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Calvary

Luke 23:32-39, *There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. ³³ And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots. ³⁵ And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God." ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, ³⁷ and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself." ³⁸ And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. ³⁹ Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us."*

There are few viewpoints of the crucifixion of Jesus.

Joke:

For the Romans, the crucifixion of Jesus, the whole event had been twisted into a perverted and extended joke. As for them it was a comedy and Jesus were the butt of the joke.

What was the joke?

This is the King of the Jews and laughable to them.

Jesus had already been,

- stripped of his freedom when he was arrested,
- stripped of his rights when he was unjustly condemned,
- stripped of his friends when they all forsook him,
- stripped of his ministry, and
- stripped of his clothing, down to a loincloth.

They were about to strip him of his life, but in the process, they wanted to make sure they stripped him of his honour and any respect that he might still possess.

So, the execution of Jesus is designed to be a joke for them.

The Jews also joined with the executioners by making Jesus as the target of their sarcasm.

There are three verbal actions described here, sneering, mocking and hurling abuse.

They define for us the attitude of the crowd, both the Jews and the Romans, all of them throwing scorn at Jesus. There are three statements that reinforces.

“He saved others; can’t he save himself?”

“Since you are the Son of God, save yourself and us.”

“This is the King of the Jews.”

They had enthroned Jesus like a king is enthroned above the people, only on a cross.

They had placed on his head a crown, not a gold crown, but a crown of thorns digging into his brow, sending blood streaming down His face.

They had crucified one thief on the right and the other on the left. This is to imitation a king who has on his right and his left his two leading courtiers, the second and the third-most honourable people in the court. They put two criminals, one on each side of this king, as if they were his most respected courtiers.

They offer him mock royal wine as if doing their duty to serve the need of the monarch.

When he was in Pilate’s judgment hall, they had put a mock robe on him, a mock royal robe on him.

They had put a sceptre in his hand, a reed, and they had hailed him as a king.

Romans turned it into a fiasco by putting the title, “This is the King of the Jews.”

The Jews laughed at it.

1 Corinthians 1:22-23, *For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness*

Impossible to believe!

He claimed to be a king, he had no army.

He claimed to be a king, he had no entourage.

He claimed to be a king, he had no territory.

He claimed to be a king, he conquered no one ever.

Luke 23:27-28, *And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. ²⁸ But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.*

This is not a time to laugh but a time for weeping and not weeping for Jesus but weeping for themselves. Because they have rejected Jesus and God has rejected them too.

V33, *And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left.*

It was called The Skull,
Golgotha in Aramaic or Hebrew,
Calvaria or Calvary in Latin.

Origin of Crucifixion

Crucifixion goes back to 500 B.C. Historians confirm that it seems to have been invented by the Persians.

Darius crucifies 3,000 Babylonians. That was the first time we read about it.

Alexander the Great, in the great Greek Empire, crucified 2,000 citizens of the City of Tyre in vengeance over the way they treated him, and put them up on crosses along the shore for everyone to see.

Around 100 B.C., Alexander Jannaeus crucified 800 Pharisees and made their wives and children watch them be crucified.

The Romans came to power in 63 B.C. and used crucifixion extensively and perfected it as a fine art of torture.

In 70 A.D. when the Romans did conquer Israel and destroyed the temple and slaughtered the Jews historians say that Titus used so many crosses to crucify Jews they ran out of lumber.

Crucifixion was very common. It didn't need an explanation. But the Jews couldn't comprehend that their Messiah would be crucified.

Crucifixion was common in the time of Jesus. Historians confirm that as many as 30,000 people were crucified in the land of Israel around the time of Christ.

The Romans always crucified them in public places along highways and on hills so that everybody would see the results of rebellion against Rome.

They were well aware of what a crucifixion involved. No need to describe it and there is no need for the Bible writer to describe Jesus and the actual crucifixion that he endured because it would have been exactly the same as everybody else endured.

The Bible is not concerned to give us details about the actual physical elements since it was very familiar to everyone.

Deuteronomy 21:22-23, *“If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree,²³ his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.*

Anyone who was crucified, was treated with contempt, treated with disdain. It was reserved for the worst and the lowest, the social pariahs, the outcasts.

