

## 十架上的前三个小时：各种嘲讽——马可福音 15:24-32

### First Three Hours of the Cross—All Kinds of Mockery—Mark 15:24-32

#### *Introduction and Outline*

- Scripture Reading: Mark 15:24-32; Isaiah 52:13-53:12

#### **Mark 15:24-32** (NASB1995)

24 And they crucified Him, and divided up His garments among themselves, casting [g]lots for them to decide what each man should take. 25 It was the third hour when they crucified Him. 26 The inscription of the charge against Him read, “THE KING OF THE JEWS.” 27 They crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left. 28 [And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And He was numbered with transgressors.”] 29 Those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, “Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, 30 save Yourself, and come down from the cross!” 31 In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves and saying, “He saved others; He cannot save Himself. 32 Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!” Those who were crucified with Him were also insulting Him.

- The Most Important Six Hours in Human History. Every believer’s sin will be completely forgiven by God because of what happened in these six hours. Every unbeliever’s sin will never be forgiven because they reject the message of these six hours.
- Examples in the Old Testament that pointed to the cross include: The Passover Lamb; All the sin offerings in the Old Testament; The bronze snake lifted up by Moses (Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-15); The law regarding the cities of refuge that sinners could go free after the death of the high priest (Numbers 35:25-28)..... That is why Paul summed up the key message of the gospel like this:  
**1 Corinthians 15:3** “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures**”
- The Timing of the Crucifixion: Jesus was nailed to the cross at the third hour— 9am in the morning (Mark 15:25). Three hours later, darkness covered the whole land from noon to 3pm (Mark 15:33). At 3pm, Jesus cried out with a loud voice and gave up His spirit (Mark 15:34, 37). This is exactly the time when the Jews were killing their Passover lambs in the temple.
- There are two themes in the six hours on the cross: the first three hours were filled with all kinds of mockery; and the last three hours were filled with darkness.
- Outline:  
Title: First Three Hours of the Cross—All Kinds of Mockery—Mark 15:24-32
  1. Mockery of the Roman Solders (vv. 24-28)
  2. Mockery of the Jewish Passers-by (vv. 29-30)
  3. Mockery of the Religious Leaders (vv. 31-32a)
  4. Mockery of the Co-crucified Robbers (vv. 32b)

## **Mockery of the Roman Solders (vv. 24-28)**

- “crucified Him”: The cross was invented not only to kill, but to inflict the greatest pain and shame to the victim. The purpose of the cross was to prolong suffering, to intensify pain, and bring open humiliation. Usually, death would not come until after days of extreme suffering.

**【Background】** The Pain of the Cross: The victim’s body weight would pull on the nails in the hands and feet, causing tearing pain. The victim could push up with his legs to alleviate the pain in the hands, but that would intensify the pain in the feet. If, however, he tries to relax his feet, his weight would not only rest back on his hands but also press against his chest, making it hard to breathe. He must keep pushing up and relaxing to let the hands and feet take turns to rest. Every time he pushes up, his lacerated back would rub against the wooden cross, adding more to the pain. After a few days of suffering, the victim would become too weak to push up again. His pressed chest would no longer breathe, and he would die from suffocation.

However, Jesus died so quickly — in just six hours. This is so unusual that even Pilate was surprised that Jesus died so soon (Mark 15:44). This is certainly not the normal experience of crucifixion, but it happened according to God's perfect plan. Jesus had to die at the exact time when the Passover lambs were being killed, showing that He is the true Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

- "divided up His garments": The significance of this detail is that it fulfilled the prophecy in the Old **John 19:24**: “This was to fulfill the Scripture: ‘They divided My garments among them, and they cast lots for My clothing.’”

**Psalms 22:18** “They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.”

**【Explanation】** David, as a prophet, wrote many prophetic psalms about the Messiah (see Acts 2:30-36). However, these prophecies were also, in a sense, David's own personal experiences as a believer, just as Jesus said: “If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you” (John 15:20). The psalms are filled with prayers, feelings, and experiences of believers throughout all ages, and that’s why they are such a timeless treasure to us today.

The Roman soldiers, of course, had no idea they were fulfilling David’s prophecy. They were simply mocking Jesus for their own sinful pleasure. Dividing clothes was simply the soldiers doing their thing out of their depraved sin nature.

