

# Dividing the Robe

## Part II of "Suicide Mission"

April 12, 2015



On Easter, we looked at the Roman commander at the cross.

And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and **saw how he died**, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!" – Mark 15:39 NIV

And, *what exactly* did he see Jesus do?



He bowed his head and **[then]** gave up his spirit. – John 19:30b NIV

**This flies in the face of the false notion that to be in God's will means all is well. No. It means all is for our eternal best.**

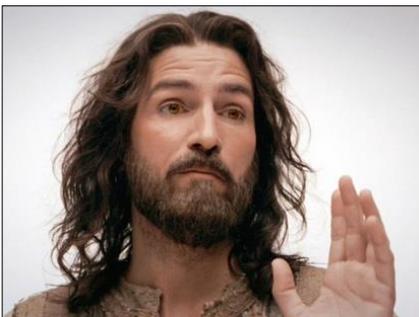
The word "bowed" (*klinō*) is very specific *and* significant. It doesn't imply *worship* or the *helpless dropping* of the head; but, **a deliberate putting of His head into a position to rest.**<sup>1</sup>

And, **what happens if you rest on a cross? You suffocate.**

**Ever wonder why God chose crucifixion for His execution?** Something makes it *enormously different* from beheading, boiling, burning, drowning, crushing, devouring, hanging, poisoning, starving, strangling, stoning, trampling, even electrocution, the gas chamber, lethal injection, and the firing squad. What makes crucifixion so uniquely suited for God's purpose?

**Only crucifixion offers the sufferer control of his death.** Granted, Jesus may be the *only One* to ever exercise such control. Most struggled till the bitter end. That's what *TV Jesus* does.

The centurion looks up just as **Jesus shockingly, deliberately, *klinōs* His head to rest and breathes His last.** (Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46)



Jesus used the same verb when He said ...

"Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to **lay** [or: *bow, (klinō)*] **his head.**" – Matthew 8:20b NIV (*also see Luke 9:58*)

**But, when He found a tree, (Gal 3:13) in which to nest, and a hole in the ground, to be laid to rest, (John 19:41) His hour had come, and the Son had a final place to lay down His head and His life.**

<sup>1</sup> Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words; reference Strong's Number: g2827

The centurion's bold witness inspired his men to follow suit.

When the centurion and *those with him who were guarding Jesus* saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he *was* the Son of God!" – Matthew 27:54 NIV



These are the same men who put the robe on Him and mocked Him a little over six hours earlier. Now they give Him *Caesar's* title!

Now, *if you're a Bible critic*, you should be thinking, "Maybe they are; maybe they're not. ***Who Put the Robe On Jesus is one of the 'classic contradictions'.***"



Online sites that list Bible "contradictions" are quick to point out that **Luke (23:11) says King Herod and his men did; but Matthew (27:27-28), Mark (15:15-17), and John (19:1-2) say it was Pilate's men.**

So, was it the King of the Jews or the Roman Governor? **It's easy to point out contradictions when you pull verses out of context.**

**There's no contradiction. There are *two robes*.**

Pilate announced to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no basis for a charge against this man." But they insisted, "He stirs up the people all over Judea by his teaching. **He started in Galilee** and has come all the way here." On hearing *this*, Pilate asked if the man was **a Galilean**. When he learned that Jesus was under **Herod's jurisdiction**, he **sent him to Herod**, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him. **From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform some miracle.** [Joanna, the wife of Cuza, the *manager* of Herod's household, had been cured by Jesus, traveled with Jesus, and financially supported Jesus. (Luke 8:1-3) She was also at the cross, one of the women who first reported Him risen, (Luke 23:49, 24:10) and Luke's likely source for the inside scoop on what went on inside Herod's palace.] He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, vehemently accusing him. Then **Herod and his soldiers [verbally] ridiculed and mocked him.** [Then] **Dressing him in an elegant [lampros (G2986); shining; brilliant] robe, [esthēs (G2066); garment; usually suggesting the ornate] they sent him back to Pilate.** [When the angel appeared to Cornelius, (Acts 10:30) he's wearing a *lampros esthēs*; James says (James 2:2, 3) not to show favoritism to a rich man wearing a *lampros esthēs*. Whatever Herod's reasons – further mocking of Jesus' claim, or fear of Jesus' supporters, or just to thumb his nose at the religious leaders who were *far right* of Herod's leanings – **the return of Jesus in Herod's elegant robe would've been quite a surprising sight!** That day Herod and Pilate became friends—before this they had been enemies. [Pilate liked it!] Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers and the people, and [presenting Jesus] said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. **Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, [idou (G2400); behold!; see!; lo!; when a thing is specified which is unexpected yet sure, or seems impossible yet occurs (Thayer's Greek Lexicon)] he has done nothing to deserve death.**" – Luke 23:1-15 NIV

To be in God's will does *not* mean all is well; it means that **you'll be on the side of justice when all is called to account.**

