

Matthew 27:1-32

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[0 : 00] Good morning. Oh, come on. Good morning. We're in Matthew and we're in chapter 27.

! And for those of you that are not regulars, we've been going through Matthew, an amazing book written by a Jew, two Jews. So the context of everything that we've looked at so far, with one small exception, which I plan to go back and correct, is Jewish.

And we look at it through Jewish eyes. We are going to spend the next three sessions on Matthew. Now, they're not consecutive sessions because on the 1st of March and for the first time, Malcolm Jarrett's going to preach to us on the subject of spiritual growth.

So we look forward to that. In the next three Matthew sessions, we're going to do the run-up to the crucifixion, the crucifixion itself, and then the resurrection.

And I have to say, preparing this has been the most incredible blessing, whilst at the same time being incredibly harrowing. Because the more you study it, the more you realise how much Jesus loved us in order to put himself through what he did.

[1 : 25] And we've said it several times as we've come through the Gospel of Matthew. He could have walked away at any moment. He said to Peter when he lopped off Malchus's ear, Don't you know that I could call 12 legions of angels to deliver me from this?

But this has to happen so that God's Word can be fulfilled. And God's Word has to be fulfilled because they contain God's promises. And God is not a man that he can lie.

So I don't know, well I do know that I would not have the courage to go through with something like this just because my dad had promised it to someone else. This is above and beyond the call.

And because of it we are saved. Now we're going to start at the beginning of Matthew 27, but I'm not going to dwell for any length of time on Judas Iscariot because we covered that last week when we made a contrast between him and his sin and the sin of Peter when he denied Christ.

And if you missed that, I recommend you get it. It will be online. But very briefly, he was known to be an unbeliever. And so Peter was a believer and was therefore forgiven.

[2 : 34] Judas was not a believer, therefore was not forgiven. And that is actually the way things are. John 3, 18, those who believe are not condemned. Those who do not believe are already condemned.

And so Judas would have fallen into the latter category. So let's read it first and then I'll, otherwise I'll wrap it on far too long with an introduction. Starting in verse 1.

Now when morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put him to death. And they bound him and led him away and delivered him to Pilate the governor.

Then when Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that he had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the 30 pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.

But they said, what is that to us? See to that yourself. And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and departed. And he went away and hanged himself.

[3 : 35] The chief priest took the pieces of silver and said, It is not lawful to put these into the temple treasury since it is the price of blood. And they conferred together and with the money bought a potter's field as a burial place for strangers.

For this reason, that field has been called the field of blood to this day. Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah, the prophet was fulfilled. And they took the 30 pieces of silver and the price of the one whose price had been set by the sons of Israel.

And they gave them for the potter's field as the Lord directed me. Now Jesus stood before the governor and the governor questioned him, saying, Are you the king of the Jews?

And Jesus said to him, It is as you say. And while he was being accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?

And he did not answer him. With regard to even a single charge, so the governor was quite amazed. Now at the feast, the governor was accustomed to release for the people any one prisoner whom they wanted.

[4 : 48] At that time, they were holding a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when the people gathered together, Pilate said to them, Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas saw Jesus, who is called Christ.

For he knew that because of envy they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of him.

But the chief priests and elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to put Jesus to death. But the governor said to them, Which of the two do you want me to release for you?

And they said, Barabbas. And Pilate said to them, Then what shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ? They all said, Crucify him. And he said, Why?

What evil has he done? But they kept shouting all the more, saying, Crucify him. When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, I am innocent of this man's blood.

[5 : 59] See to that yourselves. And the people said, His blood shall be on us and on our children. Then he released Barabbas for them. But after having Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around him. They stripped him. They put a scarlet robe on him. And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and a reed in his right hand.

And they knelt down before him and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews. And they spat on him and took a reed and began to beat him on the head. After they had mocked him, they took the scarlet robe off him and put his own garments back on him and led him away to crucify him.

As they were coming out, they found a man of Cyrene named Simon, whom they pressed into service to bear his cross. And we'll start at verse 33 next time.

What we read at the start of this is Jesus has been he's he's standing before the governor and the governor is questioning him, questioning him.

