

Mark 15 Commentary

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MARK: THE SERVANT JESUS

Click chart to enlarge
Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
[Another Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll-right side of page

THE LIFE OF CHRIST SHOWING COVERAGE BY MARK (SHADED AREA)

Click chart to enlarge
Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

Mark 15:1 Early in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes and the whole Council, immediately held a consultation; and binding Jesus, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate.

- **Early in the morning:** Ps 2:2 Mt 27:1,2 Lu 22:66 Ac 4:5,6,25-28
- **and delivered:** Mk 10:33,34 Mt 20:18,19 Lu 18:32,33 23:1,2-5 Joh 18:28-38 Ac 3:13
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Roman Law and the Trial of Christ - R Larry Overstreet](#) - excellent background
- [Tabular Summary of Jesus' Six Mock Trials](#)
- [Tabular Harmonization of Parallel Passages](#)
- [The Morning of Good Friday](#) - Alfred Edersheim

RETRACING CHRIST'S LAST HOURS:

THE ARREST, THE TRIALS, AND THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST

Map of Jerusalem Retracing Christ's last footsteps on earth: (Here is another similar map of [Jesus' Arrest, Trial and Crucifixion](#))

Hint: Locate the "**Upper Room**" (found on left side of picture) in the diagram and then follow the arrows which retrace the footsteps of the Messiah, steps which had been foreordained in eternity past "by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23+, cp Acts 4:27-28+) taking Him from the Upper Room to the excruciating agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, to the tragic betrayal by a friend resulting in His unfair arrest, leading to 6 unjust trials (see table below) which culminate in the central event in all eternity, Christ on the Cross on Calvary. The numbers below correlate with the **numbers** on the map with the **arrows** on the lines signifying the direction of Jesus' movement)

(1) Jesus left the **Upper Room** (see left side of picture just below Caiaphas' Residence) and walked with disciples out of the city, across the Kidron Valley and up to the **Mount of Olives** and from there to the nearby **Garden of Gethsemane** (see right upper side of picture)

(2) He was arrested in the Garden and taken back into the city, first to an informal "trial" before Annas (who apparently lived next to Caiaphas) and then to **Caiaphas' Residence** (the location is an approximation) where the Jewish Council (Sanhedrin) were gathered.

(3). After His first night time "trial" before the Sanhedrin at Caiaphas' residence, Jesus was tried at daybreak before the Sanhedrin, probably at the Temple as shown in the diagram above.

(4) Jesus is taken from the trial before the Sanhedrin

(5) Next, he was taken to Pontius Pilate (admittedly this is difficult to follow on the map above)

(6), Pilate sent Jesus to the palace of Herod Antipas (location uncertain). Herod Antipas returned Jesus to Pilate (admittedly this is difficult to follow on the map above)

(7), Pilate handed over Jesus for scourging (possibly at Fortress of Antonia but this is not depicted on the map) and then delivered over for crucifixion at Golgotha (note there are two possible locations - The "Traditional Golgotha" and "Gordon's Calvary")

Related Resources:

- [Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus](#) - Nice depiction of Gordon's Calvary (Golgotha) which was outside of the holy city when and where Jesus was crucified.
- See also Detailed Discussion of 3 Religious Trials

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:1-2 Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death; 2 and they bound Him, and led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate the governor.

Luke 22:66-71+ When it was day, the Council of elders of the people assembled, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him away to their council chamber, saying, **(THE FOLLOWING DETAILS IN vv. 67-71 ARE UNIQUE TO LUKE)** 67 "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe; 68 and if I ask a question, you will not answer. 69 "But from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND of the power OF GOD." 70 And they all said, "Are You the Son of God, then?" And He said to them, "Yes, I am." 71 Then they said, "What further need do we have of testimony? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth."

Luke 23:1+ Then the whole body of them got up and brought Him before Pilate.

John 18:28 Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the [Praetorium](#), and it was early (THIS TIME DESIGNATION CORRELATES WELL WITH THE SYNOPTIC ACCOUNTS OF THE EARLY MORNING TRIAL OF JESUS "BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN"); and they themselves did not enter into the [Praetorium](#) so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

D A Carson comments "The Jews take elaborate precautions to avoid ritual contamination in order to eat the Passover, at the very same time they are busy manipulating the judicial system to secure the death of him who alone is the true Passover!" (The Gospel According to John - Pillar). (Click here for more notes on John 18:28)

THE OFFICIAL JEWISH COURT CONDEMNS JESUS

Jesus had prophesied that the events in Mark 15:1ff would take place declaring to His disciples...

"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles (**EXACTLY WHAT WE SEE IN Mark 15:1**). 34 "They will mock Him and spit on Him, and scourge Him and kill Him, and three days later He will rise again." (Mark 10:33-34+)

Hiebert points out that "Mark turned to the political phase of the trial of Jesus. His narrative of this part of the trial is the briefest in the four Gospels (Matt. 27:1–26; Luke 22:66–23:25; John 18:28–19:16). Mark's brief and simple account omits much that is given in the other Gospels." ([Mark Commentary](#))

Early in the morning the chief priests ([archiereus](#)) with the elders ([presbuteros](#)) and scribes ([grammateus](#)) and the whole Council ([sunedrin](#)), immediately held a consultation - Early in the morning = "when it was day" (Lk 22:66). The third phrase of the religious trial (see below **"Before the Sanhedrin"**) is an early morning formal trial before a quickly assembled Sanhedrin to secure the verdict of the full Sanhedrin and to formulate the charge against Jesus. A legal sentence (in this case the death sentence) could be pronounced only in the daytime. This "legal" gathering is completed early in the morning, probably before 6 AM because daybreak was about 5 AM. The Gospel of John does not describe this third phase of the religious trials. Matthew and Mark give a summary description (Mt 27:1, Mk 15:1) but only Luke 22:67-71 (see above) gives details of the interchange between Jesus and the Sanhedrin. This brings us to Mark's description in Mk 15:1 which parallels the descriptions in Mt 27:2, Lk 23:1 and Jn 18:28. John 18:28 alone tells us that Jesus entered the [Praetorium](#) minus the "religious" Jews.

The [Praetorium](#) ([Pix 1](#), [Pix 2](#)) describes the headquarters of the commanding officer of a Roman military camp or a Roman military governor's headquarters (in this case Pilate) and is derived from "*Praetor* (Latin, "leader") was originally the title of the highest-ranking civil servant in the [Roman Republic](#), but later became a position directly below the rank of [consul](#)." (Wikipedia) The Praetorium was formerly the headquarters or barracks of a Roman camp; however, in the provinces as well as in Rome, praetorium came to be used in reference to the governor's or emperor's official residences. The Romans accommodated themselves with such buildings by seizing and appropriating the palaces of conquered royalty of the local area. The Praetorium was also the

location of Pilate's judgment seat (Mt 27:19, Jn 19:13)

Notice that John records Jesus appearing before Pilate **early**, which is most likely around 6-7 AM (DAYBREAK WOULD HAVE BEEN ABOUT 5 AM, WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN WHEN THE SANHEDRIN CONVENED THEIR OSTENSIBLY "LEGAL" TRIAL OF JESUS. AFTER THEIR SPEEDY VERDICT JESUS WAS TAKEN TO PILATE.). Roman officials would normally begin their work at day break so that they could be finished by 10-11 AM. **On this fateful day Pilate would accomplish his "business" before 9 AM so that there would time for Jesus to die on the Cross** ([Ref](#)).

Related Resource - [Sanhedrin](#)

MacArthur comments on **early in the morning** which helps establish the timing of the events of the three phases of the religious trial (see the Table below) on Friday morning...

Having taken Jesus prisoner about **1:00 a.m.** on Friday morning, the Jewish religious heads brought Him to the house of the high priest where He was first questioned by Annas (Described only in John 18:19-24)(**ED: RELIGIOUS TRIAL #1**) and then tried before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:55-65+)(**ED: RELIGIOUS TRIAL #2**). When the council (SANHEDRIN) failed to produce consistent testimony against Jesus, they resorted to accusations of blasphemy and subsequently condemned Him to death. The trial before Caiaphas likely ended about **3:00 a.m.**, at the time when Peter's denials also ended (cf. Mk 14:66-72+, Lk 22:56-62+). For the next couple hours, Jesus would have been held prisoner by the Temple police, who continued to mock and mistreat Him (cf. Mk 14:65+). At daybreak, near **5:00 a.m.**, the Sanhedrin reconvened (**ED: RELIGIOUS TRIAL #3**). (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Mark)

Lane - "The detail that Jesus was delivered to Pilate's forum early in the morning is a significant index of the historical accuracy of the tradition. It was necessary for the Sanhedrin to bring its business to Pilate as soon after dawn as possible because the working day of a Roman official began at the earliest hour of daylight. Legal trials in the Roman forum were customarily held shortly after sunrise." (NICNT-Mk)

Utley - In chapter 15 Mark has several time markers;

1. sunrise, Mk 15:1 (around 6 A.M. depending on the time of the year)
2. third hour, Mk 15:25 (around 9 A.M.)
3. sixth hour, Mk 15:33 (around noon)
4. ninth hour, Mk 15:34 (around 3 P.M.)
5. evening, Mk 15:42 (sunset, around 6 P.M.)

Consultation (plot together, conferred)([4824](#) [sumbouliōn](#) from **sún** = together + **boulé** = counsel) speaks of what is related to consultation with lambánō (receive) meaning to form a plan (in negative sense - plot - Mt 22:15) with poiéō (do or make) meaning to make or take council (Mark 3:6 = conspiring; Mk 15:1 - held a consultation).

And binding Jesus - They treated Him like some common criminal who was awaiting a chance to make his escape. "Jesus had been bound in the Garden (John 18:12, 24); evidently His bonds were removed during the trial. They wanted to send Him bound to Pilate so He would appear to be considered dangerous." (Gilbrant)

They led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate - Note this is a literal fulfillment of Jesus' prediction in Mk 10:33+ that they "will hand Him over to the Gentiles." The location of Pilate's judgment hall, the [Praetorium](#), is likely located in Fort Antonia just north of the temple. The Jews hated the Romans and undoubtedly hated Pilate, so this action demonstrates the degree of their intense hatred of Jesus Christ, the King of the Jews! Amazing! And amazingly tragic! John 18:28 records that after their hasty guilty verdict the religious leaders "led Jesus from Caiaphas into the [Praetorium](#), and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the [Praetorium](#) so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover." These duplicitous hypocrites would not defile themselves so they could eat the Passover Lamb, but had no concern that they would be eternally "defiled" for having killed the true Passover Lamb! MacArthur adds "Incredibly, the chief priests and scribes sanctimoniously refused to enter a Gentile residence for fear of becoming ceremonially unclean, yet they had no compunction about lying in order to murder the Son of God (cf. Ex. 20:13, 16)." (MNTC-Mark)

Gilbrant points out that "Under Roman rule the Sanhedrin exercised civil jurisdiction according to Jewish law, plus a certain degree of criminal jurisdiction. Under certain circumstances, it could decree death as the penalty for crime, but it did not have the authority to execute capital sentences (John 18:31). The "right of the sword" was one of the most carefully guarded prerogatives of Roman rulers. According to many sources, Pilate was a very harsh administrator who despised the Jews with their peculiar religious sensitivities. In his first year he had enraged the Jews by having ensigns bearing the image of the emperor brought into Jerusalem. He had confiscated temple funds to build an aqueduct into the city. Already the Jews had complained against him to Caesar; therefore,

the leaders expected little difficulty in getting him to accede to their wishes. (Complete Bible Library - Mark)

Note that this first "trial" before Pilate in the early morning hours was **INSIDE** Pilate's residence, for John 18:28 tells us "Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas **INTO** the Praetorium, and it was early; and they (JEWS) themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover." Keep in mind that Pilate "and his predecessors and successors made it a point to be in Jerusalem on the high feasts, to be available to quell any untoward disturbance." (Carson, Pillar Commentary) **Pilate's** normal residence was in [Caesarea Maritima](#) ([aerial photo](#), [pix](#)), (this was the palace Herod the Great had built for himself) but he came to Jerusalem during the Jewish feasts to keep an eye on the Jews because Jerusalem was flooded with pilgrims (some say up to 2 million). **Wikipedia** says that Caesarea Maritima "is the location of the 1961 discovery of the [Pilate Stone](#), the only archaeological item that mentions the Roman prefect Pontius Pilate, by whose order Jesus was crucified. It is likely that Pilate used it as a base, and only went to Jerusalem when needed."

It is clear that **Pilate** was a historical figure as documented by the [Limestone block discovered in 1961 with Pilate's tribute](#) in Latin to [Tiberius](#). The words [...]TIVS PILATVS[...] can be clearly seen on the second line. The translation from Latin to English for the inscription reads:

*To the Divine Augusti [this] Tiberieum
...Pontius Pilate
...prefect of Judea
...has dedicated [this]*

J C Ryle makes an interesting comment - The mere fact that the Jews were obliged to apply publicly to a foreign ruler to carry out their murderous plan was a striking proof that the 'sceptre had departed from Judah' (Genesis 49:10) when the Messiah came.

Delivered is [paradidomi](#) which means to give one over to the power or authority of another. This was a clear fulfillment of prophecies by Jesus Himself Who had predicted "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day...Let these words sink into your ears; for the Son of Man is going to be delivered ([paradidomi](#)) into the hands of men." (Lk 9:22, 44+, Lk 18:32+)

Pilate (governor of Judea AD 26 to AD 36) ([4091](#)) (**Pilatos** - of Latin origin) "Roman governor of Judea remembered in history as a notorious anti-Semite and in Christian creeds as the magistrate under whom Jesus Christ "suffered" (1 Tim 6:13). The NT refers to him as "governor," while other sources call him "procurator" or "prefect" (an inscription found in Caesarea in 1961). Pilate came to power about A.D. 26, close to the time when two of his contemporaries, Sejanus in Rome and Flaccus in Egypt, were pursuing policies apparently aimed at the destruction of the Jewish people." (Holman Dictionary) Pilate was hated by the orthodox Jews and never really understood them (see 4 interactions that made him odious to the Jews).

As shown in Luke 23 Pilate's handling of the trial of Jesus would show him to be [indecisive](#) and vacillating, characterized by lack of decision and firmness. As we might say today Pilate had no "[backbone](#)" or "[intestinal fortitude](#)!" **Warren Wiersbe** adds that "The Gospel of John records seven different moves that Pilate made as he went out to meet the people and then went in to question Jesus (see passages below). He kept looking for a loophole, but he found none. Pilate has gone down in history as the man who tried Jesus Christ, three times declared Him not guilty, and yet crucified Him just the same." (Bible Exposition Commentary)

James M Boice on **Pilate** - Pilate was not a noble character. In fact, if it were not for his influential connections through marriage, he would never have come even to the relatively insignificant post he held as procurator of Judea. He came from Spain, being a native of Seville. He had joined the legions of [Germanicus](#) in the wars on the Rhine. After peace had been secured, he went to Rome to make his fortune. There he met and married [Claudia Procula](#), the youngest daughter of Julia who was the daughter of the emperor [Augustus](#). From the perspective of Pilate's future this was a wise move. Claudia had connections with the highest levels of Roman government. But morally it was a disgrace; for Julia, who thereby became Pilate's mother-in-law, was a woman of such depraved and coarse habits that even in decadent Rome she was notorious. Augustus, her father, avoided her presence and eventually banished her. It is reported that afterward, whenever someone would mention the name of his daughter to him, Augustus would exclaim, "Would I were wifeless or had childless died!" Unlike Pilate, a man of nobler instincts would not have married into such a family. Nevertheless, through his new connections Pilate applied for and was awarded the procuratorship of Judea, which post he assumed in a.d. 26. He was the sixth [procurator](#) (Ed: But see [prefect](#)). Those before him were: Sabinus, Caponius, Ambivus, Rufus, and Gratus. (An Expositional

Philo, the ancient Jewish scholar from Alexandria, described **Pilate**: “His corruption, his acts of [insolence](#), his [rapine](#), his habit of insulting people, his cruelty, his continual murders of people untried and uncondemned, and his never-ending gratuitous and most grievous inhumanity.” ([Reference - XXXVIII. 299](#))

THE SIX MOCK TRIALS OF THE MESSIAH				
JESUS' THREE RELIGIOUS TRIALS				
See also Detailed Discussion of 3 Religious Trials				
	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
Before Annas (Nighttime ~1-3 AM)				Jn 18:12-14,19-24
Before Caiaphas (Nighttime - ~1-3 AM)	Mt 26:57-68	Mk 14:53-65+	Lk 22:54+, Lk 22:63-65+	
Before Sanhedrin (Daybreak ~5 AM)	Mt 27:1	Mk 15:1	Lk 22:66-71+	
JESUS' THREE CIVIL TRIALS				
Before Pilate	Mt 27:2, 11-14	Mk 15:1-5	Lk 23:1-5+	Jn 18:28-38
Before Herod Antipas			Lk 23:6-12+	
Before Pilate	Mt 27:15-26	Mk 15:6-15	Lk 23:13-25+	Jn 18:39-19:16

SUMMARY OF PILATE'S MOVEMENTS IN JESUS' TRIAL

One aspect of Jesus' trial before Pilate that can be confusing is that Pilate moved in and out of the Praetorium in various phases of the trial.. Here is a summary of Pilate's movements into the Praetorium (where Jesus was) and out of the Praetorium (where the Jewish accusers stood). You will notice that **Pilate's movement are keyed to John's account**, as John reports far more detail of the trial before Pilate than do the three Synoptists combined.

1. Jesus led **INSIDE** the Praetorium or judgment hall (John 18:28).

While all four Gospels record that Jesus is delivered to Pilate, only John includes the detail that Jesus is taken **INSIDE** the Praetorium while His accusers remained outside. This fact sets up multiple movements by Pilate as he addressed the two parties involved in the trial.

D A Carson comments that the failure of the Jews to enter the Praetorium "sent Pilate scuttling back and forth, acting on two stages as it were, a front stage and a rear stage. This simultaneously enhances the drama of the narrative, ensures that the Jews do not hear Jesus' self-disclosing claims before Pilate, and 'portrays the human predicament in which one must choose between Jesus and the world'. (Pillar Commentary - John)

2. **Movement 1**: Pilate comes **OUTSIDE** of the Praetorium to Jesus' accusers to hear their charges. This begins

the formal trial. (John 18:29-32).

John records their more general charges against Jesus and tells them to take Jesus and judge Him themselves. This forces them to concoct three specific charges recorded only in Lk 23:2.

3. **Movement 2:** Pilate goes back **INSIDE** the Praetorium to Jesus to hear His defense (John 18:33-38).

All four Gospels record that Pilate focuses on the third charge that Jesus is a King and asks Him "Are You the King of the Jews?" (Mt 27:11, Mk 15:2, Lk 23:3, Jn 18:33).

Only John 18:34-38 records the details of this phase of Pilate's interrogation of Jesus.

4. **Movement 3:** Pilate goes back **OUTSIDE** to the people to declare Jesus' innocence (John 18:38).

Only John 18:38 and Luke 23:5 record Pilate's **FIRST** of 3 not guilty verdicts (Jn 19:4, 6, cf Lk 23:22).

Pilate's not guilty verdict incites the Jews to a barrage of accusations at Jesus. Only Mt 27:12-14 and Mk 15:3-5 record Jesus' refusal to answer the accusations by the chief priests and elders against Jesus.

Only Luke 23:5 records the Jew's accusation that Jesus stirred up the people in Galilee, which prompts Pilate to send Jesus to the wicked ruler Herod (Antipas) who had jurisdiction over Galilee and was in Jerusalem at the time.