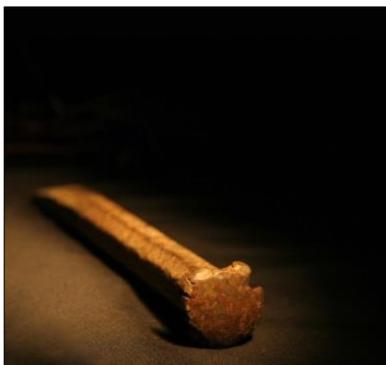
**What do they see that directly conveys Herod's ruling? It's not like Pilate is holding up a waiver! It's the shocking sight of Jesus in King Herod's elegant robe!**

Then the governor's [i.e. Pilate's] soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium [i.e. command center] and **gathered the whole company of soldiers around him.** [Why? What's so fascinating? Why do they care about a Jew? They're Romans. **The most obvious answer from Scripture is the astonishing spectacle and offensive absurdity of a criminal dressed as their superior! So...**] They **stripped him** and **put a scarlet robe on him,** [it's an old, faded, purple robe (Mark 15:17; John 19:2)] and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they **took off the robe** [the old, faded robe (as well as the crown and staff)] and **put his own clothes on him.** [Including the shining, elegant robe, glittering quite possibly with gold and silver threads and ornamentation (which becomes the possession of the crucifixion guard)] Then they [the centurion and his three soldiers (Mat 27:54; John 19:23)] led him away to crucify him. – Matthew 27:27-31 NIV



To be in God's will does *not* mean all is well; it means **you're fulfilling your created purpose to the glory of God.** No Gospel writer says Jesus struggled to carry His cross beam. And yet ...

As they led him away, they **seized** Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and **put the cross on him** [Why? Was it to assist Jesus, or to protect their investment, or both?] and **made him carry it behind Jesus.** – Luke 23:26 NIV



**What a haunting parade God orchestrated for His death march.**

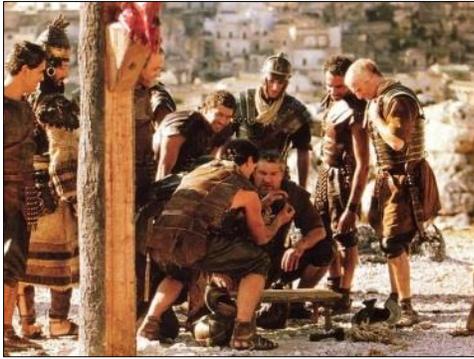
**The King of Kings, on His way to the cross, wearing a royal robe** and assisted by a servant. His cross following Him, *literally* as it had *figuratively* throughout His ministry; and then the two criminals who represent both our condition and our choice: to accept or reject. (Luke 23:39-43)

And to top it off, a Roman soldier carrying a sign that reads: "This is Jesus, of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" (Mat 27:37; John 19:19)

**Jesus was never not in full control of His crucifixion!**

To be in God's will does *not* mean all is well; it means **God is totally in control and I am totally in God through Christ.**

**"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."** (John 16:33)



Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His **outer garments** [or, *garment* (singular)] and **made four parts, a part to every soldier** [How did they make four parts? Matthew (27:35), Mark (15:24), and Luke (23:34) use the term “diamerizō” (G1266) which literally means “to cut (or tear) in pieces”] and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece. So they said to one another, “**Let us not tear it**, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be”; this was to fulfill the Scripture: [Psalm 22:18] “They divided My **outer garments** among them, **and for My clothing they cast lots.**” – John 19:23-24 NAS

**What an unbelievably specifically perfectly fulfilled prophecy!** To be in God’s will does *not* mean all is well; **it means that all is going according to God’s perfect plan.**

Why didn’t they want to divide His undergarment into four parts? If they did, it would be worthless. Why *did* they want to divide His outer garment into four parts? If they *didn’t*, it would be worthless: a soldier can’t wear the robe of a king without some serious repercussions! But, cut up, they’re free to sell it, use it, or if there’s gold, remove it.

**These are the guys God destined to be the first to hail Jesus after His death.** To be in God’s will doesn’t mean all is well; **it means you’re part of something far greater than yourself!**

**So, how do you stay in His will?**

**Follow His commands. And, lean not on your own understanding whenever it differs.**

**Do you know Jesus’ nickname for King Herod?**

... some Pharisees came to Jesus [in Jerusalem] and said to him, “Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you.” He replied, “Go tell that **fox**, ‘I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.’” – Luke 13:31b-32 NIV

He’s not referring to the day after tomorrow. He’s referring to a very specific “third day”. **The day He raises His head from rest, flies from the nest, and leaves that foxhole forever behind.**

“**Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.**” – Matthew 8:20b NIV

**Until the cross.**

**When He marched to the tree.**

**To make a nest, to protect His young.**

**Dressed in the robe of the fox.**