

## The Temple Times

The first of the spring Holy Days have begun. We celebrated our annual covenant renewal in the Passover ceremony last night. After much preparation and self-reflection, those present, re-committed our lives to The One Who gave His for us, Jesus Christ. As the events unfolded from that last Passover Christ kept with His disciples, Biblical prophecies came to fruition and were fulfilled.

**Luke 24:44-** "And He said to them, "These are the words that I spoke to you when I was yet with you, that all the things which were written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms must be fulfilled."

A completely guiltless Man was persecuted and prosecuted and put to death.

Persecution of the innocent continues today.

Imagine if you would, what the news headlines and stories would be for Nissan 15, 30 A.D. Passover would have taken place and then the events that followed would have made for some interesting reading for the local residents. From the scriptures, we can see that the same mentality towards truth existed then as it does now. I cannot help but think that even back then, there would be no truth unless it came from God's called. There is no way that the Pharisees would admit to killing the Son of God. We can ring a cowbell for the speculation, but the scriptures will be

right out of God's Word. The scriptures listed will actually fill in the blanks and omissions you would expect from a news report. A few headlines might look like these:

## **Insurrectionist Arrested and Crucified**

### **Gethsemane, Jerusalem Nissan 14, 30**

**Bin Salach, reporting**

**The criminal known as Jesus of Nazareth, was found and arrested in the early hours of Nissan 14. Several hundred Temple Guards were accompanied by Roman Legion soldiers as it was rumored Jesus had a band of men with Him. He was located and identified by a close insider of His so-called disciples.**

**The Temple High Priest Caiaphas, had filed complaints with the governor's office but it was handed back to him to manage "their own affairs." When interviewed for comment, Caiaphas stated that he and the chief priest and scribes had been wanting to arrest Jesus for some time as He was being disruptive and speaking blasphemy against God. There were many things reported that Jesus was doing that was contrary to Jewish law and traditions. In his efforts to keep the peace, Caiaphas said they wanted to arrest him before the Feast as not to cause any riots among Jesus' supporters.**

**Matthew 26:3-5-** “Then the chief priests and the scribes and the elders of the people assembled together in the court of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas. And *they* took counsel together for the purpose of seizing Jesus by treachery, and killing *Him*. But they said, “Not during the feast, so that there will not be a riot among the people.”

*(Much like those in power today, Caiaphas would have omitted the “treachery” part. He was a holy man of God...right?)*

**After being taken into custody, the criminal Jesus was taken before the High Priest Caiaphas. Many witnesses stood up and made accusations against Jesus, supported by whatever reliable evidence they brought.**

**Matthew 26:57-68-** “But those who had arrested Jesus led *Him* away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. And Peter followed Him from a distance, even to the court of the high priest; and after going inside, he sat down with the officers to see *what* the end *would be*. Now the chief priests and the elders and the whole Sanhedrin sought false evidence against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death; But *they* did not find *any*. Although many false witnesses came forward, they **did not find any evidence**. Then at *the* last, two

false witnesses came forward *and* said, “This *Man* said, ‘I have the power to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.’” And the high priest rose up *and* said to Him, “Have You no answer for what these are testifying against You?” But Jesus was silent. And the high priest answered *and* said to Him, “I adjure You by the living God that You tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God.” Jesus said to him, “You have said *it*. Moreover, I say to you, in the future you shall see the Son of man sitting at *the* right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Then the high priest ripped his *own* garments, saying, “He has blasphemed! Why do we need any more witnesses? Behold, you have just now heard His blasphemy. What do you think?” They answered *and* said, “He is deserving of death!” Then they spit in His face and hit Him with their fists; and some struck *Him* with rods, Saying, “Prophecy to us, Christ. Who is the one that struck You?”

*(Even with the false witnesses, they could not find enough evidence against Jesus. But just as today’s system is flawed, truth no longer matters.)*

**Satisfied by the evidence presented and Jesus admitting He was the Christ, they took Jesus before the Governor, Pontius Pilate. When questioned by Governor Pilate, Jesus admitted to being the “King of the Jews.”**

**Matthew 27:1-2-** “Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death. “And after binding Him, they led *Him* away and delivered Him up to Pontius Pilate, the governor.”

