"THEY INSULTED THE KING!"

Matthew 27:27-44

4-7-2023

INTRODUCTION:

***He allowed Himself to be humiliated so that you could be honored!**

I. They Insulted His Claim to be <u>KING</u> (v. 27-38)

A. They mocked Him with an <u>old scarlet robe</u> (v. 28)

B. They mocked Him with a <u>crown of thorns</u> (v. 29a)

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INTRODUCTION:

"The crucifixion of Christ was the climax of redemptive history. . . It was also the apex of man's depravity." (MacArthur, p. 246)

***He allowed Himself to be humiliated so that you could be honored!**

I. They Insulted His Claim to be <u>KING</u> (v. 27-38)

V. 27

"The soldiers of the governor" - Roman soldiers under Pilate's command

If Pilate had paid attention to his wife (v. 19) and if he had respected Christ as an innocent man (v. 24), he should have restrained his cohort of soldiers from mocking Christ.

When you are in a position of authority, you are responsible for the actions of those under your authority.

"The common hall" + The Praetorium. A hall <u>outside</u> of the Judgment Hall, where matters of justice were dealt with.

"Whole band of soldiers" - A cohort, one-tenth of a legion, which could have been anywhere from 300 to 600 men (it was 300 to 1).

Earlier that night the Jewish High Priest's servants had mocked Him as *"prophet"* (26:67-68); now these mock Him as king.

They made public sport of Jesus; they had a time of cold-hearted entertainment at Jesus' expense. With merciless cruelty, they made Jesus the object of a fiendish game.

A. They mocked Him with an old scarlet robe (v. 28)

"They stripped Him" - How humiliated it was to have all clothes of modesty ripped off.

"A scarlet robe" - A mockery of the Kingly red robes a monarch would wear

"Jesus' face was swollen from the slaps and beatings He received from the Temple police and was covered with spittle from His Jewish tormentors. He was bleeding profusely from the scourging, with terrible lacerations from His shoulders down, exposing muscles, ligaments, blood vessels, and perhaps even internal organs. Because He had not spoken for the past hour or so, the soldiers may have considered Him mentally deranged and worthy only of ridicule. They played Him as the fool, making sport of the comments they had overheard about His claim to kingship." (MacArthur, p. 248)

B. They mocked Him with a crown of thorns (v. 29a)

"Plated a crown of thorns" - A King needs a crown, they jeered, so they cut a thorn bush and weaved a crown out of thorns to mock Jesus further.

As the *"thorns"* were pressed over His precious brow, no doubt the sharp points pressed into His skin, drawing blood out to cover His already black-and-blue face from the beating received earlier (26:67-68).

C. They mocked Him with a reed for a scepter (v. 29b)

The jeering crowd of disrespectful Roman fighting men then figured that a king needs a scepter, so they found a reed and had Him hold it so as to get a bigger laugh out of the "king" they were dressing up.

D. They mocked Him with a bow of insincere homage (v. 29c)

They then, with scorn and ridiculous laughter, fall down in front of the beaten, bloodied, costumed King, and pretend to worship Him (Mk. 15:19).

"Hail" - To stretch out the two hands so as to salute the king

E. They mocked Him with spit in His face (v. 30a)

"Spit upon Him" - The height of contempt and ridicule. The insult of insults to a Jew.

Jesus, who face had now dried from the former spitting (26:67), now becomes the target of the saliva of 300 men.

F. They mocked Him with physical violence (v. 30b)

"Smote Him on the head" - To grab the King's scepter and to strike Him with it is really humiliating for the Son of God.

By beating Him with His own scepter, it is as if they said: "Your kingliness is a joke. Look how easily we strip you of your dignity and your authority. We beat you with your own scepter. Where is your power?" (MacArthur, p. 250).

V. 28-30

Why such horrible treatment? Why such a wild, frenzied, painful, and insulting time?

Answer: Satan hates Jesus Christ.

This was Satan's last and final chance to strike out at Jesus.

This was the hour of the *"power of darkness"* (Lk. 22:53).

Satan's captive servants, who are responsive puppets to do His will any time he chooses (II Tim. 2:26), were gleeful to carry out his wish to mock and humiliate the Son of God.

They did to Jesus what no person would ever do to a King.

They didn't realize that He was King of kings and Lord of lords (I Cor. 2:8 - *"Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they know it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.")*.

Christ's willingness to take the mocking was not a sign of weakness but strength. It takes strength to control your emotions and reactions when you know people are treating you wrongly. *"He that is slow to anger if better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city"* (Prov. 16:32).

Jesus didn't enjoy the shame; He *"despised the shame"* (Heb. 12:2); yet He had the self-control not to retaliate in like manner, but delivered His life over to the will of the Father.

