

Crucify Him

Mark 15:1-20

by Don Falkos

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Early in the morning, the religious leaders bound Jesus, took him to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, and accused him of treason.

Pilate asked, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

Jesus replied, "Yes, I am."

The chief priests made many accusations. Pilate asked Jesus, "Aren't you going to say anything? Listen to what they're saying about you!"

Jesus did not reply. His silence astonished Pilate.

It was Pilate's custom at festival time to release a prisoner, whoever the people asked for. Pilate knew Jesus had been arrested because the religious leaders were envious of him, so when the people demanded the release of a prisoner, Pilate asked, "Do you want me to release this king of the Jews?"

The chief priests incited the crowd to ask for the release Barabbas instead. Barabbas was in prison, charged with insurrection and murder.

Pilate asked, "What do you want me to do with this man you call the king of the Jews?"

The crowd shouted, "Crucify him!"

"Why? What crime has he committed?"

They just shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

Wanting to placate the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. The soldiers threw a robe of royal purple over Jesus' bloody back. They fashioned a crown of thorns and jammed it onto his head. As Jesus' blood coagulated in the robe, the soldiers knelt in front of him and mocked him, "Hail, king of the Jews!" They beat him and spit on him. Then they tore the robe from his back, reopening his wounds. And they led him off to be crucified.