

²⁹ *Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save yourself!" ³¹ In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! ³² Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.*

The truth even makes its way into the taunts and insults of all those surrounding Jesus on the cross. Everything that is recorded here has been shown to be true; an accurate description of who Jesus is and what he accomplished. His body was destroyed, but it was raised again three days later. The resurrection also fulfilled the demand to come down from the cross and save himself. We now know that Jesus is the Christ and the King of Israel. Through his death and resurrection he did come down from the cross – but they refused to see and believe anyway. It would appear that the liars were at the foot of the cross and not on it.

"He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself!" What the chief priests and the teachers of the law didn't understand was that to fulfill the curse under which we stand, this statement had to be true. If Jesus was to save us, then he had to die. It was not that he was powerless to save himself, but rather that he had the unique power to choose to die so that we might be saved. God had cut a blood covenant with his people through Abraham. In the covenant ceremony only God took the covenant walk symbolizing the vow that if this covenant is broken I will die (Genesis 15). We broke the covenant and therefore a death was required. Only Jesus, God in human form, could fulfill the required curse described in Genesis. Jesus could not save himself from death on the cross and save us, too. God can even take the words of liars and turn them into proclamations of the truth. What an awesome God we have! He can redeem all things.

Father, thank you for providing the way for my salvation. Jesus, thank you for your willing obedience to the Father and your sacrificial death for my sins. Holy Spirit, thank you for your work in convicting me of my need for salvation and inspiring a faith in me that I might grasp the truth revealed through the Word. Amen.