

Jesus Scourged and Condemned

MEMORY VERSE: “Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy” (Mark 15:9, 10).

“[Christ’s] abasement was the pledge of His exaltation. The blood drops of agony that from His wounded temples flowed down His face and beard were the pledge of His anointing with ‘the oil of gladness’ (Hebrews 1:9) as our great high priest.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 734.

Suggested Reading: Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 407–411. (At the bottom of this page)

1. PILATE’S WEAKNESS

Sun, Oct 26

a. When Jesus was brought back to the court of Pilate, what argument did the governor present in His favor? Luke 23:13–15.

Luke 23:13–15

And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, **14** Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: **15** No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

b. How was Pilate ruined by his weak inconsistency? Luke 23:16; John 19:1.

Luke 23:16

I will therefore chastise him, and release him.

John 19:1

Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

“[Pilate] had declared that Jesus was innocent, yet he was willing for Him to be scourged to pacify His accusers. He would sacrifice justice and principle in order to compromise with the mob. This placed him at a disadvantage. The crowd presumed upon his indecision, and clamored the more for the life of the prisoner. If at the first Pilate had stood firm, refusing to condemn a man whom he found guiltless, he would have broken the fatal chain that was to bind him in remorse and guilt as long as he lived. Had he carried out his convictions of right, the Jews would not have presumed to

dictate to him. Christ would have been put to death, but the guilt would not have rested upon Pilate. But Pilate had taken step after step in the violation of his conscience. He had excused himself from judging with justice and equity, and he now found himself almost helpless in the hands of the priests and rulers. His wavering and indecision proved his ruin.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 731, 732.

2. GOD’S WORK IN PILATE’S BEHALF

Mon, Oct 27

a. What additional opportunity did God give Pilate? Matthew 27:19.

Matthew 27:19

When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

“In answer to Christ’s prayer, the wife of Pilate had been visited by an angel from heaven, and in a dream she had beheld the Saviour and conversed with Him. Pilate’s wife was not a Jew, but as she looked upon Jesus in her dream, she had no doubt of His character or mission. She knew Him to be the Prince of God. She saw Him on trial in the judgment hall. She saw the hands tightly bound as the hands of a criminal. She saw Herod and his soldiers doing their dreadful work. She heard the priests and rulers, filled with envy and malice, madly accusing. She heard the words, ‘We have a law, and by our law He ought to die.’ She saw Pilate give Jesus to the scourging, after he had declared, ‘I find no fault in Him.’ She heard the condemnation pronounced by Pilate, and saw him give Christ up to His murderers. She saw the cross uplifted on Calvary. She saw the earth wrapped in darkness, and heard the mysterious cry, ‘It is finished.’ Still another scene met her gaze. She saw Christ seated upon the great white cloud, while the earth reeled in space, and His murderers fled from the presence of His glory. With a cry of horror she awoke, and at once wrote to Pilate words of warning.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 732.

b. To try to free Jesus, what idea did Pilate offer the mob? Mark 15:6–10.

Mark 15:6–10

Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. 7 And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection. 8 And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them. 9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? 10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

“It was customary at this feast to release some one prisoner whom the people might choose. This custom was of pagan invention; there was not a shadow of justice in it, but it was greatly prized by the Jews. The Roman authorities at this time held a prisoner named Barabbas, who was under sentence of death. This man had claimed to be the Messiah. He claimed authority to establish a different order of things, to set the

world right. Under satanic delusion he claimed that whatever he could obtain by theft and robbery was his own. He had done wonderful things through satanic agencies, he had gained a following among the people, and had excited sedition against the Roman government. Under cover of religious enthusiasm he was a hardened and desperate villain, bent on rebellion and cruelty. By giving the people a choice between this man and the innocent Saviour, Pilate thought to arouse them to a sense of justice. He hoped to gain their sympathy for Jesus in opposition to the priests and rulers.”—*Ibid.*, p. 733.

3. CHRIST OR BARABBAS?

Tue, Oct 28

a. What did the priests do to ensure Christ’s condemnation—and what would this ultimately mean for them? Matthew 27:20.

