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**BY HIS STRIPES**

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Pilate said "But you have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Do you therefore want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"

Then they all cried again, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.

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.



Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him."

Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!"

Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

John 18:39-19:6

An example of the accuracy of this Gospel account can be shown in the customary practice of releasing one prisoner at the time of Passover as mentioned above and as well in Luke 23:17.

Historical records confirm that this was indeed a yearly event performed during Passover. The following Jewish writings from the Mishna, Pesahim 8:6 states: "They may sacrifice (a Passover lamb) for mourning the loss of his family, or for one that clears away a ruin; as well as for the one who has been **promised to be released from prison.**"

Another example of the Gospel's accuracy can be found in how the Romans scourged and crucified their enemies. The historian Josephus gives us a glimpse into this barbaric practice.

"Forcing themselves into every home, they slew its occupants; so the citizens fled along the narrow paths, and the soldiers butchered those that they caught, and no method of plunder was overlooked; they also caught many of the common people, and brought them before Florus, **whom he first punished with stripes, and then crucified.** The entire number of those that were killed that day, including women and children, (for they did not even spare tiny infants), was about three thousand and six hundred. And what made this attack even worse was that Roman barbarism had reached to a new level of evil; for Florus did what no one had ever done before, that is, he had given orders that the men who were of equestrian nobility be **whipped and nailed to the cross before his council**; who, although they were by birth Jews, they were still looked upon as being Roman citizens."

Jewish War, Book 2: chapter 14:9

The way in which Christ was treated and suffered during his trial was also not unusual for the culture during the times in which He walked the earth. History records that the surrounding nations mocked anyone who claimed they were a king of the Jews. The historian Philo mentions one such incident shortly after the time of Christ:

"Gaius Caesar gave Agrippa, king Herod's grandson, the third part of his family inheritance to rule over, which in the past was governed by his uncle Philip the tetrarch..... (Agrippa went to Alexandria) .... (But the men of Alexandria) were filled with an ancient and what I may call an inward hatred towards the Jews. They were furious at the thought of anyone becoming a king of the Jews.... they spent much of their time insulting the king in the schools, and planning all sorts of deeds to ridicule him ..... There was a certain man named Carabbas, who was afflicted with a gentle form of mental illness which came upon him from time to time; this man spent most of his days and nights destitute along the roads being harassed by the youth of the city; .... they drove this poor man against his wishes as far as the auditorium. There they set him up on a high place where everyone could see him. They then flattened out a papyrus leaf and put it on his head instead of a crown, and clothed the rest of his body with a mat as if with a royal cloak and instead of a scepter they put in his hand a small stick which they found lying by the roadside and gave it to him. And when he had been dressed and adorned to look like a king, the youth in the crowd took up sticks on their shoulders and stood at attention on each side of him pretending to be his bodyguards with spears. Then others came up and gave him a mock salute, while others came to him and pretended that they wished to consult with him concerning governmental affairs. Then a multitude of voices from the crowd yelled out the title Maris (Lord); which is the name by which they call the kings of Syria; for they knew that Agrippa was by birth a Syrian, and also that he governed over a great district of Syria."

If the nations could mock an earthly king in this manner, how much more would their hatred grow against the true King of the Jews?

Isaiah the prophet, in one of God's prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah, spoke of His suffering servant and described how He would be mocked and rejected by men.

“Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.

Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men; So shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider.

Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.

He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.



All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to

the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

And they made His grave with the wicked; But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.

He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

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