

“*Ecce Homo - Ecce Rex Vester!*”

I. **INTRO:**

A. Crucifixion - *The Hour* had finally come...

1. Crucifixion was a barbaric form of capital punishment invented by the Persians
2. They believed the earth was sacred to *Ormazd(Mazda)*, the earth god.
 - a) They felt that death should not contaminate the earth; *thus hung them above the earth*

B. The forms in which **the cross** is represented are these:

1. The crux *simplex* (I) a single piece, without transom.
2. The crux *decussata* (X) or St. Andrew's cross.
3. The crux *commissa* (T) or St. Anthony's cross.
4. The crux *immissa* (t) or Latin cross. Which we think was the kind of cross on which Jesus died. Above our Lord's head, on the projecting beam, was placed the **title**.
 - a) After the conversion of *Constantine the Great* (313), the cross first came into use as an emblem of Christianity. He claimed he saw a flaming cross in the heavens bearing the inscription, “*In hoc signo vinces*” (i.e. By this sign thou shalt conquer) and that on the following night Christ himself appeared and ordered him to take for his standard the sign of this cross.¹

C. For 2000 years **the cross** has captured the attention of “*artists, poets, architects, & yes, even Jewelers*”. *Let's take that tiny piece of jewelry we call a cross back 2000 years.*

1. When the cross was **not** a symbol of **faith** but of **failure**; **not** of **morality** but of **lawlessness**; **not** of **respect** but of **unspeakable shame**.²

D. *Let's remember:* Jesus was not a *helpless victim* of some insidious plot; He was not a *pitiful martyr* whose plans were suddenly terminated. *No His crucifixion had been carefully planned, predicted, & prophesied in the Scriptures.*

1. *Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death. Acts 2:23*

E. **Outline:** *Ecce Homo*(1-13); *Ecce Rex Vester*(14-24); *Behold the Man; Behold your King.*

¹ Eastman's Dictionary

² Chuck Swindoll; John; pg.78

II. **ECCE HOMO - BEHOLD THE MAN! (1-13)**

- A. Jesus/Pilate had been talking about a **kingdom** so it was only rt that he king have a **crow**n
1. Obviously done for mockery but it preached a message, for Jesus was *wearing the consequences* of Adam's sins.
 2. In Gen.3:17-19 it describes the results of Adams fall...cursed ground, toil, **thorns** & thistles the ground will bring forth.
 - a) Here stands Jesus *wearing the consequences* of Adam's sin.
 3. **Yet don't forget, a crown is a sign of victory...He has overcome!**
- B. (12) Pilate gravely aware of *the coil of evil* in which he was caught.
- C. (13) **Gabbatha** (*Gab Baitha*) *the ridge of the house; the temple-mound*.
1. On a part of which the fortress of Antonia was built. This "temple-mound" was covered with a tessellated pavement.
 2. We ran across **Praetorium** in 18:28. A judgement-seat was placed on this "pavement" outside the hall of the "praetorium".

III. **ECCE REX VESTER - BEHOLD YOUR KING! (14-24)**

- A. (15) **We have no king but Caesar** - The political straw that brings Pilate to his knees.
1. When the Romans first came into Palestine, they had the most bloody rebellion on their hands, because **the Jews** had insisted that "**God alone was their king!**"
 2. This must have taken Pilate's breath away. (William Barclay) **The Jews abandoned every principle they had in order to eliminate Jesus. In their hatred they forgot all mercy, they forgot all sense of proportion, they forgot all justice, they forgot all their principles, they even forgot God! Never in history was the insanity of hatred so vividly shown.**³
- B. **Pilate washed his hands** (Mt.27:24) At whatever point Pilate stubbornly tried to wash the stain of his decision away, it would follow him to his grave. **And worse, beyond it!** Face-to-face with the One whose life he washed his hands of.
1. **Seriousness of unbelief of Jesus?** To reject Him as King of your life is just like washing your hands of Him.
- C. (17) **Bearing His cross** - The crossbeam where **love & justice** meet.
- D. Later *Simon* was drafted to carry it for Him (Mrk15:21).
1. Not told why. **Tradition says Jesus fell & couldn't carry it.**
 2. **Criminals** carried their own cross as a sign of **guilt**, & Jesus was **not guilty!**

