

Trial and crucifixion of christ history essay



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The events that led to the death and subsequent crucifixion of Christ closely relates to the accounts of Mark, one of the four gospels in the Bible, whose version was presented the earliest and hence the possibility of being most relevant. Furthermore, the versions of Mathew and Luke heavily rely on Mark's gospel. John's accounts dated around 80 to 95 C. E. are also a replica of Mark's recordings though with creativity in presentation as compared to Matthew's or Luke's. The Jews community lived under the reign of the Roman rule after the 63 B. C. E capture of Jerusalem by the roman general Pompey that wiped out the independent Palestinian state of the Jews. By 6 C. E, approximately seven decades after the Jewish capture, Roman laws were experiencing much opposition from the Jews on such issues like taxation, census as well as the utilization of the temple as a place of worship among the Jews (Daniel 2004, 96).

The uprising opposition of the Jews against the Roman laws mitigated crucifixion of more than two thousands insurgents as well as slavery of more than twenty thousand Jews

The Jews were specifically against the Roman law that imposed a property census for taxation purposes. The value hitherto placed on Jewish ancestral property such as land was very high that the Jews could not comprehend Rome appropriation of land, a possibility that the Roman law was indicating. Moreover, acts of defilement of the temple at Jerusalem provoked anger among the Jewish community. To the Jews, the temple was the most revered centre of religious existence manifested in sacrifices and prayers as well as a central bank for taxes and tithes. Any other activity including conducting business, non observance of codes and such was a defilement of the temple

and indeed a disrespect of the God of the Jews[2]. It being the center of contention, Roman leaders closely monitored all activities in the temple by harshly punishing any indication of Roman threat by the Jews (Leo 2002, 474).

It was during this period that John the Baptist who had previously baptized Christ was executed. The execution had a profound effect on Jesus Christ, who seeing the perceived hopelessness of the Jews, got stirred to modify John the Baptist apocalyptic vision to a vision that would endeavor to realize a change in both religious and political institutions. By around 29 C. E Christ started his teachings that illustrated an ideal world that could only realize its existence by replacing Caesar and the high priests, who ruled Jerusalem at the time, with God (Sheey 1999, 443). The said teachings were founded more on a need for change of the aforementioned institutions and less emphasis on awaiting an avenging God and as such threatening the powerful Roman leaders and the temple officials. Christ was however not immediately executed as Antipas balanced such an execution against the resentments subsequent to the execution of John the Baptist, in whose interest Christ's mission seemed to be centered. Antipas therefore delayed his move to suppress God's kingdom movement as propagated by Christ[3].

The trial and the subsequent crucifixion of Jesus appear to be primarily caused by his pronounced role in the temple's April, 30 C. E historic incident. The incident was during the festive period that included the religious day of Passover which would later usher in week of unleavened bread. During the festive, a multitude of Jews gathered to commemorate the exodus from Egypt which was a land of oppression to Canaan the promised land. Contrary

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to the temple religious codes, individuals conducted commercial practices that included sale of pigeons that were otherwise used by worshipers for making sacrifices as well as conversion of coins that bore images of emperor to Tyrian silver coins that were the only acceptable donation coins. Gospel accounts illustrate the participation of Jesus in driving away all those participating in commercial practices in efforts to purify the temple.[4]The events led to the night arrest of Jesus in Gethsemane which was an olive grove situated west of Jerusalem on mount Olives. The Romans that arrested Jesus included temple police instructed by Caiaphas.[5]While arresting Jesus, Gospels accounts the involvement of Judas Iscariot, one of the close followers of Jesus in handing over Jesus to the Roman authorities. Judas had kissed Jesus in efforts to assist the arresting police identify Jesus and had actually received a pay for it (Daniel 2004, 94).

The authorities then presented Jesus Joseph Caiaphas the high priest and the Jewish supreme council of governance known as Sanhedrin on account of blasphemy[6]. Indeed, Jesus' reply to Caiaphas' enquiry whether he had claimed to be the Messiah confirmed it all. was asked The initial concerns for the Jewish for Jesus' arrest may have primarily arose from the confrontation that Jesus had with traders in the temple, his teachings in the temple or even the Romans' fear on his increasing popularity that would lead to an uprising against the Roman rule (Leo 2002, 475). The prosecution by the high priest held that Jesus had committed offenses that were punishable by crucifixion as was in line with the Roman rule of law and hence handed Jesus to Pilate for execution of the sentence. Pilate was unconvinced with the sentence delivered by the high priest and actually regards the judgment as envious.

However, Pilate authorized the crucifixion of Jesus, not through a conviction that Jesus deserved it, but as a move to please and satisfy the crowd.

Indeed, it was unheard of for Pilate to ask for the public opinion on whether to crucify Jesus or not as if the crucifixion was not an objective move towards an observance of the Roman law.

