



THIEF ON THE CROSS

There is good news for those of us who have made serious mistakes in our past. Let's look into some Biblical case studies.

1. The two thieves crucified next to Jesus were obviously not the only criminals in town. Who else is mentioned?
 - a. Matt. 27:16 _____
 - b. Mark 15:7 _____
2. What kinds of crimes were being committed?
 - a. Mark 15:7 "They committed _____ in the _____."
 - b. Luke 23:19 "For a certain _____ in the city, and for _____."
 - c. John 18:40 "Now Barabbas was a _____."

When Jesus was born, you remember how Herod the Great reacted? Herod was governor of Galilee earlier. When enemies started attacking the Roman territory in Israel (Palestine), Herod hit the road to hide in Rome. The Romans Senate appointed Herod "King of Judah" (or actually "King of the Jews". He returned to Palestine (Israel) and took charge. His reign was brutal and bloody, and the whole nation & all the people were very unhappy. During Jesus' early life, Herod died, and the country turned to chaos. THAT WOULD EXPLAIN ROBBERS, CRIMINALS, AND REBELLIONS.

3. Y N It is probably safe to assume that petty thieves were NOT the ones usually executed by crucifixion.
4. Y N Barabbas was called a rebel, a robber, and a murderer. Roman law probably crucified people like him.
5. What were the two guys hanging next to Jesus called? (Mt. 27:38)
_____ Mark used the same word. (Mk. 15:27)
6. What did Luke call them? (Lk. 23:32-33) _____
7. What did John call them? (Jn. 19:18) _____

It's confusing to tell which crimes were against whom. The crimes by the criminals on the crosses were probably against the Roman government. Notice that Barabbas & a bunch of rebels were chained together right by the crucifixion area. The fabricated crimes by Jesus were against the Jewish leaders who tried to convince Pilate that the crimes were against the government. Why else would the trial be illegal & in secret?

8. The two criminals on the crosses knew they were guilty. However, what did they **both** do? (Matt. 27:44) _____
9. Many of those "criminals" in custody there at the crucifixion probably were not career prisoners. They got caught up in the militant chaos & injustice & knew they had no hope against the Roman authorities. Do you agree? Y N (Luke 23:32)
10. Possibly, the second crucified criminal screamed at Jesus again. What did he say? (Luke 23:39) _____
11. What did the other criminal say in response? (LK. 23:40-42)
He rebuked him saying, "Do you not even _____ God, seeing you are under the same _____?" For we receive the due _____ of our _____; this Man has done nothing."
12. Luke 23:42 - "Lord, _____ me." This criminal has no hope physically; he is dying. What is he hoping for?

13. That criminal believed that Jesus was going to have a kingdom in the future. He believed that even though he was a law-breaker and sentenced to death, Jesus would accept him. Do you have that confidence? Y N
14. I don't know if that criminal had family at the execution. One would hope not. Maybe, someone told them that his heart was changed on that cross. What a blessing that would have been. Who is going to benefit & be blessed with the second chance God is giving you? _____
