**Follow – Gospel of Mark - Wk 38 – Skull Hill**

**It’s been an amazing 33 yrs. 3 yrs teaching his followers and disciples – laughing, loving, healing, setting people free, and giving new lives… but now in chains - beaten and treated like a criminal.**

**It was all so confusing… How could this happen?**

**This was the plan all along. He had been telling them, be ready…**

**Some claim he never died, survived, & faked it -but it was fatal.**

**One of the most uncontested events of ancient history- Jesus’ death.**

**Mark 15:15 Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. (The mode of death is declared, “I condemn you to the cross”) 16 The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers.**

**First order of business - flogging of Jesus in the Praetorium for all to see – (traditional Antonia Fortress)**

**Fatal Wound 1 – Face – It had begun with repeated blows to the face.**

**The rod - with their fists and a rod – pulling his beard out!**

**Is 50:6 I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard, I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting.**

**Fatal Wound 2-3 - Back and chest- flogged, whipping, scouring, lashing**

**The flagellum- Razor sharp bones, lead balls tied to a whip, 40 -1**

**Exposing muscles and on occasion – internal organs and bone.**

**Mark 15:17 They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. 18And they began to call out to him, “Hail, king of the Jews!” 19Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. (lit kept spitting on him) Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him.**

**Jesus told Pilate that he (Jesus) was a king. This was to mock that, most likely a scarlet military cloak. Mt 27:29 gave him a reed as a scepter and then beat him with it.**

**Fatal Wound 4 - Head – Crown of Thornes**

**The Crown - Made from the poisonous flower Euphorbia Milii thorns woven into a mocking crown – pressed into skull.**

**\*\* Face covered in blood & spit. He is now in critical condition.**

**20And when (after) they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.**

**Via Delarosa - way of suffering - ½ mile walk of death.**

**Victims are forced to carry their own 120 lbs. cross beam**

**With a concussion, in shock, and hemorrhaging blood. Jesus in his humanity was struggling to carry it… let alone walk.**

**21A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. (No Roman would do it – pull a man from the crowd. He had no choice)**

**Who’s Simon of Cyrene? (N African) most likely there for Passover. The fact his name is given shows he became a follower of Jesus. They talked about him by name and knew his sons - both had become followers of Jesus.**

**Imagine at first, he was mortified - then it became the most important moment of his life. How could God need help? He didn’t, but the fully embraced humanity of God in humility did.**

**22They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”). (He left the trial walking… he arrived at Golgotha crawling.)**

**Calvary (Latin) Golgotha (Greek) Skull hill (Aramaic)**

**“Place of the skull” - look like a skull or was littered w/skulls.**

**Place criminals were crucified - vultures, animals, maggots.**

**It’s location today has a church built over it.**

**23Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. (Given to numb the pain and reduce screaming and squirming while nailing them)**

**Jesus embraced the fullness of the cross. This was not a love for suffering – but a love for souls.**

**24And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get. (Act of complete humiliation, victims are stripped naked, fulfills Ps. 22:18 – gambling for his clothes) 25It was nine in the morning when they crucified him.**

**His back already torn open by the scourging - the clotting blood is ripped open again when the clothes are ripped off and as he is dragged across the wooden beam.**

**4 words “And they crucified him” The practice is well known and recorded - they had no need to describe… they knew it well. In Judea**

**Quintilius Varus (30 yrs earlier) ordered crucifixion of 2,000 in a day.**

**Roman Crucifixion – was a long painful torturous way to die. Designed to be a slow death with maximum suffering.**

**7-inch reused metal nails**

* **Nails driven into wrists - pulling arms out of joint to position them. Severing nerves producing bolts of pain, results in a claw like grip.**
* **Nails are then driven into his feet or ankles - Forcing the body to convulse – sending fiery pain into the body.**

**Fatal Wound 5-6 – Hands and Feet – Nailed to a cross**

**The son of God - is raised up in front of everyone to die.**

**The position made it impossible to breath w/out pulling yourself up on the rough wooden beam. Asphyxia- muscle begin to cramp and spasm. Suffocating. Each effort to breath… was exhausting and agonizing.**

**Birds of prey begin to peck their flesh and insects begin to burrow into the open wounds, nose, and mouth.**

**Death from crucifixion can come from: Acute shock and blood loss. Asphyxia. Dehydration. Heart attack. Congestive heart failure. If they did not die fast enough, legs were broken – forcing suffocation.**

**“Consider how heinous sin must be in the sight of God, when it requires such a sacrifice!” (Adam Clarke)**

**Roman system fine-tuned a slow maximum pain – Excruciating (out of the cross) a word invented to describe its horror**

**\*\*\* at 9 am – Jesus is lifted up on a cross – he is crucified.**

**Mark 15:26 The written notice of the charge against him read: the king of the jews. (Mocking - attempt to say Rome is in charge – we are the kings! We are sovereign, we are in control… ancient fake news)**

**27They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. (28 some scripts include - So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And He was numbered with the transgressors.”)**

