

Matthew 27: 11-31 CONNECT THE THOUGHTS

Jesus Before Pilate

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

This question implies that to portray Jesus as an insurrectionist the Sanhedrin have converted what they judged to be his blasphemous claim to be the Christ, God's Son, into a treasonous claim to be the Jews' king. Pilate would not care about blasphemy, but he would care about any threat to Caesar's authority.

Jesus said to him, “It is as you say.” 12 And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing.

13 Then Pilate said to Him, “Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?” 14 But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.

Jesus refused to answer even one of the many accusations. He won't say anything at all that might thwart his Father's will that he drink the cup of crucifixion.

15 Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. 16 And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas.

It is possible that the governors custom "to release to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished" may have had its origin with Roman's attempt to be "culturally sensitive" to the Jews by mimicking their ritual of the scapegoat. In Leviticus 16:1-34, we read about the "Day of Atonement," which is the English phrase for Yom Kippur. The root for the word "Kippur" is kafar (כִּפּוּר), which probably derives from the word kofer, meaning "ransom." This word is parallel to the word "redeem" (Psalm 49:7) and means "to atone by offering a substitute."

The great majority of usages in the Tanakh concern "making an atonement" by the priestly ritual of sprinkling of sacrificial blood to remove sin or defilement. The life blood of the sacrificial animal was required in exchange for the life blood of the worshipper (the symbolic expression of innocent life given for guilty life). This symbolism is further clarified by the action of the worshipper in placing his hands

on the head of the sacrifice and confessing his sins over the animal (Lev. 16:21; 1:4; 4:4, etc.) which was then killed or sent out as a scapegoat.

Jesus is our scapegoat. - For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

17 Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?”

Matthew mentions Barabbas's first name, so to speak, a name that's identical with that of Jesus. So we have two Jesuses: one notorious and the other righteous. This seems to set the stage for a judicial substitution.

Matthew quotes Pilate as referring to the first as Jesus "the Barabbas," by inserting the definite Greek article τὸν which makes "Barabbas" a kind of title. Barabbas is Aramaic for "the son of the father" - "Jesus the son of the father." Compare Jesus Christ's being the Son of God the Father and the use of "Abba" for addressing God as Father in prayer.

Even today, the kingdoms of this world and their designated rulers present to us a choice: Which Jesus will we choose?

18 For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.

Paul tells us in Philippians 2:3-9

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

19 While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, “Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him.”

We cannot wash our hands of our responsibility to do what is right.

James 4:17 - "If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them."

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. 21 The governor answered and said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”

They said, “Barabbas!”

22 Pilate said to them, “What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?”

They all said to him, “Let Him be crucified!”

23 Then the governor said, “Why, what evil has He done?”

But they cried out all the more, saying, “Let Him be crucified!”

24 When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it.”

According to many of the oldest and best ancient manuscripts and translations, which are probably to be followed, the governor echoes his wife's message by calling Jesus "this righteous or just [man]."^{*}

25 And all the people answered and said, “His blood be on us and on our children.”

Ironic: their hands were dirty, guilty of shedding innocent blood; the very blood that could cleanse them of their guilty and declare them innocent.

In Exodus 24:4-8, Moses rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient." And Moses took the blood,

sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you according to all these words."

Remember back in Matthew 26:27-28, Jesus took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins

26 Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.

We are Barabbas, we are the guilty rebel set free.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. 28 And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. 29 When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Paul goes on to say in Philippians 2:10-11, "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

**30 Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head.
31 And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.**

Psalm 2

The Messiah's Triumph and Kingdom

1 Why do the nations rage,
And the people plot a vain thing?
2 The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together,
Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying,
3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces
And cast away Their cords from us."
4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh;
The Lord shall hold them in derision.

5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath,
And distress them in His deep displeasure:

6 "Yet I have set My King
On My holy hill of Zion."

7 "I will declare the decree:
The Lord has said to Me,
'You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.

8 Ask of Me, and I will give You
The nations for Your inheritance,
And the ends of the earth for Your possession.

9 You shall break them with a rod of iron;
You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel."

10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings;
Be instructed, you judges of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear,
And rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry,
And you perish in the way,
When His wrath is kindled but a little.
Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.