

Day 29 – 23rd Mar 2015

马太福音 Matthew 27:27-31

The dress-up, the role playing, they are all part of the Roman game. You may be a king in your barbarian land, but before the mighty Rome, you are a joke. This is what we do to barbarian kings. This is our warning to the world. So you think you can be king? Let's play a game. Here, let me treat you like a king. With your robe, scepter and crown, I worship you. Then I will hang you as a rebel on the cross. I want you to fight. It'd be no fun if you merely give up your control to us. We want you to defend your pride. We want you to challenge our claims. But eventually, we want you acknowledge the truth, that when your will is finally broken, your feeble aspirations are worthless before the mighty Rome.

But Jesus is not a pawn in their game. They can taunt, they can insult, but we read of no response. Jesus cares not for his pride. He does not harbor any hatred of the Romans. He is not motivated by nationalistic ambition. So, all the mockery by the soldiers fell flat because he is not your regular antigovernment revolutionary. He was in quiet acceptance of a fate he has foretold. Matthew 20: 18 "We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death 19 and will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified." Jesus knew what he was facing, and he willingly submitted himself to the Father's will. He went through all the shame and rejection in full obedience to the plans of God. He is the truly the King of the Jews.

In doing so, Jesus revealed the true intention of God. What God wants is a servant king. In Deuteronomy 17:14 When ... you say, "Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us," 15 be sure to appoint over you a king the LORD your God chooses. 18 When he takes the throne of his kingdom... he is to read (this law) all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the LORD his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees 20 and not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites and turn from the law to the right or to the left.

把囚犯装扮起来，是罗马人玩的一种游戏手段。你在自己的蛮荒地城可能是一个酋长或君王，但是来到强大的罗马，你只是一个笑话。兵士通过戏弄来自蛮荒的君王来警告世界——你认为你是君王，那么咱们来玩个游戏。让我把你装扮为君王，给你王袍、权杖与冠冕，然后我向你下跪。等一下我再把你挂在十字架上，我让你来搏斗，给你机会搏斗。如果你完全放弃护卫自己，那一点就不好玩了。我们给你机会维护你的尊严，让你来挑战我们所宣认的。但是最终我们要你承认一个真理，就是当你的意志力完全被打败之后，你卑微的祈求在强大的罗马帝国面前是一文不值的。

可是耶稣不是他们游戏里的一个棋子，他们可以嘲弄与侮辱他，他却不为所动。耶稣完全不在意他的尊严，他也没痛恨罗马人，他甚至没有爱国情操要泄恨。所以来自兵士的一切玩弄都玩不起来，因为他不是反政府的革命党人。他安静的接受了他说过的预言“看哪，我们上耶路撒冷去，人子要被交给祭司和文士。他们要定他死罪，又交给外邦人，将他戏弄，鞭打，钉在十字架上。”（马太福音 20:18-19）耶稣知道他面对的是什么，他甘心把自己交给父上帝手里，他忍受一切的羞辱与弃绝，对父上帝的计划完全的顺服。他真是犹太人的王。

当耶稣如此行的时候，他表达了上帝真正的意愿——上帝要的是一个做仆人的王。申命记 17:14，18，20 “...你若说：我要立王治理我，像四围的国一样。你总要立耶和华——你神所拣选的人为王...他登了国位，就要将祭司利未人面前的这律法书，为自己抄录一本，免得他向弟兄心高气傲，偏左偏右，离了这诫命。”

Day 30 – 24th Mar 2015

马太福音 Matthew 27:27-31

Jesus was truly the king of the Jews. But he is a king who does not fight. He is the true prophet but he did not prophesy on demand. Whatever he does is not for his own glory, but for the good of his people. Whatever he owns is not riches of the world but the righteousness of God. He came to the world to serve his people. He died so that his people might live. He sacrificed so his followers know what true love is. The sad truth is that the world has never wanted such a king. In 1 Samuel 8:10 Samuel said, "This is what the king who will reign over you will claim as his rights: He will take your sons and make them serve... 13 He will take your daughters... 14 He will take the best of your fields... for his own use. 17 ... you yourselves will become his slaves." 19 But the people refused to listen to Samuel. "No!" they said. "We want a king over us. 20 Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and fight our battles." This is the reality. Even the Jews were like the other nations. They wanted a warrior king. The Roman soldiers expected a warrior king. Their games were designed to battle against these warrior kings. This is the world they know. Might is right.

