

TEXT SERMONS

**“SCENES OF THE SAVIOR’S SUFFERINGS”**

**John 19:17-19**

*“And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center. Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.”*

If you begin to think about the colt upon which Christ rode on Palm Sunday and the cross which he bore several days later, immediately you will realize that between the two events there was a drastic change:

- On Palm Sunday he rode the colt down the hill into the city;
- On Thursday he bore the cross up the hill out of the city;
- On Palm Sunday the cry was, "Hosanna to the King!"
- On Thursday they shouted, "Crucify Him!" Crucify Him!"
- At the beginning of the week there were acclamations;
- At the end of the week there were accusations;
- On Palm Sunday it was coronation;
- On Thursday, it was crucifixion;
- On Palm Sunday he entered the city amidst cheers;
- At the end of the week He exited the city amidst jeers.

Just what happened between the Mt. of Olives and Mt. Calvary; between Sunday and Thursday? There are three places that tell the story and these three places are well known to us because of what happened at each place. The places were Gethsemane, Gabbatha and Golgotha. Let us look at these three places as follows:

**I. GETHSEMANE -- THE PLACE OF THE PRESS.**

*"Then came Jesus with them to a place called Gethsemane." (Matthew 26:36)*

The word, Gethsemane, means "oil press." Gethsemane was and is a garden of olive trees. Also located there was an oil press. The olives were pressed to extract the oil within them. It was here that Jesus retired to pray with three of his disciples.

**A. Jesus was pressed by sorrow.**

As Jesus prayed he said, *"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful."* (Matt. 26:38) He was known as a man of sorrows. Isaiah wrote that He was, *"A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."* (Isaiah 53:3) Jesus was overwhelmed with great anguish. In His human nature, in His soul, He was much and deeply affected and pressed down - *"Even unto death."*

On Olivet's mountaintop he had wept over the city of Jerusalem. (Matt. 23:37) He Was filled with sorrow for those who were so filled with sin.

*"Man of sorrows, what a name,  
For the son of God who came;  
Ruined ascenders to reclaim,  
Hallelujah! What a Savior!"*

**B. Jesus was pressed by sin.**

*"Who himself bore our sins in his body on the tree."* (I Peter 2:24)

It was not His sin with which He was overwhelmingly burdened but the sin of the entire human race! Peter also writes of Jesus: *"Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth"* (I Peter 2:22)

When was the sin-burden of the world placed upon Christ? Isaiah 53:4 says, *"He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."* In Luke 22:44 we read, *"He sweat great drops of blood."* Why? The sin of the world was placed upon Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. Therefore the sweating of blood.

Warren W. Wiersbe, in his commentary on the book of Luke, writes: "Luke is the only Gospel writer who mentions that He "sweat drops of blood." There is a rare physical phenomenon known as *"hematidrosis"*, in which, under great emotional stress, the tiny blood vessels rupture in the sweat glands and produce a mixture of blood and sweat."

Why did He "sweat great drops of blood"? When He took the "cup," the sin-burden of the world was placed upon Him. Dr. John Gill writes, "It was the sense he had of the sins of his people, which were imputed to him, and the curse of the righteous law of God, which he endured, and especially the wrath of God, which was let into his soul."

G. Campbell Morgan wrote: "He would be made sin for us and separated from His Father. He called this solemn experience, "drinking the cup. When did He receive the "cup"? In the Garden."

Notice verse 43 – *"Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him."* Why did the angel come just then to strengthen Him? Dr. George Morrison writes on the subject as follows: "Angels came and strengthened our Savior as He courageously accepted the cup from His Father's hand. When did angels come to strengthen Him? They came to Him in the Garden as He received the cup."

Martin Luther writes, "No man can know or can see what that anguish must have been. If any man began even to experience such suffering he would die. If a man could feel such anguish and distress as Christ felt, it would be impossible for him to endure it, and for his soul to remain in his body. Through Christ alone was this agony possible, and it wrung from him sweat which was as great drops of blood."

In Gethsemane, the place of the press, the sin of the world was pressed upon our Savior. I concur with the hymn writer:

*"All the sin of the world  
On the Savior was hurled,  
As he knelt in the garden alone;  
Hear His soul burdened plea:  
'Let this cup pass from me,  
Even so, not my will, Thine be done.'"*

## II. GABBATHA -- THE PLACE OF THE PAVEMENT.

*"Pilate... brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha."* (John 19:13)

The pavement was the place where public hearings were held. It served also as a court room. Into this area came the Roman soldiers with their prisoner being led as a Lamb to the slaughter while their hearts were as hard as the pavement upon which they stood.

