



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

What Shall I Do With Jesus?

JANUARY 26, 2012

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Matthew 27:15-22

“Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the multitude any one prisoner whom they wanted.

16) And they were holding at that time a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. 17) When therefore they were gathered together, Pilate said to them, ‘Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?’ 18) For he knew that because of envy they had delivered Him up. 19) And while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him saying, ‘Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him.’ 20) But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes to ask for Barabbas, and to put Jesus to death. 21) But the governor answered and said to them, ‘Which of the two do you want me to release for you?’ And they said, ‘Barabbas.’ 22) Pilate said to them, ‘Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?’ They all said, ‘Let Him be crucified!’” (NASB)

“IS NOT BARABBAS PREFERRED TO JESUS, WHEN SINNERS REJECT SALVATION THAT THEY MAY RETAIN THEIR DARLING SINS, WHICH ROB GOD OF HIS GLORY, AND MURDER THEIR SOULS?” MATTHEW HENRY

Why does Pilate suddenly shift to the release of a prisoner in the midst of Jesus’ trial? Was it Pilate’s goal to release Jesus? How can people who called for His coronation on Sunday be calling for His crucifixion by Thursday?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- FEBRUARY 2: MATTHEW 27:22-26 **WHEN THE POPULACE DEMANDS LEGAL MURDER!**
- FEBRUARY 9: MATTHEW 27:27-31 **MOCKING THE KING OF KINGS!**

All the people of Israel knew who Jesus was! His birth had been announced by angels and visited by the wise king makers from the East. His miracles had physically transformed lives everywhere He went. His teachings had been popular with many, but absolutely hated by the religious leaders because it revealed their hypocrisy and blatant wickedness. He had recently astounded the nation by raising Lazarus from the grave after he had been dead three days! The triumphal entry on Sunday had been a virtual coronation of Jesus as their Messiah King. He had suspended the thievery of their leaders on Monday when He cleansed the Temple. All had been astounded at His ability to answer perfectly the most difficult questions of their leaders while spotlighting their wicked hearts. Just like they had repeated so often in Israel’s long history of rebellion against God (Acts 7:52), instead of considering repentance, the leaders want to destroy their Messiah for holding them accountable to the truth. Pilate has already heard their false accusations, and discerned that Jesus is innocent, but the leaders *“kept on insisting, saying, ‘He stirs up the people, teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee, even as far as this place’”* (Luke 23:5). When Pilate learns that Jesus is a Galilean from Herod’s jurisdiction, he sends Christ to be tried by Herod. Before the accusing leaders and questions by Herod, Jesus was silent. Then He was mocked, and sent back to Pilate (Luke 23:6-12). Pilate then affirms he and Herod found Jesus was innocent and planned to *“punish Him and release Him”* (Luke 23:13-16).

“PILATE CONCLUDED THAT THE LEADERS WANT TO USE HIM TO EXECUTE JESUS” DANIEL DORIANI

I. THE INITIAL OFFER MT. 27:15-18

Pilate is now looking for the best way out of the dilemma he has found himself. He knows that Jesus is innocent and he wants to release Him, but he also knows that he must do it in such a way that will not upset the leadership

BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30AM –PRAYER MEETING – GAB 3RD FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM

THURSDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – GAB 3RD FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM

THURSDAY @ 12:00NOON –BIBLE STUDY – WYTESTONE PLAZA AT 8TH & MAIN 2ND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

Virginia

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in Israel because he cannot afford another complaint to the Emperor. Suddenly he remembers that on this very day, in commemoration of the Passover and Israel's deliverance from Egypt, he was expected to allow one of the convicted criminals to be delivered by the choice of the people. So, in order to help the people make the choice to release Jesus, he must have decided to limit the choice and pit the worst against the best. "*And they were holding at that time a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas*" (27:16). He had been convicted of three very serious crimes: 1) Insurrection against Rome in the Capitol City, Jerusalem; 2) Murder (Luke 23:19), and robbery (John 18:30). "*Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?'*" (27:17). Pilate must have thought that the people would be unwilling to side with their leaders because he knew that real reason the leaders had betrayed Jesus was "*because of envy*" (27:18).

"THERE IS NO SHARPER CONTRAST THAN THAT OF A HARDENED CRIMINAL AND KILLER AND THE GENTLE AND KINDLY TEACHER OF PEACE AND GOODWILL."

STUART CUSTER

II. THE IMPORTANT INTERRUPTION MT. 27:19

Probably, Pilate's wife, Claudia Procula, had been either overhearing or watching this case as it unfolded with significant consternation. It was obvious that these leaders were bloodthirsty, but her husband had defended Jesus' innocence until this point. But she was now watching him crumble before the pressure in being willing to "*punish Him*" before he released Him (Luke 23:16) and also Jesus was being treated as a convicted criminal in being presented as a choice for release. She is not allowed to personally interfere with the proceedings in the midst of a trial, so she "*sent to him saying, 'Have*

nothing to do with that righteous Man, for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him" (27:19). She was letting her husband know that she expected him to do the right thing in acquitting and releasing Jesus immediately!

"IT IS REMARKABLE THAT THIS HEATHEN WOMAN SHOULD BE THE ONLY HUMAN BEING WITH COURAGE ENOUGH TO PLEAD OUR LORD'S CAUSE, EVEN WHEN HIS OWN DISCIPLES HAD FORSAKEN HIM."

GRIFFITH THOMAS

III. THE IGNOMINIOUS CHOICE MT. 27:20-22

While Pilate pauses to confer with the messenger sent by his wife, those early morning crowds are probably still gathering to see who will be released that year. Also the chief priests and the elders who formed the Sanhedrin had seized the moment and "*persuaded the multitudes to ask for Barabbas and put Jesus to death*" (27:20). The verb for "put to death" literally means "to destroy utterly." They wanted the worst possible means of death, which all knew was crucifixion! They thought that death by crucifixion would completely invalidate Jesus' entire ministry and claims to be the Messiah because the Scriptures said, "*He who is hanged is accursed of God*" (Deuteronomy 21:23). By the time Pilate had given them sufficient time to make up their minds, he asked, "*Which of the two do you want me to release to you?*" The response must have completely astounded and alarmed the governor, "*And they said, 'Barabbas.'*" He wondered if the multitudes had not considered the result of their choice in regard to Jesus, so "*Pilate said to them, 'Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?'*" With the title, "*Christ,*" they were reminded that the multitudes had paraded Him into Jerusalem with Messianic titles the previous Sunday! Yet, in unison with their wicked leaders, they "*all*" continued to command their Roman governor with the imperative, "*Let Him be crucified!*" All were choosing to free a murderer to murder their innocent Messiah!

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Does it still happen today that wicked leaders use others in order to acquire their wicked desires?
- 2) Do you stand for the truth even when you are completely alone in your decision?
- 3) What will you do with Jesus who is called the Christ?