

Matthew 27:32-49 The Process of the Crucifixion

Alright, today we are taking the section in Matthew chapter 27 verses 32 through 49, which is page 6 of your study guide. Today, The Process of the Crucifixion. We actually study the crucifixion itself.

So far we have studied the Lord in front of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. He has been in front of Annas. He has been in front of Caiaphas. He then was shuttled off to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. Only a Roman official can declare crucifixion by death as a sentence. And so, in frustration the Jewish leaders led Jesus over to Pontius Pilate to have him handle it and put pressure on him so that they can have Him crucified.

After Pontius Pilate got frustrated with the people and said, "I find no fault in this Man," they continued to put pressure on him. And he finally relented, and gave in after washing his hands of the whole thing, and saying, "His blood be on your head." **He released Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered Him over in order that He might be crucified.** As we explained last week *scourging* was not just *whipping*. Scourging was done, flogging was done with a strap with a wooden handle on it with pieces of metal and bone in the leather of the strap, which pulled the skin off of the people who were hit by it. Some of you saw the movie *The Passion*, you saw that they depicted it pretty good. **So he scourged Jesus and delivered Him over that He might be crucified.**

But on Page 5, *The Persecution of Jesus*. The Conduct of the Soldiers around the cross is where we left off last week. **Then the soldiers of the governor having taken Jesus into the praetorium**, that would be the mansion of the governor himself, **gathered the whole cohort against Him**. A cohort is six hundred soldiers. **And having stripped Him, they put around Him a scarlet robe. And having woven a crown of thorns, they placed it upon His head.** This would be thorns that were like nails, three to four inches long and they were crushed down upon Jesus's head in mockery of a crown, a wreath.

And a reed on His right hand. And having bowed the knees before Him, they were mocking Him, saying, "Hail King of the Jews." And having spit at Him, they took the reed and were striking at His head. And when they mocked Him, they stripped off His clothes, and they put His garments on Him, and led Him away for to be crucified. So as we said last week, what are we supposed to do with these facts of how Jesus suffered? Realizing that when He suffered these things, so far it was not for the sins of the world. He is not dying on the cross yet. He is suffering under the abuse of the soldiers and the people who delivered Him over. And what are we supposed to do with these things for us?

We saw from Hebrews chapter 12 verses 3 and 4, that **We are to consider**, literally analyze, **the One who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, in order that you should not grow weary fainting in your minds. You did not yet resist until shedding of blood, while striving against sin.** So he is saying to believers, or people who are thinking of coming to Christ and seeing the suffering and hardship that is going to be before them, the question in the mind is, *Is it worth it?* The writer of Hebrews says, "Consider Jesus." Analyze

Jesus, who suffered hostility from sinners against Himself. You did not resist till the shedding of blood, but Jesus did.

So he says in verses 12 and 13 of Hebrews chapter 12, **On account of which, lift up the hands that have been wearied, and the knees having become feeble; make straight paths for your feet in order that the lame should not be turned aside; but rather may be healed.** And again, I have heard this taken out of context, used in healing meetings, about people coming up with their hands hanging down, and weary, and lame feet coming to be healed. In context, He is talking about people who are discouraged over the hardships of life, and their feet are starting to get off the path as their knees are feeble, and they are weary, their hands are hanging down. Verse 13 says, **And make straight paths for your feet, in order that the lame should not be turned aside; but rather it may be healed.** So he is telling believers, "Get your encouragement from Christ." He went through it. He went through the suffering, and the hardship, and the abuse just to get to the cross. And so He is telling the people there in Hebrews to consider Christ and turn to Him for encouragement, and strength, and help whenever you need it.

We also saw in Hebrews chapter 4 that we do not have a high priest that does not sympathize with our weaknesses, but rather He does sympathize, and suffered at all points like we yet without sin. So He sympathizes with what we are going through. But it is nothing compared to what He went through. And He can sympathize and give the help and give the ministry that is needed.

So they mocked Him, they stripped off His robe, and they put His garments on Him, and led Him away for to be crucified.

Verse 32 says, **And while going out, they found a man, a Cyrenean, Simon by name. They compelled (or forced) this one in order that he should bear His cross or carry His cross.** Cyrene is a place in northern Africa. So it is obvious that this man Simon was there for the Passover feast, Simon by name.

