

# The Word Made Flesh

## By: Ian Scott

[00:00:04.160]

Ian Scott: It's been said the one who sings, prays twice, and we've been praying. Let's continue to pray. Would you join me? Lord Jesus, our prayer this morning. Was that we might hear you? We might see who that we might know. That remains South Korea be among us now. But we ask it in your precious and wonderful name. I mean.

[00:00:33.390]

The Bible is the word of God. All right, I know this is a Bible conference and Ron told me I had to say that, but it is true. I believe it with all my heart, I believe. And Christians have always affirmed that in the scriptures. God speaks to us, sometimes commanding, sometimes encouraging, sometimes warning, sometimes guiding that in the words of scripture, we hear the voice of God.

[00:01:02.370]

But there are other voices to the voices of ordinary men and women, just like you and I, who in the midst of ordinary lives.

[00:01:12.160]

Encountered God, and that encounter changed them forever, and they told others what happened and they told others that other people were changed and then the stories were written down and they come to us in the scriptures. Well, it. It was early morning, the sun had just begun to rise, the Sabbath had ended, and so we hurried to the tomb, well, we hadn't had time to bury them properly. You see, when we got there, the stone had been rolled away and his body was gone.

[00:01:45.330]

We were frightened and confused. Mary saw this man. She thought he was the gardener, sir. She said, what have they done with her master Mary? He said to her.

[00:01:57.040]

Well, we were on our way back to a mass I mean, it was all over, we'd seen him die. Worst day of my life. This man joins us on the road. Why are you so unhappy about? He said I was ticked. I can tell you. Are you the only man in Jerusalem who doesn't know what's happened? Jesus of Nazareth, the one we thought God had sent to set Israel free, killed on a Roman cross.

[00:02:21.220]

And now some of the women from our group are saying that his body's God, that he's been raised from the dead.

[00:02:27.340]

Oh, how slow you are to understand, he said. And he began to explain scripture after scripture that said that the Messiah would come but be rejected, that he would be humiliated and suffer and die, but that God would raise them up again on the third day. Well, when we got to Hamas, we said, look, it's getting dark. These roads are not safe after dark. You better spend the night with us. It's funny, it wasn't it wasn't really until he took the bread.

[00:02:57.220]

And he broke it right, that I was sure that it was him. See there, their voices there, people's voices, and we would just listen to the scriptures. We will hear the voices of those men and women. I said I'd never believe not, never. Well, first the women came back with this crazy story about Jesus raised from the dead, and then even Peter started saying it. But I said, oh, no, not me, not Thomas, no, I'll never believe not unless I can put my hands in the wounds themselves. And there he was, my lord and my God.

[00:03:34.460]

Well, we was in a locked room, we was suddenly there's Jesus and Peter here and he thought it was a ghost. I did not. You did do there. There there are people's stories. So what I want to do tonight is just tell some stories, take you back to a time before the Bible was a black covered book in which Jesus always speaks and red letters, even notice that I wondered how that would sound. You know, like Charlton Heston, he always speaks in red the letters. Just to go back to when I was just people telling telling their stories back back to the beginning.

[00:04:14.070]

Well. Oh, in in the very beginning, well, in the very beginning, there was the locusts, the word oh, not some human word, hot air, as Shakespeare says, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. Oh, no. Know the word of God. Well, the word of God is is the mind of God. The thinking of God issuing forth as command, as deed. God speaks to the darkness. Let there be light and boom and an explosion of energy and matter.

[00:04:48.340]

The sun and the moon and the stars take their place. In the beginning. Was the word and the word was with God and the word was God, he was with God in the beginning. Oh, everything that's been made was made through him. Nothing that's been made was made without him and in him.

[00:05:11.470]

In him was life and that life is the light of all people and the light, a light shines on in the darkness. And the darkness. The darkness has not mastered it. What are you doing here? Get off.

[00:05:46.060]

I'm warning you, stranger, you don't belong here. Get off our land if you don't get off our land.

Well, my sons will be here soon. They're bigger than me. They find you on our land. They'll kill you. So go.

