

Luke 23 Pilate Seeks Jesus' Release

Now Pilate summoned to himself the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, 14 and he said to them, "You brought this Man to me on the ground that He is inciting the people to revolt; and behold, after examining Him before you, I have found no basis at all in the case of this Man for the charges which you are bringing against Him. 15 No, nor has Herod, for he sent Him back to us; and behold, nothing deserving death has been done by Him. 16 Therefore I will punish Him and release Him." 17 Now he was obligated to release to them at the feast one prisoner.

18 But they cried out altogether, saying, "Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas!" 19 He was one who had been thrown into prison for a revolt that took place in the city, and for murder. 20 But Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again, 21 but they kept on crying out, saying, "Crucify, crucify Him!" 22 And he said to them a third time, "Why, what has this Man done wrong? I have found in His case no grounds for a sentence of death; therefore I will punish Him and release Him."

23 But they were insistent, with loud voices, demanding that He be crucified. And their voices began to prevail. 24 And so Pilate decided to have their demand carried out. 25 And he released the man for whom they were asking, who had been thrown into prison for a revolt and murder; but he handed Jesus over to their will.

Simon Carries the Cross

26 And when they led Him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, as he was coming in from the country, and placed on him the cross to carry behind Jesus.

27 Now following Him was a large crowd of the people, and of women who were mourning and grieving for Him. 28 But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

29 For behold, days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are those who cannot bear, and the wombs that have not given birth, and the breasts that have not nursed.' 30 Then they will begin TO SAY TO THE MOUNTAINS, 'FALL ON US,' AND TO THE HILLS, 'COVER US.' 31 For if they do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?" 32 Now two others, who were criminals, were also being led away to be put to death with Him.

The Crucifixion

33 And when they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. 34 But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing. "And they cast lots, dividing His garments among themselves. 35 And the people stood by, watching. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the

Christ of God, His Chosen One.”

36 The soldiers also ridiculed Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine, 37 and saying, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!” 38 Now there was also an inscription above Him, “THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

39 One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, “Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!” 40 But the other responded, and rebuking him, said, “Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our crimes; but this Man has done nothing wrong.” 42 And he was saying, “Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom!” 43 And He said to him, “Truly I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

44 It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the entire land until the ninth hour, 45 because the sun stopped shining; and the veil of the temple was torn in two. 46 And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, “Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I ENTRUST MY SPIRIT.” And having said this, He died.

47 Now when the centurion saw what had happened, he began praising God, saying, “This Man was in fact innocent.” 48 And all the crowds who came together for this spectacle, after watching what had happened, began to return home, beating their chests. 49 And all His acquaintances and the women who accompanied Him from Galilee were standing at a distance, seeing these things.

- We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions
- What questions were provoked within you?
- Did anything confuse you?
- Did anything move you emotionally?
- Did God instruct you to do something?
- Did you gain any insight into God’s character

Paul’s observations and insights

1. In Jesus Christ’s deepest anguish, He still finds it in Himself to comfort and instruct the broken.
2. Who says that life must be free from suffering?
3. Who gives us the right to act inappropriately when things are not going so well in life?
4. Jesus shows us, even under great trials, there is a right way to behave.
5. Is Jesus referring to himself as ‘the green tree’?
6. Why did Luke refer to, the two criminals that walked the road to Calvary hill with Jesus?

7. Do you know how a person who is crucified actually dies?
8. Why did Jesus ask God His father to forgive these people?
9. Why did He say they didn't know what they were doing?
10. Why did Luke include the division of the garments in his story?
11. Who were the rulers who did the sneering?
12. Could Jesus have saved himself?
13. 'Is this God's Christ?' It means God's saviour. Is Jesus Christ God's saviour, His chosen one?
14. This is the big question that is still being asked even today - is Jesus the way back to God?
15. Why offer Him sour wine, ridicule Him and show Him no mercy?
16. What motivated the soldiers to taunt Jesus, to prove Himself to be the 'King of the Jews'?
17. Why did the leaders ask for the inscription, 'King of the Jews', to be changed to, 'He said, 'King of the Jews'.
18. Why did Pilate want to release Jesus?
19. By law he should have set Jesus Christ free, after all, under investigation He was found innocent of the crimes.
20. Pilate reinforces the lack of evidence, stating 'Even Herod found no grounds for having Jesus put to death'.
21. What changes Pilate's mind as to why he didn't just punish him and set him free, as he suggested?
22. What do you think about the law that permits a guilty person, like Barabbas, to be set free?
23. Why was Pilate persuaded by the Jews to release Barabbas?
24. This man had murdered and incited a revolt! All Jesus had done was help people find freedom!
25. The words, 'crucify Him, crucify Him', still echo down the corridors of history from the Jewish nation.
26. For the second time Pilate attempts to punish Jesus, but he gives way. Why?
27. It seems the crowd's hysteria finally got to Pilate. He could not resist them and their shouts anymore!
28. Does Pilate come away from this situation looking good or bad?
29. He let the bad man go, but handed the good man over to them, to allow them to do their worst with Jesus.
30. God provided help for Jesus along the road at the time of His great need. Has that been your experience?
31. A mob of people followed along the road, some fanatical and some in deep anguish.
32. Many follow Jesus today but for so many different reasons. Why do you follow Jesus?
33. One of the criminals was desperate, pressing Jesus to save himself and them.
34. Desperation motivates the reality of the darkness, or the light, that's living in us.

35. The Christians who went down on the Titanic were portrayed to be at peace, despite the calamity of drowning.
36. The other criminal recognises Jesus' innocence and puts his last desperate hope in Jesus!
37. He stands up for Jesus against the other criminal.
38. He demonstrates repentance, confession and surrender. He puts his faith in Jesus - his newfound companion.
39. Even at the end of His life Jesus is still saving sinners.
40. This convicted man, condemned to be crucified, is accepted by God to live in paradise for eternity.
41. He has a last-minute confession, and we get an insight into the existence of life beyond death.
42. Darkness over the land when it should have been light, but there is a day when darkness will be no more.
43. What is the importance of the veil in the temple being torn in two, from top to bottom.
44. Jesus let go of life at the declaration of His word.
45. It was His spirit He trusted to His heavenly Father.
46. But where did Jesus go in death?
47. What does it mean 'to die'?