It is interesting about this verse, the fact - in John chapter 19 verse 17 tells us that Jesus carried His own cross. But apparently while they were going outside the city, Jesus fell under the weight of the cross because of the physical beating, and so the soldiers picked a man out of the crowd to carry the cross for Jesus the rest of the way up the hill. So submitting to the whole process of the beating and the abuse making the physical body weak, He buckled under the load of carrying the cross. And the soldiers forced, compelled, a man out of the crowd by the name of Simon to carry the cross for Him the rest of the way.

Now what is interesting about this man Simon, is that this man - according to Mark chapter 15 verse 21, it says that Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus. Which according to Romans chapter 16 verse 13, Paul mentions Rufus as one of the Christians in Rome; and whose mother is Rufus' and Paul's. So putting these texts together the belief is that Simon, after carrying the cross for Jesus, inquired as to whose cross it is, and what did He do? And that he looked into Jesus and eventually came to know Christ, because his sons Rufus and Alexander were later identified as Christians.

And Paul when he came to Jerusalem to study under Gamaliel he stayed with a family, and it happened to be Simon's family. And so, Paul is now saved. In Romans chapter 16, he says to **Greet Rufus and his mother and mine**. He saw them as his family.

So the soldiers picked him out of the crowd to carry His cross, and later on find out that the sons know the Lord. And so that the belief is the Simon looked into who this Man was that was carrying the cross and found about Jesus and looked into Him.

Verse 33, **And having come into a place called Golgotha**, which is Aramaic, **which means place of a skull**. *Golgotha* means *skull*. It is a mountain outside of the city of Jerusalem that was in the form or shape of a skull. *Calvary* is a word that comes from the Latin word for *skull*. And **κρανίον** (*kranion*) is the Greek word for *skull*. So it is interesting Golgotha, the place of a skull, a little hill outside the city where they are going for the crucifixion.

The Conduct at the Cross, verses 34 through 44. **They gave Him vinegar mingled with gall to drink. And having tasted it, He was not desiring to drink**. The vinegar or sour wine is the vinegar that is strained from off of the cheap wine, and it was used to quench thirst. The gall was a sedative. The word *gall* just means *bitterness*. So they took this vinegar, this sour wine, it was strained off of the regular wine, and used as a thirst quencher, mixed it with the gall and then offered it to Jesus. When Jesus tasted it, He did not desire to drink. Interesting, He would not take the sedative. All in fulfillment of Psalm 69 verse 21, that they would give Him vinegar with gall to drink. So it is believed to be an opium sedative that they gave to those who were crucified and put them to sleep so that they would not suffer through the crucifixion. But Jesus would not take it. He refused to take it. So they gave it to Jesus but He refused to take it.

In verse 35, **And having crucified Him, they divided His clothing, casting a lot**, and there are several lots cast by the soldiers, **in order that they might be fulfilled which has been spoken by the prophet**, this is Psalm 22 verse 18, **They divided My clothing among themselves, and they cast a lot over My clothing**. We know that Jesus, His cloak was seamless, so instead of ripping it in two, which they could not do, they cast a lot for it.

And sitting down (that is, the soldiers) **they were guarding Him there**. It was the common duty of the soldiers to guard the individuals who were hanging on the cross so that no one would come and help them down, or help them with their suffering, or take them. So that was the scene that we have now.

Verse 37, **And they put over His head His accusation which had been written: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS**. They did this for every prisoner. They tied a chord around His neck while He was carrying the cross and it was that plaque that was nailed over you. So you had a plaque hanging down over your neck as you carried your cross or went up to the hill. And when you got up to the hill, they took the plaque off your neck and nailed it to the top of the cross. So that the accusations of the criminal who was crucified could be read by all. This is so that people coming in and out of the city of Jerusalem could see the accusations. And we will see in a moment they had some pretty blasphemous things to say to Jesus and the two robbers that were crucified with Him.

Now are told that in John's Gospel, John chapter 19 verses 21 to 23, it tells us that the religious leaders came and told Pontius Pilate, "Do not put that, that this is Jesus King of the Jews. But that He said, He was King of the Jews." I mean Pontius Pilate made a factual statement: This is Jesus, King of the Jews. They said, "Do not say that." It is a factual statement. "Say, He said, He was King of the Jews." That was His accusation against Him. Pilate said, according to John chapter 19 verse 23, Pilate said, "What I have said I have said," and he left it that way.