V. 28-29

What is interesting is that the mock costume they were dressing Christ up with will one day be His real garb.

Except then He will not have a cheap scarlet robe, but a red vesture dipped in the blood of His enemies (Rev. 19:13).

The crown of thorns will be replaced by a golden *stephanos* (victor's crown) at the time of Rapture reaping (Rev. 14:14), and replaced by many *diadematas* (king's crowns) at the time for Armageddon (Rev. 12:12).

The *"reed"* will one day be replaced by a *"rod of iron"* with which He will rule the nations and dash them to pieces like pottery (Ps. 2:9; Rev. 2:27, 12:5, 19:15).

The mock bowing will be replaced with people falling down to worship Him (Rom. 14;11).

And the mockery "Hail King of the Jews" will be replaced by their tongues confessing that *"Jesus Christ is Lord."* (Phil. 2:10).

*SEE: Rev. 19:11-16 for a glimpse of Christ's future glory.

G. They mocked Him with death by crucifixion (v. 31-37)

V. 31

So as to cover up and hide the shameful treatment they gave to our Lord (so as to retain any dignity they may have had in the minds of the populace), they put His own clothing back on Him.

It's amazing what people will do behind closed doors which they would never do out in public.

As Jesus walked toward Golgotha, many Jewish women wept for Him (to which He replied, *"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.")*

V. 32

Jesus, whose deity was housed in mortality and human flesh and blood, was now so physically weary that He could not bear the cross.

Normally, the one to be crucified would carry his own cross to the place of execution, but Jesus was drained from the torturous, inhuman pummelling and blood loss He had already endured.

"Simon" was from Cyrene, North Africa. "He had come to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, and now he was humiliated by being forced to carry the cross of an unknown criminal" (Wiersbe, p. 102)

If Simon knew who Jesus was, he would have viewed anything done for Him as a great honor.

"Mark referred to Simon as though people reading his gospel would recognize him: *"the father of Alexander and Rufus"* (Mk. 15:21). Apparently these two sons were well-known members of the church. It seems likely that this humiliating experience resulted in Simon's conversion as well as the conversion of his family.

Simon came to Jerusalem to sacrifice his Passover lamb, and he met the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for him (Wiersbe, p. 102).

It is possible that Simon's wife (the mother of Rufus) is the woman who became like a mother to Paul (Rom. 16:13).

"It was required that the prisoner carry his own cross (or at least the cross beam), and that he wear a placard around his neck announcing his crime. That placard was then hung over his head on the cross for all to see" (Wiersbe, p. 102).

Christ's only "crime" was claiming to be the ***"King of the Jews,"*** so this is what He was condemned for. And yet He really was and is the King of the Jews!

Are you willing to bear a cross for Jesus? *"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."* (Lk. 9:23)

V. 33

"Skull" **-** Greek = *kranion* Latin = *calvaria* (cranium; Calvary)

"Golgotha" **-** The Aramaic word for "skull," perhaps indicating that the place where Jesus was crucified had the appearance of a skeleton head. It had the semblance of death.

Such a place exists today, just outside the old city walls of Jerusalem (often referred to as "Gordon's Calvary"). Jesus hung *"outside the gate"* (Heb. 13:12).

V. 34

"Vinegar" **-** lit. wine

"Mingled with gall" **-** gall was a narcotic that was mixed into the wine so as to help deaden the pain.

"He would not drink" - Our Lord, however, refused the drugs this world offered Him.

He would not allow any mind-altering substance to enter His body! Neither should you!

Jesus intended to accept the full brunt of the world's punishment and wrath without impairing His faculties.

Evidently the offering of this "gall" mixture was not an act of mercy on the part of the soldiers, but an act to ease the pain so that the victim would not by struggling violently jar a hand or foot loose from the cross, which would require more work on the part of the soldiers to re-nail the loose limb.

V. 35

"They crucified Him" - The most humiliating way to die. A method used for the scum of society.

The Jewish law viewed such a one hanging on a cross as a curse (Gal. 3:13 - *"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."*; cp. Deut. 21:23).

VINNY, SEE: PHOTOCOPY OF MACARHTUR, P. 255

Christ's only physical possessions were taken and gambled off so as to fulfill Psalm 22:18.

He had next to nothing as He lived on this earth (Mt. 8:20 - *"And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests: but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.")*, and He had nothing at His death. . . And yet His impeccable life and His substitutionary death gave Him the right to purchase the greatest treasure of all! --His Church, the Bride of Christ (Rev. 21:9).

V. 36

They ***"watched"*** Him primarily to guard Him (they were well aware of His miracles and powers).

"They watched Him" - looking to see what He would do, whether He would come down from the cross or whether Elijah would come to save Him (v. 49), etc.

