

## THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW – THE LAST WEEK OF JESUS’ LIFE ON EARTH

Week 8 – Jesus Felt the Nails!

March 14, 2023

*...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 (Heb. 12:2).*

The trials of Jesus – three religious and three civil - represent the ultimate mockery of justice. Our sinless Messiah, Jesus, was sentenced to a criminal’s death by crucifixion. But Jesus was first scourged by the Romans (John 19:1). But, Jesus could not be killed by flogging. Why? He MUST be crucified according to Scripture (Psa. 22 and Isa. 53)...He MUST fulfill prophecy...He MUST!

Both the religious and civil authorities found Jesus to be blameless. Yet, how evilly Jesus was treated by those He came to save!

*He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed (Isa. 53:5).* The “stripes” referred to in this prophecy are a direct reference to the lashes Jesus received.

During flogging, a victim was tied to a post, leaving his back entirely exposed. The Roman whip which tore off flesh and lacerated muscles was called a flagrum or flagellum with small pieces of bone and metal attached to a number of leather strands. Jesus was beaten without mercy by those whom He created!

*Isa. 52:14 - His appearance was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men.*

And, Jesus was mocked. A purple or scarlet robe was placed upon His battered, bloodied body. *Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow (Isa. 1:18).*

*Matt. 27: 29-31 - they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’<sup>30</sup> Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. <sup>31</sup> And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.* The crown of thorns the soldiers pushed down upon Jesus’ head may have covered Jesus entire scalp. The thorns may have been 1 to 2 inches long.

The thorns speak to the earth that was cursed at the fall (Gen. 3:17-18). The Roman soldiers unknowingly took thorns, an object of the curse, and fashioned them into a crown for the One Who will deliver the earth from that curse. The significance of the scarlet robe and the crown of thorns emphasize Jesus taking the sins of the world upon His body.

*Rom. 8:22-23 - For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. <sup>23</sup> Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.* The earth awaits its redemption (the curse removed).

Believers in Jesus await our redemption (glorification). Everything that was lost at the fall will be restored!

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Jesus was led away to Golgotha (Aramaic for “skull”), carrying the crossbar (80 to 110 lbs.) of the cross across His shoulders after having been SEVERELY flogged which might’ve caused hypovolemic shock. Hypovolemic shock causes fluid to gather in the sack around the heart and lungs resulting in blood and water coming from His side when He was pierced after He died.

Why was Jesus crucified at the place called the “skull”? Gen. 3:15, which is the first Messianic prophecy, gives us a huge clue! *And I will put hostility between you [Satan] and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He (the Seed of the woman – the Messiah) shall crush your head (Satan), and you shall bruise his heel.* As the nail would have been driven through the heels of the one crucified, the prophecy of Genesis 3:15 was being partially fulfilled...Satan would bruise the Messiah’s heel. Consider with me the crushing of Satan’s head. At Golgotha, the cross of Jesus was rammed into the ground that looked like a skull!! Heb. 2:14 - *through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.*

Criminals who were crucified had their crimes inscribed on a placard. The placard was hung around the neck of the victim as he made his way to his execution and then it was attached to the tree/cross over the head of the victim.

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS (John 19:19)

Jesus/His Hebrew name, Yeshua – God is salvation

Nazareth – Heb. – netzer - BRANCH (Messianic title – Jer. 23:5-6)

King – in Hebrew - melech

Jews – in Hebrew – Yehudah

Yeshua Netzer Melech Yehudah

What did the Jewish people read from this sign? Hanging on this tree is...

“SALVATION Who is the BRANCH – the Messiah – the KING of the Jews”!!!!

Jesus came to die. As the Lamb of God, He was scrutinized and found blameless. Jesus was nailed to the cross at 9 a.m. as the animal Passover lambs were being slain in the temple the day of Passover – the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.

What did Jesus cry from the cross? “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34). Jesus looked down from the cross and...

- He saw the Roman soldiers casting lots for His clothing (John 19:23-24).
- He heard the two thieves reviling Him (Matt. 27:44).
- The religious leaders were mocking Him (Matt. 27:41-43).
- The crowd was blaspheming Him (Matt. 27:39).

If good works can save us, why did Jesus have to die...and die such a horrific death? Jesus' crucifixion was the height of man's inhumanity to man AND the height of God's love for man!!!!

Man's freedom of choice was on display at Golgotha! What an UGLY display. We will never understand the holiness of God if we don't understand the depravity of man (sin has affected every part of our being. Regarding eternal life, as sinners not having been forgiven, we are as bad off as we can be). As sinners, we can do nothing to earn God's love. Isa. 59:2 – our sin has separated us from

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God. BUT GOD has reached out to us...to reconcile us to Himself...to put us into a right relationship with Him! The cost of the cross remains ENTIRELY on God's side!

