

Appearance before the Romans

Objective: Given Matthew 27:1-31; Mark 15:1-20; Luke 23:1-25 the learner **SHALL** learn that Jesus had to suffer for and pay the price for our sins.

Introduction

- **Question:** What are the most significant events in the history of the world? Have you ever thought about that? I decided to Google it and find what is considered the most important events. I looked at a number of lists. They were all very similar. One list I found is listed as [**The 10 Most Important Moments and Events in History**](#).
- (10) **The Renaissance** – The enlightenment, the growth of knowledge, science, answering questions of life
- (9) **Pax Romana** – The period of time when Rome dominated the world, built culture, connected areas by road and brought relative peace to the world
- (8) **The Life of Mohammed** – He brought about a new religion and united a region of world that was nothing but warring tribes.
- (7) **Gutenberg's Printing Press** – Instead of hand copied manuscripts, books were made available for the common man to be able to read for himself and not some small group of the elite.
- (6) **World War I** – The war that was known as the Great War and war was made on a global scale instead of between two or three nations.
- (5) **World War II** – War became a global event affecting almost every nation of the world, along with tens of millions of men and women and children losing their lives.
- (4) **Tearing Down of the Berlin Wall** – Signified the end of Communist rule in the world in general and the end of the Cold War
- (3) **The Life of Jesus of Nazareth** – The impact of Jesus' life and teaching changed the world and it has never been the same since
- (2) **The Reformation** – Marked the end of a world dominating church and bringing the church back into the hands of the people and a Bible written in their own language
- (1) **The American Revolution** – (Some would say the French Revolution.) This event led to the idea that all men are created equal and should be treated fairly. The idea that men could rule themselves and have a voice in their rule was transforming and changed the world.
- **Question:** What do you think? Let's look at the life of Jesus. What is important in his life...
- His (1) **Birth** – God becoming man, (2) **Life he led** – sinless life, (3) The **lessons he taught** – taught us about God, (4) **Power** he showed over nature and disease, (5) **His death** – his death on the cross, (6) His **resurrection** – showed us that our sins have been paid for.
- My proposition is that the most significant event in the history of the world was the death of Christ.
- **[CLICK]** [**1 Cor 15:3-5**](#) *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.*
- **[CLICK]** [**Rom 5:8**](#) *but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
- It is only by the death of Jesus that we have peace with God. It was only possible that Jesus' death made a difference for He only who has lived and been sinless. Jesus is God and it is only by God's own plan and God's initiative that we can have our sins forgiven.
- I want to look at the passages of Scriptures before us today from the perspective of the people involved and I want to present this as a series of acts and scenes, as you would find in a classical play...

Lesson

- [CLICK] **Prologue**

- The last two weeks we have looked at the passages dealing with the plan and the arrest of Jesus.
- **Scene 1: The Plot - Matt. 26:3-6** *Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people."*
- The Jewish leadership had decided a long time before that Jesus had to die. They followed Him around, questioned Him, tried to trick Him, and did what they could to create a reason that they could get rid of him. They wanted him dead.
- [CLICK] **Scene 2: The Agreement – Matt. 26:14-16** *Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?" And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him.*
- One of Jesus' closest followers, Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests, not to convince them that Jesus was the Messiah, but to betray Him.
- **Question:** Why would Judas do this?
- Judas loved money more than anything else. He was the one that objected to Mary's anointing of Jesus and "wasting" a year's worth of wages. He was a thief and stole from the Apostle's money.
- Judas was the only Apostle not from Galilee and he was unfamiliar to the other disciples. We don't know anything about his family background. His call to Jesus is not listed in the Gospels.
- Judas was a devoted Jew who hated the rule of the Romans. In my opinion he was one of those who wanted the Messiah to be the one to overthrow the Romans and reestablish Israel as a world power. Judas became disillusioned with Jesus and after Mary's anointing of Jesus and he went out to betray Jesus very soon after.
- His true character came out and he was willing to betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. Our best estimate is that this was worth about four month's wages.
- **Question:** Did Judas have a choice? Yes he did. Was Judas' betrayal part of God's plan? Yes it was.
- [CLICK] **Scene 3: The Arrest – Matt. 26:48-49** *Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; seize him." And he came up to Jesus at once and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" And he kissed him.*
- [CLICK] John MacArthur writes, *Judas profaned the Passover that night. He profaned the Lamb of God. He profaned the Son of God. He profaned the place of prayer. He betrayed his Lord with a kiss.* - **John MacArthur**
- **Question:** How did Jesus feel about this? He wasn't surprised. He was saddened. He was submissive to the Father's will. He didn't want to suffer, but it was a part of the Father's plan. He willingly went to the trial and was he willing to die on a cross for all mankind.
- One of the most interesting things that occurred in Gethsemane was that Jesus healed the high priest servant's ear that Peter had cut off. Jesus was still **concerned** about the welfare of others even when he was being led to his trial.