[7 : 14] Are you King of the Jews? And Jesus has said what we would say is, yeah, that's right. Or you said it. It's a positive affirmation. Lots of people look at this and see as if there is some doubt.

It's a positive affirmation that Jesus has said, I am the Messiah. Pilate himself, I'll just say a brief word about Pilate himself. He was the Roman governor from 26 AD through to 36 AD.

He was he spent that 10 year period as the governor. And he was in a most precarious political position. Because to keep his place, he had to keep Rome happy.

And there'll be several little bits of punctuation of this talk that says, but he had to keep Rome happy or he had to stay friends with Rome.

And the reason for that is that he was put in charge so that there would be his job was to make sure there were no insurrections. There was no kerfuffle, no strain on Rome, nothing contentious, that the peace was kept.

[8 : 22] And he's now faced with this situation where the Jews have decided Jesus is guilty of a capital crime, even though they have produced no evidence.

And they are clamoring to have an execution done. And we'll touch on it again in a moment. But part of the clamoring comes about because they didn't any longer have the right to conduct their own capital punishment or even administer their own judgments because the prophecy in Genesis 49, which says the scepter will not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes, had been fulfilled.

And they're sitting there having had the rights of self-government taken away from them. Therefore, the scepter, which is the staff of authority, has been taken away.

And at this time, Jews were crying out and literally crying because they were saying, the scepter has been taken away from us and Messiah hasn't come.

And therefore, the word of God has been broken. And you can read about this, by the way, in Josephus and other historical documents, that the Jews at this time were bereft because they were saying the word of God has been broken.

[9 : 46] But unbeknown to them, and this was in 6 or 7 AD that this transition was made, unbeknown to them, there was a carpenter's boy in Bethlehem and Messiah had come.

And by the time we read, by the time that this passage is set in, we realise that he's now adult and he's laid claim to Messiahship.

And they're still saying, woe is me, Messiah hasn't come, the word of God has been broken. When in fact, Messiah is under their noses. So, Pilate finished his life, he was recalled to Caligula.

The emperor changed during his time as governor. And he was recalled to Caligula and tried, I'm not sure for what. And having been tried, he subsequently died.

And the accounts conflict as to whether he committed suicide or he was executed. But either way, 26 to 36 was his reign as governor. And soon after that, he died.

[10 : 53] He was a very offensive man to the Jews. He did things like he minted coins and put the emperor's head on those coins. So the Jews now had to spend money.

They didn't have their own heading on them. They had a Roman figure on them. He also replaced a lot of their religious artwork with Roman artwork.

It was tantamount to filling their places of worship with idols that were pagan. So he'd really upset them. And but they had to go to him if they wanted to get rid of Jesus, because he was the one who had the authority to say they could or could not execute.

So let's just work our way quickly through the passage. If I don't finish this today, it doesn't matter because the next time I'll just carry on from where we leave off. The first thing to note is that the chief priests and elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put him to death.

Illegal under their own law. You don't confer to put someone to death. You look at evidence and therefore decide whether there's a trial necessary here.

[12:08] It was not based on any evidence. They were just they just decided we're going to put him to death. They then paid this price to Judah, Judas to go and betray him.

And then they wouldn't take it back. You just try to repay these 30 pieces of silver. But they were unable to, ironically, because it was blood money. This is blood money.

We can't take that back into the temple. But hang on, you paid it out from the temple. They're never short on hypocrisy. But one of the jobs of the temple is to deal with the bodies of strangers who are visiting for feasts and such like.

You get people from all over visiting the temple. And over time, some of them die in the temple. And so the temple has the duty of dealing with their bodies.

Nothing sinister in that. They just grew old and died while they happened to be visiting the temple. So they needed somewhere to bury bodies. And so this idea of purchasing the field of blood served a very pragmatic purpose that they would then have somewhere to bury the bodies of those who died.

[13:20] And I presume Judas was the first one to be buried there. And before we move on, there's one other thing I want to deal with in the first part of this. And that is when we're talking about the field of blood in verse 8.

And then it says that which was spoken of through Jeremiah, the prophet was fulfilled. And then there is a quotation in your Bible on Zechariah 9 and verse 9. So was it Jeremiah or was it Zechariah?

And lots of Bible critics and skeptics will throw this out as a contradiction. So is it a contradiction?

