

2023 Good Friday Did you know the four Gospels devote nearly a third of their length to the last week of Jesus' life. Matthew Mark, Luke and John saw death and resurrection as the central story of Jesus. Going to the cross has been his mission all along, this plan of salvation was formed between the Father and the Son before the creation of the World. Today we pick up the narrative of Jesus' march to victory....the last night of his life on earth... From an upstairs room in Jerusalem, Jesus and his 11 disciples...Judas having already left to commit his act of treason... rise from the Passover meal of and head for the cool of an olive grove in a garden east of the city called Gethsemane... today we pick up the narrative after he is arrested...**Though the Religious leaders had decided to do whatever needed to kill Jesus...they knew only the Romans could condemn a person to death and carry out that sentence...and they knew the Romans did not consider it a crime for anyone to break Jewish religious laws or to blaspheme their God, they could care less...so they would need to paint Jesus as a insurrectionist or terrorist threat against the government, to kill Jesus legally and not create any legal problems for themselves... So they would need to present charges that the romans would be concerned with.. they came up with three made up reasons...1) He subverts (attempting to overthrow)the nation 2) He opposes taxes 3)He claims He is a king**

And we will see this play out...but remember Jesus set this up...

Laets pick up the narrative after his arrest in the garden... Matthew 26:57-68

NIV MT 26:57 Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the elders had assembled.

- **An armed contingent of soldiers under the command of the leading priests, and elders of the people arrest Jesus..bringing him to Caiaphas.. the puppet chief priest home**
- **First they would need to take Jesus to their own trial...and convict him of Blasphemy...a crime according to Jewish law as a capital crime...leading to stoning if convicted.**

⁵⁸ But Peter followed him at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high priest. He entered and sat down with the guards to see the outcome. ^{MT 26:59} The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. ⁶⁰ But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward ⁶¹ and declared, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.' "

^{MT 26:62} Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" ⁶³ But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." ^{MT 26:64} "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. (He stated who he was to the Religious authorities) "But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

When the religious leaders heard this...

NLT^{MT 26}: ⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his clothing to show his horror and said, “**Blasphemy!** Why do we need other witnesses? You have all heard his blasphemy. ⁶⁶ What is your verdict?” “Guilty!” they shouted. “He deserves to die!” ⁶⁷ Then they began to spit in Jesus’ face and beat him with their fists. And some slapped him, ⁶⁸ jeering, “Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who hit you that time?”

- **They broke twelve religious and civil laws in their arrest and trial..**
- **Home of Caiaphas... Caiaphas political appointee High Priest...their Puppet**
 - 1) **Illegal should be held in the counsel chamber**
 - 2) **At night ...Illegal**
 - 3) **Trial on Feast day ...illegal**
 - 4) **Judges looking for false witness...illegal... Sanhedrin**
 - 5) **When the witness couldn't agree the prisoner should have been released... Illegal**
 - 6) **Self incrimination...Illegal. they had their own type of fifth amendment**
 - 7) **High priest tears clothes...illegal not permitted to tear official robe Lev 21:10**
 - 8) **Guilty verdict could not be rendered on the same day as the trial...Illegal**
 - 9) **His sentence was pronounced in a home, but the law says it must be pronounced in the temple...illegal**
 - 10) **Use of violence during a trial went unopposed by the Judge. Illegal**
 - 11) **No civil authority to pronounce a death sentence...illegal**
 - 12) **And it wasn't Blasphemy ...It was the truth. He is the Christ the son of God Christ, the Son of God."the king of all kings**

As John would see the vision of this happening in the future 60 years later NLT Rev1:5 ...He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world. All glory to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by

shedding his blood for us. 6 He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God his Father. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen. 7 Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven.

And everyone will see him—even those who pierced him. And all the nations of the world will mourn for him. Yes! Amen!

So they send him to Pilate in the early Am....

On to the Roman trial Three Roman Trials 1) Before Pilate 2) Before Herod 3) Before Pilate Luke 23

NLT LK 23:1 Then the entire council took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor. 2 They began to state their case: “This man has been leading our people astray by telling them not to pay their taxes to the Roman government and by claiming he is the Messiah, a king.”