So brothers and sisters, what about you? You have seen the way Jesus is king. Is he your king? Do you want a servant king? This is not a decision to be taken lightly. It is a commitment. If Jesus is who we truly wish to follow, then we have to submit to his way. It is a way of meekness and humility. It is a way of sacrifice and servitude. There will be moments we fight. But we fight not for our self-interest. We fight against sinful desires and temptations. There will be moments we prophesy. But we prophesy not for our pride. We prophesy against the ways of the world. But like Jesus, there will be moments we neither fight nor prophesy. We may appear weak and silent. But it is never about winning the spur of the moment. We endure and persevere for the true crown that awaits us before the throne of God. Therefore we live with only one concern. That is to fulfill the will of God.

耶稣实在是犹太人的王，可是这个王不打仗；他是一个真先知，但不被人利诱或推使来说预言。他所行的，没有一件事是为了他个人的荣耀，而是为了他子民的好处。他拥有的不是这世界的财富，而是上帝的义。他来到世界来服事他的子民，他死了，好让别人得生。他牺牲自己，好让追随者明白什么是真正的爱。很可惜的是，这世界从来没有索求这样的王。在撒母耳记上，先知撒母耳说“管辖你们的王必这样行：他必派你们的儿子为他赶车、跟马，。。。必取你们的女儿。。。也必取你们最好的田地、葡萄园、橄欖园。。。你们也必作他的仆人。”百姓竟不肯听撒母耳的话，说：不然！我们定要一个王治理我们使我们像列国一样，有王治理我们，统领我们，为我们争战。”（8:10,13-14,17,19-20）这就是事实，就算犹太人也跟列国一样，他们都要一个可以打仗的君王。罗马兵士要一个能统领战役的君王，他们的游戏就是设计来治这些能打仗的王，他们所了解的世界就是这个样子的一有力量的一方是对的。

在大斋节期间让我们来思索自己的路。我们已经看到耶稣是君王，但他是你的王吗？你可要一个仆人式的君王？这不是一个小决定，而是一个一生的委身。如果耶稣是我们真正要跟随的，那么我们就需要顺从耶稣的道路，这条路是温柔与谦逊的路，是牺牲自己的路，是以仆人的态度去服事的路。当然有些时候我们需要格斗，但我们不是为自己的利益来争取，而是向自己的私欲和试探来格斗。有些时候我们需要发预言，但我们不是为了自己的尊严来说话，而是向这世界的方式与歪理来发出先知性的语言。但就像耶稣一样，有些时刻我们不打也不发预言，人家看我们是软弱与沉默的，但我们争取的不是一时的胜利。我们为着那摆在父宝座面前的冠冕而忍耐、持守，因为我们只是为一件事而活，就是要完成上帝的心意。

Day 31 – 25th Mar 2015

马太福音 Matthew 27:32-37

Two activities were highlighted alongside the crucifixion: lots casting and wine mixing. These two activities make reference to two psalms, Ps 22 and Ps 69. Ps 69:21 They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst. Ps 22: 18 They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment. Why were these two particular Psalms referenced? Upon investigation we discover that both of these psalms were written with King David as the main subject. In both psalms, David was under persecution from his enemies. Both of them were prayers of distress. David cries out to God for help, and laments about all the treachery he suffered from his enemies. But these psalms were also expressions of hope in the eventual deliverance of God. Whether it is in safety or in the midst of danger, David expressed confidence in God's salvation.

To compare the similarities between Jesus and David was a brilliant theological insight from the New Testament writers. The Jews were expecting a restoration of God's kingdom. They were anticipating a king that would lead them to victory over their enemies. Jesus fulfilled God's promises but not in the way they imagined. They wanted a king like David. They forgot that David was more than just a good fighter. In their minds, David was the model king, the Davidic dynasty was the blessed royal bloodline from God. But David also had his times of persecution and rejection too. These times were captured well in the Psalms and the history books. The Jews had forgotten that all these were a part of David too. David may be the king, divinely anointed by God. But David was not free from attacks and hardships. In fact, his troubles arose out of his choice to fulfill God's will. It was his latent kingship that led Saul to persecute him. The worthiness of David lies not in his strength or talents, but in his full dependence and commitment to God. David was the chosen king of God, even in the times when he was down and out. In referencing these psalms of David, Psalm 69 and 22, Matthew was telling his readers that Jesus was king too. Jesus was crucified on the cross, mocked and persecuted by his enemies. But this path was already well traveled by the likes of King David. Jesus' miserable plight diminished not his royal stature. Jesus is king.