- [CLICK] **Act I – Before the Jewish Leaders**

- **Scene 1 – The trial of Jesus before the Jews**
- Jesus was lead away for a trial. In fact there had been three trials between sunset and sunrise. First with Annas, then Caiaphas, then the Sanhedrin. Three trials were illegally held during the middle of the night.
- [CLICK] Look at what it says, **Matt 26:59-60** *Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward.*
- Jesus remained silent as they accused Him and only answered the question about whether He was the Messiah, which He answered and said He was. The rest of the questions He ignored.
- **Question:** Why would He do this? He wanted to make sure that people knew who He claimed to be. He always wanted those He was with to make a decision: Were they for Jesus/God or where they against Jesus/God. The rest of the questions and accusations didn't bother Him, because they weren't a part of His message. He wanted people to look at Him, examine Him, and make a decision about Him.
- [CLICK] The conclusion: **Matt. 27:1-2** *When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.*
- Jesus did not react to their wild accusations. He didn't defend himself. He didn't try to get out of the punishment. He was beaten and spit upon.
- This must have been a horrible time for Jesus: Accused falsely, suffering when he didn't deserve it, abandoned by his followers, and a devout Jew being delivered over to the heathen Romans to be killed.
- **Question:** Did the Jews believe that Jesus was guilty of a crime deserving death? They thought He was, but they had no evidence. They had to fabricate false witnesses in violation of their own law.
- The Jews did not have the right to implement the death sentence. This was a Roman prerogative and so the Jews thought Jesus deserved death and sent him to Pilate to deal the Roman justice and to complete the sentence of death upon Jesus.
- [CLICK] **Scene 2 – The death of Judas**
- **Question:** How did Judas feel about what he did? He had sinned. He had betrayed innocent blood. Did Judas repent? No. He felt bad, but he didn't repent. He didn't turn his life around and ask for forgiveness and throw himself before God. He could have and then he could have become a powerful witness for the risen Savior, but he killed himself instead. For him, there was no way out. Death was the only thing that he could think of.
- [CLICK] **Matt. 27:3-5** *Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself.*
- The Jewish leaders didn't **believe** the testimony against Jesus, yet they condemned Him anyway.
- Judas didn't **believe** in the guilt of Jesus and felt sorry he had betrayed Jesus.

- [CLICK] **Act II – Trial Before the Romans**

- **Scene 1 – Before Pilate**

- [CLICK] History tells us that Pontius Pilate was a Roman who incurred the wrath of the Jews when he hung worship images of the Emperor around Jerusalem and had coins minted that contained pagan symbols. The Jews didn't love him. He was later called back to Rome to stand trial for his cruelty and oppression in 36 A.D. Josephus (a Jewish historian) portrays him as a headstrong strict authoritarian Roman leader. The New Testament portrays him as a weak, vacillating personality.
- Pilate questioned Jesus and Jesus only responded again with an answer of who He was and ignored the accusations:
- [CLICK] *Mark 15:2-5 Pilate questioned him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He said to him in reply, "You say so." The chief priests accused him of many things. Again Pilate questioned him, "Have you no answer? See how many things they accuse you of." Jesus gave him no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.*
- Jesus' response of "*You say so*" wasn't evasive or denying anything. It was the way at that time to agree with what the speaker asked. He was stating loud and clear that He was the King of the Jews, the promised Messiah, the one that the Jewish people had been longing for.
- **Question:** How do most people respond when they are accused? They deny. They attack. They get angry. But not Jesus. He remained calm. He remained silent. He didn't get agitated. He didn't get depressed. He didn't become hysterical or break down.
- Jesus fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah:
- [CLICK] *Isa 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.*
- **Question:** Why was Pilate amazed? Jesus didn't respond like any normal person and did not become defensive. This more than anything else convinced Pilate that Jesus was not guilty.
- Pilate rejected the Jewish leaders' charges against Jesus and wanted to release Jesus, finding nothing worthy of death. The Jews continued accusing Jesus. All of which Jesus ignored.
- [CLICK] **Scene 2 – Before Herod Antipas**
- [CLICK] History tells us that Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great. He was the tetrarch (ruler $\frac{1}{4}$ of Herod the Great's 'empire') of Galilee during this time. He divorced his own wife and married his brother's wife. He had John the Baptist beheaded. He restored some of the cities that had been destroyed during a conflict. He encouraged the Herodians, a party of the wealthy rich Jews who were tolerant of Roman rule.
- Herod was in Jerusalem during the Jewish Passover and wanted to see Jesus and see Him perform miracles.
- [CLICK] *Luke 23:8-9 When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer.*
- **Question:** What was Herod's motivation? He wanted to be entertained. He wanted a show. He wanted to see something he had never seen before. Was he really looking at Jesus as a possible Messiah? I don't think so. Herod asked Jesus many questions, but no record is made if Jesus responded to him at all. Herod was not a true seeker of truth and Jesus ignored him.