Pilate a seasoned governor of Judea knew what was up... so they present three charges that the romans would be concerned with..

1) He subverts (attempting to overthrow)the nation 2) He opposes taxes 3)He claims He is a king

NLT LK 23:3 23 Then the entire council took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor. 2 They began to state their case: “This man has been leading our people astray by telling them not to pay their taxes to the Roman government and by claiming he is the Messiah, a king.”

• First verdict of Innocence there will be three more

NLT LK 23:5 Then they became insistent. “But he is causing riots by his teaching wherever he goes—all over Judea, from Galilee to Jerusalem!” 6 “Oh, is he a Galilean?” Pilate asked. 7 When they said that he was, Pilate sent him to Herod Antipas, because Galilee was

under Herod's jurisdiction, and Herod happened to be in Jerusalem at the time.

Down from Ceasera on the coast of the Mediterranean... for the feast to help oversee any problems

- **So he goes to Herod...He says not a word in the presence of Herod... Herod had spent much time talking with John the Baptist then put him to death... he had heard God's word and silenced God's word ... Jesus had nothing more to say to him ...**
- **So Herod sends him back to Pilate ...proclaiming his innocence but beats him anyway**
- **Back to Pilate** *NLT* ^{LK 23:13} Then Pilate called together the leading priests and other religious leaders, along with the people, ¹⁴ and he announced his verdict. "You brought this man to me, accusing him of leading a revolt. I have examined him thoroughly on this point in your presence and find him innocent.#1 ¹⁵ Herod came to the same conclusion#2 and sent him back to us. Nothing this man has done calls for the death penalty.#3 ¹⁶ So I will have him flogged, and then I will release him."
- **Both claim him innocent...and both beat him down anyway...he should have been released...but no**

John describes his beating by Pilate

NLT **John 19:1** Then Pilate had Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip. ² The soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they put a purple robe on him. ³ "Hail! King of the Jews!" they mocked, as they slapped him across the face.

After the beating Pilate brings him back out....

⁴ Pilate went outside again and said to the people, “I am going to bring him out to you now, **but understand clearly that I find him not guilty.**”#4 ⁵ Then Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said, “Look, here is the man!”

Isaiah prophesied what the man would look after the beating 600 years earlier

NLT ISA 50: 6 I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting.

NLT ISA 52:14 14 But many were amazed when they saw him. His face was so disfigured he seemed hardly human, and from his appearance, one would scarcely know he was a man.

The purpose of the first whip/scourge was to elicit, if possible, the compassion of the bloodthirsty mob. *When the religious saw him...it still was not enough...they want the not guilty man dead*

John 19:6 When they saw him, the leading priests and Temple guards began shouting, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” “Take him yourselves and crucify him,” **Pilate said. “I find him not guilty.”**#4 ⁷ The Jewish leaders replied, “By our law he ought to die because he called himself the Son of God.”

- **fourth time pronounced not guilty (three Pilate one Herod)**
- **So Pilate tried a new tactic he tried to get them to break Roman law... getting them to commit to a conspiracy to murder an innocent man as declared by Pilate... thereby being able to free**

Jesus and convict them of a crime the religious leaders did not bite!

So Pilate tries one last tactic he offers to release a real bad guy a murderer who had attempted an overthrow of the government surely they would rather have Jesus released than this guy if they were truly concerned about insurrection against the government...nope

NLT Matt 27: ¹⁵ Now it was the governor's custom each year during the Passover celebration to release one prisoner to the crowd—anyone they wanted. ¹⁶ This year there was a notorious prisoner, a man named Barabbas. ¹⁷ As the crowds gathered before Pilate's house that morning, he asked them, "Which one do you want me to release to you—Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" ¹⁸ (He knew very well that the religious leaders had arrested Jesus out of envy.) ¹⁹ Just then, as Pilate was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him this message: "Leave that innocent man alone. I suffered through a terrible nightmare about him last night."

