

GUILTY AS CHARGED! (Mk. 15:1-37)

They nailed my Lord upon the tree
And left Him, dying, there:
Thro' love He suffered there for me;
'Twas love beyond compare.

Upon His head a crown of thorns,
Upon His heart my shame;
For me He prayed, for me He died,
And dying, spoke my name.

*Crucified! crucified!
And nailed upon the tree!
With pierced hands and feet and side!
For you! For me!*

The apostle Paul wrote, **II Cor. 5:21** *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* ... Jesus, the perfect Son of God, was made sin for us, - He had never known sin, but the moment was fast approaching when all the sin of His people would be, - at a stroke, - laid upon Him ... He would be declared 'Guilty as charged' and suffer the penalty of an eternity's worth of Divine punishment that should have been ours.

The Jewish leaders levelled a false charge against Him, for which He was not guilty, - He was innocent of what they had accused Him ... He was faultless before them. But, on the cross, from twelve o'clock noon to three o'clock in the afternoon, as far as how He stood before His Father was concerned, Jesus was rightly condemned, - *guilty as charged!*

He was guilty of murder, because He took upon Himself the punishment for murderers who would come to faith in Him. He was guilty of rape, for He suffered God's righteous wrath for rapists who would be saved. He suffered in the place of thieves, and liars, and terrorists, and all the worst kind of people you could think of ... who would one day come to accept Him as their Saviour.

... There is no sinner beyond the power of God's grace to save ... And among all the people for whom the Lord Jesus died was you and me. **Rom. 5:8** *God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

... The same blood covered *all* our sins ... What a punishment He endured, condemned, and guilty as charged! ...

Calvary was so dark, - for those three hours, darkness enveloped it, **Lk. 23:44** *And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. 45 And the sun was darkened.* ... What a gasp there must have been among the people! One moment the sun was shining, the next it was total darkness ... not just for a minute or two, but for three whole hours. During those three hours, Jesus was still alive ... in the darkness. Humanly-speaking, it could not have been any more frightening for when that darkness descended, those next three hours were the most terrifying and horrendous for our Saviour.

Hanging, nailed to the cross, - fixed there by His obedience to His Father, - Jesus Christ God's Son suffered what must have seemed like a never-ending torrent of God's wrath being poured upon Him. It was relentless ... as if it was never going to stop.

But let's make this clear, for it is so important ... The punishment wasn't coming from the devil, - Satan did not punish Jesus on the cross. Satan was powerless at the cross, - he could not do anything! He did not add one iota of pain to the Saviour. He cannot boast in anything to do with the cross, not even in how Jesus was arrested and interrogated, for it had all been set in place by our Heavenly Father. ... In Jn. 12:27, just five days before He would die, Jesus was on the outskirts of Jerusalem, and He was troubled, and understandably so because the cross was so close. In v. 31, however, He turned from being *troubled* to being *triumphant*, **Jn. 12:31** *Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. 32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. 33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.*

Firstly, He spoke about how the judgment is on the world. Secondly, the prince of this world will be cast out. Thirdly, when He will be lifted up from the earth. Fourthly, He will draw all men to Himself. ... *Mighty statements!*

Firstly, at the cross, the world was judged. Sin's empire was judged. Sin's whole system was judged, and its destruction was sealed by the rejection and imminent murder of the Son of God. ... The world was guilty for God's sentence of judgment was upon them. ... The Jews arrogantly thought they had judged Jesus, but in God's reality, He had judged them, - the Jewish people, their leaders, Herod, Pilate, the Roman soldiers, Judas ... the whole society extending to all mankind, were condemned ... alienated from God caught up in the

wave of rejection of Christ. ... But what looked like the judgment of Christ was, in fact, God's judgment of the world *upon Him* for, - because of God's sovereign and saving grace towards His people, - He passed the sentence of guilt over to His own Son, thus *condemning Him* on the cross. *Jesus* willingly and vicariously took upon Himself His Father's reproach. ... Christ was laid out on the altar ... **Jn. 1:36** *Behold the Lamb of God!* ... And on Calvary's altar the Lamb of God, - in the will of God, - for us defeated sin, death, and the devil.

And that leads into the second part of what Jesus said in Jn. 12:31, *Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.* ... This is a verse some people use to say the devil is bound, but the devil is not bound, - not yet, - for how can he be since he is roaming about like a lion seeking whom he may devour (I Peter 5:8)? ... But, as far as Satan is concerned, at Calvary Jesus dealt the serpent a devastating blow to the head ... *Jesus dethroned him.* What?! Was Satan on some kind of a throne?! ... That's what Paul indicates, **Eph. 2:1** *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;* **2** *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air,* - that 'prince' is a title the devil took to himself ... and yes, he has authentic power in the world, **I Jn. 5:19** *we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.* For God's purposes, God has granted him a dominion, and that is what the devil was referring to when he tempted Jesus, **Lk. 4:6** *And the devil said unto him [Jesus], All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me ...* If God had not given it to him, the devil would not have had it! That's how he 'crowned' himself as 'the prince of this world', but as the story of Job illustrates, his power is always restricted under the sovereign control of God (Job 1:12), and it is temporary, **Rom. 16:20** *the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.*

... But at the cross, it looked like Satan won, that he had triumphed over Jesus, but in reality, Satan was conquered by the victorious Christ Who crushed his head (Gen. 3:15). That means even though Satan continues to fight, he is 'fighting from death row'. He's fighting, and he will become more desperate for he knows he *is* defeated, and Christ is coming soon. Satan continues to battle ... he's 'making all the noises' but he is the loser for Christ wins ... and we are also more than conquerors with Him.

... Satan was cast out of Heaven. Jesus had earlier told His disciples, **Lk. 10:18** *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.* In the Old Testament, Isaiah had spoken of it, **Is. 14:12** *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground [eretz, land, earth] ...* John also highlights it in the

Book of Revelation, **Rev. 12:9** And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him ... He will be cast out again, **Rev. 20:1** And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, ³ And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up ... till the thousand years should be fulfilled ... And the final time he will be cast out will be after the thousand years has expired, **Rev. 20:10** And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone ... and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Jesus said His own death would precipitate judgment on the world, and secondly, the prince of this world will be cast out ... The third part of what He said was this, ³² *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth*, “when I am crucified”, as David had prophesied, **Ps. 22:16** they pierced my hands and my feet, and also Zechariah, **Zech. 12:10** they shall look upon me whom they have pierced. ... Previously, Jesus told His disciples, **Mt. 16:21** how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. ... **Mt. 17:22** The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: ²³ And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again ... **Mt. 20:17** the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, ¹⁹ And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again. ... **Lk. 9:22** The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day. ... **Mt. 26:1** And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, ² Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

He *would* be ‘lifted up’, and here is the fourth part of what He said, - *triumph*, **Jn. 12:32** *if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* ... Jews, Gentiles, people from across the world, **Rev. 5:9** every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. ... I will draw them all, He promised ... *and He will*. He has the authority for He dealt absolutely with our sins on the cross, **Col. 2:15** having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it ... so that ultimately **Col. 1:18** ... in all things he might have the preeminence. ... Jesus took our place at Calvary, - He was *guilty as charged*, bearing our sins ... and now we belong to Him ...

His voice I hear, His love I know;
I worship at His feet;
And kneeling there, at Calvary's cross,
Redemption is complete.