



The Revolution on Trial

Matthew 26:57 – 68; 27:11 – 31

The trials of Jesus did not destroy the revolution, but merely sounded its triumph.

- Jewish leaders were so excited to have Jesus at their disposal → thirty pieces of silver a very small price to pay.
- Their law dictated a trial must be in public and by daylight yet when the sun rose, it was already Jesus' third hearing.
- Had neither truth nor lies after 3 years to convict Jesus → even his enemies found no sin.
- Jesus claimed to be Israel's true King, the Messiah, and the 'Son of God' which was sedition against Caesar.
- Jesus confessed that he was the same 'Son of Man' whom Daniel had seen destroy the Roman Empire → Psalms 110:1, Daniel 7:13.
- Such revolutionary talk gave the Jewish leaders reason to carry out their plan.
- Pilate could see that Jesus was innocent → but could not overlook defiance against his emperor → in the end he did nothing.
- Jesus had healed children, fed families and preached hope, yet the crowd preferred a criminal to the Messiah who came in peace.

- The trials proved Jesus' message to be true.
- Jesus remained silent in order to fulfill the prophecy even though he could have gone free with just one well-aimed reply.
- Jesus turned the other cheek in a silent but powerful sermon of love; forgiving and praying for his enemies.

The crucifixion did not destroy King Jesus and his Kingdom Revolution. The cross became a pulpit from which the Messiah preached showing that God's love is greater than sin and nothing can exhaust the compassion of God towards us. Jesus of Nazareth cried out and died, but his radical message had never shone brighter. The soldiers and the Sanhedrin had seen in his death the radical truth and death-defying power of Jesus' message.

The Revolution had been put on trial, and the crushed and crucified King who was laid in Joseph's tomb had won.

Remorse and Repentance

Matthew 26:69 – 27:10

Two men. Two friends. Two betrayals and yet two very different destinies. Both Simon Peter and Judas were convinced and felt remorse yet only Peter turned remorse into repentance.

Judas was the most promising of the disciples in many ways → the only pure Judean and fine administrator. But this was a façade → heart enveloped in creeping disappointment with the meek and humble Messiah for whom he had given up everything.

- He stole money which he managed for Jesus and the other disciples.

- Judas ignored the warning from Jesus that he was hardening his heart like Pharaoh and choosing a terrible fate.
- He led the troops to the garden of Gethsemane, kissed Jesus as a poignant act of treachery, and then watched as they led him away to his death.
- Judas felt remorse unlike the Chief Priests → he tried to confess to the priest and find atonement yet he didn't look for forgiveness in the one place he could find it, i.e. in God and in torment he rushed out and hanged himself.
- Judas deeply regretted his love for money and his actions in betraying Jesus but he lacked faith to go to the Lord for forgiveness and restoration.
- Judas ran away from Jesus instead of to him, and chose remorse instead of repentance.
- Peter turned regret into repentance and faith → he ran to Jesus' empty tomb, walked on water and ate with Jesus in faith that through God's grace he might yet be restored and forgiven and cleansed.
- We must to combine conviction with faith in the love of Christ, the power of the cross and the Gospel message → 2 Corinthians 7 vs. 10 → Peter and Judas were both friends and betrayers, but only one of them had faith.

“That is the difference between remorse and repentance. The man who has not repented, but who is only experiencing remorse, when he realises he has done something against God, avoids God... tries to get away from God, to avoid him at all costs.”

Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Perspective

Matthew 27:46

It was the word of God which gave Jesus perspective to see glorious victory in the face of defeat and blessed assurance in the face of abandonment.

Jesus had been reading Psalms leading up to the cross and quoted from them four times four days before. Jesus saw the true perspective of scripture and cried out with triumphant faith: “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani”? In this prayer he cries out in faith to his Father. Psalm 22 → clearest on the suffering of the Messiah and therefore, he is meditating on the promises of the Psalm.

- Jesus was no ordinary man and with the perspective of Scripture to strengthen his resolve; he knew his Father's plan was working → every fulfillment a fresh attack!
- The Jewish leaders mocked him and unwittingly quoted Psalm 28 vs. 8 → intending to break his spirit but instead encouraged him more than the words of a friend.
 - ❖ His Father's plan was working so well that even his enemies were dancing to his tune!
- Through these Scriptures, Jesus saw his Father's perspective and rejoiced with hope as he drew his final breath.
- As Jesus cried out ‘*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*’ his cry of horror is filled with hope – 27:46
- The Father is still ‘my God’ → forsaken him only to redeem nations through the ransom-price of his blood.
- ‘It is finished’ is a cry of victory not defeat – John 19:30.
 - ❖ Jesus' knowledge of scripture gave him true perspective in his suffering and transformed grief into glory; tears into triumph and death into deliverance.

Study, learn and meditate on scripture to gain true perspective for the trails ahead.

The Curtain

Matthew 27:51

God loves to paint Gospel pictures which reinforce the message of the Kingdom. He is the God of the Word and the God of illustration, and as his bleeding Son died he painted a beautiful picture of salvation.

He began painting it in the desert sands around Mount Sinai nearly 1,500 years beforehand. A man-made tent called a Tabernacle in which the living God would camp among his people. Five hundred years later God told Solomon to upgrade the Tabernacle into a magnificent Temple, but the same glorious picture remained. God had set a place where people could find him and bring their requests to his Throne.

- # God used a brush labelled presence but he also used another one labelled holiness.
 - But he didn't let people think he was like them.

- The inner room, or Most Holy Place was shut off by a finely embroidered four-inch-thick curtain.
- ❖ Only the high Priest could enter and that was on one day of the year.

- The outer room, or Holy Place was also shut off by a four-inch-thick curtain.
- ❖ Out of bounce to all but a select few priests.
- ❖ Matthew is not clear which of these two curtains split in 27:51 → in New Testament the curtains are talked about as if they were one single 'veil' between God and man.
- God was present in power but too holy to receive people in close quarters. This was a reminder of the fatal result if a sinful person entered the presence of the holy God.

- # God used a third brush labelled blood-sacrifice.
 - No forgiveness of sin without the shedding of innocent blood.
 - Therefore a massive altar dominated the courtyard in front of the Tabernacle and Temple where a sacrifice was made by everyone who entered the Temple.

- # Three brushes – *presence*, *holiness*, and *blood sacrifice* – formed the tricolor picture of Old Covenant grace.
 - Then on the day Jesus died, God changed the picture forever.

- As Jesus gave up his spirit, the barrier between man and God was torn apart
 - ❖ From top-to-bottom showing that God had paved a way for us.
 - ❖ Not from bottom-to-top, as if a way had been made by humans.
 - ❖ Torn all the way down as a permanent statement of grace.

Jesus Christ had painted all over God's Old Covenant picture with a paintbrush dipped in his own blood.

A picture speaks a thousand words, as does God's finished New Covenant picture, which speaks powerfully of how he is so holy that nothing but the blood of his Son could bridge the gulf between our sin, guilt, and filth on the one side of the curtain and his pure and sinless presence on the other side.

The curtain was not just torn to let us *in* to God but to let him *out* to us.

Act five of Matthew ends not with the falling of a curtain but the tearing of one, bring the five chapters of Kingdom Judgment to a close with Kingdom Mercy.

"We are the Most Holy Place of the living God. As God has said: 'I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people'."

2 Corinthians 6:16