Only Luke 23:6-12 records the transfer of Jesus from Pilate to Herod and the mistreatment Jesus received in the second phase of the civil trial.

Only Luke 23:11 records that Herod sent Jesus back to Pilate.

Only Luke 23:13 records that "Pilate summoned the chief priests and the rulers and the people." Apparently the gathering before the Praetorium had either broken up or decreased in size while Jesus was before Herod. And it is clear that the religious leaders followed Jesus and spoke out again when He appeared before Herod (Lk 23:10). Note that since Pilate summoned the religious leaders and began to sp

Only Luke 23:14-15 record Pilate's statement before the Jews (who had been summoned) that he found no guilt in Jesus nor did Herod.

Only Luke 23:16 records Pilate's conclusion "Therefore I will punish Him and release Him." The Gospels do not record the reaction of the Jews to this announcement, but Pilate's subsequent mention of the custom of releasing a prisoner implies that their reaction prevented him from following through and forced him to try another ploy.

John 18:39 records Pilate's attempt to release Jesus "But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I release for you the King of the Jews?" The interchange regarding Barabbas is recorded in John 18:39-40, Matthew 27:15-18, 20-21, and Mk 15:6-11.

5. **Movement 4:** Pilate goes back **INSIDE** the Praetorium to scourge Jesus (John 19:1-3).

6. **Movement 5:** Pilate goes back **OUTSIDE** to the Jews to offer a compromise (John 19:4-7).

7. **Movement 6:** Pilate goes back **INSIDE** to Jesus to investigate the possibility of a supernatural being (John 19:8-11).

8. **Movement 7:** Pilate goes back **OUTSIDE** to the Jews to release Jesus (John 19:12).

9. **Movement 8:** Pilate brings Jesus **OUTSIDE**, sits on the Judgment Seat and gives his verdict of crucifixion (John 19:13-15).

Parallel Passages - The following table is an attempt to line up parallel passages from the 4 Gospel accounts on the same row and to identify the passages found only in one Gospel with **yellow highlighting**. In some cases it is difficult to state with certainty which passage in a particular Gospel comes next in time sequence. If you see a passage you do not think fits in the sequence please send an email with your explanation.

- Here is [another good parallel](#) by Wil Pounds in which he correlates events and approximate times.

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN

THE THIRD RELIGIOUS TRIAL OF JESUS

Mt 27:1 Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death;	Mk 15:1 Early in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes and the whole Council, immediately held a consultation.	Lk 22:66+ When it was day, the Council of elders of the people assembled, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him away to their council chamber, saying.	JOHN'S GOSPEL DOES NOT DISCUSS THE SECOND AND THIRD PHASES OF THE RELIGIOUS TRIAL OF JESUS.
		Lk 22:67+ "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe; 68 and if I ask a question, you will not answer. 69 "But from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND of the power OF GOD." 70 And they all said, "Are You the Son of God, then?" And He said to them, "Yes, I am." 71 Then they said, "What further need do we have of testimony? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth."	

THE JEWS DELIVER JESUS TO PILATE

Mt 27:2 and they bound Him, and led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate the governor. (N1)	Mk 15:1b and binding Jesus, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate.	Lk 23:1+ Then the whole body of them got up and brought Him before Pilate	Jn 18:28 Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas I N T O the Praetorium ,
			Jn 18:28b and it was early; and they themselves DID NOT ENTER into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

[CLICK HERE](#) TO GO TO
NEXT SET OF PARALLEL PASSAGES ON
FIRST CIVIL TRIAL BEFORE PILATE

COMMENTS ON MATTHEW

Note 1 on "delivered Him to Pilate" - Delivered is [paradidomi](#) which means to give one over to the power or authority of another. This was a clear fulfillment of prophecies by Jesus Himself Who had predicted "**The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day...Let these words sink into your ears; for the Son of Man is going to be delivered ([paradidomi](#)) into the hands of men.**" (Lk 9:22, 44+, Lk 18:32+)

Question: [Who was Pontius Pilate?](#)

Answer: Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea from A.D. 26-36, serving under Emperor Tiberius. He is most known for his involvement in condemning Jesus to death on a cross.

Outside of the four Gospels, Pontius Pilate is mentioned by Tacitus, Philo, and Josephus. In addition, the "Pilate Stone," discovered in 1961 and dated c. A.D. 30, includes a description of Pontius Pilate and mentions him as "prefect" of Judea. Pilate is also mentioned in the apocryphal writings, but these were all written at much later dates.

In the Bible, Pontius Pilate is mentioned solely in connection with the trials and crucifixion of Jesus. The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) portray Pilate as reluctant to crucify Jesus. Pilate calls the charges against Jesus "baseless" (Luke 23:14) and several times declares Jesus to be not guilty: "What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty" (Luke 23:22).

Pilate's conscience was already bothering him when his wife sent him an urgent message concerning Jesus. The note begged him, "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him" (Matthew 27:19).

John's Gospel offers some more detail of the trial, including an additional conversation between Pilate and Jesus. Jesus acknowledges Himself as a king and claims to speak directly for the truth. Pilate responds with the famous question, "What is truth?" (John 18:38). The question intentionally communicated multiple meanings. Here was a situation in which truth was compromised in order to condemn an innocent man. Pilate, who is supposedly seeking the truth, asks the question of the One who is Himself "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). A human judge, confused about the truth, was about to condemn the Righteous Judge of the world.

In the end, Pilate sought a compromise. Knowing Jesus had been handed over by the religious leaders out of envy, he appealed to the crowds at the Passover, asking which "criminal" should be set free, Jesus or Barabbas? The leaders convinced the crowd to cry out for Barabbas (Matthew 27:20–21). Giving in to political pressure, Pilate authorized both the flogging and crucifixion of Jesus: "Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified" (Mark 15:15).

Pilate had the charge against Jesus posted on the cross above Jesus' head: "THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS" (Matthew 27:37). As soon as Jesus died, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus in order to bury Him, and Pilate granted the request (John 19:38). The last glimpse we have of Pontius Pilate is when he assigns guards for Jesus' tomb (Matthew 27:64-66).

Pontius Pilate's brief appearance in Scripture is full of tragedy. He ignored his conscience, he disregarded the good advice of his wife, he chose political expediency over public rectitude, and he failed to recognize the truth even when Truth was standing right in front of him. When given an opportunity to evaluate the claims of Jesus, what will we decide? Will we accept His claim to be the King, or will we follow the voice of the crowd?

(Source: GotQuestions.org)

PILATE'S FOUR MISTAKES IN GOVERNING JUDEA

It is clear from historical records that Pilate was the fifth procurator of Judea, appointed by the emperor Tiberius, that he was procurator cum potestate (having civil, military, and criminal jurisdiction), that he held office for ten years (A.D. 26–36), and that in some way, not clearly known, he was subject to the legate of Syria, which was not uncommon at that time. **It is also known that Pilate created much antagonism between himself and the Jews on at least four different occasions.**

(1) The first of these was immediately after his being appointed governor when he and his soldiers brought their standards into Jerusalem, bearing the emperor's image, and placed them within sight of the Temple. This so enraged the Jews, who regarded it as idolatry, that Pilate yielded to them and had the standards returned to

Caesarea.

(2) A second occasion is recorded in Luke 13:1+ which states that Pilate apparently killed some Galileans while they were offering sacrifices.

(Luke 13:1+ - Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices.)

(3) On a third occasion he used revenues from the Temple to construct an aqueduct. The Jews also objected to this sacrilege, but Pilate had his soldiers beat the complainers into subjection with staves.

(4) On the fourth occasion he hung golden shields, apparently bearing the name of the emperor as a deity, in Herod's palace. The Jews objected so strenuously to this that the emperor himself rebuked Pilate and ordered them removed. This event has been dated at A.D. 32. **It can thus be seen that Pilate had yielded to Jewish pressures on at least one occasion, and that the emperor himself had intervened to reprimand Pilate on another occasion; this latter event carries special significance since it occurred only about a year before the death of Christ.**

These historical events form an important background for Pilate's dealings with Christ.

(ED COMMENT: Specifically Pilate could hardly afford to have a major Jewish riot over his handling of Jesus, for to do so would risk Rome removing him from his position as procurator. He had worked too hard to get this position and as we shall see was willing to do whatever it took to preserve that position!)

The Governor and Roman Law

Four factors have a bearing in Pilate's dealing with Christ: (1) Pilate's authority, (2) the rights of Roman citizens in a province contrasted to those of noncitizens, (3) the relationship of Roman law to the local law of provincials, and (4) the punishment for the crime of treason.

(1) Local Provincial Law -

Generally speaking, Roman law allowed the local law of each province to be exercised without much interference. Kunkel has pointed out that "local administration, the administration of justice as between the natives of the provinces, and many other tasks were in general simply left to the political organs of the subject people." One significant exception to this was jurisdiction on matters involving capital punishment which was reserved to the procurator. This exception has been set forth by Lyall: "The Romans did, for example, reserve the right to impose capital punishment, as in the case of Christ, but the day to day administration was none of their concern." (Francis Lyall, "Roman Law in the Writings of Paul—Aliens and Citizens," The Evangelical Quarterly 48 January-March 1976)

This particular exception is critically important in the trial of Christ before Pilate, since the Jews expressly declared, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God" (John 19:7); but they also said, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death" (John 18:31). While it is true that some time later the Jews did exercise the power of capital punishment, illegally, in the stoning death of Stephen (Acts 7:58+), there was a great deterrent in the case of Christ, and that was the involvement of Annas (John 18:13, 24). In A.D. 15, while Annas was the Jewish high priest, he led the Sanhedrin to violate this law when there was temporarily no procurator in Judea. That action resulted in his being deposed by Valerius Gratus that same year. It seems reasonable that Annas would have had a great influence on the decision of Caiaphas, the high priest during Christ's trial, since he was Caiaphas's father-in-law, and the case of Christ was one that involved great popular opinion.

(2) Rights of Individuals -

The rights of individuals within a province varied depending on whether the person was a Roman citizen or a noncitizen, an alien. The state of the noncitizen has been explained by Lyall: "The [peregrini](#) were subjects of Rome, but not Romans, because they were not citizens. They were not liable to military service, but were subject to supervision, and to the heavy burden of Imperial taxation. In terms of strict Roman law they were rightless and dutiless, existing as objects and not subjects of law." Concerning this same subject Garnsey has given a specific time when citizens were distinguished from aliens in a crucial area, that of corporal punishment. "Corporal punishment was traditionally used against slaves and aliens. This was written into the laws from the early second century, B.C., when a [lex porcia](#) granted to Roman citizens the right of appeal against beating as well as execution." The only time a Roman citizen was supposed to be subject to execution without a properly constituted trial was if he had been declared an enemy of the state. In other instances there was a clear difference between aliens and citizens in the empire. "Discrimination in favour of citizens as opposed to aliens

was thus a permanent feature of the Roman judicial system. It was practised in all spheres of law where aliens were technically excluded, as from the *ius civile*, and where they were not, as in criminal law.“ However, it should also be noted that from the time of the Republic onward aliens were supposed to be allowed “natural principles of equity which are common to all nations.” It may be concluded then that aliens—and Christ was one of these in relation to Roman law—had no direct legal standing at all; however, ethically and morally the natural principles of equity should have been applied to His case, but there was no legal compulsion to do so.

(3) Authority of the Governor -

Since Judea was a province subject to Rome, “the governor exercised the unlimited jurisdiction of the military imperium.” The governor of a province like Judea would exercise military, financial, and judicial functions.¹⁸ In relation to his judicial functions, the provincial governor “exercised both civil and criminal jurisdiction among Roman citizens, and also among foreigners, so far as such cases came before him by virtue of the province’s statute (*leges provinciae*) or by the operation of his discretion.” While it is clear that the governor’s judicial activity would mainly concern Roman citizens, it is also clear that “if the interests of Roman sovereignty were involved, no doubt he would also at all times have summoned provincials to his court.”

The extent of the governor’s authority is manifested in the types of punishment he could legally mete. There is no question but that he had the power of capital punishment over noncitizens, and he could also “execute humbler citizens or send them to the mines.” Indeed, the evidence indicates that the governor could inflict capital punishment on any Roman citizen, but “custom seems to have directed that the governor should remit capital cases of Roman citizens to the home government.”

It may be concluded, then, that the Roman governor had absolute legal authority to deal with noncitizens, such as Christ, and to prescribe the death penalty, without fear of having his authority challenged. As far as the procedure which a governor would follow is concerned, it is documented that he could “deal with crime inquisitorially, i.e., by investigating on his own initiative and by any means at his disposal.” It is clear that “judicial administration in the provinces was much less precise and technical than that which was required in Rome itself.” It is this fact which enables the flexibility and informality in Pilate’s dealings with Christ to be understood. There was nothing improper or unusual about it.

(4) Crucifixion as a Punishment

Since Christ was crucified as a result of Pilate’s final decision, it is needful to examine this mode of punishment and the people on whom it was used. In general, the mode of crucifixion was adopted by the Romans “to inflict the death penalty upon rebellious slaves and seditious provincials.” Concerning crucifixion, Garnsey wrote, “Crucifixion was the standing form of execution for slaves. Furthermore, in the reign of Nero, Gessius Florus scourged and crucified some Jews in Jerusalem, including some equestrians. On other occasions, Jewish rebels suffered crucifixion. A political charge was at least aired in the trial of Christ.”

It is obvious from the Gospels that Christ was charged with sedition or treason (Luke 23:2+; John 19:2). The law on treason was not specifically delineated but was capable of wide interpretation. Indeed, in the time of the empire, “the law was extended not only to all attempts on the life of the reigning prince, but to all acts and words which might appear to be disrespectful to him,” and it was regarded as a capital crime. In the case of Christ, the evidence indicates that He “was on trial for his life before the Roman governor and the basis of the prosecution was his danger to the Roman state. The very means of execution shows that Jesus died as an offender against Rome, not the Jewish nation.”...

Overstreet on Pilate’s later life - It is known from history that Pilate was removed from his position as governor in A.D. 36. The event that led directly to this was Pilate’s leading his troops against some restless [Samaritans](#) on [Mount Gerizim](#), and conducting a needless massacre (**ED: HE FALSELY VIEWED THEM AS INSURRECTIONISTS AND KILLED MANY RELIGIOUS PILGRIMS**). The Samaritans complained to Vitellius, the legate of Syria (**ED: HE WAS PILATE’S IMMEDIATE SUPERIOR**), concerning this, and he immediately deposed Pilate and sent him to Rome to answer the accusations before the Emperor [Tiberius](#). However, by the time Pilate had reached Rome, Tiberius was dead, and [Caligula](#) was on the throne. What happened to Pilate following this is a matter of some conjecture. Though there are many traditions, Eusebius stated that Pilate committed suicide (**ED: BUT THIS IS NOT DEFINITIVE**)....Pilate’s character is not to be envied: he appears as a vacillating, compromising individual more concerned with political expediency than with equity at the trial of Christ. His actions may not be condemned because they were illegal; however, his actions may justly be condemned because he acted against his own conscience (Matt. 27:24), and also against what was morally and ethically correct. ([Roman Law and the Trial of Christ - R Larry Overstreet](#))

Rich Cathers - If it weren't for the trial of Jesus, Pontius Pilate would be considered a minor figure in history. He is mentioned by ancient historians Josephus, Philo, and Tacitus, besides the four gospels. Yet sixty years ago, he was considered by some scholars to be nothing more than a myth. In 1961, archaeologists turned over one of the stones in the ancient amphitheater at Caesarea, and found the name of Pilate carved into it. The inscription, translated from Latin, is: "To the Divine Augusti this Tiberium ... Pontius Pilate ... prefect of Judea ... has dedicated this"

Illustration - A Sunday school teacher asked her students to draw a picture of the Holy Family. After the pictures were brought to her, she saw that some of the youngsters had drawn the conventional pictures....the Holy Family and the manger, the Holy Family riding on the mule, etc. But she called up one little boy to ask him to explain his drawing, which showed an airplane with four heads sticking out of the plane windows. She said, "I can understand that you drew three of the heads to show Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. But who's the fourth head?" "Oh," answered the boy, "that's Pontius the pilot!"

Rod Mattoon - Some of the frustrating characteristics of our judicial system today are the influences that public opinion and the media will have on the verdict of a case. Threats of rioting or violence tend to pressure or blackmail juries into making a popular decision instead of a just one. The O.J. Simpson case is a classic example of such pressure. The verdict of that case continues to be mocked to this day.

It is also frustrating when judges do not abide by the law, but use their authority to hinder or overturn the votes or legislation of a state in order to implement their political preferences. The state of Wisconsin is dealing with this right now. Corrupt judges will ignore or distort the Constitution of the United States and use their bench to legislate, a problem our Founding Fathers cautioned us about and warned us to avoid.

What do you think would happen if a famous, well-liked person in this country was tried on national television and declared innocent by the judge, but then, the person was sentenced to death and executed after being declared "Not Guilty" because of public opinion and peer pressure? Do you think people would be a little upset? I would think so. Such actions would be unjust, unfair, and outrageous.

This is what we find in this portion of Luke. We come to the trial of the Lord Jesus Christ and find it was a Kangaroo Court. A Kangaroo Court is a court that is characterized by irresponsible, unauthorized, or irregular procedures. The principles of the law and justice are perverted or disregarded. The punishment is given outside legal procedures.

This was also a Kangaroo Court because the leaders or judges had Jesus jumping from one court to another. Those who were in charge kept passing the buck when it came to dealing with Jesus because of the fear they had of the opinions of others. This trial will provide insights into what happened to the Lord and practical insights for living the Christian life. . (Treasures from Luke)

PILATE AND JESUS Mark 15:1–15

"The waves of the world's sea may surge, But the blue sky above is calm."

The life and character of Jesus is like the calm blue of Heaven compared with this restless world of troubled human spirits. The calmness of Jesus in the presence of the excited and bewildered Pilate is full of deep significance. A witness to the majesty of truth. Small men are fussy. "Still waters run deep." Pilate's treatment of Jesus is an example of how multitudes to-day treat the Gospel of Christ. Note that he—

1. Had Jesus given to him. "They delivered Him to Pilate" (v. 1). Now was Pilate's opportunity of justifying himself by justifying Jesus. When the Gospel is preached in the power of the spirit it is as it were a delivering up of Jesus for the acceptance or rejection of the hearer. How often has He been brought within your reach? What a solemn privilege!
2. Ascertains His character. "Pilate asked Him, Art Thou the King of the Jews? He answered, Thou sayest it" (v. 2). "To this end was I born" (John 18:37). He has Christ's own testimony as to His kingly character, although He was of no reputation. Gospel hearer, you know the claims of Jesus, you too are familiar with His poverty and His dignity; yea, more, with His death and resurrection, with His power to save and keep.
3. Marvels at Him. When Jesus answered nothing to the many things charged against Him, Pilate marvelled (v. 5). He whose Name is "Wonderful" must in His manner be marvellous to many. The silent submission of Jesus to such false accusations (for He knew that for envy they had delivered Him) was a revelation. Gospel hearer, have you never been led to marvel at the uniqueness of His character, the profundity of His teaching, or the richness of His grace?
4. Was inclined to favour Him (vs. 9, 10). He found no fault in Him, and was disposed to release Him. Gospel hearer, you must surely confess that you have no fault to find with Jesus. Does not your deeper convictions tell you that He is the Truth? Have you not at times felt inclined to believe Him, and release Him by confessing Him before men? Have you not also, like Pilate's wife, "suffered many things because of Him?"
5. Submits his will to the people regarding Him. "Pilate said, What will ye that I shall do unto Him?" (v. 12). His vacillating spirit would deal with Jesus according to the fickle and perverted will of the multitude. Gospel hearer, are you treating Christ according to your

better convictions, or in a manner only to please the Christ-hating world? Is the will of the ungodly to be your guide as to what ye shall do with Jesus? If you judge Christ by the opinions of His enemies you will be verily guilty of the Blood of God's Son.