Traditionally it has been considered that it was a high ground and it was called The Skull.

“And there they crucified him.”

That’s the same phrase in all four gospels.

“There they crucified him and the criminals.”

All three of them got the exact same treatment.

All three are crucified in the exact same way, as thousands of others before them and after them would be.

No one survived crucifixion.

To confirm death in hours or days when the Romans thought the person might be dead, the body was pierced with a lance. It was pierced in precisely the exact spot in the heart in which the flow of blood and water.

Davis prophesied about His suffering in Psalms 22 thousand years before.

Psalms 22:12-16, *Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. ¹³They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion. ¹⁴I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. ¹⁵My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. ¹⁶For dogs have surrounded*

*Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.
They pierced My hands and My feet;*

Isaiah prophesied 700 years before.

Isaiah 53:7, *He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.*

Zechariah prophesied 510 years before.

Zechariah 12:10, *“And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

The thieves were pierced for their own transgressions.
Jesus was pierced through for our transgressions.

It was not the physical elements of his crucifixion that were unique. They were not unique.

It was the purpose and the achievement of his crucifixion that is unique.

Jesus was cursed, but HE was made a curse for us.

Jesus was pierced, but HE was pierced for our transgressions.

It was foolishness to the Greeks. It was a stumbling block to the Jews, and for them it was a joke.

In the future, the Jews will view it differently. They will not laugh but will weep.

Revelation 1:7, *Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.*

Once Jesus was dead and the Jews had managed to lie about and bribe the Roman soldiers to lie about the resurrection, they had to justify what they had done.

70 A.D. all their joke ended by God.

The comedy ended, and it ended seriously and deadly.

How serious is the cross?

There is no salvation, no forgiveness, no heaven unless you embrace Jesus as your Lord and Saviour and believe in the sacrifice that he offered at the cross to pay the penalty for your sins.

You either take the cross seriously or you become an eternal tragedy.

There are others whose view are Blasphemy

The stunning contrast at Calvary is the contrast between the merciless insults of the crowd and the merciful intercession of the Christ.

The crowd is made up of four groups.

1. People
2. Leaders
3. Soldiers
4. Thieves

They all have the same response to Jesus. They were literally without sympathy, heartless, cruel, and brutal.

Mocking God, sneering at the incarnate God, and with sarcastic scorn on the Creator and the Redeemer – the true King! The true Messiah!

We should be expecting a holy, righteous God to react to this kind of ultimate blasphemy by pouring out wrath and vengeance and fury on those who are perpetrating this on him.

Judgment came after 40 years in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Many, if not most of those people, gather today who are still alive 40 years later will perish in that judgment.

Leviticus 24:16, *And whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the Lord, he shall be put to death.*

Capital crime to blaspheme the name of God!

They are blasphemers. They were blaspheming Him, pronounce curses on Him, and heaping abuse on Him.

Perverted twist, they accused Jesus being the blasphemer!

Matthew 26:64-68, *Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." ⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy!" ⁶⁶What do you think?" They answered and said, "He is deserving of death." ⁶⁷Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, ⁶⁸saying, "Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?"*

John 10:33, *The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."*

John 10:36, do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?

The whole thing is twisted.

Justice should fall on them. It falls on Christ. Judgment should crush them. It crushes Christ. They accuse him of blasphemy, they are the blasphemers.

Certainly, our Lord had every right to judge them, every right to destroy them on the spot and catapult them forever into hell.

Past:

Habakkuk 1:2, O Lord, how long shall I cry, And You will not hear? Even cry out to You, "Violence!" And You will not save.

Future:

Revelation 6:10, And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

Saints in the past, in the future and certainly in the present, sometimes we wonder at the patience of God!

Isaiah 1:2-7, Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! For the Lord has spoken: "I have nourished and brought up children, And they have rebelled against Me; ³The ox knows its owner

And the donkey its master's crib; But Israel does not know, My people do not consider.”⁴ Alas, sinful nation, A people laden with iniquity, A brood of evildoers, Children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, They have provoked to anger The Holy One of Israel, They have turned away backward.⁵ Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, And the whole heart faints.⁶ From the sole of the foot even to the head, There is no soundness in it, But wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; They have not been closed or bound up, Or soothed with ointment.⁷ Your country is desolate, Your cities are burned with fire; Strangers devour your land in your presence; And it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

Isaiah 1:14-18, *Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them.¹⁵ When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.¹⁶ “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil,¹⁷ Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.¹⁸ “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the Lord, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.*

God offering grace and mercy to a sinful people upon whom he has pronounced judgment that will fall unless they repent.

