

Matthew 27:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

Analysis

Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified (φραγελλώσας... παρέδωκεν ἵνα σταυρωθῇ)—Roman scourging (phragellōsas, flogging) used a flagrum—leather whips embedded with bone/metal that shredded flesh. Many died from scourging alone. This fulfilled Isaiah 53:5: 'with his stripes we are healed.'

The innocent suffered for the guilty—Barabbas walked free while Jesus went to the cross. This is substitutionary atonement enacted: the righteous for the unrighteous (1 Peter 3:18). Every believer is Barabbas—guilty, condemned, freed because Another took our place.

Historical Context

Roman verberatio (severe flogging) preceded crucifixion to hasten death. Victims were stripped, bound to a post, and beaten across the back, buttocks, and legs. The flagellum (scourge) caused deep lacerations, heavy bleeding, and shock.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Barabbas walking free while Jesus went to crucifixion personally picture your own salvation?
2. What does the physical horror of scourging reveal about the cost of your redemption and the depth of Christ's love?

Interlinear Text

τότε	ἀπέλυσεν	αὐτοῖς	τὸν	Βαραββᾶν	τὸν	δὲ	Ἰησοῦν
Then	released he	unto them	G3588	Barabbas	G3588	and	Jesus
G5119	G630	G846		G912		G1161	G2424

φραγελλώσας	παρέδωκεν	ἵνα	σταυρωθῆ
when he had scourged	he delivered	him to	be crucified
G5417	G3860	G2443	G4717

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 53:5 (Parallel theme): But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

John 19:1 (References Jesus): Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

Mark 15:15 (Cross): And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

Isaiah 50:6 (Parallel theme): 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.

Luke 23:16 (Parallel theme): I will therefore chastise him, and release him.

Mark 10:34 (Parallel theme): And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.

Matthew 20:19 (Cross): And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

1 Peter 2:24 (Parallel theme): Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

John 19:16 (Cross): Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

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