

Lesson 7: Contrition

Today's Bible Story

The Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, sentenced Jesus to death on a cross, even though he knew that Jesus had done nothing wrong. Two criminals were led out at that same time to be put to death with Jesus.

The soldiers came to the place called Golgotha (*GOL-ga-tha*), which means "The Skull." There they nailed Jesus to a cross. They also nailed the two criminals to crosses, one on each side of Jesus.

As they did this, Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive these people! They don't know what they're doing."

While the crowd stood there watching Jesus, the soldiers gambled for his clothes. They rolled dice to see who would get his cloak.

The leaders who came by insulted Jesus by saying, "He saved others. Now he should save himself, if he really is God's chosen Messiah!"

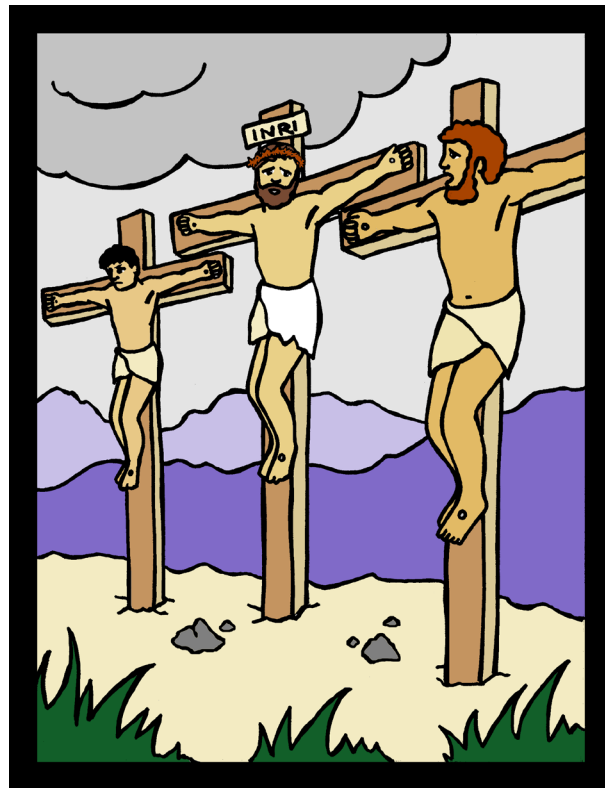
The soldiers also made fun of Jesus. They brought him some sour wine to drink and said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!"

At Pilate's orders, above Jesus they had posted a sign that read, "This is the King of the Jews."

One of the criminals hanging there complained to Jesus, saying, "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself, and save us!"

But the other criminal told the first one to be quiet. He said, "Don't you fear God, even when you are dying? You and I deserve to be punished for what we have done, but this man has not done anything wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, please remember me when you come into your kingdom!"

Jesus replied to the man, "I promise that today you will be with me in paradise."



From Luke 23:32-43

Bible Rhyme

At a place they called "The Skull,"
Jesus was led up that hill.
There they had him crucified
with a robber on each side.

