

Lesson March 3: Trial and Crucifixion

1. Read **John 18:28-32** and answer:

- What accusations do the Jews make against Jesus?
- Why did the Jews say that they could not judge Jesus by their own law?

Note: The Jewish accusers do not enter the palace of Pilate as that would make them “unclean” for the Passover meal.

2. Read **Luke 23:2-16** and answer:

Note: They needed a violation of Roman law to accuse Jesus and it had to be serious enough to demand the death penalty. Which accusations did they choose?

- What question did Pilate ask Jesus?
- How did Jesus answer?
- What did he say about his “kingdom?” (See **John 18:36-38**)
- What was Pilate’s original judgment of Christ?
- Why did Pilate send Jesus to King Herod?

Note: Pilate finds no Roman law violation and sends Jesus to Herod since Herod was “in charge” of Galilee.

- What was Herod’s reaction to Jesus?
- Why?
- Why did Herod end up disappointed and sending Jesus back to Pilate?
- When Jesus returned to Pilate, what did Pilate tell the Jews?

Note: Since no Roman law was broken, Pilate could not condemn Jesus. He has him scourged (beaten with whips containing sharp objects) to show his authority and then intends to release him.

3. Read **Matt 27:15-31** and answer:

- What practice had become a custom for the governor at the Passover?
- What two choices did Pilate give the people?
- Which did they choose?
- Who was he? (See **Mark 15:7**)
- What message did Pilate’s wife send to him?

Note: The Romans tried to appease the people they ruled by allowing them certain “privileges” – like freeing a prisoner during their “holy days.”

- When Pilate asked what should be done with Jesus, what did the crowd shout?

Note: When the crowd chooses Barabbas, Pilate has a problem – he cannot “legally” condemn Jesus by Roman law, but the mob wants Jesus crucified.

- How did Pilate try to absolve himself of responsibility in Jesus’ death?

Note: Washing his hands in front of them tells them, Rome has made its decision – innocent – and the responsibility for any consequences are on them for demanding crucifixion.

- What things did the soldiers do to Jesus after Pilate turned him over to them?

4. Read **John 19:4-16** and answer:

- John adds that one last time Pilate shows the beaten, bloodied Jesus to the people and said that he found no basis for crucifying him. Why did the Jews say that Jesus had to die?
- When Pilate said that he had the power to crucify or set free, where did Jesus say he got his power?
- What did the Jews say that finally convinced Pilate to crucify Jesus?

Note: When Pilate hesitates, the crowd threatens to “tell Caesar” that he is not treating them properly as “Roman subjects of Caesar” – something that could get a governor like Pilate recalled and removed from office.

5. Read **Luke 23:26-31** and answer:

- Who was forced to carry the cross of Jesus on the way to Golgotha?

Note: The prisoner would normally carry only the crossbeam of the cross on his shoulders, but after the beating, Jesus was unable to do this well enough to satisfy the Roman guards and they grab a spectator to carry it for him.

- Who was he the father of? (See **Mark 15:21** and **Rom 16:13**)
- Who followed Jesus to the cross?
- What did he say to them?

Note: The coming times of weeping that Jesus spoke of happened just a few years later at the fall of Jerusalem.

6. Read Matthew **27:33-43** and answer:

- When he got to Golgotha, what did they offer Jesus to drink?
- Did he take it?
- What was done with Jesus’ clothing?
- What sign was placed above his head?

Note: Gall was often mixed with wine vinegar as a pain killer (to make the person last longer on the cross). The crucifixion process was the ultimate deterrent of the Romans and they would make the most of it – announcing “crimes” on signs above the heads of those crucified.

- What things did the people say mocking Jesus?

7. Read **Luke 23:39-43** and answer:

- What did the robbers who were crucified on each side of Jesus say to him?
- How did Jesus respond to them?

Note: Jesus told the one repentant robber that he would be with him in Paradise (not Heaven, but the comforting place of Hades, the waiting place of souls.)

8. Read **John 19:25-27** and answer:

- What provisions did Jesus make for his mother while he hung on the cross?

Note: The firstborn son had the responsibility of caring for the welfare of the parents.

9. Read **Matt 27: 45-56** and answer:

- What happened at the sixth hour of the day (noon)?
- What things happened at the ninth hour of the day (3 P.M.)?

Note: Some have said this was an eclipse of the sun – what tells us that it was not? (Eclipses last only a few minutes, not hours)

- The sponge on which the “drink” was given was a standard issue “toilet sponge” for the Roman soldiers – the ultimate insult for Jesus.
- What things happened when Jesus died?
- What was the reaction of the attending centurion and those who witnessed these things?

Note: It was God who tore the temple curtain in two from top to bottom. It has been estimated that the curtain was from 4 to 8 inches thick and extremely heavy. (This was not a “natural event”). Even the hardened Roman centurion was afraid when he saw the events happening.

10. Read **John 19: 31-37** and answer:

- What was done to hasten the death of those on the crosses?
- Was it done to Jesus?
- Why?
- What was done to him instead?

Note: To breathe, the one crucified would have to push upward with his legs to allow air to get into the lungs. (The hanging bodyweight would not allow the lungs to operate) breaking the legs stopped this and caused death by suffocation.

- What scriptures were fulfilled during the events surrounding the crucifixion? (See **Ex 12:46, Ps 34:20, and Zech 12:10**)

11. Read **Matthew 27:57-66** and **John 19:38-42** and answer:

- Who went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus for burial?
- Who helped him?
- How did they prepare the body for burial?

Note: The body was wrapped with strips of linen, then a layer of spices and aloes was spread over the strips, then another layer of strips of linen was wrapped around the body forming a “cocoon”. The mouth was held shut with a separate cloth folded and tied around the head. The whole thing was then covered with a sheet and placed on a rock “shelf” in the tomb until the body decayed. Then the bones were collected and placed in a storage box for permanent keeping.

Note: 75 pounds of spices was more than a “normal” person would use in burial – that was the amount a king might receive.

- Where did they bury it?
- How was the tomb sealed?
- The next day, the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate with what request?
- Why did they ask for this?

- How was the tomb supposedly “made secure?”

Note: The tomb was made secure with a seal (warning punishment by Rome if it was violated) and by the placing of Roman approved guards outside the tomb by the Jewish leaders.