

Deadly Consequences

Description

Mark 15:16-20

Mark 15 offers some oft-overlooked insights into the roles that non-Jewish political and military actors played in Christ's trial and execution. The soldiers mentioned were probably local Gentile recruits. They likely served as a personal bodyguard for Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea. Many were present for Christ's arrest in Gethsemane and subsequent trial. They would have been intimately familiar with the charges against Him.

After brutally torturing Jesus on Pilate's orders, the soldiers mocked their victim with the trappings of an emperor: after draping Him with a purple cloak, crown, and staff, they knelt and hailed Him as one who claimed to be king. In all of this, one message was clear: those who dare to challenge the enmeshed powers of religious, political, and military elites will be brutally and summarily destroyed.

And so it is today: when religious leaders are seduced by power, violence, and nationalism, the results are always deadly.

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