

THE FOREST HILL NEWS

Published weekly by the Forest Hill church of Christ

Visit our Website at www.foresthillchurch.org

Forest Hill Church of Christ

3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd.
Memphis, TN 38120

Office: (901) 751-2444
Fax: (901) 751-9711
Info Line: (901) 392-2449

Elders:

Anthony D. Callahan
Floyd M. Hayes
Harold D. Mangrum
Leonard Watson

Minister:

Barry M. Grider

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

Missions Supported:

Memphis Hispanic Ministry
Kakinada, India
Manila, Philippines
Murmansk, Russia
Far East/World Evangelism
In Search of the Lord's Way

Volume 31

September 23, 2003

Number 38

WHO CRUCIFIED JESUS?

Barry M. Grider

While preaching the gospel to Cornelius, Peter said of Jesus, ...[He] went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38). Truly, no one lived a more noble, selfless life than the Christ. His very reason for coming to this earth was motivated by His uncomprehending and unconditional love for lost humanity (John 3:16). Yet Matthew records, "And they crucified him..."(Matt. 27:35).

Who would crucify Jesus? It is good to consider that question occasionally and ask ourselves if we bear any responsibility in regard to His death.

First, Roman soldiers actually nailed Jesus to the tree. Skilled in carrying out executions by crucifixion, these brutish beasts inflicted the severest of pain with minimal mercy. In fact, crucifixion was so horrifying, one who witnessed such take place was sure to come away saying, "I'll never do anything worthy of such a death." Yet, Jesus was perfect, the innocent Son of God, and he still endured crucifixion.

Second, the Jewish leaders crucified Jesus. They so despised His teaching and so rejected His Messiahship they were willing to release Barabbas, a thief and a murderer, and have Jesus put to death. In fact, these Jews admitted they were responsible, for they said, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matt. 27:25).

Third, Judas was responsible for the death of Christ. Whatever caused the heart of this disciple of the Lord to become so calloused, perhaps we shall never know. Was it money or popularity? Did he become disillusioned? All we know is that for 30 pieces of silver he betrayed his Lord (Matt. 26:15).

Fourth, Pilate was responsible for the Lord's death. He had the power to release Him, yet he lacked the moral courage to do so. "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" (Matt. 27:24). He can wash his hands until judgement day, but he is still guilty.

Fifth, the Devil was responsible for Jesus' crucifixion. Psalm 22 is Messianic and verse 21 reads, "Save me from the lion's mouth..." the Devil is likened unto a devouring lion (1 Pet. 5:8). Although the cross was a fatal blow to Satan, the cross was exactly where he wanted Jesus. The destruction and misery that the Devil brought into this world necessitated the cross.

Sixth, Jesus suffered, and I say this with all reverence, at the holy hand of God. According to Peter, Jesus was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). Our Lord had to die that he might appease God's wrath. Jesus prayed that there might be another way (Matt. 26:39), but there was no other way.

Finally, each one of us is responsible for the death of Jesus. Peter said to the Pentecostians, "ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts

Mel Gibson's "THE PASSION": The Film, The Fight, and The Facts

Todd Clippard

[Editor's note: Not only are the revisionists trying to rewrite secular history, but it seems they are trying to do the same with the Bible. Brother Clippard's article is worthy of review as it shall be interesting to see how all this unfolds].

Sometimes in the spring of 2004, Mel Gibson will release "The Passion," a film he co-wrote, directed, and invested \$25 million of his own money to produce. The film depicts the final hours of the life of Jesus Christ. The Passion is said to be the most realistic production of the death of Jesus Christ ever produced. To add to the authenticity, the movie is in Latin and Aramaic. Originally, Gibson said the movie would not contain subtitles, and there are conflicting reports regarding subtitles in the final edition of the film. Some who were allowed to preview the movie said the version they watched included subtitles. If the final version is released without them, it shouldn't present a problem understanding the events on the screen. (On a flight home from Ghana, I first saw the movie "Frequency" without sound, but still understood what was going on and thoroughly enjoyed the movie.)

