

Because He, the Righteous One was Tried & Condemned

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[0:01] Luke chapter 23, I'm going to read the first 31 verses, then we'll do our study. Then the whole body of them arose and brought him before Pilate.

And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, the king. And Pilate asked him, saying, Are you the king of the Jews?

And he answered him and said, You say. And Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitudes, I find no guilt in this man. But they kept on insisting, saying, He stirs up the people teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee, even as far as this place.

But when Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was in Jerusalem at that time.

Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus. For he had wanted to see him for a long time, because he had been hearing about him, and was hoping to see some sign performed by him.

[1:12] And he questioned him at length, at some length. But he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and the scribes were standing there, accusing him vehemently. And Herod with his soldiers, after treating him with contempt and mocking him, dressed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him back to Pilate.

Now Herod and Pilate became friends with one another that very day, before they had been in enmity with each other. And Pilate summoned the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people, and said to them, You brought this man to me as one who incites the people to rebellion.

And behold, having examined him before you, I have found no guilt in this man regarding the charges which you make against him. No, nor has Herod, for he sent him back to us.

And behold, nothing deserving death has been done by him. I will therefore punish him and release him. Skip down to verse 18. But they cried out all together, saying, Away with this man, and release for us Barabbas.

Now he was one who had been thrown into prison for a certain insurrection made in the city, and for murder. And Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed him again. But they kept on calling out, saying, Crucify! Crucify him!

[2:28] And he said to them the third time, Why? What evil has this man done? I have found in him no guilt demanding death. I will therefore punish him and release him.

But they were insistent, with loud voices demanding that he be crucified. And their voices prevailed. And Pilate pronounced sentence that their demand should be granted.

And he released the man they were asking for, who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder. But he delivered Jesus to their will. 26. And when they led him away, they lay hold of one Simon of Cyrene, coming in from the country, and placed on him the cross to carry behind Jesus.

27. And there were following him a great multitude of the people, and of women who were mourning and lamenting him. 28. But Jesus, turning to them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

29. For behold, days are coming when they will say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed. 29. 30. 30. 31. Then they will begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us.

[3:42] For if they do these things in the green tree, what will happen in the dry? On the morning of November 10, 1898, a throng of some 2,000 armed white men took to the streets of the southern port town of Wilmington, North Carolina.

Spurned on by white supremacists, politicians, and businessmen, the mob burned the offices of a prominent African-American newspaper, sparking a frenzy of urban warfare that saw dozens of blacks gunned down in the streets.

As the chaos unfolded, white rioters descended on City Hall and forced the town's mayor to resign, along with several black aldermen.

By nightfall, the mob had seized full control of the local government. Some 60 black citizens lay dead, and thousands more had fled the city in panic.

While it took the form of a race riot, the Wilmington Uprising was actually a calculated rebellion by a cabal of white business leaders and Democratic politicians, intent on dissolving the city's biracial majority Republican government.

[5:06] Once in power, the conspirators banished prominent black leaders and their white allies from the city and joined with other North Carolina Democrats in instituting a wave of Jim Crow laws suppressing black voting rights.

Despite its illegality, and I would add its injustice, states and federal officials ultimately allowed the power, the power grab, to proceed unchecked, leading many historians to cite the Wilmington insurrection as the only successful coup in American history.

And despite its illegality, and its injustice, Jesus, the innocent, righteous man, was tried and condemned as a rebel, while the real rebel was set free by Pilate.

Can you believe that? It's amazing that these trials against Jesus continued to proceed. He was an innocent, righteous man who'd done nothing wrong, especially nothing worthy of death.

All the trial proceedings were unjust, and yet Jesus was considered a criminal worthy of death. To all outcasts, come follow Jesus.

[6:41] He's the Messiah, God's servant, He's the Son of Man, He's the Lord, and you will find forgiveness of your sins. Come follow Jesus, because He, the righteous one, was tried and condemned on behalf of rebels.

He, the righteous one, was tried and condemned as a rebel for rebels. That's what we'll see today. And yet, what a picture of salvation. What a picture of the gospel. The righteous, innocent man tried as a rebel for rebels.

