

## Lesson 23 – The Trial of Jesus

Text: Matthew 27:1-31; Mark 15:1-19; Luke 22:66-23:25; John 18:28-19:16

Main Characters: God, Jesus, Judas Iscariot, Herod Antipas, Pilate, ruling Jews, Roman soldiers, the Jewish mob

### Key Passages:

- Matthew 27:1 – Before all of these events, the ruling Jews had already concocted a plan to kill Jesus.
- John 19:16 – Pilate ultimately sentenced Jesus to death by crucifixion.

### Main Storyline:

On the morning after Jesus was arrested (Friday), Jesus was again taken before the ruling Jews (Sanhedrin council). The chief priests and elders had created a plot to kill him. They asked him if he was the Christ. Jesus told them that, even if he told them, they would not believe. They continued to press him, and Jesus confirmed that he was the Christ. The Jews knew, at that point, that they had enough to kill Jesus.

When Judas Iscariot saw that Jesus had been condemned, he felt very remorseful for betraying Jesus. He took the thirty pieces of silver that he had been paid in exchange for Jesus back to the chief priests and elders. Judas threw the money in front of them before hanging himself. The chief priests used the money to buy a field in which to bury strangers (they could not put the money back into the treasury).

Later that morning, Jesus was taken to the Praetorium, a Roman building where Pilate, the Roman governor, resided. Pilate asked what Jesus had done that they were bringing Jesus to him. The Jews clamored that he was perverting the nation, that he was forbidding taxes from being paid to Caesar, and that he was claiming to be Christ, a king. Pilate brought Jesus into the Praetorium and asked him privately if he was the king of the Jews. Jesus asked Pilate if it was his own question, or if he was asking because of what the others had said. Pilate responded that he was not a Jew; he was just trying to understand what Jesus had done. Jesus told Pilate that he was a king, but that his kingdom was not of this world. Pilate then told the Jews that he found no fault in Jesus. The mob became even fiercer as they continued to accuse Jesus. In their accusations, Pilate learned that Jesus was from Galilee, and sent Jesus to Herod Antipas, who was in Jerusalem at the time.

When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad because he had wanted to see Jesus for a longtime. Herod had heard a lot about Jesus and was hoping that Jesus would perform a miracle for him. Herod asked Jesus many questions, but Jesus answered none of them. The chief priests and scribes continued to accuse Jesus, and apparently Jesus continued to be silent. Herod and the soldiers mocked Jesus, dressed him up in gorgeous clothes, and sent him back to Pilate. Pilate and Herod had been enemies, but after this they became friends.

After Jesus came back to Pilate, Pilate called the chief priests, rulers, and the people together. He told them that he had examined Jesus in their presence and found that he was innocent of their accusations. Additionally, Herod did not find that he had done anything either. Pilate offered that he would punish (likely scourge) Jesus and then release him (as Pilate customarily released one prisoner during the feast). The Jews cried out that they did not want Jesus to be released, but instead they wanted Barabbas to be released (who had been thrown in prison for rebellion and murder). Pilate then asked what they wanted him to do with Jesus; the mob shouted that they wanted him to be crucified.

At that point, Pilate sent Jesus away to be scourged. After being scourged, the soldiers began to mock Jesus, putting a crown of thorns on his head, dressing him in a purple robe, and putting a reed in his hand as a scepter. They bowed before him and hailed him as king. They also spat on him and hit him in the head.

After the scourging, Jesus was taken back to Pilate, who tried to convince the people that he was not worthy of further punishment. The mob continued to shout, “Crucify! Crucify!” Pilate tried to convince the people otherwise, but they would not listen. When he realized that the people were about to riot, he washed his hands of the matter (literally) and sent Jesus to be crucified.

### Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) Our response to realizing that we have committed sin should be repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10).
- 2.) We must not give up standing for the truth just because people around us pressure us to renounce it.