

## **Jesus' Remarkable Conduct In His Silence While He Suffered For Us.**

Text: Matt 26:62-63, Luke 23:8-9, Matt 27:12-14  
Suggested Hymns:

401, 270, 73, 337, 610

- 1) By His Silence  
Jesus Atoned For The Sins Of Speech
- 2) By His Silence  
Jesus Has Shown That He Is The Lamb Of God

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Matthew 26:62-63, <sup>62</sup> *And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?"* <sup>63</sup> *But Jesus kept silent.*

And Luke 23:8-9, <sup>8</sup> *Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him.* <sup>9</sup> *Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing.*

And Matthew 27:12-14, <sup>12</sup> *And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing.* <sup>13</sup> *Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?"* <sup>14</sup> *But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

These three passages set forth Jesus' silence in His suffering. Before the Jewish high priest, when urged to answer false witnesses, Jesus held His peace. Before Herod, who questioned Him with many words and hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him, He answered nothing. Before Pilate, who urged Him to defend Himself against the charges brought forth by the chief priests and elders, He made no reply.

This was before the trial took place. There stood the Jews, vehemently accusing Him, and the question was with Pilate, whether or not he should receive

this man for trial. But as much as he questioned Jesus as to those accusations, ***“He answered him not one word, so that the governor marvelled greatly.”***

Never before had he met with such a case that a man brought to him on the most serious charges neither admitted nor denied his guilt, but kept his composure in serene quietness in the face of his accusers who were thirsting for his blood. He marvelled greatly.

As Matthew informs us, he knew that because of envy, the chief priests had delivered Him. So he knew that those serious charges of sedition and insurrection were but a pretence to hide the real cause which led them to deliver Jesus, their own envy, and that Jesus must be innocent.

But he expected Jesus to say something at least in His own defence or to answer back His accusers. He does not know what to make of this man’s silence when life and death depends on His speech.

And must we not find it most remarkable that Jesus, who had always been ready to speak words of comfort for the distressed, and words of reproof for the desperately wicked, observes such silence in His suffering?

Is it not remarkable that Jesus of whom the people said, ***“No man ever spoke like this Man,”***<sup>1</sup> has nothing to say before His accusers?

Let us consider, then, *Jesus’ Remarkable Conduct In His Silence While He Suffered For Us*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

### **1. By His Silence Jesus Atoned For The Sins Of Speech.**

Jesus suffered for our sins. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. In every stage of His suffering He atoned for all our sins. By His silence He atoned for the sins of speech.

There is not a sin committed with the lips for which Jesus did not suffer and atone when silently He bore the wrath of God and the curse which rests upon these sins.

Our first text is, <sup>62</sup> ***And the high priest arose and said to Him, “Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?”*** <sup>63</sup> ***But Jesus kept silent.***

After His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus was taken to Annas first and then to the high priest’s palace where the Sanhedrin, the ecclesiastical court,

was quickly assembled in the dead of night. They had already agreed among themselves that Jesus must be put to death, and now a trial was held which was nothing but a farce.

Witnesses were summoned and told what to say against Jesus. But the rule was that at least two witnesses had to agree to secure a conviction, and it took a long time before two were found who said the same thing.

They claimed that they had heard Jesus say, ***“I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.”***<sup>2</sup> This was a lie. Jesus never said any such thing. He had said: ***“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,”***<sup>3</sup> meaning the temple of His body and speaking of His resurrection.

The witnesses knew that, and the high priest knew it. What then was Jesus to reply to these false accusations? He kept silent and said nothing. O how many lies are told in court and in common life! How frequently the neighbour is deceitfully misrepresented, betrayed, slandered, and defamed! How ready are we to resent any false accusation and to say more than we should say, to render evil for evil, and railing for railing! By His silence Jesus atoned for these transgressions.

Our second text is, ***<sup>8</sup> Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. <sup>9</sup> Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing.***

Pilate had sent Jesus to Herod, hoping thus to get rid of Him. Herod was exceeding glad to see the man of whom he had heard the most wonderful things. He poured forth a volley of questions which he addressed to Jesus, asking Him, undoubtedly, to do some miracle right then and there. Jesus answered nothing.

***Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe,***<sup>4</sup> but Jesus maintains His silence and makes no reply. How many sins are committed by vain talk!

The Word of God says in Matthew 12:36, ***<sup>36</sup> But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.*** How many sins are committed by lewd joking, by filthy speech, by foolish

talking and jesting which is not proper! Jesus has atoned for all these sins of the tongue by His silence before Herod.

Our third text is, <sup>12</sup> *And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing.* <sup>13</sup> *Then Pilate said to Him, “Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?”* <sup>14</sup> *But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.*

The greatness of the sin of the chief priests and elders is apparent from the fact that they directed their false accusations against the Son of God.

It was a sin not so much against the second as rather against the first table of the Law, an abuse of the Lord's Anointed. Jesus did not defend Himself against their blasphemous charges, He did not answer them, but bore all this reproach in silence.

Numerous sins are continually being committed by the abuse of the Lord's name, by false and unnecessary oaths, by cursing and swearing, by thoughtless prayers, and by false doctrine! By His silence before Pilate the Lord Jesus atoned for these terrible sins of the tongue.

## **2. By His Silence Jesus Has Shown That He Is The Lamb Of God.**

But there is a special significance to the silence which Jesus observed in His suffering for us. He has shown thereby that He is the Lamb of God.

The prophet Isaiah foretold the sufferings of Christ, as we read in Isaiah 53:7, <sup>7</sup> *He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.* This prophecy had to be fulfilled as well as all the rest of the prophecies concerning Christ.

We would not be sure that Jesus is really the Christ, the Promised One, the Lord's Anointed, the eternal Son of God, the Saviour of the sinful world, if He had not made true this prophecy which says that in His suffering for the sins of the world He would be as a lamb led to the slaughter, and that, as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so He would not open His mouth.

How exactly Jesus has fulfilled this prediction! By His silence at different stages in His suffering, before the high priest, before Herod, before Pontius Pilate, He has plainly shown that He is the Man of whom Isaiah spoke.

We read in 1 Peter 2:23, that *when Jesus was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously.*

*Not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling,*<sup>5</sup> but went to the slaughter as meek as a lamb, in passive obedience, without a word of resentment, in compliance with His Father's will.

Could Jesus have shown more plainly than by His silence that He is truly the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,*<sup>6</sup> *the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing?*<sup>7</sup> as we read in the book of Revelation.

Let us appropriate to ourselves the merits of our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who, as the Lamb of God, was sacrificed on the cross for the remission of our sins.

Let us accept in a true living faith that which He offers and presents to us, the forgiveness of all our sins earned through His great sacrificial offering. And then let us follow His steps. Let us learn from His silence. Let us guard against all the sins that are committed with the tongue.

Let us not contaminate our lips with lies, with cursing and swearing, or any profane and obscene language. Let us always bear in mind that on the day of judgement men must give account of every idle word which they have spoken, how much more for every wicked word.

And may the Lord thus guide us safely through this wicked world and, finally, adorn us with the crown of life which He has prepared for those who love Him. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> John 7:46

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 26:63

<sup>3</sup> John 2:19

<sup>4</sup> Luke 23:11

<sup>5</sup> 1 Peter 3:9

<sup>6</sup> Revelation 13:8

<sup>7</sup> Revelation 5:12