**Matthew 27:11-14-** “Then 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 said.*” And when He was accused by the chief priests and the elders, He answered nothing. Then Pilate said to Him, “Don’t You hear how many things they testify against You?” And He did not answer even one word to him, so that the governor was greatly amazed.”

**As it was customary for the Governor to release a prisoner each year at the time of the feast, Governor Pilate asked the crowd who should he release to them, Barrabas who was a political prisoner or the radical Jesus who proclaimed Himself to be the Christ. Those in the crowd expressed their desire for Barrabas to be released and the criminal Jesus be crucified. Governor Pilate granted the crowd’s wish and released Barrabas and sentenced the rebel Jesus to be scourged and then death by crucifixion.**

**It was later rumored that Pilate's wife, who was into astrology had dreams about Jesus being crucified. She reportedly sent word to her husband to avoid getting involved. Governor Pilate washed his hands of the matter and told the Jews present that this was on them. They felt empowered as their justice was being served.**

**Once sentenced, Jesus was mocked, beaten, scourged, and led away to be crucified.**

*(The chief priests and elders had influenced the crowd to tip the scales in favor of Barrabas that Jesus would be crucified. Much like stuffing a ballot box or rigging election results, the fix was in against Christ.)*

**Matthew 27:15-31-** “Now at *the* feast, the governor was accustomed to release one prisoner to the multitude, whomever they wished. And they had at that time a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you desire *that* I release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus Who is called Christ?” For he understood that they had delivered Him up because of envy. Now as he sat on the judgment seat, his wife sent *a message* to him, saying, “*Let there be* nothing between you and that righteous *Man*, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him.” But the chief priests and

the elders persuaded the multitudes to demand Barabbas, and to destroy Jesus.

Then the governor answered *and* said to them, “Which of the two do you desire *that* I release to you?” And they said, “Barabbas.” Pilate said to them, “What then shall I do with Jesus Who is called Christ?” They all said to him, “Let *Him* be crucified!” And the governor said, “Why? What evil did He commit?” But they shouted *all* the more, saying, “Let *Him* be crucified!” Now Pilate, seeing that he was accomplishing nothing, but *that* a riot was developing instead, took water *and* washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, “I am guiltless of the blood of this righteous *Man*. You see *to it*.” And all the people answered *and* said, “His blood *be* on us and on our children.” Then he released Barabbas to them; but after scourging Jesus, he delivered *Him* up so that He might be crucified.

Then the governor’s soldiers, after taking Jesus with them into the Praetorium, gathered the entire band against Him; And they stripped Him *and* put a scarlet cloak around Him. And after plating a crown of thorns, they put *it* on His head, and a rod in His right hand; and bowing *on* their knees before Him, they mocked Him, and *kept on* saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” Then, after spitting on Him, they took the rod and struck *Him* on the head. When they were done mocking Him, they took the cloak off Him; and they put His own garments on Him and led Him away to crucify Him.”

**On the way to be crucified, Jesus kept dropping His cross which was delaying the process. Thankfully, the Roman soldiers commandeered a spectator to carry His cross for Him. The unfortunate bystander, Simon of Cyrene was available for comment.**

**“I was just minding my own business, watching this criminal get what was coming to Him. He kept falling up the stairs, dragging His cross and the Roman soldiers pulled me out of the crowd and forced me to carry His cross, I was so embarrassed, and I even got blood on my tunic. Who is going to pay for that? Once we got to Golgotha, I dropped it and said man I am out a here.”**

**Matthew 27:32-33-** “Now as they came out, they found a Cyrenean man named Simon; *and* they compelled him to carry His cross. And after coming to a place called Golgotha, which is called Place of a Skull,”

*(How many of us carry our own cross every day?)*

**Matthew 16:24-25-** “*And Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life shall lose it; but whoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it.” We must be willing to die to ourselves daily and conform to the*



*will of God and endure whatever may come our way. If we fail to do this, we are not worthy of Him.*

**Matthew 10:38-** “*And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me.*”)

**Once at Golgotha, the sentence of crucifixion against the Criminal Jesus was conducted before a crowd of onlookers, some cheering and mocking Him and others, wept in disbelief. The priest and scribes within the temple were relieved that justice had been served.**