Well, of course it isn't because it's God's word and it doesn't contradict itself. The simple explanation is this. The ancient Jews would keep scrolls, obviously.

And the first scroll of the prophets or the beginning of the scroll of the prophets was Jeremiah. He was the earliest prophet. And so it's what they call a synecdoche, which is you use a general description to refer to specifics.

[14:29] And so the scroll of Jeremiah would have contained Zechariah and other prophetic writings. Right. So it's not a contradiction. It's just a different use of the local vernacular.

So then in verse 14, Pilate says, are you the king of the Jews? And what he says equates to what we would say, which is you said it.

It was a positive affirmation that he he was claiming to be the king of the Jews. He wouldn't speak. He didn't answer any of the charges.

He was silent before his accusers. In the Old Testament, in chapter 53 of Isaiah, it says, like a lamb, like a lamb before its shearers, he would not open his mouth.

And if you've ever seen sheep shearing and you grab a sheep to shear it, it goes quiet. It's all they're all running about trying to escape the shearer. And you grab one and you upend it and you get your shearing thing and it's gone quiet.

[15:37] And so this is a very apt description that he is. Quite literally before his shearers in that they want to expose him.

And he is quiet. He makes no defense of what he's accused of. And when we think about it, the Jews haven't actually accused him of anything.

They've changed. They started with no accusation. Then they. That in order to get the Romans interested, they said he was an insurrectionist. And then laterally, as the thing progresses, they accuse him of blasphemy.

But there was never a clear charge like you would normally put people before a court and they would in their time as well. You put someone before a court and say, you are charged with X.

And then it's up to you to produce a defense or admit the crime or whatever. Those opportunities were never given to Jesus. So. Pilate is backpedaling.

[16:39] He doesn't want this. And in fact, a strange fact about Pilate is that the Coptic church, which is the Egyptian church and the Ethiopian church.

They believe that he got saved. Now, I've got no evidence for or against this. The majority of evidence seems to actually be against it.

But they base that on the fact that he tried to wriggle out of putting him to death. So he was. They actually. The Coptic church venerates him as a saint.

Which I find surprising. But you can see how they got there because he washed his hands. He said, I don't want anything to do with this. This man has done nothing wrong. But then he scourged him when he'd done nothing wrong.

And scourging was. For many, scourging was a fatal thing. They. You were so badly lacerated that you would either bleed to death or all your internal organs would be exposed to the weather.

[17:44] So you die of infection or something. But scourging was usually fatal. So if you think he's done nothing wrong, why would you scourge him? Anyway, it's not for me to reason.

He will face a much higher court than mine. So he comes to this point. He's backpedaling. And in verse 15, he says, At the feast, the governor was accustomed to release for the people any one prisoner whom they wanted.

So a crazy kind of unjust tradition. When you say to the people, you can have the prisoner you want from this selection of really heinous crimes.

You can let one of them go free. Who are you going to choose? Why would you choose to let any of them go free? But in this particular instance, it's really very interesting.

He offered up Barabbas. Barabbas, we know from other parts of the gospel. So in Mark 15, verse 7, Luke 23, verse 19, John 18, verse 40, where Barabbas is referred to.

[18:47] It's clear that he's an insurrectionist and a murderer. So he is a candidate for crucifixion. And they let him go free. They let him go free to crucify Jesus.

And the people chose this for themselves. Now, the name Barabbas means son of the father. So, first of all, if you think of what's going on here, Barabbas, a guilty murderer, went free because Jesus, who is an innocent and righteous man, was going to die in his place.

And it's an absolute stark model of our salvation. Right? The principle in our salvation is encapsulated in this thing.

The guilty murderer goes free because Jesus died in his place. And that principle applies to all of us. We all go free because Jesus died in our place.

But also, the name means son of the father. So, he was a son of his father. Jesus said to a lot of them, you're the son of your father, the devil.

[20:06] I can't speak for you. But I was the son of my father. And I was going nowhere fast. In fact, I was headed for hell. Accelerating towards hell.

And the son of the father, this son of this sinful father, was saved because of the sacrifice of Christ. I was saved by the sacrifice of Christ from following the footsteps of my father.

