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~ Crucify Him! ~

You can learn much more about this story by doing these three things:

1. Read Matthew 26:57-27:26 and John 18:15-18 and 18:25-19:16.
2. Discover key cultural and historical insights.
3. Answer the reflective questions.

1. Read the text of the story.

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Matthew 26:57-27:26 NASB	Matthew 26:57-27:26 NLT
<p>⁵⁷ Those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. ⁵⁸ But Peter was following Him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and entered in, and sat down with the officers to see the outcome.</p> <p>⁵⁹ Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death. ⁶⁰ They did not find <i>any</i>, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward, ⁶¹ and said, "This man stated, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days.'" ⁶² The high priest stood up and said to Him, "Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" ⁶³ But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God." ⁶⁴ Jesus *said to him, "You have said it <i>yourself</i>; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."</p> <p>⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; ⁶⁶ what do you think?" They answered, "He deserves death!"</p> <p>⁶⁷ Then they spat in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him, ⁶⁸ and said, "Prophecy to us, You Christ; who is the one who hit You?"</p> <p>⁶⁹ Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant-girl came to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." ⁷⁰ But he denied <i>it</i> before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." ⁷¹ When he had gone out to the gateway, another <i>servant-girl</i> saw him and *said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." ⁷² And again he denied <i>it</i> with an oath, "I do not know the man." ⁷³ A little later the bystanders came up and</p>	<p>⁵⁷ Then the people who had arrested Jesus led him to the home of Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of religious law and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸ Meanwhile, Peter followed him at a distance and came to the high priest's courtyard. He went in and sat with the guards and waited to see how it would all end.</p> <p>⁵⁹ Inside, the leading priests and the entire high council were trying to find witnesses who would lie about Jesus, so they could put him to death. ⁶⁰ But even though they found many who agreed to give false witness, they could not use anyone's testimony. Finally, two men came forward ⁶¹ who declared, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the Temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'" ⁶² Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Well, aren't you going to answer these charges? What do you have to say for yourself?" ⁶³ But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I demand in the name of the living God—tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God."</p> <p>⁶⁴ Jesus replied, "You have said it. And in the future you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God's right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven."</p> <p>⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his clothing to show his horror and said, "Blasphemy! Why do we need other witnesses? You have all heard his blasphemy. ⁶⁶ What is your verdict?"</p> <p>"Guilty!" they shouted. "He deserves to die!"</p> <p>⁶⁷ Then they began to spit in Jesus' face and beat him with their fists. And some slapped him ⁶⁸ jeering, "Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who hit you that time?"</p> <p>⁶⁹ Meanwhile, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came over and said to him, "You were one of</p>

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said to Peter, "Surely you too are *one* of them; for even the way you talk gives you away." ⁷⁴ Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know the man!" And immediately a rooster crowed. ⁷⁵ And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, "Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

27 Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death; ² and they bound Him, and led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate the governor.

³ Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, ⁴ saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See *to that* yourself!" ⁵ And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. ⁶ The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood." ⁷ And they conferred together and with the money bought the Potter's Field as a burial place for strangers. ⁸ For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. ⁹ Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "AND THEY TOOK THE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER, THE PRICE OF THE ONE WHOSE PRICE HAD BEEN SET BY THE SONS OF ISRAEL; ¹⁰ AND THEY GAVE THEM FOR THE POTTER'S FIELD, AS THE LORD DIRECTED ME."

¹¹ Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And Jesus said to him, "*It is as you say.*" ¹² And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He did not answer. ¹³ Then Pilate *said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" ¹⁴ And He did not answer him with regard to even a *single* charge, so the governor was quite amazed.

¹⁵ Now at *the* feast the governor was accustomed to release for the people *any* one prisoner whom they wanted. ¹⁶ At that time they were holding a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. ¹⁷ So when the people gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" ¹⁸ For he knew that because of envy they had handed Him over.

¹⁹ While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him *a message*, saying, "Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him." ²⁰ But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to put Jesus to death. ²¹ But the governor said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." ²² Pilate *said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all *said, "Crucify

those with Jesus the Galilean."