Meaning and symbology of crucifixion

The events and the subsequent crucifixion of Christ symbolize a humble phenomenon that would probably alter the political and religious institutions as observed by the Romans. Gospels account that Jesus had evaded other attempts which had threatened his life. For example, He evaded the threat to throw him down-the-hill, yet he could not evade crucifixion. The crucifixion therefore symbolizes humility with which the followers of Christ also should emulate. The crucifixion also symbolizes the cruelty that is deep seated in individuals (Clarke 2003, 162). The later manifests itself with the beating that Jesus received as he proceeded to Golgotha for crucifixion.[7]The piercing on the cross while crucified and the nailing of the limbs on the cross clearly symbolizes cruelty in human beings.

It is important to note that though the Roman law was in place during the crucifixion process, excessive cruelty was observed through the dismissal of Pilate on account of cruelty leading to Pilate's seeking refuge in Vienne, France (Leo 2002, 476). In addition, the crucifixion of Jesus symbolizes defects that exist in upholding of the rule of law. Objectively, Pilate saw no logic in the judgment delivered by the high priests but instead of upholding the same law and dismissing the judgment sort the approval of the citizens in crucifying Jesus. By extension, the crucifixion of Jesus symbolizes the

knowledge deficiency that exist/existed during the drafting of the law and hence a need for constant review.

Individuals who saw the events that led to and the actual crucifixion of Jesus regarded the act as a rejection of the Messiah. Indeed, the then followers of Jesus disassociated themselves from the doctrine. However, later writings started describing the crucifixion as having deeper meaning beneath the human comprehension surface of the early Jewish and Roman community. Today, crucifixion of Jesus has the following meanings (Sheey 1999, 445). To start with, Crucifixion was God's plan in redeeming humanity as had earlier been prophesied long before Jesus came.[8]The redemption of human beings included the payment of the debt of sin, which is death and hence a reconciliation between human beings and God. The Bible displays God as just and as such keen to ensure that sin/wrongs are punished. The blasphemy sin that human beings have committed against God is punishable by death. The death of Jesus on the cross paid the debt of sin on behalf of Christians giving them a chance to commune with God, a fellowship that was lost when sin got a place in human beings (Daniel 2004, 94).

Second, the crucifixion of Jesus, who was God's own son, has the implication that human beings have God alone to boast of. Realizing the simplicity in human beings in their choice of subject of worship, God chose to have Jesus crucified so that human beings, on being reunited back to Him would find the absolute reason to worship Him (Nelson 1997, 336). Indeed, the importance of reestablishment of the relationship between God and human beings is worth the best that human beings can give which is worship. Probably, if Christians would pay for the cost of reuniting themselves with God, they

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would boast of their ability and as such overlook the essence of boasting of their Almighty God. Indeed, the centre of Christians' faith is the crucifixion of Jesus on the cross and the subsequent resurrection.

Third, the crucifixion of Jesus who asserted to be God in Him demonstrated God's power to save human beings from the dominion of sin that leads to death. In fact, human beings would never have afforded the cost of establishing a reunion between themselves and God since it involved a pure purifying blood. The pure blood would only be from Jesus alone since He had committed no sin[9]. The love of God to human beings to the extent of allowing His only son to be crucified is beyond reason and can only be termed as foolish to human beings in their normal senses and who would want to save themselves (Sheey 1999, 445).

In addition, the followers of Jesus at the time He was being crucified, though absorbed in fear, developed an inward drive and an uprising that would strengthen them in observing the course that led to their role model sufferings. Indeed they had witnessed the worst that would ever face them. As such they were not afraid of any unknown. In the modern days, crucifixion of Jesus has formed the basis of differentiating Christianity from any other religion. Throughout the ages there has not been such a sacrifice to reconcile human beings to God (Clarke 2003, 198). To the Christian community, the superiority of the said sacrifice provides the evidence of the superiority of their religion and a reason to hold in Christ's teaching. Indeed, Christian gatherings observe the events that led to crucifixion of Jesus during Easter. During Easter period, Christians derive themselves off life's comfort ranging from esteemed food, drinks, associations and the related to signify the

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suffering of Christ. In crucifying Jesus, it became possible for Christians to have a long-term survival in their faith, and all the related positive message and action hope, love, and faith.

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[1]The gospel accounts commonly referred to as 'The Gospels' in the Bible include the first four books of the new testament Bible i. e. Mathew, Mark, Luke and John.

[2] Temple codes included humility, silence and meditation as well as non violence

[3] Antipas was the Roman official who beheaded John the Baptist

[4] Gospel accounts of Jesus' driving out business people from the temple can be found in Mathew chapter twenty one. Scholars criticize the possibility of the temple purification described herein amidst the watchful eyes of the Roman administration that clearly monitored the temple activities and whose commercial practises was at their discretion.

[5] Caiaphas was the high priest

[6] Blasphemy is defined as the speaking of God's sacred name that was YHWH according to Jewish law code that was assembled around 200 C. E

[7] Golgotha also referred to the mountain of bones was the crucifixion site for the Romans

[8] Prophecies about the death of Jesus to reunite God and human beings are in the Old Testament accounts of the Bible.

[9] The blood of the most pure human beings would probably be that of a child who unfortunately, is born of human beings who are impure and hence even the child is impure.