

**Day 17 - 9th Mar 2015**

**马太福音 Matthew 26:57-68**

Why did Jesus go through this? Why did Jesus have to go through such a process to save us? The priests did not abuse their power to get Jesus convicted on this. At the end, all the people were shouting for Jesus to be crucified because they were convinced by the case presented by the priests. The people had the same background and context as the priests and could identify with the crimes Jesus was accused of. Through their history, God had taught them to respect the Temple and not be presumptuous. God is the only one who can build the Temple and tear down the Temple. Therefore the Messiah, who was the one promised by God to be our saviour, cannot be easily claimed by anyone.

Who are you? You are just a carpenter's son. Are you really the Messiah? If you are, then let us see, let us see if your Father will send the heavenly troops to save you, we will wait and see, wait for you to prove you are who you claim to be. And you actually claim that you are equal to God and have the same rights of judgment? Then we don't need the trial any longer, because if we don't stop you according to our religious laws, you will continue to wreak havoc among us. You will become a heresy, you will bring our people into the wrong religion. However, the question that we need to ask is: why did the Chief Priest want to convict Jesus? Of course they had their reasons, they had a handle on Jesus, especially politically, and it gets scarier when you have the means to get rid of such a person. It was jealousy that led to the feeling of being violated. The deeds carried out by Jesus and the words spoken by Him were a true reflection of their corruption, but they showed no repentance, it did not occur to them to repent. In society today, it is also not easy to admit one's wrong, especially for politicians, and impossible for the Emperor of China. Admitting to a mistake would cause them to lose their stature. We are hung up over such sin and insecurities. We look at ourselves and the amount of influence we have at that point in time, and react accordingly.

让我们在今年的大斋节来思想，为什么耶稣经过这样的事？为什么耶稣拯救我们之前，必须先经过这样的过程？（17-19日的灵修资料）从昨天的经文，大祭司问耶稣的问话，一直到耶稣经过彼拉多手下被审，百姓喊着钉他十字架。这个过程中祭司长不算是操弄权力，而且百姓被大祭司的角度说服了。百姓也有足够的认知，能够认同大祭司对主耶稣所定下的罪状，他们常年被培养出一种态度，知道不能藐视圣殿，因为圣殿的立与毁，都在乎上帝。至于上帝所应许的弥赛亚，更不能让人家随意来认这个名衔。

耶稣是谁呀？他只是木匠的儿子。他如果真的是那位弥赛亚，那么大家就要睁大眼睛来看，他的父会不会派天军来救他？耶稣得证明他是何许人，然而他竟然说他跟上帝同等、有审判权？这一切证据充分，大祭司不必再审了。

为什么大祭司非要治死耶稣不可呢？我们得了解他的思考，按照他们传统的信仰文化，如果有一号好像耶稣这样的人，倘若宗教领袖不及时制止他，他就会引起骚动，成为异端，把百姓带入错误的宗教信仰。治死耶稣也不纯粹是宗教原因而已，也包含政治因素，如果配合上拥有的生杀大权或者资源的时候，在位者就更可怕了。这些宗教领袖看到耶稣的受民间欢迎，他们内心感到嫉妒，觉得地位被侵犯了。主耶稣所做的事、所讲的话反映出他们的腐败和败坏。但是他们却不懂得反省。

说到反省，在今天的社会里面，人也不敢轻易认错，尤其是从政的人，又譬如中国的皇帝是不可以认错的，因为这会让他们失去威信。我们会陷入这种不认错、无法反省的罪性里，因为安全感作祟，然后我们根据当下所拥有的资源或影响力，我们就会向外反扑。

**Day 18 - 10th Mar 2015**

**马太福音 Matthew 26:57-68**

Jesus was convicted by a humanity shrouded in darkness and bound by sin. Through this, God really walked into the sinful nature of man. There was jealousy in the Pharisees and the priests. I think they also agreed with some of the censures of Jesus. From a point of view, the Temple was sacred and should not be encroached; and only God can be God, no one else could be equal to Him. Yes, all these are right, but Jesus said that He was the exception: I am the exception. I have said a lot and done a lot over the past three years to let you understand that I am the exception. And I will bring about a revival. I am here to bring all of us out of sin, to bring about something normal, something better. But you find me a threat, a disgrace. You see that I am accepted among the people, so you do not dare to touch me, you hold discussions to find a way to get rid of me. You know that if I say the word, there might be chaos. You are afraid that if there were to be another religious tussle among us, that under Roman rule they would clamp down hard on all regardless of the reason for the fight or who was right or wrong. There was only one principle under Roman rule - that everyone would suffer together if a tussle broke out. The chief priest was afraid and did not wish for things to reach such a stage.