Verse 38, **Then two robbers are being crucified with Him, one off of the right, and one off on the left.** It is believed these robbers were part of Barabbas' gang. You remember they released Barabbas and kept Jesus. One of them was crucified on the right and one on the left.

But the ones passing by were blaspheming Him, shaking their heads. And again, that is another fulfillment of prophecy. Psalm 22 verse 7 says that they would walk by and wag their heads. The text says that they were continuously passing by. So these are the people coming in and out of the city that were passing by and saying these things and doing these things. They were shaking their heads and blaspheming Him and saying, verse 40, **"You the One destroying the Temple and building it in three days, save Yourself. If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross."**

Verse 40 tells us a mockery was that He testified He was going to destroy the temple and build up in three days. Remember that was told to the religious leaders before Caiaphas, and that is blasphemy to the Jews to say you are going to destroy the temple. It is speaking against the temple, the sacred shrine. So they said that He was going to destroy the temple and build it in three days. That is blasphemy to the Jews. But in John 2 verse 19, it says He was not talking about the physical building, He was talking about His body. Destroying this temple, His physical body. He was pointing to Himself. In three days, I will raise it up. They were saying, "Save Yourself."

Verse 42, **He saved others; Himself is not able to save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him come down from the cross, and we will believe Him.** Literally He saved others, He is not able to save Himself. That is what they are blaspheming Him with. They are daring Him to come down off the cross to prove that He is who He says He is. People never believe on the basis of miracles. They are doing it in mockery to Him.

They went on to say verse 43, **He has trusted upon God. Let Him deliver Him now, if He desires Him. For He said, I am Son of God.** Very powerful verse. Again, a quote from Psalm 22 verse 8. They are saying that if Jesus put His trust in the Father and if the Father was pleased with Jesus then the Father would have rescued Him. **And the same thing also the robbers who had been crucified with Him, reproached Him.** They also said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, get yourself down off this cross." That is before one of them was saved. Matthew does not tell us that the two thieves began to jeer Him too.

In Luke chapter 23 verse 39 to 43 one said, "If you really are the Christ then get us down off this cross, you and us both." And the other thief said, "This is truly the Son of God." And he

said, "Remember me when You come into Your kingdom." And Jesus said, "Today you shall be with Me in paradise." So one of the thieves was saved on the cross, and the other was lost. That is Luke chapter 23 verse 39 to 43.

Matthew chapter 27 verse 45 to 49, The Communication with the Father. **Now the sixth-hour there became darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.** The sixth hour is noon, and the ninth hour is three o'clock in the afternoon. It tells us in Mark chapter 15 verse 25 that Jesus was crucified on the third hour, that is nine o'clock in the morning. So He was on the cross for six hours. So there was a special time that Matthew wants us to take note of, that is from noon to three in the afternoon, darkness over the land until the ninth hour. So for three hours it was an eclipse, complete darkness. **And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a great voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani;" that is "My God, My God, why did You forsake Me?"** That is Hebrew: *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*. Mark presents it in Aramaic but Matthew presents it in Hebrew. It is an exact quote of Psalm 22 verse 1.

It is interesting because this has perplexed many people, Jesus saying, **"My God, My God, why did You forsake Me?"** Is He saying that God gave up on Him? What exactly is He saying? Well, in experiencing the judgment on the cross, experiencing the punishment for sins, the sins of the world, it was not just symbolism. It was not just Jesus hanging on a cross that you hang on your wall and the hanging on the cross symbolizes the forgiveness of sins. He actually experienced what it would be like to be separate from God throughout eternity. So while He was hanging on the cross, yes He suffered the sufferings of the cross, but He literally experienced the punishments of sin for the world.

Verse 47, **And some of the ones who had been standing there, having heard, were saying, "This One is calling Elijah."** Because He said, "Eli, Eli lama sabachthani." So they said, "Oh, He is calling for Elijah." **And immediately one of them having run and having taken a sponge, and having filled it with vinegar, and having put it on a reed, was giving Him to drink.** Again Psalm 69 verse 21, giving Him to drink again. **But the rest were saying, "Let be; we should see if Elijah comes, saving Him."** Let it alone. Let it be. Let us see if Elijah comes to save Him.

Next week we will continue. But what Jesus suffered for us, both in His abuse and His dying on the cross for the punishment for sins. He did not shrink back or hold back from suffering that punishment. We are to consider Jesus who suffered the hardships of the world, suffered at the hands of sinners for the world.

Let's close in prayer.