Grand View Baptist

A Grave Mistake
It Is Friday, But Sunday Is Coming

By Glenda Ward
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Around the world, Christians are celebrating the momentous events that took place over 2000 years ago, the Week of Easter. There is one thing on which all Christians can agree. Holy Week is the center of our Christian Faith. It is eight days that begin with Palm Sunday and end with Easter Sunday. Two great events represent Holy Week – Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior – Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday. This time is truly a Holy Week because it encompasses the most sacred events of the Christian faith. All things that we hold most dear were proved to be true during this great week in Jerusalem so many years ago. When Jesus has come into the city of Jerusalem, people were asking, "Who is this man?" They did not recognize Jesus as the Messiah. The people described Him as Jesus the Prophet of Nazareth from Galilee. "*And it came to pass"* …Jesus said unto His disciples, "*Ye know that after two days is the feast of the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified"* (Matthew 26:1-2).

At this point, Judas Iscariot has agreed with the Romans chief priests to betray Jesus into their hands. Jesus is now in a place called the Garden of Gethsemane with His disciples to pray. Jesus begins to be sorrowful and with a heavy heart. The hour is at hand. Judas comes and with him a multitude of swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Jesus' disciples forsook Him and fled. Those that laid hold on Jesus led Him away to the high priest: and with them were assembled all the chief priests, elders, and scribes. The Romans have now sentenced Jesus to death. The process of Crucifixion is at hand. The time has come. This Galilean teacher, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior was savagely whipped (scourged) on the orders of Pontius Pilate. Scourging was a brutal punishment but was standard practice before a crucifixion. The whip, flagellum, had several thongs, each one had pieces of bone or metal attached. It made a bloody pulp of a man's body. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall and presented Him to the multitude that awaited. Many, upon seeing Jesus' battered, torn, and bloody body turned and fled the scene. Those who had scourged Jesus gathered unto them the whole band of soldiers. The soldiers stripped Jesus and put on Him a scarlet (purple) robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns and put about His head, and a reed in His right hand: they began to salute Him in mockery, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They smote Jesus and spit upon Him. They bowed their knees in mockery of worship to our Lord, Jesus Christ. After they had mocked Him, then they took off the purple robe from Jesus, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified (Reference Matthew 27:24-31).

A Big Mistake.

It is Friday In Jerusalem.

The smell of death is in the air.

Outside the city wall, just north of the Damascus Gate, in a place long reserved for public executions, a crowd has gathered. Crucifixions were not unusual. But on this day an unusual man was being crucified. This man was the teacher and miracle worker from Nazareth, his case is different. He was without sin. The Roman people made a Great Mistake!

Up the path comes a group of people led by a foreigner carrying a cross. He was a man by the name of Simon – Simon of Cyrene. Behind him is a shell of a man, a stooped figure now crawling, an agony to behold. This was Jesus Christ of Nazareth our Lord and Savior.

He had been beaten within an inch of His life. His back was in shreds, his front was covered with the markings from the whip. His face is disfigured and swollen where they had plucked out His beard by the roots. On His head is a crown of thorns. Thorns were inches long and stuck into the skin. A man is already more dead than alive. A Major mistake!

On the Hill of Calvary, a wooden cross lay on the ground. The centurion soldiers placed Jesus onto the cross – one arm over here, one arm over there and they drove long rusty spikes into his flesh as he was nailed to the cross. A spike for each hand and a spike through His feet with the feet resting on a small platform with the legs slightly bent to produce more excruciating pain. Ropes were wrapped around the cross beams including the arms and around the post and legs With the ropes in place they pull the cross up to position it. Blood spurts from raw wounds. Then at the right moment, they let go and the cross falls into place with a thud. This is a Mistake!

There Jesus hangs on the Cross, exposed before the world; beaten, bruised, and bloody. An innocent man who had committed NO sin was crucified. At the sixth hour, the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst, the earth did quake, rocks rent, and graves were opened. Darkness fell over all the land until the ninth hour, Jesus' friends scattered, and hope seemed lost – But heaven just started counting to three.

Jesus was Mistaken by so many people. Even the resurrection was Mistaken by many. This was a Mistake because it cost so many people their ETERNITY! This was A GRAVE MISTAKE!