⁷⁰ But Peter denied it in front of everyone. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said.

⁷¹ Later, out by the gate, another servant girl noticed him and said to those standing around, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth."

⁷² Again Peter denied it, this time with an oath. "I don't even know the man," he said.

⁷³ A little later some of the other bystanders came over to Peter and said, "You must be one of them; we can tell by your Galilean accent."

⁷⁴ Peter swore, "A curse on me if I'm lying—I don't know the man!" And immediately the rooster crowed.

⁷⁵ Suddenly, Jesus' words flashed through Peter's mind: "Before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me." And he went away, weeping bitterly.

27 Very early in the morning the leading priests and the elders of the people met again to lay plans for putting Jesus to death. ² Then they bound him, led him away, and took him to Pilate, the Roman governor.

³ When Judas, who had betrayed him, realized that Jesus had been condemned to die, he was filled with remorse. So he took the thirty pieces of silver back to the leading priests and the elders. ⁴ "I have sinned," he declared, "for I have betrayed an innocent man."

"What do we care?" they retorted. "That's your problem."

⁵ Then Judas threw the silver coins down in the Temple and went out and hanged himself.

⁶ The leading priests picked up the coins. "It wouldn't be right to put this money in the Temple treasury," they said, "since it was payment for murder." ⁷ After some discussion they finally decided to buy the potter's field, and they made it into a cemetery for foreigners. ⁸ That is why the field is still called the Field of Blood. ⁹ This fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah that says,

"They took the thirty pieces of silver—the price at which he was valued by the people of Israel, ¹⁰ and purchased the potter's field, as the LORD directed."

¹¹ Now Jesus was standing before Pilate, the Roman governor.

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<p>Him!" ²³ And he said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they kept shouting all the more, saying, "Crucify Him!"</p> <p>²⁴ When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this Man's blood; see <i>to that</i> yourselves." ²⁵ And all the people said, "His blood shall be on us and on our children!" ²⁶ Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.</p>	<p>"Are you the king of the Jews?" the governor asked him.</p> <p>Jesus replied, "You have said it."</p> <p>¹² But when the leading priests and the elders made their accusations against him, Jesus remained silent. ¹³ "Don't you hear all these charges they are bringing against you?" Pilate demanded. ¹⁴ But Jesus made no response to any of the charges, much to the governor's surprise.</p> <p>¹⁵ Now it was the governor's custom each year during the Passover celebration to release one prisoner to the crowd—anyone they wanted. ¹⁶ This year there was a notorious prisoner, a man named Barabbas. ¹⁷ As the crowds gathered before Pilate's house that morning, he asked them, "Which one do you want me to release to you—Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" ¹⁸ (He knew very well that the religious leaders had arrested Jesus out of envy.)</p> <p>¹⁹ Just then, as Pilate was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him this message: "Leave that innocent man alone. I suffered through a terrible nightmare about him last night."</p> <p>²⁰ Meanwhile, the leading priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas to be released and for Jesus to be put to death. ²¹ So the governor asked again, "Which of these two do you want me to release to you?"</p> <p>The crowd shouted back, "Barabbas!"</p> <p>²² Pilate responded, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?"</p> <p>They shouted back, "Crucify him!"</p> <p>²³ "Why?" Pilate demanded. "What crime has he committed?"</p> <p>But the mob roared even louder, "Crucify him!"</p> <p>²⁴ Pilate saw that he wasn't getting anywhere and that a riot was developing. So he sent for a bowl of water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood. The responsibility is yours!"</p> <p>²⁵ And all the people yelled back, "We will take responsibility for his death—we and our children!"</p> <p>²⁶ So Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.</p>
<p>John 18:15-18; 18:25-19:16 NASB</p>	<p>John 18:15-18; 18:25-19:16 NLT</p>
<p>¹⁵ Simon Peter was following Jesus, and <i>so was</i> another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and</p>	<p>²⁵ Meanwhile, as Simon Peter was standing by the fire warming himself, they asked him again, "You're not one of his</p>

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entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest,¹⁶ but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in.¹⁷ Then the slave-girl who kept the door *said to Peter, “You are not also *one* of this man’s disciples, are you?” He *said, “I am not.”¹⁸ Now the slaves and the officers were standing *there*, having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold and they were warming themselves; and Peter was also with them, standing and warming himself.

