

THE CRUCIFIXION



Passages to Study: : Matt 27:32-61; Mark 15:21-47; Luke 23:26-56; John 19:17-42

Read with the class: Matt 27:32-61;

Text for memorization:

Younger: Isaiah 53:5.

Older Isaiah 53:5.



OBJECTIVES: To show that

1. In order to save us, the Lord Jesus did not save Himself.

2. His death

a. was that of a SACRIFICE, "for our sins".

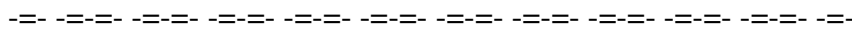
b..was the death of a SUBSTITUTE, for "Christ died for us."

a. was COMPLETE ATONEMENT for sin, as He indicated, saying: "It is finished."

3.God was satisfied with the death of His Son and thus is able to save the sinner.

4. The cross of Christ marks the great difference in eternity between the saved and loss.

5. Appreciation for the Lord Jesus motivates the believer to be generate as was Joseph of Arimathea.



SCENE No. 1. Pilate's judgment hall.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

- The religious leaders succeed in obtaining the condemnation of the Lord.
- Instead of consulting the neutral laws of justice only, Pilate listens to the enemies of Jesus.
- Pilate knows that there is no basis to the charges brought against the Lord Jesus, but allows the leaders to have their way.

Sug. Using an example from the present, or some known court case, explain how the law requires the presentation of evidence in the mouth of two or three witness before a person is judged for some fault.

Sug. Try to show to the students how a guilty verdict without evidence is unjust.

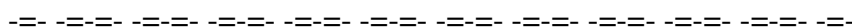
- On this occasion, Pilate is the judge, but a day is coming when he will stand before the Lord Jesus Christ who will then be his judge.
- At that time, nobody will be asked for an opinion. Rather, the books will be opened, and the unrighteous acts of Pilate and all those who have rejected Him as King and Saviour will mean their condemnation to the lake of fire.

- Pilate has the Lord Jesus scourged and turned over to His enemies.

Cns. The scourging might have been to satisfy the unruly crowd, or formed part of the judgment process at that time.

- Jesus was then conducted outside the city of Jerusalem. (Leviticus 16:27; Hebrews 13:11 y 12)
- Thus begins the fulfillment of many more prophecies found in the Old Testament, and also of others which Jesus had foretold during his public ministry and privately to his disciples.
- Many people were involved in the condemnation and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, such as Judas, Pilate, Herod, and the Jews who insisted on the death of Christ.
- The value of His death is seen as being voluntary, for "He, bearing His cross, went forth ...". John.19:17

- The Lord thus demonstrated that His whole purpose in coming into the world was to save us, even though it would cost Him the death of the Cross.



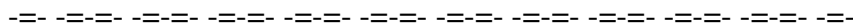
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SCENE No. 2. A roadway outside Jerusalem.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

- On the way to the place of crucifixion, the Lord was guarded by Roman soldiers, one of whom would carry a tablet with the accusation against Him written on it.
- Cmt.** Combining the Gospel narratives, the accusation written in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew was **“THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS”**.
- Pilate himself had written the accusation. See. John 19:22.
- The two malefactors were accompanied by their respective guards, each one having his written accusation carried by a soldier.
- On the way, Simon a Cyrenian (perhaps not a coloured person, as some represent him, but a Jew living in Africa) is compelled to bear the cross "after Jesus".
- Many came near to the Saviour but we do not read of them being saved. About Simon we read a few more details. He had sons called Alexander and Rufus, known to the writer of Mark, (ch.15:21) perhaps the same Rufus named in Rom.16:13.
- Other religious leaders and a large group of the curious accompanied or followed them, eager to watch the agony and death of the One in whom nobody had been able to find any fault at all.
- This journey to Golgotha, the Place of a Skull, accompanied by many who wanted His death, was made necessary since, in order to save sinners, He would not save Himself.
- Sug.** Imagine with the children the different feelings experienced by the people who were following. For example, mention the sorrowing women, the indifferent soldiers, the malefactors who would know that they had only a short time left to live, Simon of Cyrene, perhaps puzzled by the obligation laid upon him by the Romans.



SCENE No. 3. The Place of a Skull.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

- It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified the Lord Jesus.
- SUGGESTED FIGURES FOR FLANNELGRAPH USE:**
- A dark cloud with the words of Isaiah 53:5 could be placed above the center cross. (The memorization text)
- The word **SIN** can be placed above the head of each of the malefactors. The word **INNOCENT** could be placed over the head of the Lord Jesus.
- Their work of crucifying finished, the soldiers cast lots over the outer garment of the Lord.
- Thus the prophecies of Isaiah 53:3 and Psalm 22:18 were fulfilled.
- "They parted" or divided up most of His clothing, but "cast lots" so the outer seamless robe could be taken away intact.
- Accustomed to all kinds of cruelty, the soldiers treated the crucifixion as just part of their work and a source of gain.
- Apl.** The soldiers might talk later on about their “gains” at the crucifixion, things belonging to those put to death, but probably would not think about the great “loss” of not seeing in Christ the Saviour of their soul
- No one seeing the malefactors on their crosses would have thought that one of them would end the day in Paradise.
- At first this malefactor insulted the Lord Jesus as his companion did, (Matthew 27.44) but later changed. (An example of repentance).
- The malefactor that later believed thought that Jesus would have a future kingdom and wanted to be part of it.

