

Matthew 27:23-26

Curses!

The tension rises ...

I. Pilate's Cursed Hands

A. Innocent Blood

B. Guilty Stains

II. The People's Cursed Vow

A. Blame Us

B. And Our Children

III. Jesus' Cursed Sentence

A. The Scourge

B. The Tree

... Jesus is delivered.

Children, Listen ...

1. *Why did Pilate wash his hands?*

2. *How did that help take away the guilt of his sin?*

3. *What foolish thing did the people say about the blood of Jesus?*

4. *Jesus was whipped and would be crucified, but what was His sin?*

5. *What is the only way we can have the guilt of our sin taken away?*

What Can Wash Away My Sin?

You can rinse off dirt and even kill germs, but wash your hands all you want, you can't wash away guilt. With his grand symbolic gesture Pilate tried to convey and perhaps even convince himself that he has been absolved of his complicity in Jesus' condemnation to crucifixion. In reality, he was not only an ordinary sinner, but an extraordinary one who effectively brought a curse down on himself. The anti-Jesus Jewish leadership bore guilt in much the same way and even verbally brought down their curse on their children. The guilt of our sin, great or small, is a self-perpetuating curse upon all of us – that is, unless it is absolved by the Lord. The third subject of curse-bearing in our passage is Jesus. But the guilty curse that He bore was not His own but ours. His substitution for us has lifted our guilt and cleansed our stains. As penned the English poet William Cowper (1877): "*There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins; and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.*"

But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed.

Isaiah 53:5