

# Gospel Lesson for the Week

November 25, 2007

## **Festival of Christ the King**

**Please Read:**

**[Luke 23:33-43](#)**

**Also read:**

**[Jeremiah 23:1-6](#)**

**[Luke 1:68-79](#)**

**[Colossians 1:11-20](#)**

*When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews." One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."*

## **What Kind of King Is This?**

The story comes full circle.  
He hangs upon his cross  
even more weak and vulnerable  
than the baby that years before  
lay in Bethlehem's manger,  
the butt of their jokes,  
the victim of their cruelty  
as once more, Herod and Pilate  
and all the power of the state  
destroy the innocents.  
History repeats itself.

Above his head, a derisive label,  
"This is the King of the Jews."  
If only they knew,  
if only they could tell  
that he was destined  
to be King of the Universe.

But in reality, it's up to us  
whether the inscription is to be  
cruel joke or promise and prophecy.  
For His is a kingdom of the heart,  
in truth, a pure democracy  
where each person has a deciding vote.  
And the King's realm is as small  
as the inner recesses of our being  
and as wide as eternity.  
And those who vote for the King  
find themselves walking with him each day  
in Paradise.

--- rvc