Matthew 27:20

But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

b. To Pilate’s surprise, what final choices did the multitude make? Matthew 27:21–23; John 18:39, 40.

Matthew 27:21–23

The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. **22** Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. **23** And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

John 18:39, 40

But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? **40** Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

“ ‘What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?’ Pilate asked. Again the surging multitude roared like demons. Demons themselves, in human form, were in the crowd, and what could be expected but the answer, ‘Let Him be crucified?’ ”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 733.

“The Jewish leaders made their choice. Their decision was registered in the book which John saw in the hand of Him that sat upon the throne, the book which no man could open. In all its vindictiveness this decision will appear before them in the day when this book is unsealed by the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

“The Jewish people cherished the idea that they were the favorites of heaven, and that they were always to be exalted as the church of God. They were the children of Abraham, they declared, and so firm did the foundation of their prosperity seem to them that they defied earth and heaven to dispossess them of their rights. But by lives of unfaithfulness they were preparing for the condemnation of heaven and for separation from God.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 294.

c. How is this scene repeated today—and what is our role in it? Joshua 24:15.

Joshua 24:15

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

“[Satan] is full of anger because he cannot bind the people of God into bundles with the world, to render to him complete allegiance. Kings and rulers and governors have placed upon themselves the brand of antichrist, and are represented as the dragon who goes to make war with the saints—with those who keep the commandments of God and who have the faith of Jesus. In their enmity against the people of God, they show themselves guilty also of the choice of Barabbas instead of Christ.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 39.

4. HATED BY HUMANS AND DEMONS

Wed, Oct 29

a. How did the Roman soldiers contribute to the Saviour’s torture and how did He respond? John 19:2, 3; Mark 15:16–19.

John 19:2, 3

And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, 3 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

Mark 15:16–19

And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band. 17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head, 18 And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! 19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him.

“Wonder, O heavens! and be astonished, O earth! Behold the oppressor and the oppressed. A maddened throng enclose the Saviour of the world. Mocking and jeering are mingled with the coarse oaths of blasphemy. His lowly birth and humble life are commented upon by the unfeeling mob. His claim to be the Son of God is ridiculed, and the vulgar jest and insulting sneer are passed from lip to lip.

“Satan led the cruel mob in its abuse of the Saviour. It was his purpose to provoke Him to retaliation if possible, or to drive Him to perform a miracle to release Himself, and thus break up the plan of salvation. One stain upon His human life, one failure of His humanity to endure the terrible test, and the Lamb of God would have been an imperfect offering, and the redemption of man a failure. But He who by a command could bring the heavenly host to His aid—He who could have driven that mob in terror from His sight by the flashing forth of His divine majesty—submitted with perfect calmness to the coarsest insult and outrage.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 734.

b. Having wounded Christ before the people, what announcement did Pilate make? John 19:4, 5.

John 19:4, 5

Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. **5** Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!

“There stood the Son of God, wearing the robe of mockery and the crown of thorns. Stripped to the waist, His back showed the long, cruel stripes, from which the blood flowed freely. His face was stained with blood, and bore the marks of exhaustion and pain; but never had it appeared more beautiful than now. The Saviour’s visage was not marred before His enemies. Every feature expressed gentleness and resignation and the tenderest pity for His cruel foes. In His manner there was no cowardly weakness, but the strength and dignity of long-suffering. In striking contrast was the prisoner at His side. Every line of the countenance of Barabbas proclaimed him the hardened ruffian that he was. The contrast spoke to every beholder. Some of the spectators were weeping. As they looked upon Jesus, their hearts were full of sympathy. Even the priests and rulers were convicted that He was all that He claimed to be.”—*Ibid.*, p. 735.

5. THE SON OF GOD

Thu, Oct 30

a. What inconsistent proposal did Pilate make to the Jews—and what declaration filled him with fear? John 19:6–8.

John 19:6–8

When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him. **7** The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. **8** When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

“Pilate was startled. He had no correct idea of Christ and His mission; but he had an indistinct faith in God and in beings superior to humanity. A thought that had once before passed through his mind now took more definite shape. He questioned whether it might not be a divine being that stood before him, clad in the purple robe of mockery, and crowned with thorns.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 736.

b. What conversation took place between Jesus and Pilate? John 19:9–11.