Condemned as a rebel for rebels. What a picture of our salvation. Jesus tried and condemned, and us, the real rebels, were set free.

It was Barabbas, interesting, it was Barabbas, the insurrectionist, the rebel, the murderer, who was released while the righteous, innocent man was condemned.

[7:58] And yet, in all these things, in all these false trials, Jesus said little or nothing at all.

It would be politics, and public relations that would rule the day. Oh, we don't have any of that today, do we? It's not justice.

And the righteous sufferer would be condemned as a lawbreaker for lawbreakers. He will die as the innocent lamb.

If there's anything you could take away from this message, from this passage, it's the fact that the righteous sufferer would be condemned as a lawbreaker because you're the lawbreaker. We are lawbreakers.

We are rebels. We deserve to be tried. We deserve to be condemned. Yet, there he goes. In our stead. Two main points, if you haven't seen it yet so far.

[9:10] First, we'll look at how he's tried as a rebel for rebels. Then I have in parentheses a catchphrase for those who are not followers of Jesus this morning.

A catchphrase for you. Don't be flippant. Take this seriously. Don't be flippant. Don't be glib. Don't sleep.

Do not slumber. Notice how it begins how the whole body of them, not just a few, the Jewish leadership, they had to seek the permission of the Roman Empire to execute somebody.

That's the only way Jesus could face a death penalty. They could not act alone, so they went to Pilate, the Roman procurator, responsible for finances in the region, who maintained law and order. And notice it says there in verse 2, they began to accuse him, saying we found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar and saying that he himself is Christ, a king. Two

broad accusations and one specific offense.

[10:19] One against Jews, two against Rome. Jesus is misleading our nation. Yeah, that's subjective. He forbids paying taxes to Caesar.

Yeah, that's a lie. The tax, the finance, the politics, or the police, the guards, the baths, those things. He's a financial risk to Rome.

And then most important, he declared, Jesus declared himself to be an anointed king. They wanted to paint Jesus as a radical revolutionary. Woo! He sure was.

Wow. He was seditious. Now, did he claim himself to be the king? Yes. But not in the sense that they meant it.

Those last two charges, they interested Pilate. So verse 3, are you the king of the Jews? And he answered and said, you are sane, or you have said so. He affirmed, but with a qualification about the way the question was given.

[11:27] Yes, I'm a king, but I'm not out to overthrow the Roman government. He reluctantly assented to Pilate's question, it's not the way you think, Mr. Pilate.

Well, notice in verse 4, Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitudes, I find no guilt in this man. So Luke merely gave us a summary. More was probably said, but Luke is summarizing things for us.

Summarizing things for us. But Pilate was convinced Jesus was no threat. I find no guilt in this man. And no is emphatic. We should have ended it all right there.

It should have been done, right? Done. Walked away. But it didn't. Ah. The Father's plan for Jesus was moving forward, wasn't it?

The Father's plan for Jesus to go to the cross was continuing, wasn't it? Jesus would be portrayed as a rebel, rebelling against Rome.

[12:34] But it was the religious leaders who wanted to rebel against Rome. And they wanted to rebel against God's chosen servants. Their true king.

Verse 5, They kept on insisting, saying, He stirs up the people teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee, even as far as this place. So Jesus was innocently righteous, but trial proceedings continued by the religious leaders.

They didn't accept Pilate's verdict. They were adamant. They kept insisting. He has the nation in the world. He's teaching all over from Galilee all the way to here.

Look at verse 6. When Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And then verse 7, When he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also wasn't Jerusalem at the time.

So either Herod was going to pass the buck, Awesome, I don't have to deal with this guy. Right? Or it was a kind gesture, whichever it was. This was a wise move by Pilate.

[13:46] Because he wanted to involve the highest of Jewish leadership. Herod was about 25% Jewish, but still, nonetheless, he was still Jewish. So the religious leaders were saying, If you're a really good governor, you would send Jesus, you would deal with Jesus.

And Pilate said, Well, I'm going to send him over to Herod since he's part of Galilee. Knowing that Herod Antipas was in town, probably for the feast, he made the move.