- **For 3+ years he did nothing but help, heal, and delivered people...and at his trial Not one person healed of a disease, not one person released of demonic oppression, not one apostle, Not one roman leader, came forward in his defense not one person spoke out against the injustice of his trial ...except Pilate's wife who** intercedes with Pilate on Jesus' behalf. ...
- **Her dream is a warning to Pilate from someone he trusts. Out of a crowd of witnesses, God chose a Roman pagan woman—one with no authority, or power—to be an example of active faith and a voice to affirm the righteousness of His Son.**

- **This makes it all the worse when he ignores it. So the gospel implies that he really was at fault when he rejected her advice.**
- **Church tradition...Saint Procula governess of Judea, widow and martyr honored in the Eastern and Ethiopian, Oriental, Orthodox churches her feats is celebrated on Oct 27th**

²⁰ Meanwhile, the leading priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas to be released and for Jesus to be put to death. ²¹ So the governor asked again, “Which of these two do you want me to release to you?” The crowd shouted back, “Barabbas!” ²² Pilate responded, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” They shouted back, “Crucify him!” ²³ “Why?” Pilate demanded. “**What crime has he committed?**” But the mob roared even louder, “Crucify him!”

- **Pilate intentionally bring out this man...traitor to Rome and a convicted murderer... his name Barabbas means Bar=Son...Abbas =father**
- **Do you want me to release this son of Abba....or Jesus this son of Abba?**

²⁴ Pilate saw that he wasn't getting anywhere and that a riot was developing. So he sent for a bowl of water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man's blood. The responsibility is yours!” ²⁵ And all the people yelled back, “We will take responsibility for his death—we and our children!” ²⁶ So Pilate released Barabbas to them. **He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.** The purpose of the second scourge, was to administer the punishment preliminary to crucifixion according to Romans law

- In the end an exasperated governor pronounces the harshest verdict permissible under Roman law...He surrenders to their will to control a riot and not anger his superior...The Caesar. Crucify him... odd sentence for blasphemy the penalty is stoning!
- They led Him away...Crucifixion.... common so not explained by the Gospel writers.
- Jesus asks his father to not hold this against as first degree murder...premeditated...but second degree...because they were ignorant ...they did not know what they were doing...

NLT LK 23: 33 When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed him to the cross.

35 The crowd watched and the leaders scoffed. "He saved others," they said, "let him save himself if he is really God's Messiah, the Chosen One."

- **He is the Messiah of God..and came to save others not himself...they had it all backwards**

NLT LK 23: 38 A sign was fastened above him with these words: "This is the King of the Jews."

NLT John 19:29 A jar of sour wine was sitting there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. *30* When Jesus had tasted it, he said, "It is finished!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

He looked to heaven then bows his head...It is Finished...the reason why he came was completed...

1 Peter 2:24 He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed.

Lets take a minute to watch these last words...and meditate on them... ..He dies alone becoming sin for us and separated from his father...so we will never have to be! Mission Accomplished! The penalty for sin is completely satisfied ...humans have unencumbered access to the father!

This is what communion is all about...

1 Corinthians 11:26 For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again.

- **in silence each individually receive communion in remembrance of what Jesus did for you. Just between Jesus and you!**
- **And when you have shared in your communion with him, that through his sacrificed you are eternally healed..**
- **place the cup at the foot of the cross...signifying your remembrance of what he did for you and your union with him...through his body and blood taken into your being. And know this...to Jesus you were worth it**
- **you are free to leave...**
- **Know this Its Friday but Sunday is coming!!**
- **in three days death will be conquered! end**

Pick up the action in John 18:2-14

JN 18:2 Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. ³ So Judas came to the grove, guiding **a detachment of soldiers** and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.

Judas knew the place ...Jesus knew Judas Knew..._Jesus didn't hide

- **Detachment 200+ soldiers also known as cohort**
- **Intent on arresting all 11 plus Jesus.**
- **Expecting resistance.... did not know him at all**

JN 18:4 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?" *JN 18:5* "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) ⁶ When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. *JN 18:7* Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." *JN 18:8* "I told you that I am he," Jesus answered. "If you are looking for me, then let these men go." ⁹ **This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."**

JN 18:10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) *JN 18:11* Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! **Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"** *JN 18:12* Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him...

