

## Day 23 - 16th Mar 2015

### 马太福音 Matthew 27:1-10

The temple was often viewed as a sacred place, with a position of high stature. In the Old Testament, the sanctuary in particular, only the high priest was allowed to enter on behalf of the people to offer sacrifices. The book of Deuteronomy also discussed that even ill-gotten gains, were perceived as dirty monies, and therefore were not allowed to be brought into the temple. So when Judas brought the money hoping that the council would rescind its order, the high priest did not dare to receive the money, and the council admittedly was not willing to accept, but instead it asked Judas to bear responsibility for his sins. Judas helplessly left the 30 pieces of silver at the temple, attempting to find a solution himself, which turned out to be hanging himself outside the temple. To the ordinary people, men visited the temple to search for God, and to receive comfort from the temple. But now, we see people coming to the temple, complaining that they were suffering because of sin, pleading for help, but were ignored. The temple authorities were busy protecting their political benefits. As Judas who was dissatisfied with his sinful and unclean self, the temple authorities were unwilling to help, but instead had time to discuss matters relating to land purchases. Because of the authorities' disobedience and stubbornness, this represented that the entire system was beginning to crumble and disintegrate.

This not only brought out the mistakes the temple's religious leaders had toward this issue, being indifferent to people, but it also marked the beginning of the end of the temple. The temple had a magnificent and grandiose structure. But to Jesus, that temple was built on sandy soil, and would eventually collapse. So in Chapter 24, Jesus Christ said to the disciples upon leaving the temple: do you not see these buildings, truly I tell you, in the future, not one stone here would be left on another, as they would be demolished. Sure enough, as history tells us, after 40 years, the magnificent temple buildings would be destroyed by the Roman soldiers in 70 A.D. Jesus Christ's new temple would be put up/built in 3 days. The temple which Jesus Christ brought about would be a completely new temple, a brand new system replacing the old. Zechariah 4:6, the Almighty Lord says "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit."

圣殿一向来被看为是神圣的地方，具有崇高的地位。旧约里的圣殿，尤其是内殿，只有大祭司才能代表百姓进到里面去献祭。申命记也有讲到甚至不义之财，都被视为肮脏钱，不能带进圣殿里。所以当犹太把钱拿回去时希望公会收回对耶稣的定罪，祭司长也不敢接收那笔款子，公会不买他的账，还吩咐犹太需承担自己的罪。犹太无奈将 30 块钱丢在殿里，自己找寻解决方法，走到外面吊死。就普罗百姓来说，人到圣殿是去寻找上帝，从圣殿那得到安慰。这段经文让我们看到当人来到圣殿，惶恐自己为罪所苦，恳求得到某种帮助，但是无人理会。圣殿当权者在意的是自己的政治利益。像犹太这样一个意识到自己有罪、不洁的人，圣殿当权者不理睬他，过后还有闲空商议买地的事。因着当权者的悖逆，顽梗，这代表整个体制也开始崩溃瓦解。

经文显示的不只是圣殿里的宗教领袖错误的判了耶稣的罪，他们对人也高度冷漠，同时也间接揭示了圣殿就要开始走向毁灭。希律为了讨好犹太人，花了不少心思在建筑物上，巨资盖了这个宏伟巍峨的建筑群。但对耶稣来说，再华贵的圣殿也不过是盖在沙土上，终究会倒塌。所以在 24 章，主耶稣出了圣殿时对门徒说：“你们不是看见这殿宇么，我实在告诉你们，将来在这里，没有一块石头留在石头上不被拆毁了。”果然 40 年后华丽的圣殿建筑物被罗马军团彻底摧毁，时为公元 70 年。主耶稣新的圣殿果然在 3 日建造起来。主耶稣带来的是一个全新的殿，他以一个崭新的体制取代了旧有的制度。撒迦利亚 4 章 6 节，万军之耶和华说：'不是倚靠势力，不是倚靠才能，乃是倚靠我的灵方能成事。'

**Day 24 - 17<sup>th</sup> Mar 2015**

**马太福音 Matthew 27:11-26**

The incident with Jesus was not the first time Pilate had an encounter with a Jew. When he first assumed his post, he brought the ensigns of the Roman emperor to Jerusalem, hoping to put it up in this important place. The Jews were unhappy because Jerusalem was a sacred religious place. In the Jewish religion, there should not be sculptures or ensigns in their surroundings as that was akin to worshipping other gods. Pilate thought that the angry crowd would disperse after a few days. Unexpectedly, not only did the crowd remain, but also they would rather die than to compromise. This was Pilate's first encounter with the Jews. Therefore before he met Jesus, he already knew that if the issue involved Jews and their religious faith, there would be many among them who were willing to shed blood for God or to sacrifice their lives for God in order to safeguard their religion and to ensure that its purity remained untainted. Pilate already had a taste of this and he knew that when Jews gathered, things could easily get out of hand.

