

## JESUS WAS TRIED IN OUR PLACE

Mark 14:53-15:15

Key Verse: 14:61,62

"But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, 'Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?' 'I am,' said Jesus. 'And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.'"

Last Sunday we studied about Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane in order to obey God's will for world salvation. For this, Jesus had to drink the cup of suffering and die on a cross as the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29). Why did Jesus have to drink the cup of sufferings? It was because God intended to save the whole world through his Son's death on the cross and resurrection. Jesus was ready to drink the cup of suffering. Still, Jesus was overwhelmed with sorrow in his humanness. For Jesus, there was only one way to overcome himself and fulfill God's mission assigned to him. It was prayer. In order to solve his agony of soul he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus prayed all night, saying, "Abba, Father...Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will" (36). Luke the physician vividly described how he prayed. Luke 22:44 says, "And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground." The title of today's passage is, "Jesus was tried in our place." When we prayerfully study this passage we can clearly see that Jesus was tried by many. But in the midst of trial Jesus identified himself as the king of the Jews, the Messiah who was promised to come. Jesus also declared that he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

### I. Jesus was tried before the Sanhedrin (14:53-65)

The religious leaders, the agents of the devil, arrested Jesus and took him to the high priest. They were members of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was the ruling council of the Jewish nation. Originally, they were chosen people and a priestly nation (Ex 19:6). They were called to teach the Bible to the peoples of all nations so that the world might overflow with the knowledge of God. But they abandoned God and became politicians under the Roman rule.

When God's chosen people turned out to be politicians, abandoning God's mission to be Bible teachers, they became the agents of the devil. They should have served Jesus. They should have been servants of God. But they became judges and brought Jesus to the Sanhedrin. They made Jesus kneel down on the ground like a criminal and seventy of them were sitting as judges. They were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. Many testified falsely against Jesus, but their statements did not agree. Someone said in verse 58, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this man-made temple and in three days will build another, not made by man.'" At that time, this kind of statement was considered blasphemy. Blasphemy was the worst guilt. The high priest asked Jesus, "Do you want to defend yourself?" But verse 61 says, "Jesus remained silent and gave no answer." In his humanness, Jesus could have defended himself because that false testimony could take his life away. But Jesus remained silent. Jesus did not defend himself to avoid false accusations. This one phrase, "Jesus remained silent," tells us that Jesus is the holy God: Jesus transcended mundane people's political intrigue. Jesus decided to obey the will of God for world salvation through his death and resurrection. Jesus knew that he would die as the Lamb of God as a ransom sacrifice for the sin of the world. Jesus knew that he would be condemned by their false accusation. So Jesus did not open his mouth. This reminds us of Isaiah 53:7, "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth."

Again the high priest asked Jesus, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" (61) The high priest asked this question so as to charge Jesus with blasphemy. Here, "the Son of the Blessed One" is the Messiah who was promised to come. What did Jesus answer? Look at verse 62. "'I am,' said Jesus. 'And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.'" In this verse Jesus testified that he is the Messiah. As the Messiah, Jesus had to undergo trial, suffering and the pain of crucifixion for the sin of the world as the Lamb of God. But Jesus warned them that after his resurrection the Son of Man will sit at the right hand of the Mighty One. Jesus also warned them that he would come again on the clouds of heaven to judge the living and the dead. This warning was the good news of great joy if they repented and accepted it.

How did the high priest respond to Jesus' words? He tore his pompous high priestly garment as if he were a man of holy righteousness and condemned Jesus for speaking blasphemy. Even a little child can know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One, through Jesus' divine words and deeds. But the high priest cheated his conscience and condemned Jesus as a man of blasphemy who deserved the death penalty. The high priest not only deceived his conscience, but also he gave the vilest influence to his people. At the high priest's words, people became as evil as the high priest. They all condemned Jesus as worthy of death. By the high priest's bad influence, people became the entertainers of sadistic joy. Then some began to spit at Jesus; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophecy!" And the guards took him and beat him (65). Here we learn that one person's bad influence can ruin a community and a whole nation and at last the whole world. Jesus was tried by the Sanhedrin members. In fact, Jesus was tried in such a way by his chosen people. But in light of God's point of view, Jesus was tried and tortured in our place. Each of us must be tried and tortured because of our own sins. But Jesus took over such a terrible trial in our place. Jesus took up all our iniquities and transgressions and was tried in such a way. Praise Jesus! Jesus is our true friend. Jesus is our high priest. Jesus was tried in our place.

## II. Peter disowns Jesus (66-72)

How can we imagine that Jesus' top disciple would deny Jesus? It is totally unbelievable. Anyway Peter denied Jesus three times. It was because he was paralyzed by fear. When Jesus was being dragged to the Sanhedrin to be tried, Peter followed Jesus, keeping a distance. He went into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire. Obviously, at that time Peter covered his nose with his head covering not to be noticed by anyone. But a servant girl saw him there warming himself. She looked closely at him. Then she said, "You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus." But Peter denied it. Again the girl saw him there. She said again to those who were standing around, "This fellow is one of them." Again

Peter denied it (70). After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, "You are one of them, for you are a Galilean" (you don't speak Jerusalem English). Peter loved Jesus so much that he was ready to lay down his life for Jesus (31). Now Jesus was on trial. There was a danger that he was to be arrested as one of Jesus' disciples. Yet Peter loved Jesus; he was so loyal to Jesus that he was ready to die for him. But his loyalty was no more than human loyalty. Peter didn't mean to do so. But as soon as that servant girl told him three times that he was one of Jesus' company, he felt as if he got a penicillin shock. In his helplessness, he called down curses on himself and he swore to them, "I don't know this man you're talking about" (71). As soon as Peter denied Jesus, immediately a rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him, that before the rooster crows twice, you will disown me three times. And he broke down and wept. Peter was broken. But he was not broken in despair. When he broke down, he was not broken; his huge sin of a rocky mount was broken. When he wept, he did not weep out of regret, but he wept with joy that he would see the Risen Christ face to face again.

