

Preached on 4/17/22 at GBC - Ruston

"Behold THE MAN"

John 19:1-24

For the last several weeks we've been in what is considered by "false religion" as the "EASTER SEASON", and almost all have been gearing up in anticipation of TODAY, RESURRECTION SUNDAY. They've had their crosses with the purple robe on them planted in front of their facilities, and I'm sure you noticed that today they replaced the purple robe with a white one, symbolic of their "jesus's resurrection". They've attended and participated in their "Easter Sunrise Services", and most today will put a lot of emphasis on Christ's death and His resurrection – WE WILL TO!!! But there is a BIG DIFFERENCE between those who have been "born of God" and those who are "altogether too superstitious" (literally, TOO RELIGIOUS) when it comes to their attitude and thoughts on this particular aspect of Christ's work. Lost, moral, sincere religious sinners see Christ's death and His resurrection as making salvation possible for all who of their own freewill and profession take advantage of it – "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."(I Cor.1:18); "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know [them], because they are spiritually discerned."(I Cor.2:14) To them, ALL CHRIST DID, only made it possible for sinners to be saved, but didn't actually secure the salvation of ANY SINNER! One famous religious lay-person made this statement – "HELL is the GREATEST MONUMENT to HUMAN FREEDOM!" In other words – MAN'S FREE WILL! They think and teach that God wants to save sinners, but THEY WON'T LET HIM, so He is forced to consign them to condemnation. On the other hand, those "taught of God", this particular work performed by their Surety and Substitute the Lord Jesus Christ is much more than a "holiday" or cause for celebration. It is the historical record of God's faithfulness to His covenant of grace to send forth the one promised, prophesied, and typified, the One looked for by sinners since Adam's fall in the garden – THE MAN!

I want us to begin this morning by reading this section starting in John 18:29-19:24. When I think of Pontius Pilate and his fained innocence in his dealing with Christ, I have to consider it in light of Peter's words – "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."(Acts 4:26-28) The Jews, Pontius Pilate, and the Roman soldiers who treated Christ with such contempt were only unwitting pawns moved by our God to accomplish His sovereign will and purpose in saving His people from their sin. There was NO OTHER WAY REDEMPTION could be accomplished other than through Christ's suffering and death – "And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou [wilt]." (Matt.26:39); "But THIS MAN, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."(Heb.10:12-14)

With that said, I'd like to point out something of great importance to our understanding of Christ coming forth in the purple robe and crown of thorns. If you'll notice in our text, the word "PILATE" is in italics, meaning it wasn't in the original – "*Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And [Pilate] saith unto them, Behold the man!*" It wasn't **PILATE** who said to the Jews, "**BEHOLD THE MAN**", it was our LORD who made the statement to these Jews. This would be consistent with the entirety of the Scripture, seeing the **very first promise** by God after Adam's fall as our representative man concerned "*the seed of the woman*", the Redeemer and Savior of man. When Eve bore her first son Cain she declared "*I have gotten a man from the LORD.*"(**Gen.4:1**) From that **first promise** made to our parents in the garden, the Scriptures are filled with references to "**THE MAN**", and Israel as a nation was looking for **THE MAN** to come on the scene. The problem was that **NATIONAL ISRAEL, not those who were "Israelites INDEED"**, were looking for an earthly king or deliverer out from under the rule of whatever nation they were presently in bondage to, and in this case it was Rome. Think about what these JEWS sought after Christ had fed the 5000 – "*Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.*"(**Jn.6:14,15**) Even after Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, His own Apostles exhibited confusion about the nature of Christ's Kingdom – "*When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*"(**Acts 1:6**) The original word translated "*restore again*" means 'to restore to its former state or TO BE in its former state'. In these verses we're considering this morning, in answer to Pilate's question: "*Art thou the King of the Jews?*", listen to our Lord's response – "*Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*"(**Jn.19:34-37**) Christ was indeed "**KING OF THE JEWS**", but not these national Israelites who sought for and gained His death. In the Old Testament, Christ the Son is introduced as calling on His Church, His Bride, the subjects of His kingdom in this manner – "*I am sought of [them that] asked not [for me]; I am found of [them that] sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation [that] was not called by my name.*"(**Isa.65:1**); "*Tell ye, and bring [them] near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? [who] hath told it from that time? [have] not I the LORD? and [there is] no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; [there is] none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I [am] God, and [there is] none else.*"(**Isa.45:21,22**) God the Father proclaims Christ to the church in the same way, bidding them to **BEHOLD HIM** – "*Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, [in whom] my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.*"(**Isa.42:1**) God the Holy Spirit by John the Baptist encouraged them **BEHOLD CHRIST** – "*The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*" "*And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!*"(**Jn.1:29,36**) Before Christ could take possession of His **KINGDOM**, He must accomplish the work He was sent to do as the suffering servant of Jehovah. After the resurrection, Christ said to His disciples – "*Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that*

the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”(Lk.24:25-27) These JEWS who sought Christ’s death and cried for His crucifixion were without excuse, seeing the Old Testament was clear on the **NATURE** and **OFFICE** of God’s true King, the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah declared: “*And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*”(Isa.32:2) The Prophet Zechariah spoke of “the man” this way: “*And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name [is] The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD.*”(Zech.6:12); “*Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man [that is] my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.*”(Zech.13:7) Listen to these prophetic words of Isaiah and consider Christ as He comes out before these Jews - beaten, scourged, wearing a crown of **THORNS (which was symbolic of the CURSE He bore for His people)**, and a purple robe - “*He is despised and rejected of men; A MAN of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were [our] faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*”(Isa.53:3) Christ comes forth having fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy – “*I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*”(Isa.50:6), and declares to these heathen Jews, as well as to all His children who He would save from their sins by His accomplished death as the God sent Messiah – “**BEHOLD THE MAN**”. **How did these unbelieving Jews respond? Look at Vs.6** – “*When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify [him], crucify [him]. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify [him]: for I find no fault in him.*”

These JEWS hear Christ’s prophetic declaration, “*behold the MAN*”, and cry for His crucifixion. They didn’t want a Savior from sin, they wanted an **EARTHLY KING**. But thank God, Christ’s words to Pilate are true of all God’s redeemed in every generation – “*Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*” That thief on the cross **HEARD THE TRUTH**, and by God given faith saw Christ’s **KINGDOM-ELABORATE**. All those “*born of God*” glory in Christ’s suffering and death as their **ONLY HOPE** and **CAUSE** of salvation. Paul declared – “*But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*”(Gal.6:14) By God’s grace and mercy, every regenerated and converted sinner sees and understands what it took to “save them from their sins” – “*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*”(Gal.2:20)

Let me say this in **CLOSING**: Christ’s work of redemption is not something we just dwell on a couple times a year at Christmas and Easter, but **OUR GLORY AND HOPE** every remaining moment of our whole lives in “*this present evil world.*”