

I/ I am a King

- **John 18v1-11 – Jesus of Nazareth arrested – “I am he”**
 - Jesus is clearly totally in control of his arrest!
 - How do the soldiers respond to Jesus saying “I am he”? There must have been something deeper about this than just a declaration of his humanity (“Jesus of Nazareth”). At the deeper level is a declaration of I am the one who must die for the world.
 - For whom is Jesus most concerned (v8-9)? How concerned is Jesus for you?
 - Simon Peter is ready to take matters into his own hands. How do I respond in threatening situations? What do you think enabled Jesus to take such a calm response (v1,v11)?
- **John 18v12-27 – Trial 1 with the High Priest & Peter denies knowing Jesus**
 - “Another disciple” is most probably John the author (though some disagree on the basis of why would he use a different designation here to elsewhere). He clearly had some good connections!
 - The questions put to Peter are all in the negative, and the first two definitely expect a negative answer. Temptation usually comes in a form that is easy to give in. In what ways are you most easily tempted?
 - The last question is by someone who thinks they saw him. This probably felt quite threatening to Peter as he might then be identified as the one who cut off the ear! The path of denial has already been set, making it even harder to take courage and lay his life on the line.
 - Note Jesus’ answer (v20-21) is to point to many witnesses rather than give self-defence. Is it obvious to the world what I believe?
- **John 18v28-40 – Trial 2 with Pilate – “I am a King”**
 - It is worth noting the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders who ensure they are “clean” to keep the Passover (supposedly in conformance with God’s desire and instruction) while they seek to kill God’s Son. Are we more concerned about conformance and ritual than real obedience to God?
 - Why did the Jews bring Jesus to Pilate? (v29-32)
 - Jesus confirms and declares “I am a King”. What is Jesus’ kingdom? Why has Jesus come into the world? (v36-37)
 - In our “post-modern” world, very low regard is made for truth. Many consider there is no “absolute truth”, and that each of us can think as we please. Pilate almost seems a person of our times (v38)! Do I come to Jesus’ words in the Bible for what they are – truth? Or do I come taking it as just another opinion?
 - Pilate finds Jesus innocent and offers to release him. Do you think Pilate is being serious or sarcastic when he offers the crowd “the king of the Jews”? How does the crowd respond?

- **John 19v1-16 – The sentence – “Here is your king”**

- Jesus is dressed up in mock king's clothes and mocked and beaten: his title used in irony. What do you think Pilate is really thinking?
- The Jews are insistent that Jesus should die. What is the reason? (v7)
- Pilate is afraid. That is not a good place to operate from. He is fearing the people, but he is also concerned that maybe Jesus really is “the Son of God”! He is choosing between upsetting the people and upsetting the gods!
- Jesus' answer is intriguing, but it seems to make Pilate more determined to set Jesus free. What lever do the crowds then use to persuade Pilate? Once again this is a potential position of fear with regards to his employment.
- By declaring “here is your king”, Pilate is getting himself into a tricky situation – he is promoting a king that has not been appointed by Caesar. It is ironic that the Jews declare that Caesar is their king, when they hated being submissive to the Romans. This leaves Pilate with little choice if he is to keep his position under Caesar. What would you have done?

- **John 19v17-27 – The “King of the Jews” is crucified**

- On the basis of v17-22, what do you think Pilate's view of Jesus is?
- John is eager to show the detailed fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. Psalm 22 from which this verse comes is an amazingly “Messianic” Psalm (ie looking forward to the Christ). It is worth reading in its entirety.
- How do you think Jesus felt as he saw his mother and other supporters at the foot of the cross (v25-27)? What does Jesus do to provide for his mother? This may indicate that Jesus' brothers were still strongly opposed to his ministry.

- **John 19v28-37 – The testimony of John and the scripture to Jesus' death**

- The statement “It is finished” is generally seen as a completion of the task he has set rather than a giving up. It is therefore actually a statement of victory – Jesus has endured to the end. Are you a completer? Or do you tend to start things and not push through to completion? Somehow it becomes too much effort and the motivation has reduced. Not so our Lord.
- It would take some time for someone to die by crucifixion: that was part of the cruelty of it. Again, the Jews are concerned for their cleanness in religious rituals without regard to what is really going on. This leads to the evidence that Jesus was actually dead – the flow of blood and water. Yet also, it is the fulfilment of prophecy (eg Isaiah 53v5, Zechariah 12v10) which was most unusual to have both crucifixion and be “speared”. Possibly the effect of the flogging led to the quicker death.
- It would seem that John is writing from first-hand experience (v35), though it could be someone else he considers reliable.

- **John 19v38-42 – Jesus is buried**

- Two closet followers come out of the closet for this important act of burial. It is clear from the other Gospels that some of the women were also with them. It is interesting that there is no record of Jesus' main disciples being involved at all.
- Jesus is given a proper though hurried burial: the Jewish calendar day and in particular the Sabbath began at sunset.
- The King is dead. Pause and give thanks for what Jesus has done for you.
- Pray for those who are believers, but secretly for fear of those who are opposed to them.