

“The Trial of the Ages”
November 16, 2014

Mark 15:1-20

CORE: No one has been more falsely accused, hated, opposed, wrongly condemned—yet, more fully in charge of His destiny—than Jesus (in these final hours of His life). *(Personally, the most painful part of the Bible for me to read.)*

1. WHAT Jesus suffered.

NOTE: These final hours are referred to as His “passion”—Lit.- “to suffer” physically, emotionally, spiritually.

a. Accusation

- The Sanhedrin—chief priests, elders, teachers of the Law—the 70-man highest authority in Jewish community (*i.e., Supreme Court*)
- Had authority in civil matters, but not in criminal matters; a “death sentence” required Roman approval.
- “By daybreak, they made a decision: Jesus was worthy of death!”
- Their charge: **BLASPHEMY** (*which meant nothing to the Romans!*)
- So, “the chief priests accused Him of many things” (v. 3). According to Luke 23:1-2, they accused Him of 3 other crimes:
 - **TAX EVASION** (*Encouraging people not to pay taxes to Rome*)
 - **TREASON** (*Claiming to be “King of the Jews”—He desired to overthrow Rome*)
 - **TERRORISM** (*He caused riots all over the country, i.e., clearing out the Temple*)

b. Apathy

- **Pontius Pilate**—Roman governor of Samaria & Judea (*Jerusalem was in Judea*)
- **Harsh ruler. Held deep contempt for the Jewish people** (*Josephus recorded*).
- **Looked for any opportunity to punish the Jews...**
- **Yet, he was “amazed” at Jesus’ refusal to defend Himself** (v. 5)
- **Seeking to be free from executing an innocent man, Pilate offered them a way out. He had established a custom of releasing one prisoner every Passover.**
- **But the “chief priests stirred up the crowd to release Barabbas”**(v. 11), a prisoner accused of murder in a riot against Rome.
- (v. 15) **“Wishing to satisfy the crowd,” Pilate caved in to the pressure, gave them Barabbas, and sent Jesus to be crucified.**
- **Symbolic of his apathy & fear, he ceremonially “washed his hands” of all responsibility in the matter** (Matthew 27:24). No one spoke in defense of Jesus.

c. Hostility

- “Flogging”- leather whip with sharps objects affixed to the ends. Jewish floggings were to be no more than 40 blows. Roman floggings were limitless. The goal was to weaken the prisoner so they would die quickly on the cross. Many never made it to the cross.
- “Hail, King of the Jews!”- mock worship, as they spat on Him, struck him in the head with a reed, and knelt before Him. They placed the crossbeam of His own cross (weighing over 100 pounds) on His shoulders. Four soldiers led Him to the place of His execution, a long walk out of Jerusalem.

2. WHY Jesus suffered.

a. Our guilt

- Isaiah 53:6- “We all, like sheep, have gone astray. Each of us has turned to his own way. And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”
- “Transgressions”—our actual sins.
- “Iniquity”—why we sin. Imbedded within us—Our propensity toward self-pity, self-indulgence, independence (“No one is going to tell me what to do!”), self-justification. Selfishness.
- This fallen/rebellious nature result of our disconnect with God.
 - “You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away.” (Colossians 2:13)
- Like Barabbas, our judgment was laid on an Innocent Man!

b. His heart.

- HE PURPOSED TO DO THIS! (*He overruled the schemes of man*)
 - “He made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ.” (Ephesians 1:9)
 - “It was always His perfect plan to adopt us (and establish us) as His delightful children.” (Ephesians 1:5 TPT)
- TWO EXTREMES VIEWS: (*RE: our spiritual condition & need*)
 - “We are basically good.” (*Maximizes our value—minimizes our need for Jesus*)
 - “We are vile wretches. Worms. Worthless.” (*Maximizes our need for Jesus—minimizes our value*) NOTE: “Wretched” (Romans 7:24) “In a desperate place; suffering the pain of inner conflict”
- TRUTH (Eph. 1:5,9)- We are beloved sons and daughters—desperately separated from God. We are so desired & delighted in—He did the ultimate to rescue us & restore us!!
- PART OF HIS PROPHETIC PURPOSE: SEE Isaiah 50:6; 52:13-15
- NOTE: A deeply personal, passionate choice (SEE Isaiah 53:4-5,10-12)