**King Jesus Was Crucified for Us**

Mark 15:16-32 (Key verse 26)

“The written notice of the charge against him read: the king of the Jews.”

We live In a world were Political leaders look after themselves even though they are chosen to serve others. It is also true that, the church has also become infected by this disease of worldly politics and systems. However, in this passage is revealed king Jesus who was crucified for our salvation. Jesus kingship contradicted human centered expectations of a king. In the passage we shall see that, they expected Jesus to save himself. They acknowledged that he saved others. He was mocked and humiliated. Why did Jesus not save himself, because he could call down fire and angels? What was Jesus life purpose? We will explore these serious questions through this message. May we learn one word of God, and place our faith fully on king Jesus who saves us, not from poverty, unemployment, failing a degree, rejection and humiliation, but from our fundamental human problem, sin. Amen!

In verse 16 we read that, the soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. It as though they created a whole special ceremony for Jesus, a stage for cruel form of mockery. Their mockery began with what they made him appear to be like a king. They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. The color purple was an imitation of royalty and the twisted crown of thorns an imitation of the kingly crown. Look at verse 18, “And they began to call out to him, “Hail, king of the Jews!” Though Jesus is indeed king of the Jews, which means the Massiah, the one who comes to save. The romans where saying this to mock Jesus. They made him become a public spectacle of mockery.

Not only did their mockery end with words and how they made him look like a king. Look at verse 19-20, “Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. 20And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.” Jesus was struck again and again on the head. Jesus was spat on. Jesus faced all of this because of sin. Question is, whose sin? Jesus never sinned, he is holy and righteous. However, he ends up in this kind of mockery and humiliation because of your sin and my sin. It is our sin that Jesus came to be mocked for, humiliated for and suffer much beating on his head. They did all these horrible things and as their continued form to degrade Jesus, they paid homage to him. They faked honoring him by falling on their knees before Jesus. Jesus as king, bore it all and took it intentionally.

No one wants to be humiliated, spat on, humiliated and rejected. Most especially in public. We all want to be respected and seen as good, most especially in public. However, we are the ones who deserve what was done on Jesus. We deserve the humiliation and the public mockery. We are the ones who deserved to be whipped publicly as a form of judgment before God. How many times do we dishonor God, how many times has our hearts thought of indecent things that are displeasing before God? Is it not us who struggle with sin on a daily basis? Sin before God is ugly and deserves all the humiliation and rejection. It belongs in hell. However, it is our king Jesus who bore it all in our place. King Jesus took it all upon himself. King Jesus has become our shield before God. God’s wrath against sin was poured on Jesus so we may not have to face, the humiliation, pain, rejection and mockery due to sin on God’s judgement day.

After they were satisfied with mocking and humiliating Jesus. He was now led to be crucified. Jesus probably started off carrying the heavy cross, however, at some point became too tired. Verse 21 tells us that, there was a certain man called Simon from Cyrene. He was the father of Alender and Rufus. While he was passing by, he was forced to carry Jesus cross [21]. The poor man was probably minding is own business not trying to be involved at all. However, he was forced to carry the cross. Probably the cross was bloody and Jesus looked all horrible with blood all over his body. Simon probably asked himself, why me and why now. He might have even regretted to have taken the route he took. Let me ponder a little bit on this man’s experience of Jesus and the cross. We read in Mark 16:13, “Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too.” It seems this is the same Rufus, the son of Simon who helped carry Jesus cross. The mother of Rufus, would then be the wife of Simon. And Mark 16:13 clearly tells us that they had become saved, Apostle Paul even calling Rufus’ mother a mother to him. Due to the encounter with Jesus by carrying the cross, Rufus and his family became soldi believers. This truly reveals that, what may feel like a misfortune or loss by carrying the cross of Jesus, is actually a true blessing.

Now let us jump back to what is happening to Jesus. Look at verse 22, “They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”). This is the place were the real execution happened. Remember it is a place were actual criminals were brought for their last breadth. Before they began with the crucifixion they offered him myrrh, in order to perhaps assist with reding the pain and Jesus refused it. Jesus was intentional in takin up the full might and wrath of God due to sin. They even Divided up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get. Which was something already foretold in Psalms 22:18, exact words also reads, “They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.”

Jesus was then crucified around nice in the morning [25]. When crucified victims were nailed they struggled to bear their body weight. Shoulders came out of socket. Every breath was difficult and brought excruciating pain. It is said that it was so painful that the person, would faint and awaken repeatedly to the pain. Next to Jesus was two rebels, one in his right and one in his left [27]. Fulfilling what was foretold about him in verse 28, however verse 28 does not appear in the NIV but in the KJV it reads, “And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.” Jesus was placed right in the middle, right at the center of transgressors, typifying that, he became the chief of transgressors. For in John 3:16 we read, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” Now going back to the men divided Jesus clothes and cast lots. Right before them was their savior king, however they chose to focus on what to get from Jesus, his clothes. Had they repented of their sin, Jesus would be their savior king and they would inherit eternal life.

Let us all read verse 26, “The written notice of the charge against him read: the king of the jews.” Jesus was charged for being the king of jews. As much as the jews did not like this charge, it was actually a true reflection. Rember they asked Jesus in Mark 14:61-61, are you the Messiah, the son of the blessed one, and Jesus said, “I am”. Because Pilate on the other hand could not find any reason to crucify Jesus, he went with what the Jews said about him. Which was Jesus claim to be the Messiah the son of the blessed one. And so this charge, is so accurate, because Jesus is indeed Messiah. Jesus is our savior king. However, he was not received and treated like one. All kinds of people hurled insults at him.

