

# Good Friday

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]      Keep your Bibles open there at John chapter 19 as we spend some time thinking about this part of God's Word together. We Australians are a mixed mob really in many ways.
- There's people from many nations, there's people from lots of political views, there's people with various religious affiliations, there are people who would like the idea of a republic, there are people who are monarchists.
- I for one only feel a vague experience of living under the direct rule of a king. His palace is far from where I live and yet our former government's closely linked to that of England.
- Prince Charles' rule as king is exercised by people who I'll probably never meet and our justice system has king's counsellors in it.
- It will be interesting to see how King Charles' coronation is received. Some will love him or at least his office and others will despise him or at least despise his office.
- [ 1 : 0 9 ]      As we consider Easter, we come to one of the most heinous crimes in history, the killing of an innocent king, King Jesus.
- But the execution of kings is not unheard of through history. There's been over a hundred kings killed in history. Greek, Spanish, Iraqi, Iranian, Scottish, monarchs have all been executed.
- King Charles I, the king of England, was executed in 1649. He was convicted by a court of law that he didn't recognise and convicted as a tyrant, as a traitor, as a murderer, as a public enemy of the people of his nation and is put to death by having his head severed from his body.
- By contrast, King Jesus of the Jews was crucified having no valid conviction made against him.
- By all accounts, he was a loyal, faithful giver of life, an advocate for good for his people and the people of the whole world. And yet today is the day in the calendar devoted to remembering the events of his execution, his crucifixion.
- [ 2 : 3 6 ]      So, let's consider our king. Firstly, he was an innocent king. It's Friday, the day before the Jewish Passover. Jesus has been brought before Pilate, the Roman governor of Jerusalem, because the Jews want him dead.
- And being an occupied nation, they are not permitted to kill him themselves. Jesus has been set up as the king of the Jews and Pilate recognises him as a king in chapter 18, verse 37.
- We see that last week. And has found him innocent of any crime in chapter 18, verse 38. He's an innocent man. But Jesus is still bound and under arrest and so to add injury to the insult, Jesus is flogged and given a crown of thorns and a royal coloured purple robe to wear.
- Maybe in some attempt to have him punished enough to satisfy the Jews, let him go. That's maybe why he was flogged. And Pilate again declares him as innocent.
- You see there in chapter 19, verse 5. Verse 5. So, Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe and Pilate said to them, Behold the man.

[ 3 : 58 ] When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, Crucify him, crucified. Pilate said to them, Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him. And so, standing him before them, he shows them that he's innocent and tells them to behold the man.

Look at the man, the innocent man, the flogged and mocked man. He is the one who claimed to be your king. Look at him now, what a pathetic people you are. He's despised, rejected by you.

And to add to their crimes, they, the religious leaders of the day, the priests, actually the chief priests, and the officers of the temple guard, demand that he be crucified.

The most barbaric form of death that man has invented, and from which we get the word excruciating, as to describe the pain. For by being crucified creates a deathly pain before death.

The pain that comes out of X being crucified is what we word excruciating. And a third time, Pilate said, I find no guilt in him.

[ 5 : 19 ] Make no mistake, Pilate finds this man innocent, not guilty of any crime or anything worthy of crucifixion. And so when Pilate says, you take him out and crucify him, Pilate's not saying that they can do it, no, far from it.

He's saying that they bring Jesus to him for trial, they reject his verdict, and it is they who want Jesus crucified, you want him dead, crucified, not me.

They will not accept Jesus as their king, their long-awaited Messiah. Behold your king. Now, Pilate would have rather released him, but they reject their king.

The Jews, which is shorthand for the leaders who are opposed to Jesus, that group of faithless opponents of God, show their wicked stripes, and the charge is treason.

See there in verse 12. From then on, Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, if you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.

[ 6 : 26 ] To tolerate a rival king is to undermine the supreme authority of the Roman Empire, Caesar himself. And to tolerate a rival king in Jerusalem will mean that you are not a friend of Caesar, Pilate.

And if you're not a friend of Caesar, you'll find yourself up on the receiving end of Caesar's wrath. If Jesus is king of the Jews, he is an enemy of Caesar, and so deserves a full wrath of Roman law.

And now, Pilate sits in the judgment seat, in verse 12, and you can feel the deep irony, can't you? For Jesus was the one that God the Father has entrusted all judgment to, and it will be Pilate who will one day stand before Jesus as his judge.

And that will be the final verdict that will stand for all eternity. And as Pilate capitulates to the Jews, giving up Jesus, who he'd previously declared innocent, we see the great irony and the tragedy of the next few words.

Pilate gets them to gaze upon their king and says, Behold your king. Behold your king standing before me, the Roman governor, presiding over his fate.

[ 7 : 51 ] Look at your king, see him humiliated and flogged, see him wearing a crown made of painful thorns, blood coming down from his head. Nothing like the crown an earthly king would be wearing with gold and precious stones.

Behold your weak, powerless, defeated king. And we see him doubly rejected. Doubly rejected. Firstly, rejected by the Jews.

Away with him. The way to do away with him is to crucify him. A Roman jail's not good enough. Death we want for him. That's bad enough, but worse is to come.

Secondly, secondly, and these are the words that will be held against them for all time, we have no king but Caesar.

Ponder that with me for a moment. When the Jews first asked for a king about a thousand years prior to Jesus, God said to them, by asking for a king, they were not rejecting Samuel, but they were rejecting God himself.

[ 8 : 58 ] And yet now, it doesn't get any clearer. The religious leaders of the day, the chief priest is saying that God is not their king. Certainly not his son. God the son is not their king.

No, they are complete atheists now in turning away from God, against God. And they submit to Caesar as their king.

Claiming allegiance to Caesar who is their oppressor, no less. The leopard really can't conceal his spots.

