

## **THE REJECTED KING**

Friday, September 1  
Reading: Mark 15:1-20

**Mark 15:15** *Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed Him over to be crucified.*

**THE CHIEF PRIESTS' REJECTION:** The Sanhedrin met briefly in the early morning to confirm their verdict of the night before. They change their charge from blasphemy (which the Romans could care less about) to treason – Jesus claimed to be the king of the Jews. It was out of ENVY that they rejected Jesus (15:10). They resented His popularity with the crowds and His threat to their power. They hated Him because He exposed them for who they were. He often uncovered their sins and hypocrisy in front of the people.

**PILATE'S REJECTION:** Pilate was the Roman governor. History tells us that Pilate was in trouble at this time, having already upset the Jews several times that ended in riots and bloodshed. He could not afford another incident. But Jesus impressed Pilate and he tried several alternate plans to get rid of the case. He tried SUBSTITUTION by giving the people a choice between Jesus and a notorious criminal named Barabbas. This failed as the religious leaders had the crowd cry for Barabbas' release. He next tried PITY by having Jesus scourged. He hoped this would satisfy the crowd but instead they became like sharks that smell blood in the water. And they went into a "feeding frenzy" and demanded Jesus' death. Pilate rejected Jesus out of EXPEDIENCY. Though he knew Jesus was innocent, he was not going to risk his career for Him. He wanted to please the crowd more than he wanted to do what was right!

**THE SOLDIERS' REJECTION:** Bleeding and battered from His scourging, Jesus stood naked before these brutal, battle-hardened soldiers. They mocked Him by making Him into a comic king, complete with crown of thorns. Tiring of this "worship" they beat their victim and spit in His face over and over again. I feel sorry for these soldiers. They had nothing against Jesus. They knew very little about Him! They rejected the Savior out of IGNORANCE. They simply didn't know any better.

### **POINTS TO PONDER:**

1. "What Shall I Do with the King of the Jews?" Many people today reject Jesus for these same reasons. They don't want their sins to be exposed (see John 3:19-21) or they don't want to change their lifestyle. They are comfortable with their sin and don't want to come to Christ. They would rather please themselves than God. And many, like the soldiers, simply are ignorant of their position before God. No one has told them about the plan of salvation. "What shall I do with Jesus?" is the most important question and we all must answer it. Our eternal destiny lies in the balance.
2. "Pilate Released Barabbas." More than anyone else, the criminal Barabbas knew what it meant that Jesus took his place. The cross on which Jesus died was meant for Barabbas! But Jesus took his cross and Barabbas went free! Jesus literally died in Barabbas' place. What a wonderful picture of what Jesus has done for each one of us. We all stand condemned and worthy of death. But Jesus took our place. He was rejected so that we might never be rejected. He died so that we might live.