As one might expect with a film of this nature, there is already a firestorm of controversy surrounding the film. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL), a group which seeks to stamp out any negative references to Jews, is up-in-arms over the film. A visit to their website (www.adl.org) reveals a number of articles on the front page decrying Gibson's film as anti-Semitic (anti-Jew) and anti-Catholic. Now before putting stock in what the ADL has to say about the film, one should understand their view of the Gospels. According to Jewish "scholars," the Gospels are neither "fully historically accurate nor consistent."¹ According to the ADL, "The film unambiguously portrays Jewish authorities and the Jewish mob as the ones responsible for the decision to crucify Jesus."² In the eyes of the ADL, any attempt to tell the truth about Jews is defamatory in nature.

Additionally, many in the Catholic Church are also speaking out against the film. "Sister" Mary C Boys, professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York condemned the film on the basis that it 'heightened the role of the Jews in the Crucifixion,' adding, "the Jewish mob is shown as a huge bloodthirsty, vengeful group."³ Paula Fredriksen, another Catholic "theologian" and professor at Boston University, condemned the film as being inconsistent with the Catholic Church's "current

teaching" concerning the crucifixion. Allow me to explain. In 1965, in an edict known as *Vatican II*, the Catholic popes (beginning with Pope John XXIII and ending with Pope Paul VI) declared that the Jews were not responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Apparently, these men knew more than the inspired apostle Peter, who, on the first Pentecost after the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, said to his audience, "*Ye men of Judea (a.k.a. JEWS-jtc)...Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonder and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him...ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain*" (Acts 2:14, 22-23). Not long afterward, Peter said, "*Therefore let all the house of Israel (a.k.a. JEWS-jtc) know that God hath made this same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ*" (Acts 2:36). Fredriksen condemned Gibson's directorial comments indicating the crowd at Jesus' trial "was frenzied with blood lust, it screamed for his death." Seems to me I remember reading somewhere of a huge crowd of Jews screaming, "**Crucify Him! Crucify Him!**" and "**his blood be on us and on our children!**" Oh yes, now I remember, it was in **THE BIBLE (Luke 23:21; Matt. 27:25)**. Fredriksen continued, "That's a Jewish crowd, and that's not in the Gospels."⁴ What in the world has this woman been reading?! It certainly hasn't been the Bible!

Ultimately, all men are guilty of the death of Jesus Christ. Jesus died to save us from our sins (**Matt. 20:28; 1 John 2:1-2**). As a sinner (**Rom. 3:23; 6:23**), I must accept the fact that my sins were responsible in part for His death. I mourn the fact that Jesus had to die, but rejoice in the truth that He3 did so out of His great love for me (**Gal. 2:20**).

¹ "Gospel, or Mel Gibson movie?" The Birmingham News, August 22, 2003 6H

² "ADL Concerned Mel Gibson's 'Passion' Could Fuel Anti-Semitism if Released in Present Form", Press release, August 11, 2003, http://www.adl.org/PresRele/ASUS_12/4291_12.htm

³ Gospel

⁴ Ibid
(from *Standing In The Gap*, weekly bulletin of the Nesbit, Mississippi church of Christ)

2:23). We were in the crowd that day, for Jesus died on the cross for our transgressions. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6). So every time I look in the mirror I see one who is responsible for Jesus' death. Every first day of the week when I partake of the Lord's Supper, even though I rejoice over what He did for me, I am reminded that I am the one who crucified Christ.

Dear reader, let us not become so proud and arrogant that we forget that Jesus died for our sins. On the contrary, may we humble ourselves and bow in submission to the Savior's will, realizing that without his suffering, none of us could be saved.

PERIODICAL
POSTAGE
PAID
MEMPHIS, TN

**FOREST HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST
ADULT CLASSES
FALL QUARTER, 2003**

SUNDAY MORNING

Auditorium (A) Barry Kennedy
The Parables of Jesus

Chapel Hall(E) Barry Grider
Tell Me The Story of Jesus

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Auditorium (A) Keith Mosher
Isaiah

Chapel Hall (E) Andy Ammons
*The Christian's
Everyday Problems*

Ladies Classroom (A) Melinda Thompson
James

TUESDAY MORNING

Ladies Classroom (A) Vada Rice
Examine Yourselves

A—Auditorium Building
E—Education Building

The Forest Hill News (USPS #018-150) is published weekly by the Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Road, Memphis, TN 38125-2585. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Forest Hill News, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125-2585.