

**(Matt. 27:32)** – As they brought Jesus out to lead Him to Golgotha to be crucified, *“THEY FOUND A MAN OF CYRENE, SIMON BY NAME: HIM THEY COMPELLED TO BEAR HIS CROSS.”* It is very likely, that this man was a follower of Christ, which might be one reason why they laid hold on him, and obliged him to bear the cross of Christ; since he was the father of Alexander and Rufus, who were men of note among the first Christians (Mark 15:21; Rom. 16:13). The soldiers did this, not out of compassion for Jesus, but because they feared they might be robbed of carrying out the sentence of crucifying Him. However, even in this, our God was ruling and overruling, to teach us spiritual lessons. Like Simon did physically, all who would follow Christ by God-given faith must take up His cross and do so daily (Luke 14:25-33). We must follow Him in truth outside the camp of false religion that denies Christ and His doctrine “bearing His reproach” (Heb. 13:13). If we take up His cross, denying ourselves and following Him, we must be compelled by grace to do so because it is so contrary to our flesh.

**(Matt. 27:33-34)** – *“GOLGOTHA,”* was another name for Calvary. It was called *“A PLACE OF A SKULL”* because in this place of slaughter, people who were stoned to death or crucified were simply covered over with a little dirt. Consequently, in a matter of time skulls and bones were everywhere. It was considered a place for the cursed to die, and we know the reality of God’s grace in our salvation as Christ *“hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree”* (Gal. 3:13). *“THEY GAVE HIM VINEGAR TO DRINK MINGLED WITH GALL.”* This mixture of vinegar (flat wine that had gone sour and bitter) mixed with gall was thought to be a mixture that would prolong one’s life. *“AND WHEN HE HAD TASTED THEREOF, HE WOULD NOT DRINK”* – Our Lord refused to drink of this mixture because He was determined to suffer the wrath of God for us without any distraction or intoxication of mind. And He refused to drink of it because He would make all to know that He would do nothing to prolong His life, but was willing to die now that His hour, the fullness of time, had come.

Also, this drink was given by the soldiers because they must, according to God’s decree, fulfill the prophecy of *Psalms 69:21* – *“They gave Me also gall for My meat; and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink.”* These soldiers had no compassion or regard for Jesus, yet they did exactly what God ordained that they would do and said that they would do (Acts 4:27-28; 13:27-29). Thus, the Lord God makes even His Son’s murderers to be His witnesses! John Gill wrote, “This potion of vinegar with gall was an aggravating circumstance in our Lord’s sufferings, being given to Him when He had a violent thirst upon Him; and was an emblem of the bitter cup of God’s wrath He had already tasted of in the garden, and was about to drink up”

**(Matt. 27:35-36)** – *“AND THEY CRUCIFIED HIM”* – Here is the crux of redemptive history that had been determined by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in the everlasting covenant of grace made before time and earth began. His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, was the establishment of righteousness based upon which God justified His elect and from which they are given spiritual and eternal life (Rom. 8:33-34).

*“AND PARTED HIS GARMENTS, CASTING LOTS”* – Again, we are reminded that the Lord God Almighty was in total control of the affairs on this day. The soldiers did nothing except what God had long before said they would do. This parting of our Lord’s garments was a fulfillment of *Psalms 22:18*. – *“THEY PARTED MY GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND CAST LOTS UPON MY VESTURE.”*

**(Matt. 27:36)** – *“AND SITTING DOWN THEY WATCHED HIM THERE,”* – Consider, what do you suppose they saw as they watched the Lord of Glory suffering on the cross? Because of their spiritual blindness and ignorance, they saw just another criminal (malefactor) no different than the two thieves who were on either side of Him. Isaiah described it – *“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not” (Isa. 53:3)*. To the religious leaders and the crowd, the death of Christ was nothing but the execution of a blasphemer who deserved to die this horrible death. Consider, what do we who know the truth of God’s glory in the Person and finished work of Christ see? We see our whole salvation and all the blessings and benefits of God’s grace settled and accomplished by our Lord and Savior. We see the justice as well as the mercy and love of God towards us who deserve nothing but death and hell (1 John 4:10). Here is the ground upon which God is just to justify the ungodly. Here is the answer to the eternal question of the ages – How can a sinful man be justified before a holy God? Here we see the righteousness in which we stand before God and find acceptance and fellowship completed by Christ as the Author and Finisher of our faith.

**(Matt. 27:37)** – *“AND SET UP OVER HIS HEAD HIS ACCUSATION WRITTEN, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”* They viewed Christ’s claim of being the Messiah and the true king of the Jews as a crime. It was what contained the sum and substance of what Jesus was accused, and for which He was condemned. In John 19:21 we read that the religious leaders among the Jews objected to this title. They felt it was false, because they did not believe that Jesus was the King of the Jews. They also believed it was demeaning, because it showed Rome’s power to humiliate and torture even the “King of the Jews.” Yet Pilate would not alter this, and when asked to take down the inscription he answered, What I have written, I have written (John 19:22).