Now, my father did get saved. But when I was growing up, he wasn't a saved man. And I was following in his footsteps. I was the son of my father. We are all.

And I know there's a gender argument to be had here. But look, you ladies, you're not your female sons, if you like. The word sons, whenever Hebrew and Greek uses generalizations, they speak it in the masculine.

So, the fact that you're a woman doesn't mean you're disqualified from being a son. And we are all sons of our father. And we've all been saved. Because Jesus died in our place.

[21:13] Now, what we also see here is the incredibly awful choices the Jews made. In verse 18, the only reason for handing Jesus over was they were envious of him.

And the word is phthonos. It's difficult to pronounce because there are far too many consonants together at the beginning of that word. But it means ill will or jealousy. They had ill will towards him and jealousy.

That was the only reason they handed him over. I was doing jury service on one occasion. And a guy came up and he went through. They shared the evidence.

And we're then considering. We're in the room out the back considering whether this man is guilty or not. And one of the first people to speak was a lady who said, I think he's guilty.

And that was before we'd even considered any evidence. And so I said, well, how do you get to that? Well, look at him. Tattoos, earrings, piercings.

[22:16] Of course, he's guilty. And there was no sharing of evidence in her mind necessary. Just because he looked a bit weird, he was guilty. He was subsequently found not guilty.

Which is interesting, isn't it? So this thing that's happening in this court, if you think that one of the gospel accounts of this, Pilate says to them, what's he done?

And they said, well, if he hadn't done something, he wouldn't be here, would he? Now, that's the same mindset. No, this is what he's done. It's he must have done something or we wouldn't bring him to you, would we?

And it was a sort of sidestep around the need to present actual evidence. But what we know of this, what we've just read, we know from last week that the Jews put him forward for crucifixion based on no evidence.

They knew he was innocent. They wanted him to die. But we now know from this statement that Pilate knows he's innocent. And he knows that he shouldn't be crucified, but he's going to sanction it anyway.

[23:28] Pilate also received this dig in the ribs from his wife, who said, I've had this troubling dream and you shouldn't really condemn this righteous man. Now, he should have listened.

But this means that Pilate, and we see it as the thing develops, Pilate was motivated to acquit. He was looking for a way to acquit this man. He didn't want to crucify this man, but he had to stay friends with Rome.

And if he'd have said, no, I'm not going to do it. He hasn't done anything wrong. He shouldn't be scourged. He shouldn't be crucified. I'm not going to do it.

He would have had uproar among the religious Jews, which then would have got back to Rome. And then he'd have been having a tussle on two fronts, one with the Jews and one with his Roman superiors. And he'd have been in a right political pickle.

In fact, in John chapter 19 and verse 12, of what we see is the Jews using these precise scare tactics against Pilate, who has to stay friends with Rome.

[24:35] And they say, if you release this man, you'll know friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself out to be king is opposed to Caesar. You don't go along with us, you'll upset Caesar.

You know, the psalm we shared this morning, don't trust in men. Now, this man was trying to endear himself to men. You don't execute him.

Rome is going to be mad at you. And you have to stay friends with Caesar. So I think in the long term, because it was roughly three years after the crucifixion that he was called to Caligula and subsequently executed or committed suicide.

We're not sure which. I think he was sealing his own fate here when he admits to knowing this and yet goes on and does the wrong thing.

But what you see with the Jews, they originally took Jesus, put him before Pilate and said, he's done wrong and we want to execute him.

[25 : 38] Well, why do you want to execute him? We just do. Well, what's he done wrong? Well, if he hadn't done something wrong, we wouldn't be here, would we? And Pilate realises that this man is innocent.

But then he bows to the Jews who increased their vehement requests for execution. And the very thing he's trying to avoid, a lot of noise before Rome, he's getting more and more and more of that noise.

They're all shouting. They're crying out in the marketplace and they're getting louder and more insistent. Oh, flipping heck, I'll just crucify him and then it'll all stop. Well, just as a little pause and a small aside here, many people will preach on this and they will say that all Israel was against Jesus.

And I've heard lots of people say, you know, there was this furore going on and all Jews were with this.

Now, I think there is room to question that. And the reason I say that is if we go back to the triumphal entry that we studied in chapter 21, we see that he was welcomed as one who was fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9 verse 9.