6. Questions the justice of their judgment concerning Him. "They cried out, Crucify Him. Pilate said, Why, what evil hath He done?" (vs. 13, 14). Self-righteous priests and a wilfully ignorant and prejudiced people have no need of the Christ, and nothing to give Him but a cross. Gospel hearer, have you not thought that it was unjust and grossly wicked to cast out and crucify the meek and lowly Jesus? Yet by your refusing to receive Him you are deliberately casting Him out of your life, and virtually saying by your unbelief, "Away with Him, I will not have this Man to rule over me."

7. Scourged Him (v. 15). The barbarous thongs, tipped with bones and lead, in the hands of a heathen, ploughed His back and made deep their furrows, making His very bones to stare out. Yet he found no fault in the Man. Gospel hearer, are you scourging the soul of Him, whom you know to be faultless, by your love of the world, your indifference to His redeeming Blood, and your unwillingness to submit yourself to Him?

8. Delivered Him up to be crucified. "Pilate, willing to content the people, delivered Jesus" (v. 15). He handed Him over as one who wished to have no more to do with Him. But Pilate shall meet Him again at another tribunal. Gospel hearer, Jesus has been delivered up by God for you, and in His Word to you. Are you, like Pilate, anxious to get quit of Him, or, like Mary, anxious to have Him? Pilate, with all his great privileges in having Jesus brought near to him, profited nothing, but augmented his guilt. What have you profited by many similar opportunities? What shall ye then do with Jesus?

CHRIST'S TRIAL BEFORE PILATE (Mark 15:1–15) - C I Scofield

I. The Analysis

1. Jesus and Pilate (verses 1–5).—See below.

2. Jesus and Barabbas (verses 6–15).—The foundation doctrine of redemption is vicarious sacrifice, and in all Scripture there is no better illustration of substitution. (1) Barabbas means "son of his father," and that describes us all. By nature we are all sons of our father, Adam. (2) Barabbas was justly condemned to die. He was not on probation to see if he would become a good man. The law had condemned him; he was awaiting execution (Rom. 3:19; John 3:18–36). (3) He was unconditionally released simply because another was dying in his place. (4) He did nothing whatever to secure his pardon but accept it.

3. The Final Testing of Man Under Law (verses 6–15).—For centuries man had been under the testing of the law. What was the result? The religious leaders of the nation to whom the law was given could not discern the Lord of glory, though they were expecting Him, and had a wonderful mosaic portrait of Him in the law and the prophets. Neither could they discern perfect moral loveliness, but clamored for the release of a murderer and the crucifixion of Jesus.

II. The Heart of the Lesson

It is not easy to say what is the deepest heart of things here. In a very supreme sense, of course, Jesus is the central figure, as in any scene in which He appears. But so incontestable is His prominence that often it is not the fact to be insisted upon—it goes without saying. Often the real question is: What will this or that man or body of men do concerning Jesus who is in the midst? For the Incarnate Word, like the written Word, is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and His very presence compels disclosures of what is passing in the inmost being of the bystander.

In this lesson the human interest centers upon Pontius Pilate.

Think of Pilate. When a famous skeptic saw Munckacsy's "Christ Before Pilate" he said with a sigh, after looking long at that great picture, "The artist has reversed the positions of these men; he has painted, not Christ before Pilate, but Pilate before Christ." And so it was. One pities Pilate while condemning him. Compelled to admit the sinlessness of Jesus, and therefore urged by the law, by his conscience, and by the importunities of his wife to deal justly, he yet dealt unjustly. Even his inclination seems to have been strongly on the side of Jesus; he "sought how he might set Him free."

Do not imagine that there has been but one Pontius Pilate in the personal history of Jesus Christ. Alas, there have been countless millions of Pilates during the nineteen centuries in which Christ has been on trial in the forum of conscience and of reason. When Pilate said: "I find no fault in Him," he acknowledged a fact unique in human history. Of no other human being could that justly be said. Jesus alone among the sons of men has been without fault. All other goodness has been flawed with badness; all other greatness has been linked with littleness; Jesus is the only sinless one. And so Pilate believed. So all men who know the story of His life have believed and do believe.

So, believing, Pilate pronounced the sentence which sent Him to the cross; so believing thousands are "crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh." In what essential respect do they differ from the Roman governor of infamous memory?

Three possible courses were open before the first Pilate—have been and are open to all succeeding Pilates. The first course was the obvious one of evasion and delay. Catching at a word (Luke 23:6) Pilate sought to shift upon Herod the decision for or against Jesus.

But no, it was Pilate's question, and he could not pass it over to another. Again Jesus stood before Pilate; evasion had failed. Then two courses only remained—to act upon the logic of his own admission of the faultlessness of Jesus, or, in deliberate violation of conscience, to cast Jesus out. He chose the latter course. Why? Because it seemed to accord with his present interests. To side with Jesus might, in the then precarious favor in which he stood with Cæsar, mean the sacrifice of his worldly prospects. To incur at that time the enmity of the Jews might mean the sacrifice of his governorship, and he was not prepared to do right by Jesus at the cost of worldly prosperity. For the present prosperity of a questionable business, for a dance, or a game at cards, or a sensual play, millions are rejecting that very Jesus whom they profess to admire and to find without fault.

Related Resources:

- Wikipedia - [Pontius Pilate](#)
- American Tract Society [Pilate or Pontius Pilate](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Pontius Pilate](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Pontius Pilate](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Pilate Pontius](#)
- Whyte's Bible Characters [Pontius pilate](#)

Mark 15:2 Pilate questioned Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And He answered him, "It is as you say."

- Mt 2:2 27:11 Lu 23:3 Joh 18:33-37 19:19-22 1Ti 6:13
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And Jesus said to him, "It is as you say."

Luke 23:2-3+ And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a King." 3 So Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And He answered him and said, "It is as you say."

John 18:29-38 (JOHN'S ACCOUNT ADDS DETAILS NOT IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS - SEE THE [TABLE BELOW](#)) Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover. 29 Therefore Pilate went out to them (CAME OUT OF THE PRAETORIUM) and said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?" 30 They answered and said to him, "If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you." 31 So Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law." The Jews said to him, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death," 32 to fulfill the word of Jesus which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die. 33 Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered, "**Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?**" 35 Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?" 36 Jesus answered, "**My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.**" 37 Therefore Pilate said to Him, "**So You are a king?**" Jesus answered, "**You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.**" 38 Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and *said to them, "I find no guilt in Him."

PILATE QUESTIONS JESUS KINGSHIP

MacArthur entitles this section "Pilate before Jesus!" (cf. John 5:22–30; Acts 10:42; Rom. 2:16; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8)

We need to look as some background on why Pilate asked Jesus if He were the **King of the Jews** - His question was prompted by the allegations recorded only in Luke 23:2+ "And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this man(1) misleading our nation and (2) forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and (3) saying that He Himself is Christ, a King." Clearly of the 3 Jewish accusations against

Jesus (recorded only in Luke 23:2), the one that aroused Pilate's attention was the statement that Jesus claimed to be a King. Pilate's question is recorded in all four Gospels (Mt 27:11, Mk 15:2, Lk 23:3+). Note also that this is the FIRST question Pilate asked Jesus. If He were a King, that could be a threat to Rome so he had to deal with this charge by the Jews.

Pilate questioned Him - One aspect of Jesus' trial before Pilate that can be confusing is that Pilate moved in and out of the Praetorium in various phases of the trial.. Here is a summary of Pilate's movements into the Praetorium (where Jesus was) and out of the Praetorium (where the Jewish accusers stood). You will notice that Pilate's movement are keyed to John's account, as John reports far more details of this trial before Pilate than do the three Synoptists combined. **See a summary discussion of Pilate's movement** in and out of the Praetorium. And so while all four Gospels record that Jesus is delivered to Pilate, only John includes the detail that Jesus is taken INSIDE the Praetorium (Jn 18:33 **Pilate entered again into the Praetorium**) while His accusers remained outside. This fact sets up multiple movements by Pilate as he addressed the two parties involved in the trial.

D A Carson comments that the failure of the Jews to enter the Praetorium "sent Pilate scuttling back and forth, acting on two stages as it were, a front stage and a rear stage. This simultaneously enhances the drama of the narrative, ensures that the Jews do not hear Jesus' self-disclosing claims before Pilate, and 'portrays the human predicament in which one must choose between Jesus and the world'. (Pillar Commentary - John)

Questioned (1905) (**eperotao** from **epí** = an intens. + **erōtáō** = to ask, inquire of, beg of) in the NT means "to interrogate, inquire" (Zodhiates).

"Are You the King of the Jews?" - **You** is emphatic "and carries an obvious tone of disdain or surprise." (Hiebert) Keep the context in mind. Jesus is standing before Pilate bloody and beaten as the Man of Sorrows and hardly has the appearance of a king. One can almost imagine Pilate thinking "and You claim to be a king!" All four Gospels record that Pilate focuses on the third charge that Jesus is a King and asks Him "Are You the King of the Jews?" (Mt 27:11, Mk 15:2, Lk 23:3, Jn 18:33).

John describes the dialogue between Pilate and Jesus in considerably greater detail than the three synoptic accounts ([See Chart of Parallel Passages](#)). If one reads only Mark's account, it would seem very strange that Pilate would still declare Jesus not guilty even though He admits to being a King. The answer is found in John 18:34-38 for as described below Jesus explains to Pilate that His Kingdom is not an ordinary kingdom and thus He is not an ordinary king. If He were an ordinary King, Pilate would have seen Him as a political threat to the Romans and would not have declared Him innocent.

F F Bruce "Pilate was evidently not alarmed by the charge brought against Jesus. Why? Apparently at first glance he saw that the Man before him was not likely to be a pretender to royalty in any sense that he need trouble himself about...The **[you]** in an emphatic position in Mt 27:11 (and Mark 15:2) suggests this = **You** the King of the Jews!"

King of the Jews - Matt. 2:2; Matt. 27:11; Matt. 27:29; Matt. 27:37; Mk. 15:2; Mk. 15:9; Mk. 15:12; Mk. 15:18; Mk. 15:26 (cf synonymous phrase "King of Israel" in Mark 15:32) Lk. 23:3; Lk. 23:37; Lk. 23:38; Jn. 18:33; Jn. 18:39; Jn. 19:3; Jn. 19:19; Jn. 19:21

Hiebert - His "royal pretension" to the throne of Israel merited death because it was treason against Caesar, the one unpardonable sin for imperial Rome. The charge of blasphemy (Mark 14:64) had been turned into treason. ([Mark Commentary](#))

Only John 18:34-38 records the details of this interaction of Pilate with Jesus.

Jesus answered, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?" 35 Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?" 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm." 37 Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." 38 Pilate *said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and *said to them, "I find no guilt in Him.

Comment on "I find no guilt in Him" - Pilate clearly did not believe Jesus was guilty of any capital crime (cf. Matt. 27:19, 24; Mark 15:14; Luke 23:14-15; John 18:38; 19:4, 6). The official findings of the Roman magistrate exonerated Christ of any guilt, and he repeatedly said that he found no fault in Him. (MacArthur)

And He answered him, "It is as you say." - NET has "You say so," adding that "The reply "You say so" is somewhat enigmatic, like Jesus' earlier reply to the Jewish leadership (mentioned in Matt 26:64 and Luke 22:70)."

And while the synoptic Gospels all record Jesus' answer as **'It is as you say,'** John adds a more lengthy interchange in Jn 18:34-38a. In sum this extended discourse (1) is found only in John's Gospel, (2) occurs in private within Pilate's residence, the Praetorium, and (3) represents Jesus' explanation to Pilate that He is not a King in the usual sense that Pilate might expect of a typical earthly king. In

view of this revelation, Pilate interpreted Jesus as no threat to the Roman empire and for that reason found **no guilt in Him**. (Jn 18:38b, Lk 23:4+).

Hiebert on It is as you say - Jesus' answer has been differently understood. The words have been taken as a denial, as being noncommittal, or as a firm acknowledgment. A denial is inconsistent with the facts. If understood as a Hebrew idiom, it was the regular way of affirming the contents of a question. But the Greek may well be taken as a qualified assent. Christ's thou is also emphatic and may be intended to mean, "Yes, but not with your exact meaning." It implied that His answer was open for further discussion. He could not deny that He was "the King of the Jews" but not in the political sense as Pilate thought. John 18:33–37 gives a fuller account of the interview, indicating that Jesus did explain to Pilate the true nature of His kingdom. Convinced that Jesus was no threat to the Roman government, Pilate brought Jesus out and announced that he found "in him no fault" (John 18:38) ([Mark Commentary](#))

Akin on It is as you say - Jesus responds in a somewhat coy and cryptic fashion to his question, "You have said so." The "You" is emphatic. This is neither a direct affirmation or denial. I think Jesus' intention is something like this, "Yes, I am a King but not the kind of King you are thinking of. As Jesus said, recorded in John 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world."

The more complete account in John 18:36, 37 seems to show that Jesus left no doubt in Pilate's mind about His Kingship. Jesus made clear the spiritual nature of His kingdom, and Pilate understood, to the extent that he stepped out and told the Jews, "**I find in him no fault at all**" (John 18:38). This verdict was like stirring up a hornet's nest and brought a barrage of accusations in Mark 15:3.

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
JESUS' FIRST CIVIL TRIAL BEFORE PILATE INSIDE THE PRAETORIUM			
Mt 27:1 Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death; 2 and they bound Him, and led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate the governor. (N2)	Mk 15:1 Early in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes and the whole Council, immediately held a consultation; and binding Jesus, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate.		John 18:28 Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium , and it was early;
			Jn 18:28b and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium , so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover. (N1)

<p>Mt 27:3-10</p> <p>PARENTHESIS</p> <p>ONLY</p> <p>MATTHEW DESCRIBES THE FATE OF JUDAS (N)</p>			
			<p>Jn 18:29 Therefore Pilate went out to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this Man?” (N1) (see pix)</p> <p>30 They answered and said to him, “If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you.”</p> <p>31 So Pilate said to them, “Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law.” The Jews said to him, “We are not permitted to put anyone to death,” 32 to fulfill the word of Jesus which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die, (N3)</p>
		<p>Lk 23:2 And they began to accuse Him, saying, “We found this man (#1) misleading our nation (#2) and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, (#3) and saying that He Himself is Christ, a King”</p> <p>(See notes on three false accusations against Jesus.)</p>	
<p>THE FIRST TRIAL CONTINUES</p> <p>WITH PILATE QUESTIONING JESUS</p> <p>INSIDE THE PRAETORIUM</p>			
<p>Mt 27:11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?” And Jesus said to him, “It is as you say.”</p>	<p>Mk 15 : 2 Pilate questioned Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?” And He answered him, “It is as you say.”</p>	<p>Lk 23:3+ So Pilate asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?” And He answered him and said, “It is as you say.”</p>	<p>Jn 18:33 Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?” (N4)</p>

			<p>Jn 18:34 Jesus answered, “Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?” 35 Pilate answered, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?” (N5) 36 Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.” 37 Therefore Pilate said to Him, “So You are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.” 38 Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?” (Pix)</p>
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THE FIRST CIVIL TRIAL CONCLUDES:
PILATE REACHES HIS VERDICT INSIDE THE PRAETORIUM.
THEN HE GOES OUT TO THE JEWS
TO ANNOUNCE HIS FIRST "NOT GUILTY" VERDICT

		<p>Lk 23:4+ Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no guilt in this man.”</p>	<p>Jn 18:38b And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, “I find no guilt in Him. (N6)</p>
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<p>Mt 27:12 And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He did not answer .</p> <p>13 Then Pilate said to Him, “Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?”</p> <p>14 And He did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so the governor was quite amazed. (N7)</p>	<p>Mk 15:3 The chief priests began to accuse Him harshly (repeatedly).</p> <p>4 Then Pilate questioned Him again, saying, “Do You not answer?”</p> <p>See how many charges they bring against You!”</p> <p>5 But Jesus made no further answer; so Pilate was amazed.</p>	<p>Lk 23:5+ But they kept on insisting, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee even as far as this place.”</p>	
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THE SECOND RELIGIOUS TRIAL BEFORE HEROD ANTIPAS (Only in Luke)

FRIDAY - EARLY MORNING

Lk 23:6+ When Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. **7** And when he learned that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, **he sent Him to Herod**, who himself also was in Jerusalem at that time....

Lk 23:8+ Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him. **9** And he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing. **10** And the chief priests and the scribes were standing there, accusing Him vehemently. **11** And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate. **12** Now Herod and Pilate became friends with one another that very day; for before they had been enemies with each other.

THE THIRD CIVIL TRIAL JESUS' SECOND APPEARANCE BEFORE PILATE

Luke 23:13-16+ Pilate summoned the chief priests and the rulers and the people, **14** and said to them, "You brought this man to me as one who incites the people to rebellion, and behold, having examined Him before you, **I have found no guilt in this man regarding the charges which you make against Him.** **15** "No, nor has Herod, for he sent Him back to us; and behold, nothing deserving death has been done by Him. **16** "Therefore I will punish Him and release Him." ([See Note](#))

[CLICK HERE](#) TO GO TO NEXT SECTION
WHO DO YOU WANT ME TO RELEASE?

GOSPEL OF JOHN

Note 1 - John 18:28 says the Jews "themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled". When the Jews brought Jesus to Pilate, it seems clear that Jesus Himself was taken inside the Praetorium to face Pilate, while the Jews

remained outside. The when Pilate went out to them he formally commenced the legal proceedings (the first civil trial) as he asked **"What accusation do you bring against this Man?"** ([see pix](#)) (Jn 18:29). It is interesting that the Jews did not at first give a specific accusation declaring "If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you." (Jn 18:30) The presumed this would be sufficient for Pilate to condemn Jesus to death. For after all Pilate would have had to give the order for a Roman cohort to go with the Jews to arrest Jesus (Jn 18:3). Probably to their shock Pilate told them to judge Him (Jn 18:31). Of course their problem was they wanted Him dead and had no authority to carry out capital punishment. Therefore they came up with three accusations calculated to force Pilate to condemn Jesus to death, for high treason and insurrection. Pilate was a weak man of fickle character but he was still smart enough to discern that the reason the Jews had delivered Jesus into his hand was because of **envy!** (Mt 27:18). So the Jews in essence forced Pilate's hand with their triple accusation in Lk 23:2.

How tragically deceived (and hypocritical) were these "religious" Jewish leaders who regarded ceremonial defilement a much more serious matter than moral defilement! (cf Lk 11:39+) Are we not often like them, maintaining a "spiritual" exterior, while at the same time internally harboring unclean thoughts, unrepentant sins, etc? O Lord, acquit us of hidden faults and keep us from presumptive sins, lest they come to rule over us. Amen (Ps 19:12-13).

Augustine - O impious blindness! They would be defiled, forsooth, by a dwelling which was another's, and not be defiled by a crime which was their own. They feared to be defiled by the praetorium of an alien judge, and feared not to be defiled by the blood of an innocent brother.

Matthew Poole "Nothing is more common than for persons overzealous about rituals to be remiss about morals."

John Trapp - "Putrid hypocrisy! they stand upon legal defilements, and care not to defile their consciences with innocent blood. What is this, but to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel?"