There was jealousy. You riled me, so I needed to get rid of you. It is something we do every day. When we are treated unfairly by others, regardless of who is in the right, when we are hurt, when we feel nothing but anger, our instinct is to strike back. When we do not have the ability to strike back, we use words such as: "Do you how bad that person is? He said..." We speak ill of the person because we cannot get hurt, we all have our self-esteem, we cannot be hurt. None of us is able to stay calm and unprovoked when we are hurt, much less the chief priest with his power, authority and stature.

归根究底，耶稣就是在人性的阴暗与被罪捆绑底下被害的。上帝来到人间，就是这样的走进人性的黑暗面，然后在当中来带来转化和新生。客观的来看法利赛人和祭司长的行为，我们能说他们产生嫉妒。就事论事的话，他们确实也会同意主耶稣的某些指责。从某一角度来看，圣殿是神圣不可以侵犯的，只有上帝是上帝，再也没有一个人可以和他同等。

‘对，你们这些都对。’但是耶稣说‘我是例外，我就是例外。过去的三年我讲了很多，也做了很多让你明白我是例外。而且我这个例外，我来是要带来一个复兴。’耶稣明白他的到来，是要把人类从罪恶中带出来，带到一个更正常、更好的境地。但是宗教领袖却觉得他是一个威胁、耻辱。他们见到耶稣在百姓当中被接纳，于是他们不敢动他，私下却一直在商议要如何除掉他。他们也知道如果耶稣发动什么，可能会生乱。这样的想法令宗教领袖们担心，因为知道如果在他们的境内产生这种宗教纠纷，在罗马帝国的统治下只有遭到镇压。不管谁对谁错，全地一起遭惩罚。这样的后果是大祭司的大忌，也绝对不希望演变到那个地步。

因为嫉忌，招惹麻烦，然后想要除掉对方。我们每一天都在经历这类的事。当我们遭到不合理的对待，不论是对的还是错的，只要感到被伤害，我们就会想要反扑。对于那些手头上没有任何能力的人，他们也可以逢人就讲别人的不好，想方设法打击对方。这一切都源于因为我们不愿意受伤害，我们维护尊严。请问有谁能承受被伤害而不被激怒的？那更不用说是有权位、也有面子尊严的大祭司了。

**Day 19 - 11th Mar 2015**

**马太福音 Matthew 26:57-68**

Do not say it was the priests and Pharisees who crucified Jesus, do not say it was the Jews who crucified Jesus. Their weak and corrupt nature is something you and I face every day. Look at Jesus, all he needed to do to ensure His instant release was to say: "All I've said does not matter." But the truth would prevail, if it were true, it could never be untrue. Jesus had to insist on the truth even in the face of being misunderstood and ill-treated. If He did not insist, today we would not be able to see what a true life should be. Do you know how these priests passed judgment on Jesus? They used their ability to differentiate good and evil. As humans, we stress on our morality and our ability to differentiate good and evil. Will there be hope for humanity once we follow our ability to differentiate good and evil? The priests used this ability. What does it mean to differentiate good and evil? I can evaluate your words based on our religious and traditional laws, but if there is none to justify what you have done, then you are evil in the eyes of our religious laws. We also apply the differentiation of good and evil to situations to evaluate if they are advantageous to us. If you continue to dabble in a declining situation, things might become chaotic and disadvantageous to us, and we might get clamped down by the Roman soldiers again. All man can do is to differentiate good and evil, but this ability does not enable us to evaluate what is life and what isn't. Jesus is life, Jesus is the truth, He is the true life. Life is not evaluated by the ability to differentiate good and evil. Life is life; life cannot violate life; life upholds its own life. Although He was crucified and His life was taken away, through this He gave us life.

The Jews represent us. Through them, we see that they are not the only ones who are weak, they are not the only ones with hardened hearts, all people, all of us are equally hardened, because we believe that as long as we are able to differentiate good and evil, we can attain goodness. However, here we see that things are not like that, and only life can bring about life.

