

# **“Will You Stand For Jesus, Or Buckle Under the Pressure?”**

## **John 19:1-22**

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**Teaching Aim:** To examine the circumstances surrounding the final trial of Jesus before His crucifixion. To recognize how temperamental people can be when a mob mentality is present. To realize that not everyone who says they are a believer in the God of the Bible really is; Jesus said you will know them by their fruit. To understand how easy it is for us to buckle under the pressure when people turn against us. To recognize Jesus had to be crucified if we are to be saved today!

### **DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)**

#### **Part I: The Jewish populace demands the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (John 19:1-6)**

1. In **John chapter 18**, we find Pontius Pilate declaring Jesus *“innocent of the charges”* and looking for a way to release Him. On three separate occasions, Pilate declared Jesus innocent & on a fourth, so did Herod. In a last-ditch effort to save Jesus, Pilate followed the custom of releasing a prisoner during the Passover Festival. He offered the Jews one of two: the insurrectionist and murderer Barabbas, or the Lord Jesus Christ. (See **John 18:39-40**) Pilate assumed Jesus would be chosen because of His popularity during His public ministry in Israel. The other candidate was Barabbas, who had become a national hero by resisting the Romans as an insurrectionist. Who did the Jews decide to free?
  
2. Jesus was an innocent man; He lived His entire life without committing a single sin. (See **2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5**) What do we learn about the leadership style of Pilate from His decision to crucify Jesus, even though he knew He was innocent? Do you find yourself buckling under the pressure when people turn against you, or do you stand for what is right no matter what the cost? On a scale of 1-10, how are you doing?
  
3. In one final gamble to release Jesus, Pilate had his soldiers *“scourge”* Jesus (**vs. 1**). What does it mean for someone to be scourged? (See Commentaries) What were some of the more devastating effects of scourging? Why would Rome use this punishment? In this particular case, what was the purpose behind Pilate having his soldiers scourge Jesus?

4. **Verse 2** tells us that the Roman soldiers under Pilate's command abused Jesus. The crown of thorns was most likely thorns from a date palm, these thorns are often 12 inches in length. What was the purpose behind the crown of thorns? How painful would this have been for Jesus? Why? Why did the soldiers clothe Jesus in a purple robe?
  
5. Bloodied by the soldiers, Jesus was now black and blue, hurting so bad that He could hardly stand, but more abuse was about to come. What did Pilate's soldiers do next to degrade Jesus (**vs. 3**)? It's hard enough to watch an animal being purposely injured, can you imagine witnessing this event? What other kind of physical abuse did the soldiers use on Jesus? How does it make you feel to know that Jesus went through this because of your sin?
  
6. What declaration do we find Pilate making for a second time in **verse 4**? Note: Pilate was hoping after the scourging and mocking of Jesus that the Jews would take pity on Him and agree to His release. That did not happen. What can we learn about Pilate's leadership (or lack of it) from the way he had Jesus treated (**vs. 5**)?
  
7. Pilate had declared the innocence of Jesus three times to no avail (**vs. 6**). (See **John 28:38; 19:4, 6**) What did Pilate mean when he said, "*Behold the Man*"? (See Commentaries) In doing so, Pilate appealed for mercy from the Jewish chief priests and officers. Did Jesus receive mercy from the religious leaders (**vs. 6**)? Can we always trust someone because they say they are religious? Note: The Jewish people would have no mercy on Jesus, the very one who came to offer mercy to His people the Jews, and Gentiles around the world.

## **Part II: Pilate questions Jesus and then makes a final judgment (John 19:7-16)**

1. According to Roman law, Jesus was innocent (**vs. 6**). What angle did the Jews move to once Pilate had declared the innocence of Jesus (**vs. 7**)? What is "*blasphemy*" and why is this such a serious crime? (See **Lev. 24:16**) Had Jesus committed "*blasphemy*," or had He told the truth? (See **John 5:18; 8:56-59; 10:33,36**)

2. The Romans were often superstitious. Pilate was already afraid when it came to Jesus because of what Jesus could mean for his career and perhaps his life. Pilate was already in trouble with Rome. Additionally, his wife had sent him a disturbing message during the trial warning Pilate to steer clear of Jesus. (See **Matt. 27:18-19**) As Pilate walked back into the Praetorium, what question was on his mind (**vs. 9**)? Why? Do you think Pilate may have been wondering if He had just beaten the Son of God? Pilate was self-centered, probably wondering, “*What will that mean for me?*” Do you think of yourself first or others?
  
