



The Glory Beyond The Cross

And as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one, Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus (Luke 23:26).

As Simon woke up that morning, it was to be a day in history, he would never forget. He began his preparations to go to Jerusalem for the Passover events.

Millions of Jews would converge on Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Passover. Simon had longed for this event, a chance to visit Jerusalem.

Kissing his wife goodbye, and hugging his sons, he began his journey towards Jerusalem.

The crowd grew larger that day, and the Roman soldiers were out in full force. Maybe there was a rumor of a Jewish uprising.

As Simon entered the outskirts of Jerusalem, he heard the noise of the multitudes. He began to hear shouts of cursing, and the crack of the Roman whip. He began to see the women weeping as he drew closer. This was supposed to be a sacred Passover; what could this be?

Making his way through the crowd, his eyes fastened on a man falling beneath a cross. His body was bruised and covered in blood. This man was weak and unable to carry the cross. He was on His way to be crucified. He was probably a criminal or murderer, as this punishment is reserved for such.

Suddenly, the hands of Roman soldiers seized Simon. "Bear that cross," snapped a soldier. Simon tried to resist, but the hands tightened on him.

He had no choice, but to bear that blood stained cross for the criminal.

Many thoughts perhaps raced through his mind; why should he get mixed up in a crucifixion of a criminal? Why did the soldiers pick on him? I wonder what my family would say now?

Simon bent low, and put his shoulder under the cross. The eyes of the criminal kept staring at him. Simon could feel the blood on the cross, this wasn't going to be easy to do. What a humiliating experience.

He heard the women weeping as they followed along. Wait, the criminal is stopping and looking at the women, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For behold, the days are coming in the which they shall say, blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never give suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, fall on us; and to the hills, cover us, for if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

What does this mean? What is He saying? Such eloquent words, what kind of a criminal is this?

They were at Golgotha by now. Simon was ordered to drop the cross to the ground, his task was over. Boy, what a relief!

All three men were put on a cross, as Simon watched. The soldiers were nailing something over the head of the one he bore the cross after. It looks like a sentence in three different languages, it reads, "THIS IS JESUS CHRIST OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS."

"Wait a minute, that Name sounds familiar. This is the man I heard rumors about. This is the man, they say, healed the sick, and raised the dead. This man is no criminal; why are they nailing Him to a cross?"

The sky grew dark, as the wind began to blow across the mountains. The darkness continued for three hours, it was a strange darkness.

The body of Jesus is moving, His lips are quivering, He is trying to say something. "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit."

The ground began to shake, as the rocks were rent asunder. The Roman centurion cried out, "Truly, this was the Son of God."

"That's it, I remember now! This is Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the Son of God."

Simon continued his week in Jerusalem for the Passover feast. During this time, he had heard many things about this Jesus. He had heard that He arose from the dead. It was all speculation among the Jews, though.

There were some; however, who seemed to think that indeed He arose. Many of His disciples confirmed it to be so. They had seen Him on many different occasions. The grave was empty. Truly, this was the Messiah of Israel.

Simon went home and told his family about his experience in Jerusalem. What seemed his most humiliating experience, turned out to be the greatest event in his entire life. He had bore the cross of the Messiah of Israel, the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords. What an honor!

Simon and his family became converted to the Lord Jesus Christ. Simon's two sons were: Rufus and Alexander (Mark 15:21).

After 30 years later, Alexander became a Christian martyr. The Apostle Peter mentions Rufus in Romans, 16:13, "Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine." The mother of Rufus, who was the wife of Simon, somehow showed kindness to Paul during his missionary journeys.

The family of Simon was saved because of what he did that day at Jerusalem. The cross of Jesus changed their lives. They experienced the glory beyond the cross.

Friend, let me say today, the cross of Jesus Christ can change your life. Jesus said, "We must take up our cross daily and follow after Him (Luke 9:23).

Some people today, are ashamed of the cross.

Some people are ashamed of the blood of Christ.

Some don't want to be seen carrying the cross of Jesus.

Unless we carry that cross, we cannot be the disciples of Christ.

Lord, I want to bear that cross today.

I know it is a cross of shame.

I know it is a cross of ridicule.

I know it is a cross of sorrow.

I know it is a cross of suffering.

But it is my cross, and I must bear it daily in my life.

This is for you Jesus! I'm not going to lay it down till I reach Calvary, till I reach Heaven.

There was glory beyond the cross.

The glory of the resurrection was beyond the cross.

The glory of immortality was beyond the cross.

The glory of the Holy Spirit was beyond the cross.

The glory of the church was beyond the cross.

Beyond my cross is the glory of Heaven.

Beyond my cross is the glory of the angels.

Beyond my cross is the glory of eternity.

Beyond my cross is the glory of the New Jerusalem.

My life today, depends on the cross.

The life of my family depends on the cross.

The life of the church depends on the cross.

Your life today, depends on your decision of the cross. Take up thy cross and follow after Christ. You will never regret the glory beyond the cross.