- Herod did not think Jesus guilty of the charges that were brought against Him. After his examination of Jesus he sent Jesus back to Pilate.
- But, Herod did allow his soldiers to abuse and mock Jesus. The Roman soldiers were known for their cruelty. They liked nothing better than asserting their dominance and authority over the Jewish people. Typically Roman soldiers were sent from another part of the empire and so did not know or sympathize with the locals. To the Roman soldiers the Jews were troublemakers and had to be dealt with.

- **[CLICK] Scene 3 – Before Pilate, reprise**

- **[CLICK]** Jesus was delivered back to Pilate. Pilate had one more plan to get Jesus released – there was a tradition the governor had of releasing any prisoner that the crowd wanted released.
- He knew that Jesus was a popular teacher and there was a notorious prisoner named Barabbas who had led a rebellion against the Romans and was guilty of murder and in prison at the same time.
- **[CLICK]** Surely the people would condemn this man and let Jesus go free. With a choice between Jesus and Barabbas the choice seemed clear to him. The people would ask for Jesus and they would condemn Barabbas.
- **Question:** But what happened?
- **[CLICK]** *Mark 15:11-14 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" And they cried out again, "Crucify him." And Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him."*
- Pilate tried to release Jesus, but it didn't work. The chief priests worked the crowd and the very crowd that proclaimed Jesus as King the week before now called for his death. From "*Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!*" to "*Crucify him!*"
- A riot was about to occur and Pilate washed his hands in front of the crowd and proclaimed his innocence.
- **[CLICK]** *Matt. 26:24 When Pilate saw that he was not succeeding at all, but that a riot was breaking out instead, he took water and washed his hands in the sight of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood. Look to it yourselves."*
- Pilate was telling everyone that he thought Jesus was innocent and the death that they wanted was not based upon what he wanted, but what the crowd wanted.
- The crowd responded:
- **[CLICK]** *Matt. 26:25 And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!"*
- What a prophetic statement! They meant it for bad, but it was exactly true: Jesus would die and His blood would be shed for the Jewish nation and provide the means of salvation not only for them but also for the whole world.

- **[CLICK] Act III – Humiliation of Jesus**

- Jesus was taken before the whole battalion of Roman soldiers, about 500 soldiers altogether.
- **Question:** How was Jesus treated? With respect? With reverence? NO! **[CLICK]** He was beaten, ridiculed, and mocked. They dressed in a robe, and put a crown on his head, and bowed before him. Then they beat him, hit him, and spit on him. Then the robe was ripped off of him and he began to bleed once again.

- This was after He was scourged. The scourge was an instrument made of many leather fingers and embedded with bits of metal and bones. The back of Jesus was shredded exposing muscles and maybe bones.
- **[CLICK]** *The whip used for scourging had a short wooden handle, to the end of which were attached several leather thongs. Each thong was tipped with very sharp pieces of metal or bone. The man to be scourged was tied to a post by the wrists high over his head, with his feet dangling and his body taut. Often there were two scourgers, one on either side of the victim, who took turns lashing him across the back. Muscles were lacerated, veins and arteries were torn open, and it was not uncommon for the kidneys, spleen, or other organs to be exposed and slashed.* □- **John MacArthur**
- **[CLICK]** Then they led him out to crucified. So ends the trial before the Romans...

