

Not Guilty, Yet He Was Punished

John 19:1-6

So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. 2 And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. 3 Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands. 4 Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him." 5 Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!" 6 Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him."

This world has its share of suffering. Whether it is the result of the sin of another, as was in the case of Jesus or it is the result of our old sinful world, as it was in the case of Jesus. Jesus suffered at the hand of the murderous Jewish leaders. And he also suffered at the hand of the self-serving Pilate, who for his own convenience had Jesus scourged and crucified.

But notice even the somewhat uninvolved soldiers went out of their way to bring suffering to Jesus with the crown of thorns they placed on His head. And they mocked Him with a royal robe and a scepter made from a reed. And why. What did they have to gain by this cruel treatment?

We have more of a problem handling suffering of the innocent as in the case of children or animals. But you see that was the same case of Jesus. He was innocent, not only of what they were accusing Him, but He was innocent of any crime, of any sin, in His whole life.

And this all come to the question that people often ask when the innocent suffer. Why did God allow that to happen? Why did not God intervene to save His Only Begotten Son? Who could a good and loving God allow such a miscarriage of justice as took place on that day nearly 2000 years ago? Didn't God care? Was He simply helpless to save His Son? Why did this happen?

- I. Suffering does not take place because God is not sovereign.
 - A. We have countless examples in the Bible where God does intervene to stop suffering and injustice.
 - B. We have even more examples where people are punished for causing the suffering of others.
 - C. We have hundreds of commands of God that would eliminate suffering if they were only obeyed.
 - D. And God has warned of a future place where those who have done wickedly will be repaid for all their evil deeds.
- II. Suffering does not take place because God is not good.
 - A. One of the favorite arguments of the agnostic is that with all the suffering in the world, if there is a God, He could not be a good God.

1. They want God to intervene to stop all wrong actions except their own.
2. And they expect God to adhere to their moral values and not His.
3. But God did not create humans to be robots that obeyed commands like the machine that is controlled by certain circuits or levers?
4. God created us for voluntary fellowship, devotion and love.

B. It is not God who is not good, but it is man that is not good.

1. Even the best people can twist their reasoning to justify almost any heinous crime.
2. I heard yesterday of a man working for the Joyce Meyer Ministries who murdered his wife and children in order to marry another woman because he knew the ministry would fire him if he divorced his faithful wife to marry another woman. How do you get to that point in your mind.
3. Mankind has taken every great invention and somehow found a way to use it for their own sinful desires.
4. Ecc 7:29 (NKJV) Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes."

III. So why did Jesus suffer if He was not guilty?

A. The natural man is at enmity with God.

1. Ro 8:7 (NKJV) Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
2. Those people were no different than ordinary people today.
3. Jesus describe all non-Christians as of the world, and how they hated Him and God, and how they would also hate God's children.
4. So then they did what come naturally to unregenerate men.

B. Jesus, the innocent, suffered in the place of the guilty.

1. 1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, NKJV
2. Isa 53:4 (NKJV) Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

3. Romans 5:6-8 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. NKJV
 4. 2 Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. NKJV
 5. Titus 2:14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. NKJV
 6. Hebrews 9:26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. NKJV
- C. God pictured this clear back in Genesis 3:21 “Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.”
- D. Lev 5:5-6 5 'And it shall be, when he is guilty in any of these matters, that he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing; 6 and he shall bring his trespass offering to the Lord for his sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin. NKJV
- E. Peter said that this was God’s plan from the beginning.
1. Ac 2:22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know-- 23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;
 2. Your and my sin was so heinous to God, that the only thing that could remove it was the blood of the sinless Lamb of God.