

# WEEK SEVENTEEN

## The Sacrificial Death of Jesus Christ

Tom Malone Sr.

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." - 1 John 1:7.

Like a never-ending stream, the river of atonement runs from one end of the Bible to the other with increasing width and depth. Every page of sacred writing seems to be stained with the royal scarlet of Jesus' blood. Just as the Bible breathes with inspiration and pulsates with life divit, it bleeds with atoning blood. The sacrificial death of Jesus Christ and His work of redemption is without any shadow of doubt the central theme of the Word of God.

Someone has said that the cordage of the British Navy is identified with a red

thread running throughout; so "the scarlet line" of Rahab's faith runs like an ever-widening river of grace from eternity to eternity.

Now when we discuss the doctrine of atonement, we must remember that the word "atonement" itself is entirely an Old Testament Word. It is found once in the English translation of the New Testament."

The same word translated "atonement" [in Romans 5:11] is translated "reconciliation" in Romans 11:15 and elsewhere. Atonement means "to cover," but the doctrine of bleed redemptions goes far deeper than that. It includes cleansing, a "blotting out"

of our sins, a separation of sin from the sinner, a divine forgiveness, a purchased freedom, and eternal safety of the trusting soul. Without incarnation, there would be no Savior. Without the resurrection of Christ, there would be no assurance. Without the atonement, there would be no forgiveness. We cannot do without the blood. These today who say, "Away with that slaughterhouse religion," or "no more of that gory story," might as well say, "Lock the gates of Heaven against every hungry heart," because the way of the bloody cross is the only way home to God and His eternal city."

THE LIFE OF CHRIST:  
THE CRUCIFIXION

# A CROWN OF THORNS

You will be reading the most moving and significant portions of Scripture this week. From the beginnings of Genesis to the conclusions of the great Revelation all Scripture points to this climactic moment.

Your reading assignments are shorter this week on purpose. This passage should not be rushed through. Read it slowly taking in each word. Compare the passages. Probe the details. Meditate upon the moment and ask for Holy Spirit insight. Soak in the Word and allow it to saturate your soul. Let your daily reading be meaningful and purposeful rather than hurried and hollow. Read and reread until your heart is full.

Today, will you meditate on the shame and humiliation Jesus endured for your sake? The spittle on his face was taken for you.

The blow to his head was endured for your sake. The King of Kings was draped with a robe of mockery and handed a scepter of derision. The One Who is now clothed with all the glory of heaven endured this shame on your behalf. Does this reveal His love for you?

A crown was placed upon His brow. This was nothing like the crowns that will be one day cast at His feet. It was the crown of sin the rested upon His brow. It was the crown that belong to you and me.

Never a thorn grew in Eden till sin entered the heart of man. Disobedience brought destruction and a curse was pronounced upon all creation.

“And unto Adam he said, Because thou

hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.” Genesis 3:17-18b

Were it not for man’s sin there would be no thorns to be placed upon the Savior’s brow. Were it not for sin, there would be no need for His sacrifice. But “all have sinned.”

Every thorn that pierced His brow was nourished by the sins of mankind. Even as God pronounced the curse in Genesis three, He knew that those thorns would one day pierce His brow as He atoned for the sins of mankind. That is God’s love.

**DAILY READING:** Mark 15:16-20,  
Matthew 27:27-31

DAY  
1

Cities/Places

1. Who led Jesus away?
2. How did they clothe Him.
3. What was placed upon His brow?
4. What did they say as they mocked Him?
5. How did they assault Jesus?
6. How would you have felt if you were an eye witness to this scene?

## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God’s Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

# WEEP NOT FOR ME

Luke's description of the wailing women adds depth to the Via Dolorosa (the way of grief or suffering). Here are the only recorded words of Christ between His condemnation and His cross.

The compassion of these ladies in love with their Lord was obvious for all to see. Their hearts yearned for Him. They looked upon His swollen face. They witnessed the deep lacerations that marked His flesh. They saw the blood, both dry and fresh, that painted His frame.

"As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." Isaiah 42:14.

Their hearts melted with sympathy for the Savior. But Jesus needed no sympathy. He was in complete control. Certainly, He suffered. His agony was undeniable. But Jesus doesn't look for our sympathy. He desires our surrender. He does not want us to weep over His cross but over our own condition.