Luke 23:44 - *Now it was about the sixth hour, (Jewish time – it was noon) and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour (3 p.m.). (Matt. 27:45; Mark 15:33) Three hours of darkness occurred while Jesus the Messiah hung on the cross during His final three hours. The darkness was not caused by a solar eclipse which lasts at most about 7.5 minutes, not three hours, We can quickly rule out a lunar eclipse as the cause, since lunar eclipses do not affect the appearance of the Sun and would not have any impact during the time of Jesus' crucifixion from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Scripture tells us that all the earth was in darkness. What is the scope of the crucifixion? Jesus took on the sins of the world! (John 3:16; I John 2:2). The darkness was a special miracle from God!*

Matt. 27:46 - *And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?' The Prophet Isaiah in Isa. 7:14 prophesies that the Messiah would come into this world as Emmanuel – God in the flesh...*

- Jesus – 100% God; 100% man. Jesus felt the nails! Jesus experienced emotions.
- Was Jesus forsaken by God? I don't believe so . I am suggesting that there can be NO separation between the Father and the Son at the cross. God is ETERNALLY the Trinity! Mal. 3:6 – *I am the LORD I change not.*
- In His cry, I'm suggesting that Jesus was teaching from the cross. Rabbis used "Remez," a teaching tool. "Remez" means "hint," "a harkening back." The Rabbis would call out a passage of Scripture and the student would have to give the Scripture before and after that passage. "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" was a harkening back – a reminder – to observant Jews – that King David wrote of the crucifixion of the Messiah in Psalm 22, 1,000 years prior to Jesus' death on the cross.

- Jesus was calling out, in quoting the beginning of Psa. 22:1 from the cross, “Here I am – I am the Messiah... I AM!!! I am the One about Whom King David wrote in His psalm – the One Who would be crucified!” HERE I AM!

*‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’* From these words of Jesus, some have taught that Jesus became sin...because God cannot look on sin...therefore, God forsook His Son. In the Tri-une relationship we see:

John 10:30 - *I and my Father are one.* Gk. – “one” – as in ONE!

John 16:32 - *You [disciples] will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.*

2 Corinthians 5:19 - *God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself,*

Regarding God turning away,,not looking at,,forsaking God the Son, this idea comes from:

II Corinthians 5:21 - *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.* Jesus was not a sinner, even on the cross. On

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the cross, the Father treated Him as if He were a sinner, yet all the while, sin was “outside” of Jesus not “inside” Him and it was not a part of His nature (as it is with us).

Jesus was not guilty, and could not be made guilty; but he was treated as if he were guilty, because he willed to stand in the place of the guilty. Yea, he was not only treated as a sinner, but he was treated as if he had been sin itself in the abstract. This is an amazing utterance. The sinless one was made to be sin.” (Spurgeon)

*HE made Him:* This was the work of God Himself! The Father and the Son (and the Spirit as well) were in perfect cooperation in the work on the cross (Isa. 53:10 – It pleased the Father to bruise the Son if He would render Himself as a guilt offering!!!! This means that the work of redemption on the cross was *the work of God*.

Habakkuk 1:13 – (read Hab. 1:1ff) *Your eyes are too pure to look at evil....* The prophet Habakkuk is NOT agreeing with God’s plan for the Kingdom of Judah! I’m understanding these words as Habakkuk’s human perspective.

Can God not look at evil? What about Job 1:6ff? Who came to present himself before the LORD? Satan! Is Satan EVIL?

In the Jewish sacrificial system, when animals were offered, they didn’t become sin. Animals were offered as substitutes...dying in place of the person who sinned. Jesus offered Himself in the place of sinners. Jesus took on the penalty for our sin! Man sins, something has to die! The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).

Jesus DIED IN OUR PLACE. He died the death we should have died. The question for each of us...have we individually accepted that gift?

The Trinity is eternal. The Godhead had never been separated...and now They are?? I don’t believe so!

Psalm 22, Psalm 23, and Psalm 24 were taught to Jewish boys in synagogues as a unit. Observant Jews would know this.

