

The Mockery of the Multitude

Matthew 27: 27-32

Our last study ended with a gripping statement: [Matt.27:26 – Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.](#) It doesn't reveal much detail. Matthew declares that Jesus was delivered to be crucified after He was scourged. Most of the detail we have regarding such punishment has been handed down through historical writings. We discussed the severe flogging endured by those who were whipped with a cat of nine tails. We know from prophecy that Jesus was beaten beyond recognition. I am certain we cannot begin to comprehend the severe physical abuse Jesus suffered at the hands of the Roman soldiers as He was scourged just prior to the crucifixion.

He has been beaten mercilessly, and yet the abuse continues. The heartless Romans and accusing Jews were not satisfied with the physical abuse already inflicted. Here we discover their determination to add to Jesus' suffering. No doubt barely able to stand from the recent scourging, Jesus now endures a time of emotional abuse at the hands of His accusers.

As we move through these verses, keep in mind, Jesus endured all of this for you and me. He willingly subjected Himself to unimaginable pain and suffering so we might escape the pain and suffering of death and condemnation. I want to consider the [humiliating events](#) described in this passage as we think on: [The Mockery of the Multitude](#).

I. The Presentation of Jesus (27) – [Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.](#) Following the horrific scourging, Jesus was brought again to the hall of Pilate. Consider:

A. The Spectacle (27a) – [Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall.](#) We find that Jesus was brought into the common hall. This was an area within the compound of Pilate's residence in Jerusalem. The phrase "common hall" is translated from the Greek word *praetorium*, and refers to a courtyard located within the governor's palace. We can imagine a grand courtyard, arrayed for the governor's pleasure, and Jesus standing in the midst, bloody, battered, and abused by His tormentors. At this moment, there may have been some who were sympathetic to Jesus among the crowd, but they would have been a small minority. Jesus is there surrounded by those filled with hatred and animosity, demanding His crucifixion. He stood alone before them.

- It is interesting to note the place for this spectacle. The Sanhedrin was there, crying out for Jesus' death on the cross, but they were too self-righteous and hypocritical to enter the palace of Pilate. Such activity would render them ceremonially unclean, but they had no problem demanding

the condemnation and death of an innocent Man. They must have demanded these proceedings take place within the courtyard.

B. The Soldiers (27b) – Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. This appears to reveal the soldiers who had subjected Jesus to the horrors of public scourging had gathered the entire band of soldiers under Pilate's authority to witness this spectacle. Some argue that since Pilate's primary residence was in Caesarea, these would have included his elite palace guard that traveled with the governor and ensured his safety. These were hardened men, having little compassion for those who were subject to Roman authority and rule, especially the Jews. A full Roman cohort of soldiers was comprised of 600 men. This would have been a large, intimidating group of soldiers gathered around Jesus.

II. The Humiliation of Jesus (28-30) – There can be no doubt, the physical abuse already inflicted upon Jesus at this point would have been unbearable, but the soldiers seem intent on adding to His suffering. They publicly humiliate Him before the multitude. Matthew reveals a series of events that accompany this humiliation. Notice:

A. The Mockery (28-29) – Notice the aspects of this mockery:

➤ **The Robe of Scarlet** (28) – And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. The garment Jesus wore was removed and a scarlet robe was put on Him. Just the act of removing His garment would have been painful after the flesh had been ripped from His back, but the soldiers were determined to ridicule Jesus. The scarlet robe was put upon Him to add to His shame. Scarlet, or any variation of purple, was considered the color of royalty. The soldiers were displaying a beaten and battered Man to the crowd. In their minds, this man only claimed to be a king. It was as if to say, "Behold your King! Doesn't he look like royalty?" If you remember, Herod's soldiers had done the same.

Unknowingly, the soldiers' treatment of Jesus bore witness to the provision He would soon make for humanity. [Isaiah 1:18](#) – Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

➤ **The Crown of Suffering** (29a) – And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head. A crown made of thorns was platted and placed upon the head of Jesus, mocking the crown of royalty a king would wear before His subjects. This further added to the suffering and misery of Jesus. As the thorns were pressed into His head, fresh blood would have run down His

face, intermingling with the blood already upon His body. This too paints a picture of the provision of Christ for us. Thorns became a painful reminder of the curse of sin after the fall. Jesus would bear the curse of sin for each of us as He endured the wrath of God in our place.