And there, Jesus, the Savior of sinners, was subjected to the cruel indignities, indecencies and interrogation by sinners. Consider what personalities who were present in this court room scene:

### A. There was the Judge and Jesus.

*"Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus said to him, "It is as you say." And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly."* (Matt. 27:11-14)

Pilate was the Roman Governor of Judea; Jesus is the Judge of the universe. Therefore, for the Judge from heaven to submissively stand before the judge of earth required the ultimate in humility. Paul wrote, *"He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."* (Phil. 2:8) What an example for us!

### B. There were the accusers.

*"All the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor."* (Matt. 27:10)

Jesus' own people, motivated by a Satanic blindness and madness, rejected Him. *"He came unto his own and his own received him not."* (John 1:11)

### D. There were the accusations:

- He perverts the people – Luke 23:14
- He speaks against Caesar – John 19:12
- He claims to be the Son of God – John 19:7
- He said he would destroy the temple – Matt. 26:61

### E. There was the beating and the mocking.

*"So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands."* (John 19:1-3)

### F. There was the sentencing.

*"When the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him."* (John 19:6)

We have a saying about unjust courts that wrongfully convict a person. We call it “A Kangaroo Court.” The term “Kangaroo Court” was popularized during the California Gold Rush of 1849. It comes from the notion of justice proceeding “by leaps”, like a kangaroo.<sup>1</sup>

A Kangaroo Court or Kangaroo Trial, refers to a sham legal proceeding or court. The colloquial phrase “Kngaroo Court” is used to describe judicial proceedings that deny due process rights in the name of expediency. The outcome of a trial by “Kangaroo Court” is essentially determined in advance, usually for the purpose of providing a conviction, either by going through the motions of manipulated procedure or by allowing no defense at all.

Although the term “Kangaroo Court” would have been foreign to Pilate and the Jewish leaders, the term describes for us, what took place at a place called Gabbatha.

### **III. GOLGOTHA -- THE PLACE OF PLACES.**

*“And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha.”* (John 19:17)

This world has many historic places. Some of these mark supreme struggles, some supreme crises in the affairs of men and nations. They attract visitors from all lands. Many of these scenes are scenes that arouse within us deep feelings of nostalgia. We love to remember the old home place of our childhood and youth. All of us thrill to the song, “Home, Sweet Home.” The place where we trusted the Lord Jesus as our Savior is ever a sacred place to us. But the place called Golgotha is the place of places; it was there that the son of God performed His greatest work for the children of men.

Call it Golgotha in Hebrew, or Calvary in Latin, it is from that “Green Hill far away, without the city wall” that flows to us the River of Life. It is there, on that rugged hill that the Lamb of God, bore our sins away for all time and eternity!

#### **A. There was the cross bearing.**

*“And he bearing his cross went forth....”* (John 19:17)

He bore the cross before the cross bore Him. He had help while *under* the cross, but He had no help and need no help while *on* the cross. This was a transaction between Himself and God alone.

#### **B. There was the bearing cross.**

*“And they crucified him....”* (Matt. 27:35)

Golgotha was the execution chamber. From this place no criminal ever returned alive. The criminal often hung for days with open wounds, raging fever, excruciating pain, with the added discomfort of the heat of the day and the cold night.

Jewish historians tell us that often the bodies were left hanging on the cross and the bones cleaned by the fowls of the air. This torturous method of death was well calculated to make the convicted sufferer suffer as much as possible before death.

It was to this place and to this kind of death our Savior went. As the song says,

*"Up Calvary's Mountain one dreadful morn,  
Walked Christ my Savior, weary and worn;  
Bearing for sinners death on the cross  
That he might save them from endless loss."*

Napoleon is said to have been looking at a map of the world as he was marching his troops from country to country, conquering as he went. As he looked at the map, the country of Britain was colored red. Pointing to that red spot Napoleon said, "If it were not for that spot I could conquer the world!" Satan, looking at the world, could have said, as he looked at the red spot of Calvary, "If it were not for that red spot I could conquer the world!"

### CONCLUSION

These are the scenes of the Savior's sufferings for us. In order for God to span the gulf between Hell and Heaven there had to be a Gethsemane, Gabbatha and Golgotha.

Yes, there were three principle places in the sufferings of Christ. However, praise God! This is not the end of the story. There is another place that we must go to in order to get the full story.

### THE GARDEN -- THE PLACE OF PROSPECT.

*" Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby." (John 19:41-42)*

The anger at Gabbatha, the agony in Gethsemane and the anguish on Golgotha were replaced by the astonishment in the Garden on resurrection morning! The angel said, *"He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead."* (Matt. 28:6-7)

Now, what a prospect we have! Jesus said, *"Because I live, you shall live also."* (John 14:19) This is the event that we celebrate when we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Thank God for the vacant Garden Tomb and the prospect that it projects for all who believe!

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