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THE STAND
HIS PASSION

Bruised for our iniquities. What an understatement.

Jesus of Nazareth, The Man, the Christ of Glory was crucified, murdered, slaughtered in a way no Mel Gibson movie could ever properly depict.

Mocked, forsaken, perjured, enduring a mockery of a trial, slandered, falsely imprisoned, whipped and beaten, scourged with a crown of thorns, barbarically nailed to a cross, a body in death pierced with a spear, all for all mankind. And the secularists say that THE PASSION was too brutal. No movie, I say, could ever depict the horror, the barbarism of all the events in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

The question of who was responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ reverberates the world over, the question almost always asked by secularists and non-Christians. These nonbelievers, for the most part, want to know who was responsible. But they care not what was done, and most of all, they care not at all WHY the crucifixion occurred. For them, it is but another Roman murder, a footnote in history and otherwise without significance. These secularists will ask any questions, say anything, even do anything to detract from the real meaning of the crucifixion, the passion and ultimate meaning of Jesus Christ.

Pilot gave the order. No matter how many times he washed his hands, the ROMAN was guilty, chief actor in the drama.

So were other Romans, including the soldiers, any Roman who was indifferent to justice. Any Roman who delighted in the bloodshed and torture of a crucifixion.

Others conspired, including the High Priest, the Sanhedrin and other Jewish leaders. They and the mob preferred Barabbas to Jesus.

But the mob, the people took over, thirsty for a bloody vengeance, preferring a criminal to The Christ. The mob demanded HIS death. No matter the charges, no matter what happened, fact be damned, crucify Him they chanted with lusty vengeance. And the mob got its way. All actors, participants in the greatest drama of all times.

The mob at work then is like the mob at work today. There is ever-growing hatred for HIM and HIS CHURCH. The name of the Son of God is mocked, taken in vain, utterly without love or respect. The mob of old got HIM crucified because He criticized their faults and condemned their sins. He came to free all humankind from bondage, but they, the mob, turned that freedom into license, anything goes. The good news of His gospel was bad news to them and to the mob today. He is not here, risen, but the mob can attack His brethren, those who love Him and His church. The killers and murderers of yesterday are the same today. Had HE lived today, we the mob would have found a way to crucify Him even as they did 2,000 years ago.

That crucifixion was a transforming act, the ultimate sacrifice for all humankind. To identify with the blood of old is to be cleansed in a way new and victorious. By His stripes, and by the brutality, the blood of the crucifixion, we are healed. That unbelievable spiritual healing comes from the cross. It is ultimate love at work in sacrifice. For you, for me.

The only way to really know and experience the crucifixion is in the heart, one on one with God. A movie can help, and certainly Scripture can. But there is nothing like your very own fellowship with God, wrestling with the real meaning of the crucifixion for your life. The ritual, the services, the camaraderie and fellowship notwithstanding, and all are good and necessary, the transforming meaning of the crucifixion can only be understood by you at the foot of the cross. It's a good thing, the right thing to go there everyday, not just Easter, with a heart bursting with love and gratitude for THE HEART which burst with love 2,000 years ago.