He sent Jesus to him to get his verdict. Or at least to share the responsibility. Again, I want to point out, justice should mean that Jesus should have been released right now.

But instead, he'd be mocked and ridiculed with more trials. Well, other forces were at work to get Jesus to face judgment.

Or rather, maybe we should say, greater forces were at work for Jesus to go to the cross. where he would be tried as a rebel on behalf of rebels. Notice verse 8 and 9.

[14:56] Herod was happy. Very glad when he saw Jesus. He wanted to see him for a long time. He'd been hearing about him and was hoping to see some sign performed by him. About a 10 minute walk from Pilate.

Herod was stoked. He's, Oh, this is great. He wanted to see this famous Jesus dude. Instead of confronting Jesus, he was going to be frivolous with him though. Questioning him, yes.

But serious? No. See, Herod was hoping to have Jesus do some miracle sign wonder. He wanted to be wowed. It was show time.

Do a little trick for me. Notice it says, verse 9, he questioned him at some length. But Jesus answered him, nothing. Jesus didn't say a word.

Like a lamb led to slaughter, he was silent. Though treated like a criminal, he certainly didn't act like it, did he? Why? Because criminals, they're always what?

[16:00] They're always innocent, right? I mean, come on. Everybody knows that. They didn't really do that. Come on. Jesus didn't do that. He didn't act that way. He was divinely restraining his words.

And why should he speak anyways? He was righteous. Plus, this jokester wanted nothing more than to see a really cool thing, right?

Well, Herod was disappointed. Jesus didn't answer him or do a little, hey, hey, little sign. Notice verse 10. The chief priests and the scribes were standing there accusing him vehemently. They continued to just lay into Jesus. no room for comfort at all. Relentlessly accused him before Herod, but that didn't matter. Herod, he was seeing, wasn't getting anywhere with Jesus. He wasn't saying anything, so what did Herod do? His excitement is fading, so he decided to join with his soldiers to mock Jesus. Notice verse 11. And Herod, with his soldiers, after treating him with contempt and mocking him, dressed him in a gorgeous robe and sent him back to Pilate, he decided to have fun with him.

[17:12] Messiah? Huh? This guy? Now that's funny. Let's have a little fun here, guys. They dressed him in some bright clothes, which is regal, kingly, high social standing type clothes.

He wanted to shame Jesus for his claim to be a king. This guy's a king? Wouldn't Herod should have been taking things seriously?

He became flippant, trivial, glib. Here he had the very Son of God in his presence, and he could only joke? Well, having had his fill of fun, he sent him back to Pilate.

Notice verse 12. Herod and Pilate became friends with one another that very day, before they had been at enmity with each other. The two were at odds because Pilate was a ruthless cold leader. He cared less for anybody, especially the Jews. He did some offensive things in the past against the Jews. So they didn't really like him. He was merciless, obstinate, he was inflexible.

[18:30] That was the reason why he and Herod Antipas were at odds. So Pilate sending Jesus to Herod was a kind gesture, and then Herod returned the favor. This mended some poor relations, but it also goes to show that both Rome and Jerusalem are going to be responsible for trying a righteous, innocent man.

So once again, justice was not served. As a matter of fact, instead of taking this seriously, there was indifference.

It was an amusing scenario. They thought it was funny. The righteous one is suffering and they thought this is funny. Look, indifference to Jesus is even more dangerous than opposition because one thinks she or he is okay.

If you're sitting here, you're not a follower of Jesus, you're like, eh. Eh. That's even worse than you opposing Him. People today, they don't take spiritual things seriously.

And even worse, they don't take the Bible seriously. They're flippant and glib, thinking they're just fine with God when that's not the case.

[19:52] And the sad part is even, for us as Christians, sometimes we don't even take the Bible seriously. We don't even take the Christian life seriously. We're flippant, we're glib, we're more in tune with having the next drink or the next football game.

Really? Really? Really? Are you not a follower of Jesus this morning? Have you been indifferent? Eh. That's the whole Jesus religious thing. He was tried as a rebel for rebels. Don't be flippant. Take this seriously. This is serious stuff.

We move on. Notice in verse 13, He summons the chief priests, rulers, and the people.

