synagogue. Referring to God as your Father will get you killed, The Pharisees will not tolerate such blasphemy."

"My wise friend. I have no choice. I cannot go against who I am."

"But, Jesus. Won't you listen to reason?" Nicodemus seemed genuinely concerned.

"Nicodemus, will you listen to the truth? I am the Messiah. I am the one whom our people have waited for. I shall carry their sins upon my own body. Did you not hear Isaiah?

By my wounds you shall be healed. Can you not understand?"

The old man looked confused. The men around the campfire seemed worried.

They hated to hear Jesus talk like this,

"We need a sign, Jesus. We must have proof of whom you say you are." Nicodemus waved his hand emphatically.

"I will give you a sign. Such a miracle that men will speak of it forever. Yet

will you believe?" Jesus picked up his lyre again and began to sing.

All of them like sheep Wandered
away to stay. God has called his
lamb

For all their sins to pay.

He was beaten and wounded, Yet he
spoke not a word.

Like a lamb led to slaughter He died for his Father,

He took the whole blame,
By his wounds we are healed.

Jesus stopped, put down his lyre and looked at his men.

"My friends, did you hear my song'? I will not be with you much longer. I have a job to do. It requires a great price. I sing because I'm happy, but I have sad songs, too." Jesus bowed his head. A moment later he looked up, tears streaming down his face. "There is no halfway with God."

Jesus stood up and walked into the darkness. "Take care of Nicodemus for the evening, John."

"Yes, Lord." John helped the old man to his feet. "I'll make sure you get home safely."

"Thank you, young man."

The two men shuffled down the path. I laid by the fire wondering what my

master meant. Was he really going to be killed? My master was right. He knew some very sad songs.

Run Boy, Run!

I enjoyed being with Jesus. He thrived on exercise and was one of the fastest runners in all of Galilee. The Romans called him the "running Rabbi." They wanted him to compete in the games of Rome. I loved to watch their faces when Jesus refused. "I was not sent for Caesar's entertainment."

Jesus loved to run. His leg muscles were like iron and his arms broke firewood in a way that astounded even Peter.

One warm morning he approached his followers with an observation.

"Friends, you need more exercise. To feel the blood rushing, the heart pounding." Jesus looked wistful. "I think I've made discipleship too easy on you physically. I want others to see you and understand what is meant by good health. Our body is the temple of God."

"What should we do, Lord?" John questioned.

"We shall have a race," Jesus replied.

"I'm ready, Jesus." Thomas stepped forward. His enthusiasm disturbed the other men.

"Well done, Thomas. Now. What about the rest?" Jesus looked each man in the eye.

"I'll run." John started stretching.

Andrew was next in line. "Let's go, Rabbi."

Phillip and Bartholemew stepped forward. "We're ready, Jesus. "

Even Judas got into the mood and said, "I'll try and take it easy on these old guys, Lord." Judas was the youngest in the band of followers.

Eventually the rest of the disciples decided that the race was inevitable and they too agreed to go. All except Peter.

"Will you not come, Peter?" Jesus beckoned him forward.

"Lord, races are for children," Peter argued.

"And are you so old?" Jesus questioned.

"Rabbi, I can't keep up with you."

"Will you not try?" Jesus asked forcefully.

"Yes, Lord. I will try." Peter rose to his feet hesitantly.

"Excellent! Everyone ready? Let's go! Come on, Scribes, you run with me." Jesus took off his shoes and sprinted down the road. My master could run! He left everyone else in the dust. I could barely keep up with him. My tongue dangled out as I raced beside him. Later, I looked behind us and couldn't see any of the men. Jesus realized this too and stopped. "They couldn't keep up with us, boy."

I whined in agreement,

"Let's go find them."

We soon discovered James and John. Jesus circled behind the trail to watch them go by, I started to bark.

"Shhh. Quiet, boy. I want to hear what they're saying."

"Our Master sure has some weird ideas," James moaned.

"I don't even know where we're running to," John agreed. "You're right! Jesus didn't mention." James shrugged his shoulders.

"I'm exhausted. Let's take a break," John panted.

"Listen, brother. If we want to be rulers in Jesus' kingdom we better keep going," James insisted.

"I guess you're right. I just wish we had a destination." James and John hurried off.

"Go get them, Scribes." Jesus pointed at the two men. I raced down the road and nipped at John's heels.

"It's the Lord's dog. Jesus must be around here somewhere." I ran back to Jesus as they followed close behind.

"Jesus! We're glad to see you. Did we win?" John asked excitedly.

"Yes! You won." Jesus shook their hands.

"What do we get?" James inquired hesitantly.

"You get the satisfaction of having run the race." Jesus slapped him on the back.

"Thanks. I guess." James rolled his eyes.

"Now, sit back here and wait for the others," Jesus sat cross legged under an olive tree.

The rest of the disciples eventually straggled in. Eight of the twelve were together. They jogged slowly forward. We listened as they went by.

"Did you see the way James and John went running after Jesus?" Andrew asked.

"Those two brothers are always trying to get Jesus' favor." Thomas stated disgustedly.

"Is that right? You tried to keep up with them, too!"

Bartholemew reminded his friend of his earlier burst of speed. "I was afraid you would get lost," Thomas stammered.

"Of course," Thaddaeus laughed.

"Where did. Peter go?" Simon the Cananean inquired.

"I saw him sit down under that big tree." Andrew pointed behind him.

Jesus leaned over to me and said, "Get their attention, Scribes." I ran over to the group and barked.

"It's Scribes! Where's Jesus, boy?" Andrew asked. I ran over to my master.

"Lord! We made it." Thomas dashed over to Jesus.

"That was a quick pace you set for yourself, Thomas." Jesus patted him on the back.

"Yes, Lord. But I couldn't keep it up." Thomas looked down and kicked the dirt.

"My friends, I'm proud of you. You may not run as fast as I, but you kept going," Jesus told them.

"Thank you, Lord." Thomas spoke for the whole group.

"Where is Peter and Judas?" Jesus asked.

"I saw Peter sit down under that big olive tree," Andrew replied. "I haven't seen Judas since we left camp.

No one else knew where he was either.

"Fair enough. We'll wait for them here. How do you feel, men?" Jesus asked.

"I'm exhausted, Lord," Phillip sighed.

"Totally." Andrew laid down on his back breathing heavily.

"Though you are tired now, soon you will be stronger. Tomorrow you will feel sore because you used weak muscles. With exercise the body is strengthened. As you use your spiritual muscles of prayer and faith, they become stronger. Without work, nothing works," Jesus explained.

"Lord, here comes Peter!" Matthew spotted the gnarly fisherman lumbering down the road. He trudged along valiantly, sweat streaming from his forehead. He grimaced when he saw the other men.

I ran out to greet him.

"Last, I've come in last." Peter groaned.

"Not last, Peter, at last. We are here together. We only came in separately. We are a team, dear friend," Jesus consoled.

"Yes, Lord." Peter collapsed on the ground. I licked his tired face.

"Scribes!" Jesus called.

I hustled over to my master. "Go find Judas."

I ran back towards camp. He wasn't hard to locate. I found him back at the campsite.