Note 3 on to fulfill the word of Jesus (Jn 18:32) - Specifically Jesus had predicted **"And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself."** (Jn 12:32) In John's Gospel the Greek word **lifted up** ([hupsōo](#)) always refers to the cross (Jn 3:14; 8:28, 12:34, Mt 20:19, cf OT prophecy in Ps 22:16). On the cross He became a curse (Dt 21:23, Gal 3:13). Notice also that Pilate's response in John 18:31 (for them to **"take Him yourselves..."**) forces the Jews to offer up the three specific charges recorded only in Lk 23:2.

Note 4 - John 18:33 on "Are You the King of the Jews?" - First note that Pilate **"entered again into the Praetorium"** from which he had come out initially to address the Jews. Now Pilate goes back inside apparently this time taking Jesus with him. In the Greek text, the **"You"** is emphatic and so more literally it reads *"You, are You the King of the Jews?"* Clearly of the 3 Jewish accusations against Jesus (recorded only in Luke 23:2), the one that aroused Pilate's attention was the statement that Jesus claimed to be a King. Pilate's question is recorded in all four Gospels (Mt 27:11, Mk 15:2, Lk 23:3). Note also that this is the **FIRST** question Pilate asked Jesus. And while the synoptic Gospels all record Jesus' answer as **"It is as you say,"** John adds a more lengthy interchange in Jn 18:34-38a. In sum this extended discourse (1) is found only in John's Gospel, (2) occurs in private within Pilate's residence, the Praetorium, and (3) represents Jesus' explanation to Pilate that He is not a King in the usual sense that Pilate might expect of a typical earthly king. In view of this revelation, Pilate interpreted Jesus as no threat to the Roman empire and for that reason found **no guilt in Him**. (Jn 18:38b, Lk 23:4).

MacArthur adds that "Jesus could not answer Pilate's question with an unqualified "Yes" or "No" without first defining exactly what His kingship entails. His counter question, **"Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?"** was intended to clarify the issue (I.E., TO CLARIFY PILATE'S QUESTION). If Pilate was saying this on his **own initiative**, he would be asking if Jesus was a king in the **political sense** (and hence a threat to Rome). Jesus' answer in that case would be **"no,"** He was not a king in the sense of a military or political leader. He had earlier rejected the crowd's attempt to make Him such a king (Jn 6:15). But neither could the Lord deny that as the Messiah He was Israel's true king. (Ibid)

James Stalker adds that Jesus "desired to learn in what sense the question was asked—whether from the standpoint of a Roman or from that of the Jews; because of course His answer would be different according as He was asked whether He was a king as a Roman would understand the word or according as it was understood by the Jews....Jesus at once proceeded, however, to answer Pilate's question on both sides, both on the Roman political and then on the Jewish religious side. First, He answered negatively, "My kingdom is not of this world!" He was no rival of the Roman emperor....It was not a kingdom of force and arms and worldly glory He had in view....Yet, even in making this denial, Jesus had used the words, **"My kingdom."** And Pilate broke in, **"Art Thou a king then?"** **"Yes,"** replied Jesus; **"to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.** This was His kingdom—the realm of Truth. It differs widely from that of Caesar. Caesar's empire is over the bodies of men; this is over their hearts. The

strength of Caesar's empire is in soldiers, arms, citadels and navies; the strength of this kingdom is in principles, sentiments, ideas. The benefit secured by Caesar to the citizens is external security for their persons and properties; the blessings of Christ's kingdom are peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost (ED: "ETERNAL SECURITY!"). The empire of Caesar, vast as it was, yet was circumscribed; the kingdom of Christ is without limits, and is destined to be established in every land. Cæsar's empire, like every other earthly kingdom, had its day and passed out of existence; but the kingdom of Truth shall last for evermore."([THE TRIAL AND DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST: A DEVOTIONAL HISTORY OF OUR LORD'S PASSION](#))

Stalker - In the silence, then, of this interior hall He (Jesus) and Pilate stood face to face—He in the prisoner's lonely place, Pilate in the place of power. Yet how strangely, as we now look back at the scene, are the places reversed! It is Pilate who is going to be tried—Pilate and Rome, which he represented. All that morning Pilate was being judged and exposed; and ever since he has stood in the pillory of history with the centuries gazing at him. In the old pictures of the Child Christ by the great masters a halo proceeds from the Babe that lights up the surrounding figures, sometimes with dazzling effect. And it is true that on all who approached Christ, when He was in the world, there fell a light in which both the good and the evil in them were revealed. It was a search-light, that penetrated into every corner and exposed every wrinkle. Men were judged as they came near Him. Is it not so still? We never show so entirely what is in us as by the way in which we are affected by Christ. We are judging ourselves and passing sentence on ourselves for eternity by the way in which we deal with Him.

Note 5 on what have You done? - The Roman laws allowed the accused to be questioned in detail. So while Pilate understands why the Jewish leaders had delivered Him over (i.e., envy - Mt 27:18), he is uncertain what Jesus has done to stir up such anger and hostility.

Note 6 on I find no guilt in Him - MacArthur explains that "In this context, **"find"** represented a judicial verdict. Pilate acquitted Jesus of any civil or criminal wrongdoing. In modern parlance, He threw the case out of court for lack of evidence. He exercised ["summary judgment."](#) (Ibid)

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Note 7 - Mt 27:12-14 (parallel with Mk 15:3-5, Lk 23:5) - Although Matthew and Mark do not record Pilate's first not guilty verdict against Jesus, they do record a barrage of repeated accusations against Jesus in an attempt to force Pilate to reverse his verdict. In stark contrast to the angry lying accusations of the Jews, Jesus is majestically silent! And Pilate's reaction was that he was **amazed** ([thaumazo](#))! Pilate is marveling that the Jews are falsely accusing Him of crimes that would warrant the death penalty and yet He offered no self-defense! In truth, He did not have to because Pilate had already declared Him not guilty (Lk 23:4, Jn 18:38). In His silence Jesus fulfilled OT prophecies

Isaiah 42:1-2 "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. 2 "He will not cry out or raise His voice, Nor make His voice heard in the street.

Isaiah 53:7+ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.

Comment: In Acts 8:32+ Luke records the last part of Isaiah's passage "HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER; AND AS A LAMB BEFORE ITS SHEARER IS SILENT, SO HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH." This was a portion of the passages of Scripture the Ethiopian Eunuch was reading which led to his salvation as Phillip preached Jesus to him beginning with Isaiah's prophecy (Acts 8:34, 35+)

Streams in the Desert - "He answered nothing." (Mark 15:3)

THERE is no spectacle in all the Bible so sublime as the silent Savior answering not a word to the men who were maligning Him, and whom He could have laid prostrate at His feet by one look of Divine power, or one word of fiery rebuke. But He let them say and do their worst, and He stood in THE POWER OF STILLNESS—God's holy silent Lamb.

There is a stillness that lets God work for us, and holds our peace; the stillness that ceases from its contriving and its self-vindication, and its expedients of wisdom and forethought, and lets God provide and answer the cruel blow, in His own unflinching, faithful love.

How often we lose God's interposition by taking up our own cause, and striking for our defense. God give to us this silent power, this conquered spirit! And after the heat and strife of earth are over, men will remember us as we remember the morning dew, the gentle light and sunshine, the evening breeze, the Lamb of Calvary, and the gentle, holy heavenly Dove.

—A. B. Simpson.

The day when Jesus stood alone
And felt the hearts of men like stone,
And knew He came but to atone—
That day “He held His peace.”

They witnessed falsely to His word,
They bound Him with a cruel cord,
And mockingly proclaimed Him Lord;
“But Jesus held His peace.”

They spat upon Him in the face,
They dragged Him on from place to place,
They heaped upon Him all disgrace;
“But Jesus held His peace.”

My friend, have you for far much less,
With rage, which you called righteousness,
Resented slights with great distress?
Your Saviour “held His peace.”

—L. S. P.

I remember once hearing Bishop Whipple, of Minnesota, so well known as “The Apostle of the Indians,” utter these beautiful words: “For thirty years I have tried to see the face of Christ in those with whom I differed.” When this spirit actuates us we shall be preserved at once from a narrow bigotry and an easy-going tolerance, from passionate vindictiveness and everything that would mar or injure our testimony for Him who came not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them. —W. H. Griffith Thomas.

Mark 15:3 The chief priests began to accuse Him harshly.

NET Mark 15:3 Then the chief priests began to accuse him repeatedly.

NLT Mark 15:3 Then the leading priests kept accusing him of many crimes,

ESV Mark 15:3 And the chief priests accused him of many things.

NIV Mark 15:3 The chief priests accused him of many things.

- **the chief:** Mt 27:12 Lu 23:2-5 Joh 18:29-31 19:6,7,12
- **but He said nothing** (only in the KJV): Mk 15:5 14:60,61 Isa 53:7
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- See Table with Parallel Passages to Mark 15:1
- See Table with Parallel Passages to Mark 15:2

Related Passages:

Mt 27:12 And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, **He did not answer** .

Lk 23:5⁺ But they kept on insisting, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee even as far as this place.”

CHIEF PRIESTS ARE CHIEF PROTAGONISTS

So while Pilate is trying to acquit Jesus (Lk 23:4⁺, Jn 18:38), the Jewish leaders would have none of that! They were too close to their long sought after goal of murdering the Man Jesus!

The chief priests began to accuse Him harshly - **Harshly** is polys which more literally means "many," so the NAS is somewhat interpretative with "harshly" (although it is likely their charges were harsh!) The tragic irony is that the very men who should have led the Jews to recognize their true High Priest, take the lead in accusations against Him. **Accuse** is in the vivid [imperfect tense](#) depicting these evil men as furiously making false allegations against Jesus, one accusation after another! Luke records an

example of the type of charges brought against Him writing "they kept on insisting, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee even as far as this place." (Lk 23:5+) It is worth noting that the verb "insisting" is in the imperfect tense which pictures the Jews as making their accusations over and over, again and again. As we might say today the Jews Went ballistic!" One can just picture this scene, as one Jew would finish his angry accusation, another would bring a similar accusation. It was a veritable "cacophonous chorus" of maliciously fabricated false charges against Jesus, the blameless, innocent Lamb of God (1 Peter 1:19+).

Accuse (2723) (kategoreo from **kata** = against + **agora** = market place, place of public speaking) means to speak openly against a person, to condemn them before a public tribunal or bring an accusation in court. To accuse formally by bringing a charge publicly. The idea is to speak openly against, to condemn or accuse mainly in a legal sense. The cognate word kategoria was a legal technical term that referred to the content of the accusation or charge made against someone. Note that all of the Gospel uses involve accusing Jesus (except John 5:45).

All four Gospel writers used **kategoreo** earlier in Jesus' ministry, John for example recording

They (scribes and Pharisees - Jn 8:3) were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for **accusing** Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground. (John 8:6, cf Mt 12:10, Mk 3:2, Lk 6:7+).

As an aside, who is "motivating" (so to speak) the members of the Sanhedrin? Surely Satan the ultimate Adversary of Jesus was "shooting" **flaming missiles** of hatred and murder into the minds of these godless Jewish men (cf Eph 6:16+). And so "like father, like son", and who was their "father?" (see Jn 8:44)! Thus it should not surprise us to find this same verb **accuse**" (kategoreo) in John's description of Satan in Revelation...

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the **accuser** (Satan - kategoros) of our brethren has been thrown down, he who **accuses** (kategoreo in the present tense = continually) them before our God day and night. (Rev 12:10+)

Comment: The Greek word for "**accuser**" (kategoros) is the name given to Satan by the rabbis! Here the Jewish religious leaders are before Herod and in the irony of ironies they are carrying out the devil's dirtiest deed! It's amazing how we can deceive our own hearts! (cf Jer 17:9).

Overstreet explains 'The Jews brought Christ to Pilate because they were forbidden by law to put Him to death themselves. Second, it should be remembered that a provincial governor (LIKE PILATE) had the legal freedom to conduct a trial as informally and with as little set procedure as he wished. Several observations may be made concerning Pilate and the legality of the trial of Christ. **First**, since Pilate was governor of Judea, and this was to be a capital offense, he was the proper person to conduct the trial of Christ. **Second**, he was quite correct in initially declining to hear the case, since the first charge was so vague (see John 18:30). **Third**, he acted in accordance with Roman law when there was an indictment for treason leveled against Christ (Luke 23:2), and he questioned Christ privately concerning this matter, deciding He was innocent. At this point Pilate had the legal authority to release Christ, but he did not. Instead, he once again went to the Jews, for which he has been criticized as acting illegally. However, when it is remembered that under Roman law a non-citizen, such as Christ, had **no legal rights** to begin with, then Pilate could not have acted illegally. He may be accused of being unethical or immoral (and rightly so), but he may not be accused of acting illegally under the Roman legal system. He had every legal authority to continue or not, as formally or informally as he pleased. **Fourth**, Pilate did not act in an unusual manner when he sent Christ to Herod (Luke 23:6-12). Greenidge has pointed out that a provincial governor had the power to ask anyone he wanted to be his adviser, and that "it was even possible in an important prosecution to summon expert advice from another province—nay, even a neighboring provincial governor himself." Herod's refusal to try Jesus indicates that in his opinion Jesus was innocent; Pilate used this in his argument for Christ's release (Luke 23:15). The remainder of Pilate's legal dealings with Christ may be considered from the legal basis of a non-citizen having no legal rights in Roman law." (Ref)

THE "LAMB-LIFE"

... accused . . . he answered nothing. Mark 15:3

... as a sheep ... dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. Isaiah 53:7

Recently I was blessed and convicted in my own soul by the penetrating comments of Mrs. Penn-Lewis, on these and other verses dealing with the amazing silences of Jesus. She began by calling attention to the fact that the "lamb-life" is characterized by silence! That is, the sanctified Christian who is living close to his God will manifest humility and supreme self-control under the most adverse and trying circumstances. Says Mrs. Lewis: "We will be silent in our lowly service among others, not seeking to be 'seen of men.' Silent over the glory of the hours on the mount lest others think of us above that which they ought. Silent while we stoop to serve the

very ones who betrayed us. Silent when forced by others to some position where apparent rivalry with another much-used servant of God seems imminent, only to be hushed by utter self-effacement in our silent withdrawal without explanation, irrespective of our 'rights.' Silent when our words are misquoted."

After additional suggestions on the silences of consecration and humility, Mrs. Lewis concludes her article with this impassioned prayer: "O Thou anointed Christ, the Lamb of God, Thou alone canst live this life of silent self-effacement in a world of self-assertion and self-love. Live Thou this life in me!"

Are you set on always "getting your rights"? Will you argue for hours to make others understand your "reasonable position"? Then you still have much to learn from the silences of Jesus! Oh, may it be said of us as it is of that blessed company in Revelation 14: "These are they who follow the Lamb wherever he goeth" (Rev. 14:4)!

"Hold Thou my tongue" — for oh, I cannot guard it, Unless Thou teach me to control each word.

Guard Thou my thoughts, lest haply I should whisper Something to grieve my Savior and my Lord!— Gladys Roberts

Though the human tongue weighs practically nothing, it is surprising how few persons are able to hold it!—Wm. A. Ward

The Clue of Silence

The chief priests accused Him of many things, but He answered nothing. —Mark 15:3

Today's Scripture: Isaiah 53

The Sir Arthur Conan Doyle story *Silver Blaze* centers around a clue of silence. In this mystery, detective Sherlock Holmes investigates the theft of a prized racehorse, which had been guarded by an excellent watchdog.

In gathering evidence, Holmes learns that the dog did not bark during the intrusion. The great detective deduces that the dog knew the culprit, and this leads to solving the crime.

For anyone investigating the identity of Jesus Christ, the Bible holds many clues. One piece of evidence is His silence. Speaking of Him centuries earlier, the prophet Isaiah offered this clue: "As a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth" (53:7). The significance of this remained obscure until Jesus was brought before His accusers and "He answered nothing" (Mark 15:3).

It's a small but important piece of evidence, especially when combined with other clues, such as His birth in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2; Luke 2:4), His Davidic lineage (Is. 11:10; Luke 3:31), the casting of lots for His clothing by the soldiers (Ps. 22:18; John 19:23-24). These and more than 300 other fulfilled prophecies present us with overwhelming evidence of the identity of Jesus. He is the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of all who put their faith in Him. By: David C. Egnor ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Think About It

Are you convinced that Jesus is the promised Savior?

Have you accepted the forgiveness and eternal life He offers? If you have doubts, read the Gospel of John.

Believing Christ died—that's history; believing Christ died for me—that's salvation.

Barking At The Moon

Let all . . . evil speaking be put away from you. —Ephesians 4:31

Today's Scripture: Mark 15:1-5

A certain judge was constantly annoyed by the sneering remarks and abusive language of an attorney. Instead of cracking down on the lawyer and silencing him, the judge would only smile and chew on his pencil. People wondered how he could be so patient.

At a dinner party someone asked him, "Why don't you do something about that wise-guy lawyer?" The judge laid down his fork, and resting his chin on his hands said, "Up in our town there lives a widow who has a dog. Whenever there is a full moon, that dog barks and barks all night."

Then the judge quietly resumed his eating. One person asked, "But Judge, what about the dog and the moon?"

He replied, "Well, the moon just keeps right on shining!"

Of all sins, there is perhaps none more insidious than slander. When we are misrepresented, the natural reaction is to return evil for evil. Yet the evidence of real Christlikeness is to be able to reward evil with good and go right on living for the Lord. We are to be like our Savior, who did not retaliate even when He was horribly mistreated and slandered and led to the cross (Mk. 15:3-5; 1 Pet. 2:21-23).

Oh, for grace today to keep on shining for God amid all the "barking dogs" around us. By: M.R. DeHaan [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

I want the love that always sweetly bears
Whate'er my Father's hand may choose to send;
I want the love that patiently endures
The wrongs that come from enemy or friend.
—Anon.

It's not always kind to respond in kind.

Mark 15:4 Then Pilate questioned Him again, saying, "Do You not answer? See how many charges they bring against You!"

- **Do You not answer?** Mt 26:62 27:13 Joh 19:10
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- See Table with Parallel Passages to Mark 15:1
- See Table with Parallel Passages to Mark 15:2

Related Passages:

Mt 27:13 Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" 14And **He did not answer** him with regard to even a single charge, so the governor was quite amazed.

PILATE OFFERS JESUS ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO DEFEND HIMSELF

Then Pilate questioned Him again saying, "Do You not answer? See how many charges they bring against You!" At this point Jesus has had enough. Not only has Pilate pronounced Him not guilty, the barrage of charges from the Jewish leaders had no merit. He refused to descend to their level.

Wuest writes "Swete says: "The Lord preserves a strict silence, as He had done when false witnesses had given contradictory evidence before Caiaphas. To Pilate this self-restraint was incomprehensible; he invited answers from the Prisoner, and, when He remained silent, expressed great astonishment." Expositors remarks: "The governor had never seen a prisoner like this before. He does not believe Him to be a political pretender, but he sees that He is a remarkable man, and feels that he must proceed cautiously, groping his way amid the parties and passions of this strange people.""

Gilbrant - Pilate was in a dilemma. He could find no reason to pursue Jesus' trial. At the same time, he knew it would be disadvantageous politically to discharge a prisoner who refused to even plead not guilty.

Mark 15:5 But Jesus made no further answer; so Pilate was amazed.

- **Jesus:** Isa 53:7 Joh 19:9
- **Pilate:** Ps 71:7 Isa 8:18 Zec 3:8 Mt 27:14 1Co 4:9
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- See Table with Parallel Passages to Mark 15:1
- See Table with Parallel Passages to Mark 15:2

Related Passages:

Mt 27:14 And **He did not answer** him with regard to even a single charge, so the governor was quite amazed.