Isaiah 40:1-5, *“Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” Says your God. ²“Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the Lord’s hand Double for all her sins.” ³The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; ⁵The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”*

Isaiah 42:6-8, *“I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles, ⁷To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house. ⁸I am the Lord, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.*

Isaiah 55:1-3, & 6-7, *“Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. ²Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and*

*eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance.
3 Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live;
And I will make an everlasting covenant with you— The sure mercies of David.*

6 Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the Lord, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

We don't understand God, how God can look at people who have gone after idol, people who have defected from him, people who have shown him nothing but rebellion and revolt, and he has pronounced judgment on them.

How can God extend Himself to them in this way?

Is God's patience this great?

Isaiah 55:8-9, *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord. 9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.*

When you run out of patience, God does not.

The uniqueness of God is this: when God is massively offended, yet He still comes to the offenders and warning them of the judgment to come offers them forgiveness, mercy, grace,

compassion and makes them His children to take them to His holy heaven forever.

It is that God who is hanging on the cross.

That God whose patience is far beyond ours because His ways are not our ways, His thoughts are not our thoughts.

1. Crowd:

V 35, And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God."

The whole thing has been staged by the Jews and the Romans to be comedy. Jesus claims to be a king and that is laughable.

All the sneering, mocking, abusive sarcasm is built around this idea that Jesus claimed to be a king.

Roman soldiers they did crucify criminals all the time. There were executioners by trade who put him on the cross.

We might even expect cruelty out of the leaders, the religious leaders, because they had demonstrated how cruel they were by piling heavy burdens on people. They were brutally unkind to sinners and tax collectors and the kinds of people that Jesus received.

We might expect unsympathetic brutality from the criminals because they were criminals by profession, and long-ago sympathy and compassion had probably departed out of their hearts.

So, we are not surprised at those people.

Would not we expect little more sympathetic from the crowd?

These are the people, probably, who had been healed by Jesus of certain diseases.

These might be people who had had experiences of other miracles that Jesus had performed in the area of Judea and Jerusalem, Galilee in the north and other places.

There may have been people in the crowd who were fed among the 5,000 when Jesus made the food.

There were certainly people who knew well those who had been healed, maybe been given their hearing or their sight, or raised up to walk from a state of paralysis.

Wouldn't we expect to find something sympathetic out of them?

Didn't they hear Jesus teaching?

Didn't they experience the meekness and gentleness of Christ?

Didn't they experience the love of Christ that was so manifest in the beauty and magnificence of what HE taught?

This is a large crowd. They have come from everywhere. It's Passover. The city has swelled by hundreds of thousands of people and the crowd moving toward Calvary from the public trial early in the morning is growing. Because Jesus is the most popular person in the country by far and drawing a massive crowd that are now collected around the cross.

These are people who were there to hail him as the potential King on few days back when Jesus came into the city. They were the same people who were there to scream, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" earlier in the day.

Matthew 27:39-43, *And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." ⁴¹ Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, ⁴² "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. ⁴³ He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'* "

Mark 15:29-32, *And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ save Yourself, and come*

down from the cross!”³¹ Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, “He saved others; Himself He cannot save.³² Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.

The crowd were in it. They had been orchestrated by the leaders. They are easily seduced by their evil hearts of unbelief, easily seduced by the manipulation of their leaders.

This is the worst possible conduct by the people of Israel.

2. Leaders

V 35, And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, “He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God.”

Of course, the leaders had orchestrated all of it, “Saying he has saved others, let him save himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One.”

Then they use to Messianic terms, The Christ of God, the Anointed; the word Messiah, and His Chosen One a Messianic title taken from Daniel chapter 9.

The Old Testament expressions related to the Messiah are in reference when they use the term the Christ of God. The

specific words, “His Chosen One” comes from Daniel 9 and definitely is a Messianic title.

