

Examination

a. Before the Sanhedrin & Herod (22:66-23:12)

22:66-69 The human predicament – men aren't changed by LIGHT only! (Isaiah 6:9,10; Acts 28:25-27; John 7:17)

[1] Our Lord's confession deprived His enemies of all excuse for unbelief. The Jews can never plead that our Lord left their forefathers in ignorance of His mission, and kept them in doubt and suspense. Here we see our Lord telling them plainly who He was, and telling them in words, which would convey even more to a Jewish mind than they do to ours. Their hearts were hardened by prejudice. Their minds were darkened by judicial blindness. The veil was over the eyes of their inward man. They heard our Lord's confession unmoved, and only plunged deeper into the most awful sin. **J.C. Ryle** *Luke* Vol. 2 p. 444

22:70,71 Christ's enemies confirm His prophecy!

[2] [22:70] Whereas before they had asked Jesus to say whether He was the Christ, now they ask the direct question, *Are you the Son of God, then?* As men are sometimes called sons of God, we must understand the definite article as important. They are asking whether Jesus claims a special relationship to God. His reference to the Son of man and to the place at God's right hand must have seemed to them a claim to a higher place than that which they understood the Messiah to occupy. For them a claim to be Messiah might be a mistake, but it was not blasphemy. But this was something different. **Leon Morris** *Luke* p. 318

23:1-5 What is the leaders' angle with Pilate?

[3] [23:1,2] The depth of feeling that gripped the

Sanhedrin is seen in that the whole company of them brought Jesus to Pilate. **Leon Morris** *Luke* p. 319

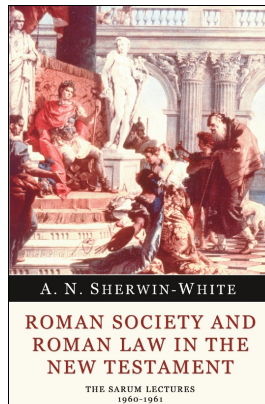
[4] [23:3] It condenses a conversation given at greater length by John, without whose narrative that of the three is scarcely intelligible. It would be extraordinary that Pilate should simply hear that Jesus admitted that He claimed to be King of the Jews, and at once declare, "I find no fault in this man. But a conversation with Jesus had convinced Pilate that He was a harmless enthusiast. He did not claim to be a king in the ordinary sense. **Alfred Plummer** *Luke* p. 521

23:6-12 What is Herod's interest? (9:7-9; 13:31-33)

[5] [23:8-12] Joana, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward (8:3), would be a likely source of information. **Alfred Plummer** *Luke* p. 522

[6] [23:8-10] *Sign (semeion)* is often used of Jesus' miracles in John, but the Synoptists prefer *dunamis*, 'mighty work'. The word normally indicates that the miracles had meaning, that they were significant. But Herod would have been thinking only of the miraculous. The interview must have disappointed Herod. He got no answer to his many questions. What could Jesus say to the trifler who wanted nothing more than a mild sensation? He never refused a sincere questioner, but Herod was not in that class. He is the only person to whom Jesus said nothing at all. **Leon Morris** *Luke* p. 321

[7] [23:11] The chief guilt throughout is transferred from Pilate to Herod and the Jews. **Alfred Plummer** *Luke* p. 523



Murdering Messiah

a. Piecing Together the Facts of the Trial (23:13-25)

23:13-17 What is Luke at pains to emphasize about Pilate (i.e. Rome's representative?, vv. 20,22)

[8] [23:16] Luke is remarkable in that his additional materials – the full formation of the charges before Pilate, the reference to Herod, and the proposed acquittal with admonition are all technically correct. **A.N. Sherwin-White** *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* p. 32

23:18-25 How is the blame for Messiah's death here apportioned? (Acts 3:13-17)

[9] The details of Jesus trial are not easy to piece together, for none of the Gospels gives a full account. But it seems clear that there were two main stages. First, there was a Jewish trial in which the chief priests had Jesus condemned according to Jewish law and

then tried to work out how best to get the Romans to execute Him. Then a Roman trial followed in which the Jewish leaders prevailed on Pilate to sentence Jesus to crucifixion. The Jewish trial was itself in two or three stages. During the night there were informal examinations before Annas (as John tells us) and Caiaphas (who had some of the Sanhedrin with him). After daybreak came a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin. This was probably an attempt to legitimate the decisions reached during the night. It was not lawful to conduct a trial on a capital charge at night. It was not even lawful to give the verdict at night after a trial had been held during the day. But the Jewish hierarchy was in a hurry, so they rushed Jesus into an examination immediately after His arrest, night time though it was. To give this an air of legitimacy they proceeded to hold a daytime meeting in which the essentials of the night meeting were repeated and confirmed. Even so they came short of what was required, for a verdict of condemnation could not be given until the

day after the trial (Mishnah, *Sanhedrin* 4:1). But they appear to have thought it was worth doing and all three Synoptists tell us of the day meeting. ... Luke's account is quite short. He tells us only of Jesus' appearance before the formal Sanhedrin. **Leon Morris** *Luke* p. 317

[10] [23:24,25] Pilate gave his decision. Luke begins and ends by referring to the Jews, first to *their demand* that Pilate granted and finally to *their will* to which he gave Jesus up. We cannot miss the emphasis on the Jews' responsibility for Jesus' death. ... Perhaps we should add that Luke is not being anti-Semitic, much less providing grounds for anti-Semitism in our own day. He is dealing with a specific group of people and maintaining that they brought about Jesus' death. **Leon Morris** *Luke* p. 324

23:26-31 How is there ambiguity in the Jewish attitude to Christ?

