

Session 11: Why did Jesus die?

What are the historical reasons for the crucifixion of Jesus? And what did Jesus make of his own impending death?

This session will look at the Jewish charge, the Roman charge, and Jesus' own understanding of the significance of his death.

Why did Jesus die?

What were the motives that lay behind the crucifixion of Jesus?

The Roman Charge

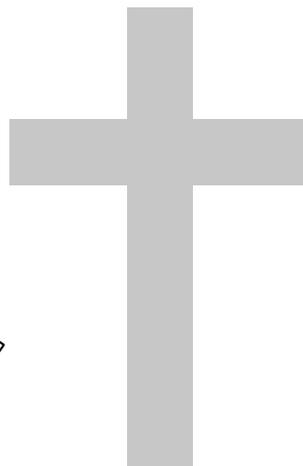
Pilate
Matt 27:11-26; Luke 23:1-7
(also Mark 15:2-15; John 18:28-19:16)

Herod
Luke 23:8-12

The Jewish Charge

Matt 26:59-61; John 2:19-22
(also Mark 14:55-59)

Matt 26:62-66; Mark 14:60-65



Jesus' Intention

Full control of the situation
John 10:17-18; 18:4-8; 19:11

Why act this way?
Luke 22:15ff; John 5:19; Luke 22:42

Why did Jesus die?

Adapted from D.A. Carson's *Scandalous*

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Four Ironies of the Cross</u> Matthew 27</p>			
<p>The one who is mocked as king <i>is</i> the king</p> <p>Barracks humour - v27-30</p> <p>Title on the cross - v37</p>	<p>The one who is utterly powerless is powerful</p> <p>Simon of Cyrene - v32</p> <p>Divided clothes - v35</p> <p>Taunting - v40; cf. Jn 2:21</p>	<p>The one who couldn't save himself saved others</p> <p>Mockery - v41-42</p> <p>'A ransom for many' 20:28</p> <p>Blood of the New Covenant 26:28</p>	<p>The one who cries out in despair trusts God</p> <p>Mockery - v43</p> <p>Cry of despair? v46</p> <p>Psalm 22</p>

Why did Jesus die?

How does Jesus' death fulfil the central unifying symbols of Judaism?

Election

Torah

'My proposal, then, as the way of making sense of all the data before me, is that Jesus believed it was his god-given vocation to identify with the rebel cause, the kingdom-cause, when at last that identification could not be misunderstood as endorsement. Israel was in exile, suffering at the hands of the pagans; the Roman cross was the bitterest symbol of that ongoing exilic state. He would go ahead of his people, to take upon himself both the fate that they had suffered one way or another for half a millennium at the hands of pagan empires and the fate that his contemporaries were apparently hell-bent upon pulling down on their own heads once and for all. The martyr-tradition suggested that this was the way in which Israel would at last be brought through suffering to vindication. Jesus' riddles, binding the fate of the nation to his own fate, suggested strongly that he intended to evoke and enact this tradition.

The 'messianic woes' tradition indicated that this suffering and vindication would be climactic, unique, the one-off moment when Israel's history would turn their great corner at last, when YHWH's kingdom would come and his will be done on earth as it was in heaven. The central symbolic act by which Jesus gave meaning to his approaching death suggests strongly that he believed this moment had come. This would be the new exodus, the renewal of the covenant, the forgiveness of sins, the end of exile. It would do for Israel what Israel could not do for herself. It would thereby fulfil Israel's vocation, that she should be the servant people, the light of the world.' (N.T. Wright, JVG, p597)

Monotheism

Temple