

## Lesson 12     14 January 2018

### Jesus' Trial and Death

**Lesson Scope:** [Luke 23](#)

*References in brackets pertain to Luke 23 unless otherwise noted*

#### Lesson Focus

Following His arrest, Jesus endured intense suffering and humiliation through six different trials. First, He was taken to Annas, father-in-law to Caiaphas, who sent Him bound to Caiaphas, the high priest. Caiaphas then sent Him to face accusation before the Jewish council. It was the whole multitude of the elders, chief priests, and scribes that led Him to Pilate to sanction their unjust verdict. Pilate, on learning that Jesus was of Galilee, sent Him to Herod. After abusing and mocking Him, Herod sent Jesus back to Pilate, who tried his best to free Jesus, but finally sentenced Him to be crucified. These trials were perversions of justice, merely carried out to justify the sentence they had already predetermined.

The Jews condemned Jesus to death, but the Romans carried out the execution. The religious, political, and military world all joined forces to commit the crime against the innocent Son of God. Thus all men were symbolically guilty of crucifying Jesus. But as every person is guilty of this crime, so also every person can be freed from this guilt by accepting the shed blood of the Lamb!

The horror and injustice of Christ's experiences could cause undue indignation at the cruelty, perverseness, and blasphemy of the Jews and Romans involved in committing the crime of slaying the innocent Lamb of God. However, though our sense of justice is stirred, let us not forget the larger picture of the epic struggle between God and Satan. Satan knew that Jesus was God's Son and did his best to destroy Jesus. Though it seemed Satan got the upper hand in crucifying Jesus, it was Jesus' death that provided all humanity with the offer for redemption from the clutches of sin and Satan! Also, since Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, emphasize that by our sinfulness, we also are guilty of the blood of Jesus (Hebrews 6:6). Yet this very blood becomes our life! "Hallelujah, what a Saviour!"

Jesus lived a perfectly sinless life. He alone was qualified to redeem the world from sin.

**Lesson Aim:** To see the Son of Man as the perfect Lamb of God.

**Theme Verses:** [Isaiah 53:7-8](#). He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

### **Lesson Text**

#### **Falsely Accused**

[Luke 23:1-11](#) And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. <sup>2</sup>And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. <sup>3</sup>And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest *it*. <sup>4</sup>Then said Pilate to the chief priests and *to* the people, I find no fault in this man. <sup>5</sup>And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place. <sup>6</sup>When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean. <sup>7</sup>And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time. <sup>8</sup>And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long *season*, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. <sup>9</sup>Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing. <sup>10</sup>And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. <sup>11</sup>And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked *him*, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

#### **Unjustly Condemned**

[Luke 23:13-25](#) And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, <sup>14</sup>Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having

examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: <sup>15</sup>No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. <sup>16</sup>I will therefore chastise him, and release *him*. <sup>17</sup>(For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.) <sup>18</sup>And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas: <sup>19</sup>(Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.) <sup>20</sup>Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. <sup>21</sup>But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him. <sup>22</sup>And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go. <sup>23</sup>And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. <sup>24</sup>And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. <sup>25</sup>And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

### **Cruelly Crucified**

[Luke 23:32-47](#) And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. <sup>33</sup>And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. <sup>34</sup>Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. <sup>35</sup>And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. <sup>36</sup>And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, <sup>37</sup>And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. <sup>38</sup>And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. <sup>39</sup>And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. <sup>40</sup>But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? <sup>41</sup>And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. <sup>42</sup>And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. <sup>43</sup>And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. <sup>44</sup>And it was about the sixth hour,

and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. <sup>45</sup>And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. <sup>46</sup>And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. <sup>47</sup>Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

## **Questions for Study**

### **Falsely Accused**

1. List prophecies from Isaiah 53 that were fulfilled at Jesus' trial.
2. Why did Jesus not defend Himself when falsely accused?
3. What can we learn from Jesus' example during His trial?

### **Unjustly Condemned**

4. What were the Jews' reasons for demanding the death sentence? What were Pilate's reasons for giving in to them?
5. Discuss Pilate's attempts to declare Jesus innocent.

### **Cruelly Crucified**

6. What are the implications of Jesus' request in 23:34?
7. What does the rending of the veil in the temple typify?
8. How are all men guilty of Jesus' death? How can this guilt be cleared?

## **Analyzing the Passage**

Three times Pilate declared Jesus innocent (23:4, 14, 22). He was able to see through the weak arguments the Jews presented and realized that Jesus had done nothing worthy of death. However, Pilate likely understood too that if he freed Jesus, the potential ensuing riots and upheaval in Jerusalem could cause the Roman government to question his ability to govern. Thus the voice of the crowd prevailed, and Pilate gave consent to the people to do as they pleased.

