

Scourging Of Jesus

Lesson 3.11

The scourging of Jesus cannot be told in a non-graphic way - nor should it be. Pictures will come to your mind as we discuss the details of Christ's punishment for our sins. Take precautions with young children.

Please read [Matthew 27:27-31](#) before starting GraspingGod.com's free Bible study lessons, #3.11

Preliminary Bible Study Questions:

- 1) When did Jesus first suffer physical abuse?
- 2) What tool was used in Roman scourging?
- 3) What was the reason for the Roman's mocking of Christ?

This lesson was researched and written under a dark cloud. I'm saying that the sense of my sins at times overwhelmed me ([Psalm 34:4-7](#)), leaving me temporarily depressed. Knowing that the One who loves me took my punishment left me saddened, but finally overjoyed. In the end, nothing but gratitude towards my Savior filled my heart. Studying the suffering of Christ should churn our hearts.

Let's discuss the scourging of Jesus Christ, picking up the story immediately after his arrest.

Jesus' Love

Jesus made it clear that he was not going to defend himself ([Mark 15:5](#)), or attempt to flee ([John 18:11](#)) from the coming persecution. God could have rained fire down from heaven and ended this fiasco. He could have sent destroying angels to annihilate everyone from Judas to Pilate ([Matthew 26:53](#)). But, had he done such a thing our souls wouldn't be offered salvation. This was the Father's plan from the beginning and Jesus willfully joined him because of his love for people. Jesus' stoic silence and inhuman strength to withstand such a barrage of emotional and physical abuse was based on his love for us.

The study can best begin with the Scriptural data for the scourging of Jesus.

List Of Brutalities Against Jesus Christ:

- A guard slapped Jesus during his trial before Annas, the honorary high priest: [John 18:22-23](#)
- The mocking of Christ began at his trial before Caiaphas: [Matthew 26:67-68](#); [Mark 14:65](#) (same); [Luke 22:63](#) (same)
- Herod and his guards mocked Jesus during his trial before Herod Antipas: [Luke 23:11](#)
- Pilate officially ordered the scourging of Jesus: [Matthew 27:26](#); [Mark 15:15](#) (same); [Luke 23:16](#) (same); [John 19:1](#) (same)
- Pilate sentenced Jesus to death by crucifixion: [Luke 23:24-25](#); [John 19:16](#)

- Soldiers mocked Jesus until they grew tired: [Matthew 27:27-31](#); [Mark 15:16-20](#) (same); [John 19:2-3](#)
- Public and religious mockery with Jesus on the cross: [Matthew 27:39-44](#); [Mark 15:29-32](#) (same); [Luke 23:35-39](#)

Who Participated In the Scourging Of Jesus?

Nearing the end of my research on this topic an interesting thought occurred. It seems one could divide the persecutors of Jesus Christ into two groups. The first group behind the scourging of Jesus consisted of those who felt threatened by his life and teachings. The religious Jewish leaders formed and gathered many like-minded people. This group had their positions at stake along with the wealthy business of temple profiteering. They also had deeply held religious beliefs grounded in a corrupted form of Judaism. Their Jewish faith had gone awry because they lost sight of the prophesied Messiah who would come and save them from their sins. If they had known the Scriptures they would have recognized Jesus as their promised Messiah ([Mark 7:6-8; 12:24](#)).

Another group interested in the scourging of Jesus consisted of those who sought weekend entertainment. Herod Antipas and the Roman soldiers represented this group of heartless humans. Many bystanders gathered alongside them for this public Roman sport (aka crucifixion). Blood draws people of this sort and they had plenty of Jesus' blood to fill their senses on this sad day. We should have broken hearts knowing that we are a part of the human race that lowered themselves to these despicable depths. This is a graphic record of how heinous people can be when God's Spirit is withdrawn ([Romans 1:24](#)).

When Did the Scourging Of Jesus Occur?

The initial physical abuse against Jesus occurred when a guard slapped him during the trial at the high priest's home. The final physical abuse against Jesus occurred when the guards thrust a spear into his side while on the cross, although he was dead by that point. The crucifixion of Jesus involved a dizzying display of unspeakable barbaric acts. All of Satan's demonic forces joined forces with the vilest of humans, and the combination resulted in the most inglorious day.