Verses 4-11 Jesus went out to meet them why? To protect his men so he would fulfill verse 9 and John 17:12

- 2. showed them a glimpse of His glory and they fell down...scared them**
- 3. Simon swipes at guard probably hit helmet and slides down to ear.**

Healing ear saved Peter's life.... They bound him...illegal only bind a suspect resisting.

*MT 26:36 Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸ Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." ^{MT 26:39} Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, **may this cup be taken from me.** Yet not as I will, but as you will."*

- **Gethsemane --olive press to crush olives for oil. Peter James and John**
 - **Jesus is overcome with emotion...as the day has arrived? why**
1. **Separation from Father, The hardest part of the covenant between them. They both would experience it... For He was made sin for us, which means he will be separated from Father. For Sin has no fellowship with the Father...light and and dark are not compatible**
 2. **Jesus will experience for the first time what we have all experienced many times...a sense of God-forsakenness...where are you Lord?**
 3. **Though his Father is ever present he would not feel his presence...for the first and last time ever, Feeling separate from God...feeling alone...isolated...completely rejected, fearful**
- **You see it is human nature to want to have someone by our side ...when we must experience a trial...go to a hospital to have an operation...when death is near...**

And Jesus was no different...he asked his disciples to be near him and pray with him....he knew they would all abandon him...but what was un bearable for him...to experience death knowing he would be all alone...not even his father would be with him.... "Why have you forsaken me" would be his cry from the cross...

And his father would have to separate from his son...at his most desperate and needy time...oh the pain.... **What father here would agree to abandon his child at their death...but that was their agreement for our sake.....separation for a moment for our union forever...**

And what makes it even more amazing...Jesus could have chosen at any time to not go through with it!

1. Yet He is committed to the plan of redeeming humans... committed to his destiny... **willing to drink the cup the guilty should have.**
Three times Jesus will ask his Father “Is there is any other way for man to be saved besides the cross” **When people say there are many ways to God...It’s interesting that Jesus and His Father didn’t know any.**

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- *r Peter’s point is that Christ endured the same kind of suffering that he calls Christians to bear. Christ was righteous, but suffered in behalf of those who were unrighteous “that he might bring (them) to God”— suffering with a redemptive purpose.*
- *“in which he also went and preached to the spirits in prison (Greek: phulake), who before were disobedient, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ship was being built. In it, few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water“ (vv. 19-20). Martin Luther, in his commentary on Peter and Jude, wrote of this verse, “A wonderful text is this, and a more obscure passage perhaps than any other in the New Testament, so that I do not know for a certainty just what Peter means.”*

- After reading a number of scholars on this text, I have come to the conclusion that they don't know "for a certainty" either—and neither do I. For the most part, I think the preacher would do well to avoid getting bogged down trying to explain this verse.
- However, the Apostles' Creed took a cue from this verse to include the words, "He descended into hell." Because of that, some parishioners might ask for an explanation. While I can't provide a definitive exegesis, I will offer what I have.
- First, I will note that verses 19-20 don't say that Christ "descended into hell." They mention neither "descended" nor "hell." The Greek word is phulake, which means prison—not hell. Ephesians 4:9 says that Christ "descended to the lower parts of the earth" (a literal translation). However, the meaning of that verse is also uncertain.
- The phrase "descended into hell" was not in the original version of the Apostles' Creed, but was added centuries later. Today, some versions of the creed substitute "he descended to the dead." Some versions drop the phrase entirely.
- We can look to three passages within 1-2 Peter for clues to his intentions:
 - In 1 Peter 4:6, Peter says that "the Good News was preached even to the dead." However, that doesn't necessarily mean that Christ did the preaching. A number of scholars believe that this preaching took place prior to these people's deaths. Their response to the Good News while alive has determined their eternal destiny.
 - In 1 Peter 3:22 (the last verse of this lectionary reading), Peter says that "angels and authorities and powers (have been) made subject to (Christ)."
- And