[26 : 57] He was welcomed as the one who comes in the name of the Lord, which is taken from Psalm 118, which is part of the Hallel. And in Luke's account, Luke 19 verse 37, we read that these were his disciples who were praising God for him, having been the beneficiaries of his ministry and of his miracles.

So I think it's fair to say there's a lot of Jews who are not for what is happening. But what is also true to say is that it was the religious national leaders and their toadies who were for this.

And therefore, this imparts a national desire to see Jesus got rid of. And I think there were lots of Jews that got saved and stayed saved and came through this without being dragged into this.

But the ones that were yelling, crucify him, crucify him, were not necessarily the same bunch of people who were on the road on the first Palm Sunday, worshipping and praising him.

That was a group of disciples. This is a group of the religious people whom Jesus has offended. And if you remember back to that study of what happened back in chapter 21, at that time, they said to Jesus, can you get your disciples under control?

[28 : 27] And he refused to do so. He said, if they don't cry out, the very stones will cry out. So the point is that on the run up to the crucifixion, the gathered crowd are unbelievers and they are spokesmen for national Israel.

And they're rejecting Jesus and they're calling for his blood. Now, what they then did, and the key phrase is in John 19, verse 15, but they were told, Pilate was saying, this is your king.

What do you want me to do with your king? And they said, we have no king but Caesar. Now, that speaks of phenomenal grace on the part of Jesus, who has given them every opportunity to accept him as king.

We're used to kingdoms where the king imposes his will on the people. Right? If you're claiming to be king, you turn up and you say, I'm king. And if you don't like it, talk to my soldiers.

Right? I'm king. Jesus never did that. He said, I'm king according to God's word. And he spent, and we've read it throughout the whole of Matthew's gospel.

[29 : 44] He has fulfilled prophecy after prophecy. He's showed kindness. He's shown love. He's done healings. He's cast out demons. He's taken control of the weather.

He's taken control of the food supply and fed thousands of people on a very meager offering. They know he's God and they know he's innocent and they want him dead.

And I want to make one other point. In doing this, this is a travesty of justice. Now, there are various scriptures that will tell us that Jesus was justice, just as he was love.

And of course, he was the son of God and was Messiah, but he was also justice. In Isaiah 30, 18, it says this, for the Lord is a God of justice, blessed are all who wait for him.

In Micah 6, 8, that emphasizes that God requires justice and righteousness. Psalm 82 speaks of God as the ultimate judge and defender of the oppressed.

[30 : 56] And Deuteronomy 32, verse 4, describes God as the rock whose work is perfect, and all his ways are justice. So he is the ultimate expression of justice.

And when they put him to death on that day, they put justice to death. And I would say, whilst it's not true in every single case, that's still very central in our court systems all over the world today.

And the British court is no different. I've been in British courts and I've presented cases in British courts and effectively, what people do to subvert justice is they lie through their teeth.

And it happens on both sides. It happens on the prosecution side where they lie about a man to deliberately put him in clink. You notice, I'm sure, from recent news that they tried to do that with Donald Trump.

They impeached him several times and they said he was guilty of all sorts of unproven crimes. Our courts haven't improved since this time. We mustn't trust in men.

[32 : 01] We must trust in the Lord. And when they said, we have no king but Caesar, and then they said, his blood shall be upon us and our children.

That's in verse 25. In saying that, they brought down a curse of blood on their generation and their children's, which was fulfilled in AD 70, when Israel was, well, Jerusalem was set on fire, basically, and the temple was destroyed.

But this curse of blood, the biblical concept of a curse of blood is an interesting one. In Jeremiah 22, verse 30, we see the curse of blood on Caniah, or Jeconiah, where because of his sin, his bloodline would be prevented from sitting on the throne of David.

And that's a passage of scripture that Tony's alluded to when he's been taking us through part of Samuel. What happens in 2 Kings 24, verses 6 to 16, this very young king led all Israel astray and into idolatry.

And he did it in the same way, really, as these leaders did when they led them all to worship Caesar. Because if you're saying Caesar is my king, and the culture said that Caesar was a divine figure and was worshipped, then when you say I'm making Caesar my king, you're effectively worshipping Caesar.