马太福音在钉十字架之外，还提了两件事，拈阄和混合苦胆汁的酒。这两件事和诗篇 22 和 69 有关系。诗篇 69:21 写道“他们拿苦胆给我当食物。我渴了，他们拿醋给我喝。”诗篇 22:18 “他们分我的外衣，为我的里衣拈阄。”为什么会特别留意到这两篇诗篇呢？仔细查阅，这两篇都是以大卫王为主，都提到他被敌人逼迫，在困苦当中向上帝祷告，祈求上帝的帮助，并且哀叹敌人的背信弃义。可是这两篇也都表达了一种深切的盼望，相信上帝必然拯救。因此无论是在平安无事的阶段，或者是身在险境，大卫都表达了他对上帝救恩的信。

新约作者能够在这些事上看到耶稣和大卫之间的相似，真是神学上的洞见。犹太人一直期待上帝为他们复国，他们久盼一位可以带他们胜过仇敌的君王，耶稣来，正是完成上帝的应许。只是那个完成的方式完全出乎意料之外。犹太人要的是一个像大卫的君王，可他们忘记大卫不只是一个战士。在他们印象中，大卫是王的模范，上帝也祝福了大卫的血脉，让他们有个大卫王朝。可是大卫也曾经历迫害与弃绝呢，这一切写在诗篇和撒母耳记。很可惜，犹太人忘记了大卫也有过这么一段历史。是的，大卫是上帝膏立的王，但他没有免于攻击和困苦；事实上他的苦，也因为他宁可顺从上帝，结果自己捱得很惨。扫罗正是因为觉得这个人有可能成为未来的王，所以一心追捕他；而大卫的伟大，正是在于他对上帝完全的依靠，而不在于他的长处或优秀的才干。大卫是上帝拣选的王，早在他落魄与寂寂无名之时。《马太福音》的作者通过他细致的写作，让读者想到诗篇 69 和 22，他也在默默的指出耶稣也是一个这样的君王！耶稣被钉在十字架，被人嘲笑，被仇敌逼害至死，但这样的受苦之路，大卫已经走过了。虽然耶稣经历非常痛苦的死亡，这一点也不削减他的君王至尊，耶稣是王。

Day 32 – 26th Mar 2015

马太福音 Matthew 27:32-37

Let's read from Psalm 69:6 Lord, the LORD Almighty, may those who hope in you not be disgraced because of me; God of Israel, may those who seek you not be put to shame because of me. 7 For I endure scorn for your sake, and shame covers my face. 8 I am a foreigner to my own family, a stranger to my own mother's children; 9 for zeal for your house consumes me, and the insults of those who insult you fall on me.

The psalms were more than a distress call from sufferings of pain and trouble. They were battles against evil, and in particular, the sins of humanity. David was fighting because of Saul's rebellion against God's will. But David persevered for the sake of God. He was mindful of the community that he served. He labored on in suffering so that those who hope in God and seek him were not disgraced. In these very moments, David demonstrated what it meant to be a servant king. He was a servant of God and also a servant of his people. This is true kingship. It is a kingship exemplified by David himself. Jesus on the cross was not helpless. He was not a victim of circumstances. He was fighting the good fight, fulfilling the mission of God against his enemies. It was a battle against evil.

There is a Chinese saying 道高一尺，魔高一丈. It concludes that the battle against evil is seemingly impossible. For every achievement in moral good, it seems the difficulties and oppositions from evil will mount a bigger challenge. It is a never-ending fight, but eventually a hopeless cause. If we too concentrate only on the act of crucifixion, we too may conclude that evil has won. But Matthew has given us a different picture. He focused not on the act of crucifixion, but on the casting of lots and the wine mixing. They were references to psalms 22 and 69. Understanding these two psalms become the key to understanding the passage. The two psalms of David were cries of help from a righteous servant. But they also confess the truth that God is in control, and salvation belongs to him. Those familiar with the biblical story know that David overcame Saul. The Psalms are right. God triumphs over evil.

