

**ROAD TO EASTER**  
**FACING INJUSTICE**

Tuesday, March 26

Reading: John 19:1-11

**John 19:10** "Do You refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't You realize I have power either to free You or to crucify You?"  
**11** Jesus answered, "You would have no power over Me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed Me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

In another attempt to avoid condemning Jesus to death, Pilate has Him flogged. He probably hoped that seeing Jesus beaten and bloody would satisfy the blood lust of the crowd. While Jewish floggings were limited to 39 lashes, the Romans had no limit on the number of blows or the parts of the body to be assailed. This brutal act was sometimes called "half-way death" and some men were known to die under the lash.

After the brutal punishment is over Jesus' body would have been in shock from pain and loss of blood. The soldiers decide to play a game with Jesus. If He is the 'King of the Jews' they will make Him look the part. They crush a crown of thorns on His head, put a purple robe over His shoulders, and give Him a reed as a scepter. Then they bow in mock worship. After they tire of this mocking, they beat Jesus and spit on Him (Matthew 27:27-30). Through it all, Jesus said nothing.

Pilate now presents Jesus to the mob. The sight of this tortured Man did not have the desired effect. Seeing the mass of flesh and blood standing before them merely whetted the Jewish leaders' appetite for more. They were like sharks sensing blood in the water! Their shout that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God unnerved Pilate. Most Romans were superstitious on some level and his wife's warning, "Don't have anything to do with that innocent Man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of Him" (Matthew 27:19) would have played into his fears. He questions Jesus again which only confirms his original verdict that Jesus has done nothing worthy of death.

**LESSON ONE:** "I Find No Basis for a Charge Against Him." This is the height of injustice! Pilate has just beaten almost to death a Man whom he has declared innocent! Yet through all the torture and injustice heaped upon Him, Jesus remains silent in His own defense – never pleading His rights or innocence. How do we respond to injustice in our lives? Do we fight back even if it will hurt our testimony for Christ? How does God want us to react? (see 1 Peter 2:21-23 for the answer).

**LESSON TWO:** "You Would Have No Power Over Me." Pilate already knew Jesus was from Galilee, so his question "Where are You from?" had nothing to do with Jesus' earthly existence. He was asking if Jesus had some heavenly origin. When Jesus didn't answer, Pilate threatened that Jesus' life was in his hands. Jesus finally responds by saying Pilate had no power over Him except what God had given. The Jewish leaders held a greater guilt because they had seen the miracles and the evidence that Jesus was the Messiah; Pilate had not. Yet, despite all this evidence, they rejected Him and plotted His betrayal, arrest, and condemnation. Notice that God was still in control. Pilate could do nothing but carry out his part in God's plan. Yet he and the religious leaders were still responsible for their actions. The sovereignty of God and the freewill of people work together for God's glory. God is in charge but we are still responsible for our choices.