[00:06:01.210]

Well, you sure you want me to tell you my name? You want me to tell you I know my name is stupid. You're stupid is my name. But you think I'll tell you my name. You'll use it in a spell to get control of me. You want to tell me your name? I'm very interested. You what you are the lion of Judah. The Anointed One of God. The line of duty. Yeah, well, that's a mighty fancy name for a little fellow who doesn't even carry a sword.

[00:06:34.810]

Let me tell you something, Lion of Judah. If you don't get off our land, you'll be a lion rug. I'll be a very dead lion. So get away. Oh, no, no. Lord. That was you, you, you.

[00:07:07.220]

You you said you said my name. You said you said my name is as no one has said my name in a very long time. Oh, the Lord. The Lord.

[00:07:22.730]

My God. He used to say my name like that. Adam he would say, Adam.

[00:07:28.040]

Oh, that was in the garden that he made wasn't like this ground. It was it was lush and green. And he made me you know, he took the dust of the earth and he shaped it, molded it, and he breathed life into it. And I was he said I was very good.

[00:07:47.150]

He he made all the creatures that were my friends. He let me name them what was Hippopotamus and Giraffe and graceful Gazelle and Eagle of the Mighty High. And we would play together in the evenings. Oh, in the evenings when it got cool. Well, the creatures of the water would begin to leap and the creatures of the air would begin to circle and the creatures of the land would lie on their backs and recall with joy. And I would know that the Lord was passing by.

[00:08:15.200]

I'd hear him call my name Adam. Adam, I love you. Oh, I love you, Lord. I would say it. It was very good. But but sometimes, well, sometimes the creatures didn't want to be my friend, they they wanted to be alone to buy to each of their own kind.

[00:08:37.260]

The Lord said it is not good that the man should be alone. So he placed me into a deep sleep. And when I awoke. She was so beautiful it hurt. I thought this is this is an ishah woman. She comes ish from man, she's she's the very flesh of my flesh and the bone of my bones. And the two became one, and it was very good. One day

[00:09:27.360]

One day, the the serpent came to the woman, oh, he was the craftiest of all the creatures who came to the woman and he said, tell me, is it true that the Lord has said to you that if you eat of the tree of the knowledge of the vehicle, you'll surely die?

[00:09:49.290]

And the woman said, yes. The Lord has said that if we eat of the tree, of the knowledge of good and of evil, we'll die. Nay, that's not true at all, said the serpent.

[00:10:00.630]

You see the Lord, that is, that if you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you'll be like gods yourselves. You can decide for yourselves what is true and what is false, what is good and what is evil.

[00:10:20.350]

The woman thought it would be good to be like gods, to decide for ourselves what is true and what is false, what is good and what is evil.

[00:10:30.810]

It and it looked good and she ate and Lion of Judah I ate. And suddenly I felt very small and very weak and and I knew that I was naked. And for the last time I heard the voice of the Lord calls my name a dog at home.

[00:11:00.270]

And so I hid and the Lord said, Adam, why are you hiding? Because because I am naked Lord. And I was ashamed. Who told you that you are naked? He said, did you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and of evil? She made me do it, I said the serpent made me do it. She said, oh, the Lord was creating a spirit and he cursed the serpent and he kissed the woman no more.

[00:11:38.120]

He said, Will the man be your friend no more? Will you be his companion? But your desire will be for him. But he will attempt to lorded over you and to master you. And you will give birth in pain and with sorrow. And he kissed me no more with the crown for a joy to work, but it would be hard and dry and filled with thorns and thistles, and I would work it by the sweat of my brow and I would learn the bitter. Bitter taste of death, lion of Judah. My sons, my sons have taught me about death. You better go.

[00:12:24.650]

My sons will be here soon. And if they find you on our land, they'll kill you. And and we did with the sons and the daughters of Adam.

[00:12:41.520]

We did they came from God, a man named John. He came to bear witness to the light. Oh, he himself was not the light. He came to bear witness to the light that through his testimony, all might believe the true light, the light that gives light to all people was even then coming into the world.

