

## The Significance of Simon Cyrene

April 11th, 2006

**“This is the day the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.”  
There is no greater time on the Christian’s calendar than the days of the  
death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Not much is said about some individuals who took part in the greatest story of history, the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. One participant was Simon of Cyrene. He was a Hellenistic Jew who was of Greek culture and who had adopted the Greek language. Born on the north coast of Africa, it is likely that Simon was a large man with a strong build thus standing out in the crowd that was excited about the coming crucifixion party. Of the three criminals to be crucified, Jesus was considered the worst. Being a Hellenistic Jew, Simon may well have been there for the Passover Feast or had immigrated as one of the many settlers in the Jerusalem area.

He was pressed into the service of carrying the cross of Jesus when he met the procession that was on its way to the most shameful event in all history. This had to have been a life-changing event for Simon when he came face-to-face with the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is more than likely that the influence of this event led him to become a believer by embracing Jesus as the true Messiah. Perhaps he influenced all his family. A few scripture verses suggest that Simon’s experience with Jesus may well have had a most profound influence on his family. Mark 15:21 “And they compelled one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear the cross.” Later in Scripture his family members are referred to in the church, Romans 16:13 “Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.”

What we do with the cross of Christ will determine the response of our own family members, as seen in this captivating incident in Scripture. Where Simon was on that day was in God's divine providence. This traumatic event led to the salvation of his house-hold plus many others who were traumatically touched by Simon's story of that day's blood-sprinkled events. As it is difficult to argue with such an experience, it ought to be very difficult for others to argue with you about your experience with Christ, if you have picked up your cross and followed the Christ of the cross.

The one difference between Simon's cross-bearing and ours is that he was commandeered to do so while we are asked to do so. Never will a man attain to the crown if he will not take up the cross. Cross-bearing is very unpopular today as there are very few who are willing to be removed from secular society. Matthew 10:38 "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." There seems to have been very little success in the early stages of this horrific event, but the end was the salvation of the "whosoever will."

*Would you not rather fail in what will one day triumph, rather than triumph in what will one day fail? "Take up thy Cross and follow me."*

Send your comments and questions and we will, prayerfully seek to get back to you as soon as possible. [jandrvdv@nbnet.nb.ca](mailto:jandrvdv@nbnet.nb.ca)