²⁵ Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, “You are not also *one* of His disciples, are you?” He denied *it*, and said, “I am not.”²⁶ One of the slaves of the high priest, being a relative of the one whose ear Peter cut off, *said, “Did I not see you in the garden with Him?”²⁷ Peter then denied *it* again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

²⁸ Then they *led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.²⁹ Therefore Pilate went out to them and *said, “What accusation do you bring against this Man?”³⁰ They answered and said to him, “If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you.”³¹ So Pilate said to them, “Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law.” The Jews said to him, “We are not permitted to put anyone to death,”³² to fulfill the word of Jesus which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die.

³³ Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”³⁴ Jesus answered, “Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?”³⁵ Pilate answered, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?”³⁶ Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”³⁷ Therefore Pilate said to Him, “So You are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”³⁸ Pilate *said to Him, “What is truth?”

And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and *said to them, “I find no guilt in Him.”³⁹ But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I release for you the King of the Jews?”⁴⁰ So they cried out again, saying, “Not this Man, but Barabbas.” Now Barabbas was a robber.

¹⁹ Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him.² And the soldiers

disciples, are you?”

He denied it, saying, “No, I am not.”

²⁶ But one of the household slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, “Didn’t I see you out there in the olive grove with Jesus?”²⁷ Again Peter denied it. And immediately a rooster crowed.

²⁸ Jesus’ trial before Caiaphas ended in the early hours of the morning. Then he was taken to the headquarters of the Roman governor. His accusers didn’t go inside because it would defile them, and they wouldn’t be allowed to celebrate the Passover.²⁹ So Pilate, the governor, went out to them and asked, “What is your charge against this man?”

³⁰ “We wouldn’t have handed him over to you if he weren’t a criminal!” they retorted.

³¹ “Then take him away and judge him by your own law,” Pilate told them.

“Only the Romans are permitted to execute someone,” the Jewish leaders replied.³² (This fulfilled Jesus’ prediction about the way he would die.)

³³ Then Pilate went back into his headquarters and called for Jesus to be brought to him. “Are you the king of the Jews?” he asked him.

³⁴ Jesus replied, “Is this your own question, or did others tell you about me?”

³⁵ “Am I a Jew?” Pilate retorted. “Your own people and their leading priests brought you to me for trial. Why? What have you done?”

³⁶ Jesus answered, “My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world.”

³⁷ Pilate said, “So you are a king?”

Jesus responded, “You say I am a king. Actually, I was born and came into the world to testify to the truth. All who love the truth recognize that what I say is true.”

³⁸ “What is truth?” Pilate asked. Then he went out again to the people and told them, “He is not guilty of any crime.”³⁹ But you have a custom of asking me to release one prisoner each year at Passover. Would you like me to release this ‘King of

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twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him; ³ and they *began* to come up to Him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and to give Him slaps *in the face*. ⁴ Pilate came out again and *said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him." ⁵ Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. *Pilate* *said to them, "Behold, the Man!" ⁶ 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." ⁷ The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out *to be* the Son of God."

⁸ Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was *even* more afraid; ⁹ and he entered into the Praetorium again and *said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate *said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" ¹¹ Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has *the* greater sin ¹² As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out saying, "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out *to be* a king opposes Caesar."

¹³ Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. ¹⁴ Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he *said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!" ¹⁵ So they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate *said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."

¹⁶ So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified.

the Jews'?"

⁴⁰ But they shouted back, "No! Not this man. We want Barabbas!" (Barabbas was a revolutionary.)

¹⁹ Then Pilate had Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip. ² The soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they put a purple robe on him. ³ "Hail! King of the Jews!" they mocked, as they slapped him across the face.

⁴ Pilate went outside again and said to the people, "I am going to bring him out to you now, but understand clearly that I find him not guilty." ⁵ Then Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said, "Look, here is the man!"

