

Matthew 27:1-56 The King on a Cross

I think if you were to take a poll and ask people the meaning of the cross, you would get some typical answers.

A)The cross is the symbol of Christianity "" as opposed to "The star of David" or other icons or symbols of world religions.

B)Someone familiar with History: the cross was the symbol of Roman Justice against those who committed capital crimes against Rome!

1)Both those answers would be insufficient.

C)The real meaning behind the cross is that it is the ultimate demonstration of the love of God.

1) Paul said in Romans Chapter 5, "God demonstrated his love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

"The cross is the proof that there is no length to which God won't go to win the hearts of men. It shows how far God will go to bring us to him." - William Barkley

Chapter 26 came to a close as Jesus was led out of the palace of Caiaphas after an illegal midnight meeting of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Supreme Court.

V.1 When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people **plotted against** Jesus to put Him to death. 2 And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

Notice that word – Plotted

A)the reason they had to plot to put him to death is because they couldn't put him to death on their own.

B)The Romans had taken away their right of capital punishment years before.

C)That being said the Jews found ways to circumvent that law: **They were ready to stone the woman caught in adultery.**

1)They did stone Stephen to death – and later tried to stone Paul to death

D)So Stoning was not out of the question: But the thing we need to realize is that these religious leaders are not in charge. – JESUS IS

The OT alluded to the fact that Messiah would be crucified – and Jesus had told his disciples he would be crucified.

A)Deuteronomy 21:23 **Cursed is anyone who hangs on a tree-** Jesus came to take the curse of sin upon himself in our place.

B)So Jesus picks the place – Jerusalem – Same place yrs later Abraham – Isaac – God will provide himself a lamb

1)HE PICKS THE TIME – Passover – Final Passover lamb

Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. ¹⁸No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. – John 10:18

As we consider the events recorded here in Matthew 27 led to the cross.

A)I want to high light – reactions of 3 men –

1st Pilate the Governor:

A)Pontius Pilate was the fifth governor of Judea given the post in 26 A.D. by Tiberius Caesar and he occupied that post for ten years.

B)He wasn't Roman. He was Spanish. He was born in Seville, Spain. He loved fighting, he loved armies,

1)and when the Roman legions came to his area of the world, he decided to join the Roman army and fight for Rome.

C)But how did he get a job like this? Well, he married Up

1)He married a young lady by the name of Claudia Procula, the granddaughter of Augustus Caesar. So he got a good post.

D)He got a government job. He was the governor, the procurator of Judea.

The Bible portrays him as a weak man, not a good leader, very self-inclined, and arrogant

A)Already made several blunders - He had 3 strikes against him – one more and he would be done.

B)Strike #1 **Pilate made his first mistake when he initially came into Jerusalem.**

1)As his soldiers carried their standards topped with eagles of gold and silver into the temple area,

C)the Jews saw the eagles as idols and became so infuriated that they rioted on the temple mount.

Wanting to quell the rebellion immediately,

A)Pilate ordered the riotous Jews held in an amphitheater outside Jerusalem where they would be slaughtered unless they repented.

B)These courageous Jews laid their heads down on the ground and said, “Chop off our heads,

1)but there will be ten thousand others to take our places if your images ever come on temple property again.”

C)Foreseeing a bloody rebellion and a political strike against him, Pilate backed off.

1)But word got back to Rome that Pontius Pilate had been beaten by some obstinate Jews.

Strike #2, Pilate wanted to make up for his bad start with the Jews by bringing in a fresh supply of water.

A)So he built an aqueduct that would carry water from the north down to Jerusalem.

B)It was a great engineering feat. ISRAEL

C)But he financed the undertaking with money from the temple treasury.

1)This infuriated the Jews and blood was shed as Pilate put down the ensuing rebellion.

Strike #3 When Pilate ordered new armor for his soldiers, the new shields bearing the image of Emperor Tiberius Caesar incensed the Jews.