"What are you doing, dog?" Judas mumbled and spit at me. I growled and pulled on his robe.

"Forget it, dog. I'm not going anywhere. I know Jesus too well. I'm sure this race was a trick. He wanted to see who would be the first back home, so I took a shortcut. It's easy when you know the way," Judas laughed hysterically.

He wouldn't budge. I finally gave up. It was about dark when the rest of the men strolled in,

"So, Judas! Did you not run with us?" Jesus asked.

"Yes, Lord. I won! See, I was here first, before any of you," Judas stated

proudly.

"Can you outrun me?" Jesus asked.

Everyone knew that was impossible. The Lord was too fast. "Uh, well, I guess I must have lost, my way. Before I knew it I was back home." Judas looked down at his sandals.

"This race was for us all, Judas. You were the only loser." "Oh. Sorry." Judas tried to sound mournful.

"Not as sorry as I," Jesus shook his head in disgust. I was so mad I ran over and bit Judas on the leg.

"Scribes, no!" Jesus commanded.

I let go and Judas kicked me in the stomach.

"You'll pay for that, dog!" Judas picked up a rock and started to throw it at me.

I stood there and growled at him. Judas raised his hand and Peter stepped in.

"Drop it, Judas," The fisherman's powerful hand tightened down. "I said, drop it."

Judas let the stone fall.

"I happen to like that dog. And if you ever kick him again, you'll answer to me." Peter's eyes shone with anger.

I ran over and nuzzled Peter's hand. At that moment I realized what hate was.

Judas hated me. Frankly, I didn't care.

"That's enough, men, you're tired. Go to sleep." Jesus pointed to their knapsacks.

"Scribes, come here," Jesus patted his hip. "I'm ashamed of you, dog. Go tell Judas you're sorry." Jesus pointed at Judas. I acted dumb.

"Scribes. Go over there and make up." Jesus used his serious voice.

I sauntered over to Judas. He looked at me, then glanced over at Peter who was watching. I rolled over in the dirt, trying my best to be submissive.

"Forget it, dog:" Judas turned back to the fire. I recognized that tone of voice. Judas was lying through his teeth, and everyone knew it. This man was trouble. I sensed it in my bones. I never trusted him again, and never turned my back on him.

Weapon Words

Jerusalem meant trouble. The Pharisees waited for us, ready to attack.

It was a holiday in Jerusalem: People feasted and children frolicked. The Pharisees weren't festive. They expected us. My master knew this. He was never afraid. Jesus was always in control of the situation. He relished solving problems.

As we entered the Golden Gate, the smells of the city overwhelmed me. After living for months in the country the spices of town were delicious. My nose burned with the rich odor of garlic.

"It's good to be here." Jesus looked at the crowds of people and smiled.

The other men weren't so sure.

"Lord, you know the Pharisees want to kill you. Remember John the baptiser," Peter asked worriedly. The fishermen was nervous in throngs of people.

"Calm down, Peter," Jesus insisted.

"Shall we go to the house for food?" John asked, rubbing his belly.

"Yes, let's go to my Father's house." Jesus strode towards the temple. I ran beside my master, eager for action. "Lord, are you sure you want to go there? It's terribly crowded now with all the visitors in town."

Matthew despised inconvenience.

"They'll make room." Jesus gave Matthew a wink.

Soon we reached the temple. The place reeked with incense and sweaty bodies. Animals crowded every square inch and pushed against the swarm of humanity.

A bearded man held up a cage and shouted at the top of his lungs, "Get your two sparrows! Special this week on sacrificial sparrows!"

"We've got a great deal on goats today, Rabbi." Another man pulled Jesus closer and showed him his herd.

Jesus was furious.

"How dare you! This is my Father's house. It is for worship, not bargains!" Jesus shouted.

The men watched as Jesus made his way through the courtyard. The horde pressed in tighter. The festival spirit pulsed in their veins. A buying frenzy surged through them.

"I can't take this any more." Jesus' eyes lit up with a wild intensity. He grabbed a whip and cracked it over his head. His carpenter arms rippled with strength. Jesus was awesome when he got mad.

"This evil must stop." He shoved the money changer's table over. Silver coins rolled everywhere. "You have made my Father's house a den of thieves!"

"You can't do that!" A merchant shouted.

"Watch me!" Jesus caused a riot in the temple.

I was amazed. He actually pushed the people and their animals out of the courtyard.

The temple was in an absolute shambles. Birds flew from their cages and goats wandered aimlessly in the streets. Eventually only the Pharisees and we were left. Jesus' chest heaved from the exertion. The Pharisees were livid. They made most of their money from commissions on the animals sold in the temple.

Jesus threw the whip down in disgust. Turning to the Pharisees he said, "This is your fault. You keep the letter and destroy the spirit of the law. The Temple is a holy place. You have made it into a market."

"And you, Jesus of Nazareth, have committed the ultimate blasphemy. How dare you call yourself God's son?" Caiaphus raged.

"I speak the truth while you weigh the people down with laws that your tradition has invented." Jesus pointed his finger at the high priest,

"Your days are numbered, carpenter. We have ways of dealing with blasphemers." Caiaphus glanced at the other Pharisees. They nodded in agreement.

"It is not yet my time to die. Yet when I do, I go to be with my Father in Heaven who sent me." Jesus abruptly turned and left. I ran close behind him.

Jesus stopped, looked back at the Pharisee and said, "And you, Caiaphus shall return to the pit!"

My master was furious. The phrase "return to the pit" rang in my ears. Tension crackled in the air. The men looked pale as they followed Jesus.

"Master, perhaps you were a bit harsh," John suggested.

"They are vipers, John. Their poison kills the people I came to save. They use the law for their own good." Jesus was outraged.

I walked beside Jesus and rubbed against his leg.

My master knew words; he used them like weapons when he had to.

Garage Sale

It was one of those days when all I could do was pant. The sun bore down mercilessly. The street was so hot I felt like my paws were being scorched.

Jesus was really popular that afternoon. The crowd pushed in from every side. All I saw was a forest of legs. Then I heard a fight break out.

"You! Get out of the way!" A brawny fellow shoved people to let him by. "Come on! Move it!" The throng parted to let him through.

A very well dressed man in a shiny silk robe followed him. "Calm down, Cephas. We're not in that big a hurry," the young man said.

"Right, master." The big man pushed his way to the front of the crowd then sat down beside me. I sniffed at him and moved closer to Jesus.

"Rabbi! I've heard so much about you. I am excited to finally meet you face to face. Please excuse my servant's brash manner." The young man shook Jesus' hand exuberantly.

"I'm pleased to meet you, too. What is your name?" Jesus asked.

"I am Barsabus Justus. Perhaps you have heard of me?" Justus seemed very proud.

"Indeed I have! You are well respected in the Temple," Jesus replied.

"The priests let me read the holy Scripture nearly every Sabbath," Justus stated.

"That's quite an accomplishment. What would you like from me?" Jesus inquired. I was curious, too.

"It's quite simple, Rabbi. How do I earn eternal life?" Justus asked eagerly. His eyes shone with anticipation.