Caesar is the one who set himself up as God, who called people to worship him as a God. And now, in having Caesar as king, they are rejecting the God of heaven and earth, the one who created them.

And in having Caesar as king, they are rejecting Jesus as king. And by rejecting as Jesus as king, they are placing themselves clearly under the impending wrath of God.

[ 10 : 07 ] And in rejecting Jesus as king, they are making a catastrophic mistake. Because one day, they like all people, will have no choice.

One day, like all people, every human who has ever lived, everyone will submit to Jesus as king. And receive the judgment that will come upon all who reject him as king.

Their own words will condemn them. They are written here for all time to read. We have no king but Caesar. So, Pilate hands Jesus over to be crucified.

It's like Jesus just in another annoying part of his day to just get rid of so he can go to sleep. Behold your king. The question is, who is your king?

And we see there now that Jesus is the king for everyone in verses 17 to 27. The Jews get their way, the crucifixion is not described in great detail.

[ 11 : 17 ] Jesus carries his own cross, his own means of death and then he's crucified. Verse 17 and 18. Let me read it out to you again. And he went out bearing his own cross to the place called the place of the skull which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.

There they crucified him and with him two others, one on either side and Jesus between them. It's the real place at a real time seen by real people.

Golgotha near the city of Jerusalem. It's on the preparation day for the Passover. It's before the Jewish leaders, Roman soldiers and Jewish people from all over the world who have come to Jerusalem for the Passover.

Some spoke Aramaic, some spoke Latin, some spoke Greek and Pilate has an inscription written and placed where Jesus was crucified. You see there in verse 20. Many of the Jews read this inscription for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city and it was written in Aramaic.

In Latin and in Greek. Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. Written in Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke and the common language of Judea.

[ 12 : 35 ] Written in Latin, the official language of the Roman army. Written in Greek, the common language of the empire well known in Nazareth of Galilee where Jesus grew up.

The purpose is clear. every strata of society and every person in the world can read for themselves that if you set yourself up as a king in Caesar's empire, this is what you can expect.

Being nailed to a cross too. Jesus is the king of the Jews. See how powerless he is. And yet, the notice also serves God's people and serves God's purposes.

for the world's put on notice that Jesus is king and king not only of the Jews but king of all, both Jew and those who are not Jews, the Gentiles.

He is king of the entire world no matter where you come from and the entire world is on notice that Jesus is the king. And just as Caiaphas served God's purposes in leaving the Jews to reject their king so Pilate unwittingly furthers God's purposes by having Jesus crucified and announcing to the world that this Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth is king.

[ 14 : 11 ] And it's at the cross where Jesus is crowned king. Behold your king. And now to the cross Jesus dies.

You see it in verse 28 to 30. After this Jesus knowing all is finished said to fulfill the scriptures I thirst. A jar of sour wine stood there so they put a sponge full of sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth.

When Jesus had received the sour wine he said it is finished. He bowed his head and gave up his spirit. He's truly dead.

But before he dies we learn that this is all in accordance with God's will in accordance with the scriptures. And in his final words the living word of God fulfills God's word by saying I thirst.

How? Well by saying I thirst they give him a sponge full of sour wine which brings us to Psalm 69 which identifies the Messiah as the king of the Jews as being the one who's rejected oppressed opposed despised king of Israel.

[ 15 : 29 ] Then read to you Psalm 69 verse 19 and following You know my reproach and my shame and my dishonour my foes are all known to you reproaches have broken my heart so that I'm in despair I look for pity but there was none and for comforters but I found none they gave me poison for food and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink.

The sour wine was a cheap wine used by soldiers it would prolong life so prolonged pain for Jesus and strengthened by the sour wine Jesus speaks his final words it is finished.

One thing you cannot do is deny the historical death of Jesus. Jesus finished all that he had come to achieve his life in faithful obedience to the Father his life as the true Israel his life as the full revelation of God's glory his life lived in accordance with all the scriptures he did it the Lamb of God has come has been slain as a Passover sacrifice at Passover time he was born and has born our sin and paid the price for our iniquity for our rebellion and for all who would not submit to him as king and those who do submit to him are forgiven the plan that God has had from the beginning of time to bring about his kingdom where people his people can live with him in a perfect peace for all eternity has been fulfilled the job is done nothing more needs to be done to save sinners from the righteous wrath of God as God the Son bears his sin and drinks the cup of God's wrath to the very dregs so that we can be saved from the punishment that we deserve that I deserve for my treason against the God of the universe for the life of treason that we live by having no king but self well unlike the first disciples who thought this was the end we know that Jesus rose again from the dead and now reigns forever as the exalted king but the question is then who is king well more importantly far far more importantly who is my king who reigns over me is it me or is it Jesus it can't be just a little bit of me and a little bit of Jesus right that doesn't work so living like that means that I'm the one who tells Jesus where he fits into my life and I'm the king but as we gaze upon Jesus who else would you rather have as king for Jesus is the good one the good king who willingly suffers and dies for his subjects

Jesus is the king who knows what it's like to be one of his subjects he's not just off in some ivory tower he is the one who is not beyond his subjects he is the one who is only ever gracious and kind the one who is ever only true and righteous the one who rules for the good of all not for his own good he's the one who cares for others at his own expense he's the one who's able to forgive us for all our sins and failings the one who will not hold my sin against me our sin against us our treason when we come to him and ask him to forgive us may it be that we have no king but Jesus and may it be that we're aligned with him and him alone as the righteous and just ruler of our lives let's pray our father in heaven as we come to this day we're reminded again of the great length you went to to bring us into your family and we're reminded again of your great wisdom which so confounds the world and is seen as folly we do pray that you would help us to submit to our lord

Jesus as king and that would demonstrate itself in the way we live now and always we ask it in his name amen