**Matthew 27:34-50-** “They gave Him vinegar mingled with gall to drink; but after tasting it, He would not drink. And when they had crucified Him, they divided His garments *by* casting lots; so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, “They divided My garments among themselves, and for My vesture they cast lots.” And they sat down there to keep guard over Him. And they put up over His head His accusation, written, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.” And two robbers were crucified with Him, one at *the* right hand and one at *the* left. Then those who were passing by railed at Him, shaking their heads, And saying, “You Who *would* destroy the temple and rebuild *it* in three days, save Yourself. If You are *the* Son of God, come down from the cross.” And in the same way also the

chief priests were mocking, with the scribes and elders, saying, “He saved others, *but* He does not have the power to save Himself. If He is the King of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will *have* Him. For He said, ‘I am *the* Son of God.’” And the two robbers who were crucified with Him also reproached Him with the same words. Now from *the* sixth hour until *the* ninth hour, darkness was over all the land. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” That is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” And some of those who were standing there heard *and* said, “This *one* is calling for Elijah.” And immediately one of them ran and, taking a sponge, filled *it* with vinegar and put *it* on a stick, *and* gave *it* to Him to drink. But the rest said, “Let Him alone! Let us see if Elijah comes to save Him.” Then *another* took a spear *and* thrust it into His side, *and* out came water and blood. And after crying out again with a loud voice, Jesus yielded up *His* spirit.”

*(It was over, Jesus Christ had finished His earthly mission. He had accomplished the purpose for which He was sent. The New Covenant was established in His shed blood. He was conquering death and the grave. He took the sins of the entire world’s population, past, present, and future upon Himself. He revealed God the Father to us and set the example for us to follow.)*

## **Strange Weather and Earthquake Reported**

**Nissan 14, 30**

**Ruach Sifah, reporting**

**A severe, abrupt storm and an earthquake struck the outskirts of Jerusalem just after 3 PM on Nissan 14. High winds, lightning, and thunder rocked the area for three hours. The skies were darkened to near midnight conditions. The ground shook so violently that the Temple sustained damage both inside and out. The ensuing chaos caused many reports of people hallucinating claiming to see the dead rise from graves. Many people fled the area in panic.**

**Luke 23:44-** “Now it was about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.”

**Matthew 27:51-54-**“Then suddenly the veil of the temple was ripped in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook, and the rocks were split, So that the tombs were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had died, were resurrected. After His resurrection; *and* they came out of the tombs. *Then* they entered into the holy city, and appeared to many. Then the centurion and those with him who had been

keeping guard over Jesus, after seeing the earthquake and the things that took place, were filled with fear, *and* said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

*(The last thing anyone reporting on this incident would have wanted, would be to acknowledge it was all related to the death of The Son of God, Jesus Christ. Even the disciples were scattered in fear at that time. But because of their witness of the resurrected Jesus, their faith and resolve to spread His gospel was renewed, strengthened, and even increased by their receiving the Holy Spirit on Pentecost as Christ promised.)*

## **Body Found Near Temple Grounds**

**Nissan 14, 30**

**Afor Qatan- reporting**

**The body of a local man was found hanged in a tree near the Temple Grounds in the morning hours of Nissan 14. The man was identified as Judas Iscariot, son of Simon Iscariot. It is rumored he was associated with the criminal Jesus of Nazareth. No foul play is suspected as he hanged himself. Investigation is still pending.**

**Matthew 27:3-5-** “Now when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He was condemned, he changed his mind *and* returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying, “I have sinned and have betrayed innocent blood.” But they said, “What *is that* to us? You see *to it* yourself.” And after throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he went out and hanged himself.”

Lies and cover ups are certainly not exclusive to our day and age. Posting guards on Christ’s tomb and concocting a lie on the disappearance of His body is today’s truth. They had the headline for His resurrection before it happened. Spinning scripture to fit narratives is commonplace. We walk in God’s truth. All of it.

Monday night (Nissan 15) we are to observe the Night Much Remembered. These brief stories may not seem to be connected but it was my intent to emphasize the truth and reality of what Jesus went through in paying the price for the sins of mankind. He took our sins with Him to the grave.

God delivered the Nation of Israel from the physical bondage of Egypt and Christ Jesus delivered us from the spiritual bondage of sin and death. We are commanded in God’s Word to keep, remember, obey, observe, watch, continue, and do God’s commandments. It is far easier to follow His instructions *if* we always remember

what was sacrificed. In keeping the image of what Jesus Christ gave up and what he suffered in our hearts and minds, *we will never forget.* Amen.\_

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