Before he was arrested, Jesus warned Peter by quoting Zechariah 13:7, "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered." But Peter did not listen to Jesus because he was very upset that his loyalty was not recognized by Jesus 100%. 14:31 says, "But Peter insisted emphatically, 'Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.'" We remember that despite their childish faith, Jesus gave them a glorious and hopeful promise of meeting again face to face after his resurrection. "But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee" (28). This promise was indeed a glorious promise. This promise suggests Jesus' rising from the dead on the third day.

This promise suggests that Jesus wins final victory over sin and death. This promise suggests that Jesus, the Messiah, would give us eternal salvation and the kingdom of God through his death and resurrection.

### III. Jesus was tried before Pilate (15:1-15)

Since the Jews had no right to execute criminals, they handed Jesus over to Pilate. Pilate was a Roman governor of Judea. In reality, Pilate had nothing to do with Jesus because it was a matter of Jewish religion. If he had declared that he had nothing to do with Jewish religion, he might have saved himself. But he attempted a political compromise with the Jews, and he invited eternal disaster upon himself. Pilate on the throne heard the Jewish verdict that Jesus claimed to be the Christ, which meant King of kings. It implied a rebellion against the Roman Emperor. As soon as Pilate saw Jesus, he asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" (2) "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. Pilate, however, knew that it was the jealousy problem of the Jewish religious leaders. So he wanted to rescue Jesus from the hand of the Jews. Pilate hoped that Jesus would defend himself. So he asked him, "Your people accused you of many things. So it is right for you to answer my question." Verse 15:5 says, "But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed." Jesus did not reply to Pilate because the Sanhedrin had already decided to destroy him. Pilate the governor was in deep trouble because Jesus did not answer his question. Pilate felt that terrible disaster had pounced upon him. He trembled because his wife had a nightmare about Jesus and told him, "Don't bother Jesus of Nazareth" (Mt 27:19). But Jesus was peaceful.

Here, the miserable person was not Jesus on trial, but Pilate the governor on the throne. Pilate was a smart person. He knew the tradition and the mentality of the Jews. Now it was the day of custom to release a prisoner whom the people requested. A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did (7-8). "Wishing that an innocent person like Jesus would be released, Pilate asked, "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?"

What was the response? The chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead. Pilate exclaimed, "What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?" At the moment people shouted, "Crucify him!", Pilate's heart sank. In verse 14 Pilate asked, "Why? What crime has he committed?" Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent. Pilate felt that Jesus was more than a man. But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!" Pilate succumbed to the Jews' intimidation and had Jesus flogged, and

handed over to be crucified. We are the ones who should be flogged to death and crucified because of our sins. But our friend and heavenly Father Jesus was flogged and handed over to be crucified. Out of helplessness, Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. But history testifies that Pilate did not condemn Jesus to death--Pilate condemned himself, and put himself into eternal condemnation.

When we study Mark's gospel, people, even the Gentile people, liked Jesus. After defeating Satan's temptation in the wilderness through fasting prayer for 40 days, Jesus launched the earthly messianic ministry. When Jesus began his ministry, he wanted to win men over to God so that they may be saved. So he said in Mark 1:15, "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" Even if Jesus delivered the message of repentance, people were happy and many repented and followed Jesus. Those who accepted Jesus rejoiced, believing that they have eternal salvation and the kingdom of God in Jesus. Those who followed Jesus experienced heavenly joy.

Jesus chose twelve disciples from among low-class people. Peter was born to be a fisherman. It was very hard for him to turn his back on the sea and follow Jesus who was telling the same old, old story again and again. But a miracle happened. God changed his desire of being a man of the sea into a desire to learn of Jesus and grow up to be a disciple of Jesus. Peter was not formally educated. But people of the world say that he is the best teacher who ever lived because he learned of Jesus. When Jesus saw 5,000 people, Jesus had great compassion on them (Mk 6:34). Jesus taught them the word of life all day long without eating. During the time of his earthly messianic ministry, Jesus opened the eyes of the blind. Jesus healed the men with leprosy. Jesus wept for sorrowful people. Jesus became a father to the Samaritan woman. Jesus became a friend to a lonely tax collector. When we study this passage those who were loved by Jesus so dearly forgot the grace of Jesus. Now they are under the bad influence of the religious leaders. They were bribed to stand against Jesus. Later, they became worse until they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Today we studied how Jesus was tried, humiliated and beaten up. Jesus was tried and tortured in our place. We are the ones to be tried and condemned because of our iniquities and transgressions. But Jesus was tried and condemned in our place. So Romans 8:1 says, "Therefore, there is now

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no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." By his trial he freed us from eternal condemnation. Jesus also taught that he is the Son of God and he will come again. Praise Jesus that in the midst of trial he declared he is the Son of God and he comes again to judge the living and the dead.