

Three Wives and the Resurrection

CHARACTERS: 3 Adult Females, wives of members of the Sanhedrin

Joanna - considers the resurrection a possibility by the end

Dinah - wife of a moneychanger

Tamar - wife of Caiaphas, the High Priest

PROPS: None

COSTUMES: Biblical

SETTING: none specified

RUN TIME: 7 minutes

FK reading level: 5.8

JOANNA: (*Put out*) How many of these impromptu meetings is your husband Caiaphas going to call? He's been dragging our husbands, the members of the Sanhedrin out of our homes at all hours of the night.

DINAH: They have other things to do, Tamar. Business for one thing. My husband makes a lot of money around Passover with all the traveler's needing money changed to the temple coin.

TAMAR: (*Haughty, elitist. Puffing herself up*) My husband is the Chief Priest in the temple here in Jerusalem. Do you or your husband question his authority?

DINAH: No....

JOANNA: He does seem to be botching this whole Jesus of Nazareth affair.

TAMAR: (*Angry*) Be quiet, Joanna. The disciples of Jesus are spreading the story that he rose from the dead. Something has to be done.

DINAH: My husband says your husband certainly used enough of the temple treasury on this whole affair. Paying off Judas Iscariot to betray him, bribing the Romans.

JOANNA: Dragging our men out of bed to have that trial in the middle of the night.

DINAH: And then they had to stand around all morning while this Jesus was on trial, trying to keep the crowd whipped up. Getting them to scream for his crucifixion. That was no easy task since many of the people in the crowd had witnessed his miracles. My husband lost a whole day's business. Pretty inconvenient.

TAMAR: It was necessary. Your husbands are members of the Sanhedrin. It is their duty to put the good of the Jewish nation before their businesses. (*Pointedly to Dinah*) No matter how inconvenient. (*Dinah makes a face at her when Tamar turns away*)

JOANNA: But this isn't some national crisis. It's one man.

TAMAR: As my husband said, it is better for one man to die than the whole Jewish nation to perish. That Jesus of Nazareth was a menace to all of us. He had to be dealt with. He had to die. (*Contemptuously*) He was nothing but an upstart trouble maker. (*Haughty*) He should have kept to his place as a carpenter in Galilee, not gotten involved in matters that pertain to his betters.

DINAH: What is the meeting about tonight?

TAMAR: Stopping the resurrection rumors.

JOANNA: Didn't he go to Governor Pilate and ask him to seal the tomb and to put armed guards at the entrance to prevent the disciples from stealing the body.

DINAH: (*Disgusted*) Yes, my husband says he played right into the hands of the Christians by doing that. It actually strengthened their case for the resurrection. Posting guards destroyed the story that the disciples stole him away. For crying out loud, the tomb was guarded day and night by an entire detachment of Rome's finest.

JOANNA: Didn't they also try to spread the rumor that Jesus was not really dead when they laid him in the tomb, that he woke up from his coma and escaped from the tomb.

DINAH: Yes. No one believes a man who had been beaten repeatedly on the head, flogged to near death and suffocated on a cross for six hours would have enough strength to roll away a 2000-pound rock. Besides, how would he get past the guards?"

TAMAR: That's why Caiaphas invented the story that the guards fell asleep.

JOANNA: (*Angry*) People won't believe that. There isn't a single person in Jerusalem who believes that those highly trained Roman guards all fell asleep at once. Everybody knows that the penalty for falling asleep on guard duty is death.

DINAH: The fact that the guards are still alive tells everyone that they didn't fall asleep on duty. If there wasn't a payoff somewhere they would have been executed.

TAMAR: (*Defensively*) Caiaphas saw to it that the guards were transferred out of town, (*Discouraged and perplexed*) but rumors of the resurrection are more numerous than ever. They should have resealed the tomb and not let anyone go near it. Then, if the body of Jesus turned up missing they could have found another body and put it in the tomb and kept everyone out until the body decomposed, then paraded the disciples of Jesus by the open tomb and showed them that their precious little messiah was still dead.

DINAH: But now everyone in Jerusalem has heard there is an empty tomb. Did you know that more than 500 people swear they saw Jesus alive?

JOANNA: (*Shocked*) 500! There are 500 people who claim to have seen this Jesus alive?

TAMAR: They're arresting some of the witnesses, (*With contempt*) those unschooled disciples of his. Caiaphas says flogging will shut them up.

DINAH: My husband is upset that two of our own number have defected. Joseph of Arimethea and Nicodemus!

JOANNA: (*Starting to show she thinks there might be some truth to all this*) I know both of them and their wives. They are good men. Reliable men. Maybe there is something to all this.

TAMAR: (*Contemptuously*) Nicodemus! He was sneaking around to talk to that Jesus then had the nerve to defend Jesus' actions to the Sanhedrin. And Joseph, volunteering his tomb. Traitors!

JOANNA: Maybe they know something we don't. Maybe he did come back from the dead. Lazarus did.

TAMAR: (*Exploding*) Preposterous! The only way Jesus could have risen from the dead is if he was God himself! And that whole thing with Lazarus was a fraud.

JOANNA: I don't think so. I know Martha pretty well. If she said her brother was dead, then he was dead.

TAMAR: (*Emphatically*) Jesus could not possibly have been God. That's absurd! (*With contempt*) If Jesus was God, he would have recognized the authority of the rabbis and priests. He would have asked Caiaphas to teach him and his disciples the finer points of the law. He would have asked permission before riding into Jerusalem on the Sunday before the Passover.

DINAH: (*Throwing her hands up in the air*) What a disaster that was! My husband says the people were all excited was because the "TRUE" messiah was predicted to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey.

JOANNA: I was there! The streets were lined with adults and children shouting "Hosanna" and laying down palm branches. Jesus seemed very ... kingly, royal even.

DINAH: (*Angry*) "Royal"? He didn't look very "royal" when he turned the tables over in the temple. We lost more money than my husband cares to count thanks to that little temper tantrum.

TAMAR: We can't have that kind of thing happening. The Romans or Herod will not have that kind of nonsense going on in Jerusalem. If our men can't get this Jesus thing under control we might lose our temple. Without the temple my husband would be nothing other than any other Jew.

DINAH: Is that what all of this is about? Power? Position? Prestige?

TAMAR: (*Dismissively*) Of course not.

JOANNA: It better not be. Because if this Jesus really has been resurrected, our husbands have killed the son of God. (*They all look at each other as the magnitude of the situation hits them*)