

When a Father's ...

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Soon, through that commotion, Barabbas may have heard his name mentioned in the arguments outside his cage. They were demanding to have Barabbas released. They ordered Jesus to die in Barabbas' place. "Why would they want me free, after all I have done? Why, they don't even know me. I certainly am not their religious type," he may have considered.

What a tragedy. What an injustice the ensuing trial was. Jesus' reputation was widespread. Certainly, Barabbas had heard something of the man that would die in his stead. He may have heard of Jesus' healing of the sick, or of all the miracles He had performed. Street gossip from many had raised the suspicion of many that this prisoner, Jesus, was not just a man. Some thought He was the "Son of God," the true Son of the true Father, and the long-awaited Messiah.

For all the good Jesus was known, the mob wanted Him to die. This great, good man would die in the place of a common criminal. Some unreliable, written sources even claim that Barabbas' first name was Jesus. As God ordered it, the only Son of the heavenly Father, the promised Messiah, would die in the place of another "son of

"Deathbed repentance is often burning the candle of life in the service of the devil and then blowing the smoke into the face of God." — *Billy Sunday*

father", Barabbas. Jesus would die so the sinful son could go free.

What Barabbas had heard was true. The Roman guards opened his jail door. Barabbas walked away free. Jesus would be taking the place of the criminal. It was not fair for Jesus, but Barabbas was grateful for the court's mercy. The guilty man went free; one would die in his place.

The substitutionary death was only temporary, however. One day Barabbas did die, as one day we will all die. By believing and trusting that Christ's death on the cross is payment for all our sins – past, present, and future, His death can be a payment for all our sins. His death can be what sets us free from sin's control in our lives now, and it can free us from the wages of sin for eternity. His gift of dying for our sin can open the prison gates our sin has put us behind.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

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Jesus Suffered for You

Bill Brinkworth

Many of the details of the most important event in human history are listed in Matthew 27. It is the event that had to happen to give all the opportunity to see and live with God forever. This event was the death of God's only begotten son, Jesus.



In God's plan, Jesus' death was the only way anyone's sins could be paid for. Our good deeds, works, doing religious ceremonies, and obeying tradition cannot pay for one sin we have done, let alone the countless number of which we are guilty. The only payment acceptable to God for our sins was the sacrificial death of His Son. Jesus' death on the cross was not for anything the sinless Saviour

had done, but for what all mankind has done.

Although Jesus was God's son, the pain and suffering He encountered were not lessened. Here is a list of some of what Jesus suffered when He went to the cross for our sins:

- ☞ He was bound (Mat. 27:2).
- ☞ He was betrayed (vs. 3).

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When a Father's Son Went Free

Bill Brinkworth

At the time of the unjust capture of Jesus Christ a notorious criminal was also apprehended. His escapades were known by many in the area. He was a murderer, a robber, and was guilty under both Roman and Jewish law. His name meant "son of father." Maybe at one time he was daddy's boy, but not at the time of his capture. He was the wicked Barabbas.

Surely, the legal presentation of his case did not last long. His

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Jesus Suffered for You

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- ☞ He was falsely accused (vs. 12).
- ☞ He was unjustly convicted. He was so hated that a man guilty of murder and robbery was released so that Jesus could die in that man's stead (vs. 26).
- ☞ He was whipped (vs. 26).
- ☞ He was stripped of His clothing and humiliated (vs. 28).
- ☞ He was repeatedly mocked and ridiculed (vs. 31, 37, 40 ...).
- ☞ He was spat upon (vs. 30).
- ☞ He was beaten (vs. 30).
- ☞ He was nailed to a cross, and allowed to hang there.
- ☞ His death only meant the value of His clothing to some (vs. 35).
- ☞ He and his disciples were not trusted (vs. 42).

Jesus did all this and more to pay for our sins! All the words we know are insufficient to tell Jesus how thankful we all should be to Him for all He has done for us. None of us is worthy of the great price Jesus paid for our iniquities. He is worthy of only good things yet He suffered all this for us! What great love He has for all of us that He would lay down His life so that we could have the opportunity to go to Heaven because of what He has done!

"This is the very essence of true religion — personally living with a personal Savior, personally trusting a personal Redeemer, personally crying out to a personal Intercessor, and receiving personal answers from a Person who loves us, and who manifests himself to us."

— Spurgeon

Has His death on the cross been in vain for you? If you have not made Him your personal Saviour and asked Him to save you from an eternity in Hell, His death was of no value for you! Admit your sinnership, and ask Him to be your payment for sin today.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Romans 10:9-11

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Captivity could not have been lengthy, as his death was planned to be completed before the nearing Passover. He was detained in one of the infamous dark and dank Roman jails. It could have been the only comfort he had of not being alone were the screams and cries of other criminals facing the same fate.

Perhaps, from hearing the

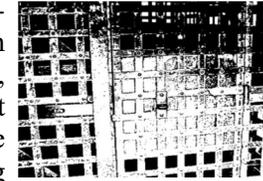
cries and the commotion outside his cell, he learned what was to happen to him. Maybe the guard's cruel taunts also informed him of what his fate would be.

Two of his prison mates would also accompany him in death on the cruel, Roman cross. Just the thought of the long, lingering torture of being nailed to an old, rugged cross would sober even the worst of attitudes, and certainly Barabbas must have been sober.

The other two Barabbas was to die with were thieves. If they deserved death, certainly Barabbas did. As man's standards go, Barabbas' deeds were far worse. Not only was he reaping the consequences of his thievery, but also for his act of murder. His fling of felonies brought much anger to his captors. They would be relieved when he died.

Outside, the people stirred nervously. Crowds came and went. Barabbas may have heard some of their emotional opinions as they brought in another well-known man for punishment. The loudest of the angered mob were the religious. Those Jewish leaders wanted the man destroyed. "Jesus" was the name called out the most. It was Jesus they wanted crucified also.

Arguments and debates pierced the darkness of the early morning. The trials were a



mockery of decent law. Quickly, many hearing the judging of Jesus knew He was guilty of nothing. An earlier hearing from King Herod revealed Jesus had committed no transgression worthy of death. They brought him to Praefectus Pilate, the governor of Judea, who was hearing the case, and he also found no fault in the accused. It had to be evident that the Jewish elders and chief priests had it in for Jesus. They even brought in several men to bear false witness against Him. The leader's envy against Jesus brought the religious leaders' tempers to a frenzy. They pleaded and demanded that Pilate would have Him killed even though the ruler saw nothing worthy of death in the testimonies against Jesus.

Pilate tried to get out of making the decision to crucify Jesus. Their demands were persistent, however. Knowing some of the Jewish laws, Pilate reminded the Jews that a prisoner could be spared prior to the ensuing religious holiday. Ignoring Pilate's repeated pleas to free Jesus from death, their demands quickly changed.

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"There is either of two things we must do. One is to send back the message to Heaven that we don't want the blood of Christ to cleanse us of our sin or else accept it." — D. L. Moody