

Gospel Reflections:

JOHN 19

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JOHN 19:1-15 – PILATE’S FINAL EFFORT TO RELEASE JESUS

- 1: Then Pilate therefore took JESUS, and scourged Him.
- 2: And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe,
- 3: And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote Him with their hands.
- 4: Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring Him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in Him.
- 5: Then came JESUS forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold The Man!
- 6: When the chief priests therefore and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify Him, crucify Him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye Him, and crucify Him: for I find no fault in Him.
- 7: The Jews answered him, We have a Law, and by our Law He ought to die, because He made Himself The Son of GOD.
- 8: When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;
- 9: And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto JESUS, Whence art Thou? But JESUS gave him no answer.
- 10: Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest Thou not unto me? knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?
- 11: JESUS answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin.
- 12: And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let This Man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.
- 13: When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought JESUS forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.
- 14: And it was the preparation of The Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!
- 15: But they cried out, Away with him, away with Him, crucify Him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priest answered, We have no king but Caesar.

Such a sad picture! Here the leaders of GOD’s people were anxious to spill The innocent Blood of The King of the universe incarnate, but have the Gentile occupying powers whom they despised do the murdering, so that they could go on with their rituals which they held so high above The Law of GOD! And here our hearts should cry for these men who, though GOD had placed them in The Seat of Moses to be the shepherds of His people, were blind in The Light of GOD’s Presence. They could see only according to their own iniquity in the darkness. So they cry out to the hated Roman governor, “Crucify Him! For we have no king by Caesar!”

We may read The Divine Judgement and Wrath soon to come upon these wayward shepherds, and upon GOD’s people placed under them as a result, and weep for them. The suffering and destruction of those who are called to be remade in The Likeness of GOD, as they are in His Image, is about to fall upon them!

So we read in PSALM 82:1-8, “GOD standeth in the congregation of the mighty; He judgeth among the gods. How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah. Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked. They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course. I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of The Most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. Arise, O GOD, judge the earth...!”

JOHN 19:16-30 – THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST

16: Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took JESUS, and led Him away.

17: And He bearing His Cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

18: Where they crucified Him, and two other with Him, on either side one, and JESUS in the midst.

19: And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on The Cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20: This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where JESUS was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

21: Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that He said, I am King of the Jews.

22: Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

23: Then the soldiers, when they had crucified JESUS, took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

24: They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted My raiment among them, and for My vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

25: Now there stood by the cross of JESUS his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

26: When JESUS therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27: Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

28: After this, JESUS knowing that all things were now accomplished, that The Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29: Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to His mouth.

30: When JESUS therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.

What sorrow a loving parent might feel to behold the agony and death of their beloved child, I thankfully know not, and pray that I never shall! It is a popular saying, that “a parent should never have to bury their child.” And though the disciples and the faithful women could not then understand why these terrible events were unfolding

around them, we may read of old Simeon in LUKE 2:25-26, when Joseph and Mary brought the infant JESUS into The Temple as commanded by The Law of Moses. Simeon was a “just and devout” man who awaited to see “The Consolation of Israel,” for The HOLY SPIRIT had revealed to him that he should not see physical death until he had beheld The Messiah with his own eyes.

So when Joseph and Mary brought the baby JESUS into The House of GOD, Simeon took Him in his arms and blessed The LORD, saying in LUKE 2:29-35 this joyous and at the same time fearful prophesy, “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word: For mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation, Which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel...” Simeon then blessed them, and said unto Mary His mother, “Behold, This Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed!”

JOHN 19:31-37 – EVENTS FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF CHRIST

31: The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon The Cross on The Sabbath Day, (for that Sabbath Day was an High Day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

32: Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him.

33: But when they came to JESUS, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs:

34: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

35: And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36: For these things were done, that The Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

37: And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on Him Whom they pierced.

Again the bloody hypocrisy of the religious leaders of GOD’s people! “Complete the bloody murderous acts so that The High Sabbath Day might not be profaned as The Passover approaches!” But what is innocent blood viciously spilled, and that by the authority of the leaders of GOD’s people, if not profanation? Did not the slain blood of innocent Abel at the hands of bloody Cain bring down The Divine Judgement and Wrath? For The LORD says in GENESIS 4:10 to the murderer, “...What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me from the ground!” How much more so The innocent Blood shed by sinful bloody men of The Son of GOD?

David writes in PSALM 34:18-22, “The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all His bones: not one of them is broken... The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.” That CHRIST took upon Himself a broken heart and a contrite spirit is evident, in that He being GOD Incarnate, allowed Himself to be slaughtered as the sin-offering for the world. As we sing in The Liturgy of The Church at Holy Communion, “Lamb of GOD, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us, and grant us Thy peace!”

And here the prophet Zechariah foresaw by GOD’s Spirit that The Messiah would be pierced unto death, and GOD’s people would mourn the sacrifice of Their Saviour, Who in His matchless Perfect Love has come to bring us back home into His Kingdom – now and forever. So we read in ZECHARIAH 12:10, “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, The Spirit of Grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

JOHN 19:38-42 – THE BURIAL OF JESUS

38: And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of JESUS, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away The Body of JESUS: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took The Body of JESUS.

39: And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to JESUS by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

40: Then took they The Body of JESUS, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41: Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42: There laid they JESUS therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

How hungrily the Jewish and Roman authorities must have searched for The Body of CHRIST, that they might destroy The Apostles’ claim that CHRIST was risen from the dead! But down through the years, no Body! The superficial hype we hear in the media today, that this or that amateur researcher-adventurer has discovered The Body of JESUS CHRIST, never seems to hold up to close scrutiny. And we may be sure, if such a find ever did stand up to scrutiny, the real academic findings would be non-stop in the face of The Church and every Christian upon the face of the earth. But such alleged finds never do in fact stand up to scrutiny. The simple reason however, escapes the skeptics, in that JESUS CHRIST did indeed rise again from the dead on the third day! There is no Body of The Messiah JESUS because He lives and is ascended to Heaven.

But here we have an additional testimony from The Gospel record, in that JESUS was indeed found to be dead after His Body was removed from The Cross. And this is attested to by 2 reliable, respected and known historical figures - Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus – members of the ruling Sanhedran and the Pharisees. The record of these 2 pious leaders of GOD's people being so deeply involved in these events shows also that not all the leaders of then remnant Israel rejected JESUS as The Messiah. But it is a sad note that they were obliged to hide their faith in CHRIST for fear of their fellow men of GOD!