诗篇 69:6-9 “万军的主耶和华阿，求你叫那等候你的，不要因我蒙羞。以色列的神阿，求你叫那寻求你的，不要因我受辱。我为你的缘故受了辱骂，满面羞愧。我的弟兄看我为外路人。我的同胞看我为外邦人。因我为你殿心里焦急，如同火烧。并且辱骂你人的辱骂，都落在我身上。”

诗篇不仅是诗人在痛苦与愁烦中的呼喊，看得深入些，你就明白这当中包含了与邪恶的对抗，或者更具体的说，是与人类的众罪之对抗。大卫之所以陷入这种争战或对抗，那是因为扫罗违抗上帝的心意，而大卫却为了上帝的缘故受苦了。他在苦难中没有忘记他所服事的群体，继续坚持到底。他站立得稳，使得那些信靠上帝的人不至于受辱---在这样的时刻，大卫具体的表现出一个仆人式的君王是怎样的。他是上帝的仆人，也是百姓的仆人，这才是真正的王者。耶稣在十字架上的时候也不是孤立无助的，他不是情境之下被逼到走投无路的可怜受害者，他乃是在打一场非常重要的战役--与邪恶对抗，要完成上帝托付给他的使命，在十字架来击败邪恶。

在中文有一句话说，道高一尺，魔高一丈，意思是要胜过鬼魔之流，真是难之又难。每当有一些好事发生，就会引发魔方更多的反扑，永远搞不完，也真是没有办法胜过。如果我们单单看着钉十字架之动作，也会深深感叹邪恶占了上风，但是马太的写法却不同，他写了钉十字架，也写了拈阄和调和有胆汁味的苦酒，就把我们带回到诗篇 22 和 69，调整了我们的观点！那两篇大卫诗篇是义仆的呼求，但最后却承认上帝掌权，救恩单单属于他。那些熟悉撒母耳记的，就知道后来大卫没有被扫罗所害，反倒成为下一个君王。是的，诗篇说得对，上帝终于胜过了邪恶。

Day 33 – 27th Mar 2015

马太福音 Matthew 27:32-37

In this passage, two psalms were referenced by Matthew, both speaking of the victory of God. He defeated his enemies so that his people will worship him. The victory is important because it shows his rule and dominion. It shows his righteousness and justice. He must act because he is God. This was so in David's situation indicated in the Psalms, it was the same with Jesus. Jesus' resurrection from the dead is his vindication from God. As the psalm proclaims, "He has done it! (Ps 22:31)" God raised him from the dead to show his victory over sin and death. Jesus served the Lord and his people just as David served. He endured the ridicule and mockery of his enemies just as David endured. But he also won his battle just as David won. It is hard for the world that worships strength and power to see the truth. But we who have read the Psalms and the bible stories must recognize it. Jesus who was crucified on the cross is the king. He is glorious as a faithful servant on the cross. His glory is complete when he is resurrected.

Brothers and sisters, this is why Jesus is God's psalm for the world. In our lives, the battle against evil wages on. On the bigger scale, there are wars against tyrants and dictators. On a smaller one, there are local fights for more civil liberties and social equality. Whether big or small, it is a constant struggle for the righteous. We lament over the injustice. And we long for God to act as he had acted in the past. So we pray to Jesus. We worship Jesus. Jesus is God's psalm for the world. In Jesus we have the promise that God vindicates the righteous. In Jesus we have the victory. So in this period of Lent, let us remember those who are suffering under evil. You may be facing an injustice of your own. Evil has its time of the day to manifest itself. They are mixing wine and casting lots. You may be frustrated and perplexed over God's timing. Lent is the season when we reflect over these difficulties that Jesus also had to endure. But we continue our faith in God. Situations can transform even just in three days. On Easter morning, we rejoice. For Jesus who was the king of the Jews is now the Lord of our lives.

马太的记载，把我们的视线转向诗篇 69 和 22，二者都以上帝的得胜为结束。上帝战胜了他的仇敌，使得他的百姓来敬拜他。这胜利事关紧要，因为表达了上帝的统理和掌权，以及他的公义和公理。是的，上帝必须行动，因为他是上帝。在大卫的处境里如此，在耶稣的处境也是如此。耶稣被上帝把他从死里复活，显明了上帝带来平反。就如诗篇 22:31 “是他所行的！”上帝把耶稣从死里复活，要表达耶稣已经胜过罪恶和死亡，耶稣服事了上主和他的百姓，正如大卫也服事了上主和他百姓。耶稣忍受了仇敌的讥笑和嘲弄，正如大卫也忍受了这一切。耶稣打赢了，正如大卫也打赢了。当世人只是朝拜势力与权力的时候，他们的眼睛就被蒙蔽，看不见这样的真理。但我们这些读了诗篇和圣经故事的人却一定要能认出这真理来。耶稣那位被钉在十字架的，是君王。他作为忠心的仆人死在十字架上，却在十字架上得了荣耀。当他复活的时候，这荣耀就完全彰显了。