John 19:9–11

And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. **10** Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? **11**

Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

c. What dishonest argument of the Jews led Pilate to cowardly yield to their demand? John 19:12–16. Who deserved the greatest blame for the crime?

John 19:12–16

And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. **13** When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. **14** And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! **15** But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. **16** ¶ Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

“Pilate yielded to the demands of the mob. Rather than risk losing his position, he delivered Jesus up to be crucified. But in spite of his precautions, the very thing he dreaded afterward came upon him. His honors were stripped from him, he was cast down from his high office, and, stung by remorse and wounded pride, not long after the crucifixion he ended his own life. So all who compromise with sin will gain only sorrow and ruin.”—*Ibid.*, p. 738.

“The greatest guilt and heaviest responsibility belonged to those who stood in the highest places in the nation, the depositaries of sacred trusts that they were basely betraying.”—*Ibid.*, p. 737.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Fri, Oct 31

- 1. What characteristics of Pilate am I in danger of imitating?**
- 2. How often have I, like Pilate, ignored a trustworthy warning?**
- 3. How would I act if under the type of pressure Pilate faced?**
- 4. What resource did Pilate use to try to absolve Jesus?**
- 5. Who is to blame for the death of the Son of God—and why?**

Suggested Reading: Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 407–411.

The Controversy Waxes Stronger

There never will be a time in the history of the church when God's worker can fold his hands and be at ease, saying, “All is peace and safety.” 1 Thessalonians 5:3. Then it is that sudden destruction cometh. Everything may move forward amid apparent

prosperity; but Satan is wide-awake, and is studying and counseling with his evil angels another mode of attack where he can be successful. The contest will wax more and more fierce on the part of Satan; for he is moved by a power from beneath. As the work of God's people moves forward with sanctified, resistless energy, planting the standard of Christ's righteousness in the church, moved by a power from the throne of God, the great controversy will wax stronger and stronger, and will become more and more determined. Mind will be arrayed against mind, plans against plans, principles of heavenly origin against principles of Satan. Truth in its varied phases will be in conflict with error in its ever-varying, increasing forms, and which, if possible, will deceive the very elect. **(TM 407.1)**

Our work must be an earnest one. We are not to fight as those that beat the air. The ministry, the pulpit, and the press demand men like Caleb, who will do and dare, men whose eyes are single to detect the truth from error, whose ears are consecrated to catch the words from the faithful Watcher. And the Spirit from the throne of God will make itself felt upon a degenerate Christianity, a corrupt world, ready to be consumed by the long-deferred judgments of an offended God. **(TM 407.2)**

Hatred of Reproof

There is danger now of men's losing sight of the important truths applicable for this period of time, and seeking for those things that are new and strange and entrancing. Many, if reproved by the Spirit of God through His appointed agencies, refuse to receive correction, and a root of bitterness is planted in their hearts against the Lord's servants who carry heavy, disagreeable burdens. There are men who teach the truth, but who are not perfecting their ways before God, who are trying to conceal their defections and encourage an estrangement from God. They have not the moral courage to do the things that it is for their special benefit to do. They see no necessity for reform, and so they reject the words of the Lord and hate him who reproveth at the gate. **(TM 408.1)**

This very refusal to heed the admonitions which the Lord sends gives Satan every advantage to make of them the bitterest enemies of those who have told them the truth. They become falsifiers of those who have borne to them the message from the Lord. **(TM 408.2)**

The man who rejects the word of the Lord, who endeavors to establish his own way and will, tears to pieces the messenger and message which God sends in order to discover to him his sin. His own inclinations have influenced his conduct, and he has built himself up in a wrong way. The divine rule is, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:31. But he would not do this. As a man thinketh, so is he. From within, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts inspired by Satan. He begins to quibble at technicalities and manners. The spirit of Satan links him up with the enemy to bear a word of criticism on less important themes. The truth becomes of less and still less value to him. He becomes an accuser of his brethren, etc., and changes leaders. The outside world has a greater weight with him than has the flood of light that God has poured in upon the world in messages that he has given, and which he once rejoiced in. **(TM 408.3)**

