



THROUGH THE EYES OF BARABBAS

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCE

Mark 15:6-15

So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged *Him*, to be crucified. ~ **Mark 15:15**

ADDITIONAL STUDY

II Corinthians 5:17-21,
Ephesians 2:1-10, & I Timothy 2:5-6

PRAYER POINTS

- + Thank God for the great exchange which came with a great salvation, and has given you new possibilities in life
- + Ask for grace to be fervent in serving the purpose of God for your life as long as you live

Around 33 AD in Jerusalem, a man was lying on the cold floor of a maximum prison. Being a notorious prisoner, his feet were kept in stocks and his wrists were chained to other convicts like him. He had led a bloody riot in an attempt to overthrow the ruling Roman government, in which he had killed some people. So, as a murderer, Barabbas was kept on death row, awaiting the day of his execution, by crucifixion. For how long he was there, we really can't tell.

One Friday morning, after some commotion on the streets above his dungeon, Barabbas hears the footsteps of soldiers approaching his cell. "This must be execution day," he thought. He must have said final goodbyes to his cell mates and was ready to face his fate. On approaching the judgment seat of the Procurator (Governor), Pontius Pilate, he saw a Man he had heard about, looking gentle and meek, bound and held by soldiers. He listened to His trial and how Pilate pronounced Him not guilty. However, he saw the rage of the Jewish leaders and the people. They insisted that He must be crucified although He did nothing wrong. Pilate was in a dilemma, but he would exploit a provision of their law to grant pardon to convicts. He pitched Jesus against this career criminal. He was sure the people would ask for Barabbas' head.

Barabbas awaits the verdict... "Who should I release to you, who should I execute?" Pilate asks. Barabbas could smell death, he could see himself hanging...he was lost in thought until he was interrupted. "Release Barabbas, crucify the Christ!" the crowd shouted. Suddenly, the soldiers removed the stocks and fetters from His hands and feet, and put them on Jesus...and Barabbas just strolls into the crowd – a free man. He kept looking back wondering if it was just a dream.

Barabbas became the first fruit of the great exchange Jesus brought to us by His death. He just had a life-from-the-dead experience. One minute he was sentenced to death, another, he was a free man. All he ever did wrong was forgotten, the charges against him dropped, and the guilty verdict was reversed. Barabbas, after that experience, was as innocent as anyone in Jerusalem.

Barabbas, whose name means, 'Son of (human) father' was substituted for by the 'Son of our Heavenly Father,' Jesus. His encounter reveals to us how Jesus died for us sons of men, how He took our place, took the death that was meant for us, suffered the consequences for our sins and declared us not guilty before God. We who were once sinners are now the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. Barabbas must have lived the rest of his life with this 'salvation' experience etched indelibly on his heart. How much more should we live in recognition and in appreciation of our Great Salvation. How much should we use our lives and time to serve the purpose of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us? It doesn't matter what your past is or what name life gave you, the great exchange took place, old things are passed away, all things are now new!