

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Matthew: Jesus As Israel's Messiah And His Kingdom

Part XXXIV: Christ As Israel's Messiah Seen In His Trial Before Pilate

(Matthew 27:11-26)

I. Introduction

- A. Matthew's Gospel was written to explain to Jewish readers how Jesus was their Messiah even if He did not establish His Messianic Kingdom in His first advent, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1337.
- B. A part of that explanation is Matthew's record of Jesus' trial before Pontius Pilate in Matthew 27:11-26, and we view that event for insight and edification (as follows):

II. Christ As Israel's Messiah Seen In His Trial Before Pilate, Matthew 27:11-26.

- A. Jesus had predicted in Matthew 12:38-40 that He would die, be buried and rise the third day, and He revealed He was such a Messiah though about to die due to His refusal to defend Himself in Matthew 27:11-14:
 - 1. When Jesus stood before Pilate and was asked by him if He was the King of the Jews as they charged, He replied, "Thou sayest," an idiomatic expression meaning, "Yes!" (Matt. 27:11; *Ibid.*, ftn. to Matt. 26:64)
 - 2. After this reply, the chief priests and elders accused Him before Pilate of trying to make Himself a King to counter the rule of Rome in political insubordination (Matt. 26:63-64; John 18:33-35; Matt. 27:12a).
 - 3. Though John 18:34-37 reports Jesus told Pilate He was not in sinful rebellion against Rome, Matthew reports He answered nothing to defend Himself against the charges by Israel's leaders, Matthew 27:12b.
 - 4. Jesus' silence in not defending Himself amazed Pilate, so he asked Jesus, "Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?" (Matt. 27:13) Though His human life was at stake, Jesus did not answer Pilate a single word in defense of Himself to where Pilate greatly marveled, Matthew 27:14.
- B. Jesus was shown to be God's Messiah even in the acts of Gentiles when He was before Pilate, Matt. 27:15-19:
 - 1. It was a good-will gesture at the nationally politically sensitive Jewish Passover for Pilate to release to the people one of their own who had been imprisoned for trying to rise up against Rome, so he asked if they wanted to have a notable political prisoner named Barabbas released, or if they wished for Jesus to be released, a cynical move as he knew they had delivered Jesus to him out of jealousy, Matthew 27:15-18.
 - 2. Then, when Pilate was set down in the judgment seat, his wife sent him word to have nothing to do with Jesus, "that just man," for she had suffered many things that day in a dream because of Him, indicating her superstitious fear that Pilate's condemning Jesus to death would hurt her welfare, Matthew 27:19.
- C. Jesus was revealed to be God's righteous Messiah by Pilate's reluctance to condemn Jesus, Matt. 27:20-26:
 - 1. When Pilate asked whether the people wanted him to release unto them Jesus or Barabbas, they replied, "Barabbas," Matthew 27:21. The people answered thus upon having been persuaded by the chief priests and the elders to urge Pilate to release Barabbas and destroy Jesus, Matthew 27:20.
 - 2. Pilate replied to the multitude, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" and they replied, "Let Him be crucified," Matthew 27:22.
 - 3. "Why?" answered Pilate, "What evil hath he done?", but the people cried out the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified," Matthew 27:23.
 - 4. Pilate, moved by his wife's warning, clearly wanted to release Jesus, but he realized he could not prevail as a riot was beginning to form (Matthew 27:24 ESV), and those who caused riots in Jerusalem got into trouble with the Roman emperor. Accordingly cornered in this incident, Pilate in his lost way of thinking did what he felt was his only choice: he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it," i. e., "see it yourselves," Matt. 27:24-25 KJV, ESV.
 - 5. He thus released Barabbas to the people and, scourging Jesus, delivered Him to be crucified, Matt. 27:26.

Lesson: *In His trial before Pilate, (1) Jesus did not defend himself against His foes who charged Him with a capital crime as it was the Father's will that He go to the cross though He was the Messiah. (2) The testimony of even Gentiles Pilate and his wife revealed Jesus was a just man, not worthy of death, (3) and Pilate's effort to release Jesus only to be pressured by the multitude to crucify Him followed by Pilate's washing his hands of Jesus' death all reveal Christ was upright as God's Messiah Who was giving Himself to die for the sins of the world.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation, Matt. 28:18-20. (2) May we yield to God's will for us even if it means He will allow us to be unfairly mistreated like Jesus, and (3) may we like Jesus live so uprightly that if we are misrepresented, even the unsaved world by our testimony can discern we are righteous, 1 Peter 3:15-16.*