V. 37

The accusation written by Pilate (Jn. 19:19) and placed above His cross actually said: "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" (cp. Jn. 19:19), and it was written in the three languages of the day - Greek, Latin, and Hebrew (Lk. 23:38).

The Jewish religious leaders, not believing that the accusation was true, asked Pilate to change it (which he did not) (Jn. 19:21-22).

"In one sense, this title proved to be the first 'Gospel tract' ever written" (Wiersbe, p. 103). One thief read it and was saved!

H. They mocked Him with association with two criminals (v. 38)

Christ was further humiliated by being associated with two thieves. One wicked man on His right and another on His left, and Perfection placed in the middle.

"He made His grave with the wicked" (Is. 53:9).

II. They Insulted His Power to do <u>MIRACLES</u> (v. 39-40)

V. 39

"Reviled Him" - hurled verbal abuse at Him; used insulting language to describe Him.

"Wagging their heads" - Again, a mockery. No doubt, with their eyes lifted up, a smirk on their faces, perhaps arms crossed or finger pointing at Him -- they shook their heads back and forth to express their disbelief at one who supposedly was so awesome, so powerful, so mighty, and yet He just hung there like a helpless, hoopless common criminal.

V. 40

They mocked, "If you could do what you said you could do, then why not prove it, and prove it now!"

Could Jesus come down off of the cross? Of course He had the spiritual power to do so. However, He did not for at least three reasons:

1. His coming down at their request would be to submit to their wishes, thus making Christ subordinate to their will

2. His coming down would be to fail to fulfill the will of the Father (Lk. 22:42) and to fail to fulfill the whole purpose for which He came to earth (Mt. 20:28)

3. His coming down would be to fail to purchase your salvation

Can you imagine the hardness of heart to insult a man as His life is being poured out?

Many would no doubt insult a convicted criminal, but not even the hardest of hearts would insult him as he fries in the electric chair right before one's eyes.

"Jesus enemies so hated Him that even His death seemed to be a disappointment, because it ended their opportunity to spew venom on Him" (MacArthur, p. 246).

[ILLUS: Bill Murray's testimony of how his mother's (Madaline Murray O'Hair)

hatred of Jesus Christ proved His reality and existence to Bill, who recognized that no one hates someone who does not exist.]

III. They Insulted His Ability to <u>SAVE</u> (v. 41-42)

V. 41

Those religious Jews never stopped opposing Christ right up until His final breath on the cross.

*Don't tell me all religions lead to Heaven!

V. 42

"He saved others" - And He did! EX: Jairus' daughter (Mt. 9:18); Lazarus (Jn. 11; v. 24-26 - *"Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?")*.

"Himself He cannot save" - It's not that He <u>could</u> not. It's that He <u>would</u> not.

If He chose to save Himself, He could not have saved the world.

His death means life to you and me.

"And we will believe Him" - Christ did more than enough miracles to authenticate Himself. He would never succumb to this request.

Would they really believe? These same people knew how Christ raised Lazarus from the dead (Jn. 11:47-48 - *"Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on Him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.")*. Yet rather than believing the evidence, *"they took counsel together for to put him to death"* (Jn. 11:53).

The rich man in hell thoughts that a miracle would save his five brothers (Lk. 16:30, 31).
If people will not believe God's Word and submit to the working of the Holy Spirit, neither will they be persuaded by a miracle (EX: Judas).

Jesus was their "Brand of Messiah." They were all looking for a different type - a political deliverer, not a Savior from sin.

Beware of demanding to have things <u>your</u> way. Accept God's way!

IV. They Insulted His Relationship With the <u>FATHER</u> (v. 43-44)

V. 43

"Let Him deliver Him now" - They not only put the Son of God to a test, but God the Father also.

They in effect say, "Where is that mountain-moving faith now, Jesus?!"

Of course, Jesus didn't need "faith," because faith is believing the unseen. Jesus of course saw everything; had been in the Father's presence in eternity past, and was in essence *"one with the Father."*

The hymnwriter said; "...He could have called 10,000 angels to destroy the world and set Him free...but He died alone for you and me."

V. 44

Out of their mouths came the same insults the rest had given; however, one of the thieves saw the error of his words and repented, rebuked the other thief for insulting Christ, and came to faith in Christ (Lk. 23:39-43).

CONCLUSION:

In this text, there is a message to the saved and unsaved alike.

The message to the saved is that you should *"follow in His steps"* (SEE: I Peter 2:19-24 *V. 21).
How do you respond to unjust treatment?

The message to the unsaved is this: Although Christ had the power to come down from the cross, He stayed there to bear your sins in His own body and pay the price to ransom you.