3. According to **verse 9b**, how did Jesus respond to Pilate’s question? How do we see His response fulfilling prophecy? (See **Isa. 53:7**) When Jesus refused to answer, Pilate became agitated. What kind of power did Pilate claim to have? Where did this power come from? (See **Rom. 13:1**) In the case of Pilate, did he have the power to take away the life of Jesus or was that something only Jesus could allow (**vs. 11**)? (See **John 10:17-18; Luke 23:46**)
  
4. Pilate’s authority was not self-generated, it was God given and came through Rome (**vs. 11**). In **verse 11b**, Jesus points His fingers at someone who was even more guilty of sin than Pilate, who? (See Commentaries) What makes this person the prime suspect?
  
5. According to **verse 12**, what was Pilate hoping for? How did the Jews respond to Pilate’s last-ditch effort to release Jesus? It is important to remember that Pilate was already in hot water with Caesar over a previous issue with the Jews. In light of this revelation, did the Jews blackmail Pilate into doing what they wanted with Jesus (**vs. 12**)? If so, how?
  
6. It appears that the Jews hated Jesus even more than they hated the Romans (**vs. 12**). (See **Matt. 27:24-25**) Pilate had enough, what did Pilate finally do in **verse 13**? Pilate’s judgment seat was known as “*the bema judgment seat.*” Where else do we hear of “*The Bema Judgment Seat?*” What is the purpose of “*The Bema Judgment Seat of Christ?*” in **2 Cor. 5:10**? How is this different from the Great White Throne Judgment? (See **Rev. 20:11-15**)

7. There has been a lot of confusion over what **verse 14** means. Jesus celebrated the Passover Seder (or dinner) on Thursday night with His disciples. What feast is John referring to in **verse 14**? What two different methods of keeping time are found in **John 18:14** & **Mark 15:25**? What hour are both writers referring to? (See Commentaries) Why is it significant that the crucifixion of Christ would begin at 9:00am and His death would be at 3:00pm?
  
8. Pilates attempts to have the Jewish populace pity Jesus failed miserably. What do we find the people calling for in **verse 15**? What can we learn about spiritual state of the chief priests from their pledge, "*We have no king but Caesar?*" Why is this shocking?
  
9. After not getting his preferred outcome, what did Pilate do next (**vs. 16**)? On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate Pilate as a leader? What do you see as his weaknesses? Do you see any strengths? What are some of the qualities of a good leader?

### **Part III: The crucifixion of Jesus Christ (John 19:17-22)**

1. Where was Jesus taken once the sixth and final trial during the 24-hour period ended (**vs. 17**)? What did the Bible mean when it said that Jesus had to bear His own cross? Why is it unlikely that Jesus carried the entire cross? What part of the cross did Jesus most likely carry? (See Commentaries) Who carried the cross of Christ when He could carry it no further? (See **Mark 15:21**) On what continent do we find the city of Cyrene located? (Hint: Search online) Could Simon's nationality have had something to do with why the Romans chose him to carry the cross of Christ?
  
2. Where did they send Jesus to be crucified (**vs. 17**)? Who was crucified on his right side and His left (**vs. 18**)? How was this a fulfillment of prophecy? (See **Matt. 27:38; Isa. 53:12**) How did each criminal react to Jesus? (See **Luke 23:39-43**) Did the crucifixion take place within the city walls of Jerusalem or outside of the Jewish camp? (See **Heb. 13:10-13**)

3. It was the custom of the Romans to write the reason for an execution on a placard or tablet hung around a person's neck or nailed above their head while they were being crucified. According to **verse 19**, what did Pilate have written on the tablet above the head of Jesus? Why did the Romans do their crucifixions in high traffic areas witnessed by many people?
  
4. In what three languages was the charge written (**vs. 20**)? What was the significance of each language and what people group was represented by each? Why were there so many people from all over the world in Jerusalem at this time?
  
5. How did the chief priests of the Jews respond to the words Pontius Pilate chose for the sign (**vs. 21**)? Why? Did Pilate buckle under the pressure of their demands this time? Why or why not (**vs. 22**)?
  
6. How does the story of **Numbers 21:8-9** relate to the cross of Christ and to the gospel message found in **John 3:14-16**? Have you received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord? If not, why not do so in prayer right now?

#### **MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!***

- Sadly, the Jewish people chose the insurrectionist Barabbas over God's gift of Jesus to them.
- Not everyone who says they are a true believer in the God of the Bible really is.
- Time and time again, Pilate demonstrated his insecurity and indecisiveness as a leader.
- Pilate, who was already in trouble with Caesar, was blackmailed into crucifying Jesus.
- The Jewish religious leaders chose allegiance to Rome rather than allegiance to God.
- Crucifixion was a horrible way to die, so horrible that Roman citizens avoided crucified.
- Jesus was crucified at Golgotha, the place of the skull.
- Crucifixions took place in a high traffic area as a warning to those passing by.
- Jesus revealed that He is the fulfillment of the bronze serpent on a pole in **Num. 21:4-9**.
- The crucifixion of Jesus Christ as the sinless Lamb of God is a prerequisite for our salvation today. (See **John 3:14-17**)