So, they mock him for his claim to be the Messiah.

They mock him for his claim to be the one chosen by God.

They are sneering at him, a very strong word used only here and one other time in the gospel of Luke, and nowhere else in the New Testament.

They blaspheme him.

Please do notice that they don’t speak to Jesus. They never speak to him. There is no record around the cross that they ever spoke to him.

They speak to the crowd about him. “He saved others, let him save himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One.”

They never speak to Christ.

Their intention is to stir up the crowd, so they never address Jesus. “He saved others, let him save himself.”

What do they mean?

Pure sarcasm and ridicule.

They are very proud!

They even welcome the responsibility in saying his blood be on us and on our children.

Matthew 27:25, *And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children."*

If He is the King of Israel let him now come down from the cross and we will believe him. He trusts in God, let Him deliver him.

Psalm 22:7, *All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,*

All that sarcasm was predicted in the Psalm, they fulfilled it to the letter.

3. Soldiers.

V 36, *The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine,*

They don't know anything about Jewish theology.

They just joined with them

They mocked him.

Inflicting even more pain on him to his face as he hangs in agony. In a mock act of obeisance and service to him as if he were a king, they offer him sour wine.

Now there are a couple of occasions that are clearly identified when Christ was crucified in which he was offered something to drink.

The first one was when they got him to the place to be crucified, they offered him a drink that had a sedative in it. Probably be used to sedate the person a little bit so it would be easier to nail him to the cross and he wouldn't fight. Jesus refused that!

When Jesus comes to the very end of his dying, six hours later, at the very end, at 3:00 in the afternoon when He was about to die, He says, "I'm thirsty,"

They lift up to him a drink on a sponge on the end of a stick. This seems to me to be something different from both of those. This seems to me to be part of the game they were playing. This is certainly not their giving him the wine in response to his asking.

The mockery just reaches ultimate proportions.

V38, ³⁸ *And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

It all played around that idea.

Where did that sign come from?

John gives us the answer in his Gospel.

We know historically that when people were crucified, their crime was posted and since Jesus committed no crime there could be no crime posted over him.

So, Pilate decided what was going to go on the sign.

John 19:19, *Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

This inscription many of the Jews read for the place Jesus was crucified was near the city, again reason for the huge crowd. It was written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek.

Pilate wanted everybody to know it!

John 19:20-22, *Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. ²¹ Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews." ' "* ²² *Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."*

Pilate wouldn't change it because this is Pilate's way to mock them. They had mocked him.

The religious leaders blackmailed him into executing a man he knew was innocent.

Even his wife said wash your hands of this innocent man.

Pilate said multiple times, "I find no fault in him."
Herod found no crime.

Pilate had been made to look like a fool and he wasn't going to leave it at that, so he wanted to turn the tables and make them look like fools.

It was Pilate's little joke. This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. They said take that down and put up he said he's the King of the Jews and he said what I have written I have written. So, you have the people mocking Jesus and Pilate mocking the people.

Matthew 27:35, *Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots."*

That is standard procedure. The executioners were given the right to keep the possessions, the final possessions of clothing and things of the people who were executed. That was sort of a small job benefit.

John 19:23, *Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece.*

There would be four parts. There would be four garments that a man would wear in that day. There would be an outer cloak that you kept warm with, like a jacket, and you slept on and used as a blanket.

There would be shoes or sandals.

There would be a headpiece.

There would be a sash or a belt.

Four Roman soldiers assigned to a crucifixion.

Acts 12:4, *So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.*

It's a quaternion made up of four. In fact, a full one was four units of four, so it's very likely that there were four soldiers in a death squad.

That's why the four garments could be divided one to each of the four, but there was also a tunic which would have been his regular garment and the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece, so they said let's not tear it. Let's cast lots for it to decide whose it shall be. That the scripture might be fulfilled they divided my outer garments among them and for my clothing they cast lots.

Psalm 22:18, *They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.*

They cast lots, dividing up his garments among them, each taking one piece and then somebody winning the tunic.

Now realize that Jesus has been stripped of everything. He is been stripped of all his clothing and naked except for a loincloth. They are doing everything they can to strip him of all his dignity, if there's anything left of his dignity.

