

# Our **GUIDE**

## for little ones

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IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Lesson 50

### Judas' End

*John 19:13-16; Matthew 27:3-10*

"I find no fault in him at all."

That is what Pilate said about Jesus. That was his *judgment*, his *verdict*. He was not fooled for a minute by the angry charges that the chief priests kept bringing against Jesus. Pilate did not change his mind. Jesus is *innocent*. *No fault at all*.

At last, however, Pilate sat down in the judgment seat. The people knew what that meant. Pilate is finally going to announce his *sentence*, his *decision*. The people must therefore have stopped their clamoring and shouting, and they waited breathlessly to hear what the governor would say.

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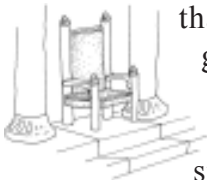
Yes, it was the *Roman governor*

who was about to speak. The Roman governor, you see, spoke for *Caesar*, the ruler of the *world*. So when *Pilate* speaks, it's really the *world* that speaks. That's important. Try hard to understand it. Pilate must speak now for the world about a very important question. It is, really, *God's* question. It is God's question to the world, to the world of *men*: "What will you do with Jesus, My *Son*, My *righteous* Son — when He gets in your way, and He stands there as a helpless man?" What will Pilate say?

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Actually, Pilate had already de-

**Note to Parents:** These papers are intended for the younger Sunday School students — grade 3 and below. Vocabulary and concepts are such that children in this age group, even the 3rd graders, will profit most if the stories are read *to* them, not *by* them. Most lessons have two stories, for two sittings if that proves to be beneficial. Our hope is that parents will find these lessons to be useful tools in the teaching of Bible stories and Bible truths to their children in the "off" season.



cided. “Somebody’s going to get hurt here — *Him* or *me*. And it’s *not* going to be *me*.” That’s what Pilate decided. He is angry, however, that the Jews have forced him to do that. So, before he announces his sentence, he *taunts* them. He *mocks* them. “Behold your *King!*” he says. “You miserable Jews have always wanted a king. Well, here He is. This wretched man is the king you deserve.”



Immediately the Jews start hollering again: “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!”

Pilate must have enjoyed that. He is trying, now, only to get the Jews riled. And it’s working. He pretends to be *surprised*. “What?!” he asks, “Shall I crucify your *king?*”

“We have no king but Caesar!” cried the *chief priests*. Can you believe it? The leaders of the *Jews* pretend to be *loyal to Caesar*. Everybody there knew that that was a *lie*.

Nor does Pilate care at all about *truth*. Sitting in his judgment seat, he condemns Jesus to *death* — only because he thought it would be better for *himself*. Just like the Jews.

And just like ... *us*. We are no different. We must keep reminding ourselves of that. Isaiah said it right when he prophesied of the Savior: “He is despised, and *we* esteemed him not.” We, too, put ourselves *first*. It’s only because we are *not* different ... that Jesus had to go to the cross. Think about that.

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Where Jesus’ disciples were at this time on Friday morning we do not know. But the Bible does tell us about Judas Iscariot. What do you think — was he out some place spending his 30 pieces of silver? Was he, maybe, enjoying new friendships among the leaders of the Jews, who had been so glad to see him when he offered to help them capture Jesus? Was Judas pleased with himself for having been able to lead the mob to where they could find Jesus in the middle of the night? No. No. No.

Fact is, Judas was a miserable man. He must have been awake all night. Soon he learned that Jesus was *condemned* — condemned to *death*. Jesus will be *crucified* — an *innocent man*. Yes, Judas, who had been close to Jesus for three years, knew very well that Jesus was *innocent*. And now Jesus is going to *die* — having been *betrayed by one of His friends*.

Betrayal — that’s a *despicable* thing. But to betray *Jesus*, the *Son of God*, is an especially terrible thing. God hates it. Jesus, you remember, said so in the upper room. “It had been good for that man,” said Jesus about the traitor, “if he had *never been born*.” Judas had not paid attention to that at the time, but now he begins to feel God’s anger in his own guilty conscience. Not that he cares at all about *Jesus*. He despised Him still, and wanted nothing to do with His spiritual kingdom. But Judas hated his own shameful, foul deed. And because he hated his *deed*, he hated the 30 pieces of silver. They were, to him, like 30 hissing



snakes in his money bag.