PILATE SHOCKED THAT JESUS MAKES NO DEFENSE

But Jesus made no further answer; so Pilate was amazed- Although Matthew and Mark do not record Pilate's first not guilty verdict ([see above](#)) against Jesus, they do record a subsequent barrage of repeated accusations against Jesus in an attempt to force Pilate to reverse his verdict of "not guilty" (cf Lk 23:4, Jn 18:38). In stark contrast to the angry lying accusations of the Jews, Jesus is majestically silent! **No further answer** is a strong double negative indicating Jesus was completely silent!

And Pilate's reaction was that he was **amazed** ([thaumazo](#))! Pilate marveled that such an obviously innocent man would not even defend himself. Pilate is marveling that the Jews are falsely accusing Him of crimes that would warrant the death penalty and yet He offered no self-defense (cf Mk 15:4 **See how many charges they bring against You!**)! In truth, He did not have to because Pilate had already declared Him not guilty (Lk 23:4, Jn 18:38).

It is notable that **amazed** is in the [present tense](#) indicating that Pilate "continued to feel wonder and astonishment at the refusal of Jesus to bring any pressure to bear on the governor in His own behalf. He recognized it as a difficult thing to do, and he somehow admired Jesus for it. It did not lead Pilate to conclude that Jesus was guilty as charged." (Hiebert)

Barclay - "He knew that the lines of communication were broken. The hatred of the Jews was an iron curtain which no words could penetrate. The cowardice of Pilate in face of the mob was a barrier no words could pierce."

Note [in the table above at this point in the interrogation](#) when Pilate learned Jesus was from Galilee, he transferred the case to Herod Antipas. This second phrase of the political trial is recorded only by Luke 23:5-12+. Jesus would not say a single word to this evil ruler and murderer of John the Baptist. He will not cast His pearls before pigs (Matt. 7:6). Once more the prophecy of Isaiah 53:7 is being fulfilled, "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth".

Gilbrant - The reasons for Jesus' silence were no doubt the same as when He had stood before Caiaphas (Mark 14:60, 61) and before Herod (Luke 23:9). He was aware of the falseness of the charges and of the certainty of the condemnation. The main reason, however, was His submissiveness to the known will of God. Many prophecies were fulfilled as He "opened not his mouth" (Isaiah 42:1-4; 53:7).

In His silence Jesus fulfilled OT prophecies

Isaiah 42:1-2 "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. 2 "He will not cry out or raise His voice, Nor make His voice heard in the street.

Isaiah 53:7+ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.

Comment: In Acts 8:32+ Luke records the last part of Isaiah's passage "HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER; AND AS A LAMB BEFORE ITS SHEARER IS SILENT, SO HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH." This was a portion of the passages of Scripture the Ethiopian Eunuch was reading which led to his salvation as Phillip preached Jesus to him beginning with Isaiah's prophecy (Acts 8:34, 35+).

Warren Wiersbe - But Jesus still answered nothing, so that Pilate marveled. MARK 15:5

To everything there is a season," King Solomon wrote, "a time for every purpose under heaven," and he included in his list "a time to keep silence, and a time to speak" (Eccles. 3:1, 7).

Most of us can recall times when we should have spoken up and did not and also times when we should have kept quiet but spoke up. Jesus knew how to handle both of these disciplines, and we clearly see him doing it during his so-called trials after his arrest.

Jesus was silent before his accusers. The Jewish religious leaders—the chief priests, the elders, scribes, and council—were determined to kill Jesus and even enlisted false witnesses to strengthen their case. These same people accused Jesus when he stood before Pilate, but he did not answer the accusers or defend himself. When the high priest put Jesus under oath, he admitted that he was indeed the Son of God (Matt. 26:62–64), but he never responded to the accusations of the leaders. This fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth" (Isa. 53:7). "And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing" (Matt. 27:12). The Good Shepherd was being treated like a lamb in the slaughterhouse. In a few hours, he would lay down his life for the sheep. All who follow Jesus will on some occasion be falsely accused even as he was; like he did,

let's allow God to control our speech and bless our silence.

Jesus was silent before King Herod (Luke 23:6–12). Pilate the politician, trying to escape making a decision about Jesus, sent him to Herod Antipas, the man who had ordered the execution of John the Baptist. Herod was anxious to meet Jesus and hoped to see him do a miracle, but Jesus said nothing to Herod and did nothing for Herod. Jesus was not a religious entertainer. When Herod had killed John the Baptist, he had silenced the voice of God. Herod had listened to John speak but had not obeyed the Word of God, and according to King David, when God keeps silence, it's like our going down into the pit of death (Ps. 28:1). God's Word is alive and powerful (Heb. 4:12), and if we believe and obey, it imparts life, but if we reject it, it brings death. Moses and Aaron brought God's living Word to Pharaoh in Egypt, but he would not listen; death came to the land. We who are children of God must obey him, or he may not speak to us and our sin will "kill" our witness and our service, and, if we don't repent, may also kill us. "There is sin leading to death" (1 John 5:16).

Jesus was silent before Pilate (John 19:9). Yes, Jesus answered some of Pilate's questions, but when asked, "Where are you from?" Jesus gave no reply. The thing that frightened Pilate was our Lord's claim that he was the Son of God, the Ruler over a special kingdom. Pilate was a good politician but a poor theologian, and could not understand that Jesus ruled over a spiritual kingdom that came from heaven, a kingdom that one day would destroy the Roman Empire. Rome succeeded by murder, lies, and oppressive authority, but Jesus ruled through life, truth, and loving authority. Like most world leaders today, Pilate could not understand that at all.

Through his Word and by his Spirit, God is speaking to his church today. Are we listening? "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" is found seven times in the last book of the Bible!

My soul, wait silently for God alone. Psalm 62:5

Mark 15:6 Now at the feast he used to release for them any one prisoner whom they requested.

NET Mark 15:6 During the feast it was customary to release one prisoner to the people, whomever they requested.

NLT Mark 15:6 Now it was the governor's custom each year during the Passover celebration to release one prisoner-- anyone the people requested.

ESV Mark 15:6 Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked.

NIV Mark 15:6 Now it was the custom at the Feast to release a prisoner whom the people requested.

GNT Mark 15:6 Κατ' ὅρον ἐπὶ λυεῖν αὐτοῦ ἑνὸς ἀποκρινομένου ἐκ τῶν αἰτουμένων.

- Mt 26:2,5 27:15 Lu 23:16,17 Joh 18:39,40 Ac 24:27 25:9
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- See Table with Parallel Passages to Mark 15:1ff
- See Table with Parallel Passages to Mark 15

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:15 Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the people any one prisoner whom they wanted.

Luke 23:17 [Now he was obliged to release to them at the feast one prisoner.]

John 18:39 "But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I release for you the King of the Jews?" 40 So they cried out again, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber.

THIRD PHASE OF ROMAN TRIAL BEFORE PILATE

Mark totally omits mention of the second phase of the Roman Trial before Herod Antipas (recorded only in Luke 23:6-12 - [see above for table summarizing the "Six Mock Trials"](#)), the murderer of John the Baptist.

Akin - These are some of the most ironic verses (v6-14) in all of the Bible. The true Son of the Father, sinless and innocent, will be beaten and crucified. The other son of the Father, Barabbas, sinful and guilty, will be set free because Jesus became his substitute! The sovereign providence and plan of God could not be more clearly on display.

Now at the feast he used to release for them any one prisoner whom they requested - Pilate now had a problem. He knew Jesus was not guilty. Herod Antipas had not helped him because he provided no guilty verdict. He did not to offend the Jews. So he seems to hope that this "tradition" of releasing a prisoner will placate the Jews. Little did he know that they wanted Jesus dead not freed.

John MacArthur writes that "When the Jewish leaders told Pilate, "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar" (John 19:12), he understood exactly what they were threatening. Years later, around A.D. 36, Pilate blundered again when he unwisely ordered his troops to ambush a group of Samaritan worshipers. When the people of Samaria complained to his immediate superior, the Roman legate of Syria, Pilate was summoned back to Rome. After that, little is known about him. According to tradition, he was banished in disgrace to Gaul where he eventually committed suicide." (Ibid)

Believer's Study Bible - Since the Feast of the Passover was observed in commemoration of the release of the Hebrews from Egyptian bondage, the Roman governor customarily released a prisoner during the Feast as a symbolic gesture of goodwill. Pilate thought the people would choose Jesus, but they chose Barabbas instead.

Note: The following table is an attempt to line up parallel passages from the 4 Gospel accounts on the same row and to identify the passages found only in one Gospel with **yellow highlighting**. In some cases it is difficult to state with certainty which passage in a particular Gospel comes next in time sequence. If you see a passage you do not think fits in the sequence please send an email with your explanation.

From the chart below note that Luke provides a much briefer account of Barabbas compared with Mark 15:6-11 (and Mt 27:15-18, 20-25). Only Matthew records the message of Pilate's wife (Mt 27:19). While Luke does mention Barabbas' crimes (Lk 23:19), he does not explain the custom of releasing a prisoner which is described by Mark (Mk 15:6) and Matthew (Mt 27:15).

- Color Legend - **Pilate's words.** **Jew's words.** **Barabbas.**

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
WHOM DO YOU WANT ME TO RELEASE?			
<p>Mt 27:15 Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the people any one prisoner whom they wanted.</p> <p>16 At that time they were holding a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas.</p> <p>17 So when the people gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?"</p> <p>18 For he knew that because of envy they had handed Him over.</p>	<p>Mk 15:6+ Now at the feast he used to release for them any one prisoner whom they requested.</p> <p>7 The man named Barabbas had been imprisoned with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the insurrection.</p> <p>8 The crowd went up and began asking (present tense) him to do as he had been accustomed to do for them.</p> <p>9 Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?"</p> <p>10 For he was aware that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy.</p>	<p>Lk 23:17 [<i>Now he was obliged to release to them at the feast one prisoner.</i>]</p> <p>LUKE DOES NOT RECORD THIS INTERCHANGE BETWEEN PILATE & THE JEWS</p>	<p>Jn 18:39 But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover; Do you wish then that I release for you the King of the Jews?</p>

<p>19 While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, "Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him." (Picture)</p>			
<p>20 But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to put Jesus to death. 21 But the governor said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." 22 Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all *said, "Crucify Him!" 23 And he said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they kept shouting all the more, saying, "Crucify Him!" 24 When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves." 25 And all the people said, "His blood shall be on us and on our children!"</p>	<p>11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask him to release Barabbas for them instead. 12 Answering again, Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?" 13 They shouted back, "Crucify Him!" 14 But Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify Him!"</p>	<p>Lk 23:18 But they cried out all together, saying, "Away with this man, and release for us Barabbas!" 19 (He was one who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection made in the city, and for murder. 20 Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again. 21 but they kept on calling out, saying, Crucify, Crucify Him! 22 And he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has this man done? I have found in Him no guilt demanding death; therefore I will punish Him and release Him."</p>	<p>Jn 18:40 So they cried out again, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber." Jn 19</p>
<p>26 Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.</p>	<p>15 Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.</p>	<p>23 But they were insistent, with loud voices asking that He be crucified. And their voices began to prevail. 24 And Pilate pronounced sentence that their demand be granted.</p>	<p>John 19:1 Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him.</p>
<p align="center"><u>SEE NEXT TABLE</u> <u>BARABBAS RELEASED</u></p>			

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

The warning dream of Pilate's wife (? [Procla or Procula](#)) is not found in any other Gospel. She had the message of her dream sent to Pilate who seated on the judgment seat (bema - SAME WORD USED OF THE PLACE BEFORE WHICH EVERY BELIEVER MUST STAND SOME DAY - 2 Cor 5:10+) at "**The Pavement**" ([Gabbatha](#)) ([See picture](#)). Both Romans and Greeks viewed dreams as an important way their false gods spoke (e.g., viewing them as "[omens](#)"), albeit in this case the dream may have originated from the true and living God (but we cannot be dogmatic, cf warning in a dream in Mt 2:12). Whatever the content of the dream was, it was sufficient to convince Pilate's wife that Jesus was righteous and presumably innocent. One can only imagine Pilate's thoughts (and fears) at that moment. Notice that Pilate's wife does not say release Jesus, but **have nothing to do with Him**, something he was already actively trying to do! This pagan woman dreaming of Jesus does raise the question [Is God giving people in closed countries dreams and visions to bring them to faith in Christ?](#) ([see discussion](#)) (See also [Christian dream interpretation? Are our dreams from God?](#))

Can you imagine the pressure intensifying on Pilate to release or to condemn Jesus? Apparently while Pilate was being warned, the chief priests were persuading the crowd to ask for Barabbas' life and Jesus death! (Mt 27:20)

John MacArthur comments on Pilate ritually washing his hands in **Mt 27:24** - It was ironic, and doubtlessly intentional, that the governor chose a Jewish ritual to depict his renunciation of responsibility for Jesus' fate. If the ruling elders of a city were not able to determine the identity of a murderer, the Mosaic law provided that they could publicly wash their hands, pray to God, and thereby absolve themselves of any guilt regarding their inability to render justice (Dt 21:6,7). Using a modified form of that Jewish ceremony which he had heard of, Pilate proclaimed he was innocent of this innocent Man's blood. Doubtlessly with a tone of both dismay and disgust, the governor then said, "See to that yourselves." And when he gave them what they wanted, the people gave him what he wanted. If he would permit Jesus' death, they would assume all blame. "His blood be on us and on our children!" they shouted. That declaration did not, of course, absolve Pilate of guilt, but it did proclaim for all time the people's acknowledgment of their own guilt. They soon forgot that assumption of guilt, however, and not many months later the Sanhedrin self-righteously rebuked the apostles for holding them accountable for Christ's blood (Acts 5:28). The multitude of perhaps several thousand Jews who stood outside the Praetorium made their verdict in behalf of all Israel. It was that verdict, acknowledged by all the other unbelieving Jews through their silence, that caused the branch of Israel to be broken off the tree of God's redemptive blessing (Ro 11:17). It is no wonder that since that fearful day, as a nation and as individuals, unredeemed Jews have been under the chastening hand of God. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Matthew)

GOSPEL OF MARK

Mark 15:8 records that the Jews were asking Pilate to release a prisoner as was the custom at **the Passover** (cf Jn 18:39, Mt 27:15). John MacArthur comments that "Each year, the governor would grant amnesty to one sentenced criminal of the people's choice as a way to cultivate goodwill and to demonstrate Rome's mercy. Pilate thought the crowd would select Jesus, thereby solving his dilemma." (As an aside, this "tradition" is not recorded in any extra-Biblical source.) This "tradition" gave Pilate another opportunity to avoid executing an innocent Man and so he asked the Jews if they would like him to release **the King of the Jews** (Mk 15:9), **Jesus Who is called Christ** (Messiah) (Mt 27:17).

GOSPEL OF JOHN

John 18:39 - King of the Jews - Pilate is mocking the Jewish leaders for he knew they had vehemently rejected Jesus as their **King**. Another consideration (but only speculative) is that Pilate hoped to play off the sympathies of those in the crowd who had proclaimed Him as King in His triumphal entry.

John 18:40 calls **Barabbas** a **robber** which is the Greek word *lestes* a word that describes one who steals openly and with violence in contrast to a thief or [kleptes](#) who steals primarily by stealth. Judas **was a thief** ([kleptes](#) - John 12:6) but was not violent, while **Barabbas** was a robber (*lestes*) who "had committed murder" (Mk 15:7). It is also notable that the word **lestes** is used to describe the **two thieves** who were crucified with Jesus (Mt 27:38, 44, Mk 15:27). The irony is that Luke had just used the word *lestes* when Jesus was arrested in the Garden and had addressed "the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders who had come against Him," asking "**Have you come out with swords and clubs as you would against a robber** (*lestes*)?" (Lk 22:52+) In fact it was the Jewish leaders who had made the Temple Court of the Gentiles into a **robber's den** (Lk 19:46+), and who now compounded their sin by asking Pilate to release the real **robber** Barabbas and crucify the innocent Jesus!

Fruchtenbaum summarizes Pilate's attempts to release Jesus -

Once again Pilate attempted to release Yeshua. He offered the people a choice between Yeshua and Barabbas. This is recorded in Mark 15:6–10. Pilate attempted to have the Messiah released by offering the crowd a choice between Jesus and Barabbas. The irony of the situation must not be missed! Barabbas was guilty of the very crime of which Jesus was accused: sedition or rebelling against Rome. Furthermore, we know from other contemporary sources that the entire name of the guilty one was Jesus Barabbas. The name Barabbas means “son of the father.” So the prisoner who was going to be released was “Jesus, son of the father.” But the Lord Jesus, the Son of the Father, was being accused of sedition and would die on the other’s behalf.

At this point in the proceedings, Pilate received a message from his wife. We find this recorded in Matthew 27:17–19:

When therefore they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered him up. And while he was sitting on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have you nothing to do with that righteous man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

According to tradition, Pilate’s wife’s name was Claudia. She apparently was more sensitive to spiritual things and had received a troubling dream concerning the person of Jesus. In this dream, He was clearly revealed as a righteous man. She also had a sense of impending doom that if Pilate gave in and condemned Jesus to death, dire consequences would result upon the family. Apparently, she had already gone through a night of suffering, realizing that the decision Pilate would make would determine their destiny also.

After Pilate received the warning from his wife, he gave the people the choice between Yeshua and Barabbas. This is recorded in Matthew 27:20–22: Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. But the governor answered and said unto them, Which of the two will ye that I release unto you? And they said, Barabbas. Pilate said unto them, What then shall I do unto Jesus who is called Christ? They all say, Let him be crucified.

The Jewish leaders in the meantime had moved through the crowd, inciting the people to ask for Barabbas’ release and to demand the Crucifixion of Yeshua (Mt 27:20). Pilate’s second attempt to have Yeshua released was foiled.

Pilate attempted a third time to release Jesus. We see this in John 19:1–6. Pilate’s third attempt in verse 1 was another compromise, for he had Jesus **scourged**. Pilate’s apparent hope was that when the people saw Jesus after His scourging, they would be sympathetic toward Him and would call for His release. (Ibid)

Mark 15:7 The man named Barabbas had been imprisoned with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the insurrection.

- Mt 27:16 Lu 23:18,19,25
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- See Table with Parallel Passages to Mark 15

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:16 At that time they were holding a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas.

Luke 23:18; 19; 25 But they cried out all together, saying, “Away with this man, and release for us Barabbas!”
19 (He was one who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection made in the city, and for murder.

The man named Barabbas had been imprisoned with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the insurrection -
Here Mark gives us some background to help understand the subsequent decision of Pilate to release **Barabbas** instead of Jesus.

MacArthur - Ironically, the name **Barabbas** means “son of the father.” Here the lawbreaking son of a human father was being offered to the people in the place of the sinless Son of the divine Father. Aware of Jesus’ popularity from just a few days earlier (Mark 11:8–

10), the governor was confident the crowd would never choose Barabbas. Pilate's plan was simple: when the multitude selected Jesus, there would be nothing the Jewish council could do. He could preserve justice and at the same time garner favor with the people.

Question: [Who was Barabbas in the Bible?](#)

Answer: Barabbas is mentioned in all four gospels of the New Testament: Matthew 27:15–26; Mark 15:6–15; Luke 23:18–24; and John 18:40. His life intersects that of Christ at the trial of Jesus.

Jesus was standing before [Pontius Pilate](#), the Roman governor who had already declared Jesus innocent of anything worthy of death (Luke 23:15). Pilate knew that Jesus was being railroaded and it was “out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him” (Mark 15:10), so he looked for a way to release Jesus and still keep the peace. Pilate offered the mob a choice: the release of Jesus or the release of Barabbas, a well-known criminal who had been imprisoned “for an insurrection in the city, and for murder” (Luke 23:19).