A)Considering them to be a form of idolatry, the Jews rebelled yet again.

B)And when Tiberius heard of it, he was incensed and sent the message to Pilate that if there was one more rebellion, he'd be out of a job.

C)I mention all of that because – it plays into how

we see Pilate in this passage.

D)Proverbs 9:10 **The Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom**

1)Proverbs 29:25 **The Fear of man is a snare**

E)Pilate would give into the latter – ignoring the warnings as we shall see –

So Jesus is brought to Pilate - There's a section in the Temple Mount area. (Israel)

A)The remains of what is called the "Antonio Fortress" or the "Ancient Roman Praetorium," where Pontius Pilate had his headquarters

B)This is where people were judged for capital crimes, - this is where they brought Jesus

1)In fact, the very pavement is still intact today, the pavement that Jesus stood on to be judged by Pontius Pilate. You can stand on it to this day.

3 Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 saying, **“I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”** And they said, “What is that to us? You see to it!”

“I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”

A)If Judas had seen any fault, any inconsistency, any hypocrisy, or any sin in Jesus, he could have justified the betrayal in his own mind.

B)He could have said, “He makes Himself out to be the Son of God, but I’ve seen Him lose His temper,”

1)or “I remember the time He stretched the truth,” or “I heard Him gossip.”

C)Instead, Judas realized Jesus was exactly who He declared Himself to be—the Lamb of God, the Sinless One.

D)The religious leaders – Sorry dude that is your problem and not ours

5 Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.

6 But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood.”

E) See the hypocrisy here: We will pay for a betrayer – we will sentence an innocent man to death ... blood money.

7 And they consulted together and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. 8 Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

9 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, 10 and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."

What was a potter's field?

A) In Bible times, if a potter discovered cracks or chips in something he had made, he would throw the marred vessel outside of his shop.

B) Over time this area would become full of broken pottery.

1) Because nothing would be able to grow in this portion of land, it was good for nothing except to use as a cemetery for strangers and travelers who had no other place to be buried.

C) Now, think with me for a moment. The blood money of Jesus Christ was used to buy the place where broken pottery and dead bodies were.

1) That's us. Without Jesus we were shattered, dead, and good for nothing.

What hope is there for broken pottery?

A) Only this: If it is reheated and placed in water once again, it will become pliable and able to be re-shaped and restored.

B) So, too, if we as broken pieces of pottery become heated by the trials our Master Potter allows in our lives,

1) if we're warmed by the love He has for us and washed by the water of the Word He gives to us, we can be re-shaped and used for His glory.

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus said to him, "It is as you say."

A) Jesus said to him, "It is as you say." In other word, "Yes. That's right.

B) You said it. I am a king." John's Gospel said that he said to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this

world. If my kingdom were of this world, my subjects would rise up and they would fight." John 18:36

C) So he was not a political king. He was a spiritual king, that is, you can ask him to rule and reign in your hearts

1) so that the kingdom of God can come to you in your life experience right here, right now, as you allow him to rule over you.

D) That is what a Christian really is.

1) A Christian is somebody who has allowed God and His Kingdom to take the place of me and my kingdom.

E) That's what a believer is. It's not just somebody who goes to church and sing songs and says, "I feel really good when I go there."

1) It's somebody who has allowed kingship of Christ to take the place of his or her own desires.

There is a day coming when Jesus is going to return and set up an earthly Kingdom

A) Every knee will bow and tongue will confess.....

B) Do it now for tomorrow will be too late!

C) Pilate ignores the testimony of Jesus

12 And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing.

13 Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" 14 But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.

C) When the religious leaders were interrogating Jesus – he didn't respond to their questions: Pilate questions him on that –

1) Do you know what they are saying about you – Jesus has no response

D) That was unusual for Pilate – He has been in many of these trials before and he was used to criminal saying, "Please, let me go. I didn't do it.

E) Jesus said nothing. Isaiah the prophet said, "As a lamb, before its shearers is silent so he opened not his mouth."