So back to the chief priests he went. “I have sinned,” he said, “in that I have betrayed innocent blood.”

The chief priests looked at him. They saw this pathetic figure, despair written all over his face. And they said, “What do we care?” That’s right, they said, “What is that to us? see thou to that.” And they turned away.

In the mind of Judas, the hissing of the snakes in his money bag seemed to get louder. He had to get rid of them. The chief priests, he thought, will have these 30 pieces of silver, whether they want them or not. So he rushed to the sanctuary, and with all his might hurled the pieces of

silver through the open entrance to the Holy Place.



Then he left the temple, hurried through the streets of Jerusalem, out of the city ... and hanged himself.

Think back, if you can, to the time when Jesus was with His 12 disciples, far away from Jerusalem, and He asked them, “Whom say ye that I am?” Peter answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Peter spoke, then, for all the disciples — except for Judas. Judas never did believe that. The others did. Why? Jesus told them why. After declaring them to be *blessed*, Jesus said, “For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” There’s the reason. The *only* reason. Not *my faithfulness*. Not *my better understanding*. No, *God revealed*

*it*. It’s *His grace*. When we watch Judas hurry away from the temple and kill himself, all we can say is, “There, but for *His grace*, go I.”

### How Well Did You Listen?

1. What was Pilate’s “verdict” about Jesus? Why, then, did he not let Jesus go?
2. Pilate mocked the Jews by asking, “What!? Shall I crucify your king?” What was the Jews’ answer?
3. What did the chief priests say to Judas when he came to them to confess his shameful deed?
4. What did Judas do with the 30 pieces of silver? What did he do with himself?

## The Crucifixion

*Luke 23:26-31; John 19:17-24*

Death by crucifixion was *slow* and *painful*. Sometimes a man would hang on a cross alive for several *days*. Of all of the ways that have ever been used to put people to death, crucifixion was one of the *cruellest*.



And crucifixion was the death that the Jews wanted for *Jesus*. Crucify Him! Crucify Him! they shouted. That is, nail Him to a cross! Let Him *suffer*! And that was Pilate’s sentence — death, for Jesus, by *crucifixion*.

The wooden beams for the cross must have been close by. They had to be carried now to the place of crucifixion. They were heavy. Proud Roman soldiers

were not of a mind to carry those beams themselves. That would be too much like *slave labor*. So they ordered *Jesus* to do it. And He did it. He dragged the cross as far as He could.

If you have ever tried to carry something heavy for a long ways, you know that you have to stop often to *rest*. Jesus got tired too. He struggled with the load and just couldn't keep going. The soldiers were impatient. Coming into the city at that moment was a man by the name of Simon, of Cyrene, perhaps to celebrate the Passover. The Roman soldiers grabbed him and forced him to carry the cross the rest of the way to Golgotha, or Calvary, outside the city, where the crucifixion was to take place.



When you, in your mind, picture Jesus, bloodied and bruised, struggling under the heavy weight of a cross, a cross on which His body will soon be nailed — do you feel sorry for Him?

Some women of Jerusalem saw that sight. And as they beheld Him, they *wept*. They felt *sorry* for Jesus.



Now listen to what Jesus said. He said to these women, “Weep not for me.”

Does that surprise you? Would we not expect Jesus to feel *good* about it — that at least *somebody* felt *sorry* for Him? Why would He *rebuke* these women for their *tears*?

Tears are *good* — if they are for the right *reason*. Why were these women of Jerusalem crying? Were they crying be-

cause they knew the *sin*, the *grievous sin*, of Jerusalem? Were they crying because Jerusalem had this day *rejected its King*? Were they crying because Jerusalem had this day looked at the Son of God, and said, “Away with that man! Crucify Him!”? No, their tears were tears of *pity*. That was all. They didn't see the sin, *their sin*, which would bring down the judgment of God on their city. No wonder, then, that Jesus said, “Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.”

*Sin!* That's why Jesus had to struggle under the heavy weight of the beams of a cross. And be nailed to it. Sins. *Our sins*. If we do not see *that*, if all we feel is *pity* for the man Jesus, then He will say the same thing to us that He said to the women of Jerusalem: “Weep not for *me!*”

Yes, it was for *us* that Jesus went to Calvary. He had it in His power, remember, at any time to make all His enemies fall backward. The soldiers may *think* that they had the power to nail Jesus to the cross. But they didn't. Jesus *let* them do it. Consciously, willingly, Jesus would suffer — for us.