"Earn?" Jesus asked. I crept closer to my master. This promised to be interesting.

"Yes, what must I do?" Justus insisted.

"What do the Scriptures say?" Jesus asked. My master stroked my neck.

"Love God with all your heart, mind and soul. I have kept this and every other law since I was a child," Justus waved his hand in the air as if swearing before a Judge. I could hardly believe this fellow.

"I believe you are correct. You are a good man, Justus. Yet, there is more you must do," Jesus told him.

"Tell me, Rabbi. What is it?"

"Sell all you have and give it to the poor. Then come follow me." Jesus stated flatly. Justus looked like he had been hit with a rock.

"But, Rabbi. I'm rather well off financially, Did I hear you correctly? Must I sell everything?" Justus was shocked. "Yes, Then follow me." Jesus looked him right in the eye.

"Perhaps there is a set of rules I could follow instead?" Justus whined. The rich man was at his wits end.

"No, Justus. Do what you must do." Jesus seemed sorry for the man. Not me. I thought he got what he deserved.

"If you insist, Rabbi." Justus looked devastated. "Come, Cephas, Let's go home."

The big man jumped up and followed Justus.

Jesus glanced at me. "He doesn't look well, Scribes. Watch him for me." My master pointed for me to follow them. I scrambled after the odd looking pair.

Justus and Cephas made their way through the twisting streets of Jerusalem. Suddenly, from out of the shadows, eight men emerged. They waved huge knives in the air. The leader had a scar on his face.

"Give us your money," the man swore, "or I'll cut you to ribbons."

Justus looked at Cephas. "Deal with these fellows, please."

"Yes, master." Cephas stepped forward and slapped the leader across the face. "Show me what you're made of, swine!"

The leader lunged forward with his knife. Cephas dodged to the left and brought

his knee up against the man's chin. Thud! The man slumped to the ground. The other seven in the gang surrounded him. Cephas was tough, but outmanned. I dove in to help.

I growled and, snapped my teeth in the air. My hair stood straight out. I bit the first man in the thigh and lunged for the next. Cephas gave the counterpunch. I wove in and out between the thugs keeping them off balance. I bit another on the hand.

The man dropped his knife and Cephas snapped the thug's head back with a bone-crushing blow. While we were fighting the main group, the leader woke up and held a knife to Justus' throat.

"Stop! Or your master dies," the leader snarled. The blade dug into the man's flesh.

"Let him be, Cephas," Justus gasped. I watched, barely able to control myself.

"Wise choice. I'll just leave now." The leader escaped down a dark alley.

I raced after them. The man slung his knife at me. It nicked my ear. I swore I'd get him for that. I kept close behind and watched them duck into a doorway. He slammed the door. I listened carefully and heard screams. It was Justus!

I had to find Jesus. He could sort this out. I ran back to where my master was preaching and barked hysterically.

"Scribes! What's wrong?" Jesus asked.

I kept barking.

"Let's go, boy!" Jesus raced after me.

Peter and John followed close behind. Soon we reached the alley where Justus was held. I heard more screams and scratched on the door. Jesus heard them, too.

"Justus! Good work Scribes. Stand back," Jesus said. "Peter, open the door."

Peter flexed his powerful legs and kicked the door down with one blow. Jesus and I followed Peter in.

"Rabbi" Justus moaned. His face was a bloody mess. "Leave us, Rabbi!"

The man pointed the knife in Jesus' direction.

"Put that down." Jesus' eyes burned like hot coals.

"Sure. Here you go!" The man with the scar threw the knife at Jesus. My master ducked just in time. The knife stuck in the wall.

"Let the man go." Peter said firmly.

"Make me," the man taunted.

"If necessary." Peter moved closer.

The man lunged at Peter. That was his first mistake. The big fisherman made a swift side-step and the man fell on his face. CRASH! The man was dazed, but stupid enough to try again. Peter rushed in and grabbed the man by the arm.

"I think you've done enough damage for today, Zadok." Peter wrestled the man to the ground.

"Peter. We meet again." Zadok gritted his teeth.

"This fellow is a wanted criminal, Jesus. He stole my nets once," Peter tightened his grip.

"That's quite enough, Peter. Take him to the governor." Jesus stated.

I hovered over Zadok and growled."You too, Scribes. Lethim be." Jesus commanded.

I moved back to Jesus' side. My master went over to Justus and untied him.

"How do you feel?"

"I hurt all over, Rabbi," Justus answered.

Jesus gingerly touched Justus' face.

"You were lucky my dog tagged along." Jesus patted me on my head.

"Thanks, Scribes."

I didn't know what all the commotion was about. I was just doing my job.

"I'll tell you one thing, Jesus. All my money didn't count for much when I thought I was going to die, You will be seeing me soon."

"I'm glad to hear that, Justus. Where's Cephas?" Jesus asked.

"Right here, Rabbi." The big man walked through the door, his cloak in tatters.

"My sons talk about you often. Thank you for helping my master."

Cephas took Jesus by the hand and squeezed.

"You've got a good dog there. He's a real fighter," Cephas said.

"I'm rather fond of him," Jesus said and smiled.

Cephas came over and rubbed me behind my ear.

"Believe it or not, he doesn't really like to fight," Jesus stated. "We have work to do, Come on, Scribes." I followed Jesus out the door.

The next morning the city was in an uproar. It seemed a ruler was selling all that he had. Beggars lined the streets. Someone was giving money away.

It was Justus!

"Rabbi! I'm glad you could come. Here, please take some of this money to help with your ministry." Justus handed a bag to Jesus.

"No. You have more worthy customers." Jesus looked at the crowd of beggars.

When Judas heard my master refuse money, he was livid. "Rabbi! How can you do that? Don't you realize how much good we could do with that money?" Judas moaned.

Jesus looked at Judas and shook his head.

"Justus, I'm very pleased with your decision. I look forward to seeing you soon." Jesus waved good-bye.

I looked back at Justus. He grinned from ear to ear. My master was right. Jesus had freed him from his golden chains.

Dead Or Alive

It was a tense situation. The Pharisees harangued Jesus for hours; and his followers constantly griped about being in danger.

Jesus and I were on our afternoon run when he admitted, "Scribes, we need a change of pace. The big city life has got us on edge."

We ran back to camp and Jesus asked the disciples to pack. "We need time to think," he told them.

"Right, Lord! I can't wait to leave." Peter got his clothes together and hurried the others up.

Soon we were on our way. Jesus was right. As soon as we got away from the city, everyone seemed to relax. It was good to hear bird sounds again. The smell of freshly cut

grass tickled my nose.

We hiked for about two hours when Jesus pointed towards a tiny inn.

"We'll stay there." Jesus smiled at his followers. I ran ahead. The inn keeper met me at the door.

"Scribes! Good to see you again. Where's Jesus?" Phillip was a rotund man known

for his friendliness. "There he is! Welcome, Rabbi! Welcome!"

"Phillip! You're looking well." Jesus gave him a hug. "Thank you, Jesus. And my leg hasn't hurt at all since you cured it." Phillip pulled up his robe to show Jesus his leg.

