

1. (Lisa) Blessing The Badge

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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. 22 And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. 23 Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it. 24 And when they crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots for them to determine what every man should take.

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.

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."

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!"

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.

Jesus has **been on trial**, **6** in fact & sentenced to death by crucifixion, **for what?**

* Before the **Jews...** out of **envy, greed, their desire power**. Not for the sermon on the mount, not for defending the poor, not for teaching with wisdom and love, He wasn't sentenced to death for healing lepers, lame & blind or raising people from the dead ...

It was for **claiming to be Christ, One with God**.

The Jews knew that a claim to be Messiah would mean nothing to the pagan governor, Pilate....

* Before the **Romans**....they charged JS as being the ‘**king of the Jews**’. A **direct threat to the throne** of Caesar. There can be **no other king in Rome** than Caesar!

* There was **another trial** altogether happening. The trial **that God was putting Christ through**, where the sin of all mankind was **placed on Jesus**, the **just** one. We have to catch the enormity of this.

In order for **humanity to be restored** - for **death to lose its grip** - for **forgiveness to happen**... God has to **judge** our sin, The **wrath** of God must be poured out presumably on us, the offenders.

What does He do? God sends **Himself** to die in our place. A heavenly trial is actually taking place unbeknownst the Jews, Romans, and disciples alike.

In the **redemption story** of man...we are **building up**, rising up to the **highest rung** on the ladder, the greatest point of tension in the narrative of creation. This is the moment all of creation had been waiting for. The earth itself eagerly groans for things to be made right again.

We come to the **absolute height of the redemption story**.

In **literary terms** this is called **the Climax**, the highest point of tension or drama in a narratives’ plot. Often, climax is also when the **main problem of the story is solved**. The phrase climax is derived from the Greek word meaning “**ladder**.” We will Compare the **literary & the true** using The basic elements of plot...

1. **Exposition**: Characters and setting are established and the conflict, or problem, is introduced.
 - a. God, Man, Satan
 - b. **Conflict**, sin entered the world through pride, mankind was separated from God ever since. Bound for hell for eternity...with no way back
2. **Rising action**: The conflict begins to **affect the characters**, complicating their lives.
 - a. Our lives are so affected by sin, we have no idea! Humanity has been crippled by sin. It seemed **like all hope was lost**. There was no way to be made totally right with God.
3. **Climax**: The conflict is faced during the main, most dramatic event of the story. Problem solved.
 - a. **Climax**, the **hero of the story is Jesus**, the Savior of the world steps in to save the world, but **not how** we all expect a hero to step in. A typical hero sweeps in when all hope seems lost & totally conquers the enemies of evil by using **military/brute force**.
 - b. But not so in the redemption story. (John 3.16 For God so loved the world that **He gave His only Son**, that whosoever would believe in Him would not perish but have eternal life)
 - c. The Hero here is Jesus, the Creator of the world who will **conquer death by dying Himself**. He will **overpower** evil forces **by submitting His life**. He will **scream against injustice** by being **silent**. He will **lay down His life**, to give to us eternal life. He will **hew out hatred** by pouring out **His love**. (Jn 15.13 Greater love has no one than to lay down his life for his friends)
 - d. Ultimately, our hero will defeat all our foes, by dying for us, the hero dies
4. **Resolution**: The story is tied up and concluded.

- a. We know the ending folks, Revelation tells us how this all finishes. It's beautiful beyond belief!
 - b. Revelation 21:1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the **tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them**, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 And **God will wipe away every tear** from their eyes; there shall be **no more death**, nor **sorrow, nor crying**. There shall be **no more pain**, for the former things have passed away." 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "**Behold, I make all things new**."
 - c. We all live happily ever after.... Those in Christ. Those who have not repented & turned to JS? A very different ending, one they chose while ignoring every opportunity to receive the gift of salvation. (this is why we share the gospel!)
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There is a saying, people use "the crux of the matter". Crux, latin for cross - the basic, central or critical point of an issue, topic or problem. Why? Because the center of all of the bible, all of creation is the fact that Jesus purchased mankind back from sin by going to the cross!

16 Then the **soldiers led Him** away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. 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!"

Slide Before this Pilate had Jesus severely **beaten** with the **Roman Scorge**, whip with sheep bone, lead. Jesus' back would be torn open so severely that his organs would be exposed.

Jesus handed over to **600 Roman soldiers** after the brutal beating of his flesh, Jesus will be mocked, laughed at, ridicule & beaten some more. Far worse than physical pain is emotional and psychological pain, these effects can last a lifetime!

Purple was the color of royalty, "king of the Jews, huh?" As they laugh at the idea of this weak and bloody man before them ever holding a place of royalty, a king, much less being the Son of Man.

Crown of thorns, not coincidence here. Thorns, think back to Genesis 3, and the results of Adam's sin. God said 17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it':

"Cursed is the ground for your sake;

In toil you shall eat of it

All the days of your life.

18 Both **thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you**,

And you shall eat the herb of the field.

19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread

Till you return to the ground,

For out of it you were taken;

For dust you are,
And to dust you shall return.”

The sin of mankind brought thorns into this world, the crown of thorns was twisted and wrapped around Jesus' skull, signifying what was being placed upon Jesus before His crucifixion!

19 Then they **struck Him** on the head with a reed and **spat on Him**; and **bowing** the knee, they **worshiped** Him. 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.

This reed was first given to Jesus as a mock scepter of royalty, then they took it & beat Him with it, spitting on Him, reviling Him. Then they **pretend to worship** Him as king... no doubt the soldiers knew that Jesus had claimed to be something special....

But they looked at Him as nothing more than a vile criminal, take off the mock royal robe, reducing him back to a mere criminal.

