

# CHAPTER 10

## The Trials of Christ

### Who Was Really Guilty?

Following His arrest, the sinless Son of God was put on trial as a common criminal and sentenced to death. During the night and into the next morning, six trials were held--three by the Jews and three by the Romans. These trials were totally unfair because the Lord's enemies *had already made up their minds* that Jesus was guilty and that He should die. As we look at these six trials it will become quite clear who was really innocent and who was really guilty!

#### 1) Trial Number 1 – Jesus Before Annas

The Bible tells us that immediately after Jesus was arrested, He was led first to \_\_\_\_\_ (John 18:13). The Jewish people looked up to Annas and considered him to be their leader.

During this brief trial Jesus made a very fair request. He asked that honest witnesses might be brought forth who could tell what they knew about the Lord and His teachings (John 18:21). This fair request was immediately followed by some very unfair treatment from the hand of a Jewish officer who "S \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus with the \_\_\_\_\_ of his H \_\_\_\_\_" (John 18:22).

This officer took his hand and struck the sinless Saviour in the face. His hand was not clenched in a fist, but he struck the Lord with his open hand, either by a blow with the palm of the hand or a strong slap with the hand and fingers. Even if Jesus had been an ordinary man and guilty of a terrible crime, He would not have deserved such unfair treatment. This was the first of many such blows to the face that Jesus would receive in the coming hours.

This trial and the ones to follow were very unfair in many ways. These men tried to get rid of the Lord Jesus by whatever means possible. Holding this trial at night was contrary to Jewish law. Honest witnesses should have been heard. A lawyer or defense attorney should have been given to Jesus, not just a slap in the face. Everything they did was wrong and was done with wrong motives. As a result the trial was unfair and unjust. All that mattered to these Jewish leaders was to remove Jesus from the earth and get rid of Him once and for all.

#### 2) Trial Number 2 – Jesus Before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin

After His visit with Annas, where was Jesus taken (John 18:24)? \_\_\_\_\_ Both Annas and Caiaphas wanted to have Jesus put to death, and they were not interested in having a fair trial. The Jewish leaders were also present at this trial (the council of Jewish leaders was known as the Sanhedrin—Mark 14:55). Many false witnesses were brought forward to speak against Jesus and to say things about Him that were not true, but what one person said did not agree with what another person said (Mark 14:56). Their testimony was contradictory.

After a while, Caiaphas was amazed that Jesus was not saying anything (Mark 14:60). When he

asked Jesus about this, the Lord said not a word (Mark 14:61)! Usually men try to defend themselves even when they know they are wrong, and especially when they know they are innocent. In this case the Lord Jesus was completely innocent and He had every right to speak out against the unfair things that were being said about Him, but He remained silent! Can you find a verse in Isaiah 53 that speaks of our Lord's silence before His accusers? Verse: \_\_\_\_\_ . Compare 1 Peter 2:22-23.

There is a time to speak and there is a time to be silent. Can you think of times when it is better to speak up? Can you think of times when it is better not to speak? The Lord knew that His Heavenly Father would take care of all the wrong things that were being said and done to Him.

Finally the High Priest (Caiaphas) said, "**Are You the Son of God?**" (compare Mark 14:61). This time Jesus would no longer keep silent. What answer did the Lord give (Mark 14:62)? "I A \_\_\_\_\_!"

As soon as Jesus had said this, the High Priest gave the **verdict** (Matthew 26:65):

**He is guilty of B \_\_\_\_\_**.  
(Blasphemy is when someone who is only a man claims to be God.)

The Council then gave the **sentence** or the punishment (Matthew 26:66):

**He is worthy of \_\_\_\_\_**.

What was His great crime? Why should He die? Because He said that He was the Son of God! When criminals were crucified, the charge or accusation was often written over their heads. For example, if a man had intentionally killed someone, they might write, "**This is a murderer!**" What accusation was written over the head of Jesus (Matthew 27:37)?

\_\_\_\_\_ This was His crime!

After deciding that Jesus was guilty and worthy of death, these Jews took off their religious masks and began to show what kind of monsters they really were. First they began to \_\_\_\_\_ in His face (Matthew 26:67). They also B \_\_\_\_\_ Him (Matthew 26:67), which means they clenched their fists and struck the Lord even as a boxer would strike an opponent (yet without the comfort of boxing gloves). Others hit him hard with the \_\_\_\_\_ of their hands (Matthew 26:67 – an openhanded slap or cuff). As they punished Him with their fists and their open hands, they mocked Him and made fun of Him and started playing games with Him.