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- Jesus gave him a much better promise, saying "today" he would be with Him in Paradise.

Cns. He said nothing about purgatory for there is no intermediate stage.

Lsn. Judging by outward appearances, the repentant thief is just a poor sinner coming near to the end of his life on earth. However, inwardly, he was already prepared to enter eternity with the Lord Jesus.

Cmt. It would be wise to emphasize that life eternal is possessed in the heart, and religious duties performed outwardly do not prepare a person for Heaven. Ex. Crossing oneself, baptism as a child, public dedication ceremony, carry a Bible to impress others, etc.

- When he died, this thief entered Eternity **SAVED** and the other one **LOST** for not believing in Christ as his Saviour.

Apl. It is not by works, such as going to church, nor by living a good life, but through the death of Christ as the Substitute who took one's place that one can be saved.

- The thief knew when he died where he was going.

Apl. Using the example of the thief, show that **YES**, a person can know he/she is saved before dying.

- Besides the enemies of the Lord Jesus who were looking on while He suffered and died, others who loved Him were there such as the disciple John and the women.

Cns. – When God laid our sins on the Lord Jesus, none could enter into what He suffered while dying as a Sacrifice for sin. He **ALONE** could be the Sacrifice, and Substitute, not Mary His mother, nor any other person.

- From midday till three o'clock in the afternoon, there was darkness over all the earth. (A black netting can be placed over the flannelgraph scene, if the teacher wishes, to represent the darkness and loneliness of those three hours.)

- Stress that the real judgment for sin came from Heaven (can be represented by a dark cloud), and not from any source on earth. The sufferings caused by man show the cruelty of the human heart and the great need for redemption.

- Human eyes are not allowed to watch while God dealt with Jesus on account of our sin.

- The fourth cry that the Lord Jesus made from the cross at the end of the three hours of darkness, was "Eli, Eli, .." etc. He was left alone so that we might never be left alone to suffer for our sins.

Cns. In order that the Scripture (Psalm 69:21) might be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I thirst" Jn. 19:28. At that they offered Him vinegar, a sour wine soaked up in a sponge and raised to His mouth.

- The fifth cry was, "It is finished." Jn 19:30, showing that atonement had been made for sin, to the complete satisfaction of God.

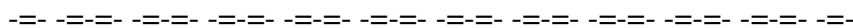
- The seventh and last cry is heard when the Lord Jesus cries with a loud voice, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit", and He breathed out His life.

- In doing so, he showed once again that no one took His life from Him but rather, as He said, "I lay it down".

- Before the sun had set, the soldiers come to break the legs of the two thieves in order to hasten their death.

- Surprised that Jesus is dead already, a soldier pierces His side with a spear. The blood and water that flow out show that he truly has expired.

- The resurrection within three days will show that God is satisfied, the price of sin has been paid (Rom. 1:4; 6:23) and the lost can be saved.



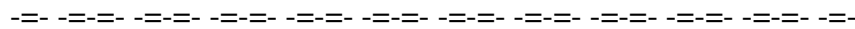
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SCENE No. 4. Outside the tomb.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

- Out of love for His Lord, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus give Him an honorable burial.
- Joseph was a secret believer in the Lord Jesus.
- Apl.** Help the children to think about the generosity of Joseph. Did he expect to receive the tomb back again in three days time?
- Thus was fulfilled another prophecy that said "he made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death." Isaiah 53:9.
- Most of the disciples had fled, abandoning their Lord, but some of the women remained with Him to the end. Their faithfulness to the Lord is outstanding.
- These women would end the day hindered from doing what they desired, for the Sabbath was about to begin.
- They had to return to the city quickly without attending to the Lord's body as they would wish, but they observed where He was laid.
- Nicodemus and Joseph or the women would go to tell the apostles what they had done.
- Throughout the day of rest the tomb would be quiet, with its guard of soldiers. (The Betty Lukens flannelgraph figures have a good example of the rolling stone that would cover the entrance of the tomb. It rolled in a small ditch down an inclined plane to close the tomb.)



SCENE No. 5. Summary and application.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

- If using flannelgraph, various figures could represent different people who had contact with Christ.
- 1) Some listened and were not interested.
- 2) The centurion recognized Jesus as the Son of God.
- 3) James, the brother of the Lord, long an unbeliever, joins the disciples.
- 4) Joseph of Arimathea gave his best to the Lord.
- 5) Imagine a father explaining the event to his child.
- 6) A modern family showing indifference.
- 7) A Christian family for whom Christ is all.
- 8) The outline of a child, representing the young people of the class.

SUGGESTION: Use whatever ideas are most useful to the teacher when applying the meaning of the Crucifixion.

- 1) There are today many who have no interest in the gospel.
 - 2) The centurion was not one of these, who understood a truth which many others failed to perceive.
 - 3) James the brother of the Lord believed after the death of Christ. How hard his heart must have been, because he knew Jesus during His growing-up years, but had not accepted Christ long before.
 - 4) Joseph of Arimathea was willing to give up his new tomb for the Saviour to use it.
 - 5) A picture of a man giving up his valuables means that we must accept Jesus as Saviour and Lord and show our gratitude.
 - To confess Christ Jesus as "Son of God", as the centurion did, is the same as recognizing that He came from Heaven to seek and to save that which was lost.
- Stress to the class that the crucifixion was necessary to end with our old life of sin and allow for a new beginning in the new life, through resurrection.
- Each must give an answer.