



## WHY DOES HE NOT DEFEND HIMSELF?

*Listen to what happened to Yoan.*

*- It's not me, Dad! I assure you it's not my fault! It's not me!*

*- I was told it's you, you will be punished!*

*- It's not true. I'm telling you it's not me! It's not fair!*

*Yoan is very angry. They are accusing him falsely. He defended himself but they didn't believe him. He is punished on someone else's behalf. It's hard to live! Isn't it? Maybe you have known this situation, it made you suffer and you still remember it?*

*Today we will meet Jesus in court. He's being accused unfairly. Listen well and you can answer my question: Why does He accept to be condemned without defending himself, without saying anything?*

## JESUS IS AT THE TRIBUNAL

Jesus did nothing wrong, yet He is there in court like a thief. He is standing before the



judges, before Caiaphas, the high priest and the religious leaders, who are hard and wicked men. It's a strange tribunal since everything has already been decided. They question Jesus.

*- What did you do?*

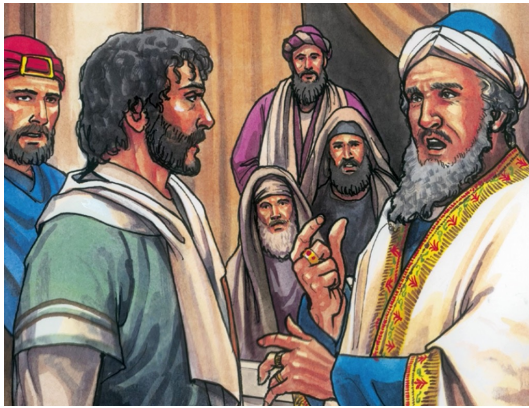
*- What did you say to the people?*

*- Come on! Tell us now! Answer!*

*- I didn't say anything in secret, Jesus answers calmly. I taught publicly in the Temple and in synagogues. Ask those who listened to me. They will tell you.*

They bring in false witnesses who make all kinds of accusations against Him, terrible lies. They contradict each other and provide no proof.

The accusers come one after the other but where is the lawyer? The one who must defend Jesus, where is he? There is nobody! Jesus is all alone. For several hours, the interrogation continues. Caiaphas asks brutally:



- Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God!

- Yes! Jesus says, I am.

They are furious. The guards punch Him and slap His face. They insult him and him mistreat Him.

- You heard what he said! Cries Caiaphas. He claims to be God! It's a terrible affront, a blasphemy! What more do we need? He deserves death!

The sentence falls. They are all satisfied. Now they have to find a way to have him condemned by the Romans because since they are under Roman occupation, they can't apply the death penalty.



"Let us take him to Pilate, the Roman governor," they say.

They have excited a whole crowd that is accompanying them to Pilate.

- He's a criminal! They tell him. He claims to be the King of the Jews! He deserves to die!

Pilate questions Jesus.

- I cannot find anything guilty in this man! I don't see why I would condemn him.

- You must! You must! He encourages people to revolt. He is dangerous!

- Take Him to Herod, he is the governor of His region!

Herod is very happy.

- That's good, he says to himself. I have wanted to see Him for a long time. Maybe he will do a miracle, there, in front of me!

He asks Him a lot of questions but Jesus does not answer him. Herod is very upset.

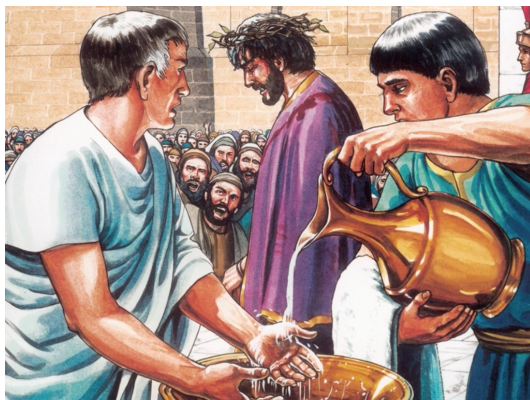
- Take him back to Pilate! He said.

The religious leaders and the mob continue to accuse Jesus violently, but Pilate is quite unsettled he would like to let him go.



- I couldn't find anything to condemn him and neither could Herod. I'm going to have him have a good thrashing and then I'm going to release him!
- No! No! He must die! The wild crowd shouts. If you release him, you are not a friend of Caesar!
- Today I have to free a prisoner! Who do you want me to release?
- Barabbas! Release Barabbas!
- But he's a criminal!
- Release Barabbas and crucify Jesus! They scream.

Will Pilate hold on or will he give in to the pressure and the cries of the crowd and of the religious leaders?



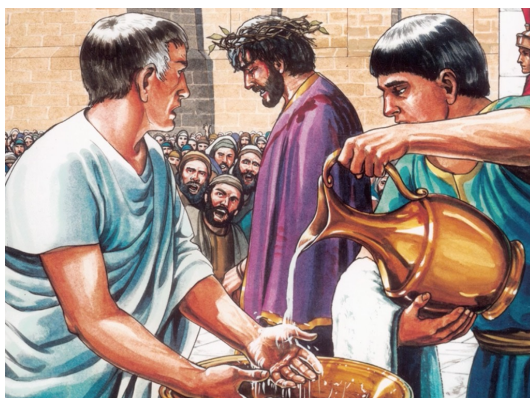
He sends for water and in front of them he washes his hands.

- This man is innocent! He declares. I am not responsible for his death! It's your responsibility!

He frees Barabbas and leaves Jesus in their hands. Some soldiers make a crown of thorns that they put on His head. They throw a scarlet cloak on his shoulders, strike him violently.

- Hail King of the Jews, they say, bowing their heads before him.

A heavy cross is brought.



- Come on! Take it and move on now! They shout brutally.

Jesus takes the cross. On the way people shout insults at him. His body is crushed, bruised by so many blows. He has no more strength, He stumbles, he falls. A man walks by.

- Come on! You! Take up his cross and carry it! Order the soldiers.

Jesus walks with difficulty. He endures all this suffering without saying a word. Not one moan, not a complaint.

## 1, 2 3, 4 AND YOU AND ME!



*This story is overwhelming. We cannot understand the sufferings that Jesus has endured. He, who has done good to men all his life, is condemned to death, like a criminal. This is unfair, isn't it? So why did He accept all this without defending himself, without saying anything? This is the question we asked you. Let's answer it now.*

*Do you remember Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane? He said:*

*- My Father, if it is possible take this cup of suffering away from me. However, not what I want but what you want!*

*Jesus accepted to drink, that is to say to endure, all this suffering, without defending himself because He takes the place, the condemnation that all men deserve to because of their disobedience, their life away from God. He is punished, condemned instead of us so that God can forgive us. I suggest you think about all this in a quiet moment.*

## 4, 3, 2, 1 AND WE PARENTS!



*In this story we see Jesus condemned by men, Jews and Romans. But in fact, Jesus was obeying God and fulfilling His perfect plan for granting forgiveness and salvation to men. He surrendered his life, voluntarily, out of love for men, for us and our children.*

*You will find these passages in the Gospel of John in chapter 18 of verses 19 to 37 and in the Gospel of Luke in chapter 23 verses 1 to 12.*

*To conclude, I'm leaving this verse in your heart:*

*"The punishment that gives us peace has fallen on Him, that is, on Jesus."*

*Isaiah chapter 53 verse 5*