

The Humiliation of Jesus
Mark 15:16-20
September 21, 2014

Introduction

We are coming to the end of the gospel of Mark. He writes about the crucifixion of Christ. I want to note that all the gospel writers do not focus on Jesus' physical suffering even though it is horrific. What they want us to focus on is His humiliation. There was a movie recently called the The Passion of Christ which was made by Mel Gibson. He focuses entirely on the physical suffering of Jesus rather than His true suffering, His drinking the full cup of God's wrath. The gospel writers do not go into much details about His physical suffering. Mark only says that Jesus is flogged (or scourged). What happens to Jesus physically is not unique. 30,000 people are crucified every year in Israel when Jesus lives.

No, what the gospel writers focus on is that Jesus is humiliated by the world. The soldiers mock Him and make sport of Him. While Jesus is on the cross, the priests make fun of Him, and even the two criminals that are crucified with Him make fun of Him as well. This is the high point of blasphemy. Yet this is the blasphemy that Jesus forgives. They have no idea that they are mocking the true King of the Universe, the Lord of Glory. They have no idea at all. However, their actions betray their own evil desires and their true nature.

The Old Testament testifies of His humiliation.

***Isaiah 49:7** Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One, to Him whom man despises, to Him whom the nation abhors, to the Servant of rulers: "Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship, because of the Lord who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel; and He has chosen You."*

***Isaiah 50:6** I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.*

***Isaiah 52:14** Just as there were many who were appalled at Him—His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and His form marred beyond human likeness*

***Isaiah 53:2-3** He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him, nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him. **3** He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

***Isaiah 53:7** He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so He did not open His mouth.*

The reason that Jesus is humiliated is that He made Himself as nothing when He becomes man. He makes Himself nobody in their eyes. He even tells the disciples what He will experience on His way to the cross.

***Philippians 2:7** but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

Let us look in awe of what He goes through.

Mark 15:15 *Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed Him over to be crucified.*

- Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified
 - He only did this to satisfy the crowd rather than justice
 - Pathetic exercise of authority
- Flogged
 - No other description involved
 - What we know about flogging is from other sources in history
 - Roman flogging = whipping
 - Wooden handle with multiple leather thongs
 - Thongs will have bone, stone, metal embedded in them
 - Leaves laceration when struck
 - When Jesus is flogged, He is bloodied and has open wounds

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

- Praetorium
 - Pilate's palace (huge)
 - Also houses the elite guards who protect the leaders
- Whole company of soldiers
 - 600 soldiers
 - They were all there to make fun of Jesus

17 *They put a purple robe on Him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on Him.*

- Purple robe
 - Purple mantle

Matthew 27:28 *They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him,*

- Is this a contradiction?
 - No—Roman soldiers wore red mantles
 - What Jesus wears is an old mantle that the colors have faded from red to purple
 - Very rough to touch
- Crown of thorns
 - Probably looked like Caesar's laurel crown
 - God cursed Adam with thorns in ground—make harder to work the ground

Genesis 3:18 *It will produce thorns and thistles for you,*

- Picture of curse being broken through His death
- Reed (scepter) right hand

Matthew 27:29b *and a reed in His right hand.*

- Why did they put the scepter in His hand?

18 *And they began to call out to Him, "Hail, king of the Jews!"*

- Hail
 - Ironic and cruel mockery
 - Hail Caesar
 - They were not honoring Him at all
 - Jesus looks like a nobody to the Roman soldiers

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.

- Struck Him on the head
- Spitting on Him
 - Ultimate act of disdain
- Falling on their knees
 - Sheer mockery without an ounce of honor
 - However one day this will happen

John 19:1-15

1 Then Pilate took Jesus and had Him flogged. 2 The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head. They clothed Him in a purple robe 3 and went up to Him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they struck Him in the face

4 Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, "Look, I am bringing Him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against Him."

- Pilate is going to release Jesus again
- He is hoping that the crowd's thirst for blood is sated

5 When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" 6 As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw Him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" But Pilate answered, "You take Him and crucify Him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against Him."

- Crowd want Jesus dead
- Pilate still maintains Jesus' innocence
- He tells them to go ahead and kill Jesus
 - I'm giving you the right to do it

7 The Jews insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law He must die, because He claimed to be the Son of God."

- The Priests would not have anything to do with His murder
 - We cannot do this because it is against the law
- Their true motives for killing Jesus finally comes out
 - He claims to be the Son of God
 - They want Him dead by Roman hands not their own
 - If they had it their way, then Jesus would have been stoned

8 When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid,

- Pilate's fear
 - Romans believe that gods walk on earth
 - They also believe in demi-gods (half god and half mortal)

9 and he went back inside the palace. "Where do You come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer.

- Where do You come from?
 - Pilate is not talking about Jesus' Galilee connections
- Jesus is silent

10 "Do You refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't You realize I have power either to free You or to crucify You?" **11** Jesus answered, "You would have no power over Me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed Me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

- I have power
- NO authority
 - The only reason I am here is that God is the One making this happen
- Greater sin
 - Different degrees of punishment in hell
 - Pilate is in hell but the Jews that demand Jesus' death have greater punishment

12 From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar." **13** When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). **14** It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews. **15** But they shouted, "Take Him away! Take Him away! Crucify Him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered.

- Pilate's failure
 - The Jews played their political games very well.
 - Their threat to tell Caesar that Pilate is harboring rebels—this destroys him
- No king by Caesar
 - Ultimate hypocrisy
 - They believe that they have only one King and that King is God
 - They have never believed that Caesar is their king
 - They were only playing games
- Sixth hour
 - 9:00 AM

15:20 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.

- The soldier put the clothes back on Jesus and lead Him to be crucified
 - He is heading to the cross as a lamb to the slaughter

Conclusion

Our Lord never says a word about their humiliation. He remains silent. How beautiful are His silence. He went through this for our sake. He faced the world's wrath and mockery and came out triumphant! Our Lord was humiliated by the world. Let us be the humiliated the same as our Master for His praise and glory.