They want to make him such a mockery that there will be none of that left. He is hanging there naked. You can't help but think about that without remembering that when Adam and Eve fell into sin, they were immediately made conscious that they were what, naked. Nakedness has been associated with and symbolic of moral guilt, symbolic of shame before God.

They tried to make coverings for themselves, God moves in Genesis chapter 3 and kills an animal to make coverings for them.

Here at Calvary, Jesus is made naked in our place. Jesus is in the position of manifesting the symbol of moral guilt and moral shame before God.

Jesus is judged.

Jesus is cursed by God in that nakedness, which was not his own, but ours.

Jesus naked in our place, Jesus naked, the symbol of our moral guilt and our moral shame, is not covered by God. Jesus is judged by God and God pours out the full fury of His wrath on that nakedness.

Jesus becomes our covering, our lamb who covers us.

4. Thieves:

V 39, *Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us."*

One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Jesus.

One of the thieves, only one is quoted by Luke, but Matthew and Mark tell us the rest of the story.

Matthew 27:44, *Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.*

Mark 15:32, *Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.*

They both joined in!
The whole crowd,
The rulers,

The soldiers, and
The, both thieves.

Luke does is record for us what one of the two said, but they were both involved. “Are you not the Christ?”

So, against this attitude of this merciless insult, we look at the merciful intercession of the Christ.

Verse 34, but Jesus was saying, “*Father, forgive them for they do not know what they’re doing.*”

This is just shocking.

Without argument what is being spewed out of these evil hearts and evil mouths right at the son of God is

- the supreme blasphemy,
- the ultimate desecration of holiness,
- the lowest sin every committed,
- wickedness at its lowest, and
- deserving of divine cursing,
- divine threatening,
- divine vengeance,
- divine judgment,
- divine damnation.

Jesus asks God to provide forgiveness for them.

Conclusion:

Jesus spoke seven things from the cross.

He spoke to one of the thieves and said, "Today you'll be with me in paradise."

Then HE spoke to his mother and John and said, "Behold your mother, behold your son," and gave the care of His mother to the apostle John who were standing far away.

Then for three hours the whole earth was dark, and He spoke not at all.

After the darkness He spoke to God and he said, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Then He spoke to the soldiers and said, "I'm thirsty," and they gave him the sponge.

Then He spoke to Himself and said, "It is finished."

Then he spoke to God and said, "Unto Your hands I commit My spirit."

But the first thing he said, before any of those was, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

His first words were words seeking divine forgiveness for the world's most wretched sinners!

1 Peter 2:23-24, *who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; ²⁴who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.*

When Stephen saw life was being crushed out by the bloody stones, Stephen, following his Lord said, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.”

Acts 7:60, *Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not charge them with this sin.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.*

All the world to know that there is no sin against the son of God that is so severe it cannot be forgiven if one will repent.

That is the message.

If there is forgiveness for these people, there is forgiveness for anyone.

It is a specific prayer. When Jesus said, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing,”

He knew who the “them” were because on the day of Pentecost, 3,000 Jews in Jerusalem were converted to Christ and baptized, and the church was begun.

Few weeks another 5,000 men and many more it moves into tens of thousands of people in Jerusalem who embrace the faith of Jesus Christ. There must have been many of those who came to Christ in those weeks after the resurrection who were there in that crowd.

So that it is a general prayer telling the whole world that the sinner who repents and comes to Christ can be forgiven.

But it is also a specific prayer that God knows in His mind from before the foundation of the world.

A church was born out of these people who stood at the foot of Calvary and mocked the son of God. They became the first church. Not only that, there was a soldier among the believers.

Luke 23:47, *So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, “Certainly this was a righteous Man!”*

Matthew 27:54, *So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, “Truly this was the Son of God!”*

Some in the crowd formed the first church.

Some among the soldiers affirmed the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Roman Centurion praising the true God of Israel and affirming the reality of His son and others with him.

Acts 6:7, *Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.*

There were one of the two thieves who said, “Remember me when you come into your kingdom,” and to him Jesus said today, “I’ll meet you in paradise.”

Repent and be reconciled to God. It doesn’t matter how big or bad the crime there is forgiveness on the Calvary.