[11] [23:27] These are probably not the women who had ministered to Him previously (8:1-3), but sympathizers from the city. Comp. Zech. 12:10-14. In the Gospels there is no instance of a woman being hostile to Christ. **Alfred Plummer** *Luke* p. 528

[12] [23:27-31] This incident is found only in Luke. It brings out something of the sympathy felt for Jesus by many, especially among the women folk. We should bear in mind that those who clamoured for Jesus' execution were not necessarily a great number. They could crowd in round the judgment hall. There were still many in Jerusalem who admired Jesus and it is of some of these that we now learn. **Leon Morris** *Luke* p. 325

[13] [23:31] This saying is an argument *a fortiori*, and it may be easily applied in more than one sense here. (1) If the Romans treat Me, whom they admit to be innocent, in this manner, how will they treat those who are rebellious and guilty? (2) If the Jews deal thus with One who has come to save them, what treatment shall they receive themselves for destroying Him? (3) If they behave thus before their cup of wickedness is full, what will they commit when it overflows? **Alfred Plummer** *Luke* p. 529

23:32-38 What is Luke's unique contribution to our knowledge of the Lord's attitude at the end?

[14] [23 32-38] In this form of execution men were fastened to a cross (which might be shaped like our conventional cross or like a T, an X, a Y or even an I) by ropes or nails. ... Crucifixion was a slow and painful death, but it is noteworthy that none of the Evangelists dwells on the torment Jesus endured. The New Testament concentrates on the significance of Jesus' death, not on harrowing our feelings. **Leon Morris** *Luke* p. 326

[15] [23:34] This cannot refer to the Roman soldiers, who were doing no more than their duty in executing a sentence which had been pronounced by competent authority. It was the Jews, and especially the Jewish hierarchy, who were responsible for what was

being done: and but for the pressure which they had put upon him, even Pilate would have remained guiltless in this matter. What follows shows that the petition refers to the act of crucifixion, not to their sins generally. **Alfred Plummer** *Luke* p. 531

23:39-43 According to this unique segment, what is saving faith? (18:16,17)

[16] [23:42] Possibly he believed that Christ would raise him from the dead. In any case his faith in one who is crucified with him is very remarkable. Some saw Jesus raise the dead, and did not believe. The robber sees Him being put to death, and yet believes. **Alfred Plummer** *Luke* p. 535

[17] [23:42,43] Jesus assures this man of bliss in the immediate future, a bliss closely associated with Himself (*with me*). **Leon Morris** *Luke* p. 329

[18] [23:43, on *paradise*] The word, said to be of Persian origin, is used in various senses in Scripture: 1. "a park or pleasure-ground" (Neh. 2:8; Cant. 4:13; Eccl. 2:5); 2. "the garden of Eden" (Gen. 2:8-10,15,16, 3:1-3,8-10 etc.); 3. "Abraham's Bosom", i.e. the resting place of the souls of the just until the resurrection (the meaning here); 4. "a region in heaven," perhaps identical with "the third heaven" (2 Cor. 12.4). ... By His use of the word, Jesus neither confirms nor corrects Jewish beliefs on the subject. He assures the penitent that He will do far more than remember him at some unknown time in the future: this very day He will have him in His company in a place of security and bliss. **Alfred Plummer** *Luke* p. 536

23:44-49 Another singular emphasis of Luke! (compare the only saying from the cross in Matthew and Mark)

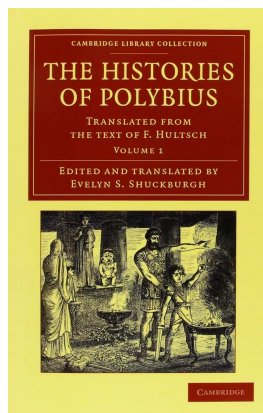
[19] [23:45] In the Gemara it is stated that some forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, the heavy gates of the temple, which could with difficulty be moved by many men, and which were locked at the time, flew open about midnight at the Passover. Josephus (*B.J.* 6:5:3) reports an occurrence of this kind shortly before the capture of the city. As Neander remarks (*L.J.C.* 293n), these accounts hint at some

strange occurrence as being remembered in connexion with the time of the Crucifixion. **Alfred Plummer** *Luke* p. 538

[20] [23:47] The good character of the centurions in N.T. confirms the statement of Polybius, that as a rule the best men in the army were promoted to this rank (6.24.9). **Alfred Plummer** *Luke* p. 539

[21] [23:48] Many of them had had no share in clamouring for Christ's death; and those who had taken part had been hounded on by the prests, and now felt remorse for what they had caused. **Alfred Plummer** *Luke* p. 539

What did Jesus mean by "paradise"?



The 7 sayings from the cross

[22] Of the 7 sayings which Jesus uttered on the cross, the first 3 refer to the persons surrounding Him – His enemies, His companion in punishment, and those whom He loves most tenderly, His mother and His friend; they are, as it were, His will. The 3 which follow: "My God, my God ... I thirst; ... It is finished," refer to His sufferings and the work which is being finished; the first 2, to the sufferings of His soul and of His body; the third, to the result gained by this complete sacrifice. Finally, the seventh and last: "Father, into Thy hands ..." is the cry of perfect confidence from His expiring heart in its utmost weakness. 3 of those 7 sayings, all 3 words of grace and faith, are related by Luke, and by him only. **Frederic Godet** *Luke* p. 492