



Text: John 19:1-22<sup>1</sup> [p. 905]  
Series: *Life in His Name* – The Message of John’s Gospel  
Title: Part 39 – “For this purpose I was born...” (2)  
Date: December 4, 2011  
Place: First Baptist Church, Olds, AB

Jesus interrogation before Pilate...

Pilate: “So you are a king.”  
Jesus...

**“You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth.” John 18:37**

“Yes, I am a king,” ... and now, we witness **his coronation!** But it is a coronation unlike any other.

**“Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you...” John 17:1**

The hour of glory – the hour of the cross – is his coronation as King of kings

Cf. The Christmas “glory” of the announcements re his birth as “the King of the Jews”

Luke 1:32-33 **Gabriel’s announcement** to Mary: “And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

Matt 2:2 **The Magi’s question** to Herod: “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

Christmas glory (angels, gold & frankincense and myrrh, etc) becomes  
Crucifixion glory (the humble Son of God dying in our place in obedience to the Father’s loving concern for us)

**Christmas glory must become Crucifixion glory** if the purpose of Jesus’ birth is to be fulfilled in our lives

The angel announced: “Good news of great joy!”

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**“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:11**

Unless we move from the glory of Christmas to the glory of the Cross, Jesus will never be “good news” to us. He will never be “gospel” to us without the cross. If Jesus, the Son of David, had not ascended the throne of the Cross, He would never have become our “Savior who is Christ the Lord.”

This is a coronation ... but it is a strange and counter event. We celebrate Jesus’ birth as the Son of David and King of kings with twinkling lights, glowing candles and the shine of silver and gold. But these things are out of place at the celebration of his coronation!

***Our King was prepared for his coronation ... by being beaten, mocked and accused without cause!***

**John 19:1-11**

**“<sup>1</sup> Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. <sup>2</sup> And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. <sup>3</sup> They came up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and struck him with their hands. <sup>4</sup> Pilate went out again and said to them, “See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him.” <sup>5</sup> So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!” <sup>6</sup> When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him!” John 19:1-6**

**They beat him...**

**“flogged him” (v.1)**

**Even though Pilate had declared...**

**“I find no guilt in him” John 18:38**

Not the life-threatening flogging that he received once he’d been condemned to crucifixion

Cf. Carson – three levels of beatings given by the Romans

- this was probably the one used for common criminals and was accompanied by a stern warning (*fustigatio*)

Cf. Mel Gibson’s, *The Passion of the Christ*

- That horrendous beating was close to reality – many men died from the flogging, even before they were crucified (*verberatio*)

- That beating was yet to come! Cf. Mark 15:15



- once Jesus had been condemned to crucifixion, the Romans beat him mercilessly
- the intent was to wound him so severely that his death on the cross would be faster

### **They mocked him...**

Cf. Jesus' "crown jewels"...

"they twisted together **a crown of thorns**" (v.2)

- thorns of the date palm were about 12" in length – added to the blood and gore

"arrayed him in a **purple robe**" – probably a Roman military tunic

**"Hail, King of the Jews"**

"and **struck him** with their hands." (v.3) – open-handed slap

NB. Not the first time – cf. 18:22 struck by the high priest's officer when he would not answer Annas' questions

Prophecy re **the Suffering Servant**:

**"I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting."** Isaiah 50:6

Cf. What a contrast with the gifts of the Magi who came to worship the King of the Jews

- gold ... for a king!
- frankincense ... for a priest!
- myrrh ... a grave spice? Cf John 19:39

NB. Even in the glory of Christmas there is already an indication of the glory of the Cross!

This lesser flogging and this mockery was a punishment that Pilate thought might satisfy the mob – he thought that seeing Jesus humiliated and bloodied might appease the religious leaders -- but it didn't!

### **They accused him...**

**NB. Over and over again Pilate declared: "I find no guilt in him" (18:38; 19:4, 6)**

- Jesus was innocent! But he was flogged as a common criminal!
- Jesus was guiltless! But the crowd demanded his death!
- Jesus went to the Cross as **the spotless Lamb of God!**



**“<sup>6</sup> Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him.” <sup>7</sup> The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God.” <sup>8</sup> When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. <sup>9</sup> He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> So Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?” <sup>11</sup> Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.” John 19:6-11**

The only charge the religious leaders could bring against Jesus was his claim that he was “the Son of God.” Had he made that claim? Yes, he had.

When the religious leaders had criticized Jesus for healing a man on the Sabbath day, he had responded by saying...

**“My Father is working until now, and I am working.” John 5:17**

The religious leaders were enraged and John tells us why...

**“This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.” John 5:18**

Yes, Jesus had claimed that he was the Son of God.

And the Law of God did say...

**“Whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death.”  
Leviticus 24:16**

But, Jesus was only guilty of blasphemy against God if he wasn't the Son of God.

“Where are you from?” Pilate asked. Jesus was silent ... because he had already answered that question again and again throughout this ministry. What proof had he offered? Throughout his ministry Jesus had presented “signs” that pointed to his identity as the Son of God. He said...

