

The Gospel According to Barabbas



Matthew 27:19-26

Barabbas (whose name means “son of the father”) was a very fitting type of the guilty sinner for whom Christ died. As the record shows, Barabbas, though totally undeserving, was granted a full pardon and Christ, the true “Son of the Father,” died in his place.

†1) Barabbas knew that he was guilty and that he had done crimes worthy of death (including murder—Mark 15:7). He knew that he deserved to go to that cross and suffer the death penalty. He knew that he was justly condemned (compare Luke 23:40-41).

†2) The One who died in the place of Barabbas was perfectly innocent and guiltless. Pilate knew this; his wife knew this, and the thief on the cross also knew He had done nothing amiss (Luke 23:4,14-15,22,41). Barabbas probably knew this as well.

†3) Barabbas knew that Jesus was his Substitute. Jesus went to the cross instead of him. Whoever in the coming ages might question whether Christ’s death was vicarious and substitutionary, Barabbas could never question this. He knew that he should have been crucified on that center cross.

†4) Barabbas knew that He had done nothing whatsoever to merit the marvelous interposition of that substitutionary death. He fully deserved death, but he was given freedom. Christ was condemned so he could be released (Rom. 8:1,3).

†5) As soon as Pilate made the decision to release Barabbas and condemn Jesus in his place, Barabbas could have full assurance that he would not be condemned to die. The matter was settled. To be saved, every one of us must realize these same five facts:

- 1) I am guilty before a Holy God;
- 2) Christ, the spotless Lamb of God, is perfectly innocent;
- 3) Christ is my Substitute;
- 4) I cannot merit my own salvation;
- 5) Trusting in Christ, I can have full assurance based on His finished work.

~George Zeller: www.middletonbiblechurch.org

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