**We know about these two men as - Luke 23:39-43 – records the amazing confession of faith in Jesus by one of the criminals.**

**(People began to mock) 29Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, “So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, 30come down from the cross and save yourself!” (Not only mocking but enjoying his death) 31In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! 32Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him. (Luke tells us only one mocked him)**

**Soldiers mocked him – Criminals mocked him – Locals mocked him Priests mocked him**

**Luke 23:34 records that Jesus cried out for those around him… “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”**

**Fulfilling OT prophecy: “He bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.” - Isaiah 53:12**

**33At noon, (3 hrs on the cross so far) darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.**

**Phlegon of Tralles, Roman historian: “In the fourth year of the 202nd Olympiad, *(33AD)* there was an extraordinary eclipse of the sun: at the sixth hour, (noon) the day turned into dark night, so that the stars in heaven were seen; and there was an earthquake.”**

**Darkness for 3 hrs as Christ bore the weight of the world’s selfishness, sin, and shame – the Holy justice and wrath of God was upon Jesus!**

**This was the hour he spoke of while in the garden – the cup of wrath.**

**34And at three in the afternoon (3 hrs later) Jesus cried out in a loud voice, *“Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?”* (Which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”). 35When some of those standing near heard this, they said, “Listen, he’s calling Elijah.” 36Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down,” he said.**

**Incredibly misunderstood words- By people then and today. The Father never turned away from Jesus – He did not separate himself, did not abandon him – Jesus is forever and always God, one with the Father. This was a beautiful declaration of the closeness of God – How???**

**Jesus was singing a song on the cross (Ps 22). If I were to sing - “Just a small town girl - Livin' in a lonely world, She took the midnight train goin' anywhere…” What would you think? (The tag, Don’t stop…)**

**In like manner Jesus often used a rabbinic technique known as Ramez. He was not saying God has left - Jesus was giving the first line and calling those who have ears - to remember the song itself.**

**Saying to them Ps 22 is happening right now. It actually describes the cross of Christ. That Jesus was not alone – ever!**

**Psalm 22:24 For he (God) has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help. (The Father is giving him strength and glory in the suffering. Jesus was singing a song of praise! The psalm ends with) Ps 22:31 They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn: He has done it!**

**Jesus every moment lives the scriptures!!**

**Shortly after John 19:20 records Jesus saying, “It is finished!” (Paid in full!)**

**The Cup of wrath was poured out – the sacrifice was accomplished.**

**These were not the words of a victim but of a victor! I have won!!**

**Mark 15:37 With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. (We are told what he said)**

**Luke tell us what he said - Luke 23:46 Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” And having said this he breathed his last.**

* **Know this - Jesus’ life was not taken, it was willingly given.**

**Jesus was in control the whole time!**

**Right then – back at the temple an amazing event happened…**

**Mark 15:38 The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. (60 ft tall, 30 ft wide curtain dividing holy of holies from others– ripped top to bottom)**

**The wall of separation between God and man removed. Top to bottom. God himself tore it from heaven instead of man tearing it from earth. We cannot do it! We could not open the way!**

**Back at the cross, John records one final wound**

**John 19:34 – But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water.**

**Fatal Wound 7 – The side – A spear is thrust into his side.**

**Hand-width wide spear, blood & water flowed, his heart ruptured. Sealing the deal. Not a bone was broken…**

**(Matt 27:54 says an earthquake occurred) Mark 15:39 And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!” (Same words as Mark 1:1)**

**Recorded in all the synoptic gospels - A soldier responsible for killing others and Jesus - never saw anything like this. Actual words - Huios Theos – “This man is very nature God”**

**The enemy of the story has his eyes opened. While the Jewish veil is torn open – so was the Roman veil of blindness!**

**John 12:32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”**

**Even at the cross – Salvation was working in the lives of others**

* **The Cyrene - Simon Later became a follower of Jesus**
* **The Criminals - One became a follower that day**
* **The Mockers - Acts 2, 3000 people came to Christ 53 days later**
* **The Angry Priests - Acts 6:7 many priests became followers.**
* **The Violent Centurion– stood in awe, history tells us that he traditionally he became follower.**

**No one is beyond the grace & forgiveness of God – power of the cross!**

**The innocent bystander, the convict and criminal, the confused, those following false faiths, the enemies of God.**

**Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Therefore, since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from wrath through Him! 10 For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!**

**SIN - the debt we owed and the price we could never pay to JESUS.**

**JESUS was our propitiation, punishment** **and payment for SIN.**

**He was our ransom and substitute.**

**7 Fatal wounds – there is no doubt – Jesus is dead…**

**Best medical minds of ancient and modern times have demonstrated without a doubt that the trauma suffered on the cross was fatal.**

**No one comes down from the cross alive.**

**Jesus was dead… but how do we know it accomplished anything? What is the evidence that is worked? Next week – the greatest moment in history.**

**Today - for some this is crazy – out there – odd – and extreme… would you like to know why you feel that why… 1 Cor 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

**2 Cor 5:19 - that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

**Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**1 John 2:2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.**