



## Part 28: The Friday Called "Good"



### Background Notes -

**PURPOSE:** To present the events surrounding Good Friday, the mock trial, crucifixion and death of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**AUTHOR:** Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John the Evangelists.

**DATE:** Passover of the year 29 or 30. Jesus is estimated to be 33 years old.

**STYLE:** Matthew sees the Jewish crowd's choice of Barabbas as symbolizing the final passing of Israel from a nation to the Church whose boundaries cross the nations. Luke adds at Jesus' death the tearing of the veil separating the innermost part of the Temple, a veil meant to prevent access to the place where God was present. The tearing was now an end to the religious institution of the Old Testament. From that moment on, all could approach God.



### Opening Quotes -

“Every one who is of the truth hears my voice.” Pilate said to him, “What is truth?” Jn 18:37

“Pilate knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up.” Mt 27:18

“We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he has made himself the Son of God.” Jn 19:7

“You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who has delivered me to you has the greater sin.” Jn 19:11

“‘Shall I crucify your king?’ The chief priests answered, ‘We have no king but Caesar.’” Jn 19:15

“Father forgive them for they know not what they do.” Lk 23:34

“Today you will be with me in paradise.” Lk 23:43

“My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?” Mk 15:34

“When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved, he said, ‘Woman, behold your son,’ and to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother!’” Jn 19:26

“Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!’ and he breathed his last.” Lk 23:46

the BIG PICTURE		☞ : LAW, History, Writings, Prophets		☞ : key covenants in our Father's plan	
	12 Periods ▾	Plot ▾	Other books related to period ▾		stories in each period ▾
BC	🌐 THE BEGINNINGS	GN 1-11	Ps 8, 104		Creation, Adam & Eve, Cain & Abel, Noah's ark, Tower of Babel
1850	🕯 THE PATRIARCHS	GN 12-50			Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel), Joseph, Melchizedek
1250	⚠ EXODUS FROM EGYPT	EX			Moses, the burning bush, the plagues, passover, exodus
1200	♣ JOURNEY TO CANAAN	NM, Jos	LV, DT		Sinai desert, 10 commandments, Levites, Law, Joshua
1100	☠ THE JUDGE CYCLE	Jg	Ruth		12 tribes, Gideon, Samson, Ruth, Samuel
1030	☆ KINGS & PROPHETS	1 & 2 S	1 Ch, Ps, Prov		Saul, David, Solomon, Jerusalem, the Temple
1000	■ THE DIVIDED KINGDOM	1 Kg	2 Ch, Prov,		Israel (N), Judah (S), Elijah & Elisha, Isaiah, Assyrian exile
721 587	⊖ BABYLONIAN EXILE	2 Kg	2 Ch, Tob, Hos, Am, Hab, Is, Jer, Lam, Jl, Mic, Zp, Jon, Nah, Ob, Ez, Dan, Bar		Babylonians, "major" prophets, Isaiah (to Israel), Jeremiah (to Jerusalem), Ezekiel (to the Exiles)
538	⚙ THE RESTORATION	Ezr, Neh	Est, Judith, Hag, Zech, Mal, Job, Ecc, Songs		Cyrus, 2 <sup>nd</sup> temple, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Law, "minor" prophets, new writings
163 63	🕯 THE REPURIFICATION	1 Mac	Dn, 2Mac, Sirach, Wisdom		Greeks, Maccabean revolt, Hasmonean Dynasty, Romans, Jewish sects (Pharisees, Saducees, Zealots, Essenes)
AD	♣+ JESUS CHRIST	LK	MT, MK, JN		Incarnation, Good News, New Law, Cross & Resurrection
33 70	🕯 APOSTOLIC CHURCH	Acts	Rm, 1&2Co, Ga, Ep, Phil, Col, 1&2Th, 1&2 Tm, Ti, Phm, Hb, Ja, 1P, 2P, 1,2&3J, Jd, Rv		Pentecost, council, journeys, epistles, Body/Bride of Christ



