

A Study of Mark – Lesson 45

Mark 15:16-28

The Way to the Cross: The King of the Jews

¹⁵ ¹⁶ The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace / (that is, / the Praetorium) / and called together the whole company of soldiers. /

¹⁷ They put a purple robe on him, / then twisted together a crown of thorns / and set it on him. / ¹⁸

And they began to call out to him, / “Hail, king of the Jews!” / ¹⁹

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. / ²⁰ And 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.

²¹ A certain man from Cyrene, / Simon, / the father of Alexander and Rufus, / was passing by / on his way in from the country, / and they forced him / to carry the cross. / ²² They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha / (which means “the place of the skull”). / ²³

Then they offered him wine / mixed with myrrh, / but he did not

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take it. / ²⁴ And they crucified him. / Dividing up his clothes, / they cast lots / to see what each would get.

²⁵ It was nine in the morning / when they crucified him. ²⁶ The written notice / of the charge against him read: / THE KING OF THE JEWS. / ²⁷ They crucified two rebels with him, / one on his right / and one on his left.



Vocabulary

1. **Paid homage:** To show respect, as a subject to a king. Here it is in scorn and disrespect.
2. **To mock:** to make fun of or to mimic someone. Horseplay after Jesus had been beaten or scourged.
3. **Myrrh:** An aromatic resin or oil used in perfumes and soaps.
4. **To cast lots:** To gamble for something. (Throw dice)

Questions

1. Who helped Jesus carry the cross? Why did Jesus need help?
2. Why would the soldiers gamble for the robe of Jesus?
3. Jesus was crucified between two other convicts. Why were they killed?
4. What did the written notice of the charge against Jesus say?
5. Was Jesus a threat to the king of the Romans? (Caesar)

Notes

1. The Praetorium was the residence of the Governor, his headquarters and the Roman soldiers would be the cohort of the guard. There were many Roman soldiers in Judea, for it was considered relatively unstable.
2. The criminal was to carry his own cross to the place of execution. Jesus was in a weakened state from the scourging and the beating. He was not strong enough, so others were forced by the Roman soldiers to help Jesus.
3. Cyrene was in Africa (Benghazi, Libya). Simon had probably come to Jerusalem for the Passover, but he could not refuse the duty the Romans demanded of him. It is strange that Simon is described as *the father of Alexander and Rufus*. Since Mark's gospel was the first written for the Church at Rome, it is likely that the readers would know these men. Paul's letter in Romans: 16:13 also mentions Rufus. Evidently he became a believer.

4. The sign on the cross, *The King of the Jews*, was required by Roman law to let people know what the criminal had done to deserve death. In Rome there was only one King and it was Caesar.
5. The soldiers gambled with dice for the clothing, which had a value. A Jew wore 5 items of clothing: the inner robe, the outer robe, sandals, the girdle, and the turban. The outer robe would lose all value if it were cut up, so they threw dice for it.



6. Other Gospels give details of the two criminals that died on either side of Jesus.