经过今年的大斋节，请我们不要说是大祭司和法利赛人钉死耶稣，不要再说是犹太人钉死耶稣。他们人性里的软弱败坏，我们岂不是每天都在经历着？

面对大祭司的审问，只要耶稣都拒绝承认那些身份，即可当场释放。但是真理就是真理，‘是’就是‘是’，不该讲‘不是’。他得坚持，就算知道因着他的坚持，他会被误会，他的回答将遭滥用，并且接下来会被折磨得很惨。

如果他不坚持他的身份，今天我们就看不到何谓真正的生命。你可知道祭司长是用什么来判断耶稣的呢？答案是：分辨善恶的能力。从人的体系来看，我们强调人能够分辨善恶、过道德的生活。问题是，如果我们遵循分辨善恶，人就一定有希望？祭司长依据信仰传统条例里的知识来分辨耶稣。他们也分辨善恶，衡量局势的趋向。依他们的筹算，如果再让耶稣继续影响群众，搞不好会生乱，会对全民不利，恐怕再一次遭到罗马军队的血腥镇压。

人的智慧有个限度，最多也只能分辨善恶，却没有办法判断什么是生命，什么不是生命。耶稣是生命、真理--真正的生命本身。生命不是由‘分辨善恶’的尺来判断的。生命就是只有生命，而生命不违背生命，生命坚持自己的生命。虽然他被治死，被人夺走他的生命，却因为这样他为我们带来生命。

福音书里的犹太人也代表了世人，他们显出的软弱别人都有，如果说犹太人心硬，那么世人都一样心硬，我们也是硬着心的---因为我们相信‘只要我能够分辨善恶、我应该能够达到善。’但是这个故事发展下去，事情并不是如此乐观，也让我们深深醒悟到，原来只有生命能够带来生命。

**Day 20 - 12th Mar 2015**

## **马太福音 Matthew 26:69-75**

This event took place after Jesus' arrest and trial. Like a dramatic climax in a movie, the scene cuts to total silence and immediately, the rooster crows. All of a sudden, flashback scenes of the earlier conversations Peter had with Jesus, describing to an uncanny detail of what had just happened. Peter denied Jesus three times before the rooster crows. Exactly what Jesus had predicted earlier. Can you feel the pain which Peter is experiencing at this very moment? The regret... the guilt...and, the shame. There are only two ways to go from here. Judas chose suicide. Peter chose life, a renewed life in Christ. It is not hard for us to imagine that in his bitter cry that day, he would have prayed, "Jesus, my Lord, please forgive me." Never in the rest of the Bible was Peter's denial ever mentioned again.

The post-denial Peter became a man of courage, transformed from his failure. Peter's denial has often been linked to Peter's three proclamation of love in John 21:15-19. Peter was regarded by the Roman Catholic Church to be its first Pope, the rock by which Jesus builds his church on (Matt 16:18). The second part of Peter's life was a total transformation. A far cry from the Peter in our passage. This makes Peter the most "human" of all biblical characters. He makes the most blaring and embarrassing, self-contradicting proclamations, but in the face of reality and truth, he becomes a changed man.

In our modern context, when we "back-slide" in our faith, we are like the disciples who "fell away". Maybe, we no longer comes to church for whatever reason. Even though, we may have been actively serving in church during our younger days; leading worship, playing an instrument in the worship team, going on mission trips, leading cell groups, attending prayer meetings, etc., yet, now, we feel uncomfortable when friends ask us if we are Christians. Sometimes, we say we are, sometimes, we say we are not. We also deny Christ, like Peter, only in a different way. I hope that we can be encouraged by Peter's denial and reformation today. The choice is yours. You could take the road that leads to self-destruction, like Judas, or take the other road to true transformation. Make that choice today.

这件事发生在耶稣被捕之后，他被带到该亚法和公会面前受审。就如电影里的高潮，镜头一转，突然进入完全的静默，然后，公鸡就啼叫了。倒叙的镜头是彼得先前与耶稣的对话，当时耶稣说的事情完全照他所说的发生了，彼得三次不承认他认识耶稣，然后公鸡就啼叫了。你能够想像彼得当下的心情吗？后悔。。。内疚。。。无限的羞愧。下一步要做什么，两条路--犹大选择结束生命，彼得选择活出生命，一个在基督里被更新的生命。我们不难想像那天他打从心里的祷告，‘耶稣，我的主啊，请你原谅原谅我。’过了这个事件之后，圣经没有再提到彼得否认耶稣。那个否认耶稣的彼得，后来成为一个大有勇气的人。彼得从失败中站立了起来，改变了。许多人经常把彼得三次不认主，与彼得后来三次宣告对耶稣的爱（约翰福音 21:15-19）相提并论。彼得被罗马天主教视为第一个教宗，基督在这个磐石上建立他的教会（马太福音 16:18），这与今天读的彼得是天渊之别啊。这也正是为什么彼得是圣经人物当中最人性化的一位--他可以嚷嚷宣告，让人觉得尴尬、自相矛盾，但是后来的历史与真相，证明他改变了。让我们转过来来审视自己吧。

