

Jesus took up the cross, for our sake.

Even though the Roman soldiers led Jesus out to crucify him, they were only doing what he had said they would do.

So, though "*they led him out to crucify him*,"(Mark 15:20) Jesus was not a victim of their injustice and cruelty. Jesus willingly took up his cross and walked to Golgotha, because he had chosen the way of suffering.

He knew this was the will of God, the way by which he would realize his Messianic destiny. Jesus chose to suffer and die so that he might fulfil Isaiah's vision of the Suffering Servant of God, the one who was "*despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity.*" (Isa 53) As this Servant, Jesus "*has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases.*"

Our lives are changed when we accept in faith that Jesus was "*wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed*". (Isaiah 53:3-5).

Our Lord chose the cross, because he chose us to be his own. Those who led him to Golgotha were simply working out what God had willed and the Lord Jesus had freely and graciously chosen. How can we thank him enough for this costly choice? Because he took up the cross, I can take up life in all of its fullness. Because Jesus was led to die, I can be led into eternal life. Because he carried my sin, I can enjoy forgiveness.

How good you are to me, dear Lord, my Saviour!