"Why, yes! That does look better, Phillip we're here to stay with you a few days," Jesus said

"Of course, Rabbi. Stay as long as you wish. My house is your house." Phillip

bowed deeply.

I took the opportunity to lick his bald head.

"Scribes! You little trickster. I've missed you, boy. Jesus, you and your men can have your usual rooms. Scribes, come with me. I may have a bone for you!"

That got my attention in a hurry. I scampered after Phillip into the kitchen. I really liked this man.

Later on that evening, after we were settled in, we gathered around the table for supper. Phillip's cooking was superb. The pressures of the big city seemed far away. Suddenly, I heard a noise outside the door. I barked and ran to see who it was.

"What is it, Scribes? Is someone there?" Phillip rose from his chair just as we heard a knock. Judas pushed the innkeeper out of the way.

"Come in," he said in a syrupy sweet voice. Judas loved to make time with the visitors. "Hello, Mary!" Judas waved for her to enter.

Mary ignored him. When the other disciples heard who it was, they jumped straight up. Mary was a very beautiful woman.

"Hello, Mary. What's the trouble?" Jesus asked.

"Master, my brother Lazarus is terribly sick," Mary looked absolutely distraught.

I rambled over and nuzzled her hand.

"Hello, Scribes." She gently stroked my ears. "Jesus, you must come quickly." Tears streamed from her eyes. Mary grabbed Jesus by the hand and tried to pull him out the door.

"Wait. It's not yet time." Jesus tried to calm her, "There's no time to waste, Rabbi. This is your friend, Lazarus! If you don't hurry he'll die." Mary fell to her knees. "Please, master, please." Her tears wet Jesus' feet. The scene about broke my heart. I headed out the door and started barking. I was sure we were going.

"Mary, you go on ahead. I'll be there soon. You trust me don't you?" Jesus asked.

"Of course," she sighed.

"Then go home." Jesus lifted her off the ground and dried her tears with his cloak.

I have to admit, I was confused. I had never seen Jesus refuse to help anyone. As the door closed, a fight broke out.

"Lord, if we go back to town we'll all be killed." Peter moaned.

"He's right, Jesus." Matthew agreed.

The other disciples were just as nervous.

"I couldn't believe you promised her we would come!" James shook his head.

"We'll stay. Don't worry," Jesus replied.

"Thank God we talked some sense into you for a change." Judas shook Jesus' hand vigorously.

But I knew my master. He wanted to see Lazarus. I was sure of it. Two days later I found out I was right. Jesus gathered us around him.

"Men, it's time to visit Lazarus."

"But, Lord! I thought you had changed your mind," Peter argued.

Matthew moaned.

"We'll all be killed," Andrew asserted.

"Men, Lazarus is dead." Jesus looked at his followers. The room was silent. "I stayed here so the power of God would be clearly shown. Now it's time to go."

Jesus gathered his knapsack and strode out the door. He never looked back. I grabbed my bone and followed.

The men looked totally confused. I heard Thomas say, "I don't know about you, but if I'm going to die I want to be with Jesus."

"I guess he's right. What choice do we have? Stay here for the rest of our lives?" Peter looked around the room.

John threw his knapsack over his shoulder and led the rest of the men out of the inn. "Thanks for all your hospitality, Phillip. We really appreciate it."

"You're welcome, John. Come again soon." Phillip waved goodbye.

Jesus glanced back at the inn and saw his men straggling after him. "They're a good team, Scribes."

I guess my master was right. They were scared to death, but they still followed.

We walked most of the afternoon before we reached Bethany. Mary ran out to greet us. Her beautiful face was swollen from crying.

"Jesus, Lazarus is dead. Why didn't you come sooner?" Mary wept on Jesus' chest. "He kept calling for you. He'd look at me and ask, 'Where's the Rabbi?' I thought you loved him, Jesus."

"I did, Mary. He was a very special man." Jesus was overcome with grief. Tears streamed down his rugged face. I covered my head and howled.

"Mary, I must see Lazarus." Jesus gripped Mary's shoulders. "But, Rabbi. He's been buried several days. There will be a smell," Mary stated.

"Open the tomb." Jesus looked at his men with his brown eyes now bloodshot from grief.

I ran to the tomb and started digging.

"Come on, John. Let's get it open." Peter walked to the boulder and shoved. James and John found a hand hold and pushed with all their might. Suddenly, the huge slab of stone rolled away from the mouth of the cave. Jesus looked up into Heaven and prayed, "Father, I know you always listen to me. I say this that their faith may be strengthened." Jesus opened his eyes and shouted, "Lazarus, come forth from the grave!"

I heard a noise from inside the tomb. It sounded like something shuffling towards the entrance.

"Praise be to God! It's Lazarus!" Mary was ecstatic. Lazarus was bound tightly with strips of linen. His face and body were completely covered. He could barely walk.

"Unwrap him! Give him something to eat," Jesus commanded.

My master seemed exhausted. It was as if a great deal of energy had suddenly left him. Lazarus fell on his knees before Jesus.

"Thank you, Lord. I knew you would come." The now living Lazarus laid his head at Jesus' feet,

"Rise, my dear friend. Let's go to the house. I'm sure Mary has something cooking." Jesus led Lazarus up the hill to the house.

Jesus knocked on the door. I followed close behind. "Rabbi! You finally show up! You're too late. Lazarus is," Martha stopped what she was saying.

"I have someone here who wants to see you." Jesus waved Lazarus forward. "Brother? Is it really you? But I wrapped your body

myself! How can this be possible?" Martha was stunned. "Yes, Martha, it's me." Lazarus hugged his sister. "Thank you, Jesus. Thank you." Martha wept with joy.

Others in the crowd were not so happy. One of the Pharisees came forward. "Rabbi. Is this your work?" The man asked. "God did this miracle through me." Jesus explained.

"I heard you claim to forgive sins. Is this true?" The man stroked his beard.

"The same power that raised Lazarus from the grave forgives sin." Jesus smiled. "Do you wish to know more?"

The Pharisee frowned and left quickly out the door. By now news of Lazarus' resurrection had spread throughout the

village. Hundreds of people came streaming into the house. "Lazarus! I heard you were alive and by Heaven it's true!" "Yes, Jacob, it's true." Lazarus shook his friend's hand.

"See, I'm no ghost!"

Outside, the crowd continued to grow.

Lazarus went outside to greet his neighbors.

"Yes, friends, I am alive. Praise God in the highest and his mightiest prophet, Jesus the

Christ!" Lazarus pointed at my master.

The crowd went berserk chanting, "Hosanna, to Israel's new King!" The mob wanted a ruler: a person capable of ridding Israel of the Romans. The Pharisees saw what was happening and ran back to the temple to tell the leaders.

Jesus wanted no part of this scene.

"It's time to leave." Jesus led us away from Bethany and into an open field.

"Master, only the Son of the living God can do works such as these!" Peter exclaimed.

"God has revealed this to you. Upon faith such as yours I will build my church." Jesus gazed deeply into Peter's eyes.

"Men, the crowd wants a king. I came to start a spiritual kingdom. It is not my duty to defeat Caesar. The people want me to take over. In but a few days they will ask for my blood. I tell you this that you may be strong.

