

Jesus' Trials



SABBATH—FEBRUARY 5

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Matthew 26:57-68; Luke 22:66-71; John 18:2-9, 12-23.

MEMORY VERSE: "Pilate wanted to let Jesus go. So he made an appeal¹ to the crowd again. But they kept shouting, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!'" (Luke 23:20, 21, NIV).

IN HIS BOOK *THE TRIAL*, Franz Kafka wrote about a bank clerk named Joseph K. Joseph who was arrested on false charges and sentenced to die. Throughout the story, Joseph faced many unfair questions and delays. He continued to claim that he was innocent. But in the end, Joseph was killed for a crime he had not done.

What Joseph went through was unfair. But his experiences were not as bad as what Jesus experienced during His trial. Jesus faced a court that was not interested in facts. The court was interested only in killing Jesus. But Jesus remained as calm and loving as He always had been. His trial was foolish and false. His trial shows how cruel people could be, even when Jesus was right in front of them.

This week, we will study what happened during Jesus' trial.

A LOOK AT THIS WEEK'S LESSON: How did Jesus show His love and mercy² to His enemies in the Garden of Gethsemane? How were Jesus' arrest and trial symbols (examples) of the gospel? How did Jesus answer the people who arrested and tortured Him? What made the leaders blind to Jesus?

Study this week's lesson to prepare for Sabbath, February 12.

¹appeal—an earnest request.

²mercy—kindness we do not deserve.

SUNDAY—FEBRUARY 6

ARREST IN THE GARDEN
(John 18:2-9).

What opportunity did God give to make the people aware of their crime in arresting Jesus? John 18:2-9.

When the people said they had come to arrest Jesus, He said in Greek, "*Ego eimi.*" *Ego eimi* means "I am." Jesus used these same words when He said to the religious leaders, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). The words *I am* are connected to the Hebrew name for God, *Yahveh* (Exodus 3:11-14). *Yahveh* comes from a Hebrew word that means "to be." Some people believe *Yahveh* means the "One who is," or "the Self-Existing³ One." By using the words *I am*, Jesus was letting these people know who He really was.

As soon as Jesus said "I am," the people fell. "God's light shone on the Savior's face. And a dovelike form (shape) came over Him. In the presence of this form, the angry people fell. Priests, soldiers, and Judas fell as dead men to the ground." —Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 694.

What does Peter's behavior show about his understanding of

Jesus' words? Matthew 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50; John 18:10.



Peter should have realized that Jesus did not need a sword to protect Himself. Jesus' words caused the angry people to fall. Then Jesus could have run away. But He stayed! Jesus let Himself be taken! Jesus was still giving proof of His godly character and nature. Even during His arrest, Jesus was working for the salvation of people who hated Him.

The Bible does not tell us if any of the angry people changed their mind about Jesus after His great show of power. Why is it so hard for some people to accept the Savior?

MONDAY—FEBRUARY 7

**JESUS BEFORE ANNAS;
PETER BEFORE THE WOMAN**
(John 18:12-23).

³self-existing—being able to live without any help from anyone else.

Both Peter and Jesus faced questioning. What were the differences between their situations? What can we learn from these differences?



What a powerful difference between Jesus and Peter! Peter is outside in a crowd of people. He stands beside a person who has no real power to harm him. But when this person asks Peter about his relationship to Jesus, Peter lies! But Jesus is different. Jesus is inside, before a high official in the Jewish nation. When this official asks Jesus about His disciples, Jesus speaks freely. Even when the official hits Jesus, Jesus still answers in an honest way that shows He has nothing to hide.

Read Jesus' words to the official in John 18:20-23. How are Jesus' words an example of the gospel? Read Isaiah 53:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Peter lies. Jesus is struck for doing no wrong. What a powerful example of the difference between sinners and the loving God who came to save them. In Jesus' words to the official, we see an example of the gospel. We sin. So we deserve to die. Jesus did not sin. He did nothing wrong. But He dies for our sins. His death for our sins is the basis of the gospel.