This particular study will focus on the mocking and flogging of Jesus. They are two different things altogether, although they were happening simultaneously to Christ. The mocking consisted of people jeering and taunting Christ about his claims and it occurred during the trials and crucifixion. The flogging was the actual official Roman scourging of Jesus ordered by Pilate. The scourging of Jesus took place immediately after Pilate's sentencing of the Christ. Keep the distinctions in mind while we discuss Jesus' humiliation further.

Why Did the Scourging Of Jesus Occur?

First, let's breakdown the mocking of Christ. The Jewish leaders detested Jesus' claims to Jewish Kingship. They found no positives in simply mocking him for his claim, they wanted him crucified. The Jews wanted Jesus tortured to the highest degree known to mankind. They wanted to destroy the person AND legacy of Jesus Christ - leaving followers of Judaism no doubt that he

was a religious fraud. The Jews thought their Messiah not be allowed by God to be conquered, so their crucifixion of Jesus was a bit of a dare towards God. The temple guards punished him through spitting and beating, but they were chastening him for his blasphemous claims of Kingship. They did not find any humor in his claims, as did our second group.

The Roman soldiers envisioned Caesar when they were told Jesus claimed to be King of the Jews. Caesar wore a laurel wreath, a purple tunic and carried a scepter. After watching Herod and his guards mock Jesus' kingship the mockery exploded through the Roman soldiers' ranks. Once the order of public flogging was announced by Pilate the severe cruelty began. They wound together thorny twigs from a nearby bush to mock Caesar's crown. They found a faded robe to drape over his body mocking Caesar's tunic. Finally, the soldiers used a simple reed stick to mock Caesar's scepter. The soldiers then knelt and bowed in mocking this self-ordained King.

Jesus' Crown Of Thorns

Crowns were symbols of honor and authority in the Roman world during this era. The soldiers creatively, but ironically, wound Jesus' crown out of thorny branches in place of laurel leaves. Thorns were placed on this earth by God because of the fall of man ([Genesis 3:18](#)) and here they return full circle. Apparently, for sinful mankind, it was best to use a symbol of their original sin (aka thorns) to mock their Creator and Savior. Certain varieties of plants around Jerusalem have woody thorns with a 2" length. Regardless of the length, Jesus' crown of thorns caused extreme bleeding and intense pain as it was pushed deep into his skull. The height of humanity's rebellion against God was evident in this heinous form of human cruelty.

Jewish men normally wore five articles of clothing: a tunic and belt, headpiece, robe-like garment, and sandals. Herod's mock tunic had been added, as well, but discarded by the soldiers, being replaced with a faded red robe. The reed stick, mocking Caesar's scepter, was snatched from his hand in order to whip his face. By this point in time, Jesus' face had been spat upon, slapped, beaten, punctured by thorns, and whipped with a reed. His swollen, bloody face left him unrecognizable.

Method Used In the Scourging Of Jesus

The Roman flogging (aka scourging) of Jesus was a horrific experience for the "criminal." After already being beaten and abused, Jesus was tied and whipped repeatedly with a lash, which had a wood handle and straps made from the sinews of oxen. Intertwined in the straps were slivers of bone, which cut deep wounds into Jesus' flesh. [Isaiah 50:6](#) states, "I offered my back to those who beat me and my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard. I did not hide my face from mockery and spitting." Are there any doubts that Jesus Christ himself spoke through his prophets?

The mocking of Christ, and the scourging of Jesus, were but warm-up activities for what lie ahead - Jesus on the cross.

Maximum Shame Was the Goal

Two groups of people: Those who saw Jesus as a threat to their career or finances, and those who saw Jesus as amusement for their bloodthirsty desires were to blame for his terrible ordeal. The scourging of Jesus was meant to bring maximum shame upon him. First of all, the Jewish leaders wanted him displayed as a weak man who couldn't save himself, much less other people. They sought to disprove his claims of Kingship. They were convinced the humiliating process of crucifixion was the only way to finally terminate the threat they knew existed from Jesus of Nazareth. Keep in mind that these men were all strongly influenced by Satan himself.

