

Jesus Before Pilate

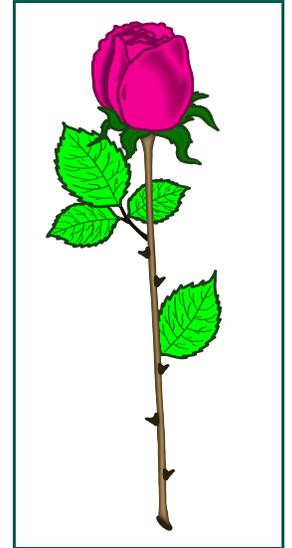
Matthew 27:1-2, 11-31; Mark 15:1-20; Luke 23:1-25; John 18:28-19:16

Have you ever tried to pick a rose?

How did it feel?

Imagine a whole wreath of thorns, pressed down hard on your head.

Was that the worst part of Jesus' suffering?



Prayer

Dear Father in Heaven, we can't imagine the pain our Savior willingly suffered for our sakes. Although He didn't commit a single sin, He was beaten, mocked, spit on, and finally crucified, all for us. He did this out of pure love for us, not because we earned it. As we learn more about His Passion, lead us to be willing also – willing to tell others about what Jesus did for them. Amen.

The Story - A Harmony of the Gospels

When morning came, the chief priests and elders of the people planned together how they would kill Jesus. They bound Him and took Him to the governor, Pontius Pilate. They would not go into the palace, because that would make them unclean for the Passover.

Pilate went outside to them. "What do you accuse this Man of?" he asked. They answered, "If He were not an evildoer, we would not have brought Him here." Pilate said, "You take Him and judge Him

according to your law." But the Jews said, "It is against the law for us to put Him to death." Jesus had predicted His own death and it was about to come true.

Pilate went back into the palace and asked Jesus, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself, or did others tell you about Me?" Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own people have brought You here. What have You done?" Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this



world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." Pilate then said, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You are right that I am a King. That is the reason I was born, and why I have come into this world, that I should tell the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." Pilate said, "What is truth?" He went back outside and told the Jews, "I find no fault in Him at all."

The chief priests and elders questioned Jesus, but He answered nothing. Pilate said to Him, "Don't You hear how many things they are saying about You?" Still Jesus did not answer, and Pilate was amazed. The crowd began to accuse Him, saying, "This Man stirs up the people and tells us not to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King! He teaches throughout all Judea, from Galilee to this place."

When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if Jesus were a Galilean. As soon as he found out He was, he sent Jesus to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. Herod was very glad to see Jesus, because he had heard many things about Him, and thought he could see some miracle done by Jesus. Herod asked Jesus many questions, but Jesus did not answer him. Then Herod and his men mocked Jesus, put a beautiful robe on Him and sent Him back to Pilate. That day Herod and Pilate

became friends; previously they had been enemies.

Pilate spoke to the crowd again. "You have brought this Man to me as one who misleads the people. Both Herod and I have questioned Him and neither of us has found Him guilty. Therefore, I will beat Him and let Him go." Now at this time it was the custom for the governor to release one prisoner to be chosen by the crowd. There was a criminal named Barabbas who had committed murder in rebellion. Pilate asked the people, "Whom do you want me to release, Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" Just then his wife sent him a message saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man. I suffered much in a dream last night because of Him." The chief priests and elders persuaded the crowd to ask for the release of Barabbas. Pilate said to them, "What should I do with Jesus, then?" They cried, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

"Why, what evil has He done?" asked Pilate. The people shouted, "Crucify Him!" Then Pilate said to them a third time, "I have found no reason to put Him to death. I will therefore have Him beaten and let Him go." But the people cried louder for Him to be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could not convince them, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it." The people

cried out, "His blood be on us and on our children." Then Pilate released Barabbas to them.

Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. The soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, then dressed Him in a purple robe. They mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and hit Him. Pilate went out again and said, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him." Jesus came out wearing the purple robe and the crown of thorns. Pilate said, "Behold the Man!" When the chief priests and elders saw Him, they shouted, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him."

The Jews said, "We have a law, and according to our law He should die, because He made Himself the Son of God." Pilate was afraid when he heard them say that, so he went back into the palace and asked Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus did not answer him. "Are You not speaking to me?" Pilate asked, "Do You not know that I have the power to crucify You and the power to release You?" Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." This made Pilate more anxious than ever to let Jesus go. But the Jews cried out, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king

speaks against Caesar."

Pilate brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" They cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" Then Pilate delivered Him to them to be crucified. They took Jesus and led Him away.

Discussion Questions

1. How do you know from this story that Jesus went willingly to His death?
2. Why did Pilate choose Barabbas as an alternative to Jesus for a possible prisoner to release?
3. Was Pilate convinced that Jesus was guilty?

Outer Aim - Jesus was tried by the Roman governor and, though found to be innocent, was condemned.

Inner Aim - Jesus willingly suffered under Pontius Pilate on His way to the cross.

Recalling Details - Unscramble the words and write them on the lines.

1. These people brought Jesus to Pilate: [dleers] _____ and [pircheefstis] _____
2. Jesus said His was not of this world: [minkdgo] _____
3. Pilate sent Jesus to him when he heard He was from Galilee: [drHeo] _____
4. The soldiers put this on Jesus: [bepperulor] _____
5. The Jews said if Pilate let Jesus go, he wouldn't be a friend to this man: [sarCae] _____

Passages

Matthew 6:24 – No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Acts 8:33 – In His humiliation His justice was taken away, and who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth.

Isaiah 53:5 – But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

Hymn - Read or sing hymn 145, stanzas 1 and 3.

Jesus, Refuge of the weary,
Blest Redeemer, whom we love,
Fountain in life's desert dreary,
Savior from the world above,
Oh, how oft Thine eyes, offended,
Gaze upon the sinner's fall!
Yet, upon the cross extended,
Thou didst bear the pain of all.

Jesus, may our hearts be burning
With more fervent love for Thee!
May our eyes be ever turning
To Thy cross of agony
Till in glory, parted never
From the blessed Savior's side,
Graven in our hearts forever,
Dwell the cross, the Crucified!

What is a refuge? Why is that a good name for Jesus? Find some other names for Jesus in this hymn.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, I'm sorry that my sins caused You so much pain. Thank You for willingly suffering all that You did to pay for those sins, especially Your crucifixion on the cross. Please help me now to tell everyone I know what You have done for all of us. Amen.