

LUKE Lesson 61

Barabbas; a Sinner Set Free When Jesus Paid His Debt (Luke 23:16-21)

23 August 2019

Barabbas is presented in the Bible as a man condemned to die for crimes committed. Jesus came with the power to destroy all His enemies in miraculous ways, yet instead He took the punishment that they deserved and provided a way for them to be set free from condemnation. Barabbas was the first man to benefit from Christ's payment on the cross and stands as a picture of a lost sinner set free by the blood of Jesus Christ.

The account of Barabbas being freed is found in all four Gospels:

Luke 23:16-21

Matthew 27:15-23

Mark 15:6-14

John 18:33-40

Order of events leading to the cross:

1. Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot and arrested in the garden.
 2. He was tried by the chief priests and elders of Israel. They wanted Him dead but lacked authority.
 3. They took Him to Pontius Pilate, the fifth governor of the Roman province of Judaea, to be tried.
 4. Pilate, not wanting to sentence a just man, sent Jesus to Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee for trial. Jesus wouldn't talk so, Herod sent Him back to Pilate.
 5. Pilate's wife, Claudia Procula, warned her husband not to have any dealings with Jesus, whom she knew to be a just man, and whom she feared because of a dream. She was the last person recorded in the Bible to receive a dream from God.
 6. Pilate offered to release Jesus according to a Passover custom, hoping the general population of the Jews would choose to release Jesus rather than to release a murderous, treasonous, robber named Barabbas.
 7. The Jews chose to release Barabbas because the chief priests moved the people to do so (Mark 15:11). See **John 9:22** for another example of the priests' ability to persuade people with fear tactics. They had the people convinced that they could only get to Heaven through the priesthood, so they feared being put out of the synagogue.
 8. They didn't choose Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father (singular). They chose Barabbas, which means "son of the fathers" (plural). **Bar** = son of (Matthew 16:17 with John 1:42). **Abba** = Father (Mark 14:36, Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:6).
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Barabbas; a sinner forgiven and set free:

1. Barabbas was guilty; he was sentenced to death for his crimes. In the meantime, he was bound in chains with other men who were also guilty. He had no chance of escape or pardon.
 2. Jesus, the innocent man, took the place of this guilty man. He died in his place and set him free.
 3. After that, Barabbas stayed away from the jail house that had held him captive.
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The New Testament Gospel:

1. I have sinned (Romans 3:23). I'm guilty (Romans 3:19, James 2:10). I was sentenced to die (2 Cor. 1:9). I was bound in chains (Galatians 4:3, Hebrews 2:15). I was already condemned (John 3:18).
 2. Jesus, the just One (Acts 3:14, 7:52) who had no sin (Heb 4:15, 1 Peter 2:22), took my place and paid my penalty (1 Peter 2:21, 1 John 3:16, Acts 20:28, Ephesians 1:14) and set me free (Romans 6:18, 22, 8:2). Now my iniquities are forgiven, my sins are covered, and I'm cleared of all charges (Romans 4:7-8).
 3. From now on, I stay away from the things that used to hold me captive
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1 Peter 2:24

1 Peter 3:18