

## Me, You...& Barabbas???

You may think it strange associating you and I with Barabbas. After all, Barabbas had been involved in insurrection and had committed murder.

He was probably a member of the Zealots which was a revolutionary Jewish group. They were not the type to sit around and wait for the Messiah to appear. They were going to get rid of the Romans any way they could. And they tried by inciting the people to riot and to murder soldiers and officials.

But this revolt was put down. Zealots were arrested and put in prison waiting to die.

One of them was a man called Barabbas.

Mark 15:6-15

“Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested. A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. The

crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

“Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate, knowing it was out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

“What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?” Pilate asked them.

“Crucify him!” they shouted.

“Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”

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Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.”

It is interesting Pilate did not offer to release any other prisoner. I'm sure there some who were not as bad as Barabbas.

So why did Pilate offer Barabbas?

At first I thought maybe Barabbas was popular with the people. Or maybe he had been falsely accused and the people had tried in the past to get him released without success.

But no, Barabbas was the worst of them. He was the one the people would be **glad** to see die and **relieved** to see dead.

They would be thankful when **he** was gone.

No more troubles. No more getting the Romans upset. They would be able to return to a life of less trouble, less problems, and less tense situations.

Not a life of peace but at least one without too much disruption. One without the stress of not knowing what was going to happen next.

To get this, all they had to do was to get rid of Barabbas. And the rest of the Zealots in jail.

They were scheduled to die any ways. Not soon enough for some people though.

Matt. 27:15-26

“Now it was the governor’s custom at the Feast to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas.

So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, ‘Which one do you want me to release to you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?’ But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed.

‘Which of the two do you want me to release to you?’ asked the governor. ‘Barabbas,’ they answered.

Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.”

Pilate offered them a choice: Jesus, the so-called king of the Jews, or Barabbas, murderer, rioter, and troublemaker?

Pilate did not want to kill Jesus. When you read the various stories about him, he really did try to have Jesus released.

Granted, in the end he gave in, he gave up, and he gave them what they wanted.

He did not have courage enough stand up to his convictions.

Luke 23:13-25

“Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers and the people, and said to them, ‘You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death.’

Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again.

But they kept shouting, ‘Crucify him! Crucify him!’

For the third time he spoke to them: ‘Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty. Therefore I will have him punished and then release him.’”

Pilate could not find any validity in the charges.

He thought Jesus was innocent.

So....why did he have Him flogged?

Maybe Pilate knew he could not stand up to the chief priests and the elders. Maybe he was afraid of them. Maybe he was afraid of Caesar and other Romans.

The chief priests and the elders wanted rid of Jesus at any cost. They didn’t care about Barabbas, Pilate, or the Romans.

Maybe they didn't even care about the people.

But they persuaded the people to choose Barabbas.

A murderer who never did any one any good. He never preached love and forgiveness. He never saved any one. He never healed any one.

He'd probably never even gone to the synagogue since his bar Mitzvah when he was 12 or 13.

The chief priests and the elders certainly had a lot of influence and power of persuasion over the people.

We can assume they were assisted and provoked by Satan and his demonic forces.

Pilate could not find any validity in the charges. He found Jesus innocent.

Therefore he did not want to have Jesus crucified.

He probably thought if he offered the crowd an alternate choice – the worst, low life, murdering, trouble maker, the source of most of the problems

the Romans had with the Jews – if he offered them a choice between someone good and someone evil, between a peace keeper and a rebel, between a man of love and a man of war, they would surely choose Jesus.

And Pilate would be off the hook.

Even Pilate's wife tried to help him.

Matt. 27:19 “While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: ‘Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him.’”

Why had she suffered? We're not told. Had she heard Jesus preaching and seen His miracles?

Whatever it was she had had a tormenting dream.

Maybe Holy Ghost inspired?

Vs. 20-24 They demanded “Give us Barabbas and crucify Jesus.”



Now here is an interesting situation.

They wanted Barabbas; they didn't want Jesus.

Wonder why this might be interesting?

They were shouting out, "Release Barabbas."

OK, so what? No big deal, right?

Do you know what the name "Barabbas" means?

I got such a blessing when I found this out. This is so good. Listen to this.

Actually before I go on, in Acts 13:6, we read of a false prophet called Bar-Jesus. "Bar-Jesus" means "son of Jesus" or "son of Joshua".

Notice Barabbas is similar. Bar-Jesus, Bar-Abbas.

It is also made of two parts: Bar means, "son of" and Abbas which means "the father."

Bar and abbas: son of the father.

The crowd was crying out, “Release to us Barabbas. Release to us the son of abbas, the son of the father.”

Let me take a little liberty with this.

The crowd was unknowingly crying out, “Release to us the son of Abba, the son of the Father.”

“We want the Son of the Father.”

Without realizing, they were crying out for the Son of God the Father.

Stay with me here.

They were also crying out, “Crucify Jesus. Crucify Jesus.”

What does Jesus mean?

“Jesus” is the Greek word for Joshua. Joshua means

“the Lord saves” or “the Lord who saves.”

They wanted to have “the Son of the Father” released but kill “the Lord who saves”.

I got excited when I realized what they were unknowingly calling for.

This is exciting.

They wanted to have the Son of the Father released but kill the Lord who saves.

What a contradiction.

You know what is ironic, what is really peculiar?

They **did** get their request.

By killing Jesus, they **released** Jesus from what was **stopping** Jesus from saving **them**.

Let me say that again: By killing Jesus, they **released** Jesus from what was **stopping** Jesus from saving **them**.

They killed Jesus and that released Jesus to be their Saviour.

They released ‘the Son of the Father’ from what was stopping Him from being ‘the Lord who saves’.

What was stopping Jesus from being able to save them? DEATH!

That’s what was stopping Jesus from being able to save them.

Jesus had to die in order to save.

Release ‘the Son of the Father’; kill ‘the Lord who saves’.

You, me and...Barabbas.

Each one of us, including Barabbas, was released when Jesus died.

Each one of us needed ‘the Lord who saves’ to die so we could be released, so we could be set free.

I guarantee you never thought you would be associated with a low life, murdering, and dangerous rebel like Barabbas and be thankful for it.

When Barabbas was offered freedom so were each and every one of us.

When Barabbas was offered freedom, he never even considered, not even for a second, staying in prison and not being set free.

Jesus was NOT offered freedom. And He never considered, not even for a second, staying free and leaving you in “prison”.

When Barabbas was offered freedom and life, he took it.

When “the Lord who saves” was offered death, He took it.

Jesus, “the Lord who saves,” offers you freedom.

What are you going to do?

Are you going to reject Jesus and stay in “prison”?

Or are you going to accept Jesus and be set free.

The choice is yours!

The choice **IS** yours.

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