Look at verse 29-30, “Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, “So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, 30come down from the cross and save yourself!” They shook their heads as a form of disapproval of over Jesus, with insults such as, so! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself. As if to say, if you can destroy the temple and build it in three days, surely you can save yourself. Right there was their spiritual blindness. In fact their words reveal their hearts and character. They were more concerned about Jesus saving himself, because, that is what they live for. People who are celebrated or people who contribute to meaningfully in society, are not people who live to save themselves. It is people who chose to be self less and lay down their lives for others. We too are generally moved by people live to save others not themselves. That is why in South Africa we still celebrate freedom day each year, on this day we remember those who lived to save others. Because of their sacrifices we all have a right to vote, irrespective of color.

However, Jesus had come to save us from something more serious and fundamental, sin. Because it does not matter what right we may have in this land, what level of education we may have, or freedoms. If we are not freed from sin, we will corrupt anything we place our hands on. And so Jesus on the cross not saving himself, was actually for own good. Sad reality of spiritual blindness is that, the very thing they are mocking Jesus of, is the very thing they fundamentally needed. Right before their very eyes was their savior, their liberator from the power of sin and death. But because they had put oog-claps on their eyes, they became spiritually blind.

However, what does it mean that, Jesus is going to destroy the temple ad build it in three days. We will learn in the next Sunday that, the curtain that separated the most holy place from the holy place became torn apart. Meaning that through the cross of Jesus we now have full access to God. The old temple we needed a human mediator who was the high priest. He was the only who could enter the most holy place. And now after three days a new temple was rebuilt. The three days symbolizes the resurrection of Jesus after three days. We now have full access to God through Jesus. This is possible because, when we come before God, God looks at us through Jesus. This is what king Jesus has accomplished for us.

The second group that mocked Jesus was the chief priests and teachers of the law. They said, he saved others, but he can’t save himself [31]. So they could concede that indeed Jesus saved others. They could not deny what they saw and heard. For Jesus healed the sick, drove out demons from those oppressed by demons, even saved his disciples from a dangerous storm and so on. The religious leaders and teachers of the also expected Jesus to save himself since he could save others. They were blown away by Jesus, wondering to themselves why not save yourself if you could save others. They could not understand because their life motor was to save themselves even though they were called to serve and live for God. In verse 32a they even said, “Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Which again was a form of mockery, because Jesus had already saved many through the power of God and yet still they failed to believe. This was how they pampered their guilt if there was any. Then the last group that mocked Jesus on the cross was those crucified with Jesus, they too heaped insults on Jesus [32b].

This shows that in all fronts, Jesus was mocked, humiliated and rejected even by those deserved the punishment of the cross the thieves on either side of Jesus. Jesus was our savior king who did not subscribe to kings and leaders of this world. Jesus remained on the cross not because of nails but because of love. His kingship is not defined by military power, number of votes or economic strength. Though Jesus on the cross looked weak and venerable, his very refusal to save himself was our salvation our redemption. We are redeemed from the power of sin today because Jesus refused to save himself. He is our true king and lord who saves us from the ugly sin. All the consequences of sin, the humiliation, the rejection even by God, Jesus took it all upon himself so that me and you, may not have to face God’s judgement due to sin.

I thank God that I have a king and savior, first and fore most of my life, and secondly who can relate with my human pain and struggles. Through king Jesus I can have a purpose and meaning in this. A purpose and meaning that does not need to depend on mankind. For Jesus stood there on the correct, rejected and mocked by everyone. Yet still he was fulfilling the most biggest significant, life changing event in the human history. Because God’s purpose was not dependent on man, but on God’s calling. I believe my salvation was gradual through the working of God’s word some years back. It is my highest security that Jesus saved me and that I am one of God’s flock. Jesus was intentional in saving a sinner like me. I am humanistic, people please or depend on people praises for meaning and joy. If it was not for what Jesus did for me on the cross, I do not know where I would be by now. For what king Jesus has done for and what he is continuing to do. My life in its fullness should be fully His. However, I still do not find myself fully surrendered to king Jesus. Even my love for him is not where it aught to be. Currently our family is in the middle of making big family decision. Where a decision from two income to a single income family. And in the middle of an economy that does not really give much confidence. I found myself struggling to trust in God’s provision as though I have made money my comfort zone. Questioning myself, what actually gives me peace? Is it the fact that my life is under king Jesus or is it because my trust is in money and the way the world does things? Worse part I found myself not given to much prayer for God’s leading and peace in this decision. I do pray about it, but am realizing especially now that the days are getting closer, the poppo is about to hit the fence, that am not given in prayer intensely. So this passage has really reminded me that, i have a savior king. What I need to do Is place my faith in him. Repent of any hopes I have placed in money and how the world works, and trust king Jesus. Please remember me and my family in your prayers. Amen!

**In conclusion**, Jesus is a king who endured all pain, humiliation and rejection for our sake. This was but all God’s love for sinners like me and you. How then do we respond to God’s love? All we need is to relate with Jesus through acknowledging our sin and repent. Our repentance of our sin before Jesus is our highest form that reveals Jesus as king in our lives. If indeed Jesus conquered the power of sin in our lives, that he indeed saves, then our response is humility and surrender before king Jesus. There is no way we can fake it, Jesus is either my king or not. It is my prayer that our lives may be marked by our surrender to king Jesus through repentance and obedience. Amen!