

The Gospel of John Pt. 28

John 19:1-16

Big Idea

Jesus' hour is at hand. The high point of His earthly ministry has come. Jesus bears all the weight of human sin.

Exposition – John 19:1-16

John delivers the narrative of the events just prior to the actual crucifixion of Jesus Christ.



1. (V1) – Upon the Jews insistence that Barabbas be set free rather than Jesus, Pilate orders Jesus to be scourged. As mentioned previously, John does not include many of the details of the trial that the other Gospel writers do. Matthew adds that the congregation of Jews that requested that Barabbas be set free had been persuaded to do so by the chief priests and elders (Matt. 27:20-21). Further, Matthew includes that it was the Jewish mob that requested Jesus be crucified rather than some other punishment (Matt. 27:22).

MacArthur and others believe that John's account indicates that Pilate ordered Jesus to be scourged rather than be crucified hoping that the brutality of scourging would incite sympathy on the part of the Jewish mob and that no further punishment would be demanded. Even Luke and Matthew's words can be interpreted in this way (Luke 23:20-25; Matt. 27:22-24).

See MacArthur's notes on scourging below:

Scourging was a horribly cruel act in which the victim was stripped, tied, to a post, and beaten by several torturers (alternating when exhausted). For victims who were not Roman citizens, the preferred instrument was a short wooden handle to which several leather thongs were attached. Each leather thong had pieces of bones or metal on the end. The beatings were so savage that sometimes victims died. The body could be torn or lacerated to such an extent that muscles, veins, and/or bones were exposed. Such beatings often preceded executions in order to weaken and dehumanize the victim (Isaiah 53:5)

2. (V2-3) – The soldiers begin the process of dehumanization that included a crown of thorns, putting a purple robe on Him, mocking, and buffeting His eyes (Isaiah 50:6). These particulars are unique to Jesus for the most part, but the reader can easily see that they were efficient at the process of torturous execution, professionals.

Many OT prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus' crucifixion:

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| A. Betrayal – Psalm 41:9; Zech 11:12-13 | I. Gamble for garments – Psalm 22:18 |
| B. Falsely accused – Psalm 35:11 | J. No bones broken – Exodus 12:46; Psalm 34:20 |
| C. Silent before accusers – Isaiah 53:7 | K. Messiah forsaken by God – Psalm 22:1 |
| D. Spat upon and struck – Isaiah 50:6 | L. Pray for His enemies – Psalm 109:4 |
| E. Crucified with criminals – Isaiah 53:12 | M. Messiah's side pierced – Zech 12:10 |
| F. Vinegar to drink – Psalm 69:21 | N. Messiah buried with the rich – Isaiah 53:9 |
| G. Hands/feet pierced – Ps 22:16; Zech 12:10 | O. Messiah sacrifice for sin – Isaiah 53:5-12 |
| H. Mocked and Ridiculed – Psalm 22:7-8 | |
3. (V4) – John doesn't mention Pilate washing his hands, but we do see Pilate overtly excusing himself from the guild of Jesus' execution.

- 4.** (V5-6) – “Behold the Man” – this statement is meant to show that Jesus was not the dangerous man that the Jews made Him out to be. By this point He would be bloody, swollen, and disfigured beyond recognition. Pilate continues in his moderate attempt to gain sympathy for Jesus. To no avail. The Jews have been agitated by Satan into a foam of hate and violence. Pilate makes the unusual decision to allow the Jews to superintend over the execution themselves. Obviously, the Roman guard did the work, but Pilate is distanced.
- 5.** (V7-9) – Possibly the most intriguing verses of this passage, Pilate is troubled when Jesus is said that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. Pilate goes back into the Praetorium where Jesus was to attempt to make more definitive identification of Him. However, Jesus does not answer. The Romans were very superstitious people. Pilate likely feared that Jesus was someone that could bring a curse upon him. It seems that Jesus doesn’t respond here because He has already answered this question previously in John 18:36, “My Kingdom is not of this world.”
- 6.** (V10-11) – Pilate flexes his authority muscles at Jesus. But, Jesus is not impressed. As always before, Jesus relies on the sovereignty of His Father (6:43-44, 65; 10:18, 28, 29). Jesus tells Pilate that his authority was given to him by the Father. Jesus tells that the one who handed Him over to Pilate has committed a greater sin because of the fact that it was “deliberate, high-handed, and coldly calculated... after having seen and heard the overwhelming evidence that He was Messiah and Son of God. Pilate had not been exposed to that.”, as MacArthur would say.
This opens up an important vein of thought about how the Bible teaches that sin correlates with responsibility. As we are exposed to truth, we grow in responsibility to respond to it (Galatians 3:15ff; Romans 4:1-5, 14-15; 7:7-13).
- 7.** (V12-13) – Pilate once again looks for a way to release Jesus, but the Jews next move is crafty. “If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar.” This statement is loaded with hypocrisy because the Jews hated Rome and therefore hated Caesar, but they knew that Pilate feared Caesar because of his severe punishment of anyone who acted against insubordinates. It shows the Jews willingness to do or say almost anything to eliminate Jesus and the jeopardy He put on their corrupt religious system.
Think of it – Pilate now sits in judgment of the only true Judge. Although Pilate judges Jesus wrongly, eventually Jesus would sit in judgment against Pilate, but in perfect honor and truth.
- 8.** (V14-15) – The preparation day for the Passover was Friday. John uses the Roman system for time here, which began at midnight, unlike most other places in the gospels where the time of day began at 6a. So, when John says it was about the sixth hour it is actually 6AM.
“Behold your King” – Pilate says this to degrade the Jews. Jesus’ physical appearance by this time would have been scandalous, a fitting king for the pathetic Jewish leaders.