[00:13:06.030]

So they have brought us. Can we just come in and warm our hands by your fire, put away their weapons. We don't want no trouble. OK, I'm not armed. We had all the adventures I can take for one night, I'm telling you. All right, shalom. All right. Peace. All right. All right. My name's my name's Bottom Bato. And this year. Well, that's that's old Yehuda. Yeah. Huh. That's Binyamin.

[00:13:30.330]

And there. Well, that's Bartholomew. He's a little bit, but it's always harmless won't cause no trouble wouldn't hurt a flea old bat. Actually some of his best friends has fleas too. Oh I spit at my bones was chilled I can tell you. Well adventures. Oh yeah. We've had adventures. All right. Well I don't know where to begin really. Well we're just doing what you're doing weren't we. You know, minding our sheep was that expression shepherds abiding in the field, watching over their flocks by night.

[00:14:05.730]

Yeah, that's what we were doing. We're just abiding. We was just abiding mind our own business when all of a sudden old bat here says, oh I can see something. Well he does see things, does odd but but then Yehuda says no, no I can see it too, it's a light and blimey I saw it as well. Well it

wasn't exactly a lie. It was more well light itself if you get my meaning bright but not harsh on the eyes.

[00:14:35.970]

And it made you feel like, well, you know how it is when you're up to in the hills at night, you get a bit lost. Well, I shepherds don't get lost. Do we get disoriented about it? I'm disoriented.

And then you see the campfire and you know your way back home. Well it was like there, it was like coming home and and here we see the face, we does a face of a warrior, strong and majestic, but not me, not them Roman soldiers.

[00:15:03.480]

And he says to us, he says, don't be afraid. Well, it was a bit late, weren't it? I mean, we were shaken and our bloody sand was, I can tell you, don't be afraid and easy for him to say, don't be afraid, he said, for I have news for you. Good news, which is for all the people for unto you. This day in the city of David is borne a savior, the Messiah, the Lord.

[00:15:33.110]

And this will be a sign to you, he said, well, we knew that the same is going to be done. We may go up there to Bethlehem and there would be the biggest army the world has ever seen. There'd be soldiers as far as the eye could see with spears and swords and shields and in the middle of them on a great horse what the mightiest warrior the world has ever known he'd have. He'd have eyes that would blaze like fire, and that would be like iron and light trucks and men would shake at the side of him and they would know that he was the messiah and the angel.

[00:16:06.590]

He says to us, he says, you'll find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, baby wrapped in birth clothes laid in a bloody feeding trough for animals. Didn't make no sense



to me. But hey, I wasn't going to tell him that. And then, well, it was like it was like a curtain opened up and. Oh, you know how it is when you're up here in the hills at night and there's no lights and there's no clouds, there's just the darkness and you and the stars, millions and millions of stars.

[00:16:44.570]

And you know how it must have been like when God created the heavens and the earth and all the stars sang for joy. Well, it was like there, but. But it was real singing. It was. And it was creatures, strange, wonderful creatures. And I was singing Glory, Glory, Glory to God on highest and on Earth Shalom God's peace and goodwill towards all people with whom he is well pleased and well it just sort of closed up again like and there he was just us and our sheep and.

[00:17:22.730]

Oh but here he says let us go up to Bethlehem to see this thing which God has done, of which the angel hath told us, which is a pretty good speech for all. But I'm telling him so often goes down the hill, I says, hold it where we go in Bethlehem, baby, lots of babies in Bethlehem. How are we going to find the right one? Baby manger, manger, stable baby in a stable and unusual but which stable lots of stables.

[00:17:53.930]

I said I know what we'll do. We'll go to the end of Barnabas on the outskirts of the city. Some traveler drop in is also for the night. So he's a baby in a manger. He'll remember that. So he goes and knocks on the door. Well, Barnabas opens the door.

[00:18:08.210]

And what is this, a bunch of shepherds?

[00:18:12.410]

Well, you know what they think about us, don't you? They think we're all thieves. We borrow things from time to time, but don't make us thieves. Exactly. So I says they want to come in no trouble. Just want to find out about a baby in a manger. Oh, he says it must be members of the family. Yes, I see. Yeah, well, that's true, sort of the messiah is the son of David, right?