They even B \_\_\_\_\_ Him (Luke 22:64) and played a cruel game of blind man's buff. "If you are the Son of God as You just claimed, tell me what my name is," as one by one they would slap Him and buffet Him (Mark 14:65). Christ could have easily told them their names (which would have greatly surprised them), but again He remained silent.

Did the Lord know beforehand that all these things would happen to him (Mark 10:34; Luke 18:32)? \_\_\_\_\_

### 3) Trial Number 3 – Jesus Before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin (Formal Trial at Dawn)

The council (Sanhedrin) of Jewish leaders gathered together for one more meeting. When did

this take place (Matthew 27:1)? \_\_\_\_\_ We should remember that Jesus was awake all that night and had gone many hours without sleep. He must have been extremely tired and exhausted. Sometimes when we must miss sleep and when we are very tired, we can remember that our Saviour knows just how it feels to be physically exhausted (Heb. 4:15).

The Jewish leaders knew that their night trial was unfair and wrong, so as soon as the morning came they condemned Christ and said He should be put to D\_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 27:1). The enemies of our Lord had a problem however. Even though they wanted to put Jesus to death they were unable to do this. It was against the law (see John 18:31). Only the Romans could put a man to death. If they were able to, the Jews probably would have stoned Christ (see John 10:31), but the Romans put criminals to death by crucifying them on a wooden cross.

#### 4) Trial Number 4 – Jesus Before Pilate the First Time

The Jews bound Jesus and led Him to Pilate the Roman G\_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 27:2). They wanted Pilate's permission to have Him executed (put to death) as a criminal.

According to Pilate's evaluation, was Jesus guilty or innocent (Luke 23:4)? \_\_\_\_\_ Pilate wanted to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders would not be happy until Jesus was dead.

Finally Pilate sent Jesus to another ruler who happened to be in the city of Jerusalem, whose name was H\_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 23:7). This was the same Herod who had murdered John the Baptist (Mark 6:16,27).

#### 5) Trial Number 5 – Jesus Before Herod

Herod was very glad to see Jesus because he had heard all about Jesus, and he hoped to see Jesus perform some M\_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 23:8). Did Jesus put on a show for Herod and perform all sorts of miracles (Luke 23:9-11)? \_\_\_\_\_ Did Jesus say anything to Herod (Luke 23:9)? \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus once spoke about Herod and He called him "that F\_\_\_\_\_" (Luke 13:32). The **FOX** wanted to have some **FUN** with Jesus. According to Luke 23:11 Herod joined with his soldiers to mock Jesus and to dress Him in a gorgeous, regal robe. Finally they sent Him again to P\_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 23:11).

#### 6) Trial Number 6 – Jesus Before Pilate the Second Time

Herod may have been glad to see Jesus (compare Luke 23:8), but Pilate was not! He wanted to do what he knew was right but he also did not want to anger the Jews. He faced a great dilemma.

Did Pilate find Jesus to be guilty or innocent (Luke 23:13-14)? \_\_\_\_\_

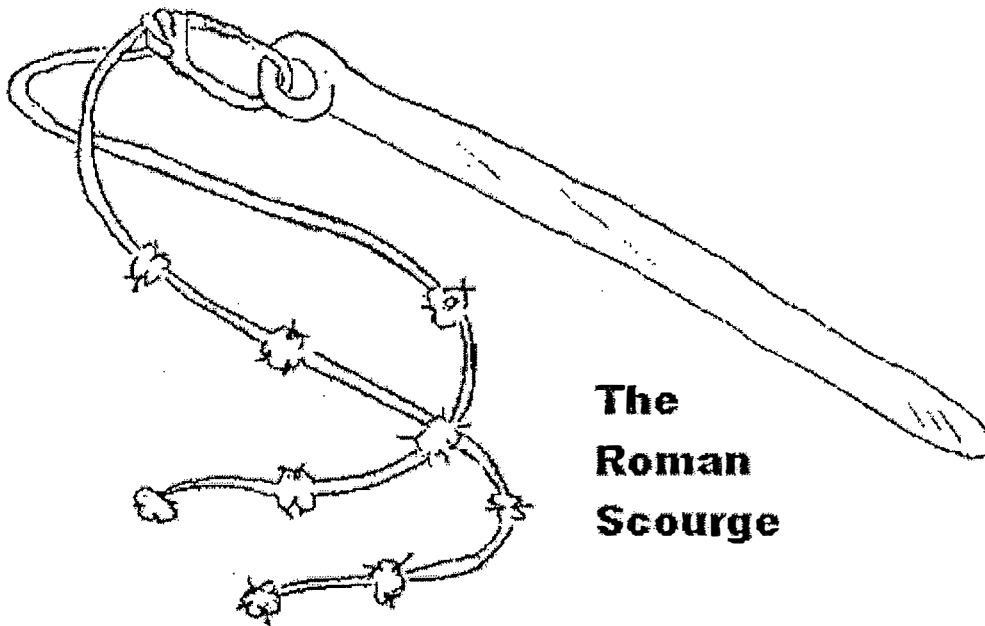
Did Pilate think that Jesus was worthy of death (Luke 23:15)? \_\_\_\_\_