That's right, Jesus did nothing to *stop* the suffering. Nor did He do anything to make the suffering *less*. Did you know that? Did you know that Jesus refused even to take a *pain-killer*? That's right, when someone, at Calvary, offered Jesus something to deaden the terrible pain of crucifixion, Jesus said No. He was offered a drink — wine mixed with myrrh. Myrrh was a pain-killer. Jesus, being

thirsty, was ready to drink the *wine*, but as soon as it touched His lips He tasted the *myrrh*. And He would not drink it. *All* of the pain, *all* of the suffering, *all* of the wrath of God against sin — Jesus chose to bear it *all* ... for us.

So Jesus was crucified. He was nailed to the cross. And above His head there was written the accusation, or charge, that had been made against Him. What could that be? Thief? No, Jesus had stolen nothing. Murderer? No, Jesus had killed no one. Rebel? No, Jesus had never rebelled. Jesus had been found guilty of *nothing*. What then, can be written on that sign above Jesus' head? Here's what Pilate wrote: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

From Pilate, it was *mockery*. This helpless, wretched man thinks He's *king*. What a joke! And this, this *cross*, is what these miserable people want for Jesus! What kind of people would ever do *that*, for their *king*? Thus did Pilate mock both Jesus and the Jews.

But it was *God* who decided it. Not Pilate. God saw to it that the sign spoke the truth about His Son. Jesus *is* King. It didn't look that way. Who could ever look at the ghastly figure of Jesus hanging on the cross ... and see a *King*? But He *was*. In fact, it was *on the cross* that He would *establish* His kingdom — a kingdom *worldwide* and *without end*. The sign above His head declared it: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" — in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, for the whole world to read.

No one at Calvary understood. Least of all, perhaps, the Roman soldiers. To them, the work of crucifying this Jew was only business-as-usual. And after doing their usual work, the soldiers did what they usually did with the victim's clothing. They divided it up among themselves. How did they do that? The soldiers were gamblers. They did it by casting lots. They saw right away that four of the pieces of Jesus' clothing were of about the same value — His head covering, His sandals, His belt, and His robe. The fifth piece was different. It was His tunic, or coat.



It was expensive, being carefully woven, without seam, from top to bottom. The soldiers eyed that tunic. They decided that they would first divide the other four pieces among the four of them, and then cast lots again to decide which one of them would get the tunic.

Business as usual. Who, at the cross, would even have noticed what the soldiers were doing with the clothes? Not many. It wouldn't have seemed very important. But it was *prophesied*. Yes, this very deed of the soldiers at Jesus' cross was foretold, some 1,000 years earlier, in one of the psalms of David. Listen: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."

Was everything going wrong? Did Jesus' enemies have the victory over Him at the cross? Jesus' disciples thought so. But it wasn't so. The soldiers' casting lots for Jesus' clothes proved it. Everything is

going according to *plan*. *God's plan*.

### How Well Did You Listen?

1. Who carried Jesus' cross for part of the way to the place of crucifixion?
2. What did Jesus say to the women of Jerusalem who wept for Him on the way to Calvary?
3. Why did someone at Calvary offer Jesus a drink of wine mixed with myrrh? Did Jesus drink it?
4. What did Pilate write on the sign that was put on the cross, above Jesus' head?
5. The soldiers divided Jesus' garments among themselves. How did they decide who got what piece?

### How Well Do You Understand?

1. Why did Judas hate the 30 pieces of silver?
2. After Peter sinned, he went out and wept bitterly. After Judas sinned, he went out and hanged himself. Can you, in two words, explain why Peter acted differently than Judas?
3. Why did Jesus not carry the beams of the cross all of the way to the place of crucifixion?
4. Why did the women of Jerusalem weep for Jesus? Jesus told the women that that was *wrong*. How can we be

guilty of the same thing when we hear the story of Jesus' crucifixion?

5. Why did Jesus refuse to drink the wine that was offered Him just before His crucifixion?
6. Did the Jews believe that the sign above Jesus' head on the cross spoke the *truth*?
7. The soldiers cast lots for Jesus' clothes. How did that show that the terrible crucifixion of Jesus was happening according to *plan*?

### Memory Verse

Psalm 22:18 "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."

Color the picture.