How should the fact that Jesus was treated unfairly help us when we are treated unfairly? How can this story of Jesus' treatment help us to treat people fairly?

TUESDAY—FEBRUARY 8

**THE EVENING TRIAL
(Matthew 26:57-68).**

How unfair was Jesus' trial? Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65.

Why was it not necessary for Jesus to answer the people who had blamed Him of doing wrong? Mark 14:56-59.

The trial was not going well. The high priest finally asked Jesus, "I command you under oath by the living God. Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God" (Matthew 26:63, NIV). Jesus knew a "yes"

answer would be His death warrant.⁴ But He would not deny who He really was or His relationship to His Father. He warned the court that someday they would see Him as the God He was.

How does Jesus answer the high priest's question? Matthew 26:64.

Jesus did not speak about His death for the sins of the world, His resurrection,⁵ or His work in heaven as the true High Priest. In a very clear way, Jesus talked about His second coming, when people will see Him as the Son of man, "sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." All through Jesus' ministry (work) on earth, He talked about His second coming to His disciples. Now, He talks about His second coming to His enemies. After this, they could never say, "No one told us."



⁴warrant—a written order saying that something may happen.

⁵resurrection—return to life.

By talking about His second coming, Jesus pointed to the hope of all Christians. Why does the promise of Jesus' second coming give us our only hope?

WEDNESDAY—FEBRUARY 9

**THE MORNING TRIAL
(Luke 22:66-71).**

Read Luke 22:66-71. Luke gives us the most details about Jesus' morning trial. How was the morning trial the same as the evening trial? How were the two trials different?

With more people at the morning trial, the religious leaders ask Jesus almost the same question they asked Him the night before. Read again how Jesus answered in Luke 22:67-69. Jesus knew their hearts. He knew they were not asking if He was the Son of God because they wanted to know the truth. He knew they wanted to find Him guilty. So Jesus did not answer their question directly. "If I tell you, you will not believe me" (Luke 22:67, NIV). They would have believed Jesus if He said He was not God's Son. The leaders were trying Him because they did not believe He was God's Son. Jesus showed them that He knew the trial was false. He showed them they were not interested in

finding the truth. They were interested only in making the truth go away. *He* was the Truth.

In front of the whole group, Jesus spoke again about the Son of man sitting on the right hand of God. He hinted at His power. The leaders knew He was talking about Himself. So they asked Him, "Are you the Son of God then?" (Luke 22:70, NIV).

Jesus uses in His answer the words *I am* (Sunday's lesson). The religious leaders showed that they clearly understood His claim to be God. The same as He did the night before, Jesus made it clear to them who He was. The leaders should have believed Him because of all they had seen and heard. Sadly for them, they did not.

One reason the leaders were so blind to Jesus was that they had a false understanding of prophecy. They expected the Savior to save them from Roman power. This false understanding helps explain why they hated Him. Why is it important for us to have a correct understanding of prophecy and Bible doctrine?⁶

THURSDAY—FEBRUARY 10

A WIFE'S DREAM (Matthew 27:19).

After His religious trials, Jesus

was taken to three political trials before Pilate, Herod, and then Pilate again. It is interesting to know what happened to Pilate when his wife warned him against bothering with Jesus. Read her warning in Matthew 27:19. Her dream must have seemed very real for her to tell her husband to stay away from Jesus. What did she see in her dream?

"In answer to Jesus' prayer, an angel was sent from heaven to visit her. In her dream, she had seen Jesus and had talked with Him. Pilate's wife was not a Jew. But as she looked upon Jesus in her dream, she knew He was the Savior. She knew He was the Prince of God. She saw Him on trial in the judgment hall. . . . She saw the cross. She saw the earth wrapped in darkness. She heard the mysterious cry, 'It is finished.' Then she saw Jesus seated upon a great white cloud. Meanwhile, the earth trembled in space, and Jesus' murderers fled from the presence of His glory. With a cry of horror, she woke up. Quickly, she wrote words of warning to Pilate." —Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 732.

