



We continued this Sunday in our Lent series in Matthew.

Following Pilate's decision to release Barabbas and have Jesus crucified, he was flogged and then we picked up the account with Jesus being led into the Praetorium, the

Governor's residence. Here the

soldiers amused themselves by taunting and torturing Jesus, before he was led off to the place of crucifixion outside the city.

There was a lot of detail in the Passion narrative, too much to cover in one sermon. But we sang a metrical version of Psalm 22 (see appendix) so that we can 'get inside' Jesus' feelings of suffering and then the joy of victory in the latter section.

What do you think are some benefits of everyone singing this, rather than just having one person read it out?

The sermon dealt with three groups of mockers and three great truths proclaimed by them, even though they uttered them derisively.

1. The Soldiers: "Jesus is King of all Nations"
2. The Passers-by: "Jesus is Building his Temple"
3. The Jewish Leaders: "Jesus Saves Others by Not Saving Himself"

1. Recap: see if you can list **seven ways the soldiers mistreat Jesus in this passage (not including the flogging in v26)**

-which of these do you find most shocking?

We didn't have time to look at 1 Pet 2:20-24 in the sermon, but you might like to read it out. **How is Jesus a model for us?**

-does anyone want to share an experience of insult or mocking that you would like prayer for?

'Dramatic Irony' is the literary device where *the readers understand something which the characters don't*

How do Matthew 1:1 and 2:2 help us understand the truth the soldiers unwittingly proclaim?

2. The passers-by don't see Jesus on the cross and pity him. Rather, they choose a prophecy of his recorded in John 2:19.

-why did they find it such a laughable claim?

-what is the destroyed temple? What is the new temple?

-how does a reminder of Jesus' words help us be more committed to our local church with all its frustrations and challenges?

3. The Jewish leaders were no better than the passers-by.

How did they make Jesus the butt of their joke?

How did they 'speak better than they knew'?

What was the aspect of Islamic belief which the sermon flagged up as seriously mistaken?

In what way do our Muslim friends express a similar attitude to that in v42-43?

Simple answer, but worth underlining: **why was it impossible for Jesus to save himself and also save us?**

As you move into prayer for individual situations, you may find Paul's words helpful as a guide and inspiration when it's hard to witness to sceptical relatives (over Easter?) and colleagues/friends.

Rom 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile."

Appendix: If people find it helpful to refer to

Psalm 22- a paraphrase written with metre and rhyme for the purpose of singing (19:40 on [Youtube livestream](#))

1. My God, O my God, have you left me alone?
Why have you forsaken me, deaf to my groan?
I cry to you daily and plead late at night,
But you do not answer or pity my plight.
2. Yet you are the Holy One, Israel's King,
to whom all our fathers and mothers did sing.
They counted on you to come through when they prayed;
whenever they trusted, then you always saved.
3. Yet I am a worm who is laughed at and mocked,
despised by the godless who saunter about.
"His help is the LORD! Foolish fellow," they sneer,
"let God set him free since he counts him so dear."
4. Since I was a baby, dependent and weak,
I nestled in safety, LORD, close to your cheek.
Please don't go away, for deep trouble is near!
Who else can secure me and keep away fear?
5. Surrounding brute beasts make me shudder with fright,
and jaws of fierce lions are ready to bite.
My bones seem disjointed, I can't catch my breath –
my heart melts like wax, and I face cruel death.
6. Like dogs they surround me, I cringe and I groan;
they pierce through my hands and my feet to the bone.
They measure me out for the kill, as they gloat.

They scatter their dice for my garments and coat.

7. My God! O my God! Do not leave me exposed.
Voracious, these dogs only deepen my woes.
These beasts, mad with violence, want me to die:
O stop them, Almighty, and answer my cry!
8. I shout out your praise to your saints who endure.
Praise God, all you faithful: his comfort is sure.
The LORD has not left me or hidden his face;
I cried out for help, and God saved me in grace.
9. Those hungry for fullness will feast with the LORD.
All peoples will worship the God they ignored.
Yes, even the proud will be humbled in dust
to honor God's power -the LORD whom we trust!
10. I thank you, my LORD, I may sing with your folk
to seal here in worship the vows which I spoke,
so new generations shall pass on in faith
that you, O my God, keep your children all safe!

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