The willfulness of the people is in stark contrast to the meek surrender of the Captive. Jesus had prayed, "Not my will, but thine be done." But when the mob realized that Pilate sought Jesus' release, they cried all the more insistently that they would have their way, even preferring to free a dangerous criminal instead of the innocent Man.

Usually the Romans forced the condemned person to carry his own cross to the site of execution. Jesus was by now so weak from the in-

tense abuse He had suffered that the soldiers recruited the help of Simon to carry His cross (23:26).

Death usually would not end the life of the crucified person for at least a few days. Jesus died within a few hours because He gave up His own life (John 10:17-18).

## **Principles and Applications**

### **Falsely Accused**

1. The Son of Man was fully qualified to be the Lamb of God (23:3). Jesus affirmed His qualification as the Messiah before the Jewish council and again before Pilate. He was the Son of Man and the Son of God. He came to this earth to fulfill the will of His Father. His death completed the work of providing redemption.

2. The Son of Man was silent before His accusers (23:9). Jesus knew that Herod was not interested in the truth, so He remained silent. His meekness now was in contrast to the sound refutations of the Jewish leaders during His ministry. He perfectly fulfilled the prophecy "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isaiah 53:7).

3. The Son of Man was despised and rejected of men (23:10, 11). When Jesus chose to remain silent, He was ridiculed and buffeted by Herod's soldiers. The chief priests and scribes continued their false accusations. No one, including His own devout followers, was willing to defend Him.

### **Unjustly Condemned**

4. The Lamb of God was without fault (23:13-16). The Jews tried desperately to find some wrongdoing in Jesus' life, but they could not because Jesus was sinless. After evaluating the evidence, Herod had no condemnation to give, and Pilate declared Jesus innocent.

5. The just Lamb of God suffered for the unjust (23:20-25). Jesus meekly bore the shame and pain of false accusations. He selflessly gave Himself over into the hands of His accusers and became the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

### **Cruelly Crucified**

6. The perfect Lamb of God was crucified with the ungodly (23:32-33). Death by crucifixion was the most ignominious and painful mode of execution, usually reserved for the vilest of criminals. "And he was

numbered with the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12). That He was identified in His death with two malefactors who were justly condemned is typical of the fact the He died for those who deserved eternal death.

7. His willingness to forgive His persecutors is evidence of the perfection of the Lamb (23:34). Jesus prayed for the surrounding rulers and soldiers as they derided Him. Conscious of His Father's unabated love and mercy, He already sought pardon for His executioners, He being innocent. Jesus' forgiveness in such a circumstance was the ultimate illustration of love and forgiveness. He fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy and "made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12).

8. The offering of the perfect Lamb of God opened the way for man to come to God (23:45). No longer would a sinner need the high priest to enter into the presence of God. The veil separating the sinner from a Holy God was rent! Jesus has made it possible for us to come boldly into the holy presence of God (Hebrews 4:16).

9. The perfect Lamb of God voluntarily gave His life (23:46). It was not the soldiers' weapons that captured Jesus; it was His love for mankind. It was not the condemning crowds that delivered Him to death; it was His surrender to the will of God. It was not the nails that held Him fast to the cross; it was His desire to provide mankind with salvation. It was not the cross or the soldier who pierced His body that caused His death; it was by His own will that He gave up His life. The perfect Lamb commended His soul to the Father, and the Father saw the travail of His soul and was satisfied (Isaiah 53:11).

10. The trial and death of the Son of Man provide irrefutable evidence of His perfection (23:47). The unusual events that occurred during the crucifixion of Jesus were such a dramatic departure from the expected that the Roman soldier rightly declared, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Mark 15:39). Yet as we recoil from this gruesome scene with dread and horror, our hearts should swell with thanksgiving and adoration for the love and mercy of redemption made available to all who call on Him for their salvation.

### **Important Teachings**

1. The Son of Man was fully qualified to be the Lamb of God (23:3).
2. The Son of Man was silent before His accusers (23:9).
3. The Son of Man was despised and rejected of men (23:10-11).

4. The Lamb of God was without fault (23:13-16).
5. The just Lamb of God suffered for the unjust (23:20-25).
6. The perfect Lamb of God was crucified with the ungodly (23:32-33).
7. His willingness to forgive His persecutors is evidence of the perfection of the Lamb (23:34).
8. The offering of the perfect Lamb of God opened the way for man to come to God (23:45).
9. The perfect Lamb of God voluntarily gave His life (23:46).
10. The trial and death of the Son of Man provide irrefutable evidence of His perfection (23:47).

