

BIBLE STORY: THE KING OF THE JEWS IS MOCKED

Matthew 27:27-44

Central Thoughts

- Humanity's evil is on full display in the rejection of Jesus by the Roman soldiers, the chief priests and elders of the people, the passersby, and even other robbers who were crucified with Jesus.
- Unbelief and the rejection of Jesus shows itself in the selfish and arrogant evil of all those who mocked Jesus.
- Where there is an absence of faith in the Gospel, there will be a corresponding absence of love, mercy, and compassion for others.
- Unbelief hates the Gospel of God's undeserved mercy and love in Jesus and fights against it.
- Jesus died for all these enemies who hated Him, rejected Him, and mocked Him.

Discussion Questions

Who were the soldiers that took Jesus into the governor's headquarters?

They were Roman soldiers. Previously, Jesus had been arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane and brought before the Sanhedrin by the Temple guard that was under the authority of the High Priest.

Describe the things they did to Jesus?

The Roman soldiers made fun of Jesus. They stripped Him of His clothing. They put a scarlet robe on Him, the color of a king. They twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head. Then they gave Him a reed as a king's staff, bowed before Him and mocked Him with the words: "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spit on Him and beat Him over the head with the reed they had given Him as a staff.

Why did the Roman soldiers treat Him so cruelly and mock Him in this way?

They did not believe in Him as the Messiah and Savior of the world. Their unbelief exhibited itself in lovelessness and acts of despicable evil. Pride, arrogance, selfishness, and acts of evil against others are what the unbelieving sinful flesh produces. These Roman soldiers also hated the Jews because they were so difficult to govern and they took out their hatred upon Jesus, rejecting everything that God's Word promised concerning Jesus' kingdom.

Where is Cyrene located?

Cyrene was a city in Libya, Africa.

Why had Simon come to Jerusalem?

He had come to worship at the Passover.

Why was it necessary for the Romans to compel someone to carry Jesus' cross?

Jesus was so physically weakened by the beatings that He had received that He did not have the strength to carry the heavy cross.

What does Simon carrying the cross signify for us?

Every Christian is called to "take up our cross and follow Jesus" — this means that we are called to deny ourselves, confess our sins, die to ourselves and follow Him who alone is our God and Savior.

What is the significance of the fact that Jesus was crucified on Golgotha, also called the Place of a Skull?

"The Skull" reminds us of the Serpent's head which, according to the promise of the Gospel in Genesis 3:15, would be crushed by Jesus' heel in His suffering and death upon the cross.

What is sour wine and gall?

Sour wine is wine that has turned to vinegar. Gall is a bitter substance made from plants that may have been a kind of drug to lessen the pain, but Jesus would not drink it.

What does Jesus' refusal to drink the wine and gall signify?

He would not shrink from His Father's call for Him to suffer, but would rather "drink the cup of wrath" that the Father had given Him to drink according to His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Where was it foretold that Jesus' garments would be taken from Him and divided?

Psalm 22:18 described the scene of dividing Jesus' garments that was played out by the soldiers at Jesus' crucifixion.

What does the dividing of Jesus' garments signify?

It signifies that He was totally humiliated in His suffering and death, and that the garments of His righteousness would extend to the four corners of the earth in the preaching of the Gospel.

What did placards above crucified victims often proclaim to passersby?

The crime for which the person was being crucified.

What was the accusation written against Jesus and placed above His head?

THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS

What is wonderful about this "accusation"?

He is the King or Messiah of the Jews and the Savior of all people. It signifies that Jesus was crucified for being who He actually was.

How did others ridicule and mock Jesus?

They challenged His words about the temple and challenged Him to come down from the cross if He were the Messiah and the Son of God.

What did Jesus words about the Temple's destruction really foretell?

He foretold His death and resurrection for He was the Temple of God that would be destroyed, but on the third day He would rise again.

Why could Jesus NOT come down from the cross to prove He was the Son of God?

He was born to die. Had He come down from the cross He would NOT have been our Savior.

When they said they would believe IF He came down from the cross, what were they rejecting?