**“For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me.” John 5:36**

He was declaring and proving his divine origin when he...

- turned water into wine at the wedding in Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11)



- healed an official's son from twenty miles away with just a word (John 4:46-54)
- healed a man who had been paralyzed for almost forty years (John 5:1-15)
- fed 5000 people in the wilderness with bread and fish (John 6:5-13)
- walked on the stormy waters of the Sea of Galilee (John 6:16-21)
- gave sight to a man who had been born blind (John 9:1-7)
- raised his friend Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44)

Beaten for no reason!

Mocked and assaulted!

Falsely accused, yet guiltless!

This was how Jesus was prepared for **his crowning achievement** ... his death on the Cross!

***Our King was heralded before his coronation ... by rejection from his own people!***  
**John 19:12-16**

When Jesus was born, the angels of heaven had heralded his birth...

**“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” Luke 2:14**

When he had entered Jerusalem, just days before, the crowd had hailed him as their king...

**“Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” John 12:13**

But on this day, as he made his way to the Cross, what he heard from the lips of men was rejection...

**<sup>12</sup> From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar’s friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.” <sup>13</sup> So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. <sup>14</sup> Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” <sup>15</sup> They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” <sup>16</sup> So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.” John 19:12-16**



John prepared us for this moment in his Gospel right from the very beginning. He wrote in the opening lines...

**“He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.” John 1:11**

You could even translate this as...

**“He came to his own home, and his own people did not receive him.”**

In a place where he should have been welcomed he was rejected! I've added the word “home” and I'll tell you why. In two other places in John's Gospel the exact phrase that appears here is translated in those verses as “his own home.” (**John 16:32; 19:27**). The force of what John is saying is that Jesus came to a place where people should have welcomed him ... but they didn't!

Can you imagine the pain of coming home and being rejected?! Can you imagine coming to a family Christmas dinner and having the door closed in your face? Can you imagine your children refusing to acknowledge you? Sending back your letters unopened? Refusing your phone calls? That's what Jesus experienced from “his own people” on the way to the Cross.

***Our King was enthroned at his coronation ... by his enemies, in agony!***

**John 19:16-22**

**“So they took Jesus,<sup>17</sup> and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.<sup>18</sup> There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.<sup>19</sup> Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”<sup>20</sup> Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek.<sup>21</sup> So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’”<sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.” John 19:16-22**

Usually a king is carried to his coronation by his retinue of officials and servants, but this king, our king, went to his coronation **“bearing his own cross.”** From the other Gospels we know that a man was forced to help Jesus carry the cross for a portion of the journey (cf. Simon of Cyrene, Mark 15:21) but John's focus is on **Jesus' obedience to his Father's will.**

Jesus carried the heavy “cross beam”



- the upright would have already been in the ground at the place of execution
- laid on his back with his arms outstretched and nailed to the cross beam through the wrist, then hoisted onto the upright and his feet nailed into position just below the ankle
- the upright had a small seat – NOT for comfort!
- in order to breathe, he would have had to either push himself up with his nailed feet or pull himself up with his nailed hands – the seat was intended only to prolong the agony of the cross – the crucified man could rest for a moment while he struggled to breathe – death came either from extreme blood loss or by suffocation

As he writhed in agony, his coronation announcement, nailed above his head to the cross on which he hung, declared...

**“Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”**

Where is the glory in this agony? Why has this Roman instrument of torture become a symbol of hope for so many?

The cross of Jesus becomes glorious for us only when we recognize that Jesus not only carried his own cross that day ... he carried our sins as well. As Peter put it so concisely...

**“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree” 1 Peter 2:24**

The cross was both a throne for the King of the Jews AND an altar for the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

- on the cross he bore our punishment for sin and beautified this “tree” forever in the eyes of those who understand that Jesus died for them

**“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23**

It was on that Roman tree of death that eternal life was born for us and that’s why the Cross is glorious to us. The sinless Son of God, the King of kings, died in our place, freely and willingly submitting to the Father’s will. And as our eyes are opened to the dreadful reality of our sin and the wonder of the Father’s love in sending his Son to take our punishment for sin, we are drawn to this horrible tree, just as Jesus said we would be!

**“And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”  
John 12:32**

As the hymn writer put it...



**In the old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,  
A wondrous beauty I see  
For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died  
To pardon and sanctify me**

Let me close with a story that ties together the glory of Christmas and the beauty of the Cross.

***A Tale of Three Trees<sup>2</sup>  
by Angela Elwell Hunt***

My prayer this Christmas season is that the tree of Golgotha will become increasingly beautiful in our eyes.

- **The Lord's Table**
- **Welcome of New Members**
- **Songs of Communion**
  - A Communion Hymn for Christmas (#287)
  - Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus (#244)
- **Benediction**

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<sup>2</sup>This is the original story as written by Angela Elwell Hunt. This story is protected by copyright. For more information about Angela's works, visit her website: <http://www.angelaelwellhunt.com/trees/>

The Tale of Three Trees A traditional Folktale by Angela Elwell Hunt.  
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