Yet, the same power that raised Lazarus from the grave shall bring me back to life. Be ready. The time is near."

Jesus turned his back and walked deliberately down the hill towards Jerusalem. I couldn't fathom what Jesus meant that afternoon. Why would people would want to crown him king and then want his death? It just didn't make sense.

Jesus was a special man. Yet, Peter was right. Jesus was more than just a man. He was God.

Food For Thought

With the raising of Lazarus from the dead, the intensity of the crowd reached fever pitch. They wanted King Jesus.

He was mobbed wherever he went.

It was time of the Passover celebration in Jerusalem. Throngs of people waited for Jesus to make his grand entrance. They covered the road with palm branches.

This custom was reserved for royalty.

My master rode into town on a donkey. He waved to the people as he entered, and shook his head in disbelief. I think he realized how quickly this would change.

I followed closely and tried not to get kicked by the hoofs.

Later that evening we met in an upper room for supper. It had been an exhausting day. Jesus preached to enthusiastic crowds for hours. He looked worn out.

The men sat around a long table. They seemed to be in great spirits.

"Did you see the crowds today? Nothing can stop us!" Peter exclaimed.

"Jesus had the people in the palm of his hand," John mentioned.

"How about the way they cheered when he rode into town on the donkey?" James enthralled.

"Amazing!" Andrew grinned from ear to ear.

The disciples thought they were really important.

I strolled over to Jesus who was getting a basin of water.

He set it down in front of Matthew. And began to wash his feet. I saw that water and hid under the table. It wasn't my bath day!

"What are you doing, Lord?" Matthew asked.

"I'm showing you the type of king I came to be." Jesus scrubbed his calloused heel. He finished both feet and dried them off carefully.

"You're next, Peter." Jesus set the basin in front of the fisherman.

"But, Lord. I can't let you clean my feet. You are the master." Peter tried to shove Jesus away.

"Peter, I must wash your feet. I came to serve, not rule," Jesus replied.

"If you insist, Lord. Then wash my hands as well!" Peter extended his hands

"My friend, once you are washed you shall be clean. Yet one of you is not clean." Jesus glanced at Judas.

Judas squirmed in his seat.

"One of you plans to betray me." Jesus finished drying Peter's feet and stood up.

"Tell us who it is, Lord!" John thundered.

I knew exactly who Jesus was talking about. I stood in front of Judas and growled.

"Surely none of us would betray you!" Peter asserted brusquely.

"Tell them who you are talking about, Jesus," Judas asked.

"If you wish. Men the one who is to betray me shall drink from this cup." Jesus handed the wine to Judas. He leaned over to the betrayer and said, "What you have to do, do quickly."

Judas left the room.

"Where's Judas going?" James asked.

"Probably to get more food," Matthew said. The other disciples nodded in agreement.

I knew better. I slipped out the back door and caught up with Judas shuffling towards the temple.

"Why didn't Jesus try and stop me? It just doesn't make sense," he murmured.

As we neared the temple courtyard, Judas caught sight of me. "Go away, dog! Leave me alone!" Judas picked up a rock and threw it at me.

I waited for Judas to enter the temple. He peered around and slunk in. I rushed in as the door closed. The leader of the Pharisees seemed to be waiting for him.

"Judas! How good to see you again." Caiaphas shook his hand vigorously. "What news do you have for us?"

"Jesus knows I am here," Judas replied.

Caiaphas frowned. "He didn't try and stop you?"

"No. He told me come." Judas shrugged his shoulders.

"Jesus is a sick. We have ways of dealing with blasphemers." Caiaphas made a whipping motion with his arm.

I hid deeper in the shadows. These men wanted blood.

"He has confused the people. It is impossible to arrest him while he is surrounded by the rabble. When can we find him alone?" Caiaphas asked. "We will make it worth your trouble."

The leader of the Pharisees tossed him a bag of coins.

"We must do this for Jesus' own good. He's gone crazy. He actually believes he is the son of God!" Judas pushed the coins deep into his pocket.

"You're right, dear Judas. He must be stopped. You shall be the new hero of Israel." Caiaphas smiled and squeezed the traitor's shoulder.

"Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane. He only takes a few men. You can arrest him there."

I knew he was the traitor! I was furious. I wanted to attack, but Jesus had to be warned. I ran back to the upper room as fast as I could.

I scratched on the door. John let me in. "Where have you been boy? I've got some scraps for you!"

For the first time in my life I didn't have an appetite. Jesus looked at me. He guessed what I had seen and sighed.

"Men, the end is near. This shall be the last time we will celebrate the Passover together." Jesus held the bread out and blessed it. "Father, thank you for this bread. It is my body which shall be broken for many."

Jesus passed the bread around the table. "This is my body you eat."

My master then took the wine, lifted it up and prayed for God to bless it. He gave the cup to Peter and said, "This is my blood that you drink."

The men looked very confused,
"This is a strange saying, Rabbi. What do you mean?" John asked.

"I am the lamb that must be sacrificed for your sins. I am the new covenant. I must die that you may have eternal life." "Master, why must you die?" Andrew asked.

"It is the only way. Peter, James, John. It is time to pray. Come with me."
The men grabbed their cloaks and followed my master out the door.

I could not believe that Jesus was going there. He knew it was dangerous. Why wouldn't he listen to my warning? He knew what Judas was doing. Then why? Suddenly I remembered what he said, "I am the lamb that must be sacrificed." He was doing this on purpose.

The Arrest

We were on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus said something the men didn't like.

"You will all forsake me," he stated flatly.

"Who?" Peter questioned.

"All of you will turn your backs on me and hide." Jesus continued walking. I stayed by his side. Peter grabbed my master's shoulder.

"Jesus, even if everyone else leaves you, I will never turn away," Peter sounded positive.

"My friend, before the cock crows three times you shall say you don't even know me." Jesus looked directly into Peter's eyes.

Peter laughed. "Lord, that's impossible!"

Jesus frowned. "Come, watch with me and pray that you do not fall into temptation,"

We walked briskly to the entrance of the garden. Jesus motioned for them to sit by an ancient olive tree. "Stay here, and pray."

"Yes, Lord," they answered.

Jesus knelt beside a large boulder. I followed behind him and laid down next to his feet. Jesus began to pray. "Father, I know the end is near. Must I drink this bitter cup of death? There is so much more that needs to be done?"

I heard a powerful voice reply, "My Son, there is no other way. You must be their perfect sacrifice. Only you can save them from their sins."

"Yes, Father. Your perfect will be done."

Jesus rose to see his men. They were sleeping like babies.

I grabbed Peter's robe, shook it and growled. He awoke with a startled expression on his face.

"What's the matter?" He stammered. The two brothers awoke with a start.

"Could you not stay awake for even this little while?" Jesus seemed very sad.

Jesus left them again to pray. He spoke with great intensity with his Father.

"Is there no other way to accomplish your will? What will happen to my men when I leave them? They will be like sheep without a shepherd."

"We shall give them another helper, Son."

Jesus again arose to speak with his men. They were sound asleep.

"My dear friends," he said, "can you not stay awake and pray with me?"

