Discussion Guide – November 15, 2026

Kingdom Victory

Matthew 27:11-26

Written by: Joel Dawson

HOW TO PREPARE

Begin preparing by reading the full passage a few times. Then answer the questions for yourself. Then think about how your Small Group might answer them. Try re-wording the questions to fit you and your Small Group. Don't feel tied down to the discussion guide, just be sure to discuss the main point of the text in your conversations.

RESOURCES

Matt. 27:14 "…quite amazed." https://biblehub.com/greek/2296.htm

Location of Barrabas cell vs location of Gabbatha (Stone Pavement) https://www.openbible.info/geo/ancient/aec23b1/gabbatha

Gabbatha

https://biblehub.com/topical/g/gabbatha.htm

Miracles of JESUS

https://bibleversehub.org/en/what-are-the-miracles-of-jesus.html

DISCUSSION GUIDE OUTLINE

Matthew 27:11-26

1. The SUPREME ADVOCATE Has No Defense. Vv. 11-14
2. The SUPREME DELIVERER Sets the Captive Free. Vv. 15-23
3. The SUPREME GOD-MAN Gives HIS Blood for All. Vv. 24-26

SCRIPTURE (NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE 1995)

MATTHEW 27:11-26

Jesus Before Pilate

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And Jesus said to him, "It is as you say."

12 And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He did not answer.

13 Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?"

14 And He did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so the governor was quite amazed.

15 Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the people any one prisoner whom they wanted.

16 At that time they were holding a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 So when the people gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?"

18 For he knew that because of envy they had handed Him over.

19 While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, "Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him."

20 But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to put Jesus to death.

21 But the governor said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas."

22 Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Crucify Him!"

23 And he said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they kept shouting all the more, saying, "Crucify Him!"

24 When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves."

25 And all the people said, "His blood shall be on us and on our children!"

26 Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 27:11-26.

INTRODUCTION AND MAIN IDEA

1. In this age of "No Kings" protests, what would it mean if this nation was ruled by a king? What would be different about our day-to-day living? (Think about a truly sovereign human king who judged by his own "truth".)

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION

These questions should help your Small Group dig deeper into the text and then apply it to your lives today.

I. The SUPREME ADVOCATE Has No Defense. Vv. 11-14

2. Why didn't JESUS just tell HIS persecutors WHO HE really was/is? Skeptics still repeat this tired question. (John 8:58) How did JESUS prove HE was/is/always will be GOD in flesh? (John 2:11; Luke 7:22-23)

3. Why did JESUS not defend HIMSELF before Pilate? Do you believe GOD was in control of this scandalous event to such a degree? (Isa. 53:7-8)

4. What does verse 14 reveal about Pilate's reaction to JESUS' silence? "…quite amazed…" (translated from "to admire") Does JESUS desire admiration or worship? What is the difference?

II. The SUPREME DELIVERER Sets the Captive Free. Vv. 15-23

5. Please read: Mark 15:7; 1 John 3:5 Isa. 59:12. "For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them." The crowd was well acquainted with Barabbas' crimes. Are our sins well-known to God?"

6. How did Pilate and his wife judge JESUS? (Vv. 14, 19, 23, 25) The world cries out for "justice for the oppressed"! Why doesn't CHRIST's innocence mean anything to the lost world?

7. Scholars and Archeologist place Barabbas's cell within hearing of the crowd but not Pilate's questions. What was Barabbas hearing the crowd shout? All Barrabas heard was "Barrabas" and "Crucify him." If he did hear them, what was his reaction to the guards releasing him moments later?

8. Read Luke 4:18-19. What other captives were set free? (Rom. 6:16) How do you know if you are set free? (Rom. 6:17-19)

III. The SUPREME GOD-MAN Gives HIS Blood for All. Vv. 24-26

9. Who is responsible for CHRIST's bloodshed? Jewish leadership, Pilate, Crowd, or FATHER GOD? (Isa. 53:5-6; Heb. 9:13-14)

10. What did the crowd mean when they cried out: "HIS blood shall be on us and on our children."? Is the blood of the LAMB claimed by you and your children? What is the difference between their claim and ours?

COMMENTARY (FROM ESV STUDY BIBLE)

Matt. 27:11–26 The Roman Trial of Jesus. The Jewish religious leaders lacked the final authority to impose the death penalty, and the charge of blasphemy was insufficient for a death sentence under Roman rule. So Jesus was sent to the Roman governor, Pilate, for trial.

Matt. 27:11 governor. Pontius Pilate (see note on v. 2). King of the Jews. Since blasphemy is not sufficient to warrant the death penalty under Roman rule, the Jewish leaders restate the charges when they hand Jesus over to Pilate (cf. Luke 23:2). Such a claim to kingship would be a direct challenge to Caesar. You have said so. See note on Matt. 26:25; cf. 26:64.

Matt. 27:12–14 he gave no answer . . . he gave him no answer. Jesus has sufficiently answered Pilate's original question (v. 11), and there was nothing more to say that would change Pilate's mind. See further Isa. 53:7.

Matt. 27:14 Pilate was greatly amazed at Jesus' refusal to defend himself.

Matt. 27:15–18 release for the crowd. Pilate had apparently instituted this custom as a means of winning favor with the masses. Barabbas. A notorious criminal who had committed robbery (see note on John 18:40), insurrection, and murder (Mark 15:7; Luke 23:18–19). He may have belonged to one of the rural guerilla bands that victimized the wealthy upper class of Israel as well as the Romans and were therefore popular with the common people.

Matt. 27:18 envy. Pilate knows the high priest and the Sanhedrin are not concerned about threats to Roman rule; rather, they are envious of Jesus' popularity and feel threatened by his authoritative ministry.

Matt. 27:19 dream. Romans often viewed dreams as omens. The dream was probably given by God as a sign of Jesus' innocence.

Matt. 27:20–22 A few days earlier the people of Jerusalem had shouted "Hosanna!" at Jesus' entry. Now they cry, "Let him be crucified!"

Matt. 27:24 washed his hands. Not an attempt to purge himself of sin but a public demonstration that he finds no grounds for giving Jesus the death penalty.

Matt. 27:25 People (Gk. laos) is Matthew's normal term for Israel as a nation. His blood be on us (cf. "Your blood be on your own heads!" Acts 18:6) was a common idiom denoting culpability for someone's death. The people placed the responsibility for Jesus' crucifixion directly on themselves, and they were judged with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. However, future generations should not be held responsible for the sins of their ancestors, for that would be unjust (cf. Deut. 24:16; Jer. 31:29–30).

Matt. 27:26 scourged. Roman flogging was a horrifically cruel punishment. Those condemned to it were tied to a post and beaten with a leather whip that was interwoven with pieces of bone and metal, which tore through skin and tissue, often exposing bones and intestines. In many cases, the flogging itself was fatal. The Romans scourged Jesus nearly to death so that he would not remain alive on the cross after sundown.