

# Good Friday

## WHAT'S AT STAKE WITH KING JESUS?

John 18:1-19:42

Good Friday

Analysis by Michael Hoy

18:1After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. 2Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. 3So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, 'For whom are you looking?' 5They answered, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'# Jesus replied, 'I am he.'# Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. 6When Jesus# said to them, 'I am he',# they stepped back and fell to the ground. 7Again he asked them, 'For whom are you looking?' And they said, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'# 8Jesus answered, 'I told you that I am he.# So if you are looking for me, let these men go.' 9This was to fulfil the word that he had spoken, 'I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.' 10Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. 11Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?'

12So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. 13First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. 14Caiaphas

was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

15Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, 16but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. 17The woman said to Peter, 'You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?' He said, 'I am not.' 18Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing round it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

19Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. 20Jesus answered, 'I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. 21Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said.' 22When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, 'Is that how you answer the high priest?' 23Jesus answered, 'If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?' 24Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

25Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, 'You are not also one of his disciples, are you?' He denied it and said, 'I am not.' 26One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, 'Did I not see you in the garden with him?' 27Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

28Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters.#

It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters,# so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. 29So Pilate went out to them and said, 'What accusation do you bring against this man?' 30They answered, 'If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.' 31Pilate said to them, 'Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law.' The Jews replied, 'We are not permitted to put anyone to death.' 32(This was to fulfil what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

33Then Pilate entered the headquarters# again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' 34Jesus answered, 'Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?' 35Pilate replied, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?' 36Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.' 37Pilate asked him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.' 38Pilate asked him, 'What is truth?'

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, 'I find no case against him. 39But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?' 40They shouted in reply, 'Not this man, but Barabbas!' Now Barabbas was a bandit.

19:1Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. 2And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. 3They kept coming up to him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and striking him on the face.

4Pilate went out again and said to them, 'Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him.' 5So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, 'Here is the man!' 6When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' Pilate said to them, 'Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.' 7The Jews answered him, 'We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.'

8Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. 9He entered his headquarters# again and asked Jesus, 'Where are you from?' But Jesus gave him no answer. 10Pilate therefore said to him, 'Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?' 11Jesus answered him, 'You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.' 12From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, 'If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.'

13When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat# on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew# Gabbatha. 14Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, 'Here is your King!' 15They cried out, 'Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!' Pilate asked them, 'Shall I crucify your King?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king but the emperor.' 16Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus; 17and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew# is called Golgotha. 18There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. 19Pilate

also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, 'Jesus of Nazareth,<sup>#</sup> the King of the Jews.' 20Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew,<sup>#</sup> in Latin, and in Greek. 21Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, 'Do not write, "The King of the Jews", but, "This man said, I am King of the Jews."' 22Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written.' 23When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. 24So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.' This was to fulfil what the scripture says,

'They divided my clothes among themselves,  
and for my clothing they cast lots.'

25And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' 27Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

28After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), 'I am thirsty.' 29A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. 30When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

31 Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially

because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. 32Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. 33But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. 35(He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows# that he tells the truth.) 36These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'None of his bones shall be broken.' 37And again another passage of scripture says, 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced.'

38After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. 39Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. 40They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. 41Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. 42And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

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## **DIAGNOSIS: Misplaced Loyalty**

### **Step 1: Initial Diagnosis** : *Following False Kings*

The first thing that's at stake is whom we follow, if following is even in our vocabulary. "We have no king but the emperor!" (19:15). Of course, even that was a lie for those who first said

it. But nonetheless, even if it is not this emperor, then it is some other; some leader, maybe even one's own ambitions and desires. Something, someone is king. But it is not the King of this story.

### **Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis** : *Denying the Truth*

And that leads us to the next thing at stake—the truth; not only the truth about this King, but our own truth. Because it is not the King of this story that we follow, what is denied is not only that One's kingship and authority for one's life, but also the full truth he represents. Like Pilate who asks, "What is truth?," the truth is unknown to the followers of false kings—even, and especially, the truth of who they are, the questioners. All they find is the darkness of their denial of the King's truth.

### **Step 3: Final Diagnosis** : *Away with Him!*

And mostly what is at stake is our own fate. Because of all this darkness in the truth and false leadership, the fate that is pronounced, "Away with him!" is also the pronouncement of the fate that awaits us all. Away with him! Away with her! Away with all! Our fate is tied so closely to the fate of this King.

## **PROGNOSIS: A Loyal King**

### **Step 4: Initial Prognosis** : *It Is Finished*

Yet that is precisely what the Promise is for us all. For this King takes the fate that awaits us all, and puts it at stake where it will end—on the stake of the cross. "It is finished!" he declares in all his Kingliness. What is finished? The judgment, the condemnation, the deserved wrath. All of that has come to an end through his end. That's what is at stake in King Jesus. The buck stops here.

### **Step 5: Advanced Prognosis** : *Testifying to the Truth*

"Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Knowing

our truth, even as redeemed-sinners-in-truth, we come to testify that the one voice that matters for us is the voice of our King, Jesus the Christ. We stake our hope on his Word, on his voice of confidence and hope.

**Step 6: Final Prognosis** : *Following the King's Orders*

And finally, we stake our risk on his orders. What orders are these? Even as he is throned on the cross, he makes family connections. "Woman, behold your son. Behold, your mother." Tied together, we go about the work of making his kind of cross-connections with the world. What's at stake? That for the love of the world all might believe and trust the One who leads us to eternal life. That is what this King claimed was at stake all along in his being sent. So are we sent—with the King's blessing.