**Golgotha Place of the Skull**

**By Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Mark 15:17-32**

**Wednesday Evening**

**October 30, 2019**

**17 And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head, 18 and began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 19 Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him.**

Saints, someone found a purple robe and threw it around the shoulders of this supposed “king.” Someone else, with a brutal sense of humor, twisted some long, sharp thorns into a crown that was then jammed onto Jesus’ head. Matthew added that they put a stick in his hand, like a king’s scepter (Matthew 27:29).

**Matthew 27:29**

“When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

They beat him, striking him on the head. They insulted him by spitting on him and kneeling down in mock worship. Yet even all of this had been prophesied (Isaiah 50:6; 52:14–53:6).

**Isaiah 50:6**

I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.

**Isaiah 52:14**

“Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men”

**Isaiah 53:6**

“All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

**20 And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.**

Saints, after having their fun, the soldiers took off the purple robe and put Jesus’ own clothes on him again. Then he was taken out to be crucified.

Probably only four soldiers under the command of an officer actually went out to the site to perform the execution because John mentions that the soldiers at the cross divided his clothing “among the four of them” (John 19:23).

**John 19:23**

“Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece.”

**Purple- Priesthood, Kingship, Royalty, mediator, wealth,**

**Judges 8:26**

“Now the weight of the gold earrings that he requested was one thousand seven hundred shekels of gold, besides the crescent ornaments, pendants, and purple robes which were on the kings of Midian…”

**21 Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.**

Saints, colonies of Jews existed outside Judea. Simon was from Cyrene, in northern Africa (see Acts 2:10), and was either on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Passover, or he was originally from Cyrene but resided in Palestine.

**Acts 2:10**

“Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes…”

Saints, his two sons, Alexander and Rufus, are mentioned as if Mark’s readers in Rome knew them. Rufus may be the same man mentioned by Paul in Romans 16:13.

**Romans 16:13**

“Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine”

If so, this could mean that Simon became a Christian through this incident. Simon, on his way into the city, was randomly picked out of the crowd and forced to carry Jesus’ cross.

**22 And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull.**

Saints, some scholars say Golgotha (translated Skull Hill) derived its name from its appearance, a hill with a stony top that might have been shaped like a skull. Golgotha is the Hebrew word for “skull.”

**Photos of the Skull>**

The familiar name “Calvary” is derived from the Latin calvaria (also meaning “skull”). Golgotha may have been a regular place of execution in a prominent public place outside the city along a main road. Executions held there served as examples to the people and as a deterrent to criminals.

**23 Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it.**

Saints, wine drugged with myrrh was offered to Jesus to help reduce his pain. Myrrh is generally understood to be a narcotic that was used to deaden pain.

Tradition says women of Jerusalem prepared and offered this drink to condemned men. This also may allude to Psalms69:21.

**Psalm 69:21**

“They also gave me gall for my food, And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink”

But Jesus refused to drink it. He chose to suffer fully conscious and with a clear mind.

**24 And when they crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots for them to determine what every man should take.**

Saints, Mark’s words are simple and direct: They nailed him to the cross. Indeed, Mark’s Roman readers needed no elaborate description; they knew it all too well. Crucifixion, instituted by the Romans, was a feared and shameful form of execution. Death came by suffocation as the person lost strength and the weight of the body made breathing more and more difficult.

Contrary to the discreet paintings of the Crucifixion, Jesus was crucified naked. Roman soldiers had the right to take for themselves the clothing of those crucified, so they gambled for Jesus’ clothes. This act had also been prophesied (Psalms22:18).

**Psalm 22:18**

“They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots”

**25 Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him. 26 And the inscription of His accusation was written above: THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

Jesus was placed on the cross at nine o’clock in the morning. A signboard stating the charge against him was fastened on his cross as a warning. Because Jesus was never found guilty, the only accusation placed on his sign was the “crime” of calling himself King of the Jews.

**Photos of Binding Jesus>**

**Photos of Binding the Lambs>**

This sign was meant to be ironic. A king, stripped and executed in public view, had obviously lost his kingdom forever.

But Jesus, who turns the world’s wisdom upside down, was just coming into his Kingdom. His death and resurrection would strike the deathblow to Satan’s rule and would establish Christ’s eternal authority over the earth.

**Photo of the 7 Feast Chart>**

Few people reading the sign that bleak day understood its real meaning, but the sign was absolutely true. Jesus is king of the Jews—and the Gentiles, and the whole universe**.**

**27 With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left. 28 So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with the transgressors."**

**Isaiah 53:12**

“Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

Saints, when James and John had asked Jesus for the places of honor next to him in his Kingdom, Jesus had told them that they didn’t know what they were asking (10:35-39).

**Mark 10:35-40**

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask." 36 And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" 37 They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory."

38 But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Can you drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" 39 They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; 40 but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared."

Here, as Jesus was preparing to inaugurate his Kingdom through his death, the places on his right and on his left were taken by two criminals.

A person who wants to be close to Jesus must be prepared to suffer and die as he himself was doing. The way to the Kingdom is the way of the cross. If we want the glory of the Kingdom, we must be willing to be united with the crucified Christ.

**29 And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, 30 save Yourself, and come down from the cross!"**

Saints, insult was literally added to injury when it came to public crucifixion. People passing by shouted abuse at Jesus. They again used the twisted accusation that had been brought against Jesus at the council (14:58), taunting him that if he could boast of building the Temple in three days, surely he had the power to save himself from the fate of the cross.

**Mark 14:58**

"We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.' "

Ironically, Jesus was in the very process of fulfilling his own prophecy. His body was being destroyed, but in three days he would rise again. Because Jesus is the Son of God who always obeys the will of the Father, he did not come down from the cross to save himself. If he had done so, he could not have saved us.

**31 Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. 32 Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.**

Saints, apparently the religious leaders had followed the executioners out to Golgotha, eager to see their plot finally completed in Jesus’ death. Not content to have brought him to an unjust death, they also mocked him as they talked among themselves.

They mockingly dismissed his healings and miracles because even though he saved others, he could not save himself. They taunted him to come down from the cross, and if he did that, they would believe him. They did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah, nor the king of Israel, but they taunted him with these names.

Obviously, Jesus wasn’t the Messiah, they thought, because he was dying just like the cursed robbers. Mark recorded that the two criminals also ridiculed Jesus, but Luke states that later one of these criminals repented (Luke 23:39-43).

**Luke 23:39-43**

39 Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." 40 But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." 42 Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." 43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

Here is the Grace of God!

**Romans 10:9-13**

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. 13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Acts 3:18-19**

18 But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. 19 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord…

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.”**