[00:18:40.710]

David was a shepherd, like some family, I thought. Yeah, yeah. Oh, he says, come with me. I'll take you right there. If it goes downhill, comes to the stable, there's this young fella walking up and down like an all proud, like all young dads do, like they did all the work. And there's this beautiful young lady. And just like the angel told us, they're in a manger is a baby.

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So what we told and what the angel said, the lady she says to me, she says, would you like to hold him? Oh, yes, please. I said, she put him in my arms. I held the Messiah. I did. He burped and I handed him back. And I said, well, thank you very much and the Lord bless you and keep you and all that stuff. And here we are on our way back to our sheep.

[00:19:28.950]

And I'm very grateful to you for sharing your fire with us. There's only one thing about it, although I still don't understand. I mean, it's still don't make no sense to me. I mean, our wise men, our our seminary professors, they told us that the Messiah would be a mighty one had come and set the people free. But a little baby.

[00:19:54.100]

Born in a stable, there's no mite in there, no majesty, no glory, its well, it's it's like we was expecting a lion and God sent us a lamb. And I ask you, what can God do with lamb? How's he going to set us free with a lamb? He was in the world, says John, but the world, though it owed

its very existence to him, didn't recognize him. He came to his very own, but his own would not receive him.

[00:20:30.250]

But to all who did receive him, to all who believed in his name, he gave the right to become the children of God. Children born not of a husband's decision, not the desires of the flesh, but born from God. For the word became flesh and wild among us. And we beheld his glory, the glorious if the only son of the father. Full of grace. And truth.

[00:21:11.270]

Mm hmm. Stop, stop there, young man, stop, let me see if I'm understanding you correctly. What you seem to be saying is that the apostles got it wrong. Yes, yes. I understand our philosophies have always taught us that the perfect cannot become part of the perfect that the infinite cannot become part of the finite. And so that which is truly spiritual, cannot become part of the material world. I understand that. So what you are saying is that Jesus, the son of God, was not truly a man.

[00:21:47.810]

I just saw an illusion, a vision, and he did not, as you put it, come in the flesh. So it's a good theory. Philosophically speaking, it's quite wrong. Of course. I know I I was there. I touched him. Yes. I felt his flesh. I felt it full of life.

[00:22:13.300]

I felt it growing cold and death. My name is Trajanus Centurion, Tenth Legion, retired now. I was just a young man at the time based in the province of Palestine, part of the bodyguard of the procurator, a nasty little fellow, Pontius Pilatus, as we were normally based on the coast of Caesarea Maritimas. But for the great festivals of the Jews, we would take up Garrison and

Jerusalem. Well, there was often trouble. It was the greatest of the festivals, the Passover I was sent for and told that I was to take charge of an execution detail.

[00:22:50.370]

Three prisoners, not normally the job for a centurion, but one of the prisoners. I was told it was a we had a large following in the Galilee. They were concerned that his followers would try to set him free. I went to the courtyard where the prisoners would be, where there were three of them to perfectly predictable Galilean bandits. We had plenty of Galilean bandits on our crosses and those days. But the other one, the other one was different.

[00:23:20.100]

It was a holy man, a man of God, Jesus of Nazareth. I'd heard of him. Well, I had a friend, you see, Marcellus, we'd gone through the academy together. Marcellus was based in the Galilee as a military governor. He'd become a worshiper of the God of Israel, very active in their synagogue. He had a servant. Well, his best friend, really, his servant had had been a slave child in his father's household.

[00:23:46.760]

They had grown up together, played together in school together. When he became an adult, Marcellus had set his friend free, but his friend had chosen to stay with them was the steward of all his lands. So friend was dying. Marcellus had heard of this. Jesus heard that he had power from God to heal the sick. So he went to him, told him of his friend, and Jesus said, Oh, I'll come right away. Oh, no, no, master, said Marcellus, I'm not worthy to have you in my house while he was a gentile.