- “The inscription of the charge against Him read, “THE KING OF THE JEWS.”: This obviously isn’t the real charge, but yet another way of mocking Jesus as well as the Jews. The Jewish leaders were offended by this and asked Pilate to change the wording, but Pilate refused (John 19:21-22). Pilate took this opportunity to vent his racial hatred against the Jews.
- “They crucified two robbers with Him”: Most likely, they were Barabbas's companions, and the cross of Jesus was probably prepared for Barabbas. They were probably Jewish religious fanatics like the Zealots — violent men who used force to defend political rights. They often carried daggers to secretly assassinate Romans. They were criminals who deserved to be put to death.

**【Significance】** Some manuscripts include verse 28: “And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And He was numbered with transgressors.””

**Isaiah 53:12:** “He was numbered with the transgressors, Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.”

**【Insight】** Behind the mockery of man, we can still see the sovereign plan of God. None of the mockers here realized they were fulfilling the prophecies of Scripture.

### **Mockery of the Jewish Passers-by (vv. 29-30)**

- "Those passing by were hurling abuse at Him": The people passing by were mostly Jews who came to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. They were busy preparing for the Passover dinner that evening. They mocked Jesus because He did not meet their expectation for the Messiah that He'd be a king to rule with power. Just a week before, they had joyfully welcomed Jesus into the city (Mark 11:1-11).
- "You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days": They twisted Jesus' own words (John 2:19-21).
- "Save Yourself, and come down from the cross!": If Jesus only wanted to win followers, He could've done exactly as they requested. But if He did, people would only treat Him as a tool to gain earthly benefit and would not appreciate His true value as the Savior. So, for the eternal benefit of sinners, Jesus chose to stay on the cross and not come down.

**【Connection】** There are many in the church today who just come and go. They come because they want to gain earthly benefit from Jesus. When they don't get what they want, or when they realize that earthly benefit isn't even what Jesus wants us to pursue, they go away. They don't know what Jesus gives to His disciples are eternal benefits in God's kingdom, and that following Jesus on the path of the cross—to deny oneself completely and to serve even to the point of death—is the way to receive these heavenly benefits. That is why they come and go, just like these crowds.

### **Mockery of the Religious Leaders (vv. 31-32a)**

- "The chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves": Their mockery was most wicked, for they were the ones who should've known the best to make the right judgment and believe in Jesus.
- "He saved others; He cannot save Himself": They admitted that Jesus saved others because they knew Jesus had performed many miracles to save lives. Every time Jesus healed the sick or cast out demons on the Sabbath, the religious leaders were there and they saw all those miracles with their own eyes. But they said Jesus' power came from Beelzebul and that He cast out demons by the ruler of the demons (Mark 3:22).
- "Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!": If Jesus did come down, would they really believe? They had already seen many miracles. What they needed was not another external miracle, but an internal one. If God would open the eyes of their heart, they'd immediately see their own sinfulness and the glory of Jesus as their Savior.

【Connection】 There have always been people who thought they'd believe in Jesus if He would just show them a miracle. They have no idea about the condition of their own heart at all.

### **Mockery of the Co-crucified Robbers (vv. 32b)**

- "The robbers who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words": They were suffering intense pain on the cross, yet they still used their last strength to mock Jesus. They said, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" (Luke 23:39).

【Insight】 Everyone was challenging Jesus to save Himself immediately, thinking this is what Christ must do to prove Himself a powerful Savior. They did not realize the most important saving work of Christ was to sacrifice Himself to atone for the sins of God's people. The way Jesus' power works here is not by saving Himself, but by controlling Himself not to save Himself so that He could save sinners from hell. Not a single person here was able to see this great invisible power, and they were all mocking Jesus as if He was totally powerless.

【Reflection】 With full omnipotent power as God, how much spiritual strength must've Jesus exerted to restrain from coming down from the cross? Attacked by everyone with all kinds of mockery, Jesus kept His mouth tightly shut. Having the power to free Himself from all suffering immediately, yet He chose to endure it for sinners. This is not a sign of weakness, but a display of holy and perfect power.

### **Summary**

Jesus endured to the end to complete salvation. In the end, this salvation even came to those who mocked Him. One of the robbers crucified with Him repented and believed in the Lord on the cross (Luke 23:39-43). Of the Roman soldiers, a centurion repented and believed as Jesus died (Luke 23:47). Of the Jews, three thousand repented and believed on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41). Even of the most stubbornly hardened religious leaders, many later repented and believed (Acts 6:7).

*The cross can turn the most stubborn mockers of Jesus into obedient worshippers of Jesus. Is this your salvation experience? Are you a mocker resisting Jesus, or a worshipper following Jesus?*