在我们现代的处境里，当我们在信仰上‘后退’了，我们就好像门徒‘跌倒’了。可能我们不再到教会，不管你给自己的理由是什么。纵使过去曾经热心服事，带领敬拜，在敬拜团队里，参加短宣队，带领小组，参加祷告会等等，而如今，当别人问你是不是基督徒的时候，你觉得周身不舒服。有时候我们说我们是，有时候我们说不是。我们就好像彼得那样，否认了耶稣，只是方式有别。我深深希望，今天读到彼得的否认主，以及他重新被建立起来，这能够带给你极大的鼓励。决定权在你，你可以选择走向自毁，就好像犹大选的路，或者选择另外一条路，领向真正的转变。你今天就可以做出抉择。

**Day 21 - 13th Mar 2015**

## **马太福音 Matthew 27:1-10**

There are many forms and levels of “regret”. Peter’s three-time denial of Jesus is an incident that is deeply upsetting. Under the pressure placed upon Peter, he faltered and fell. Thereafter, Peter cried in sorrow/anger. His shedding of tears separates him from Judas, who intentionally betrayed Jesus (for his own gains). After his act, Peter cried to the Lord, while Judas went to the priests to express his regret/guilt. We will look at these two case studies of regret today. In Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, expressing the difference between repentance and remorse in this world. 2 Corinthians 7:10: Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

Repentance refers to a sorrow towards one’s own sin, and includes a change in one’s actions beyond just a feeling of regret in the heart. Many are fearful of the consequences of their actions, or being weeded out for their sinful actions by other people, and do not really practice repentance. In the NIV version, Repentance is used to describe Peter’s feelings, to emphasize on its sincerity. Conversely, Judas’ regret is expressed in verse 3 as “he was seized in remorse”. The words remorse and repentance are used to depict very different reactions and dispositions. Peter’s repentance brought to him life, while Judas’ remorse brought to him death.

Peter’s act of crying to the Lord after his act was an act of sincere repentance towards Him. Peter’s tears symbolize guilt, shame and defeat. He used this to then re-establish his faith and was given new life, a life for the Lord. In Judas’ case, he did not express repentance/regret to the Lord but to the priests, by giving them 30 pieces of silver. His regret was merely remorse. Judas’ reaction was in anger and spite, and propelled him further into a state of loneliness. We saw in Matt 26 that Judas became a messenger for the evil one due to his greed, and further degraded. His eventual end was tragic, and he took his own life and brought himself to death.

所谓后悔，也有不同的层面和程度的讲究。我们看彼得，他3次不认主确实是件令人难过的事。他在压力下暂时失足。彼得在这个故事的结尾是他就出去痛哭。他所流的眼泪，是把他和犹大是蓄意背叛，两者区别出来是主要的特征。彼得是向主痛哭流泪，而犹大是跑到祭司面前表示懊悔。让我们来看他们这两人的悔意。大家看一下保罗写给哥林多的一封信，这里就表达在世上的悔改和懊悔。哥林多后书7章10节因为依着神的意思忧愁，就生出没有后悔的懊悔来（repentance），以致得救；但世俗的忧愁是叫人死。

真正的悔改表示我们为自己的罪感到忧愁，还要有改变自己的行为，不是单指心里的懊悔。许多人其实只怕他们的罪所带来的后果，或者被人识破而忧愁，并非真正的悔改。英文NIV版圣经用了Repentance来表达真心痛悔。彼得的悔改是真诚的（Repentance），而犹大的后悔是单单的懊悔。27:3 卖耶稣的犹大看见耶稣已经定了罪，就后悔。英文NIV版圣经把这句话翻译成 he was seized with remorse. Repentance 和 remorse 之间有天壤之别的。从彼得和犹大的身上，一个带出生命，另一个则带出死亡。