³ William Barclay; The Gospel of John, Vol.2; pg.276

- E. (18) **In the center** - or *in-between*!
- F. **Between 2 thieves**; between **life & death**; between **heaven & earth**.
- G. There He hangs with outstretched arms, aching for a *prodigal world's return*.
- H. **In the meanwhile**, Jesus is blessed with the last kind words He'd hear on earth. **Not** from a *religious leader*, **not** from a *disciple*, **not even** from His *mother* **but** from a *common thief*
1. **We don't know anything about this criminal. Not how much he stole nor how often. From whom or why. We only know **he was a thief**. A wayward son over whom some **mother's heart** has been broken; over whom some **father's hopes** have been dashed.**
 - a) I wonder, was his mother even there? If she was, could she hear or even perceive what just took place? [Lk.24:39-43]
 - b) **Oh and**, what did Jesus' eyes of forgiveness look like?
- I. **Jesus in the center** - may it be said of our lives!
1. **Not**: God #1; marriage #2; kids #3; ministry #4; work #5; hobbies #6; etc.
 2. **But**, Jesus the center of our **life**; Jesus the center of our **marriage**; Jesus the center of our **kids**; Jesus the center of our **ministry**; Jesus the center of our **work**; Jesus the center of our **hobbies**.
- J. (24) To this point, every prophecy regarding the Messiah - even to the gambling of His clothes was fulfilled.
- K. **Atonement** = to make amends, to set things right. (Also to remove by paying a price)
1. It involves Substitution & Satisfaction.
- L. **The Goats!** (Lev.16:7; 15,16; 20-22)
- M. The 2 goats represented 2 aspects of the work of the cross:
1. **The Satisfaction** (the death of a goat)
 - a) Jesus satisfied God's holy justice. He received His wrath for us.
 2. **The Substitution** (the conferring of sin to the 2nd goat)
 - a) Jesus didn't die for Himself, but for us.
- N. **The first goat needed to die!** An Expiation (to make amends) was in order. Blood needed to be shed.
- O. **The second goat was the Scapegoat!** Scapegoat means "to remove."
1. Our sins needed to be removed!
 2. This setting free of the live goat, pictured God's forgiveness of their sins. But it first required the death of the other goat!
- P. "Salvation is **free**...but it is **not cheap!**"

1. John Stott, "We strongly reject, therefore, every explanation of the death of Christ which does not have at its **center** the principle of '*satisfaction through Substitution*' indeed **divine** self-satisfaction **through divine** self-substitution."

Q. That one thief didn't know much theology. **He only knew 3 things:**

[1] That Jesus was **King** [2] That His kingdom was **not of this world**;

[3] That this King had the power to bring even the most **unworthy** into His kingdom.

1. But that was enough! **A lifetime of moral debt cancelled! :)**

R. Can you confess, "I too have **stolen**?"

1. When I **gossiped**, I have taken from another's reputation.
2. When I **raised my voice in anger**, I have taken something from peace.
3. When I **aided & imbedded immoral thoughts**, I have stolen from another's dignity, depreciating that person from a **sacred object** of your love **to** a **common object** of my own lust.
4. When I **hurt someone's feelings**, I have taken something from that person's self-worth, something which might never be replaced, something, for which I might never be able to make restitution.
5. When I **have spoken the truth, but not in love**, I have stolen from Your kingdom by pushing a soul, not **closer**, but **farther** away from the borders of **paradise**.⁴
 - a) Will you pray today, remember me O King,...a common thief!

⁴ Ken Gire; Intimate Moments With The Savior; pg.110.