⁶ When they saw him, the leading priests and Temple guards began shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

"Take him yourselves and crucify him," Pilate said. "I find him not guilty."

⁷ The Jewish leaders replied, "By our law he ought to die because he called himself the Son of God."

⁸ When Pilate heard this, he was more frightened than ever. ⁹ He took Jesus back into the headquarters again and asked him, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave no answer. ¹⁰ "Why don't you talk to me?" Pilate demanded. "Don't you realize that I have the power to release you or crucify you?"

¹¹ Then Jesus said, "You would have no power over me at all unless it were given to you from above. So the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin."

¹² Then Pilate tried to release him, but the Jewish leaders shouted, "If you release this man, you are no 'friend of Caesar.' Anyone who declares himself a king is a rebel against Caesar."

¹³ When they said this, Pilate brought Jesus out to them again. Then Pilate sat down on the judgment seat on the platform that is called the Stone Pavement (in Hebrew, *Gabbatha*). ¹⁴ It was now about noon on the day of preparation for the Passover. And Pilate said to the people, "Look, here is your king ¹⁵ "Away with him," they yelled. "Away with him! Crucify him! "What? Crucify your king?" Pilate asked.

"We have no king but Caesar," the leading priests shouted back ¹⁶ Then Pilate turned Jesus over to them to be crucified.

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2. Discover key cultural and historical insights

These insights from Bruce Malina, A Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels, 413-414 and 133-138.

1. When Jesus was blindfolded, struck from behind, and mocked as prophet, this was a calculated effect to humiliate him publicly and bring discredit to him. Such actions, not retaliated against would cause his status in the eyes of the people to crumble. 413,
2. In the end, the success of the degradation ritual made Pilate's 'sentence' a mere recognition of the obvious." 414
3. The tearing of robes symbolizes the tear in the priests honor by what has been said. It is also a sign of a tear in the social fabric and a protest against flagrant evil. 133
4. In the lower Hinnom Valley, not far from where it joins the Kidron Valley south of Jerusalem is the Monastery of St Onuphrus where tradition since the fourth century has located Haceldama, the field of blood bought with the money Judas threw back in the temple. 135
5. The Roman governor of a province was appointed by the emperor, came from equestrian ranks, had great legal entitlements, and was responsible for military peacekeeping, tax collection, and significant judicial matters. These governors were widely known for their greed and self-serving behavior, and were well insulated from protests by their provincial subjects: by the distance from Rome, which is where subjects would have to lodge their protests, by the expense in lodging protests, and by the ability of elite to retaliate. 136
6. The Christ Thorn is a small tree or large bush that is quite widespread in the mountains of Samaria and in the Jordan Valley. It has both short hooked spines and straight spines up to an inch and a half long. 137
7. Pilate's washing his hands was a symbolic action to underscore his innocence in the matter of Jesus' death. It symbolized his dissociation from the action. 137
8. Hailing Jesus as king of the Jews would insult the people of Israel and of Jerusalem as well as Jesus. 138

Answer these reflective questions.

How do you think Peter felt when he denied Jesus and they saw each other in the courtyard? Have you ever felt deep shame for your sin?

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Peter had boldly proclaimed his fearlessness and that he would die for Jesus. Yet, a servant-girl's accusation shook him to his core. What does this say about pride and about our vulnerability to simple things that may cause us to fall?

How sincere do you think Judas' remorse was? Why do you think he committed suicide? Do you think if he had repented and asked for forgiveness God would have granted it to him? Was it possible for him to repent?

Many times when Jesus was on trial he did not say a word. At other times he did speak up. Look at the story again and see if you can discover why Jesus was sometimes silent and at other times was not.

Jesus told Pilate, "my kingdom is not of this world." What did Jesus mean by this?

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Jesus endured shame, ridicule, abuse, and humiliation even before he went to the place of crucifixion. How was he able to endure such suffering? Where did he find the strength? Can we find the same strength for the difficulties we face? Read Hebrews 12:1-4 and learn what this passage teaches us.
