

**CROSS BEARING**  
**MARK 15:21 / SEPTEMBER 13, 2017 / WED**

**I. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT SIMON?**

- A. We know that his name in Hebrew means “listening”.
- B. We also know he was from Cyrene. This was a city located in Northern Africa in what is today Libya.
- C. What was Simon’s ethnicity?
  - 1. His place of origin might indicate he was a black man.
  - 2. Why might Simon have been a Jew, regardless of his color?
  - 3. We also know that Simon carried Jesus’ cross.
    - a. It was a case of being in the wrong place (or right place) at the wrong time.
    - b. Going from the guard house to Golgotha would mean they exited the city through the Joppa Gate.
    - c. Simon was probably entering the city through that same gate having sailed from Cyrene to Joppa—Matt. 27:32 and Luke 23:26.
    - d. The distance from the Joppa Gate to Golgotha was a third of a mile.
    - e. Simon didn’t volunteer to carry the cross. He was “voluntold” to carry—Luke 23:26.

**II. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT SIMON’S SONS?**

- A. Mark is the only gospel that mentions them—Mark 15:21.
- B. They may have accompanied their father to the Passover celebration meaning they would have been at least 12 years old.
- C. Mark’s inclusion of their names may indicate they were known by Mark’s readers.
- D. Paul mentions a man called Rufus who may or may not be one of Simon’s sons—Romans 16:13. If so it means he was a believer.
- E. In 1941 a burial cave was discovered in the Kidron Valley belonging to Cyrenian Jews dating to A.D 70. It contained an ossuary (bone box) inscribed twice in Greek “Alexander son of Simon.” This may or may not have been one of Simon’s sons.

### III. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT CYRENE AND THE EARLY CHURCH?

- A. A negative reference to men from Cyrene is found in Acts 6:8-10. Here they argued with Stephen prior to his stoning.
- B. A positive reference to Cyrene is that men from there may have been among the first Christians saved during Peter's sermon at Pentecost—Acts 2:5-8, 10
- C. In Acts 11 we learn that some Christians from Cyrene fled Jerusalem following Stephen's stoning and began sharing the gospel in Antioch—Acts 11:20 and 26
- D. A believer in Antioch named Lucius of Cyrene is called a prophet and teacher of the faith—Acts. 13:1.
- E. God instructed these men to send out the first missionaries which included Barnabas and Paul—Acts 13:2.