The release of a Jewish prisoner was customary before the feast of Passover (Mark 15:6). The Roman governor granted clemency to one criminal as an act of goodwill toward the Jews whom he governed. The choice Pilate set before them could not have been more clear-cut: a high-profile killer and rabble-rouser who was unquestionably guilty, or a teacher and miracle-worker who was demonstrably innocent. The crowd chose Barabbas to be released.

Pilate seems to have been surprised at the crowd's insistence that Barabbas be set free instead of Jesus. The governor stated that the charges against Jesus were baseless (Luke 23:14) and appealed to the crowd three times to choose sensibly (verses 18–22). “But with loud shouts they insistently demanded that he be crucified, and their shouts prevailed” (verse 23). Pilate released Barabbas and handed over Jesus to be scourged and crucified (verse 25).

In some manuscripts of Matthew 27:16–17, Barabbas is referred to as “Jesus Barabbas” (meaning “Jesus, son of Abba [Father]”). If Barabbas was also called “Jesus,” that would make Pilate's offer to the crowd even more spiritually loaded. The choice was between Jesus, the Son of the Father; and Jesus, the Son of God. However, since many manuscripts do not contain the name “Jesus Barabbas,” we cannot be certain that was his name.

The story of Barabbas and his release from condemnation is a remarkable parallel to the story of every believer. We stood guilty before God and deserving of death (Romans 3:23; 6:23a). But then, due to no influence of our own, Jesus was chosen to die in our stead. He, the Innocent One, bore the punishment we rightly deserved. We, like Barabbas, were allowed to go free with no condemnation (Romans 8:1). And Jesus “suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18ESV).

What happened to Barabbas after his release? The Bible gives no clue, and secular history does not help. Did he go back to his life of crime? Was he grateful? Did he eventually become a Christian? Was he affected at all by the prisoner exchange? No one knows. But the choices available to Barabbas are available to us all: surrender to God in grateful acknowledgment of what Christ has done for us, or spurn the gift and continue living apart from the Lord. (Source: [GotQuestions.org](#))

Mark 15:8 The crowd went up and began asking him to do as he had been accustomed to do for them.

NET Mark 15:8 Then the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to release a prisoner for them, as was his custom.

NLT Mark 15:8 The crowd went to Pilate and asked him to release a prisoner as usual.

ESV Mark 15:8 And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them.

NIV Mark 15:8 The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

GNT Mark 15:8 καὶ ὁ ὄχλος ῥῥατο αὐτὸν σθαῖ καθὼς ποιεῖ αὐτοῦς.

- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- See Table with Parallel Passages to Mark 15

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:17 So when the people gathered together, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” 18 For he knew that because of envy they had handed Him

over. 19 While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, "Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him."

John 18:39-16 "But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I release for you the King of the Jews?"

PETITIONING PILATE FOR HIS ANNUAL "AMNESTY" GIFT

The crowd went up and began asking him - Asking is in the [present tense](#).

to do as he had been accustomed to do for them - **Been accustomed** is in the [imperfect tense](#) (again and again). This indicates Pilate had released a prisoner on the Passover before. This was his golden opportunity to set Jesus free, for he knew (likely) that Jesus was popular with the crowd and would likely chose Jesus to be set free. He underestimated the devious determined resolve of the Jewish religious leaders as described in Mk 15:11!

Akin - Pilate saw this as a way out of a tough situation. He has already told the Jewish leaders, "I find no fault (guilt) in this man" (John 18:38). Further, his wife had warned him, "Have nothing to do with this righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream" (Matt. 27:19). Superstitious and perhaps with a tinge of conscience remaining, Pilate asks the crowd, hopeful for a positive response, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" (v. 9). Mark adds a third motivation Pilate had for releasing Jesus, "For he perceived (knew) that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up." (v. 10). If the people went with his option he could release an innocent man and stick it to the Sanhedrin as well.

Mark 15:9 Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?"

NET Mark 15:9 So Pilate asked them, "Do you want me to release the king of the Jews for you?"

NLT Mark 15:9 "Would you like me to release this 'King of the Jews'?" Pilate asked.

ESV Mark 15:9 And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?"

NIV Mark 15:9 "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate,

GNT Mark 15:9 δ Πιλ τοϛ πεκρ θη α το ς λ γων, Θ λετε πολ σω μ ν τ ν βασιλ α τ ν ουδα ων;

KJV Mark 15:9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

- **Do you want:** Mt 27:17-21 Joh 18:39 Jn 19:4,5,14-16 Ac 3:13-15
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:17 So when the people gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?"

Notice that Pilate here is addressing this question not to the religious leaders but to the Jewish people in the crowd.

Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" - This is an "in your face" snub to the Jewish religious leaders, for later in John 19:21 John records "the chief priests of the Jews were saying to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews'; but that He said, 'I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." (Jn 19:22).

Mark 15:10 For he was aware that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy.

NET Mark 15:10 (For he knew that the chief priests had handed him over because of envy.)

NLT Mark 15:10 (For he realized by now that the leading priests had arrested Jesus out of envy.)

ESV Mark 15:10 For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up.

NIV Mark 15:10 knowing it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him.

GNT Mark 15:10 γ νωσκεν γ ρ τι δι φθ νον παραδεδ κεισαν α τ ν ο ρχιερε ς.

KJV Mark 15:10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

- **envy**: Ge 4:4-6 37:11 1Sa 18:8,9 Pr 27:4 Ec 4:4 Mt 27:18 Ac 13:45 Tit 3:3 Jas 3:14-16 4:5 1Jn 3:12
- James Stalker - [Back to Pilate](#)
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:18 For he knew that because of envy they had handed Him over.

ENVY NOT LOYALTY MOTIVATED LEADERS

For he was aware - Was aware is in the [imperfect tense](#) which Robertson says is "descriptive of Pilate's growing apprehension from their conduct which increased his intuitive impression at the start. It was gradually dawning on him."

that the chief priests had handed Him over ([paradidomi](#)) because of envy - In other words the chief priests were not loyal to Rome (as some of their accusations against Jesus may have suggested). Pilate saw through their ruse recognizing that their motive was envy of Jesus not loyalty to Rome.

Gilbrant explains - "Pilate grasped at this opportunity, having decided to let Jesus go. He was, however, determined not to endanger his own position. He knew the priests were envious of Jesus because of His fame, His power, and His popularity with the crowds. His clear teaching and invincible wisdom threatened their entire system. Pilate must have reasoned that even the Jewish leaders would not ask for the release of a condemned, murdering insurrectionist when they were accusing Jesus of insurrection. While he was waiting for their answer, hoping for a way out of his own personal dilemma, there was a sudden interruption, as recorded in Matthew 27:19. His wife sent a message warning him not to have anything to do with Jesus because she had been so warned in a dream." Pilate's anxiety must have skyrocketed on receipt of this word from his wife!

MacArthur adds "The governor recognized their motivation for executing Jesus had nothing to do with loyalty to Rome, and everything to do with safeguarding their influence and prestige with the people. Unmoved by any option and driven by jealousy and pride, they rejected their own Messiah, the Son of God, because He exposed their hypocrisy, challenged their authority, and threatened their religion and power. Put simply, He performed miracles, they could not; He proclaimed truth, they did not; He was from God, and they were not.

Envy ([5355](#))([phthonos](#)) describes pain felt and malignity conceived at the sight of excellence or happiness. It means not just wanting what another person has, but also resenting that person for having it. It is an attitude of ill-will that leads to division and strife and even murder. When we envy, we cannot bear to see the prosperity of others, because we ourselves feel continually wretched. The English word **envy** is interesting as it is derived from the Latin **in** = against and **video** = to look, "to look with ill-will," etc., toward another, and obviously is an evil strongly condemned in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

To **envy** is to feel a grudging discontent aroused by the possessions, achievements, or qualities of another along with the desire to have for oneself something possessed by another. To **envy** another is to show spiteful malice and resentment over another's advantage. To **envy** is to possess a discontented feeling that arises in one's selfish heart in view of the superiority of another, and being nearly tantamount to the expression of jealousy. The one who envies possesses a malignant passion that sees in another qualities that it covets, and can even degenerate into hatred for their possessor. When we feel **envy** towards others our basic desire is to degrade them, not so much because we aspire after elevation as because we delight in obscuring those who are more deserving. It follows that **envying** while seemingly just an "innocent" sin is in fact one of the most odious and detestable of all vices.

David Jeremiah - AN EQUAL-OPPORTUNITY SIN

[Pilate] knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy. MARK 15:10

One of the largest and most active federal government agencies is the EEOC—the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. They are responsible for the statement seen nearly everywhere today: ". . . does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." The EEOC's goal is to make sure everyone gets treated fairly in the workplace and other public and private venues.

Many people are surprised to find that jealousy is an equal-opportunity sin. People think only the poor, the ungifted, the lower classes, the uneducated, or the common man ever get jealous. After all, of whom or what would "the rich and famous" have to be jealous?

Yet anyone can be jealous of someone who has something he or she wants but doesn't have. In Jesus' day, the Pharisees were jealous of Jesus because He was loved and appreciated by the people. Mark 15:10 says that the Pharisees handed Jesus over to Pilate "because of envy." Anyone who is dissatisfied and discontent is a prime candidate for jealousy and envy.

The strongest defense against the attacks of jealousy is a heart that is grateful for what God has done in your life and for what He is doing in the lives of others.

Mark 15:11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask him to release Barabbas for them instead.

NET Mark 15:11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas instead.

NLT Mark 15:11 But at this point the leading priests stirred up the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus.

ESV Mark 15:11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead.

NIV Mark 15:11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

GNT Mark 15:11 ο ὁ ρχιερεις ν σεισαν τ ν χλον να μ λλον τ ν Βαραββ ν πολ σ α το ς.

- Ho 5:1 Mt 27:20 Joh 18:40 Ac 3:14
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:20 But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to put Jesus to death. 21 But the governor said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas."

Luke 23:18 But they cried out all together, saying, "Away with this man, and release for us Barabbas!" 19 (He was one who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection made in the city, and for murder.)

John 18:40 So they cried out again, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber.

But - Term of contrast. This marks the turning of the tide (so to speak) of the crowd's response to Jesus.

The chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask him to release Barabbas for them instead - One can envision this brood of "snakes" subtly slithering through the crowd, stirring them up with their satanically inspired lies about Jesus! These purveyors of evil had no love for Barabbas or the crowd but were motivated by self-love and so used both of these players as pawn to achieve their goal of murdering the Son of God! The religious leaders were hardened by the deceitfulness of sin just as we all can be if refuse to confess and repent...

Sin will take you further than you ever wanted to stray!

Cost you more than you ever dreamed you would pay!

Keep you longer than you ever thought you would stay!

Stirred up (383)([anaseio](#)) is the rare verb found only here where ironically the Jews were guilty of what they accused Jesus in Luke 23:5+ the only other NT use. The verb [anaseio](#) literally means shaking up and down, and figuratively to incite, often with the sense of inciting a crowd to mob action (EXACTLY WHAT TRANSPIRED HERE IN mak 15:11!) or of causing an uproar. In Luke 23:5, the Jews used the [present tense](#) picturing Jesus as continually seeking to [foment](#) a riot among the Jewish populace. An absurd charge!

Mark 15:12 Answering again, Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?"

- **What:** Mt 27:22,23 Lu 23:20-24 Joh 19:14-16
- **whom:** Mk 15:1,2 11:9-11 Pr 2:6,7 Isa 9:6,7 Jer 23:5,6 Zec 9:9 Mt 2:2-4 Mt 21:5 Lu 23:2 Ac 5:31
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:22 Pilate *said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all *said, "Crucify Him!"

Luke 23:20 Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again, 21 but they kept on calling out, saying, "Crucify, crucify Him!" 22 And he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has this man done? I have found in Him no guilt demanding death; therefore I will punish Him and release Him." 23 But they were insistent, with loud voices asking that He be crucified. And their voices began to prevail.

John 19:14 Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!" 15 So they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." 16 So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified.

The King of the Jews

Answering again, Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?"- Pilate seems caught off guard by the crowd's request for Barabbas so has a follow up question for the crowd.

Gilbrant - The verdict lay in Pilate's power, not that of the Jews. Therefore, his question was not for information, but rather a spontaneous expression of surprise. He reminded them that they had called Jesus the "King of the Jews." Perhaps he hoped they would ask for some mild punishment.

THIS IS THE ULTIMATE QUESTION EVERY PERSON EVER BORN MUST ASK...

WHAT SHALL I DO WITH HIM WHO IS CALLED THE KING OF THE JEWS?

Mark 15:13 They shouted back, "Crucify Him!"

- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:22 Pilate *said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all *said, "Crucify Him!"

Luke 23:21 but they kept on calling out, saying, "Crucify, crucify Him!"

John 19:14 Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!" 15 So they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." 16 So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified.

THE FATAL WORDS: CRUCIFY HIM!

They shouted back, "Crucify Him!" - The Jewish crowd is now not asking but is commanding Pilate, the [aorist imperative](#) calling for him to "Do it now! Do not delay!"

NET Note - Crucifixion was the cruelest form of punishment practiced by the Romans. Roman citizens could not normally undergo it. It was reserved for the worst crimes, like treason and evasion of due process in a capital case. The Roman historian Cicero called it "a cruel and disgusting penalty" (Against Verres 2.5.63-66 §§163-70); Josephus (J. W. 7.6.4 [7.203]) called it the worst of deaths.

Shouted (2896) ([krazo](#)) refers to a loud cry or vociferation, and is a strong word expressing deep emotion. **Krazo** is one of those [onomatopoeic](#) words, the very pronunciation of which imitates the hoarse cry of the raven ([listen](#)), and can be an inarticulate and brutish sound or an exclamation of fear or pain. Abbott-Smith says "generally used of inarticulate cries, *to scream, cry out* (Aesch., etc.)" It is used of the cry of an animal, the barking of a dog and two men in a quarrel, trying to bawl each other down (so Aristophanes, Knights, 1017) "The prophet in awful earnestness, and as with a scream of anguish, cries over Israel' (Morison)"

Crucify (4717) ([stauroo](#) from **stauros** = cross, in turn from **histemi** = to stand) means literally to nail or fasten to a cross and so to crucify -- literal death by nailing to and hanging from a cross (a stake).

Question: [Why did the crowds shout, “Crucify Him!” when Pilate wanted to release Jesus?](#)

Answer: When the Sanhedrin brought Jesus before the Roman governor, [Pontius Pilate](#), Pilate could not find any fault in Jesus, and he said so three times (Luke 23:4, 14–15, 22). Late in the trial, Pilate sought a way to free Jesus (John 19:12). It was a Passover festival custom that the governor release a prisoner to the people, so, in a ploy to appease the crowd of Jewish leaders who had gathered and to secure Jesus’ release, Pilate allowed them to choose between a convicted criminal named Barabbas and Jesus. Instead of choosing Jesus, as Pilate had hoped, the crowd chose Barabbas for release. Shocked that they would free a hardened criminal, Pilate asked, “What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?” (Mark 15:12). The crowd cried out, “Crucify him!” (verse 13).

It is well that Pilate was confused by the crowd’s reaction, for barely a week earlier the people of Jerusalem had welcomed Jesus into the city with the waving of palm branches and shouts of “Hosanna!” (Matthew 21:1–11). What Pilate may not have known was the extent to which the religious and political leaders hated and opposed Jesus. Over the course of Jesus’ ministry, His teachings had alienated and angered the Pharisees, the scribes, the Herodians, and the Sadducees. Not only did Jesus point out their extreme hypocrisy on many occasions (see Matthew 23; Mark 7:1–14; Luke 20:45–47), but He also claimed to be God, which was blasphemy to the unbelieving teachers of the law (see Mark 14:60–64). The religious leaders wanted to utterly destroy Jesus (Matthew 12:14; Mark 3:6). Only His death would satisfy them.

In Jesus’ time, crucifixion was reserved for the worst of criminals. The torture a person endured on a cross would last for hours, and killing Jesus in this manner likely appealed to the religious leaders who hated Him so deeply. In an effort to hide their move against Jesus from His many supporters, the Jewish leaders arrested and tried Jesus in the middle of the night. When Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate—the only one with authority to order a crucifixion—it was still early in the morning (Matthew 27:1–2). When Pilate presented Jesus and Barabbas to the people, the chief priests whipped the crowd into a frenzy, encouraging them to call for Barabbas’s release (Mark 15:11). When Pilate asked what they wanted done to Jesus, the crowd, again influenced by the chief priests, shouted, “Crucify Him!” Pilate, the people-pleaser, gave them what they demanded. He had Jesus flogged and then turned Him over for crucifixion.

At the beginning of the week, there was a crowd in Jerusalem celebrating Jesus as the Messiah; by Friday, there was a crowd crying, “Crucify Him!” The striking change of the city’s heart naturally causes some perplexity. It’s good to remember that not everyone at the Triumphal Entry was celebrating the Lord. Most of the city was puzzled: “When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, ‘Who is this?’” (Matthew 21:10), and the Jewish leaders were indignant (verse 15). Some of the same crowd who shouted, “Hosanna!” may also have been part of the crowd shouting “Crucify Him!” but we can’t be sure. If some people did join both crowds, it may be because they had grown disillusioned with Jesus when they discovered He was not going to set up the kingdom immediately—or perhaps they disliked Jesus’ insistence that they repent. Also, it’s quite possible that the crowd gathered before Pilate at that early hour had been assembled and suborned by the Jewish leaders.

In the end, it wasn’t the crowd’s cries of “Crucify Him!” that put Jesus on the cross. Our sin did that. From the very beginning, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, the Lord had promised to send a Savior who would crush the reign of sin and death (Genesis 3:15). Throughout the ages God wove His plan to send a Savior, and that plan culminated in the person of Jesus Christ: God’s own Son who became the perfect God-man so He could take upon Himself the punishment for sin. Although wicked men were involved in Jesus’ death on the cross, His sacrifice was ultimately the will of God (Isaiah 53:10; John 10:18). The shedding of Jesus’ blood fulfilled God’s promise to mankind to provide a Savior and sealed the New Covenant (Luke 22:20). Jesus would then defeat the power of death and the grave by rising again three days later and ascending to His Father’s right hand in heaven. ([GotQuestions.org](#))

Today in the Word - ‘Crucify him!’ they shouted. - Mark 15:13

When Carrie Blackaby, age 16, was diagnosed with cancer, her father Henry didn’t understand. What was God doing? Why? But the Blackabys didn’t question God’s love. Henry writes in *Experiencing God*:

‘At times I went before the Heavenly Father, and I saw behind my daughter the Cross of Jesus Christ. I said, ‘Father, don’t ever let me look at circumstances and question your love for me. Your love for me was settled on the Cross. That has never changed and will never change for me.’ Our love relationship with the Heavenly Father sustained us through a very difficult time.’

God was pleased to heal Carrie and restore her to her family. But even if God had not done so, Henry Blackaby would have taken his stand on God’s perfect love shown through His Son Jesus.

In today’s reading, Jesus continues down the road to the Cross. While He is on trial before the Sanhedrin, Peter is outside in the courtyard. As Jesus had predicted (14:29-31), out of fear Peter three times denies knowing his Lord. When he realizes what he’s done (v. 72), Peter weeps over his faithlessness. We know that his repentance will bring Jesus’ forgiveness (John 21:15-19).

Meanwhile Jesus is taken to another trial, before the Roman governor Pontius Pilate. Blasphemy doesn’t qualify as a capital crime

here, so the Sanhedrin charges Jesus as a political rebel who is setting up his own kingdom (cf. John 18:36-37). Sensing that envy, not justice, motivates them, Pilate tries to duck responsibility by offering to release a prisoner. When the crowd calls for Barabbas's freedom and Jesus' death, he gives in to please them.

