



Station VI: CROWNING

Jesus is Scourged and Crowned with Thorns

Scripture ~ John 19:1-3

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. ² And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. ³ They kept coming up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and striking him on the face.

Reflection for Adults

There is a contemporary icon, Madonna of the Holocaust, which shows Mary, dressed in the clothes of an early 20th century Eastern European Jewish woman, holding Jesus on her lap. They are surrounded by barbed wire and the names of horrific places like Auschwitz, Birkenau, Dachau, and Bergen-Belsen. There is a large yellow Star of David sewn onto Mary's clothes, and a dove in Jesus' hands. The imagery used in this icon is a stark reminder that Jesus and Mary were both Jews, and had they been living in Hitler's world, would have been forced into a concentration camp because of their faith.

At this sixth station, we see the agents of the state forcing Jesus to wear a crown of thorns and a purple robe to identify him as the “King of the Jews”. The phrase “the Jews” is sprinkled liberally throughout John's account of the Passion and, unfortunately, Christians have often used this as an excuse for anti-Semitism and mistreatment of our Jewish siblings. Many biblical scholars believe that a more accurate translation would be “Judeans” (referring to a region), rather than “Jews” (referring to an entire religion). When it comes to religion and how we treat one another, words do matter!

Whether Jesus lived in 1st century Jerusalem or 20th century Germany, he will always be found with the marginalized, the oppressed, and the forgotten. Take a look at the picture. Notice the triangle in the middle. It seems to have broken pieces of glass strewn on it. Think of all the lives that have been broken because of religious prejudice.

Going Deeper

- Is it strange to think of Jesus as a Jew, rather than a Christian?
- What implications might that have for your own relationships with people of other faiths?

Reflection for Children

After Pilate sentenced Jesus to die, the Roman soldiers made a crown out of thorns and placed it on Jesus' head. Then they knelt in front of him saying, “Hail, the King of the Jews!” But they didn't really mean what they were saying. Jesus was a Jew, and the Romans did not like Jewish people. So they used their words to make fun of Jesus.

Discussion with Children

- How do you think Jesus wants you to treat people of different religions?
- What could you do to learn something about the Jewish religion?