

Friday, April 7, 2023
Season of Lent
Day 39

Matthew 27:32–44

³² As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross. ³³ They came to a place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”). ³⁴ There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. ³⁵ When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. ³⁶ And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. ³⁷ Above his head they placed the written charge against him: this is Jesus, the king of the Jews.

³⁸ Two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁹ Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, “You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!” ⁴¹ In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. ⁴² “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! He’s the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. ⁴³ He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” ⁴⁴ In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

Reflection

The charges are true! Jesus is the king of the Jews. Of course, making that claim during Roman occupation when Caesar makes that claim leads to violence. It is presumed that if Caesar can put Messiah to death then the claim between the two is settled. And, the crowds hurling insults seems to agree. But, the charges are true and not even death can deny the claim. There is a period to wait for the vindication to come, but despite appearances there is no contest. Jesus is not just the king of the Jews he is in fact Lord of all.

Prayer

Lord, thank you for your perfect sacrifice. Thank you that you have made our denial of your claim the basis for our salvation. Amen.