

Episode #612 – Easter 2020 1: Crucified!

I. The death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ were the pivotal events in the history of God's work to redeem fallen mankind. All history before these events was marked by man's failure in spite of all God did for them. After these events is marked by God's success in spite of all man can do against Him. Our salvation was granted to us by these great events.

II. The trial and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ is presented in Mark 15:1-24.

III. Mark 15:1-15. The Trial Before Pilate.

- A. Verse 1. Immediately in the morning = in the fourth watch, around 3:00AM. The Lord's trial was during the night, which was illegal. Council = the Sanhedrin, the Israelite ruling body. They brought Him bound to Pilate. The Roman governor at the time, somewhat corrupt, yet seems to try to govern well at least somewhat.
- B. Verse 2. This question is doubtless in response to the accusation of the Jewish religious leaders. He confirms it. The lineage shows He had the right to David's throne. However He had the right to much more!
- C. Verse 3. They bring many urgent accusations with no proof or truth. The One truly innocent Man does not answer any of the charges.
- D. Verse 4. Pilate asks Him why He does not defend Himself?
- E. Verse 5. He still says nothing, which amazes Pilate even more.
- F. Verse 6. A custom of Pilate to promote goodwill with the people. Should be "a" feast, not just the Passover. These were often political prisoners who had fomented rebellion against Rome, but were considered national heroes by the subjugated Jews.
- G. Verse 7. A criminal named Barabbas (Son of the Father) imprisoned at that time. A rebel against Rome who had committed murder in the rebellion. Often these supposed freedom fighters used this as an excuse to rob and pillage.
- H. Verse 8. A multitude is there and begins to cry for Pilate to fulfill his custom. Why would there be a crowd there this early in the morning? Probably many of them were supporters of Barabbas! Remember the Lord's supporters didn't even know He was arrested! It is silly to accuse the Lord's followers of abandoning Him.
- I. Verse 9. Pilate suggests the Lord as the One he will release. He hopes to get out of his difficulty this way.
- J. Verse 10. He knows enough to realize the chief priests' motivation: envy. He hopes the crowd will feel differently. Of course, if many of the crowd were there to see Barabbas freed, this suggestion will only make them angry!
- K. Verse 11. The chief priests stir the crowd up to their will. The same word the accused the Lord of doing in Luke 23:5!
- L. Verse 12. A silly question to an already hostile crowd. He seems to ask out of frustration that the chief priests have blocked this plan as well.
- M. Verse 13. Again the chief priests instigated this. The followers of Barabbas were more than willing to go along. The lawful punishment for blasphemy was stoning, but they don't really care about the law. According to the Old Testament one who is hung on a tree is cursed. They wanted the Lord to die under God's curse, hoping this way to block any attempt to make Him a martyr.
- N. Verse 14. Appealing to a mob is never going to go well!
- O. Verse 15. Pilate releases the murderer and condemns the King of Life to death! He scourges Him first, adding injustice to injustice. He is not without guilt!

IV. Mark 15:16-20. The Mockery in the Praetorium.

- A. Verse 16. Led Him into the Praetorium = “Head-quarters,” tent of the commander. Their whole garrison = about 600 men, 1/10 of a legion.
- B. Verse 17. Purple was the color of royalty, as purple dye was rare. A crown is a symbol of kingship, but what a crown this was!
- C. Verse 18. This is their mockery. These men were surrounded by those who hate them and would approve of their deaths. This does not make them very sympathetic.
- D. Verse 19. More mockery. These Roman soldiers were trained to violence. They had no sympathy for One Who claimed to be a King without Rome’s approval. Of course Pilate knew He had acted as no threat to Rome, but they did not know this.
- E. Verse 20. They finish with their game and dress Him back in His Own clothes before leading Him off to be crucified.

V. Mark 15:21-24. Led to be Crucified..

- A. Verse 21. There is no record in the gospels that Christ stumbled, as He is traditionally said to have done. Yet typically criminals bore their own cross to the crucifixion site, so He must have been struggling due to the mistreatment to this point. Simon = Hearing, Alexander = Man Defender, Rufus = Red. Cyrene was north of Israel, the gospel spread there soon after Stephen. The way we are expected to know these names leads many to believe these men later became believers in Christ.
- B. Verse 22. Touching a dead body made you unclean, so a place where a body part was found would become unclean. This was then a good place to use for executions, which of course would also make the place unclean. This was also along the main road to Jerusalem (verse 29), which was the kind of advertising Rome wanted.
- C. Verse 23. Myrrh was one of the spices the wise men brought the Lord. It was typically a perfume, but when drunk had an intoxicating quality. This was probably to make Him more docile as they crucified Him. But He would not drink; would shun none of the pain in dying in our place.
- D. Verse 24. Note: dividing His garments meant He was no longer wearing them. Men were crucified naked, adding public humiliation to torture. Matthew tells us the casting of lots was a fulfillment of Scripture. As terrible as all this was, it was all part of God’s perfect plan!

VI. The death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross was indeed terrible suffering for God’s Son to go through, but many others suffered the same torture. Yet Christ’s death was unique in this: that God placed on Him the sins of us all. He died so that we would not have to. He died the death I deserved: hanging naked on a board, humiliated and forsaken. When we believe in that death on our behalf, as well as the resurrection that followed, our sins’ penalty is paid by His death, so that we can live in new life. Praise God for the unmatched gift of His Son!