Infected by the general atmosphere, the Roman soldiers taunt and strike Jesus. They even set a crown of thorns on His head little did they know that their badge of mockery would become to the church a symbol of love!

TODAY ALONG THE WAY

In his fear and weakness, Peter denied knowing or following Jesus. How about you? Do you own Christ publicly? Do your words and actions boldly proclaim your Savior? Do you know how to answer someone who asks you about your faith?

To motivate you for witnessing, we suggest you memorize one of the following: Mark 8:38 or, if you're feeling more ambitious, 1 John 2:20-25. These verses impress upon us the seriousness of our responsibility to share the gospel. If we are ashamed of Christ, He will be ashamed of us. If we claim to know God, our actions should show it. And if we know that Jesus is the Christ, this truth should remain in us.

Tomorrow we'll follow up on this and suggest a specific way you can witness to those around you.

Mark 15:14 But Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify Him!"

- **Why:** Isa 53:9 Mt 27:4,19,24,54 Lu 23:4,14,15,21,41,47 Joh 18:38 Joh 19:6 Heb 7:26 1Pe 1:19
- **But they shouted :** Ps 69:4 Isa 53:3 Mt 27:23-25 Lu 23:23,24 Joh 19:12-15 Ac 7:54-57 19:34 22:22,23
- James Stalker - [The Shipwreck of Pilate](#)
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:23 And he said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they kept shouting all the more, saying, "Crucify Him!" 24When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves." 25And all the people said, "His blood shall be on us and on our children!"

Luke 23:22 And he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has this man done? I have found in Him no guilt demanding death; therefore I will punish Him and release Him." 23 But they were insistent, with loud voices asking that He be crucified. And their voices began to prevail.

But - Term of contrast. Pilate is still trying to turn the tide in favor of Jesus but they would have none of it.

Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has He done?" - Pilate was convinced Jesus was innocent so he makes an appeal to the crowd's sense of justice. It was a mob mentality by now and there was no reasoning with them!

But - Term of contrast. Pilate says innocent, but they cry "guilty." The religious leaders have succeeded in stirring in mob into a bloodthirsty frenzy, which has no concern for justice but only desires the cross for the Christ.

They shouted ([krazo](#)) all the more, "Crucify ([stauroo](#)) Him!" - The crowd had no answer to Pilate but instead repeated command with their shrill cry of "Crucify Him!"

CHRIST CONDEMNED Mark 15:1–15 - Croft Pentz

Christ came to help man. He healed the sick. He fed the hungry. He performed miracles. He did many wonderful works. Now He is brought before the Sanhedrin for trial.

1. THE CONSULTING—vv. 1–5
2. THE CHOOSING—vv. 6–11
3. THE CONDEMNATION—vv. 12–15

It was our sin which helped crucify Christ. It was our sins that placed the nails into His hands. Though we were not there at His crucifixion, we helped crucify Him.

Mark 15:15 Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed

NET Mark 15:15 Because he wanted to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas for them. Then, after he had Jesus flogged, he handed him over to be crucified.

NLT Mark 15:15 So to pacify the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.

ESV Mark 15:15 So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

NIV Mark 15:15 Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

KJV Mark 15:15 And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

YLT Mark 15:15 and Pilate, wishing to content the multitude, released to them Barabbas, and delivered up Jesus -- having scourged him -- that he might be crucified.

ASV Mark 15:15 And Pilate, wishing to content the multitude, released unto them Barabbas, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

CSB Mark 15:15 Then, willing to gratify the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. And after having Jesus flogged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

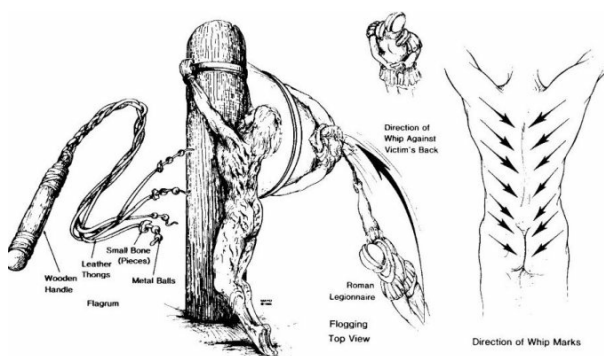
- **Wishing to satisfy the crowd:** Pr 29:25 Ps 57:11 Mt 27:26 Lu 23:24,25 Joh 19:1,16 Ac 24:27 Ac 25:9 Ga 1:19
- **after having Jesus scourged:** Mk 10:34 Ps 129:3 Isa 50:6 Mt 20:19 27:26 Lu 18:33 Joh 19:1 1Pe 2:24
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:24 When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves." 25 And all the people said, "His blood shall be on us and on our children!" (cf. Acts 5:28+). 26 Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

Luke 23:24 And Pilate pronounced sentence that their demand be granted. 25 And he released the man they were asking for who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, but he delivered Jesus to their will.

John 19:16 So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified.



Schematic of Roman Scourging - click to enlarge

PILATE PERCEIVES CROWD READY TO RIOT!

Matthew tell us Pilate was about to have a huge problem for "a riot was starting." (Matthew 27:24)

Wishing to satisfy the crowd - Literally "wishing to content the multitude." The persistent cries of the crowd for Christ's crucifixion convinced Pilate "that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves." (Mt 27:24)

THOUGHT - We need to learn from Pilate's fatal mistake to not make decisions that please the crowd. We need

to base our decisions on what pleases the Lord. There is no middle ground of compromise. Solomon's words still ring loud, clear and truth...

The fear of man brings a snare, But he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.

-- Proverbs 29:25

Pilate released Barabbas for them - Jesus death brought temporal life to a murderer but Jesus' murder made eternal life possible for all who believe in Him.

Released (630) ([apoluo](#)) is used here as a legal term meaning to set a prisoner free, so in essence Pilate was in effect saying he will grant Jesus acquittal, pardoning Him and setting Him free. Clearly the verb [apoluo](#) is a key verb in every Gospel account of Jesus' trial before Pilate, the 19 uses in 17 verses referring either to **release** of Jesus (as here in Lk 23:16) or **release** of a prisoner which eventually would be Barabbas.

Luke 23:16 "Therefore I will punish Him and **release** Him."

Luke 23:17 Now he was obliged to **release** to them at the feast one prisoner.]

Luke 23:18 But they cried out all together, saying, "Away with this man, and **release** for us Barabbas!"

Luke 23:20 Pilate, wanting to **release** Jesus, addressed them again,

Luke 23:22 And he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has this man done? I have found in Him no guilt demanding death; therefore I will punish Him and **release** Him."

Luke 23:25 And he **released** the man they were asking for who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, but he delivered Jesus to their will.

Matthew 27:15 Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to **release** for the people any one prisoner whom they wanted.

Matthew 27:17 So when the people gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to **release** for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?"

Matthew 27:21 But the governor said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to **release** for you?" And they said, "Barabbas."

Matthew 27:26 Then he **released** Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

Mark 15:6 Now at the feast he used to **release** for them any one prisoner whom they requested.

Mark 15:9 Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to **release** for you the King of the Jews?"

Mark 15:11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask him to **release** Barabbas for them instead.

Mark 15:15 Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate **released** Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

John 18:39 "But you have a custom that I **release** someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I **release** for you the King of the Jews?"

John 19:10 So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to **release** You, and I have authority to crucify You?"

John 19:12 As a result of this Pilate made efforts to **release** Him, but the Jews cried out saying, "If you **release** this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar."

And after having Jesus scourged - Just as Jesus had prophesied in Mark 10:34 declaring "They will mock Him and spit on Him, and **scourge** Him and kill Him, and three days later He will rise again."

NET Note - A Roman flogging (traditionally, "scourging") was an excruciating punishment. The victim was stripped of his clothes and bound to a post with his hands fastened above him (or sometimes he was thrown to the ground). Guards standing on either side of the victim would incessantly beat him with a whip (flagellum) made out of leather with pieces of lead and bone inserted into its ends. While the Jews only allowed 39 lashes, the Romans had no such limit; many people who received such a beating died as a result. See C. Schneider, TDNT, 4:515–19.

Scourged (5417) ([phragelloo](#) related to Latin flagellum) meant to beat severely with a multi-stranded whip whose strands had bits of metal and/or bone knotted into their ends. This was the most severe level of Roman beatings and preceded execution. BDAG states, "flog, scourge, a punishment inflicted on slaves and provincials after a sentence of death had been pronounced on them. So in the case of Jesus before the crucifixion." Victims of flagellation often collapsed and died from the flogging. See [Scourge](#).

William Lane details for us the horrific beating and punishment scourging entailed: "A Roman scourging was a terrifying punishment.

The delinquent was stripped, bound to a post or a pillar, or sometimes simply thrown to [the] ground, and was beaten by a number of guards until his flesh hung in bleeding shreds. The instrument indicated by the Marcan text, the dreaded flagellum, was a scourge consisting of leather thongs plaited with several pieces of bone or lead so as to form a chain. No maximum number of strokes was 8 prescribed by Roman law, and men condemned to flagellation frequently collapsed and died from the flogging. Josephus records that he himself had some of his opponents in Galilee scourged until their entrails were visible (War II.xxi.5), while the procurator Albinus had the prophet Jesus bar Hanan scourged until his bones lay visible (War VI. v. 3)." (William Lane, Mark, NICNT, 557).

He handed Him over (paradidomi) to be crucified (stauroo) - NLT = "turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified." In context Jesus was delivered over to the Roman soldiers (Mk 15:16).

MacArthur - "The final phase of Jesus’ Roman trial ended with a wavering politician caving to the violent demands of a raucous mob....To be scourged was to be whipped with a device known as a flagellum, consisting of a wooden handle with long leather thongs attached. The thongs, which were embedded with sharp pieces of bone and metal, were designed to rip the flesh to the bone. The victim would be tied to a post, his hands extended high over his head and his feet suspended off the ground so that his body was taught. As the scourge tore into his back, muscles would be lacerated, veins cut, and internal organs exposed. Intended to hasten death on the cross, scourging itself was sometimes fatal. After enduring such a debilitating form of torture, the Lord Jesus was handed over to be crucified."

Sinclair Ferguson says it beautifully, “without knowing it, the religious leaders and Pilate and Barabbas were all part of a tapestry of grace which God was weaving for sinners. Their actions spoke louder than their words, louder than the cries of the crowds for Jesus’ blood. Jesus was not dying for his own crimes, but for the crimes of others; not for his own sins, but the sins of others. He did not die for himself, he died for us!” Have you ever seen what they were all too blind to notice?” (Let’s Study Mark, 257).

Related Resource:

- [Are the Jews cursed because they killed Christ and asked for “His blood to be on us,” according to Matthew 27:25? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Note: The following table is an attempt to line up parallel passages from the 4 Gospel accounts on the same row and to identify the passages found only in one Gospel with **yellow highlighting**. In some cases it is difficult to state with certainty which passage in a particular Gospel comes next in time sequence. If you see a passage you do not think fits in the sequence please send an email with your explanation.

- **Color Legend** - **Jesus' words**. **Pilate's words**. **Jew's words**. **Barabbas**. **Crucify**. **Scourge**

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
BARABBAS RELEASED			
Mt 27:26 Then he released Barabbas for them;	Mk 15:15+ Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas for them,	Lk 23:24-25+ And Pilate pronounced sentence that their demand be granted. 25 And he released the man they were asking for who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, but he delivered Jesus to their will.	
JESUS SCOURGED			
Mt 27:26b but after having J e s u s scourged , he handed Him over to be crucified .	Mk 15:15b+ and after having Jesus scourged , he handed Him over to be crucified	LUKE DOES NOT DESCRIBE SOLDIERS SCOURGING OF JESUS	Jn 19:1 Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him

JESUS MOCKED BY SOLDIERS

<p>Mt 27:27-31 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him. 28 They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. 29 And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "<u>Hail, King of the Jews!</u>" 30 They spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head.</p>	<p>Mk 15:16-19+ The soldiers took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium), and they called together the whole Roman cohort. 17 They dressed Him up in purple, and after twisting a crown of thorns, they put it on Him; 18 and they began to acclaim Him, "<u>Hail, King of the Jews!</u>" 19 They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him.</p>	<p>LUKE DOES NOT DESCRIBE SOLDIER'S MOCKING JESUS</p>	<p>Jn 19:2-3 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him; 3 and they began to come up to Him and say, "<u>Hail, King of the Jews!</u>" and to give Him slaps in the face.</p>
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			<p>John 19:4-15 Pilate <u>came out</u> again and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him." 5 Jesus then <u>came out</u>, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold, the Man!" 6 So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, "Crucify, crucify!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him." 7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God." 8 Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid; 9 and he <u>entered into</u> the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" 11 Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." 12 As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out saying, "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar." 13 Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he <u>brought Jesus out</u>, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!" 15 So they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."</p>
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**JESUS DELIVERED OVER
TO BE CRUCIFIED**

<p>Matthew 27:31 After they had mocked Him, they took the scarlet robe off Him and put His own garments back on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.</p>	<p>Mark 15:20 And they led Him out to crucify Him.</p>	<p>Lk 23:25b+ but he delivered Jesus to their will.</p>	<p>John 19:16 So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified.</p>
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GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Note the "reed" (**kalamos**) in Mt 27:29, 30 (cf Mk 15:19) used to first to mock Jesus as a "scepter" then used like a "rod" to repeatedly "beat" (imperfect tense - over and over) **Him on the head**". Note that **kalamos** is not just a flimsy "reed" (like in Mt 11:7) for this Greek word was also used of a fishing rod and a rod or shaft for an arrow. These uses give us some idea of the force of the blows from the strong Roman soldiers -- while they were not a blow from a club, they were also not blows from a flimsy reed. If they were like a fishing pole in size and tensile strength, they would have been of sufficient thickness to cause significant pain, bruising and [welt](#) formation on our Lord's holy head! (cf Isaiah 53:4-5) You can begin to imagine His holy face with the sweat intermingled with blood, bruises and red welts! And He did it for YOU and for ME! (cf Isaiah 53:6, 12). **Let that thought sink in the next time you are tempted to sin!** It might cause you to pause and pass on that sin! [Hallelujah, what a Savior!](#) Hallelujah, what a Friend. Amen. [Oh, how He loves you and me \(pause, play, pray, praise Him\)](#)! (cf 1 Jn 4:19) Also remember that while they were beating Jesus on the head, there was a **crown of thorns**, the points of which were undoubtedly being driven deep into the relatively thin skin covering His [calvarium](#) forcing the points of the thorns to pierce down to the nerve (*think* pain!) and vessel rich [periosteum](#) ([pix](#), [pix2](#)) covering the bones of His skull!

Dr William Edwards describes the **Medical Aspects of Scourging** - As the Roman soldiers repeatedly struck the victim's back with full force, the iron balls would cause deep contusions, and the leather thongs and sheep bones would cut into the skin and subcutaneous tissues.⁷ Then, as the flogging continued, the lacerations would tear into the underlying skeletal muscles and produce quivering ribbons of bleeding flesh.^{2,7,25} Pain and blood loss generally set the stage for circulatory shock.¹² The extent of blood loss may well have determined how long the victim would survive on the cross. ([Read the entire article](#))

GOSPEL OF JOHN

Note that many of the details in **Jn 19:1-15** are NOT found in the other Gospels. As noted Luke has no description of the scourging or mocking of Jesus by the soldiers. As alluded to elsewhere in the notes, the scourging of Jesus was considered to be the preparation of a criminal who was to be crucified. There are some writers (D A Carson) who think that Jesus may have experienced two times of scourging, the first a milder form in an attempt to appease the Jews and a severe form in preparation for the Cross.

TIMING OF EVENTS - THIRD HOUR, SIXTH HOUR, NINTH HOUR - John 19:14 indicates that the events surrounding Jesus' trials before Pilate occurred [about](#) (i.e., it is not an exact, specific time but an approximation) the "**sixth hour**" which has created some confusion because Mk 15:25+ says "**It was the third hour when they crucified Him.**" How could Jesus have appeared before Pilate at the "**sixth hour**" and be crucified at the "**third hour**?" Given the fact that the Bible never contradicts itself (critics use this passage to say that Scripture contradicts itself), the most logical explanation is that these times reflect Jewish and Roman methods of calculating time. Mark (Mk 15:33+) and Luke (Lk 23:44+) both record that darkness was on the land from the **sixth** to the **ninth hour**, Jesus yielding up His Spirit at the **ninth hour**, which would have been 3 PM, the time when lambs were being sacrificed for the Passover (cf Jn 1:29+, 1 Cor 5:7) The apparent time discrepancy between John's **sixth hour** and Mark's **third hour** is explained below (not every scholar agrees with this explanation):

Gotquestions - Answering the question of how long Jesus was on the cross is complicated by the fact that two systems of marking time are used in the Gospels. Matthew, Mark, and Luke use the Jewish system of marking time. John uses the Roman system. Using the Jewish system, Mark says, "**They crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. And it was the third hour when they crucified him**" (Mk 15:24-25ESV). According to this, Christ's crucifixion began at 9:00 A.M. Also using the Jewish system of marking time, Matthew says that "**from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour**" (Mt 27:45ESV). That is, the darkness lasted from 12:00 noon to 3:00 P.M. This was Jesus' final three hours on the cross. At the end of that time, "when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit" (Mt 27:50). After that a Roman soldier made sure of His death (John 19:34), and Jesus' body was taken down. Jesus had been on the cross from approximately 9:00 A.M. until 3:00 P.M., a total of six hours. John adds the detail that Jesus' trial before Pontius Pilate was taking place, according to Roman time, "**about the sixth hour**" (Jn 19:14ESV). Since the Romans started counting their hours at midnight, the "sixth hour" would start at 6:00 A.M.

So, using the Roman system (Ed: John):

- **about the sixth hour** = about 6:00 A.M. Jesus is sentenced by Pilate.

Then, using the Jewish system:

- **the third hour** = 9:00 A.M. The crucifixion began. (Mk 15:25)
- **the sixth hour** = 12:00 P.M. (noon). Darkness began. (Mk 15:33, Lk 23:44)

- **the ninth hour** = 3:00 P.M. Jesus died. (**Ed**: Darkness ends. Mk 15:33. Jesus yields up His Spirit, Mt 27:45, 46-49, 50, Lk 23:44, 45, 46, cf Mk 15:34, 35-39).

Putting it all together, Jesus' trial ended about 6:00 A.M. His crucifixion began about three hours later, and He died about six hours after that. ([Gotquestions](#))

Comment: I would add that Mark 15:33+ "When the **sixth hour** came, darkness fell over the whole land until the **ninth hour**." Using the Jewish method of reckoning of time which began at sunrise which occurs at about 6:00 AM, the **sixth hour** is noon

John Grassmick - Using the Jewish method of counting hours from sunrise (and sunset) Mark alone recorded that Jesus' crucifixion took place at the **third hour**, that is, 9 a.m. This seems to conflict with the time reference "**the sixth hour**" in John 19:14. But John probably used the Roman (modern) method of counting hours from midnight (and noon); thus he put Jesus' trial before Pilate at "**about the sixth hour**," that is, approximately 6 a.m. The interval between 6 and 9 a.m. was filled with the soldiers' mockery (cf. Mk 15:16-20), Pilate's verdict on the two robbers (cf. Mk 15:27), and preparations for the crucifixions. (Bible Knowledge Commentary)

John MacArthur - Mark notes that it was the **third hour** (or 9:00 a.m.; the Jewish method of reckoning the hours of the day began about 6:00 a.m.) when they crucified Him. The statement in John 19:14, that it was "**about the sixth hour**" when Pilate sentenced Jesus earlier that morning, does not contradict what Mark says here. John was using the Roman method of reckoning time, which began counting hours at midnight. Consequently, the **sixth hour** in John's gospel referred to 6:00 a.m., three hours before Jesus was nailed to the cross. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Mark)

Pilate came out of his Praetorium three times to address the Jewish crowd - John 18:29, John 18:38, John 19:4 [See also previous note](#)). The third time Pilate brought Jesus with him, which was AFTER He had been scourged and beaten and crowned with a crown of thorns. One can only imagine His appearance. Perhaps Pilate hoped to elicit some pity from the crowd but if so it was to no avail. In Jn 19:4 Pilate pronounces his SECOND "not guilty" verdict.