The forces all joined together in what was meant to humiliate Christ. They wanted to set him up for public shame so that no one was tempted to follow his teachings. They surprisingly were so focused on Jesus during this period, that they allowed his disciples to flee.

Grasp This!

All of the humiliation, the mocking, the scourging of Jesus, and what lie ahead on the cross was God's plan for Jesus. Jesus was spat upon, slapped, beaten, whipped, stripped naked, and flogged to be punished for your sin and my sin ([Romans 4:25](#)). You and I deserve the punishment Jesus received. Every bit of this punishment was for us. Jesus drank our cup of God's wrath because he loves us.

The Jewish religious leaders were ignorant of the Scriptures, which led to their failure to recognize their Messiah ([Acts 3:17-18](#)). Jesus was indeed the Judaism's Messiah whether or not a Jew believed him ([Acts 7:52-53](#)). No longer is there an excuse for ignorance for either Jews or non-Jews (aka Gentiles). If Jews would read their original Scriptures they would be led to Jesus Christ ([Acts 17:2-4](#)). Gentiles have both the Hebrews Scriptures (aka Old Testament) and the New Testament, leaving no one with an excuse ([Acts 17:30](#)). Both groups of people need to learn the Holy Bible. They need to repent of their false notions of God and place faith in him through Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world ([Acts 3:19-20](#)).

During the trials and scourging of Jesus he kept silent, because he knew God's will ([1 Pet 2:23](#)). He didn't attempt to hide, flee, or defend himself. For why would he do such a thing? He came to earth to be punished and die for us. Like our perfect model, the One of whom we are to have the same mind - we should be silent, strong and courageous through our persecutions and trials ([Acts 5:41-42](#)). Jesus knew God's will because he knew the Scriptures and meditated in prayer. Let's commit to following his lead.

We are called to remember Jesus' sacrifice during holy communion; therefore, our thoughts should consider his terrible treatments during the passion of Christ Jesus. Our thoughts should reflect upon the mocking and scourging of Jesus. The worldly powers (aka Satan and human governments) inflicted the uttermost shame possible on Jesus, who was beaten beyond recognition, stripped naked and hung on a cross in full view of the public. Total humiliation was intended for our Savior, our Creator. His rebellious creation spoke, and Jesus was murdered.

Let's forsake our sin. Personal sin is born in the same place as what caused Jesus' death - the human heart. Each time we sin we mock Jesus' laws; every rebellious act of ours scourges

Christ's back. Look in the mirror, letting God tell us if we're worthy of this perfect love of Jesus. I think we know what the answer will be.

Bible Study Questions:

- 1) What was Rome's ultimate goal in the punishment of prisoners?
- 2) What was the irony behind Jesus' crown of thorns?
- 3) Lack of Bible knowledge can lead a person to what depths of depravity?

Inspirational Bible Verses:

As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men. [Acts 17:10-12](#)

But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. [Romans 3:21-25a](#)

Faith Quotes!

Once we truly grasp the message of the New Testament, it is impossible to read the Old Testament again without seeing Christ on every page, in every story, foreshadowed or anticipated in every event and narrative. The Bible must be read as a whole, beginning with Genesis and ending with Revelation, letting promise and fulfillment guide our expectations for what we will find there. Michael Horton

The vigor of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts. George Muller

The Bible sanctifies and molds the mind into the image of Christ. Charles Spurgeon Quotes

We ought not to criticize, explain, or judge the Scriptures by our mere reason, but diligently, with prayer, meditate thereon, and seek their meaning. Martin Luther

Thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education. Theodore Roosevelt

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

Dear Father, thank you for this amazing plan that you laid out perfectly from before time began. You could have stopped everything the moment Adam and Eve sinned, but you chose to carry on, for the sake of your glory. Reveal a bit of that glory to us, O Lord, so more people can repent towards you. Burn a picture of Jesus on the cross into our hearts, forever emblazoned in our souls. God help us to know you, on your terms, in your time. I humbly close this prayer in Christ's most precious name. Thank you, Jesus. Amen.