➤ **The Reed of Sovereignty (29b)** – *and a reed in his right hand*. They further mocked His claim of deity by placing a reed in His hand to represent the scepter of a sovereign king. They never recognized Jesus as the sovereign King, but He holds a place of preeminence that none can rival. *Heb.1:8 – But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom*. When Jesus returns in power and glory, there won't be a tender reed in His hand, but a rod of iron as He rules and reigns.

➤ **The Ridicule of Soldiers (29c)** – *and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!* This was not a display of honor or submission to Jesus, but another form of mockery and denial of who He really was. These refused to bow in submission to Jesus then, but one day they will bow and proclaim Him Lord over all. *Phil.2:10 – That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth*.

▪ As I considered the ridicule Jesus suffered at that moment, I was reminded of a time yet future when things will be much different. He was mocked, despised, and rejected the first time, but His return will be in great power and glory. *Rev.19:11-16 – And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.* ^[12] *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.* ^[13] *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.* ^[14] *And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.* ^[15] *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.* ^[16] *And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*

B. The Mistreatment (30) – *And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.*

There is little more degrading than being spat upon. The soldiers displayed their utter contempt and disdain for Jesus as they spat upon Him. I cannot imagine the hatred and cruelty of such actions. He has already been beaten beyond recognition, publicly humiliated, and now they resort to the greatest display of contempt. Oh the sadness when these stand before the One they spat upon in righteous judgment.

▪ The soldiers also took the reed from Jesus' hand and began to beat Him upon the head. No doubt this caused the thorns to drive deeper into His flesh, adding more physical pain. This was a

display of their rejection of Jesus as King. It showed their disapproval of His claims. One would never treat a sovereign whom they respected in such a demeaning way.

III. The Condemnation of Jesus (31-32) – Following the suffering and humiliation of this encounter, Jesus was condemned to death and led away to be crucified. Consider:

A. The Prophecy (31) – *And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him.* After the spectacle, the scarlet robe was removed and Jesus' robe was put back on Him. These men did not know, but this must be for the prophecies to be fulfilled. *John 19:23-24 – Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.*

^[24] *They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.* God's sovereign plan for the redemption of humanity was being carried out to the smallest of details. The soldiers thought they were in control, but this was going according to God's plan.

B. The Punishment (31b) – *and led him away to crucify him.* We will deal with the crucifixion in detail in a later study, but this reveals the punishment rendered for Jesus. He would suffer a horrific death, condemned to the fate of a common criminal. Death by crucifixion was not uncommon in Jesus' day. Historians tell us that the roads into Jerusalem were often lined with those who suffered this fate as a means to deter criminal activity. However, crucifixion was reserved for the vilest of criminals who had committed the most heinous acts.

C. The Procession (32) – *And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.* We must keep in mind that Jesus possessed a body of flesh like ours. He experienced hunger, thirst, and fatigue just as we do. As they led Jesus away to be crucified, He was expected to bear the beam for the crucifixion on His back. Utterly exhausted from the lack of sleep, the physical and emotional abuse, and the loss of blood, the soldiers selected a man from among the crowd viewing the spectacle to bear the cross for Jesus as they made their way to Calvary. They chose Simon, a man from Cyrene, the capital city of Libya. It is interesting to note that Mark identified Simon as the father of Alexander and Rufus. Apparently these men were known to Mark and others as fellow believers. One could likely assume this encounter with Jesus made a profound impact on Simon, and eventually his family as well.

- I don't wish to over spiritualize the encounter Simon had with Jesus, but it seems apparent this encounter likely changed his life. One cannot examine Jesus as the sinless sacrifice and walk away unchanged. Simon was forced to make a decision regarding Jesus and we must as well. I urge you, as you consider the facts, don't disregard Jesus as the Christ!

Conclusion: It saddens me to read this portion of Scripture. I am troubled by the mistreatment and mockery of Jesus by sinful men. I also realize this rejection and mockery continues today. Many deny and ridicule the name of Jesus and fail to realize He is their only hope of salvation. I am thankful my eyes and heart were opened to the truth and that I was given the opportunity to respond to Jesus in faith. I know He endured all that He did on my behalf.

Have you considered Jesus today? Are you willing to embrace Him as the Christ, Savior of all mankind? Do you know Him as your personal Savior? He endured all of this for you. He suffered and died in your place so you wouldn't have to. If you don't know Jesus as Savior, respond to His call by faith, repent of sin, and be saved today!