1)the governor marveled greatly. Thaumadzo is the Greek word. We would say, "Pilate was blown away."

Pilate ignores the countenance of Jesus

A)Clearly Pilate is realizing – this is no ordinary man

Pilate seeks for a compromise

15 Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. 16 And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. 17 Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" 18 For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.

From other Gospel accounts, we know Barabbas was an insurrectionist and a murderer. –

A) If you think about it this is totally appropriate – Jesus took the place of a noted Criminal

19 While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

B) History not only tells us Claudia Procula – Pilate's wife had converted to Judaism,

1)But that following this event, she became a convert to Jesus Christ.

C)The same could not be said of her husband!

1)Pilate ignores the countenance of His wife!

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. 21 The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

They said, "Barabbas!"

22 Pilate said to them, **"What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"**

They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"

"What shall I do with Jesus?" That's the key question for every person throughout history.

A)Pilate had a choice to make right then.

B)He could either stand up for what he knew was right, or he could follow the crowd and save his political skin.

23 Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?"

But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!"

24 When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it."

Pilate ignores his own conscience

25 And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children."

C)Interesting that not long after this – some of these same religious leaders would say to the Apostles

1)Acts Ch. 5 – Questioning their preaching of Christ

Are you trying to put this man's blood on us?

D)Are you trying to say – we are responsible for his death? – Exactly Peter said – they did own up to it

26 Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.

A)We know from the other Gospels that the scourging Pilate ordered was his attempt to pacify the Jews. –

B)Hoped to yield compassion on Jesus-

1)But it didn't – Only fueled their thirst for blood

C)Scourging was brutal.

It was done with a Roman instrument of torture called a "flagellum"— cat of nine tails

The first blows would cause welts to form on his shoulders and back.

A)By the seventh or eighth blow, the glass would begin to cut open these large welts,

B)not only reducing the back to the consistency of hamburger, but also exposing the internal organs.

C)Most men died under the beating of the flagellum.

But Jesus, of course, did not die there.

A)Soldiers stood Him up, brought Him out, and presented Him to the crowd.

B) Pilate declared “Behold the Man as if to say, “Look at this Man. Isn’t this enough?”

C) The people Yelled Crucify Him

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. 28 And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him.

29 When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” 30 Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head.

This is God incarnate: See what he is allowing them to do? - Ever had someone spit on you? **My MOM – those kids**

31 And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, **{Took the Robe off - blood dried!!!}** put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.

32 Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross.

A) Simon was from Cyrene—From Northern Africa.

B) We know he was a proselyte, one who had converted to Judaism.

Simon of Cyrene, desiring as all Jews did, to celebrate at least one of the feasts in the Holy City,

A) So he Saved all of his money and made all of the necessary plans and preparations.

B) At last the day arrived when he crossed the Mediterranean to celebrate Passover in Jerusalem!

1) But when he arrived, he realized it was an unusual festival. Controversy abounded.

C) He watched At the beginning of the week when Jesus rode into Jerusalem and the people cried, “Hosanna.”

D) But At the end, the people cried, “Crucify.” And Simon didn’t know what to make of it.

Lined up along the street with hundreds of thousands of others, Simon watched this Man carrying a Cross to Calvary.

A) On the way, Jesus stumbled right in front of him.

B) Simon then felt the unmistakable sensation of iron pressed upon his shoulder—

1) the spear of a Roman soldier— Compelling him to carry the cross.

C) Simon probably wondered, *Why me? Of all the hundreds of thousands of people here, why do I have to carry this criminal’s cross up the hill?*

D) But he had no choice. So he put the Cross on his shoulder.

1) The procession continued on to Calvary and Jesus was crucified—with Simon probably watching and wondering. **What was this all about?**

What happened to Simon?