In verse 24, Pilate knew that things would not look good for him if he continued with the trial of Jesus and he would be an incompetent governor in the eyes of the Roman emperor. Furthermore, it would be impossible to predict how things would transpire if matters got out of hand. All these considerations forced Pilate into a state of helplessness. And why did the crowd shout "crucify him!" at this point in time? It is understandable that there would be somebody in the crowd to mislead and urge them on: "Remember those one or two incidents in the past when someone claimed to be sent from God? And in the end we were repressed and blood was shed." This was probably how they put in effort to spur on the crowd: "This is another imposter, another one who is talking nonsense, we'd better get rid of him now before things take a turn for the worse and we end up being subjugated by the Romans." This could have possibly happened. However, Jesus persisted with His claims, He did not compromise nor beat around the bush, He did not try to defend Himself against slander or false evidence. Instead He firmly responded to the one accusation (see v. 11) that would condemn Him to death: "you have said so."

在这一年的逾越节之前，彼拉多已经领教过跟犹太人交手的经验。初上任的时候，有一次他把凯撒像的旗帜(ensigns of Caesar)带进耶路撒冷，要设置在重要地方展现帝国的势力。犹太人对此非常反感，因为耶路撒冷毕竟是他们宗教神圣所在地。在犹太人的宗教信仰里，他们非常忌讳让图像/偶像出现在他们的空间，因为他们单单敬拜耶和华，不可以有别的神。彼拉多以为过几天示威人群就会从官邸前散去。没有想到，人群不散，而且开始出现一种激昂情绪，就是犹太人宁死都不妥协，非要他把凯撒像的旗帜运走不可。这是彼拉多的经验。在彼拉多审讯耶稣之前，他已经知道犹太人一旦触及宗教信仰的课题，他们当中有总有人愿意为上帝流血、牺牲生命在所不惜，来捍卫自己民族宗教之纯正度。当人群围聚，就好像踩在地雷上，是一发不可收拾的。

24节彼拉多的动作，显示了他心里有数，群众聚集，情绪高昂，事态演变下去肯定对他严重不利。作为一个罗马帝国的巡抚，当所管理的地区产生群众闹事，就必须写报告交上去，然后他这个官在罗马皇帝面前就很不称职了。这局面对他来说非常棘手。群众为什么会喊钉十字架呢(23节)? 非常有可能的是，当中有人怂恿和误导他们，事情可能是这样的---“过去发生过一两个人自称是上帝派来的，结果引起群众运动，搞到我们被镇压流血。”“谁知道这位是不是冒认的? 可能又是胡说八道的? 与其让事情演变到被罗马人镇压，倒不如我们快点把他解决掉。”这样的猜测是相当合理的。但耶稣却还是坚持，他不妥协也不拐弯抹角。当人在其他的一些事情上诽谤他，提供假证据，他都不为自己辩解。但面对那个真正惹来杀身之祸的罪名(你是犹太人的王吗?)他却回答，‘你说的是。’

**Day 25 – 18<sup>th</sup> Mar 2015**

**马太福音 Matthew 27:11-26**

A carpenter's son lets himself be killed in such a manner. In 2000 years of history, this is how things have happened. Why must it be this way? Why did God say that He also wanted to come and be King? Don't you think this added to the chaos? There were too many people who wanted to be the king of the Jews at that time. There were also the Romans who wanted to be king over the Jews, and as the one who was sent to be governor over the Jews, Pilate also hoped that his position would not be shaken. The most ironic had to be the presence of the chief priest, one with an honorable status and position. In view of the unique history and tradition of the Jews, it is regrettable that their religious leaders were not only placed on a pedestal in terms of religious meaning, but also enjoyed high levels of authority and power politically. These religious leaders were unwilling to lose these personal benefits. We see such a situation repeatedly happening around us.