The three disciples nodded their heads and promptly returned to their dreams. Jesus went back to his rock to pray. He seemed angry.

"Why can't my Jewish countrymen see me for who I am? I came to be their Messiah. I was sent to save the very men who want to kill me. Father, how can this be?"

"Men are strange, Son. Yet, you are their only hope. They are too evil to come into my presence alone."

"Then it must be done. I will die for their sins. I accept your will." Jesus returned to his men and found them sleeping for the third time.

"Wake up. My betrayal is here." Jesus pointed to a crowd of guards led by Judas. Their torches illuminated the garden. I was frightened. I could smell the fear in Peter and the two brothers. Jesus stiffened as Judas came over and kissed him on the cheek.

"Must you betray me with a kiss?" Jesus asked.

I suppose this was the signal for the Romans. The guards rushed over and grabbed Jesus. I was furious. I bit one of the soldiers on the leg. Peter pulled out his knife and slashed one of their ears off. James grabbed the other guard and started choking him.

"Stop! This is God's will. I will have no more fighting. Men, go home," Jesus commanded. They turned and fled. I followed my master through the streets to the temple. The guards took him to see Calaphas.

"So! The blasphemer is back! Where is your crowd to protect you now, Jesus?" Caiaphas sneered.

"I am here because it is God's will," Jesus answered. "Call the first witness." Caiaphas motioned for the testimony to begin. An ugly fellow with a sparse beard came forward and said, "I heard Jesus boast he could rebuild the temple in three days." "What do you have to say to that, Jesus?" Caiaphas screamed. Jesus said nothing.

"You have no answer? Very odd. Jesus, do you claim to be God's son?" Caiaphas pointed his finger at my master.

"So you say," Jesus looked at his accuser.

"Did You hear that? He admits to blasphemy! We need no more witnesses. Elders of the council, what do you think of this mere man?"

The men were outraged. They spit on Jesus and beat him. My master suffered it all in silence.

It was more than I could stand. I started up the stairs to be with Jesus. He saw me coming and shouted, "No, Scribes. Go home."

The Pharisees pounded him with their fists. His face was bruised and bloody.

I ran out of the courtyard crushed by my master's rejection. I noticed Peter standing by a fire.

I walked up to him and sat down. One of the women looked at Peter and said, "Aren't you one of Jesus' followers?"

"Who me? I don't even know him," Peter replied.

Another woman said the same thing, "I know I saw you with him."

Peter was getting angry. "You're wrong, woman! I've never been with him."

"I saw you, too." A man around the camp fire also spoke up. "I don't know him!" Peter shook his fist in the man's face and hurried off into the darkness.

As he turned to go, a rooster crowed. Peter stopped in his tracks. He realized what he had done. He had just betrayed Jesus. He fell to his knees, his body wracked with sobs. I came over and licked him on the face. "At least you still like me, Scribes." Peter hugged my hairy body. I left him crying in the darkness.

Why did Peter deny Jesus? Fear, I guess. I knew one thing, Jesus needed me. I had never disobeyed my master before, but I couldn't leave him now.

The Trial

I could still hear Peter weeping as I ran down the trail to find Jesus. It was simple, just follow the crowd noise. Jesus stood in front of Pilate, the Governor. I squeezed through the crowd of legs to get to the front.

"Are you the king of the Jews?" Pilate asked.

Jesus said nothing. I crawled forward to get a better view. "This man is a blasphemer!" Caiaphas spit on Jesus. "He deserves the cross."

"He incites the people against Rome!" A priest yelled. Pilate looked at Jesus and said, "Don't you hear what they're saying? Say something in your defence!"

Pilate looked puzzled when Jesus still remained silent.

Why wouldn't Jesus defend himself? I couldn't understand it. Why would he let these people abuse him?

"You are a very strange man, Jesus of Nazareth," Pilate rubbed his beard.

Suddenly, the Governor got an idea.

"Citizens!" he shouted, "This is a time of great feasting in Jerusalem. In honor of this special occasion I will release a prisoner. Whom do you want: Jesus or Barabbas?"

I watched as the Pharisee wandered through the crowd. They told the people, "Destroy Jesus. If he is God's son, he will save himself."

"Jesus is a blasphemer, he deserves the cross!"

I hated the Pharisees. I ran to one and sunk my teeth into his leg.

"Horrible dog! Get away!" The man kicked me in the side. I felt a rib crack. I hobbled back to the front of the crowd. The mob was furious,

"Jesus promised to free us from the Romans!" One man yelled. What a lie! I knew Jesus hadn't said anything like that.

The people seemed thirsty for blood: my master's. Was there nothing I could do?

The throng screamed, "Give us Barabbas! Free Barabbas!" I looked at Pilate. He appeared utterly surprised.

"How can you say that?" he asked. "This man has done no harm. Why should you want his death?"

The crowd would not listen to reason. My fur bristled as I heard the words, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Not the cross. Surely they wouldn't nail him to a cross. I looked at my master. He was wracked with pain. Yet, he never said a word.

The Pharisees stood on the platform and incited the crowd. They waved their arms up and down and screamed for Jesus to be crucified. I can still hear the roar of the mob, "Crucify him."

Pilate was mortified. He had no taste for murder. He walked over to a basin of water and washed his hands.

"I will not be a part of this. I will not condemn an innocent man to death. Do with him as you will," Pilate left the stage.

The mob was near riot with blood-lust.

I couldn't believe what I had heard, He knew Jesus had done nothing wrong! Why was he leaving?

Caiaphas stepped up and said, "His blood will be upon us for all generations." He smiled to himself.

The soldiers took Jesus and ripped the cloak from him. The guard cracked the whip on Jesus' back. Flesh tore from bone. Jesus sagged under the impact of the blow.

I could take it no more. I ran to the soldier and grabbed the whip in my teeth. I felt his fist smash my face. I fell back in a daze.

"Take this, mongrel!" The soldier raised the whip and cracked me on the back. I felt the fur fly off my body. I

screamed in pain. Jesus realized what had happened. "Leave the dog alone. Your business is with me."

The guard turned and sneered at Jesus. "You want more, eh?"

Then more you shall have." The man flogged Jesus without pity.

My master had saved my life a second time. I crawled off to lick my wounds.

The soldier smiled as he cracked the whip. He gave Jesus thirty-nine lashes. Forty killed a man.

As they hit him the final time, Jesus sank to his knees. How could anyone endure such pain? It did not seem possible.

The guards untied Jesus and one of them had an idea.

"They call him the king! Perhaps he needs a crown." The soldier returned with a crown woven from thorns.

"How do you like the fit, your majesty?" The Roman pushed the thorns into Jesus' forehead. Blood trickled into his eyes.

The sight of my master being tortured like this was horrible. I thought it must be a bad dream. I was wrong. It was true.

"The king needs a robe!" Another soldier draped a purple cloak over my master's bloody back.

"Hail, Jesus! King of the Jews!" They taunted.

"Men! Stop this foolishness. Get to work," The centurion commanded.

The soldiers took the robe off Jesus' body and put his ragged cloak back on.

"Take him to Golgotha." The soldiers shoved Jesus down the hall.

