

## Sabbath School Lesson #12 – Tried and Crucified – 14-20 September 2024

**C**hrist was tried and crucified for our sake. “And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” (Mark 15:34). As the Son of God, His life was worth more than those of all created beings. Christ saw our hopeless condition and He came “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). To do this He took upon Himself our nature (Hebrews 2:16-17); and upon Him was laid “the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6).

**Sunday: “Are You the King of the Jews?”** – Read Mark 15:1-15. What was the real question for the people and for us to settle? When Jesus was before Pilate, on trial for His life, there was a great question before the people for their decision. They thought that they were deciding whether Jesus should live. But that was a mistake. With that they had nothing to do. Jesus had come down from heaven for the sole purpose of giving His life for man, as a voluntary offering. He had said, “I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh 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. This commandment have I received of My Father” (John 10:17-18). He Himself was life, even everlasting life, for He was the truth, which is eternal. The people, as well as Pilate, were on trial. When Pilate brought Jesus out to them, and said, “Behold your King,” they cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him,” and when Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” they answered, “We have no king but Cesar” (John 19:14-15). It was not for them to decide the fate either of Christ or Cesar; but in deciding which of the two they would accept as their king; they decided whose fortunes they would share. Every man, from the greatest king to the humblest peasant, has this same question to decide. As Cesar was ruler over the whole world, so he stands for the world; for the earthly against heavenly; for the principles of the world, as against the principles of heaven. When Christ declared that He was a King, He added, “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice” (John 18:37). The acceptance of Christ as King, therefore, consists in acknowledging and excepting the truth. The question then is between truth, and error. Truth is of God; for Christ is of God, and Christ is the truth. He is the Son of God, and “the Son abideth ever” (John 8:35). The world is directly opposed to God. “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17).

**Monday: Hail, King of the Jews!** – Read Mark 15:15-20. At His first advent, Christ was mocked as King of the Jews, but at His second advent, will He not be crowned “King of kings and Lord of lords” (Revelation 19:12, 16) over all “the kingdoms of this world” (Revelation 11:15) with “an everlasting dominion” over “all people, nations and languages” (Daniel 7:13-14) far more gloriously in sight of the universe than at His first coming? Certainly! At His first coming, He was not even acknowledged as a king by the Church, except in mockery and insult. To be sure, they crowned Him, and bowed the knee to Him, saying, “Hail, king of the Jews!” But the crown was of thorns, in connection with which He was spitted on, scourged and crucified in ignominy. Yet, every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess to Him truly.

**Tuesday: The Crucifixion** – Read Mark 15:21-38. Would or Could Jesus save Himself at the cross? When He hung upon the cross, the priests, scribes and elders said in mocking contempt, “He saved others; Himself He cannot save” (Matthew 27:42). And in these words there was a truth far beyond what the Jews had any thought of, – a truth that even professed followers of Jesus do not appreciate. Whoever grasps the full meaning of the statement, “He saved others; Himself He cannot save,” and who allows it to apply to himself, has salvation, for it contains the whole of the Gospel. “He saved others”; the Jews acknowledged this, yet they crucified Him. Jesus whose only offence was that “He went about doing good,” was hanged as a malefactor, and He lifted no hand in self-defence, nor uttered a word of reproach against His persecutors. “He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth” (Isaiah 53:7). Jesus Christ saved others, and even

while hanging on the cross, “a reproach of men, and despised of the people,” He showed His power to save others, in the case of the penitent thief; but Himself He could not save. And this was the secret of His power to save others. It was not simply that He *would not* save Himself, – not alone that He unselfishly forgot Himself – but He *could not* save Himself. To have saved Himself would have been the destruction of all others; for if He had planned to save Himself, He would have stayed in heaven, and never exposed Himself to reproach and cruelty. But such a thing was impossible; He *could not* thus save Himself, for such a saving of self would have been selfishness, and there was no selfishness in Him. He absolutely could not remain in heaven and leave man to perish. But He could not save men, while keeping Himself in safety apart from them and their troubles. So “He gave Himself for us” (Titus 2:14). Thus we see that the Gospel has the origin and perfection in giving. “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16). “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister,” – not to be served, but to serve, – “and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). “For ye know that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). He had everything, and we had nothing; so He gave up everything, and He kept nothing, in order that we might have everything. We know that His prayer was answered, He “was heard” (Hebrews 5:7) to save us from sin. “He saved others; Himself He cannot save” – was true of Christ on the cross. The same must be true of us; and the same spirit of absorbed interest in others, and self-forgetfulness, must be in even our most earnest prayer for personal help, if we would pray the prayer that is certain to be answered. When we come to the throne of grace absorbed in the thought that it is Jesus who is pleading to be delivered from the sins that so beset us, that it is He and not we who appear before God, and we lose thought of ourselves in our interest in His being satisfied with the travail of His soul bearing our sin (Isaiah 53:11), then we are saved. When we lose ourselves in Him, comes the thrilling thought, He was heard! Human words cannot describe the joy of the thought, for it is “the joy of the Lord”, which is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10).

**Wednesday: Forsaken by God** – Read Mark 15:33-41. Was Christ forsaken by God? To save us, Christ took the position of a lost sinner. Thus, the apostle says: “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin” (2 Corinthians 5:21). It was this fact that caused Him such anguish in the garden. He felt that the sins upon Him were shutting Him away from God. It was this that caused Him, when hanging on the cross, to utter that cry of bitter agony, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46). It was not physical pain that crushed the life out of the Saviour of the world, but the load of sin which He bore. “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). Sin will cause the death of every one who is not freed from it, for “sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:15). And because Christ was “numbered with the transgressors” (Mark 15:28), He suffered penalty of transgression. The suffering of Christ was not on His own account. “He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth” (1 Peter 2:22). Because our sin was put upon Him, He was cut off from the favour of God; when upon the cross He cried out, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” it was no fanciful utterance. God had forsaken Him. He had hidden His face from Him. In that last dreadful hour spent in Gethsemane, Christ passed without the pale of the mercy and favour of God; and it was this that caused His sufferings. He felt what the wicked will feel at the last day when they, because of sin, experience the wrath of God. Christ went where men will never be compelled to go. We shall never have to experience the dreadful certainty that God has forsaken us. Christ stood in that place in order that we might never have to go there. If any human will ever be there, it will be entirely their own choice.

**Thursday: Laid to Rest** – Read Mark 15:42-47. What work did Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, do? “In that time of discouragement and danger, when the hearts of the disciples were failing them through doubt and fear, Joseph of Arimathea, a secret disciple of Jesus, came forward and obtained the Lord's body from Pilate, and Nicodemus, who at the first came to Jesus by night, brought a hundred pounds' weight of myrrh and aloes. These two men with their own hands performed the last sacred rites, and laid the body of the Saviour in a new sepulchre where never man lay before. These lofty rulers of the Jews mingled their tears together over the sacred form of the dead” – EG White {2SP 135.1}.