Jesus stood in the sinner's stead.

I died, … "*and behold I am alive forevermore*" (Revelation 1:18).

Jesus didn't say, I am finished. He said, "It is finished." Jesus was just getting started!

After He has suffered, He will see the light of life (meaning that He would be raised from the dead) and be satisfied; by His knowledge, this righteous servant will justify many, and He will bear their iniquities (Reference Isaiah 53:11). Put into words that Jesus might have said, it would read something like this. I want the joy of seeing my Father's house in heaven filled with His redeemed children. Therefore, I am willing to suffer the pain and shame of a brutal death on the cross. With this, I am fully satisfied with my Father's Plan.

At Christ's death, the barrier between God and man was torn apart. Now, all people can approach God directly through Christ Jesus (Reference Luke 23:45; Hebrews 9:1-14, 10:19-22). When Jesus won, we won. That doesn't mean we deserve it. We don't. When He was numbered with the transgressors, He was numbered with us. When He bore the sins of man, He was bearing our sins.

It was late on a Friday afternoon in a certain garden cemetery outside Jerusalem, just before sundown; they buried the body of Jesus. He was buried in a borrowed tomb. It belonged to Joseph, a rich man who himself was Jesus' disciple. Joseph was a prominent figure in the local society, he was a counselor, and a member of the Sanhedrin – the ruling religious body. Joseph was a good and just man: and had not consented to the counsel and deed of them that condemned Jesus. Joseph was from Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also waited for the Kingdom of God (Reference Luke 23:50-52). The gospels: of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John combine to tell us of Jesus' arrest, conviction, crucifixion, burial, and Resurrection.

When the evening had come Joseph went in boldly, but secretly for fear of the Jews, unto Pilate, and craved (begged) for the body of Jesus. Pilate gave the body to Joseph. Joseph bought fine linen, and then took Jesus' body down from the Cross. Jesus' body was in bad shape. It bore all the marks of the abuse He had suffered.

And there came Nicodemus, which came by night and brought with him a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred-pound weight. Joseph and Nicodemus wound the body in the new linen cloth with spices throughout the linen. Part of it was a kind of ground powder, the other part was a gummy substance. The spices made the linen stick together and form a thigh wrap around the body, as in the manner the Jews bury their dead. It was now near sundown and this caused a problem for the Jews. The Old Testament forbade the Jews to handle a dead body on the Sabbath. Because there was no time to find a grave, Joseph volunteered his own tomb. The Bible says it was fresh, newly dug out of rock. No one had been laid in the tomb yet. As the sun slowly sinks beneath the western horizon, shadows fall across the olive trees. Joseph and Nicodemus (two men, secret disciples) pick up the limp, lifeless body of Jesus and place it in the nearby garden tomb. Close behind are Mary Magdalene; the other Mary; and Mary, the mother of James and John. Jesus' body is laid on a ledge. Outside Joseph and Nicodemus rolled a great stone over the entrance of the sepulcher (Mark 15:46). The two secret disciples and the women left the tomb as darkness fell over the garden cemetery. At some point, the Romans came and put a seal on the stone to keep people out of the tomb and set up a watch. A GRAVE MISTAKE!

When Jesus was appointed a grave with the wicked, He was buried in our grave.

Christ the Victor has willingly shared His victory with us.

The devil could not stop Him,
The Cross could not defeat Him,
The grave could not hold Him.

Christ has attained the highest place in the universe through His suffering. He came to the highest place by taking the lowest position.

Isaiah says in his own way (Reference Isaiah 53:12) what Paul wrote to the Philippians over 700 years later. "… *He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross"* (Philippians 2:8). It is in the light of this truth, and because of this truth, and as a result of this truth, God also hath highly exalted His Son and given Him a name which is above every name: to the very highest point in the universe so that one day at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord – to the glory of God the Father (Reference Philippians 2:9-11).

It's Sunday! At the break of dawn, there was a great earthquake: An angel of the Lord descended from heaven, came and rolled the stone back from the tomb, and sat upon it. The angel answered, … *"He is not here: for He is risen, as He said"* (Matthew 28:6).

Palm Sunday – The King had come. The nation had a clear choice to make. Jesus called for a decision and the nation rendered its verdict. A GRAVE MISTAKE!

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