He brings together these three groups, the religious leaders, social leaders, elders, and scribes, and the people. And I want you to notice that word people in verse 13.

[20:54] This is important because the word people is usually, they usually responded positively, or at least in a neutral. In Luke's gospel, Luke would always distinguish people from crowd.

He would distinguish those two words. What's interesting here is now they're put in the negative. Now, the crowds, they're the ones that really wanted Jesus dead. They were negative. Where the people were more positive or at least neutral.

Now, the people, they're going to flip over here. These are the ones who shouted, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King. Not so now.

It changed. Because people can be fickle. Jesus' popular allegiance was shallow. So they turned on Him because they were swayed by their religious leaders.

So now notice the seven stage, so to speak, Roman examination that you have here starting in verse 14. Notice what Pilate says. You brought this man to me as one who incites the people of the rebellion.

[22:00] You brought this man. He was arrested. Incited the people of the charges. He was perverting. And behold, having examined him before you, that's what's called cognitio, I examined him before you.

I have found no guilt in this man regarding the things or the charges you make against him. So there's no guilt. As a matter of fact, Pilate says this four times. The supporting verdict, verse 15. No, nor has Herod, for he sent him back to us. The acquittal. I behold, nothing deserving of death has been done by him. I will therefore punish him, a judicial warning, scourge in him, and then I will release him.

I'm going to do a compromise. You guys want him dead, I'll just kind of do some whipping.

Whipping. Now, whipping was a horrible punishment because the number of strokes would not be given.

The flogging continued until blood and flesh was there. Flesh was torn open. Ill. It was brutal. But Pilate would have given the lesser of the whippings, of the floggings.

[23:05] Well, that's good. Interesting, Luke never tells us if Jesus was whipped. But notice what happens in verse 16. He says, I will therefore punish him and release him, but the people are not going to have it.

Drop down to verse 18. They cried out all together saying, away with this man and release for us Barabbas. The people reacted vehemently. I take the view that verse 17 was a scribal addition to coincide with Matthew and Mark.

We won't take that as part of Luke's gospel. But notice how the people reacted vehemently. No way! This is the people now. They used to be positive. Now they're negative.

Away with him and release for us Barabbas. Verse 19. He was one who had been thrown into prison for a certain insurrection made in the city and for murder.

He led a rebellion, an uprising. He also committed murder. In other words, Oh, why did I put that there? Okay. In other words, Barabbas did what Jesus was being convicted of.

[24:18] Execute Jesus, let Barabbas go. What a picture of Jesus suffering to set the true lawbreakers, the true criminals, the true God-haters, the true rebels free.

Free. Not to mention the fact, you know what the word Barabbas means? It means son of the father. Wrong son to set free.

Oops. Jesus being tried as a rebel. Well, the true rebel. I mean, imagine this. They said, release for Barabbas.

So they bring out Barabbas and he's sitting there watching and saying, this is awesome. I'm going to probably get set free. This is great.

So he's sitting there watching the whole thing unfold. I want that guy to take my place. I don't want to get crucified. Would you? No.

[25:21] Verse 20 and 21. Pilate wanting to release Jesus addressed him again but they kept on calling out saying, crucify, crucify him.

Pilate attempted to bring justice but they shouted against him. It was the battle of the will, the people's will versus Pilate's. Notice two times, crucify, crucify, for emphasis.

They wanted Jesus to be crucified. They wanted him dead. Crucifixion was the harshest form of capital punishment in the ancient world.

Let's talk a little bit about it. The aim of it was to keep law and order. They publicly executed criminals to promote fear. Fear in those tempted to commit the same crime.

There's two main reasons why people executed. Treason, so for rebels, and the evasion of due process in a capital case. When someone was being crucified, there was four steps.

[26:35] First, the criminal would carry a cross beam to the place of execution. Second, the criminal would be bound to a cross beam on the ground by rope or by nails.

Nails was used less frequently. Third, the beam would be raised by fork poles and fastened to an upright pole or dropped into a slot at the top of the beam.

And fourth, a tablet specifying the crime would be hung around the accused so the public would be able to see why this person was being crucified because of this very reason.