[33 : 33] Well, they're doing the same thing that Caniah did. And then, of course, we've got Exodus 20, verse 5 and 6, and Exodus 34, verses 6 and 7, in both of which we read that the sins of the fathers can be visited on the following generations of those who hate God.

But loving kindness, hesed, you'd be pleased to hear, so, loving kindness is visited on the generations of those who love him. So we've got this stark reality, and please note, there are only two alternatives.

You either love him and you get hesed, loving kindness, or you don't, in which case, you get condemnation. But one of the important aspects of this is it's the fathers of Israel that have led Israel into this.

As a father, I've got quite a few fathers in the room, as a father, you have responsibility for the way you raise your kids and what you put into them. And if you lead a godless life, you're going to lead them into a godless life, and you're going to lead them to a future that's devoid of salvation unless God intervenes, which, praise him, he does.

But the point is that they were leading, the fathers of the nation were leading the nation away from Jesus and saying, we have no other king as a nation apart from Caesar.

[35 : 08] So this, the blood curse prevents a future generation from thriving, particularly when the father has given them over to it. Now in Luke's account, if you turn to Luke 23, the only reason I haven't had you all jumping around all these scriptures is because I'll be here for hours.

And this is how badly Pilate wants to shift this onto somebody else's shoulders. He doesn't want, he doesn't want the burden of being the one who says, okay, crucify this innocent man.

And so, and this is again a contributory reason why the Coptic church believe he was a saint. Start in verse 6.

When Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he heard that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself was also in Jerusalem at that time.

So, Pilate thinks he's got an out. Ah, this man's a Galilean. Galilee comes under Herod. I can get Herod to make this decision.

[36 : 21] So as we read on, verse 8, Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus for he had wanted to see him for a long time because he had been hearing about him and was hoping to see some sign performed by him.

And he questioned him at some length, but he answered him nothing. Herod got the same treatment as everybody else. Must have been rather disappointed.

Oh, Jesus, I've been waiting to see this guy. Want him to do a miracle. Doesn't say a word. And the chief priests and the scribes were standing there accusing him vehemently and Herod with his soldiers after treating him with contempt and mocking him, dressed him in a gorgeous robe and sent him back to Pilate.

So Pilate gets him back. But Herod wanted this time with Jesus and Jesus wouldn't give it to him. I believe there are those in our society and when we, something that's come up in midweek Bible study a couple of times, there are occasions when the instruction was don't pray for these people.

Now, obviously, we have to take that very seriously and very carefully because we all pray for the people we'd like to see saved. But there is a time when Jesus says enough's enough and he just turns his back and then you get the Romans 1, verse 18 and following scenario where people get given over to their sins.

[37 : 53] They get given over to a situation where the Lord's had enough. And he says, right, you've made your choice. And of course, that was the case here which was proved to us in AD 70 where this whole generation was wiped out apart from a remnant which was allowed to escape.

So what we've now got is Jesus being further mocked and beaten. Just while we're elsewhere in the Bible, have a quick look at John 18 and verse 31.

This is really just so that you know I didn't make it up. And this is at the point where they are desperately trying to get Pilate to take him and execute him.

And so it says, so Pilate said to them, take him yourselves and judge him according to your law. And the Jews said to him, we're not permitted to put anyone to death.

So here you have this evidence that firstly the scepter had been removed and Genesis 49.10 had been fulfilled. But also this clamouring to have him taken even though there was no charge and this endeavour to impart vast amounts of influence to bring about an unjust result.

[39 : 15] So I just want to say this. Jesus, who is innocent of any crime, Pilate knows it. Judas knew it.

You know, when Judas committed suicide, he had said just before he committed suicide that he was remorseful because he had caused the shedding of innocent blood.

blood. So Judas knew he was innocent. Pilate knew he was innocent. Herod knew he was innocent because he wouldn't pass judgment. The crowd baying for his blood knew he was innocent.

And yet every single one of them present decided to press ahead with this obscene injustice. And the God we serve is justice as we've discussed.

The verses we talked about collectively affirm that God embodies justice as a fundamental aspect of his character. And effectively on this day, God's own people, the Jews, put justice to death.