Did Pilate want to crucify Him or release Him (Luke 23:16)? \_\_\_\_\_

What did the Jews want Pilate to do (Luke 23:21)? \_\_\_\_\_

Pilate's next plan was to whip Jesus. He hoped that the Jews might have pity upon Jesus and he hoped they might say, "That's enough punishment! You've hurt Him enough!" Then Pilate could release Him. Therefore, Pilate took Jesus and \_\_\_\_\_ Him (John 19:1).

Nothing was more terrible than the Roman scourge. It was a terrible whip and a very cruel way of punishing criminals. It had a short wooden handle to which several cords were attached, and on the ends of the cords there were pieces of sharp metal or pieces of bone. The whip would cut into the bare back of the victim and cause terrible pain. Often the person would faint and in some cases men would even die from such a whipping. They did this to the Lord Jesus, the Righteous, Holy, Innocent One! He was willing to suffer and bleed and die so that He could save **us** (the guilty ones) and bring us to God (1 Peter 3:18)!



For the Roman soldiers, scourging was not enough. They, like Herod, wanted to have some fun with Jesus:

- 1) **They robbed Him** with a scarlet or purple robe (Mark 15:17; Matthew 27:28). After being whipped, Jesus must have felt pain as the robe went down on the raw wounds of His back.
- 2) **They crowned Him** with a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ (Mark 15:17) and pressed it upon His head.
- 3) **They sceptered Him.** After they forced Jesus to sit down, they placed in His right hand a sturdy R \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 27:29) because a king must have a *scepter* (a rod or staff carried and held by a king as a symbol of power and authority).
- 4) **They adored Him** in cruel mockery. They were pretending to honor Him but it was done in a

mocking way (making fun of Him). A soldier would drop to his knees and say, "H\_\_\_\_\_, K\_\_\_\_\_ of the J\_\_\_\_\_!" (Matthew 27:29) Then another would take his turn, and still another, until all had shared in this fun.

5) **They spit upon Him.** They seemed to act worse than beasts (Matthew 27:30). Each soldier, when his turn would come, after getting up from his knees would spit into the face of God's only begotten Son.

6) **They slapped Him** hard in the face with the palms of their hands (John 19:3), the same face that the Jews had repeatedly slapped and buffeted just hours before. Does this help us to understand Isaiah 52:14 and 53:2?

7) **They hit Him.** As the soldiers came before Jesus one by one, they removed the reed (scepter) from the hand of Jesus and then hit Him on the head with it (Matthew 27:30) as if to say, "What kind of a King are You? One that gets hit over the head with His own scepter!"

But, before we start feeling sorry for Jesus, we need to remember that these soldiers are the ones that we should really feel sorry for. There will come another day when these same men must bow before the **King**, the very One that they mocked and mistreated (see Philippians 2:9-11). Will you also bow your knee before this King? \_\_\_\_\_

Finally, after all this was done, Pilate brought Jesus out so that all the people could see Him (John 19:5). What did the Jews say (circle the correct answer):