As we look through history, we see that it is very difficult for some countries to reform some of their systems. It involves people of the past, their descendants, their complex interactions which brought about the systems, and the entire symbiotic group and the stakes of each party. Hence it is not something that can be resolved by a formula. Think about China before and after the Sino-Japanese wars, where the warlords and the local forces were involved in wrestling for territories and benefits. Prior to this, even Sun Yat Sen did not really manage to bring about change, in the end it was the innocent citizens who suffered. In the struggle for power, even those in the fight will end up suffering. It is a battle for survival to see who does not get kicked off and squeezed out. Do you think that the power of the king is unimportant? It is very important, so much so that everyone wants to fight for it. On earth we have organizations, and where there are people, there will be issues of power. Therefore we cannot be so naïve to believe that as long as there are no issues of power, people would not fight with one another. Power is desired, God wants to be king, and this issue is unavoidable for a king.

从历史的角度，两千年前受难节发生的事，即一个木匠的儿子让自己这样的死去。为什么事情需要这样的发生？上帝为什么要来蹚这趟浑水、并且说祂要来做王？难道上帝这么做不是来添乱吗？当时有不少人想在巴勒斯坦那块地上做王--做犹太人的王。而罗马人要来管理犹太人的王，彼拉多作为受委派来管犹太人的巡抚，当然更希望自己的地位稳固，不被动摇。这个局势里还有一号人物，即具有尊贵身份地位的大祭司。原本祭司只是在宗教方面作为以色列人的领袖，而没有实质的政治权力，约主前 164 年到耶稣来的期间，因着历史的缘故，宗教领袖不但在宗教方面地位特殊，在政治方面也有很高的权力和地位。大祭司和他派系里的祭司长，也不愿意失掉自己的利益。像这样的事情在我们的身边经常在重演。

从人类历史角度来看，一些国家要改革一些制度是很困难的。因为历史的因素，了一些厚有些人对国家有功，他们的后代也世袭厚利，长久的时间里产生了错综复杂的互惠关系，建立起庞大的共生群体和利害关系，要改制的确很难。用靠近的例子来向，中国在抗战期间和抗战过后，军阀和各地方势力盘踞，有着种种利害关系的牵扯。孙中山虽然改了帝制，但也无法达到真正的社会与政治上的改变，到头来受害的还是无辜的老百姓。而那些参与争权夺利的人，他们本身也会成为受害者，就看哪一天是谁被斗、被排挤、被批。冷眼旁观时，可能有人会说做王权力不重要，何必争呢？我们需要正视人有权力欲望。人在世上有组织，一群人结集在一起的时候，就必然有权力分配的问题。所以我们不要幼稚到一个地步，说只要没有权力的问题，人就不会你争我夺。权力的课题是存在的，而上帝要做王，他也避免不了做王所涉及的权力课题。

Day 26 - 19<sup>th</sup> Mar 2015

马太福音 Matthew 27:11-26

During this period of Lent, let's us learn an important lesson. Through Jesus, God is telling us how to be king, that there can be another way to be king; a king who can play a positive role and be an effective king for the benefit of the people. Christianity does not deny the regime, nor does it deny politics. Politics might be dirty but God wants to save politics. God wants to renew the person of authority through Jesus Christ who is also here to be king. Take a look at how Jesus is to be king, He let people get rid of Him, even the smallest soldier was able to make fun of Him. The kingship that we understand is about force and about putting down others. However, God is telling us that kingship is not like that. Jesus did not give up on being king and was not ambiguous about it. If Jesus had wavered on this issue of becoming king, then our salvation today would not exist, for what we need today is a life that is healthy, different and that of a king once again. Look at this person who was to be King of the Jews, he never brought anyone down; Jesus had never hurt a single person his whole life; Jesus had power and authority, but He never used it against Pilate or to control the chief priests, or suppress the innocent crowd. He would rather let the corrupted and unhealthy powers put Him to death, He let us know once again what it means to be king, a true king. He said that a king was one who served, one who put the interests of others first, who used the true authority of a king, who used that power to develop and build. It was not one who defended and protected their own selfish desires, and then went about to destroy and hurt the lives of others. Jesus suffered and died, and after three days He became king, and henceforth we are assured, we should ask that such a king become our king, because when such a king is in our hearts, our corrupted evil desires would be replaced and would not be manifested.