弟兄姐妹，这就是为什么我们说耶稣是上帝为世人的诗篇。我们的生活里也少不了与邪恶的对抗--外头的国际场景里，有着对暴君与独裁者的对抗，在比较小的范围里，争取民权或者对抗社会不公义的事；无论大小，都是一场又一场的抗争，要寻求公义。我们为着不公义的事而哀痛，心里切切的期待上帝出手，他过去曾经有行动，如今我们也期待他的公义。于是我们向耶稣祷告，也敬拜耶稣。耶稣是上帝给世人的诗篇，我们在耶稣里得着应许，知道上帝要平反义人。在耶稣里，我们有胜利。让我们记念到那些在邪恶之下受苦的人。你可能自己遇到不公义的事，邪恶得势，正在调和苦酒和拈阄，你因此觉得很苦恼，上帝何时才会出手？大斋节的默想邀请我们停下脚步，思想这一切耶稣也曾经走过的艰苦，然后鼓励我们继续的信靠上帝。在耶稣的处境里，三天后一切都改变了。在复活节的早晨，我们欢呼雀跃，因为那位犹太人的王，如今成为我们生命的主！

Day 34 – 28th Mar 2015

马太福音 Matthew 27:38-44

The first group, the crowd, mockingly questioned Jesus' power and ability to save himself. In the past, whenever I read this passage, I would think to myself. Why didn't Jesus just come down from the cross? He sure has the power to do it. All the people present that day would believe him. He would not need to die on the cross. Wouldn't it be a vindication of who he is?

As I grow in maturity in my theological understanding, I learn that Jesus must die on the cross in order for him to save the world from sin. If he had freed himself from the cross that day, there will not be victory over death. There will only be a small victory over the Jewish leaders and the Roman soldiers who tortured him. Jesus had to die. I do not know if there is a better way to save the world from sin. I only know that this was the only way that God chose, and Jesus obeyed. The point is not that Jesus could not come down from the cross but that he would not because he had freely chosen to follow his Father's will".

The second group of people who mocked Jesus on the cross was the religious leaders (the chief priests, scribes, and elders). Again, it is quite clear that Matthew has in mind Ps. 22:7-8 when he wrote his account of Jesus on the cross. 7 All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads; 8 "He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"

Jesus was accused by the Jewish religious leaders of blasphemy, a religious charge against God. But he was put to death on the cross on the charge of insurrection and treason, political crimes against Rome instead. If Jesus is indeed the King of Israel, then Caesar will no longer be their king. The highest-ranking Jewish religious leaders did not have the power to put someone to death on religious grounds. They had to hand him over to Pilate to be charged for crimes against the sovereignty of the state. Jesus is an innocent man, both in the religious and political sense of the word. He, who is sinless, bore the sins of the world on his shoulders.

第一组人，也就是众人，嘲讽质疑耶稣自我拯救的权柄与能力。以前，当我读到这段经文，我也会自我思考：耶稣为什么不从十字架上下来？他的确有此权柄，当天在场的所有人就会因此而相信他。他也完全不必死在十字架上。这岂不是一个表明他自己身份的最好证明吗？

随着我在神学教义上的成熟，我认识到为了从罪恶中拯救世界，耶稣必须死在十字架上。当日如果他从十字架上解救自己，就不可能战胜死亡。那样他只能胜过犹太领袖和折磨他的罗马兵丁。耶稣必须死亡。我不知道是否有其他更好的方式从罪恶中拯救世界。我只知道这是神所选择的唯一方式，而耶稣顺从了。这里重点不在于耶稣不能走下十字架，而是他心甘情愿选择顺从神的旨意，死在十字架上。

第二组嘲讽挂在十字架上耶稣的人是宗教领袖（大祭司，文书，长老），在诗篇 22 章 7-8 节，马太再一次清楚表明了对于十字架上耶稣的看法。诗篇 22:7 凡看见我的都嗤笑我；他们撇嘴摇头，说：22:8 他把自己交托耶和华，耶和华可以救他吧！耶和华既喜悦他，可以搭救他吧！

耶稣被犹太宗教领袖指控亵渎耶和华，但是却被以叛乱，谋反及对抗罗马政权的罪名处死在十字架上。如果耶稣的确是犹太人的王，那么凯撒就不再是他们的王。最高阶层的犹太宗教领袖们没有权利以宗教的理由除死人。他们不得不将耶稣交到彼拉多的手中以对抗国家的罪名指控他。耶稣在宗教和政治上都是无辜的。耶稣，作为一个无辜的义人，却担当了世人的罪恶。