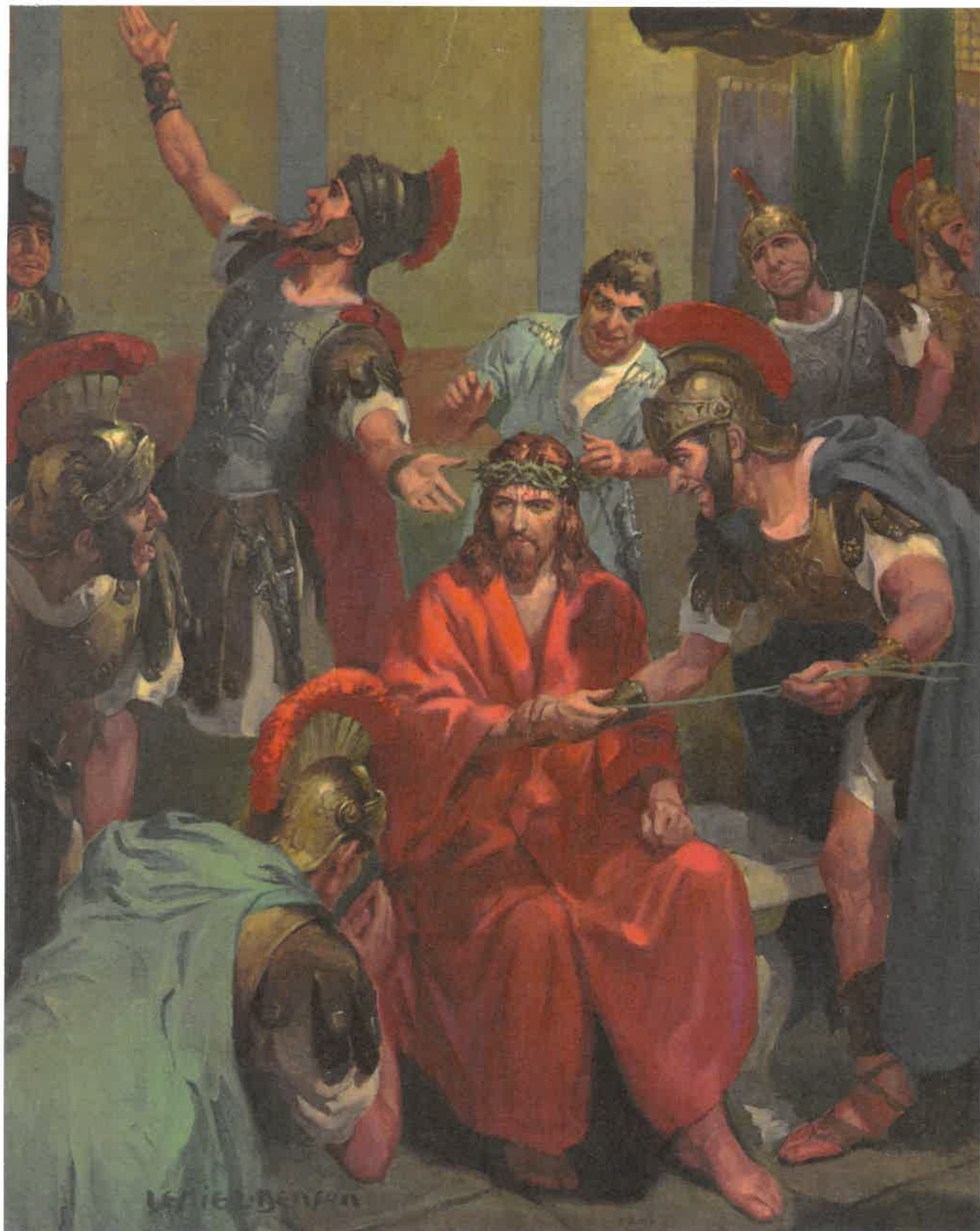
The Gospel of God's love in Jesus who had to die for our sins.

Meditation on the Bible Story

The worst of human evil is on display at Jesus' crucifixion. In the mockery of the soldiers, the cruel torture He endured, and the ridicule of everyone who witnessed His crucifixion we see the result of unbelief. Where the Gospel of God's love is rejected, man disintegrates into a malevolent monster who knows nothing of compassion and mercy, but only hatred, scorn, and contempt for God's grace. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is on display in the Passion because He willingly dies for those who hated Him and wanted Him dead. What they hated was God, His Word, His love, and His goodness. Jesus was hated for how He forgave sinners. How He came, not to condemn others or exalt Himself, but to serve others in love, especially those who hated Him. Just as faith in Christ is active in compassion and love for others, especially our enemies and persecutors, so also unbelief is manifest in every form of self-centered evil. Let us confess our sins, pray for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and cry out to God that we might rest our life and salvation only in Christ and His sacrifice of love for us.

Prayer on the Bible Story

O Lord Jesus, as You bore the mockery, torture, and rejection of those who hated You at Your crucifixion, strengthen our faith to believe that You did all this in love for us and for the whole world, so that we might live in Your mercy, love, and forgiveness toward those who hate us because of our faith in You. In Your holy name we pray. Amen.



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