在大斋节期间，让我们来学习一件非常重要的功课，原来上帝是藉着主耶稣来告诉我们，“人该怎么做王？”做王的人可以有另外一种做法，就是去做积极正面的事、造福人，从这样的层面来行使王的权力。基督教没有否定政权，也没有否定政治。虽然一般人都说政治肮脏，但是上帝要救赎政治--上帝要更新这掌权的人，而上帝的做法，就是由耶稣基督来做王。

从马太福音看耶稣怎么做王，他竟然是让人除掉他，连那些最低军阶的兵丁都取笑他。反观世人所理解的王权，就是拳头，就是把人打下去。但是上帝告诉我们，做王不是这样的做法。耶稣没有放弃做王，这是一点都不含糊的。如果主耶稣在做王的事情上动摇了，这对我们的救恩就太糟糕了--我们今天就是需要有一个健康、与世间很不一样的王的生命，回到我们的生命里。

这个生来要来做‘犹太人的王’的，他不曾行使权力去打击任何一个人。耶稣一生从来没有伤害过任何一个人。他虽有权柄和能力，但他不用来对抗彼拉多，制伏祭司长，或压制这些无知的群众。他宁愿让这些腐败、不健康的权势把他治死，他通过这一切来告诉我们什么叫做‘做王’，什么叫做‘王者’，什么是一个真正的王。祂说王是来服侍人的，为别人谋求更大利益，行使真正的王权，然后用那个权力去造就和建立。王权不是用来捍卫自己的利益，达到自己的私欲，然后去损坏和伤害别人的生命。耶稣受难死亡，三天之后祂复活，做王，我们也放心了。我们应要求这样的王来做我们的王--因为当我们心中有这样的王，那个被私欲宰制的王欲，才会被耶稣取代，而不发作。

**Day 27 - 20<sup>th</sup> Mar 2015**

**马太福音 Matthew 27:11-26**

The bible tells us that every one of us is a king. In Genesis 1 God said: "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness." This statement means that everyone is God's honoured representative on earth. Every one of us is a king, except that we are not kings born of our own selfish desires or for our personal gains. Instead, we are kings who acknowledge God as King and remember God as King. Although a king has authority and power, God's style as a king is not to use force or violence. Yet He was put to death through force and violence. We should be relieved that God's kingship takes on such a form, and we should accept Jesus Christ as our king today; if not we would eventually either become part of the crowd shouting for the crucifixion or become Pilate with power and authority or the chief priests covering up their true nature with wonderful superficiality. It would be tragic if we end up like that. Although it was a tragedy that Jesus had to suffer and be killed, it was a marvellous method that God used to bring about salvation and renewal. For human beings, be it in society or internationally, we use violence to suppress those who are evil and abuse their authority. We might claim that we are carrying out justice, but we still use violence to do so. We might have different motives, but we still use violence.

However, God's way of saving and healing those who are corrupt and abuse their authority is to let Himself be the victim so that we can once again acknowledge our lives are corrupt and we are willing to depend on and assimilate the workings of this very different form of authority. Jesus sacrificed Himself to be King. Being king does not only mean suppressing the dissidents. Today we see that we can be set free, we can be released from such a predicament, because Jesus Christ willingly entered into such a predicament and paved the way for a different path, yet He still remains as the noble king. When He returns to bring us back to Him, He will say: "May peace be with you."

圣经告诉我们，我们每个人都是王。创世记第一章 26 节，上帝说“让我们按我们的形象样式造人。”这表示祂把每一个人当做就是上帝在地上君尊的代表。我们每一个人都是一个王，但不是叫我们来做一个按私欲来做王的那种王，而是一个以上帝为王、以上帝为念的王。而上帝做王的方式，不是用武力或暴力来制伏人。然而上帝来到世间，人们竟然用暴力，武力把祂害死。我们明白了这一切，第一，可以很放心上帝用这样的方式做王，第二，今天就应该赶快接受主耶稣做我们的王，要不然我们迟早不是要把人钉十字架的群众，或是做了有权有势的彼拉多，或做了虚有其表的大祭司。如果我们沦落到这样的地步，就很可悲了。虽然耶稣受苦受害这件事情是个悲剧，但这却是上帝带来救赎更新的奇妙方式。在我们的社会或国际上，当出现一个更恶更大的权势，我们只能用更大更暴力的方式去压制，然后说‘我是替天行道’，却逃不出使用暴力的手段。我们或者说自己的动机不同，但是暴力还是暴力。