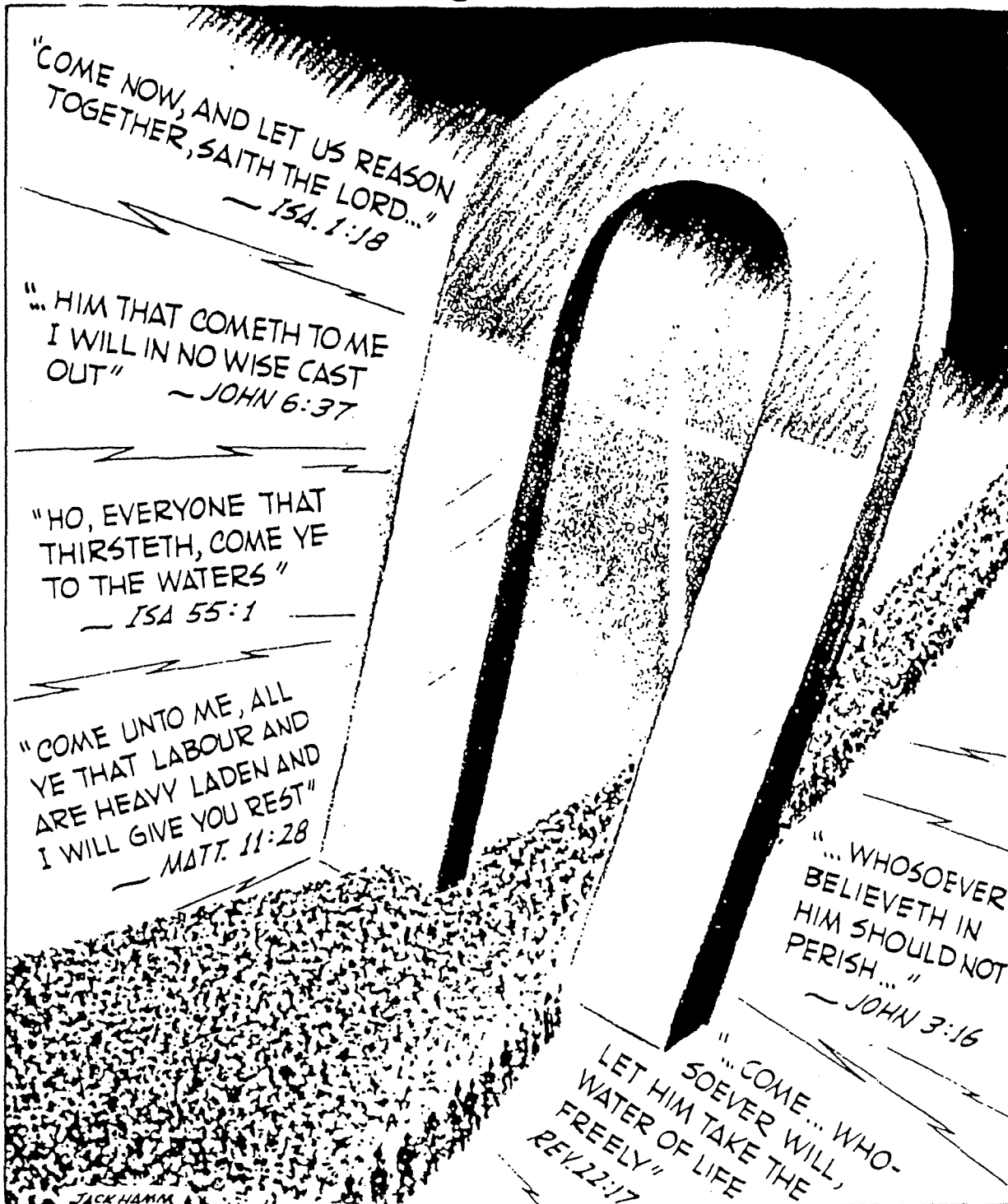
- a. "Jesus has been punished enough. Please do not punish Him anymore."
- b. "We realize that Jesus is really innocent. It was wrong for us to condemn Him to death!"
- c. "CRUCIFY HIM!"
- d. "We have sinned against God and against God's Son. Oh God, please forgive us for this great sin!"

All of Pilate's efforts failed and finally he did just what the crowd wanted. Jesus was sent away to be crucified.

Are there times when you are mistreated by others, perhaps at school or in the neighborhood? Do people ever mock you or make fun of you? Do people ever accuse you of being wrong or doing something wrong when in your heart you know that you did what was right? Have friends or foes ever hurt you in a physical way (in fighting or throwing things, etc.)?

Does the Lord Jesus know exactly what it is like to be treated in such ways? Does He know what it is like to be mocked and made fun of and injured and falsely accused? Can He be an understanding Friend to us at times like these (Hebrews 4:15 and 2:17-18)? Jesus left us an example as to how we should act in such situations (1 Peter 2:20-23), and He is able to help us at such times!

## God's Magnetic Invitation



# Have you come?