Jesus, by crying out the first verse of Psalm 22, was proclaiming:

- Here I am – the crucified Messiah of Whom King David wrote in Psa. 22. And, then we read...
- ...Psa. 22:21 - *You have answered Me* – God the Father answered God the Son in His anguish.
- Psa. 22:24 – The Messiah says of God the Father - *He (God the Father) has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted* (Jesus was afflicted on the cross); *nor has He hidden His face from Him; but when He (God the Father) cried to Him (Jesus, God the Son), He (God the Father) heard.*
  - God the Father had NOT hidden His face from Jesus – He heard Jesus.
- Psa. 22 through Psa. 24 is a unit about the Messiah.
- In Psa. 23 the Messiah is proclaiming His hope and trust in His ever-present Father – Psa. 23 – *The Lord is My shepherd, I shall not want* - even in going through the valley of the shadow (of death) – the Wadi Kelt by Jericho – the path of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem – and to the cross!
  - In Psa. 24 we see the Messiah’s glorious return to heaven – Psa. 24:7-10 – lift up your gates and the King of Glory shall come in! (Eph. 4:7-10; II Cor. 2:14)

Victims of crucifixion could live up to six days! BUT Jesus remained on the cross for six hours. Jesus HAD to die when He did. Jesus is the fulfillment of Passover;

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therefore He had to die on Passover, the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan (check your FEAST charts) while the animal Passover lambs were being slain!

In Exodus 12 God gave instructions to the children of Israel at the first Passover in Egypt. Ex. 12:6b – states that *the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it* (the lamb) *at twilight*. Twilight – means “between the two evenings.” The sacrificing of the lambs was to occur before sundown while it was still the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan. Why does Ex. 12:6 note one lamb?

I observed this verse and began asking questions and discovering answers – from an historical perspective. It appears that, based on Ex. 12:6, there was a national Passover lamb for Israel – each Passover – that was killed in the temple on Nisan 14 at “twilight” – at 3 p.m. Remember, God had chosen Israel as a nation. He called for them to repent as a nation.

The last half of the daylight hours according to Jewish time was from noon to 6 p.m. Noon to 6 p.m. was further divided into two parts: the minor evening sacrifice (noon to 3 p.m.) and the major evening sacrifice (3 p.m. to 6 p.m.). “Between the evenings” – between these two periods – equated to 3 p.m. The national Passover lamb was slaughtered in the temple at 3 p.m. – the same time that Jesus cried out, “It is finished” (John 19:30) from the cross... and He yielded up His spirit.

John 10:17-18 - ...*I lay down My life that I may take it again. <sup>18</sup>No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.*

John 19:30 – Jesus cried, *It is finished* – Jesus’ work was completed. Through His death, He destroyed him who had the power of death, that is the devil (Heb. 2:14).

- “It is finished” is *tetelestai*, an accounting term that means “paid in full.” Jesus, through His death, taking on the judgment we deserved, wiped away the debt owed to God by us!
- Jesus had finished the eternal purpose of the cross. It stands today as a finished work. The cross is the foundation of our reconciliation to God.
- When Jesus cried from the cross, “It is finished” was a victory cry – which is unheard of coming from a victim of crucifixion. The main reason for death from crucifixion is asphyxiation.
- When Jesus cried “It is finished,” the veil of the temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom. WHO tore that veil? The veil separated the Holy Place in the Temple from the Holy of Holies where the glory of God had dwelled between the cherubim on top of the mercy seat over the ark of the covenant before He departed (Eze. 8-11).
- Only the High Priest had access to the Holy of Holies – once a year at Yom Kippur – the Day of Atonement.
- The historian Josephus documented that the veil was 60’ high/4” thick – made of fine twisted linen – extremely dense.
- At Jesus’ crucifixion, the tearing of the veil signified an invitation that the way to God was open to all through the blood of the Messiah shed on the cross.

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Can we imagine what the priests thought (possibly 144 priests who were slaying the animal Passover lambs in the Temple while Jesus hung on the cross)...as the huge, heavy veil was torn from top to bottom?

- Acts 6:7 tells us that *a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith* (to what God had told them about the Messiah in the Hebrew Scriptures)

Matt. 27:51b-53 - . . . *and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, <sup>52</sup>and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; <sup>53</sup>and coming out of the graves **after His resurrection**, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.* While the graves were opened when the earth quaked, the bodies of the saints did not come out of the graves until AFTER Jesus’ resurrection! WHY? (to be continued)

“It is finished” Jesus cried from the cross and gave up His spirit. Is it finished for you? Have you received Jesus’ gift of forgiveness for your sins?

Have you thanked Him for paying the debt for your sin?

The cross of Jesus is the point where God and sinful man merge with a crash – and the way of life is open...but the crash is on the heart of God!

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes (can you insert your name in this verse for the whoever believes) in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

### Questions

How have you been impacted?

How will you live differently? (Rhetorical – unless you wish to share)

With whom will you share this lesson?

### Suggested Homework

Reread Week 8 with the Bible references.

Continue writing in your journal re: The Last Week of Jesus’ Life on Earth – what you’ve been learning, how it’s been impacting you, and how you’re moving forward in your belief.

Pray about inviting someone who doesn’t yet know Jesus to the Passover Seder on 4/11/23.

Read Week 9’s handout prior to our next Tuesday class.