A) Strong evidence that he and his whole family became followers of Christ

B) The gospel writer Mark writing his gospel account about 37 yrs after the crucifixion

1) Writing from Rome – Wrote these words

Mark writes, “And they compelled one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross” (Mk 15:21)

C) Do you see the significance of that statement: Mark writing 37 yrs later from Rome

1) identified Simon as the father of Rufus and Alexander—

D) The implication being that Rufus and Alexander were known by name in the Christian community in Rome.

E) Forty or fifty years later, in Romans 16:13, Paul once again mentions Rufus by name - Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother

F) Both Paul and Mark writing 40 yrs later he and his family were known by name believers in Rome

³³ And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, ³⁴ they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted *it*, He would not drink.

Gall was used as a narcotic to deaden pain,

A)Some believe that the soldiers were showing mercy – deaden the pain

B)If that is the case – it would seem that Jesus refused it because he wanted to bear the full weight of the Cross on our behalf

³⁵ Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet:

“They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.”

³⁶ Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there.

³⁷ And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS

³⁸ Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left.

The King on a cross

A)Crucifixion was so brutal that typically people die of asphyxiation.

B)That is why when they wanted to finally kill a man being crucified, the Romans would break his legs.

1)It was the most cruel, torturous death ever devised by man.

C)The king is mocked

³⁹ And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, “You who destroy the temple and build *it* in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

Interesting Jesus never said that about the temple – he said that about THIS TEMPLE – HIS BODY!

⁴¹ Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, ⁴² “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. ⁴³ He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’ ”

⁴⁴ Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.

FACT: Jesus could have come down from the Cross and saved Himself.

A)But had He saved Himself, He could not have saved me and you.

B)That's the message of 2 Corinthians 5:21. Paul said, "God made him who knew no sin to become sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land.

A)The Greek word translated “land” is *ge*, from which we get our word “geography.” It means “earth.”

B)In other words, the whole world was blanketed with darkness.

C)Luke 23 – Darkness fell across the whole land.

D)An Eclipse? – The Passover takes place during a full moon – time of year

1)So there is no way this is a solar eclipse or a lunar eclipse

E)This was something supernatural

Is there any historical evidence to back up this event?

A)It was recorded in a historical account of Tiberius by Roman historians that Rome was in darkness during the reign of Tiberius - the Caesar in AD.33.

B)**Tertullian** (at the beginning of the 3rd century) and Lucian (the martyr of Nicomedia, who died in A.D. 312) appealed to the testimony of national archives then in existence that a supernatural darkness prevailed at the time of the Cross.

C)**Phlegon** was a Greek historian who wrote an extensive chronology around AD 137:

Phlegon provides powerful confirmation of the Gospel accounts. He identifies the year and the exact time of day

1)Spoke of a ‘the greatest eclipse of the sun’ and that ‘it became night in the sixth hour of the day [i.e., noon] so that stars even appeared in the heavens.

D) There was a great earthquake in Bithynia, and many things were overturned in Nicaea.⁷

Eusebius Writing about the year 315, in his Chronicle, volume II, the historian and friend of the emperor Constantine,

A) Eusebius, writes about the eighteenth year of Tiberius Caesar that:

“Christ suffered this year, in which time we find in other commentaries of the heathen these words: “There was a defection of the sun: Bithynia was shaken with an earthquake, and many houses fell down in the city of Nicea.”

⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

Every other time Jesus addressed God, it was always as “Abba.”

A) But here He speaks from a distance to His Father as He says, “My God, My God.”

B) Why? Of God, Habakkuk declared, *You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness.* (Habakkuk 1:13).

C) Yet Paul writes that Jesus not only bore our sin, but actually *became* sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).

D) Being unable to behold evil or look on iniquity,

1) the Father had no other choice but to turn His back on His Son—and Jesus felt the agony of that isolation.

The Spiritual aspect of his suffering was far greater than the Physical suffering –

A) Broken fellowship with the Father –

B) Jesus endured that so that you and I would never have to say: My God forsaken me!

⁴⁷ Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, “This Man is calling for Elijah!”

⁴⁸ Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink.