[00:24:17.900]

You see, the rabbi goes to the house of a gentile. He becomes unclean, unclean rabbis. No use to anybody. No, he said, no, I'm not worthy to have you in my house. Just say the word. Jesus said I understand authority. I say to my trips go and they go as they come and they come, just say the word and he'll be healed.

[00:24:39.600]

Jesus smiled, looked at those around them, said, I haven't seen faith like this in Israel go. Your faith has healed your friend. I thanked him, returned home as it was approaching the house. One of the servants came running down the hill. Master Master, your friend as well. Your friend as well. When did it happen? He said Trajanus, he said to me, it was the very moment that Jesus had said, Go your faith has healed your friend. Surely, he said to me, I haven't seen that kind of power, that kind of authority in all my years in the Empire. Surely Jesus is the son of God. Well, here he was, this Jesus. I thought there must be some mistake. Give me the titular statement of charges to be placed above the cross. Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. A little bit of power went to his head pretty well.

[00:25:38.070]

The Jews have a king Caesar as their king. All right, I said get on with it.

[00:25:44.680]

That they had already got on with it by troops were Syrian mercenaries, they hated the Jews, they'd beaten them badly, pulled out chunks of his beard that played some kind of a game with him made of crown of thorns, vicious thorns landed on his head. The blood was running down and they'd dressed him in an expensive purple robe. I don't know who they stole it from. Take that stuff off him, I said. And they were they took it off.

[00:26:17.140]

I saw that pilot had had a flagellated oh, you don't see the flagellar and these civilized parts of the empire, but you get out there on the borders out there where we have to keep control, you'll see the flagellum often enough. It's a five thong leather whip with pieces of broken glass and jagged metal sewn into the ends. Well, and it curls around a man's body. It digs in. When you pull it back out, it pulls out chunks of flesh and strips of skin.

[00:26:44.110]

Man looks like like raw meat when it's done like a plowed field, 40 lashes and you're dead. Jesus had been badly beaten from the neck to the knees. Skin was hanging, you could see bone in places.

[00:26:59.090]

All right, I said give him his cross. Well, standard procedure. You take the turbulence and the horizontal piece, tie it back behind the shoulders, tie the arms back so that when they carry it, they stagger under the weight of it. Their arms are tied back so they can't protect themselves. They're like a little baby. Everybody laughs at them. They're helpless. When they fall. They can't help themselves. They just smack the whole body into the ground.

[00:27:27.070]

Jesus kept falling. He had been badly beaten. Finally, I could see he couldn't go on.

[00:27:34.840]

There was an African man in the crowd, a pilgrim from Cyrene. I said, Carry his cross. Came to the place of execution, Golgotha, the Jews called it good name, place of the skull. We would say Calvados in Latin. Well, there we crucified him. Standard procedure. Take one of those iron

spikes in all those iron spikes that we use in the main beams of our houses. Drive it between the bones of the wrist. Never crucify a man through the hands.

[00:28:03.190]

Won't take the weight. No to the bones of the waist and the of the wrist. And then the weight of the body will hold, you see. Well, as the spike was driven in, his whole body convulsed and he cried out. It's funny, I hadn't noticed until that moment he hadn't said a word. They always spoke when they knew they were going to be crucified. Yeah, they always had plenty to say. I'm innocent. I'm innocent.

[00:28:30.910]

So I'll do a deal with you. I'll take you to every bandit hideout in the hills. If you'll let me go, they'd curse us. They'd curse their own God for saving them. They always spoke when they knew they were going to be crucified. Jesus hadn't said a word until a spike was driven in that it cried out. Daddy, forgive them for they know not what they do.

[00:28:57.710]

Other are met a spike, lift him up onto the cross here, the pope, as the arms come out of the joints, take the feet, put him in the crouch position, drive the other spike home, always crucify a man in the crouch position. We see people think you die on a cross because you bleed to death. You don't bleed that much. Once the spikes driven and it seals the wound, you know, you die on a cross because you can't breathe with your body stretched out like that and the weight on it, you put him in the crouched position, then they can push themselves up to breathe because they they have to press on the spike. It's quite clever, really.