National rejection of Jesus would soon lead to the destruction of Jerusalem. Mothers will be weeping over their children. Great calamity will fall upon the "City of Peace" because they failed to receive the Savior. They rejected their King in favor of their own self-reliance.

While we find it difficult to read this

portion of Scripture without our hearts being stirred, we ought to be careful to search those very hearts.

Are we simply pitying Christ? Do we feel sorry for Jesus? Will you weep for Him when you ought to weep for yourself?

Observing our suffering Savior, ought to lead us to personal self-evaluation. Why was He suffering? He was suffering for our sin. What should we weep over? We should weep over our sin. Let us not weep for Him but weep for ourselves.

Let those tears lead us to repentance and holy living. Let those tear motivate us to a life of service to the One Who loves us so.

## DAILY READING:

Mark 15:21-24, Matthew 27-32-34, Luke 23:-26-31, John 19:17

1. Who bore Jesus' cross?
2. What is known as "The place of the skull?"
3. The wine mingled with myrrh was meant to ease the suffering and pain of the cross. It was a single act of mercy and sympathy for victims of crucifixion. Why do you believe Jesus rejected it?
4. Who did Jesus say the women ought to weep for?
5. Of what language is the word "Golgotha?"

DAY  
2

Cities/Places

## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

# THE KING OF THE JEWS

Above the head of each criminal hangs a placard proclaiming his crime. Above Jesus the accusations was written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. Each of the four Gospel writers gives us a portion of the accusation. What was the accusation? For what crime was Jesus convicted.

The chief priests were unhappy with the proclamation that hung over the head of Jesus. They wanted it changed. While Pilate yielded to their pressure and allowed Jesus to be crucified, he would not yield to their pressure on this point.

Recall the religious trials of Jesus. There he was accused of blasphemy. But the accusation over His head was not "Blasphemer." Rome could care less about the religious bickering of the Jews. So they trumped up charges saying that Jesus forbade paying taxes to Caesar. Yet as we look at the accusation above, we do not read "Tax Cheat," or "Insurrectionist."

They accused Him of treason, proclaiming Himself to be King of the Jews. Look overhead. Do you see "Treason" written above? No.

Pilate's accusation read "The King of the Jews!"

The chief priests were furious. They demanded a change. "Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews."

As it stood the declaration seemed to be an admission that Jesus IS the King of the Jews. This appeared to be more of a proclamation than an accusation. Would Pilate make changes to reflect a denial of the Kingship of Jesus?

"Pilate answered, What I have written I have written."

Pilate's motives are uncertain at best. Was he simply retaliating against the Jews for

pressing him into crucifying an innocent man? Did he resent the power they had over him at this moment. Or did he, perhaps, have a glimmer of faith. Did he understand even in the slightest the conversation he had with Jesus? Was there a perception of a Kingdom not of this world?

Traditional accounts suggest that under Caligula, Pilate fell into disgrace, was exiled and eventually committed suicide around A.D. 36 or 37.

Pilate's motivations will remain unknown till we reach heaven. But one thing remains certain: By God's divine providence, the proclamation above Jesus head was true and accurate. Not only is He the King of the Jews but also the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

"And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Revelation 19:16.

**DAILY READING:** Mark 15:25-32, Matthew 27:35-44, Luke 23:32-43, John 19:18-27

DAY  
3

Cities/Places

1. Each passage gives a portion of the inscription that was posted above Jesus. By comparing each passage, write the complete inscription below.
2. List all those who reviled, mocked or railed on Jesus.
3. How do we see a change in one of the malefactors?
4. What are the first three sayings of Christ upon the cross?
5. Which of Christ's companions are found at the cross?

**APPLICATION**

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

# RIPPED

The sound of fabric ripping is not usually a good sound. I don't know of a boy who hasn't ripped a hole in the knees of his pants, usually accompanied by a lecture from their mother. As soon as we hear that sound we know that we are in trouble.

