

LUKE Lesson 63

Jesus Christ: Dying in the Place of Sinners (Luke 23:32-38)

6 September 2019

There they crucified him.

Vs 33 The four gospels are very brief and to the point in reporting Christ's crucifixion. There is no mention of the physical pain, suffering, and agonizing of the Lord on the cross. God wants us to remember the purpose for the crucifixion: it was a way for the Son of God to bear the sins of the whole world in His body.

Father, forgive them.

Vs 34 When Jesus asked His Father to forgive them, he was practicing what He'd been preaching all along about forgiveness. See **Matthew 5:43-45**. It is our willingness to forgive those who spitefully use us and persecute us that reveals that we are sons of God. Stephen demonstrated that even an ordinary man can forgive his enemies in the worst of situations (Acts 7:60).

Two Heresies refuted:

1. Jehovah's Witness: *"Jesus was not God. If He was God, He could forgive sins and wouldn't have asked the Father to do it."*
2. Arian: *"God came upon Jesus at His baptism and left Him on the cross. He asked the Father to forgive sins because only Jesus the man remained on the cross."*

Why did Jesus ask the Father to forgive His enemies instead of doing it Himself?

1. Jesus, as the Son of God on earth, certainly had the power of God to forgive sins (**Matthew 9:2, 6, Luke 7:48, Mark 2:7-12**). He demonstrated this power by removing the infirmity that was the result of the sin that is inherent in all mankind.
2. Sickness, sorrow, pain, and death are proofs that there is sin in the world (there's none in Heaven).
 - a. Your changed life is proof that your sins have been forgiven. When you are born again, the effects of sin will begin to be removed from your life; a change will be seen in the way you live.
3. When Jesus was "lifted up from the earth" on the cross (**John 12:32**), the sins of the world were placed in His body (1 Jn 2:2).
 - a. He didn't cease to be God and He didn't cease to be man, but He was bearing our sins (**First Peter 2:24**).
 - b. He had taken the place of a lost, guilty, condemned sinner before the Father (**Isaiah 53:3-6**).
 - c. He was still God (**2 Cor 5:19**) while He was reconciling the world to Himself, but He was made "sin for us" (**2 Cor 5:21**).
 - d. The Son of God took our sin so we could take His righteousness (Rom 10:10, 1 Cor 1:30).
 - e. Jesus Christ was lifted up as "the serpent in the wilderness" (**John 3:14-15**, Ps 22:6, Mt 3:7, Jn 8:44).
4. The answer is simple: Christ deferred to the Father to forgive them because on the cross with our sins upon Him, He temporarily suspended His power to forgive sins; a sinner cannot grant forgiveness of sins. (When we forgive others, we're forgiving their faults and offenses against us; we're not able to forgive sins).

He saved others.

Vs 35 He was still saving others. If He was going to save others, He must not save Himself (Mt 26:53).

36-37 The soldiers mocked Him. They gave him vinegar and gall (Mt 27:34). This was not for the purpose of easing his pain. It was to insult Him in their mockery and attempt to cause Him more discomfort. Their words, “save thyself” were also part of the mocking; they didn’t believe He could save Himself.

The Superscription

Vs 38 The superscription written above Christ’s head differs slightly in the four Gospels. (Matthew 27:37, Mark 15:26, Luke 23:38, John 19:19).

1. This has led some men to either distrust the Bible due to a supposed “contradiction.”
2. Others will use this difference as an opportunity or an excuse to not take the Bible at face value, but to read it only as a general “message.”
3. Luke’s Gospel offers the solution: The superscription was written in three languages (Greek, Latin, and Hebrew). Each language provided a different emphasis to the varying people who understood those languages. The three primary languages of that day represented the descendants of Noah (Shem, Ham, and Japheth).
 - a. Note that there are not 4 differences. There are three variances and one excerpt (a part of the whole).

THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS (Matthew)

THE KING OF THE JEWS (Mark)

THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS (Luke)

JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS (John)
