

The Trials and Crucifixion

Jesus had prepared His disciples for the fact that He would die in Jerusalem. There was no wavering with Jesus. He knew this was the plan of God, and this was the reason He came. As the time was approaching, Jesus made His purpose clear: “Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name” (John 12:27-28a).

Jesus also anticipated the effect His death would have: “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.’ But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die” (John 12:32-33). His death would be by crucifixion (lifting up), but by doing so, people would be drawn to Him in unexpected ways.

The Trials: Luke 22; Matt. 26-27

Jesus had taken His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane, where He went a stone’s throw beyond them and spent His time in prayer to the Father. His resolve is heard in the words, “not My will, but Yours.”

It was in the garden where Judas would find the occasion to betray Jesus into the hands of the chief priests and Pharisees. Coming out with weapons,



Judas led them to Jesus and kissed Him on the cheek. Even here, the events that occurred should have convicted these men of who Jesus was: their falling to the ground before Him (John 18), and the miracle of replacing

the ear of the servant were both powerful demonstrations of His identity. None of that mattered to the ones intent on seeing Jesus die.

Jesus did not fight back at this point. He let them bind Him and take Him to where He would stand accused of blasphemy. He would stand before two High Priests (politically and religiously, Annas and Caiaphas), Pilate (the governor of the region), and Herod (the king). In the process of these trials, He would be beaten, spat on, lied against, and unjustly accused. And for what? They had no better motive than envy. Christ’s motive was love.

In all of this, Isaiah’s prophecy was fulfilled:

“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living for the

transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?" (53:7-8)

The Crucifixion: Matt. 27; Mk. 15; Luke 23

"But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering..." (Isa 53:10a). "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor 5:21). "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed" (1 Pet 2:24).

Jesus prophesied that this time would come. He would have to go to Jerusalem to suffer and die a cruel death (Matt 16:21). The trials were an unjust display of cruelty motivated by envy and hatred. They had no intentions of letting Jesus go free.

Pilate examined Jesus and could find nothing against Him that would warrant death. He attempted to remove himself from the guilt of the situation by washing his hands of it, but the people would prevail and Pilate would send Jesus to His death.

As was their tradition, Pilate brought a couple prisoners before the people to let them decide who would be released and who would be punished. Barabbas, a known criminal, was brought out with Jesus. Justice did not matter at this point to the people. "Release Barabbas," they cried. Then what to do with Jesus? The cry of the mob still rings out loud and clear: "crucify Him, crucify Him!"

First, Jesus was scourged. This alone could result in death. They then would make Him bear His own cross on His beaten back. Apparently physically exhausted already, they compelled another man, Simon, to help with this. When they reached the "place of the skull," they crucified Jesus. There was no big fan fare, and the Scriptures do not go into great detail. There were crowds standing against Him and a handful of others watching on as they drove the spikes through His hands and feet, lifting Him up to die the death of a criminal.

Jesus was on the cross about six hours, fully aware of what was happening, and making several statements worthy of examination. He was in control, and when the time came, the choice was His to give up His life. "It is finished," was His cry (John 19:30). Through all pain, Jesus fulfilled His purpose as the Lamb slain for the sins of the world.

In the end, let's remember that His death was for us. Because of His shed blood, we can have forgiveness of every sin. Praise God!

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