### **Answers to Questions**

1. List prophecies from Isaiah 53 that were fulfilled at Jesus' trial. "He [was] despised and rejected of men" (53:3). The hatred of Jesus' accusers was clear. "We hid as it were our faces" (53:3). The disciples fled and deserted Jesus. "He was wounded .... bruised.... and with his stripes we are healed" (53:5). Jesus faced brutal physical abuse during His trial. "He was oppressed.... and ... afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth" (53:7). Jesus answered not a word in defense against false accusations.
2. Why did Jesus not defend Himself when falsely accused?  
At His arrest, Jesus had told His captors that this was their "hour, and the power of darkness" (22:53). He meekly bore the shame of being falsely accused, knowing that the power of darkness would ultimately be vanquished by His willingness to go through with His suffering for sin. Jesus also knew that no answer was satisfactory to change the hearts of these men that had predetermined His death. His silence fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53:7.
3. What can we learn from Jesus' example during His trial?  
We may face injustices or false accusations, yet as Jesus accepted His suffering meekly and quietly, so we should not be too quick to defend our actions or correct wrongs. Being revengeful is not a mark of the meek and quiet spirit, but of a self-confident and proud person. Truth will always be vindicated. We must also not return evil for evil, but return good for evil by carefully following Jesus' example of non-resistance.
4. What were the Jews reasons for demanding the death sentence? What

were Pilate's reasons for giving in to them?

The Jews opposed Jesus' claim to be the Son of God. This to them was blasphemy, which was punishable by death. To carry out the death sentence, they needed permission from the Roman rulers. Thus to Pilate, they claimed that Jesus positioned Himself as the King of the Jews, which would have been treason under Caesar's law.

Pilate tried to free Jesus, but his choice to permit the Jews to kill Jesus was pragmatic. He would rather let the Jews have their way than to have the city of Jerusalem erupt in a riot, which could well have brought his ability to control his precinct into question by Rome.

5. Discuss Pilate's attempts to declare Jesus innocent.

Jesus truly was sinless, and He was the perfect Lamb of God. Pilate's insistence on Jesus' innocence proved that even this Gentile correctly saw through the trickery of the Jews and realized Jesus' innocence. This innocence and perfection was symbolized by the lamb that had to be without blemish to be acceptable for the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement.

6. What are the implications of Jesus' request in 23:34?

Jesus experienced the greatest injustice ever faced by a man. Yet His willingness to ask God to forgive the men who crucified Him reveals the love He had for His enemies and the mercy and compassion of the Father. He asked the Father to overlook their ignorance of what really was happening. After all, this was not merely the execution of a criminal, but actually was the only way God would provide for the executioners' own redemption! In observing Jesus' act of forgiveness, can we not then find it easy to forgive those who wronged us?

7. What does the rending of the veil in the temple typify?

The veil separated the holy place from the holy of holies within the temple. Once a year, the high priest would make atonement for the people and God's presence would fill this sacred place. The veil being torn is symbolic of the fulfillment of the Law and the ushering in of the New Covenant, where Jesus becomes our High Priest and we can "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

8. How are all men guilty of Jesus' death? How can this guilt be cleared?

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans

3:23). It was for the crimes of sin committed by all men that Jesus willingly became the sacrificial Lamb of atonement who shed His blood for the redemption of sin.

The only way to receive this redemption is to accept the provisions of this sinless blood, which washes away our sins, and then to continue living a repentant and obedient life.

### **Summarizing the Lesson**

O sacred Head, now wounded,  
With grief and shame weighed down!  
Now scornfully surrounded  
With thorns, Thine only crown:  
O sacred Head, what glory,  
What bliss till now was Thine!  
Yet, tho' despised and gory,  
I joy to call Thee mine.

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered  
Was all for sinners' gain:  
Mine, mine was the transgression,  
But Thine the deadly pain.  
Lo, here I fall, my Saviour!  
'Tis I deserve Thy place;  
Look on me with Thy favor,  
Vouchsafe to me Thy grace.  
What language shall I borrow  
To thank Thee, dearest Friend,  
For this Thy dying sorrow,  
Thy pity without end?

O make me Thine forever;  
And should I fainting be,  
Lord, let me never, never  
Outlive my love to Thee.

*Bernard of Clairvaux*

## **Research Guide**

1. Alfred Edersheim's *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services* reveals some interesting observations of the Passover and the Day of Atonement and how the death of Jesus so clearly typified these Jewish services.
2. Read the accounts in the other Gospels of the trial and death of Jesus for more details that Luke does not record.