Golgotha: the place of the skull. The hill where men were hung on crosses. How could this be happening? Jesus! How could they do this to you?

I dragged my body down the street. It was time for the crucifixion.

Cross Purpose

I followed the soldiers as they shoved Jesus out to the street.

"Here! Carry this!" One of the soldiers demanded,

He lifted the cross onto Jesus' back. The rough hewn wood ground into my master's mangled flesh. By this time Jesus could barely stand. I crawled over to my master and rubbed against his legs.

"Scribes. Why didn't you go home, boy?" He looked down at me and ran his tired hand across my matted fur,

The muscles in his back rippled as he pulled the cross up the hill. I tried to help but there was nothing I could do.

Suddenly, I caught a glimpse of someone I knew. It was the rich ruler's bodyguard!

Perhaps he would help. I ran over and pulled on his cloak.

"Scribes! What is it?" He asked.

I dragged him into the street, "Me? Yes, you're right." Simon lifted the cross onto his own shoulders,

"Thank you, friend." Jesus smiled at the big man.

The two men climbed slowly up Golgotha. I stayed near my master. When they reached the top of the hill, he laid the cross on the ground.

I licked Simon's hand. "I just wish I could do more, Scribes."

I thought the same thing.

Jesus had lost so much blood during the flogging that I wondered how he could still be alive.

"Lay on top of this your highness!" The soldiers laughed hysterically. One of the soldiers grabbed three big spikes and hammered them into Jesus' hands and feet.

The sight of those nails going into my master's hands made me whine with pain. Jesus never said a word, never cried out.

"At least this one dies like a man," a soldier stated. If only he knew how much of a man Jesus really was.

The soldiers lifted the cross and dropped the end into a hole. It landed with a thud. I winced at the sound and howled.

Suddenly, I felt a hand on my back. I turned and started to run when I realized it was John.

"Scribes. Looks like they whipped you too," John rubbed my head.

We stared at our master hanging from a cross. He appeared utterly exhausted. Jesus looked up and said, "I am thirsty."

The soldiers thought they would have more fun. They took a sponge, mixed it with vinegar and stuck it up to Jesus' mouth. My master refused .

If only I was stronger. I would have shown those soldiers the meaning of pain.

Jesus watched as the soldiers threw dice for his clothes. Above his head was the inscription, 'This is Jesus, King of the Jews.'

Two men were crucified with my master; one on the right of him, the other on the left. The Pharisees refused to leave Jesus alone.

"If you are really the son of God, like you say, why don't you come down from that cross?" They taunted.

"He saved others, why can't he save himself?" Another jeered,

I wondered the same thing until I remembered what Jesus had said, "I am to be the sacrifice." There was a purpose in Jesus dying on the cross. All the sins of the whole world rested squarely on his shoulders.

As we watched the life seep slowly out of Jesus, the s darkened. It was as if the great light was going out. Jesus moaned, "My God, why have you left me?"

I looked up at my master and tears welled in my eyes. It seemed even his Father had let him down.

The thief on the left of Jesus called to my master, "Rabbi, save yourself, and us!" The other criminal replied, "Do you not fear God? We are getting the punishment we deserve. This man has done nothing deserving of death. Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom."

Jesus looked over at the man and whispered, "Today, we will be together in paradise."

I couldn't understand that. Did he have a secret plan for getting off of the cross? I wished it were true, but I really didn't believe it.

The crowd wanted more entertainment. They threw rocks to hear the men moan. Jesus raised his head and said, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing." His head slumped to his chest.

In a few minutes Jesus opened his eyes and looked down at John. Jesus' mother stood with him.

"Mother, behold your son. Son, this is your mother." John put his arm around Mary when Jesus said this. I nuzzled Mary's hand. Her tears soaked my back. By now it was completely dark. The crowd was frightened because it was only three in the afternoon.

Jesus looked up into heaven and said, "Father, into your hands I give my spirit."

As he said these words, the ground began to shake. My master was dead.

How can I express what I felt at that moment? It was as if everything good had been taken away. What use was life without Jesus? Why should I go on? I looked at my bleeding master, and howled.

Crawling under Jesus body, I leaned against the cross, felt his blood drip onto my fur. With every drop I felt more alone.

Tomb--It May Concern

I was covered with Jesus' blood when Joseph of Arimathea came forward.

"John, I have permission to bury the body of Jesus. Will you help me?" He asked tearfully.

John nodded. He walked up to the Centurion and said, "We have come to take the body of our friend."

"Wait. He must be dead for certain before I can release the body." The soldier took his spear and ran it up into Jesus' side.

I growled as he did this. I was sick with grief and didn't care what he did to me. The soldier waved his spear at me. I tried to bite him when John grabbed me.

"The dog doesn't know what he's doing. He's still trying to protect his master."

The soldier walked away.

John got on Joseph's shoulders and pulled the nails out. Jesus' body fell directly on me. His flesh was still warm. How I hated the Pharisees for what they had done. I wanted revenge.

John lifted my master's body off the ground. "The Lord was a big man," Joseph murmured.

"Indeed," John replied.

I stumbled down the path trying to keep up with the others. My hair was caked with the dried blood of Jesus.

I picked up the slight scent of spices. Exactly the type that Mary used on Jesus. I was right! The caves were connected. Soon, I was with my master. I wanted to die with Jesus. Life was worthless to me. I settled down and awaited my demise.

Time meant nothing to me in that darkness. Images of my master flashed in my brain. I remembered the time he had walked on the water. I thought about all

the people he fed the afternoon on the hillside. I pondered the many times we had run together. My mouth was swollen with thirst I was so sore I couldn't move. So this is what it's like to die, I thought.

Suddenly, I noticed a ray of light. Where could it be coming from? The cave was totally sealed. I thought my mind was playing tricks. Suddenly, the tomb was filled with light, brighter than the brightest day. It was coming from Jesus' body.

The strips of linen that bound his body slowly began to peel away. First his legs were revealed, then his arms and chest. Finally, the face I had come to love appeared. Jesus opened his eyes. "Scribes. Somehow I thought you might be here. Come here, boy."

I jumped into his arms.

"You're quite a mess." Jesus stroked my matted fur. "Let's take care of that, shall we?" Jesus raised his hand and I felt no more pain. My wounds were healed. My fur was spotlessly clean. I felt like a puppy.

I licked Jesus' face. "Stop, Scribes. That's enough, boy. I know you love me." Jesus laughed as I gnawed on his beard. "Get down, boy. You shouldn't touch me now. Let's get out of here." Jesus touched the rock and it rolled away. Suddenly, Jesus disappeared. I felt the warm sunshine on my fur and wondered how the soldiers would explain this!

Where was Jesus? I had to find him. My master was alive! Jesus was alive! My heart was so filled with joy I thought I would burst. How beautiful the world looked: My master was really alive. "What was that?" One of the soldiers awoke with a start. "I heard it too! Great Athena, the stone has been rolled away, The Rabbi is gone!" Another soldier gripped his face in fear. To fail an assignment meant death. The soldiers ran off to tell the Centurion what had happened. Soon I saw Mary and the other women walking up the trail. They were still crying. I barked a

greeting. "Scribes! What's going on here?" Mary rushed into the grave and realized that the body was gone. "What have they done with Jesus?" The women were frantic. "Someone has stolen his body." They wailed in their grief.