And in crucifixion, death came by suffocation through exhaustion or the loss of blood and body fluids. Many of you probably know this.

As they were crucified, they would try and push up with their legs so that way they could try and get a breath. That's why they would break the legs of the criminal, of the rebel. They would break their legs so that way they couldn't push up anymore and they would just suffocate the death.

[27 : 40] death. The height could be up to seven feet. We're used to seeing the cross and be like really, really high but only seven feet.

That's not very high. It's pretty close to being eye level. And the person would be most likely naked. In many instances they were naked to shame that person for what they've done.

But keep in mind though, it wasn't just the excruciating amount of suffering of crucifixion that Jesus had to face but it was the fact that he exhausted God's wrath. All of God's wrath would be poured out upon Jesus.

They wanted him dead. Notice what happens in verse 22. He said to them the third time, Pilate, why? For the third time, Pilate declared Jesus righteous and innocent.

Why? What evil has his man done? Twice over, what evil? I found no guilt, he says in him, demanding death. I will punish him and release him. He repeated the desire to chastise him and then let him go.

[28 : 45] But the people, they would not have it for 23, but they were insistent with loud voices asking that he be crucified and their voices prevailed. All the evidence pointed to Jesus being released yet, though Jesus was totally righteous, totally innocent, he eventually would still be condemned to die as a criminal, a lawbreaker, a rebel.

They didn't want to compromise. They wanted Jesus dead. They became insistent with a great voice. The pressure was on Pilate to listen.

The pressure was on Pilate. You should be more sensitive to the Jews. You've been a jerk. You're merciless. So Pilate figured, well, one death is better than a mass violence of people.

So their voices prevailed. Which leads us to our next point. First, Jesus was tried as a criminal for criminals. Don't be flippant. Second, Jesus was condemned as a rebel for rebels, for rebels, not criminals, whatever.

Second parenthesis, don't reject him. Second, call, command, don't reject him. Finally, it works their great insistent voices.

[30 : 14] Verse 24, Pilate pronounced sentence that their demand should be granted. The judgment that they wanted, it came. He succumbed to popularity.

But notice, Pilate showed no mercy. He sent a righteous man to the cross. He condemned a righteous man. Pilate. The Jewish leadership, they were the driving force, yes.

But the Romans also had a part that they played. Jesus' fate was sealed. He was delivered to the demand of the crowd and yet, the amazing part, even in the midst of this great evil, evil, God's purposes were still being fulfilled.

Remember what Peter said in Acts 2.23? According to the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed them to the cross.

God was planning this. Notice something interesting too in verse 25. And you released a man they were asking for who had been thrown into prison for instruction and murder.

[31 : 29] Did you notice? Luke doesn't even give his name. He doesn't say Barabbas. Isn't that interesting? What does he do instead? He describes what he did.

Why? Why does Luke just not give his name? Why does he say Barabbas? No, instead he says the one who was thrown into prison for rebellion and murder. Why does he do that?

He does it on purpose. To show that this rebel was released but the righteous innocent one was condemned. The criminal goes free.

The righteous is placed amongst criminals. He does this on purpose so you would see that the one who is a rebel, the one who is a murderer, here he is sitting there watching everything happen.

Here's the innocent one. He goes free and all that the punishment that should come upon him was thrown on Jesus. Jesus. He does this on purpose.

[32 : 34] This is a picture of our sin that's imputed upon Jesus so that he takes upon himself our sin and his righteousness is credited or imputed to us through the means of faith alone.

Those are good news. This is you. This is us. We should have been condemned. We are the rebels. We are the murderers. We are the sinners.

We are the criminals. And here is Jesus innocent, righteous, awesome, holy God. Jesus. And our sin is imputed to him, credited to him. His righteousness is credited to us.

We go free. He dies. What a picture of salvation. Tried as a rebel. Condemned as a rebel. For rebels.

And the channel by which this comes through. The channel that this happens. How does this happen? What's the channel? What's the means by which this happens? This crediting our sins credited to him and his righteousness.

[33:44] Credits to us. What's the channel? Faith alone. Our faith, our trust, our hope in Jesus alone. Who he is and what he's done.