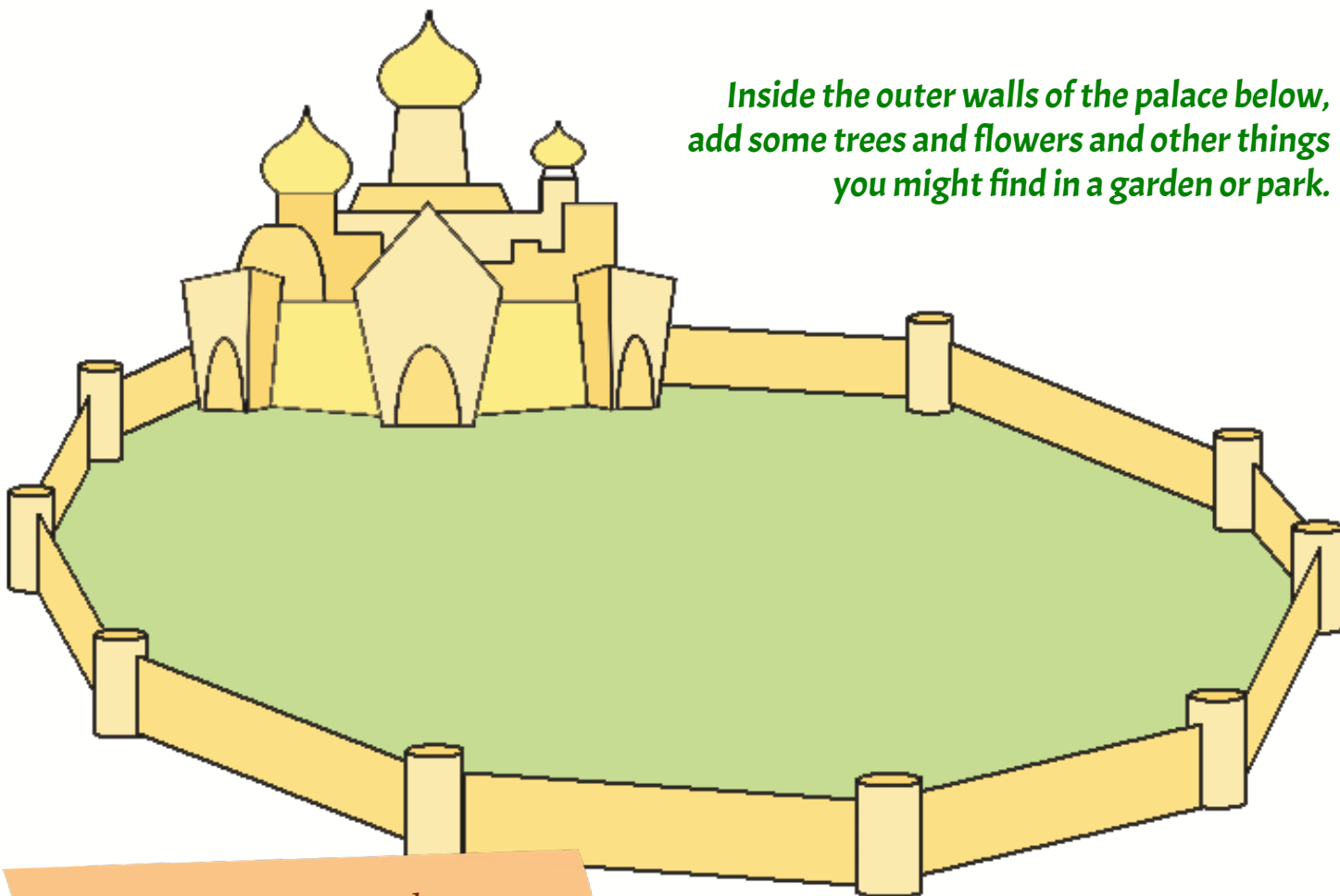
People mocked and made a joke;
soldiers gambled for his cloak.
"Save yourself," the people said.
"If you don't, you'll soon be dead!"

Repenting, one of those who hung there
asked for Jesus to remember.
Jesus told him, "You will be
today in paradise with me."

With Jesus in Paradise

In biblical days, the word “paradise” referred to an enclosed garden, park, or orchard that was often found near the palace of a king. This Persian word means “surrounded by a wall.” It is the combination of two words: “pairi,” which means “around,” and “daezo,” which means “wall.”

Inside the outer walls of the palace below, add some trees and flowers and other things you might find in a garden or park.



The Bible uses the word “paradise” to refer to the place where faithful people go to rest after they die, to await resurrection on the last day.

When Jesus told the repentant thief, “Today you will be with me in paradise,” he was letting the man know that when he died, he would be together with Jesus in a beautiful and peaceful place.

In the picture above:

- **Label the palace Heaven.**
- **Label the enclosed garden Paradise.**
- **Draw yourself in the garden.**
- **Draw Jesus standing next to you.**

As people of faith, Jesus promises us that we, too, will never be apart from him – even when we die!