

THE FOREST HILL NEWS

Published weekly by the Forest Hill church of Christ

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Forest Hill

Church of Christ

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VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.
Morning Worship... 10:30 A.M.
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

HOME OF

MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

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In Search of the Lord's Way

Volume 32

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Number 10

Yes, The Jews Crucified Christ And So Can We!

Ivie Powell

Mel Gibson is a traditional Catholic; refuses to eat meat on Fridays and attends a church where the Mass is said in the traditional Latin. Mr. Gibson rejects the changes made by the Second Vatican Council in the 1960's which declared that Jews as a group were not to be blamed for the death of Jesus. Gibson's new movie, **The Passion of the Christ**, has produced a firestorm throughout the religious world. Jews and liberal theologians are denying that the Jews were responsible for the crucifixion of Christ. The Vatican has reiterated its position clearing the Jews. Of great interest is the statement of Pope John Paul II, who after viewing the film said, "It is as it was." Of course, the Vatican tried to quickly explain away his statement. Film critic Joe Williams for the **St. Louis Post-Dispatch** said, "The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Anti-Defamation League denounced the film saying it contained faulty scholarship. Particularly the assertion that Caiaphas (and, by extension, the Jewish people) hectoring the helpless Pilate into crucifying Jesus" (Sunday, February 15, 2004).

I am truly amazed and appalled at the outright dishonesty of these so-called "scholars!" Pilate was not helpless, for he had the power to release Jesus whom he knew to be innocent (Matt. 27:15-18, 24). John removes any question as to whether the Jews hectored Pilate, "*And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar*" (John 19:12). Coffman summarizes Pilate's efforts to release Jesus as follows:

- Pilate sent him to Herod.
- He gave a verdict of innocence.
- He offered to substitute a lighter punishment.
- He proposed a choice between Christ and Barabbas.
- He insisted on his innocence, "Why, what evil hath he done?"
- He suggested that they take him and mob him.
- He yet sought to release him.

(**Commentary on The Gospel of Matthew**, Burton Coffman, pp.468-469)

Why did the Jews have such blind, intense hatred for Christ? For one thing, they were envious of him (Matt. 27:18). Boles' comments along this line are not worthy.

The word 'envy' in ancient writings implies somewhat more than it does now. It signified all those hostile feelings which are included under the general term 'unpopularity.' Fear of his power with the people, jealousy at his purity, his wisdom and miracles, a mean desire to crush a good and great man, with all the wicked, malicious feelings of a fickle multitude are ranked under the word 'envy' as used here...(**Commentary on Matthew**, H. Leo Boles, p.532).

The real underlying cause for the Jew's hatred of our Lord (John 15:25) was Christ's claim to be the Messiah, the divine Son of God! *"The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God"* (John 19:7).

Well, were the Jews responsible for crucifying Christ? Let's let them answer that question.

Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children (Matt. 27:22-25).

On the day of Pentecost, Peter said, *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ"* (Acts 2:36). In an attempt to remove the sting and cloud of shame surrounding the Jews for crucifying Christ, one "pastor" said that it was sin that crucified Christ. The fact of the matter is, it was sinful Jews that crucified Christ!

Not only are the Jews responsible for the crucifixion of Christ, they called for the innocent blood of Christ to be on their children. *"His blood be on us, and on our children."* It is no coincidence that the Jew's city and temple were overthrown and destroyed, and more than a million perished in the siege (Matt. 24:1-35). Barnes says,

...thousands died by famine; thousands by disease; thousands by the sword; and their blood ran down the streets like water, so that Josephus says, it extinguished things that were burning in the city. Thousands were crucified suffering the same punishment that they inflicted on the Messiah. So great was the number of those who were crucified, that Josephus says, they were obliged to cease from it, "room being wanted for the crosses, and crosses for the men." See Notes on ch. xxiv. To this day, also the curse has remained.

They have been a nation scattered and peeled; persecuted almost everywhere, and a hissing and a byword among men. No single nation, probably has suffered so much; and yet they have persevered. All classes of men, all the governments of the earth, have conspired to overwhelm them with calamity, and yet they still live as monuments of the justice of God, and as proofs, going down from age to age, that the Christian religion is true – standing demonstrations of the crime of their fathers in putting the Messiah to death, and in calling down vengeance on their heads. (**Notes on The New Testament, Matt. – Mark**, Albert Barnes, p. 306).

Our Lord willingly gave His life (John 10:17-18) on Calvary's cross for the sins of the world (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8-9). The same Jews that had crucified Christ were given the opportunity to obey the gospel. Of the thousands that were present, about 3,000 were baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-41). Some ten years later the Gentiles were given the same opportunity (Acts 10), thus making Christianity a universal religion (Mark 16:15-16; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2).

Lest we forget, the same spirit that crucified Christ can be produced in the hearts of people today! The Hebrew writer reminds us, "If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:6). As Jimmy Jividen concluded:

When this hardening of the heart happens, they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh. They are just as guilty as the Jews who cried out for the crucifixion. They are just as guilty as the soldiers who nailed his hands to the cross. The thought of crucifying Jesus should sober one out of his complacency. When this hardening of the heart happens, they bring Jesus to an open shame. Nothing shames our Lord more in the eyes of the world than to see indifferent, lethargic Christians. An uncommitted faith shames the Lord. (**Difficult Texts of the New Testament Explained**, Edited by Wendell Winkler, Hebrews 6:1-6, Jimmy Jividen, pp. 338-339).

Yes, the Jews crucified Christ, and so can we!

(Brother Powell preaches in West Plains, Missouri)

Forest Hill Church of Christ
Adult Classes
Spring Quarter, 2004

**PERIODICAL
POSTAGE
PAID
MEMPHIS, TN**

<u>Location</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Topic</u>
	<u>Sunday Morning</u>	
(A)	Dennis Woods	Joshua
(E)	Barry Grider	<u>Successful Christian Living in Today's World</u> (studies in James, 1&2 Peter)
	<u>Wednesday Night</u>	
(A)	Keith Mosher	Isaiah
(E)	Andy Ammons	<u>The Christian's Everyday Problems</u>
(A)	Myra Martin	<u>Choosing Life's Best</u>
	Melinda Thompson	
	<u>Tuesday Morning</u>	
(A)	Deborah Watson	<u>Loose Change</u>

A—Auditorium Building
E— Educational Building
Ladies Classroom in the Auditorium Building

**11th ANNUAL
FOREST HILL YOUTH DAY**
"Why Is Sin So Serious?"
SATURDAY, MARCH 27
Registration begins at 9:00

**38th ANNUAL
MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF
PREACHING
LECTURESHIP**
"Sin And Salvation"
MARCH 28 - APRIL 1

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