Jesus is reckoned as a rebel. He takes the place of a murder. Murder in the midst of this great tragedy and injustice.

salvation for rebels is guaranteed. Friend, it's not your good deeds that you do. No.

Friend, it's not the merits of anyone else. No. It's Jesus and Jesus alone. That's what makes us who we are.

That's what makes us Protestants. That's what makes us Baptists for crying out loud. It's Jesus and Jesus alone. Not your good deeds.

[34:48] Not your good works. It means nothing. If Barabbas was a really nice guy, so what? He was a rebel. He committed murder.

What if his whole life he was such a really nice person and he just did those two things? I mean, come on guys, let's just let him go? That's not the way it works. Nor does it work that way with you or with me.

It's Jesus and Jesus alone. Jesus faced the total wrath of God while a rebel goes free. His death was unjust, but it yields grace for humanity.

For those who turn from their sin and believe in Jesus, who he is and what he's done. If you're here, you don't know Jesus. You don't think on Jesus.

You don't put your hope in Jesus. This is what you can do. You can do that. You deserve to be crucified. You deserve God's wrath because you are a lawbreaker. You are a sinner.

[35:51] That's who you are. You can have forgiveness, compassion, grace, gentleness. You can have that. Don't you want that? Come.

Come. Come. And find forgiveness and love. Find grace and mercy. So Christian, Christian, when the Father looks upon you, is he angry?

Is he wrathful? Does he want vengeance upon you, Christian? No. No. He says to you what he said about his son, with you I am well pleased.

Why? He says this because Jesus' righteousness is credited to you. God's holiness is endless. We are so inadequate.

Look to Jesus. Cling to Christ. You sinned? Should you have done that? No. What do you cling to? Christ? Did you do that thing?

[36:57] Yes. Should you have done that? No. What do you look to? Christ? Jesus, Christian. You cling to Christ. And you're loved by the Father. He loves you.

He loves you in Jesus. One writer says, quote, the guilty, excuse me, the one guilty of death is pardoned and the innocent one dies in his stead.

That's us, folks. We're pardoned. We're pardoned. We're pardoned. Notice verse 26. And when they led him away, they laid hold of one Simon of Cyrene coming in from the country and placed him on the cross to carry behind Jesus.

I told you, all the criminals had to carry their own cross beam across the back of their neck, actually. You're like, why did Jesus have to do this? Get what's going on here.

First of all, he was up all night. He had no sleep. Also, he'd been whipped, we think, most likely two times. He was mocked and beaten up at least two, three times maybe.

[38:09] So all these things, he's completely exhausted. Exhausted. So the soldiers found Simon of Cyrene coming in from the country.

How would you like that? Coming in, hey, I'm going to celebrate the feast. What in the world? What am I doing this for? Cyrene was a port in North Africa. Now, the Romans would not carry it themselves because of the shame associated with it.

And both Roman culture and Jewish cultures, any criminal had to die outside the city. Because that meant reproach. It was shameful. So you'd go outside the city and that's where you would die. Interesting note, verse 26, another picture of salvation.

Simon, Simon, under the weight of the cross beam and following Jesus' footsteps, that was a dramatic image of what it means to take up one's own cross and follow Jesus.

Isn't that cool? Here he is following Jesus. He had no idea what he was really doing. Are you ready to be humiliated?

[39:16] Are you ready to suffer to follow Jesus? It means suffering like he did. And then something very odd. Much of this stuff is very unique with Luke and his gospel.

But then something happens here, 27 through 31. Following him were the great multitude of people, the women who were mourning and lamenting him. Sympathizers, not strongly opposed to Jesus. They were not women of Galilee, mind you, but women of Jerusalem. May be coming to be well, the death of a young man. Who knows? Local women came out to witness the executions.

It's a sad time. But notice, this is unique with Luke as well. Jesus turning to him, said, daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children.

You didn't see that in the movie, The Passion, did you? Don't be sad for me. Jesus says.

[40:23] Be sad for yourselves. My death is not my fall. It's going to be your fall though. There's doom for you and your kids.