Oh, how many things have developed since he became so full of hatred against God because his dangers and wrongs were brought before him! He has allowed wicked thoughts to strengthen and prevail because, day by day, he has not eaten of the flesh and drunk of the blood of the Son of God, because he has not become a partaker of the divine nature. The things which come from within defile the man. How corrupt then must be the source from which these evils have taken their rise! **(TM 409.1)**

The Fatal Choice

Unsanctified ministers are arraying themselves against God. They are praising Christ and the God of this world in the same breath. While professedly they receive Christ, they embrace Barabbas, and by their actions say, "Not this Man, but Barabbas." Let all who read these lines, take heed. Satan has made his boast of what he can do. He thinks to dissolve the unity which Christ prayed might exist in His church. He says, "I will go forth and be a lying spirit to deceive those that I can, to criticize, and condemn, and falsify." Let the son of deceit and false witness be entertained by a church that has had great light, great evidence, and that church will discard the message the Lord has sent, and receive the most unreasonable assertions and false suppositions and false theories. Satan laughs at their folly, for he knows what truth is. **(TM 409.2)**

Many will stand in our pulpits with the torch of false prophecy in their hands, kindled from the hellish torch of Satan. If doubts and unbelief are cherished, the faithful ministers will be removed from the people who think they know so much. "If thou hadst known," said Christ, "even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Luke 19:42. **(TM 409.3)**

The Light of Truth

Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure. The Lord knoweth them that are His. The sanctified minister must have no guile in his mouth. He must be open as the day, free from every taint of evil. A sanctified ministry and press will be a power in flashing the light of truth on this untoward generation. Light, brethren, more light we need. Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound an alarm in the holy mountain. Gather the host of the Lord, with sanctified hearts, to hear what the Lord will say unto His people; for He has increased light for all who will hear. Let them be armed and equipped, and come up to the battle—to the help of the Lord against the mighty. God Himself will work for Israel. Every lying tongue will be silenced. Angels' hands will overthrow the deceptive schemes that are being formed. The bulwarks of Satan will never triumph. Victory will attend the third angel's message. As the Captain of the Lord's host tore down the walls of Jericho, so will the Lord's commandment-keeping people triumph, and all opposing elements be defeated. Let no soul complain of the servants of God who have come to them with a heaven-sent message. Do not any longer pick flaws in them, saying, "They are too positive; they talk too strongly." They may talk strongly; but is it not needed? God will make the ears of the hearers tingle if they will not heed His voice or His message. He will denounce those who resist the word of God. **(TM 410.1)**

Men of Opportunity

Satan has laid every measure possible that nothing shall come among us as a people to reprove and rebuke us, and exhort us to put away our errors. But there is a people who will bear the ark of God. Some will go out from among us who will bear the ark no longer. But these cannot make walls to obstruct the truth; for it will go onward and upward to the end. In the past God has raised up men, and He still has men of opportunity waiting, prepared to do His bidding—men who will go through restrictions which are only as walls daubed with untempered mortar. When God puts His Spirit upon men, they will work. They will proclaim the word of the Lord; they will lift up their voice like a trumpet. The truth will not be diminished or lose its power in their hands. They will show the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins. (TM 411.1)

Satan's Vehement Work

The conflict is to wax fiercer and fiercer. Satan will take the field and personate Christ. He will misrepresent, misapply, and pervert everything he possibly can, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Even in our day there have been and will continue to be entire families who have once rejoiced in the truth, but who will lose faith because of calumnies and falsehoods brought to them in regard to those whom they have loved and with whom they have had sweet counsel. They opened their hearts to the sowing of tares; the tares sprang up among the wheat; they strengthened; the crop of wheat became less and less; and the precious truth lost its power to them. For a time a false zeal accompanied their new theories, which hardened their hearts against the advocates of truth as did the Jews against Christ. (TM 411.2)