彼得事后向主痛哭，彼得的悔改是向主发出真诚的痛悔（Repentance）。彼得的眼泪代表是惭愧，羞辱和溃败。过后他重新建立了信仰，带出了一个新的生命，为主使用。犹大那时候不是向主耶稣忏悔，而是把30块钱拿回来给祭司长和长老，他的后悔是单单懊悔（mere remorse）。犹大的反应和举动是忿怒和苦毒，陷入另一种孤立无佑。我们看马太26章时讲到犹大因贪婪而成了魔鬼的代言人，他进一步堕落而沉沦。他的结局是个悲剧，他毁灭了自己的生命，把自己带入死亡。

**Day 22 - 14th Mar 2015**

**马太福音 Matthew 27:1-10**

Judas had a tragic end. By God's special grace, at the time when he was chosen as a disciple, he certainly was an outstanding, young man, full of potential, and he was blessed to be able to live, walk and minister with Jesus. Our Lord gave him 3 years to repent and renew, but he would rather be one doomed to destruction. Having read today's passage, we should ask ourselves, we would say that we would not be like the high priest and the elders to betray our Lord Jesus Christ, we would also not be like Judas who sold Jesus out for 30 pieces of silver. But please do not forget, be it the high priest, religious leaders, or even Judas, they all are Jews who knew God, they all had excellent religious background. Judas was a disciple who was with Jesus daily, listening to his sermons and watching him perform miracles. The High priest and the elders were burdened with deep traditions and laws and decrees which led them to being Zionists, that baggage caused them to reject Jesus, and their sense of security drove them to plot to eliminate Jesus. How about Judas? He had followed Jesus for so long, but in his heart, the 30 pieces of silver was unexpectedly more important than Jesus was.

How about our circumstances? Perhaps we have been attending Sunday service for years, our hearts having been veiled by religious customs, we become self-centered and our hearts harden, marginalizing Jesus and perhaps even rejecting Him. We think that we are dedicated, standing firm by our principles, but little do we know that we have become stubborn. We saw that Judas took to heart Mary's offering of expensive perfume to Jesus, and because of his greed, Judas regarded the 30 pieces of silver to be more deserving than Jesus and as a result sold Him out. Have we considered the possibility that we would reject what Jesus had commanded us to do if we were able to earn people's applause or to garner popularity by so doing? We do not worship God according to His wishes, but instead focus on programs and activities to attract the masses. That is also selling Jesus out. Even though we might not have committed wrongdoing in the past, does it mean that we would not do so in the future? The destructive end of the high priests, the elders and Judas not only serves as an example for us but also as a warning.

犹太的下场是很可悲的。当初他蒙主恩典，被拣选为门徒时，必然是一个很有潜能、优秀的年青人，他与耶稣同住、同行、同工，是世界上非常有福分的人。主给了他3年的时间来悔改与更新，然而他宁愿沉沦为灭亡之子，堕落而灭亡。阅读今天的经文时，让我们自问是否会如同祭司和长老联合起来陷害主耶稣，是否会如同犹太以30块钱把耶稣给卖了？相信答案是‘不’。但是让我们记得，无论祭司或宗教领袖，或者是犹太，毫无疑问，他们都是认识上帝的犹太人，具有优良深厚的宗教信仰。犹太作为主的门徒，每天与耶稣同出同入，听他讲道，亲眼目睹他行神迹。祭司和长老们负有浓厚的传统，熟悉律法，成为犹太主义者——这一切的优良传统竟然成为他们的包袱，使到他们拒绝耶稣；为了护卫他们的安全感，他们设下阴谋要除掉耶稣。而犹太，这位跟从耶稣许久的门徒，到头来，在他的心目中，30块钱竟然比耶稣更为重要。

我们的光景又如何呢？也许我们参加主日崇拜多年，心中被礼教习俗蒙蔽，在许多事情上以自我为中心，久而久之心刚硬如铁，把耶稣边缘化，或者甚至于拒绝了耶稣。我们还以为是执着，坚持立场，殊不知我们已变得固执与刚硬。犹太看马利亚不顺眼，因为她把上好的香膏献给主；他后来也因自己的贪婪，把30块钱看得比耶稣还重，出卖了耶稣。我们是否想过，我们也可能为了获取别人的掌声，而向主耶稣所吩咐的说‘不’呢？我们没有按着主的心意敬拜他，而专以节目、活动来吸引群众，那也是把耶稣卖了。或说我们以前没犯错，但这是否保证以后不犯错呢？今天所读的经文，祭司、长老们和犹太的下场，确实成为我们的借镜，也敲了一记的警钟。愿主怜悯我们。