



The DAILY JESUS NEWS #316 Friday... Day of Agony and Atonement

Jesus' Three-Phase Roman Trial

Pilate Has Jesus Flogged, and Appeals the 2nd Time to the Crowd for His Release
John 19.1-6 (Parallel Texts : MT 27.22-23; MK 15.12-14; LK 23.20-22)

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¹ Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. ² The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They wrapped him in a purple robe ³ and went up to him again and again, saying, “Hail, king of the Jews!” And they kept on hitting him in the face.

⁴ Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews gathered there, “Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him.”

⁵ When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, “Look at the man!”

^LWanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. ^{MT}“What shall I do then with Jesus, ^Mthe one you call the King of the Jews, ^{MT}who is called Christ?

⁶ As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, ^Lthey kept on shouting, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!”

For the third time he spoke to them: “Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found no grounds for the death penalty in him.”

^{MT}But they kept on shouting all the louder, “Crucify him!”

So Pilate answered, “You take him then and crucify him. I myself find no basis for a charge against him.”

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This “superscript ID” is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

CONTEXT DIGEST	
Location	The Praetorium: Palace of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate
Timeline	Early April (Month 39)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VIII: Passion Week

	E. Friday: Day of Agony and Atonement
	Jesus' Three-Phase Roman Trial
Title	Pilate Has Jesus Flogged, and Appeals the 2nd Time to the Crowd for His Release

Today's reading describes our Lord's unimaginable sufferings and humiliation at the hands of sinful men, whom he was actually dying to save. Jesus did not say a word in this text, but his silence eloquently revealed his glory as the "Lamb of God."

In a final attempt to appease the mob that was crying for Jesus' crucifixion, and yet save his life, Pilate ordered Jesus to be scourged. His hope was that this terrible form of punishment, which killed some of the people who received it, would satisfy the blood lust of the mob, and allow the Governor to release Jesus.

Pilate thought that a thoroughly whipped and humiliated Jesus would no longer pose a threat to the Jewish leadership, and they would be secure in knowing he had learned his lesson. Pilate greatly underestimated the hatred of the chief priests toward Jesus.

The Roman scourging instrument was made of numerous leather straps roughly 3 feet long, with sharp pieces of bone, metal, and wood lacing each strap. The straps were fastened to a wood handle roughly a foot long. It was designed to rake over the skin and tear it off with each blow. Exposing bones and even internal organs in a scourging was not uncommon.

The blows were typically made diagonally across the back, from the right shoulder down to the left hip and vice versa, forming an X pattern on the back. A third kind of stroke went straight across the middle of the back at the center point of the X, flaying the back from right side to left, and continuing around the sides to cover a portion of the stomach area. It was a brutal form of punishment that left a man scarred for life, if they did not die from shock, blood loss, and subsequent infection.

Jesus endured his scourging in silence.

After the scourging, the soldiers heaped further physical and psychological abuse on Jesus. The crown of thorns, hails to the King, repeated blows to the face, kneeling before him in mockery, and purple cloth fit for a King all humiliated Jesus. He had already been spit upon, beaten, and mocked by the Jewish temple guards before the Sanhedrin. This was Jesus' second beating to his face.

When the soldiers were through, Pilate had obtained his objective. Jesus' body was destroyed. The blood from his scourging soaked through the purple cloth and darkened it. Blood flowed down his head from the crown of thorns. His face was now unrecognizable from the two beatings. When Pilate presented Jesus to the mob he was so physically abused that death would be a relief to him. The mob had every reason to let him live.

Pilate's cry to the mob, "Look at the man!" echoes the words of John the Baptizer when he first introduced Jesus: "Look at the Lamb of God, who really takes away the sin of the world!" (JN 1.29, DJN #029) By using the same Greek words in both passages, John was showing us that Jesus the suffering man is truly God's saving Lamb.

Now the silence of Jesus took on its full significance as the Lamb:

*3 He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.*

*Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.*

*4 Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.
5 But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the scourging that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.
6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.*

*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 its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth. (Isaiah 53:3-7, NIV)*

Jesus was standing before his enemies after being physically scourged, and twice beaten with hands and rods. His physical agonies were self-evident. But he was not beaten in spirit. He stood there in silence before the mob, and no King was ever more regal and stately in his bearing.

Rather than securing the mob's sympathy as Pilate had hoped, Jesus' heart-victory over his physical sufferings was so apparent that the mob went into a frenzy of roaring for his crucifixion. They hated him even more, for they could NOT beat him!

The record of Jesus' Roman trials shows that there were seven different statements of exoneration of Jesus, six by Pilate and one by Herod. Three of those statements by Pilate were made in this single reading. Jesus was clearly righteous, without sin--suffering at the hands of sinful men, for their sake.

APPLICATION:

How could Jesus love his enemies enough to pray for their forgiveness, and die to make it possible for them, when they treated him like this? God, the Trinity is love. There is no other answer than unconditional love.

See the love of Jesus in his silence as the Lamb of God today. Worship him for it, then go and do likewise.