## The Story of Part 28: The Friday Called “Good”



Judas, unable to bear the guilt of having betrayed his friend, hanged himself. Meanwhile the mock trial began. In the middle of the night the Sanhedrin (the Jewish court of Pharisees and chief priests led by Caiaphas) questioned Jesus. “So, are you the Christ?” His answer was a flat-out “You said it.” “He admits it!” they said to one another. “What more proof do we need of blasphemy?” as if they expected him to deny the claim. Although they wanted to kill him, they could not do so, being occupied as they were by the Romans. Since “blasphemy” wouldn’t mean anything to Pontius Pilate (the Roman procurator of their region), they took him to Pilate telling him Jesus was a self-proclaimed king of the Jews who was actually perverting the nation of Israel. “Are you a king?” Pilate asked him. Straight out, Jesus told him, “You said it.” But seeing no threat, Pilate said, as if they were wasting his time, “I see no crime here. Besides, he’s not originally from Jerusalem, but from Nazareth, so take it up with your King Herod.”

King Herod had less concern with Jesus’ claim to be a king than the opportunity to see him perform a miracle! Of course, Jesus not only gave him no miracle, but wouldn’t even answer his questions. Flustered, Herod sent him back to Pilate. “Are you a king?” Pilate asked. “My kingdom is not of this world,” he responded. Again, Pilate could find no guilt in him, so he tried to appease the Jews who turned him in by having him tied up and scourged with whips. Pilate then thought of another way out of this local mess – he appealed to a custom of releasing for the Jews during the Passover one prisoner as a Roman gesture of mercy. He gave them the choice of releasing this humble carpenter or Barabbas, a murdering zealot who killed a Roman soldier. Pilate wasn’t expecting the crowd to ask for Barabbas! “What do I do with Jesus of Nazareth, then?” Their response echoes in eternity with every sin we commit: “CRUCIFY HIM!” Before allowing a riot to form, Pilate gave in to their wishes, and taking no credit for this unfair punishment, gave the order for his crucifixion.

Before his execution, the Roman soldiers toyed with him, putting a “crown” of thorns on his head, giving him a reed as a “scepter”, hitting him over the head with it, spitting and slapping him. Taken back to Pilate one last time, Pilate asked him, “Who are you? Where are you from?” No response. “Don’t you know I have the power to have you crucified?” Jesus responded, “You would have no power over me if it were not given to you by my Father in heaven above. As it stands, those who turned me in are even guiltier than you.” Pilate, turning to the crowd, asked in a last-ditch effort, “Should I actually crucify your king?” Their response was the response of the whole non-believing world: “We have no king but Caesar!”

With crossbeam on shoulder, Jesus carried the wood and the sin of the world down the Via Dolorosa. Along

the way a Simon of Cyrene was pulled out of the crowd to help him. He then comforted the women who were weeping. When he arrived at “the place of the skull”, our Lord was nailed onto the cross, between two thieves also crucified. Even now he preached by example. “Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do.” One of the thieves looked at him. “If you are the Christ, why don’t you save us?” The other thief told the first “Have you no fear of God? We deserve to die, but this man is innocent. Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.” “I assure you,” Jesus promised, “this day you will be with me in paradise.”

Then God the Son looked up and expressed the feeling of betrayal and abandonment, quoting Psalm 22, the cry of a righteous man persecuted and suffering, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” He allowed himself to feel the abandonment we feel.

The apostles had also abandoned him, except for one – John, who stood there with Jesus’ mother. There at the foot of the cross, Jesus told “the disciple whom he loved”, “Behold your mother,” and to his mother, “Woman, behold your son.” Identifying ourselves with “the beloved disciple,” we take Jesus’ mother as our own, a gift from Christ to honor and take into our care as John did.

Then, in fulfillment of some of the prophecies of the Scriptures, Jesus was given vinegar to drink after saying “I thirst,” but he refused it. They also took his robes and threw dice to see who got to keep it.