What three things about Jesus did Pilate's wife see in her dream? The quote above and the verses on page 51 will help you find the answers. How are these three things related to one another? How important is the fact that Pilate's wife was not a Jew?

⁶doctrine—church belief.

1. Romans 5:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21

2. Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 12:2 ____

3. Mark 14:62; Acts 1:11 _____

The dream of Pilate's wife was a complete view of the plan of salvation, from the righteous (holy) character of Jesus to His second coming. Notice the comparison⁷ between what she saw about His second coming and His words to the leaders in both the evening and morning trial (Matthew 26:64; Luke 22:69). She received a clear vision of the Cross and saw Jesus' second coming.

Look over this week's lesson to see the ways Jesus worked to save the people around Him, even His enemies. What hope should that give you about God's desire to save you?

FRIDAY—FEBRUARY 11

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 698–740; *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 1104, 1124.

⁷comparison—how things are the same.

⁸attitude—how we think or feel about something.

“It will do you good . . . to review often the closing scenes in the life of our Savior. We may be tempted as He was, but we may all learn very important lessons from these scenes. It would be a blessing to spend a thoughtful hour each day reviewing the life of Jesus from the manger to the Cross. We should study Jesus' life point by point and let our imagination picture clearly each scene, especially the closing scenes of His earthly life. By thinking deeply about His teachings, sufferings, and sacrifice, we may make our faith and love for Him stronger. We may become more deeply filled with the spirit that supported our Savior and kept Him going. . . . Good and noble things in us will grow when we think deeply about Jesus on the cross.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 374.

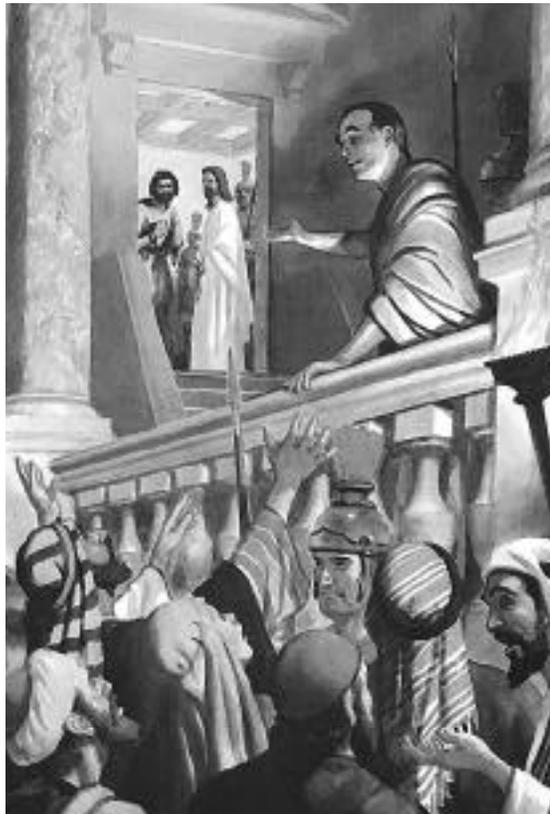
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In healing Malchus's ear and in rebuking (scolding) Peter, what did Jesus show about
 - A. His attitude⁸ toward His enemies?
 - B. The degree of freedom He could use to free Himself from the mob?
 - C. His way of dealing with the disciples' mistakes?
 - D. His own thoughts about the danger that surrounded Him?

- E. His methods of defending His work?
 - F. His view of using physical force (power) in spiritual struggles?
2. Pilate presented Jesus and Barabbas side by side and offered to free the man the crowd

chose. The crowd chose Barabbas. How do people today choose Barabbas over Jesus?

3. Why do you think Pilate was given a warning when Herod was not?



**The people chose Barabbas.
Whom do you choose?**