⁴⁹ The rest said, “Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him.”

⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice,

and yielded up His spirit.

Jesus didn’t die—He dismissed His Spirit. His life wasn’t taken away—He gave it away. And at last, the price was paid.

A) This takes us to Verse 50. “And Jesus cried out again with the loud voice and yielded up his spirit.”

B) Now Matthew just says he yelled something. He doesn’t tell us what he cried out.

1) John, in his Gospel on the other hand tells us exactly what Jesus cried out

C) **It is finished.** That was what he cried out.

D) One word in Greek, “tetelestai,” it is finished. The debt is paid in full.

This is not a cry of defeat; it’s a cry of victory.

A) Jesus isn’t a victim, he is a victor.

B) He is not saying, “I am finished.” He said, “It is finished.”

C) The word was sometimes used for merchants that way who paid off a debt.

1) Paid in full

Artists would use the word to tetelestai when the artwork was now fully completed.

A) The picture is now complete.

B) “a servant would say to his master, **“tetelestai”**,

1) “It’s finished” when he had done all that the master commanded him to do.

C) That’s what Jesus cried out with a loud voice on the cross. “It is finished!”

1) Perfect: Price had been paid

D) The picture the Bible had been painting – a sacrificial lamb – DONE

E) The task Jesus was commissioned to perform – FINISHED!

1) ALMOST – NO – NOT QUITE – NO !
FINISHED – YES

The task is finished.”

A) “The Old Testament is completed.”

B)"Satan, my enemy, is defeated."

C)"It is finished." "The task is now complete."

Signs at the Crucifixion:

51 Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom;

A)As the veil in the temple was rent in two, the Holy of Holies became open for anyone to come into the presence of God at any time concerning any matter.

B)The veil of the temple was torn and that was unheard of because of the thickness of the veil itself.

1)60 feet tall – 30 feet wide – 5-6 inches thick

C)Wall between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies – One day

D)Open House :

1)Daily Access –

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16

E)Tradition the Jewish religious leaders sewed the veil back together –

1)Religion alienates people from a relationship with God

The temple said, "Keep out."

A)God was saying at the crucifixion, "Come in."

B)Have you taken advantage of the torn veil?

1)How often do you take advantage of the torn veil?

C)How often do you enter in and communicate with the father?

1)COME BOLDLY – HE IS WAITING!!!

and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,

A)There was an earthquake and it was a hefty earthquake so that the very rock started shaking and splitting and cracked.

52 and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;

A)The word "arose" literally means "appeared

B)JON COURSON - The earthquake caused the stones that covered the tombs to roll away.

1)The bodies within those tombs then became exposed and visible.

53 and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

C)Although the stones shook loose, exposing the bodies at the time of the crucifixion, they could not come out of the graves until *after* Jesus' Resurrection. Why?

Because Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15 that Jesus is the Firstfruit. Jesus rose first.

A)These chosen saints who were resurrected after Jesus arose on Easter Sunday began to walk around the Holy City.

B)What a trip it would have been to see people who were dead for ten years cruising around Jerusalem!

C)UNCLE JOEY!!!!

54 So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

A)Centurions were in command of one hundred men.

B)Centurions were tough men—fighters and warriors—chosen for their bravery.

1)NAVY SEALS – ARMY RANGERS

C)This centurion saw the darkened sky, felt the earth quaking, listened as Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do,"

D)HE heard Him cry, "It is finished." And the only conclusion he could make was, "Truly this was the Son of God."

1)Tradition – **He became a follower of Christ**

Moved by the Dignity of Jesus – Death – Different

A)I think anyone who exams the Crucifixion and Resurrection

B)This is the only conclusion you can come to

C)Truly this is the God

1)The King of Kings

D)My king

⁵⁵ And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, ⁵⁶ among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

This is where we are going to leave Jesus tonight

Pilate: Fear of God – fear of Man

Simon – Pick up the Cross – let it impact your life

Centurion – Truly.....