

Weekly Devotional – No Cross - No Crown 8-8-18

So, then Pilate took JESUS and had HIM scourged (flogged, whipped). And the soldiers twisted together a Crown of Thorns and put it on HIS Head and put a purple robe around HIM; and they kept coming up to HIM, saying [mockingly], “Hail, King of the Jews ...” [John 19:1-4 AMP]

After the scourging of JESUS and before HE was crucified, the Roman soldiers “twisted together a Crown of Thorns and set it on HIS Head. While a Crown of Thorns would be exceedingly painful, it was more about mockery than it was about pain. Here was the “King of the Jews” being beaten, spit upon, and insulted by presumably low-level Roman soldiers. The Crown of Thorns was the finalizing of their mockery, taking a symbol of royalty and majesty, a crown, and turning it into something painful and degrading. As the soldiers struck JESUS on HIS Head with reeds, HE would have felt excruciating pains across HIS Face and deep into HIS Ears, much like sensations from a hot poker or electric shock. These pains would have been felt all the way to Calvary and while on the Cross. As HE walked and fell, as HE was pushed and shoved, as HE moved any part of HIS Face, and as the slightest breeze touched HIS Face, new waves of intense pain would have been triggered. The pain would have intensified HIS state of traumatic shock. The thorns would have cut into the large supply of blood vessels in the head area. JESUS would have bled profusely, contributing to increasing hypovolemic shock. HE would have been growing increasingly weak and light-headed. As well, HE would have bouts of vomiting, shortness of breath, and unsteadiness as hypovolemic and traumatic shock intensified. JESUS had a mind that was made up before receiving the Crown of Thorns! [Hebrews 12:1-2; Phil. 2:5-11]

When Adam and Eve sinned, bringing evil and a curse upon the world, part of the curse upon humanity was “...cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you...” [Genesis 3:17-18]. The Roman soldiers unknowingly took an object of the curse and fashioned it into a Crown for the one who would deliver us from that curse.

“CHRIST redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’” [Galatians 3:13].

For Christians, the Crown of Thorns is a reminder of two things: (1) JESUS was, and is, indeed a KING. One day, the entire universe will bow to JESUS as the “KING of Kings and LORD of Lords” [Rev. 19:16]. What the Roman soldiers meant as a mockery, was in fact a picture of CHRIST’S two roles, first of suffering servant [Isaiah 53], and second of conquering MESSIAH - KING [Revelation 19]. (2) JESUS was willing to endure the pain, the insults, and the shame, all on our account. The Crown of Thorns, and the suffering that went with it, are long gone, and JESUS has now received the Crown of which HE is worthy.

Because of JESUS wearing the Crown of Thorns, we, Christians look forward to what is called the Five Crowns of Salvation; 1) THE INCORRUPTIBLE CROWN: This is also called the Imperishable Crown. This Crown is given to believers who faithfully run the race, who crucify every selfish desire in the flesh and point men to JESUS. 2) THE CROWN OF REJOICING: To those who faithfully are witnesses to the saving Grace of GOD and leads souls to JESUS. This Crown has also been named the soul winner’s Crown. 3) THE CROWN OF LIFE: JESUS says that HE will give this crown to those who undergo severe hardship, testing, tribulation and/or physical death on HIS behalf. Probably being willing to die for your faith in GOD would be the ultimate sacrifice. It is the greatest act of courage and love that you can show GOD. Christians who have been martyred for their faith throughout history will not only be given this Crown of Life, but other rewards once they enter into heaven. [James 1:12; Revelation 2:10] 4) THE CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: To those who love the appearing of CHRIST, who anxiously wait and look forward to the day when HE will return for HIS saints [2 Timothy 4:8]. 5) THE CROWN OF GLORY: This is the pastor’s Crown and will be given to the ministers who faithfully feed the flock of GOD. This probably could also include preachers, teachers, Sunday School teachers, missionaries and all those who teach the WORD of GOD in their respective ministries. [1 Peter 5:1-4]

If you can't stand a little disappointment sometimes. If you can't stand being talked about sometimes. If you think you should always be up and never be down, I came to remind you; No cross, no crown! (Vickie Winans)

May we always have a mind through which CHRIST thinks; a heart through which CHRIST loves; a voice through which CHRIST speaks; a hand through which CHRIST helps; and be a vessel through which CHRIST lives!

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