With humanity at the nadir of its existence, the Savior looked up, and said “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,” let out a loud cry, said “It is finished,” and breathed his last.

Everybody went home, beating their breasts in sorrow, stunned that the one to whom they entrusted their souls had just died. Then, in fulfillment of some more prophecies, in order to prevent the bodies from remaining on the crosses during the Sabbath, the Romans broke the legs of the criminals to hasten their death. But when they came to Jesus’ body, they saw he was already dead, and confirmed it by piercing him with a spear. Blood and water came from his side, signifying the birth of the Church, but on a more crass level, the horrid fact that death by crucifixion happens by asphyxiation. The prophecy that was fulfilled was that none of his bones would be broken.

The rich Joseph of Arimathea and the Jesus-friendly Pharisee, Nicodemus, took the body of Jesus, prepared it with linens and buried it in a new tomb. The chief priest, meanwhile, procured a Roman guard to watch the tomb, to ensure that Jesus’ followers wouldn’t steal the body. They never counted on the body being not stolen, but... *risen*.



## Defending the Faith: Suffering for our sins

*“Why did Christ have to die for something he didn’t do? The whole ‘original sin’ thing is a made up story that only causes undeserved feelings of guilt. We need to purge our religion of such pessimism and enjoy life.”*

Some scholars point out parallels between the Adam and Eve story and other creation myths, hoping to refute the story of original sin by showing it to be just one among many similar stories. Chesterton expressed his amazement at how such “scholars” could suggest that since so many different cultures seem to remember a universal fall from grace, it must not have happened!

But the daily experience of suffering, especially suffering which doesn’t feel *deserved*, is probably the most convincing evidence that something has gone wrong in the world. The Bible informs us that sin entered the world through one man. But this does not mean that we are personally responsible for Adam and Eve’s sin. What it means is that we inherit the *effects* of that sin – death, suffering, and the tendency to sin again. “But that’s not fair! I didn’t do it!” we may feel, and we have come up with different philosophies to explain away the human condition as either an illusion of the mind, or else as something we can conquer on our own strength. But when real suffering snaps us out of the illusion, and when we utterly fail to conquer suffering on our own, original sin comes in, like bad news, to explain the harsh reality.

But the bad news comes with the Good News right at its heels (Gn 3:15)! When our ancestors rebelled against God, instead of abandoning the entire human race (made up of two people at the time), God decided to

present everyone with a basic choice in life – to love Him (which implies faithful obedience – Romans 1:5) – or not. With every sin we rebel against God, but we have recourse to His forgiveness through His Son. Jesus’ death is a sacrifice the Father cannot refuse, and we are invited to have our sins forgiven *on his behalf*. Nothing we do apart from him can ever earn heaven. But *with* him, that’s a different story (Heb 2:18). With faith, we can join our suffering to his (Rom 8:17) and be rewarded in heaven, where the joy of intimate union with God infinitely surpasses any suffering on earth (Rom 8:18, 1 Cor 2:9).

And so, this is the choice we all face – eternal suffering, separated from God, or eternal bliss, in perfect union with Him. Beyond just “fair”, this is a *free* choice between heaven and hell. Hell, as Frank Sheed describes, does not show the power of God’s wrath, but the power of man to reject his Creator.

It is not pessimism to accept a sinful condition and embrace suffering, when we consider it inseparable from the embrace of our loving Savior. We place all our hope in him, and this hope does not disappoint (Rom 5:5). Anyone who thinks Christianity is all about guilt and suffering only hears the bad news, but turns a deaf ear to the Good News. We are worthy of heaven thanks to Jesus, and we have been bought at a price (1 Cor 6:20).



## Expressing the Faith: Were You There?

Of all the musical attempts to describe the suffering of our Savior, this Negro spiritual silences them all.

*Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Where you there when they crucified my Lord?*

*Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?  
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?  
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?*

*Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?  
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?  
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?*

↗ **Next time: “Word ALIVE”** ↖