In the telling and retelling we can lose the details and cues in the Bible. Make no mistake the psychological torture Jesus is going through here is crushing Jesus just as much as the beatings. Perhaps more. “But it’s Jesus”, we say, “He wasn’t affected, didn’t bother Him”

Hebrews 12:2 looking unto Jesus, the **author and finisher** of our **faith**, who for the **joy** that was set before Him **endured** the cross, (**despising the shame**), and has **sat down** at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus was 100% God, & **Human**. The mocking and shame He experienced, pierced His soul. The very people He came to save...were making a mockery out of Him, and yes He endured *through the pain!* But not **without** the pain of total rejection & mockery

There is a lesson there for us, as time move closer and closer to Christians being mocked, ridiculed, beaten & imprisoned here in the US. (Voice of Martyrs Hearts of Fire

Jesus could have defended His position as God, He could have called down a legion of angels to destroy the mockers,,,, why didn’t He retaliate?? His mission was to SAVE the very people who were persecuting Him.

Likewise with us. We have to remember, as the world grows increasingly hostile towards Christians that our mission isn’t to defend our position or rights or freedoms. It’s not to prove how wrong the world is.

Our mission is to introduce people to the Lord Jesus Christ, and offer them the hope of the gospel, for it has the power to save. That is how we display great strength. Through humility, patience, and meekness, like Christ.

How did Jesus respond?,, Phil 2:7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

How do we respond like Christ? 2 Corinth 12:9 And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

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.

At this point, Jesus, in His humanity was wiped, nothing left to even carry the cross. Some hero, right? See how Jesus power is displayed in weakness?

Simon was likely a man from Libya, of African descent who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover feast. Perhaps a once in a lifetime event for him.

Not much is known except that Simon **was known**. For Mark says, you know, Simon the Cyrene, dad of Alex and Rufus. Rufus is mentioned in **ROMANS 16:13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine**. It's entirely possible that this man made to bear the cross either became or was a disciple of Jesus, and even possibly became an elder in Acts 13. Simon mentioned from Niger, Africa..

22 And they brought Him to the place **Golgotha**, which is translated, **Place of a Skull**. Calvary Chapel gets its name... (Calvary's Hill) Perhaps because it's the place where rocks were hewn out of the hillside, leaving a crater like holes shape of skull. Some people think it was called Golgotha because it was littered with the skulls of men previously executed. Some think it was called Golgotha because it was on a hill that looked like a skull, with the shadows of a skull's face in the hillside.

Believed that it was **Mt Moriah**, which David purchased from Ornon, where David built the first temple, where Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac, yet God would provide Himself as the sacrifice! Here is was, Jesus, God in flesh total fulfillment of this possibly at the very same place Isaac, picture of Christ, now was hung!!!

23 Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it. They offered it to Jesus. But to me it is significant that He refused it, in order that He might taste of death for every man and know what it was.

Hebrews 12:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, **might taste death for everyone**.

24 And when they crucified Him, they **divided His garments, casting lots** for them to determine what every man should take. Psalm 22:18 They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

Normal way of execution then was stoning by Jews. Or beheading. The cross was reserved for the baddest people in civilization. Crucifixion wasn't invented by the Romans, Assyrians, but they sure perfected the art of suffering before death. The nails, lack of breathing, the pain prolonged....

Have to ask yourself, Lord, why crucify your own Son, why not beheading?

His providence chose this,,, but also, perhaps it was to show us how devastating our sin looks placed upon Jesus in real physical sight. No way to fully comprehend the weight of our sin. Maybe this was a way for God to relay to us the excruciating pain of the cross?

Excruciating, a word used to describe the greatest pain we could ever face.... comes from a Latin word that means the cross....

The cross was meant to show us how deeply sin hurts the Father and Son who created us.

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. I find it amazing that Jesus only answers to the accusations that were true, and He even holds this as His sentencing crime, King of Jews, thought they wanted it to be "He said..."

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...And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors. 700 years before Christ, one of the 300 prophecies that actually happened in the 1st coming of JS

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!" 31 Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, **"He saved others; Himself He cannot save.**

More prophecy fulfilled...

Come down from the cross.... If He did come down, and He could come down, we would all go down in our sin.

He saved others, they admit. He did save people, truth. The lie was that He could not save Himself. His mission was to die for us. If JS saved Himself how could He save you and me?

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."

The truth of the matter is that no matter what some ppl see they will simply never believe. **Jesus was never derailed from His mission to save** humanity... a good lesson for us, though we will have moments of failure we need to remember as a believer in Christ, we are **called to die to self, take up the cross, follow Christ**, and **bring the gospel** message to the lost, the mockers in our lives, the abusers, the misusers, even the losers, of which I was one!

Jesus is mocked by the two criminals that deserved death by His side.

Yet in other gospels we are told that one of the 2 criminals actually comes to faith in Christ, after he mocks Jesus! (Luke 23:39-43).

The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. - [1 Corinthians 1:18](#)

Philip Ryken wrote in The Heart of the Cross: "[The cross of Christ] seems weak to those who look for strength. It appears foolish to those who look for wisdom. But this is only when the cross is viewed in human terms. From God's perspective, the cross is neither impotent nor ignorant. It is full of power

and wisdom... The power of the cross is the power of love. When Jesus was crucified, he showed the full extent of God's love."

Until you see Jesus as God in the flesh, the cross is foolish. Until you see yourself as a sinner who falls so short of God's glory....foolish cross. Until you can see that Jesus came not to be served but to serve and give His life, the cross makes no sense.

When we truly pick up the cross of suffering and walk with Jesus through this life all the way to heaven, then we are truly being a living sacrifice, acceptable to God,useful to the Creator!

Who wants to be used by God today? Who wants to take up their cross and be a light to the world, no matter the cost? That is what we are all called to do!