Suddenly, a man in shining white clothes appeared.
"Who are you looking for?" He asked politely.

Mary spoke up, "Someone has taken the body of our Lord."

"The one you are looking for is not here. He has risen. Go tell Peter and the other disciples what you have seen and heard," the man stated.

The women nodded and ran off to tell the others. I followed them down the city streets.

Jesus was alive! What a wonderful day it was! My heart sang with joy.

Reach For The Scars

I scampered down the trail after the women. I felt like I was floating on air I was so happy. Mary ran up the stairs followed by the other women. She could barely contain her excitement as she banged on the door.

"Let me in!" She shouted.

The door opened hesitantly.

"Who is it?" Peter peered out.

"It's me. Jesus is alive!" Mary screamed with joy. "What?" Peter asked. The heavy wooden door opened wide. I ran into the room.

"I just went down to the grave. Jesus is not there. talked with an angel of the Lord. He said Jesus had risen!" Mary exclaimed.

Peter grabbed his coat and rushed down the stairs. John followed right behind him. They nearly tripped over me in their hurry.

"Let's go find Jesus, Scribes!" Peter yelled.

I had never seen the big man run so fast. I raced back to the grave with them. John and I got to the grave first. John peered inside but Peter ran right in.

"Mary is right. The Lord is gone. How can this be? Who could have taken his body?" Peter moaned.

They still didn't believe what had happened. Jesus was alive!

"Let's go back and tell the others," John said.

We walked back to the upper room. John and Peter looked around for soldiers.

"I bet it was the Pharisees. They would stop at nothing to make Jesus look bad. Killing him just wasn't good enough. Now they desecrate graves." Peter clenched his fist in anger.

I rubbed up against Peter's leg.

"What do you want, Scribes? What are you so happy about?" Peter groaned. "We've lost our master, the Romans will probably kill us next, we might as well go back to our nets."

I jumped in front of them.

"Scribes, you look different. Where are the cuts on your back from the whip?" John asked,

The two men looked at each other.

"Only Jesus could have healed him. Is it really possible, Peter. Could Jesus really be alive?" John smiled from ear to ear.

"He did raise Lazarus." The two men quickened their pace to the house. I led the men up the stairs. Peter gave the secret knock. "Who is it?" Andrew whispered.

"Peter and John. Let us in."

The door opened and we slipped in.

"The women were right," John stated. "The Lord is gone." "Not gone, risen," Mary corrected.

"We all loved Jesus, Mary, but we have to be realistic. Someone must have stolen the body. It's the only explanation that makes sense," Peter asserted.

Why couldn't they believe that Jesus was alive? They had seen the miracles he performed. Their unbelief didn't make sense to me.

"I know one thing, I won't believe he's alive until I see the scars in his hands," Thomas said.

"Looking for me?" Suddenly, Jesus stood in front of us. The men stared in stunned silence.

"Rabbi, is it really you?" Thomas asked.

"Come here, my friend. Feel the scars on my hands. Do you now believe?" Jesus replied.

I ran over to be with my master. Jesus rubbed my ears. Thomas came over slowly and touched Jesus' hand.

"My Lord and my God! I believe." Thomas fell to his knees.

The other men crowded around and showered Jesus with love. "Jesus. Can you ever forgive me?" Peter stared at the floor in shame,

"Peter, you shall be the rock on which I build my church. Of course I forgive you." Jesus reached out to Peter and squeezed his hand. Peter wept with joy. I jumped up and down with delight. Jesus was back.

"How did you get here, master?" James asked.

"I have a new body. Physical boundaries no longer constrain me." Jesus replied.

"Will you leave us again?" John questioned.

"Yes, my beloved friend. Yet, don't be afraid. I shall give you another helper." Jesus squeezed his shoulder. What did he mean by that? He was going to leave! No. What had I done that he must leave us? I whined pitifully.

"Now, Scribes. Be a brave boy." Jesus patted me on the head.

I didn't care where he was going. I wanted to be with him.

"Men, I must leave you now. Meet me tomorrow morning on the hill that overlooks the temple." And with that Jesus disappeared.

I didn't understand. I knew Jesus loved us, so why did he have to leave? I kept thinking it must be something I had done.

Jesus was alive, yet he was leaving. I was happy and sad at the same moment. I laid down by the fire and sulked.

Heaven Bound

The day of departure had come. Tears filled our eyes as Jesus led us to Bethany. I walked as close as I could to my master.

"You have been a good friend to me, Scribes. There were many times you made me happy. I shall miss you." Jesus turned to his followers. "Friends, it is time for me to return to my Father. Stay in Jerusalem until the Spirit comes upon you. Then you will be filled with power."

I whined as he said this. I didn't want power, I wanted Jesus,

"It is important for you to tell people what has happened. First in Jerusalem, then Judea and to all the world." Jesus waved his hand towards the far horizon.

"The world needs what you have to give. You are my messengers. You must tell people the way of salvation. I am the door. No one comes to the Father but by me. Tell them to repent of their sins, and pray for me to come live in their hearts.

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Farewell, my friends. Remember, I am with you always, even until the end of the Earth,"

I ran over to Jesus barking madly.

"Scribes. I must leave. Take care of my men for me." Jesus wept as he patted my head.

Jesus bowed his head and prayed.

"Father, bless these my friends. Watch over them. Help them to spread the good news of eternal life. Please receive me into your holy presence."

With those words the sky was filled with a light brighter than the sun. Jesus slowly began to rise above the Earth. I leaped up and grabbed his cloak. Into the air I was lifted. Soon we were in the clouds. I closed my eyes in fear.

I heard music. I opened my eyes and we stood before a great white throne. I looked up and saw Jesus ascending the stairs. He sat down beside his Father.

"Hello, Son."

"Hello, Father." Jesus smiled at his Father.

"It seems you brought a guest." The Father pointed at me. "Scribes! What are you doing here?" Jesus grinned.

"He must love you a great deal, Son."

I ran up the stairs and laid my nose at Jesus' feet,

"He does, Father. You can't stay, Scribes. This is no place for you. Gabriel!" Jesus called the great Archangel.

"Yes, my Lord?"

"Take my little friend back to Earth." Jesus stroked my head one more time.

Gabriel picked me up in his powerful arms. Down we flew towards Jerusalem. "Sorry, Scribes. I know you love him." Gabriel placed me gently on the ground and vanished. I looked around and realized we were in the Garden of Gethsemane.

"Scribes! Scribes? Where are you, boy?" I heard Peter calling my name. I ran over to the fisherman.

"Scribes. Where have you been? We've been looking all over Jerusalem for you." Peter picked me up and squeezed.

"John! I found him!" Peter shouted.

"Scribes. We've been worried sick. Come on we've got a juicy bone for you at home." John rubbed my ears.

Jesus was right. These fellows needed me.

I looked back at the rock where Jesus had prayed so many times. He stood there watching. With a smile he waved goodbye. I was still the Lord's dog.