[00:29:35.720]

We don't torture them. They torture themselves. They don't want to they want to die. But you can choose not to breathe. They'll fight for breath as long as they can for days. Sometimes when we want to kill them, we break their legs with a club and they can't lift themselves up. They die right away. Well, Jesus hung on his cross, doing whatever a crucified man does, he breathed.

Agonizing breath after breath, hour after hour.

[00:30:08.110]

About three hours went by, it's funny, it started growing dark was the middle of the day, a lot of people became frightened and left. A doubt that had been looking at a group of people on the edge of the crowd, some women, one young man. I heard him cry out to them, to a woman, behold your son, son. Behold your mother.

[00:30:36.760]

And I thought to myself, hmm. He may he may be just a Galilean peasant, but he he has no ability. He he's dying on a Roman cross and he's thinking of his mother he's caring for. I was impressed by that. We Romans, we we understand. We we admire that kind of courage. Another hour went by, cry it out again, I'm thirsty. I heard him say, oh, that was predictable. They always got thirsty on.

[00:31:10.770]

There were some women there. They came to all the crucifixions. They would bring cheap wine mixed with narcotic herbs to dull the pain. One what my trips took a sponge, put it on the end of a spear, lifted it up to his lips, but he turned his head away. So when he realized what it was, he would have no part of it. Another hour went by to.

[00:31:32.990]



Saw him lift himself up, raise his head as though he were looking off into the distance to the very end of the world, and I heard him cry out in a powerful voice. It's done.

[00:31:46.850]

I heard him say. It's done, it's accomplished, it's completed. That was the word he used. What have you done? What have you accomplished? What have you completed? You're naked. You're dying on a Roman cross. You're as helpless and defeated as any man could ever be. What have you done? He was he was speaking as though he was some victorious general who's who sent his best troops to break through the line of the enemy. He sees them break through.

[00:32:18.260]

He knows he has the victor and he says, yes, it's done, it's accomplished, it's completed. And I thought, what have you done? Then his body slumped down and I thought he had died. I saw the body shake again. He pushed himself upright.

[00:32:42.590]

He took in a breath and I heard him cry out in a powerful voice, Oh, the. Daddy. Into the hands, I commit my spirit. And then he died just like that, he died, it it it was it was as though he had chosen the very moment of his own dying, the very means of his own death, as though he had the right, the authority to give up his own life. Because though he was saying to us, you don't take my life from me, I give my life.

[00:33:30.400]

And I thought Marcellus was right. I've never seen this kind of power, this kind of authority. Surely, I said, surely this is the son of God.

[00:33:45.210]

Oh, that's that's when I first saw it. Well, the blood, you see his blood, it it it was all over me.

I've never been so frightened in all my life. The blood of the son of God. I've crucified the son of God. Where can I hide from the anger of God that I?

[00:34:09.030]

I remembered those eyes as the spike was driven in deadeye. Forgive them for they know not what they do.

[00:34:20.580]

Then I remembered something else. I remembered how my friend Marcellus had tried to explain to me what the high priest does in the temple in Jerusalem on the day of Atonement, when he he takes the Lamb of the Sin offering and lays his hands upon it that the sins of the people might enter in that as its blood is shed upon the altar.

[00:34:44.810]

It is the blood of the lamb that washes the worst sin. And some somehow I knew that that his blood was not to condemn me. But to cleanse me somehow, I knew that his dying was for me somehow, somehow I knew that he is the Lamb of God. Who takes away the sins of the world? And that, my sisters and brothers, is the gospel, but the good news is, see, he didn't come as a lion.

[00:35:29.600]

But he came as a lamb. He didn't come to take, but he came to give to give himself, he came so that in a sense, you and I could go back to the garden, that we could hear God call us by name and not be afraid and not be ashamed. Is the Lamb of God who died for your sin and my son, he died for the sin of every man, every woman, every child who has ever lived or who will ever live.

[00:36:01.940]

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And all he asks, all he requires is that we trust him. That we allow him to wash us clean. He is the Lamb of God. Who takes away the sins of the world? And may his peace and his love be with you. Good night.