上帝如何处理那些错误运用权柄的人？祂不是以暴制暴，祂反倒是以祂的能力带来拯救和医治。祂所使用的方式，是让自己成为受害者，为全人类来解套。祂让我们有机会承认我们的生命腐败，然后祂接纳我们，让我们可以来投靠祂，学习吸纳这种全然不同的权力运作方式。耶稣是以舍己的方式来做王的，祂让我们看见，原来做王无须靠铲除异己的手段。因为耶稣为我们走进人类的困境，为我们走出一条崭新的路，祂仍旧是尊贵的主。当祂复活回来找寻门徒的时候，祂说‘愿你们平安’。

**Day 28 - 21<sup>st</sup> Mar 2015**

**马太福音 Matthew 27:27-31**

The Romans loved their games. Watching people fight to their death was entertainment. They also believed that their gods liked these fights. Many Roman people went to big amphitheaters to see these fights. First, men in armor came out and fought against wild animals. They captured the animals from faraway places and brought them to the stadiums especially for the fights. Usually the men killed the animals, but sometimes the animals killed the men. The human deaths only made it even more exciting. Around lunchtime there would be a break. While people were eating lunch in their seats, there would be a half-time show, sometimes they had criminals being killed. Sometimes the criminals were just brought out and had their heads cut off, but other times they were tied to posts and the bears came and attacked them, or they were pushed off a high tower, or something creative like that.

Why were the Roman soldiers gaming with Jesus? What is the point of toying with him? Their fascination with games was deeply related to their culture and worldview. To the Romans, might is right. They dominated their enemies with their military capabilities. They squashed any sign of uprising with brutal force. They ruled the empire with immense power. Their three main gods were Jupiter, god of rain, thunder, and lightning, Mars, god of warfare and Quirinus, also a god of war. Their superiority and mastery over physical strength was their security. It was their belief. It was their pride. Games of battles and war became their entertainment. They were a celebration of their triumph over others. They were the evidence of the truth in their philosophy. The strong prevails over the weak. They were stronger. And they had the victory. The weak must now bow in submission to them. Might is right. But Jesus did not play along with the games of this world. He had his own rules. He had his own victory conditions. He died so that his people might live. He sacrificed so his followers know what true love is. Thankfully, God raised him from the dead. This is the vindication from God that the path Jesus has taken is the right path, the path ordained by God. This is why all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus. Might is right? No. The conclusion of Matthew said otherwise. Only the will of God is right.

罗马人喜爱竞技，对他们来说，能够看人格斗到死，是无上的娱乐。他们也相信诸神都喜欢观看这些格斗。许多罗马帝国的自由人会到庞大的竞技场去看这些格斗，首先，全副武装的男人先出场，与野兽格斗——这些野兽来自遥远的土地，千里带来格斗场做这场格斗。通常这些武士会杀掉野兽，但有的时候野兽会把武士干掉，看到人类的死亡让全场观众的热血都沸腾起来。然后午餐时间人兽都休息，但有过场节目，有些囚犯被带出来处死。有些时候是带出来砍头，有些时候是被绑在柱子上，等着熊出来攻击他们致死，或者把囚犯带到高处，推他们下来，或者有其他的办法让囚犯死亡。

这些罗马士兵跟耶稣在玩些什么游戏？这些动作背后跟他们的文化和世界观有密切的关系。对罗马人来说，有权力/力量是最重要的；他们以强大的军事力量来治理他们的敌人，一旦有反叛，他们毫不犹豫的以军力来镇压，他们以庞大的权力来统管整个帝国。这个帝国有三个主神明，管理雨雷电的朱庇特，管理战争的马尔斯，还有跟战争有关的奎瑞纳斯。罗马人觉得比别人优秀、力量强于别人，能带给他们很大的安全感，这是他们素来相信的，也是他们引以为傲的，因此他们乐于竞技。战斗与战争成为他们重要的娱乐，然后胜利者也得到非常大的尊重和庆祝。他们的哲学表达于这样的行为。总之强者就胜过弱者，强者就得到胜利，然后弱者就要服从强者。有权力就是对的一方。但是，耶稣却不依从这样的游戏规则，他有自己的规则，他定下什么是胜利的条件。因着他的死亡，使得属他的人得生命，他牺牲了自己，让跟随他的人明白什么是真正的爱。感谢上帝，让他从死里复活，上帝以此来平反他，证明他所走的路是正确的、是上帝所命定的。这就是为什么天上地下所有的权柄都给了耶稣。你说，有力量就是对的那一方？不，马太的结论不是这样的。只有上帝的旨意才是对的。