

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of September 8, 2024

THEME: "Barabbas"

A CHOICE

Sunday..... Read Luke 23:18-25

"And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas." The Roman governor had heard the accusations of treason against Jesus, so he tried Him. His conclusion after a private conference with Jesus was that He was innocent: the charges were false! Instead of insisting on justice, Pilate released Barabbas, a robber, to the crowd rather than the innocent Jesus. He then sentenced Jesus to be crucified. Little did Pilate know that he was fulfilling God's plan: the death of the Son of God to be the Savior of the world. Jesus, sinless at birth and sinless through life, would die the death of a sinner. His death was to pay the penalty for our sins! The crowd then chose a worldly man instead of Jesus. Each of us has a choice to accept or reject Jesus. To accept Him is receiving God's gift of eternal life paid for by the blood of Jesus. There is no better choice!

A CRIMINAL

MondayRead John 18:37-40

"Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber." Barabbas was a criminal, a robber mentioned in today's Bible reading. In Mark 15:6-7, He was called a murderer: *"Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection."* This decision of the crowd is a picture of the choice of every person in the world: Jesus or a man. That is a choice between God's provision of salvation or sinful humanity. We know from Romans 6:23 that the penalty of sin is death. To reject Jesus is to remain a guilty sinner in the human race that had been marred by Adam and Eve. Both with a sin nature, all humans are guilty, not only by birth, but by their own sinful actions. In His love, God gave His Son to pay the penalty of sin. Choosing Jesus is having God's pardon. Rejecting Jesus is remaining a guilty sinner condemned to an eternity in hell.

A COMMANDMENT

Tuesday..... Read Matthew 19:15-20

Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal..." The choice the crowd made at the trial was to choose Barabbas, a robber. This is the choice of a man clearly in violation of a

couple of the ten commandments given by God made in the book of Exodus: *"Thou shalt not steal...Thou shalt not murder."* This is a clear demonstration that the choice of the world was to put violating God's law as less important than believing in God: Pilate's political decision to crucify Christ: picking Barabbas over Jesus!

A CHOICE

Wednesday Read Joshua 24:15-20

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The human being was made by God to have a built-in desire to worship. That desire will be fulfilled either by worshiping God according to the truth of the Bible, or by some manmade set of doctrines. Unfortunately, more people in the world focus on manmade doctrines than God-given truth in the Holy Scriptures! How much better to do as the writer of the verse in today's Bible reading and worship and live by God's truth! That is the key to having God's blessing.

SPEECH

Thursday Read Psalm 19:7-14

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer." The psalmist made a very meaningful prayer: asking God to control his conversation. He wanted to be sure that what he said passed Divine judgment. Words are important: they can be helpful, but they can be hurtful! If what we say is complimentary to others, it is acceptable to God. He is the listener to what we say according to James 1:26: *"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."* I wonder how much worship today is in vain! God hears what we say, is He pleased?

THE CRUCIFIXION

Friday Read Luke 23:30-35

"And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left." Little did those who nailed Jesus to the cross realize they were actually fulfilling the will of God. It was the literal fulfilment of John 3:16: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* Here He was dying with two other criminals who were paying the penalty of their sins. Jesus, our sinless Savior, was paying the penalty for our sins! He satisfied God's law that requires death to pay the penalty of sin. Jesus suffered that penalty of death to give sinners the hope of victory over death. Jesus accomplished that by His glorious resurrection on the third day!

ARROGANCE

Saturday.....Read Mark 15:20-24

"And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take." Those who rejected Jesus and put Him to death added insult to injury. They made His garments an object of gambling. While the followers of Jesus were mourning His death, those who rejected Jesus were making sport. In a way, that has been the digression of America, which started out a Christian nation with the followers of Jesus. Now in the American culture there are arguably more Americans at the sports arena than the house of God! Praise God that there are still many Americans who identify with our founders and are firmly relying on God for our success! Our national motto still stands: "In God we trust!"