Don't you imagine that the heart of the priests must have skipped a beat when they heard the veil of the temple ripping from top to bottom! That had never happened before. There was not a more sacred piece of cloth in the world than this veil. What were the spiritual implications of such an event? What were the logistical consequences? Who would get blamed? Would someone be held accountable?

Can you see the ever-widening eyes of the priests who may have witnessed this event? They watched in horror as a small tear beginning at the top and growing as it reached the floor. In their minds, the most sacred place in the Hebrew universe and in fact the world had just been defiled before their very eyes.

This veil separated the Holy of Holies (Most Holy Place) from the rest of the Temple.

Once a year and once only, the High Priest and he alone entered into the Holy of Holies to make sacrifice for the nation as a whole. He could not enter in himself till sacrifice had been made to purge his own sins.

Leviticus 16 outlines the procedures according to the Mosaic law while Hebrews 10 explains this event as a shadow of the true sacrifice: Jesus Christ.

The priest could only enter into the Holy of Holies through the veil. This veil is a type of Christ. We may only enter into the presence of God through Him.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." Hebrews 10:19-20

The rending of His flesh and the sacrifice of His blood purchased redemption and entrance into the Most Holy place.

The rending of the veil signified that we no longer need a worldly High Priest to offer sacrifice for atonement. Jesus is our High

Priest Who offered Himself as the spotless Lamb of God.

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Hebrews 9:11-12

The temple, a place of sacrifice, was now obsolete. Every sacrifice offered there served only one purpose: to point towards Christ. These were but shadows and Christ the Substance.

"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." Hebrews 10:11-12

The rent veil means the sacrifice is complete. The debt has been satisfied and we now have direct access to God through Jesus Christ, our High Priest!

**DAILY READING:** Mark 15:33-41, Matthew 27:45-56, Luke 23:44-49, John 19:28:-37

1. For how long did darkness cover the land?
2. What are the next for sayings of Christ on the cross?
3. How was the veil rent?
4. What two things did the centurion say?
5. What two prophecies does John cite as being fulfilled?

## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

DAY  
4

Cities/Places

# JESUS IS DEAD

There was only a small window of time when this could be said with accuracy. This would not be a true statement today. As Alfred Ackly rejoices in his wonderful hymn *He Lives*: "I serve a risen Savior, He's in the world today!"

Only three days and twenty-three verses mark the silent days or our Lord's death.

What an empty feeling must have overcome His disciples during this time. For the last three and a half years they had hardly known a moment without Him.

Many of His public followers had departed and two of His secret disciples stepped forward.

Joseph was a counselor, a part of the sanhedrin, but he was absent when they tried Christ. He had not been among those who

consented unto His death. Until now, he had feared to follow Jesus openly.

We owe a huge debt to Nicodemus for his sincere questions that elicited a response from Jesus that has been preserved as some of the most beautiful Scriptures of John chapter three. He, too, was part of the sanhedrin and even a Pharisee and had initially approached Jesus by night. He feared his companions.

At this critical point, these two secret disciples stepped out of the shadows and identified with Christ! Their courage came forth in the midst of crisis. Their fears dissipated and they were willing to be identified with Jesus in His death.

It has been said that Joseph did not give Jesus his tomb. He only lent it to Him for a few days! How much Joseph and

Nicodemus had heard and understood of the resurrection at this point is uncertain. But they serve as an example to those who were once timid but now ready to proclaim Christ!

Whether they knew it or not, they themselves fulfilled the Scriptures.

"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." Isaiah 53:9

Jesus would lie in the grave this night (Thursday). The next day was a high or annual sabbath (Friday). Jesus would lay in the grave that night. Saturday would be the weekly sabbath and once again Jesus would lie in the grave.

Bud Sunday is coming fast!

## DAILY READING:

Mark 15:42-47, John 19:38-42,  
Luke 23:50-56, Matthew 27:57-61

DAY  
5

Cities/Places

1. Who begged for the body of Jesus?
2. What did Pilate marvel over?
3. Who came with Joseph?
4. What did Nicodemus bring with him?
5. What did the Pharisees do the day after?
6. What did Pilate do to insure the integrity of the tomb?
7. According to Jesus in Matthew 12:40, how many days and how many nights must He be in the grave?

## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?



# TABLE TALK



# PASTOR'S MESSAGE