



### Matthew 27:32-56

Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink. 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."* Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him:

THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left. And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads 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."* Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, *"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. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'"* Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing. Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, *"Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?"* that is, *"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"* Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, *"This Man is calling for Elijah!"* Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. The rest said, *"Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him."* And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. 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!"* And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

## Observations & Discussion

1. Roman law demanded that the accused carry his own cross (weighing as much as 100 pounds!). Based on what you know from our previous studies why do you think the soldiers forced Simon to carry Jesus' cross?

2. Spend a little time in sanctified imagination and put yourself in Simon's sandals. What do you think Simon experienced that day, and how do you think the experience impacted him?

3. What can Simon's experience teach you about unexpected demands that are forced upon you?

4. The Roman executioners were hardened men by trade. Yet, this crucifixion struck fear into their hearts. What made *this* crucifixion different and why did it make them afraid?

5. Vs. 45 tells us that darkness came over the land for 3 hours (a typical solar eclipse lasts only 7 & half minutes & the moon was on the other side of the earth so this couldn't have been a solar eclipse)! The Greek historian Phlegon wrote that the same darkness covered the entire Roman Empire, and that it was so dark that the stars could be seen during the day! Clearly this was some kind of supernatural event; what do you think God was communicating to mankind?

6. When we think of the Lake of Fire we might imagine a place of light. How do these descriptions of the eternal destination of the wicked challenge that view?

2Peter 2:4

2Peter 2:17

Jude 6

Jude 13

7. Read 1Cor. 15:3. How are you, like the Roman executioners, responsible for Jesus' crucifixion? How does that make you feel?