- **[CLICK] Epilogue**
 - **[CLICK]** The Jewish leaders could not find a charge against Jesus but wanted Jesus killed anyway.
 - Judas proclaimed Jesus' innocence and ended his own life.
 - Pilate proclaimed Jesus' innocence and washed his hands of Jesus' death.
 - Herod proclaimed Jesus' innocence and wanted to be entertained by the miracles he wanted Jesus to perform.
 - The Roman soldiers were sadistic and only wanted to inflict punishment. They wanted to make fun of people and hurt them.
 - The crowd was fickle and was bloodthirsty and wanted a death to satisfy them.
 - No evidence was presented that indicated the Jesus should die. He was guilty of no crimes.
 - **Question:** So why did Jesus have to die if he wasn't guilty? A very good question and a key question that all of us have to understand.
 - **[CLICK]** He had to die because we, every person, are guilty.
 - **[CLICK]** *Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
 - God is holy and cannot tolerate sin at all.
 - All sin must be paid for. There is no exception. God's holiness and his righteousness demand it.
 - **[CLICK]** *Rom 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*
 - In the Garden of Eden man disobeyed God and sin was brought into the world.
 - Because of Adam we have a sin nature and we chose to sin. And when we sin we fall short of God's standard.
 - Man cannot deal with his own sin problem, because he is not perfect and cannot resolve the problem.
 - **[CLICK]** *Rom. 5:8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
 - There is only one-way for sin to be taken care.
 - Someone had to die for our sins and that person had to be sinless himself.
 - Only then could that person pay the price for our sins.
 - God, through the person of Jesus Christ, is the only one that could deal with our in problem.

- God's motivation is His love for all mankind.
- **[CLICK]** *Rom 10:9-10 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.*
 - We do not receive salvation through being good or doing good things.
 - Those things always fall short. They do not deal with our sin problem.
 - The only thing we can do is to believe that the death of Jesus has paid the price for our sins.
 - When we believe in Jesus as the payment for our sins we are justified and we are made righteous and we have salvation.
- **[CLICK]** *That is what happened on the cross:* Jesus died for our sins because we could not do it ourselves.
- **[CLICK]** Jesus death on the cross was part of God's plan for our salvation. It was God's plan from eternity past.
- Pilate tried to stop Jesus dying, but he couldn't because Jesus' death was part of God's plan.
- Herod wanted to observe miracles being displayed and missed the greatest miracle that ever occurred: Jesus dying for our sins.
- The Jews wanted Jesus to die because He claimed to be the Messiah and also God and they thought that was blasphemy – but it was actually the truth. They condemned the Messiah that they had been waiting for hundreds of years because He wasn't a Messiah they were expecting or looking for.
- Judas wanted a Messiah that would come to conquer the Romans and he didn't want a Messiah that would come to die and so he died by his own hand and missed eternal life by his own choice.
- **Question:** Why did Jesus have to die? Because without His death we could never receive eternal life. It was part of God's plan to make us right before Him.
- There are not many ways to God; there is only **one way**. There is only one method of salvation.
- **[CLICK]** *John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*
- **[CLICK]** *Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*
- **Question:** What are we to do all this information? When we approach God's Word we are to be changed by God's Word.
 - **[CLICK]** *If you are not a Christian, turn to Him and accept Him as your Lord and Savior.* Jesus has called us all to make a decision. We are to believe that we can't deal with our sin problem and He is the only answer to our sin problem.
 - **[CLICK]** *If you are a Christian, be thankful for what He has done for you.* Turn to Him everyday. Rejoice that your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Be thankful that He has saved you and provided eternal life.
 - **[CLICK]** *Reflect upon Him and understand what He has done for us.* He suffered for us. He loved us and wanted to bring us to God. The Son of God, the sustainer of the universe, took on the

form of man, and lived as a man. The one who deserved our glory and praise and worship, came as a servant.

- **[CLICK] *Tell others about Him.*** Tell all those around you who He is, what He has done, and what He has done for you. Don't be bashful. Don't be ashamed. Be bold and share with others.