[40 : 26] And they paid a high price for that and are still paying a high price for that to this day. And so finally, this spineless and politically trapped pilot washes his hands publicly and says, as if that relieves him of any culpability.

I don't want to execute this man. I'm washing my hands of this matter. And day in and day out, people put Jesus to death by excluding him from their lives in the same way because effectively they're saying, Jesus is dead to me.

It's one of the things that gives me emotional reactions. When you, I get people come to my house for Christianity Explored.

When they go away having not responded to Christ, the idea that someone comes into my house and goes away destined for hell, I find heartbreaking because they're effectively saying, not interested, Jesus is dead to me, dead to me, not dead for me.

So, nearly finished. Pilate has Jesus scourged, this totally barbaric punishment, usually fatal. heal. But according to Isaiah 53 verse 5 and 1 Peter 2 verse 24, this shedding of his blood was for our healing.

[41 : 57] And we all believe that when the Lord wants to heal, he can heal and does heal, and many of us have seen that happen. healing. But I think this refers more to the eternal dealing with healing.

Because when we read about the new heaven and the new earth, there is no sickness there, there is no pain there. Whereas in this life, we see some healed and we see some not healed and we, I don't know about you, but I struggle to work out what the principle is that get some healed and some not healed.

I kind of understand it a bit, but what I don't see is an end to sickness and pain. But praise God, we will see an end to sickness and pain.

And then in verses 27 through to 32, we see this deliberate and unnecessary degrading of Jesus. The soldiers used him for sport, stripped him and dressed him in his scarlet robe, or the other gospels call it a purple robe.

That isn't a contradiction, it's simply a different perception of the colour tone of the robe that was put on him. Those scarlet and purple were used interchangeably by the Hebrew people.

[43 : 08] But they were mocking the king. You're no king. Smack him around the face and say, go on then, tell me who hit you when he was blindfolded. Mocking his authority, you can't be a king, otherwise I wouldn't be able to slap you.

They twisted together a crown of thorns. Have you got the picture of the crown of thorns there? Remember from the previous studies, wherever Jesus' blood was shed, it was shed to deliver us from something.

I think that picture is, I'm glad in a way, underdone, because I suspect it was a much more bloody experience than you see on the screen there. But those thorns, the thorn bushes in those areas are kind of this long, and it would have been excruciatingly painful, and there would have been a lot of blood, and it's amazing he came out with his eyes intact.

So it's not a contradiction about the shades of the robe, and then they ram this crown of thorns on his head, and so at this point even more of his blood was shed for us.

And then they beat him over the head with reeds. It says reeds, it means sticks. The reeds weren't floppy bits of grass, as we see reeds. These were the thick stems. And then finally they appointed someone to carry his cross, because by this stage, having been scourged, and scourging is a whole different thing, but he'd been scourged, and he'd been beaten, and he was a mass of blood, and he didn't have the strength to carry his own cross, and so they grabbed hold of Simon the Cyrene to carry the cross.

[44 : 45] So next time we'll have a fairly in-depth look at the crucifixion, and why Jesus had to die in this incredibly barbaric way. Because there's a tendency to think, well, did he have to die that way?

Did it have to be that brutal? Could he not just have fallen asleep and paid for our sins that way? No. There's a reason for all of it, and we'll deal with that next time.

Heavenly Father, I want to thank you for dying for us. I want to thank you that you went through not just a death, but a horrible and excruciating and degrading and humiliating run up to your death, all of which delivers me from something.

All of which delivers every one of us here from something. And I thank you that you loved us enough to do it. Thank you. I'm put in mind of the words of the psalmist that says that said in Psalm 8, what is man that you are mindful of him and the son of man that you take thought of him.

Oh, my word. I deserve none of this. None of us here deserved any of this. God's love. And you loved us enough to put yourself through it anyway, that you would suffer the outpouring of the wrath of God to the dregs so that we could be with you forever.

[46 : 20] And I do pray, Lord, that you would make us effective when we share the gospel with others to somehow impress upon them the heinous crucifixion that you went through and the effectiveness of it to save us from a certain eternity of torment in hell.

Father, make it come alive to us. Make it be real to us when we consider it. In Jesus' mighty name. Amen.