Get concerned and care for these people. Especially the women who were headed for really hard times. In what? Why? 70 A.D. When Jerusalem would face a siege, people would starve.

There would be famine, destruction, hopelessness. 29. For behold, days are coming that will say, blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore, the breasts that never nurse.

Families will suffer terribly. Why? Because they rejected their Messiah. Because they rejected Jesus.

Weep for yourselves. How bad will it be? How bad will it be? So bad that people will bless each other. Oh, that's awesome that you don't have any kids. And I don't say this flippantly.

[41:25] So awesome you don't have any kids because we just ate ours last night. That's what they did. The families would eat the children in order to stay alive.

So great that you don't have any children. So great that your womb didn't have any kids. So great that you did not feed any children.

So great because we had to eat ours last night in order to stay alive. Women were blessed when they had many children. Not in this period of God's judging activity.

No. The fall of Jerusalem would be so great. It would be better to not have a family it would be so painful. It would be so devastating.

It would be so horrible. It would be so horrendous. People would actually want their lives to end. To have a quick death. Notice verse 30. They would begin to say to the mountains, follow on us and to the hills, cover us.

[42:22] It's better to face a quick death than the misery will face in the city in those days. They'll call out for the mountains and the hills, follow on us, hide us, cover us.

It's too painful to live. Jesus quotes here from Hosea chapter 10 verse 8. Because as ancient unfaithful Israel, how they pled for an earthquake to cause the mountains to fall upon them because of the destruction that they were facing at that time, so would it be in 70 AD.

Why? Because they rejected Jesus. Notice 31. For if they do these things in the green tree, what will happen in the dry?

Fire spreads more rapidly when trees are dry. I mean, call me stupid, but when they're green and wet, it's kind of hard to plant or to light a fire. I know I'm no firefighter, but...

So Jesus is the green tree, He says. And the nation is the dry wood. And there's a number of different ways to take this.

[43:33] But for me, this is where I landed. Jesus is basically saying this. If God did not spare Jesus, His eternal Son, how much more would He not spare this rebellious nation?

Why? Because they rejected Him. In other words, the fate of Jesus and the prophets would eventually come upon His enemies.

They would be judged for rejecting Jesus. See, this is a great depiction of salvation and the urgency of salvation. I said to you, if you're not a follower of Jesus this morning, I said to you, come to Jesus.

Come and let Jesus be your substitute. But if you reject Him, you will be judged. He will judge you. Don't be flippant.

Take this seriously. Don't be judged. Listen to what I'm saying. You will find such grace and compassion.

[44 : 39] Come and let Jesus be your substitute. And what grace, what compassion, what mercy to rebels who should be convicted, who should be declared guilty, who should carry their own cross and be crucified, who should face eternal torment in hell.

Friends, you realize that, right? As Jesus was hanging on the cross, what should have been poured out upon sinners, which is eternal torment in hell, it was instead poured out upon His Son as He hung on the cross.

All of God's wrath is just exhausted upon Jesus. Poured out upon Him. No, but instead, instead we are pardoned.

We are loved. We're declared totally righteous in the Father's sight. Because the righteousness of His eternal Son is credited to us. That's amazing.

We're declared righteous. He was tried as a rebel for rebels. He was condemned as a rebel for rebels.

[45 : 52] So that, we can say, as the song goes, when Satan tempts me to despair, tells me, tells you of the guilt within.

We look upwards, and we see Him there. The one who made an end of all my sin. Right? So we sing that. And we sing that with joy.

Because now we have relationship with the Father. Not through our good deeds. Not through the merits of others. But through the merits of Jesus alone. I stand free.

So do you. Take a few moments and ponder what we've seen in God's Word. Take a few moments of silence so you can think, ponder, maybe pray, maybe want to reflect upon Jesus being tried as a rebel and sin came to your mind and you have to bring that to the cross.

But maybe you're not a Christian. Maybe you want to, at this time, turn from sin and put your trust in Jesus. Whatever the case, let's just have a few moments of silence for you to think and ponder what we've seen in God's Word right now.

[47 : 09] And then we'll do our time of giving. And then we'll have our last two songs. Let's think. Thank you.