



How Jesus Had to Die John 19:1-7

When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him (John 19:6—KJV).

*So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, “Crucify, crucify!” Pilate *said to them, “Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him” (John 19:6—NASB).*

When the chief priests and the police saw Jesus, they shouted, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him” (John 19:6—NRSV).

Pilate, the Roman governor, declared three times that he found no criminal case against Jesus. If Jesus had broken any Roman laws, the chief priests would surely have added these specific legal charges against Jesus. Perhaps Pilate hoped that after they saw Jesus severely flogged and bloodied that would satisfy His accusers. However, having failed at least twice to stone Jesus to death (see John 8:58 and John 10:31-33), the religious authorities were so intent on murdering Jesus they shouted back to Pilate, “Crucify him!” The Jewish law dictated specifically how to convict someone of a crime and how to punish them. A legal trial must have at least two witnesses

who saw or heard the crime. The witnesses knew that God would punish them if they lied to convict someone of a crime. Jesus' trial before the chief priests and council was illegal. But unknowingly, the priests fulfilled Biblical prophecy. The King of the Jews was to be hanged from a tree and die. The Romans hanged criminals from a wooden cross (a tree). Quoting Deuteronomy 21:23, the Apostle Paul explained in Galatians 3:13: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.'" The prophets foretold the method of Jesus' execution; still, those who hated Jesus bore responsibility for their thoughts and actions. Before or after the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, God punished those who conducted an illegal trial of Jesus and told Pilate, "We have no king but the emperor."

Thinking Further

1. What did Pilate tell the Roman soldiers to do to Jesus? What did they do to Jesus?
2. What did the Roman soldiers call Jesus? How were they wrong when they spoke the truth?
3. What did Pilate tell the Jews after he brought Jesus out to the religious leaders? How did Jesus look when Pilate brought Him out?
4. What did the religious leaders want done with Jesus and why?
5. Who had Jesus claimed to be that infuriated the chief priests?

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