Henry Morris on John 19:12 (compare Mt 27:19) - Pilate desperately wanted to release Jesus because of his superstitious fear of what the gods might do if he executed one of their own. His immediate fear of what Caesar would do to him in the present world, however, soon outweighed his fear of any future world.

The Crown of Thorns - MacDonald writes that the "**Thorns** are a symbol of the curse which sin brought to mankind (Ge 3:17-19+). Here we have a picture of the Lord Jesus bearing the curse of our sins (Galatians 3:13+), so that we might wear a crown of glory. The purple robe was also used in mockery. **Purple** was the color of royalty. But again it reminds us of how our sins were placed on Jesus in order that we might be clothed with the robe of God's righteousness (2 Cor 5:21+). How solemn it is to think of the eternal Son of God being slapped by the hands of His creatures! Mouths which He formed are now being used to mock Him!"

Wiersbe - The scourge was a leather whip, knotted and weighted with pieces of metal or bone; and many a prisoner never survived the whipping. It pains us to think that the sinless Son of God was subjected to such cruelty. He was innocent, yet He was treated as though He were guilty; and He did it for us....Sin had brought thorns and thistles into the world (Ge 3:17-19+), so it was only fitting that the Creator wear a crown of thorns as He bore the sins of the world on the cross. The very metal He had created and placed in the ground was used to make nails to pound through His hands and feet. (Ibid)

THE DAY THE LORD JESUS DIED Mark 15:15–31 Isaiah 53:3–5

There have been great days in the history of the world, but the greatest was the day the Lord Jesus died. Never again will there be a day as dark or a day as bright as that one. Let us notice three things about that day.

- I. It was a day of darkness.
 - A. For those who crucified the Saviour.
 1. They were in darkness as to what they were doing; Luke 23:33, 34.
 2. They were in darkness as to the judgment that was theirs; Luke 13:3, 5.
 - B. For Judas Iscariot, who went out forever from the presence and blessing of the Saviour; Matt. 27:3–10; Acts 1:25.
 - C. For the only begotten Son. He bore our sins, and His Father, who cannot look upon sin, turned His back upon the Son; Rom. 6:23a; Matt. 27:46.
- II. It was an unusual day.
 - A. It was a day of wrath for the pious religionists who demanded that the Lord Jesus be crucified; Mark 15:10–14.
 - B. It was a day of judgment for the Lord Jesus Christ, who was judged by God for the sins of every repentant, believing sinner;

Rom. 5:8; 2 Cor. 5:21.

C. It was a day of grace for those who trusted Christ to save them; John 3:16–18; Luke 23:34.

III. It was a day of salvation.

A. For the “moral sinner”; John 3:16.

B. For the immoral sinner; John 3:17.

C. For the believing sinner; John 3:18.

The most infamous act ever performed by man was the crucifixion of the Saviour. However, if the Lord Jesus had not died, then believing sinners could not live spiritually for time and eternity, for salvation is through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, who shed His blood for sinners (1 John 1:7–9). Is the Lord Jesus your Saviour? If He is not, I invite you now to receive Him as your personal Saviour. Adapted from Raymond Bugg

Oswald Chambers -

And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

—Mark 15:15

PILATE ALWAYS SOUGHT HIS OWN interests. That type of person is known to us even today. People belong to certain churches because it is better for their business. This sort of unsaved person acts from this point of view: “If it is Jesus Christ’s gospel that is rising in power, then I will use it to serve my own needs.” But bring that person face to face with Christ, and he will be unable to ignore the fact that Christ would make certain claims upon his life.

False teachers of religion are deceiving thousands of people by bending the gospel to suit their own purposes. And in this regard, the human mind is ready to be deceived. If you can teach someone how to ignore sin, he will listen to you. If you can tell him how to ignore the possibility of judgment for his wrongdoing, he will listen to you. This is why the cults of deception are so popular—not because they are true, but because they alter the truth to suit the carnal desires of mankind.

May God have mercy on the deceived and on the deceivers!

TODAY IN THE WORD - Mark 15:6–11 Set Free for What? A Sinner Named Barabbas

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. John 8:36

The story is told about two men who were identical twins. They shared DNA, and they were both raised by their father who was a violent alcoholic. After each of the young men left home, their lives took dramatically different paths. One chose to stay away from alcohol, attended college, got married, landed a good job and started a family. His brother, however, was also an alcoholic like their father. He was kicked out of college for failing grades and poor behavior. Unable to hold a job, this second brother continued to suffer physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. When asked about the choices he had made in life, both twins gave the same response: “Given what I grew up with, how could I choose anything else?”

When Pontius Pilate released a prisoner named Barabbas, this man found himself suddenly spared from a death sentence. Pilate, who recognized that Jesus was innocent and that the chief priests were motivated by their own self-interest, had authorized the release of one prisoner to the crowds. In accordance with the custom, Pilate suggested releasing Jesus. The crowd, however, now bloodthirsty for Jesus, demanded another man for release: a violent prisoner named Barabbas, who was part of a murderous group of insurrectionists.

What, then, became of Barabbas? The Gospels don’t tell us the rest of his story, so we don’t know how he responded to his second chance at life. Did he continue a cycle of violence? Or did he see that Jesus provided him with an opportunity at not just physical life but also spiritual life? In this way, the story of Barabbas challenges us to consider how we respond to the offer of new life through Jesus Christ.

MARK 15:15 READ: Mark 15:1-15

POLITICIANS sometimes decide issues on the basis of majority opinion rather than of principles of right and wrong. Some time ago a state governor declared that he personally believes abortion is wrong but that as a public official he would support the will of the majority.

Pilate acted in much the same way regarding Jesus. Although he knew there was no truth in the charges leveled against Christ, he caved in to the pressure of the crowd. Consequently, his name is recorded in infamy.

Few of us are in the position of appointed and elected officials who must please the majority to keep our jobs. Yet we are subject to the same kind of pressure.

A student at a Christian college was driving three companions home after a football game. They wanted to stop at a bar known for indecency, but he didn't want to. The three students came from good homes and were popular at college. He wanted to please them, and he felt tremendous pressure to go against his conscience. For a moment he hesitated, but with the Lord's help he resisted the temptation and drove instead to a family restaurant.—HVL

Lord, give me the courage to stand up for what is good and the strength to resist all temptations that might cause myself or others to sin.

MAJORITY PRESSURE

Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus ... to be crucified. - Mark 15:15

Politicians sometimes decide issues on the basis of majority pressure rather than on the principle of right and wrong. Some time ago a state governor declared that he personally believes abortion is wrong. But he said that as a public official he would support the will of the majority. Pilate acted in much the same way regarding Jesus. Although he knew there was no truth to the charges leveled against Christ, he caved in to the pressure of the crowd. Consequently his name is recorded in infamy. Few of us are in the position of appointed and elected officials who must please the majority to keep their jobs. Yet we are subject to the same kind of pressure. A Christian college student told me that one day he was driving three companions home after a football game. They wanted to stop at a bar known for indecent activities, but he didn't want to. The three students came from good homes and were popular at college. He wanted to please them, and he felt tremendous pressure to go against his conscience. For a moment he hesitated, but with the Lord's help he resisted the temptation and drove instead to a family restaurant. Lord, help us to resist majority pressure when it would lead us down the path of sin. Author: Herbert Vander Lugt If we do what's good and right, We must be true within; If we give in to what is wrong We dull our sense of sin. - Dennis J. De Haan

Unless we rely on God's power within us, we will yield to the pressures around us.

Mark 15:16 The soldiers took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium), and they called together the whole Roman cohort.

- **the soldiers:** Mt 27:27
- **Praetorium.** Joh 18:28 19:9
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Isaiah 52:14-53:8+ Just as many were astonished at you, My people, So His appearance was marred more than any man And His form more than the sons of men. 15 Thus He will sprinkle many nations, Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand. 1 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. 3 He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?

Matthew 27:27 (Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him.

JESUS BEFORE THE ROMAN SOLDIERS

John MacArthur prefaces the shameful scorn of Jesus Christ in Mark 15:16-32 writing "The four gospels are markedly restrained in their description of the physical torments Christ endured. In a day when crucifixion was a common form of capital punishment, detailed descriptions of its horrors were unnecessary since the sight of that torture was burned into the memories of everyone. What is emphasized by the New Testament writers, instead, is the irreverent mockery hurled at Jesus throughout His trial and execution. From the courtyard of Caiaphas to the judgment hall of Pilate to the cross itself, the Son of God was repeatedly treated with unrestrained scorn and derision. The blasphemous cruelty of Jesus' enemies stands in stunning contrast to the infinite mercy and grace of God, who allowed His Son to suffer unspeakable humiliation and death in order to save sinners, including blasphemers and murderers (1 Tim. 1:12-15; cf. Acts 2:36-38; 3:14-16; 4:10-12)....In describing the crucifixion of Christ in this section (15:16-32), Mark focuses on the blasphemous scoffers who derided the Lord Jesus as He was taken from Pilate's judgment hall to the cross. Against the backdrop of the soldiers' comedic parody and the sneering participants, the suffering Savior is seen ingloriously enduring the punishment for sin in obedience to His Father's will (cf. Phil. 2:8)." (MNTC-Mark)

The soldiers took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium)- These soldiers were presumably those on duty as Pilate's bodyguard. "The governor's residence (Grk "praetorium") was the Roman governor's official residence. The one in Jerusalem may have been Herod's palace in the western part of the city, or the fortress Antonia northwest of the temple area." (NET Note)

Gilbrant notes that "Evidently the scourging had been inflicted outside publicly—perhaps intended by Pilate to evoke some sense of compassion and soften the Jews' attitude toward Jesus. From Thursday night to Friday noon, Jesus was "**led**" at least 10 times, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah 53:7).

Praetorian (See diagram & model)(4232)(**praetorium** from Latin **praetorium**) refers to a detachment of soldiers serving as the palace guard. Praetorium was originally the praetor's tent in camp, with its surroundings. Originally, general's tent. In the Roman provinces it was the name for the official residence of the Roman governor, as in this passage in Mark (only use in Mark). Cp Ac23:35. It came to be applied to any spacious villa or palace. So Juvenal: "To their crimes they are indebted for their gardens, palaces (proetoria), etc."). In Rome the term was applied to the praetorian guard, or imperial bodyguard. **Zodhiates** - In the NT a governor's house, palace. Spoken of the great and magnificent palace of Herod at Jerusalem built at the northern part of the upper city, westward of the temple and overlooking it, to which there was also access from the palace over the open place called Xystus, and a bridge across the Cheesemongers' Valley or Tyropoieion Valley. With the palace were connected the three towers Hippas, Phasael, and Mariamne. In this palace the Roman procurators, whose headquarters were probably at Caesarea Maritime (Acts 23:23; 25:1), took up their residence when they visited Jerusalem. This was their tribunal (**bema** - see Mt 27:19, John 19:13) which was set up in the area of the open court before it (John 18:28, 33; 19:9). In Matt. 27:27; Mark 15:16, it seems to refer to the court or part of the palace where the procurator's guards were stationed."

And they called together the whole Roman cohort - **They** presumably refers to the soldiers who transported Jesus into the Praetorium. Matthew's version says the whole Roman cohort gathered around Him (Mt 27:27). It is as if they perceive Jesus as some sort of spectacle for their sadistic entertainment as they proceed to mock Him in the following passages (these men likely were used to seeing cruel in the gruesome events in the Roman Coliseum where gladiators would fight to the death). While the number of Roman soldiers could have been as many as 600, it at least refers to those who were on duty in Jerusalem.

Cohort (4686)(**speira**) was a Roman military technical term for the tenth part of a legion, normally containing 600 troops (Acts 10:1). **Speira** also could refer to a detachment of soldiers as in a troop, band or company (Jn 18:3) **Gilbrant** - In its earliest occurrences in classical Greek **speira** described anything "twisted or wound around or together" (Liddell-Scott). Thus it could be used of a "band" of men, a tactical unit of soldiers. In classical usage it can also denote the coils of a serpent, a mode of hairdressing, a knot in wood, etc. However, a "cohort" is its only meaning in the New Testament, a translation of the Latin cohorts. (In other Greek literature speira also represents manipulus, one-third of a cohort.) The "cohort" in the regular Roman legions typically had 600 men but could number as many as 1,000 in the auxiliary forces (all New Testament references, apparently; see Bruce, New International Commentary on the New Testament, Acts, p.202). One "**cohort**" was stationed in Jerusalem while Judea was a Roman province. This cohort was active in the arrest of Jesus (John 18:3,12), in His crucifixion (Matthew 27:27; Mark 15:16), and in the arrest of Paul (Acts 21:31). Two other "cohorts" are mentioned by name: one originally made up of volunteers recruited in Italy (Acts 10:1), the other (Acts 27:1) wearing the name of Emperor Augustus, "a title of honor bestowed on select cohort

Called together (4779) **sugkaleo** from **sun/syn** = together more intimate than "meta" + **kaleo** = to call) in the **active voice** means to call together. To convene.

Virtue Exemplified

Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps. —1 Peter 2:21

Today's Scripture: Mark 15:16-20

In the late 1940s, a young mother was stricken with polio and became an invalid. She astounded people by the way she accepted her affliction and ran her household from her bed. Her brother-in-law said to me, "I have heard a lot of talk about 'supernatural grace,' but I never knew what it was until I saw it shining through her."

We often do not know the full meaning of a virtue until we see it lived out in a person's life. Think of how Jesus responded when the soldiers mistreated Him. They pressed a crown of thorns into His head, struck Him repeatedly, and mocked Him by clothing Him in a purple robe and bowing before Him in jest (Mark 15:16-20). They were unaware that He had the power to kill every one of them by speaking a single word.

About 35 years later, Peter vividly remembered that scene. He told his readers that Christ had set an example for them as they faced persecution (1 Peter 2:18-25). In Jesus, God became a flesh-and-blood human being to show what He is like. Because Jesus lives in us by His Spirit, He expects us to exemplify His goodness and grace.

Whether we suffer like that invalid mother or endure persecution like the Master, we can demonstrate the same virtue He modeled on the cross. —Herb Vander Lugt By: Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The difficulties in our lives,
The obstacles we face,
Provide the opportunity
To show God's power and grace.
—Sper

God's love is the blessing in every trial.

Mark 15:17 They dressed Him up in purple, and after twisting a crown of thorns, they put it on Him;

NET Mark 15:17 They put a purple cloak on him and after braiding a crown of thorns, they put it on him.

NLT Mark 15:17 They dressed him in a purple robe, and they wove thorn branches into a crown and put it on his head.

ESV Mark 15:17 And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him.

NIV Mark 15:17 They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him.

- Mt 27:28-30 Lu 23:11 John 19:2-5
- James Stalker - [The Crown of Thorns](#) -
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:28-30 (They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. 29 And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!")

Luke 23:11 And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate.

John 19:2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him;

**ROMAN SOLDIERS MOCK
THE KING OF KINGS**

They dressed Him up in purple, and after twisting a crown of thorns, they put it on Him- Keep in mind Jesus was already bruised and bleeding from previous beatings (Mk 14:64–65+). In addition Jesus' ripped flesh on His back was bleeding profusely from the wounds inflicted by scourging (Mk 15:15) "Yet the calloused soldiers turned His suffering into a parody, likely borrowing the idea from Herod's men (Luke 23:11+)." (MacArthur)

NET Note - The purple cloak probably refers to a military garment which had the color of royal purple, and thus resembled a king's robe. The soldiers did this to Jesus as a form of mockery in view of the charges that he was a king (cf. 15:2).

Matthew says before they put the purple on Jesus, "they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him." (Mt 27:28) Mark has purple, Matthew has scarlet for the color "purple" (porphuran) varied from scarlet red to deep blue, depending on the variety of shell fish from which the dye was obtained. This is likely a reference to the scarlet colored mantle that comprised part of a Roman soldier's uniform. Matthew adds they put "a reed in His right hand." (Mt 27:29). LUke says "treating Him with contempt and mocking Him dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate." (Lk 23:11)

The **crown of thorns** was undoubtedly their attempt to mimic the golden laurel wreath worn by Caesar and their cry "Hail" was a mimic of the cry "Hail, Caesar."

Akin - Without any awareness of what they were doing, the crown of thorns pressed down on our Savior's head pictured God's curse on sinful humanity now being put on Jesus (Gen. 3:17-18). He indeed bears God's curse in our place. T

NET Note - The **crown** may have been made from palm spines or some other thorny plant common in Israel. In placing the **crown of thorns** on his head, the soldiers were unwittingly symbolizing God's curse on humanity (cf. Ge 3:18) being placed on Jesus. Their purpose would have been to mock Jesus' claim to be a king; the crown of thorns would have represented the "radiant corona" portrayed on the heads of rulers on coins and other artifacts in the 1st century.

THOUGHT - It is ironic that part of the curse in Ge 3:18+ was the "thorns and thistles" that would grow on the earth. While the rivulets of blood that flowed down Jesus' head from the punctures by the thorns were not atoning, they were in a sense a foreshadowing of His atoning blood shed on the Cross. Gal 3:13+ says "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"" He would take away the curse on mankind and one day the curse on the earth (cf Ro 8:22+)!

Crown (4735) (**stephanos** from **stepho** = to encircle, twine or wreath) was a wreath made of foliage or designed to resemble foliage and worn by one of high status or held in high regard. It was woven as a garland of oak, ivy, parsley, myrtle, or olive, or in imitation of these in gold. The **stephanos** was literally an adornment worn around the head as a crown of victory in the Greek athletic games, this reward being given to the runner who crossed the goal first, to the disc thrower with the longest toss, etc. Apart from recognition of athletes and winners of various kinds of competitions, in the Greco-Roman world, the awarding of a crown or wreath signified appreciation for exceptional contributions to the state or groups within it. The recipients were usually public officials or civic-minded persons serving at their own expense. Rev 4:10-11⁺ uses **stephanos** describing the time when "the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their **crowns** before the throne, saying, "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."

This was the second time Jesus was mocked by soldiers. Luke 23:11 "And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate."

COMMENT - **Contempt** is an ugly word in English which means a lack of respect accompanied by a feeling of intense dislike. The Greek verb **exoutheneo** (1848) means they treated Jesus as of no account ("count Him as nothing!"), making light of Him as One who had no merit or worth! (contrast Rev 5:9,12⁺) They **disdained** the Holy One of Israel! They had no use for Jesus (or so they thought), Who they regarded as beneath them. O, how wrong they were! And they will have all eternity to experience the gnawing feelings of regret and remorse for their horrid contempt of the One Who could have been the Savior of their souls!

Question - [What is the meaning and significance of the crown of thorns?](#)

Answer: After Jesus' sham trials and subsequent flogging, and before He was crucified, the Roman soldiers "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" (Matthew 27:29; see also John 19:2-5). While a crown of thorns would be exceedingly painful, the crown of thorns was more about mockery than it was about pain. Here was the "King of the Jews" being beaten, spit upon, and insulted by presumably low-level

Roman soldiers. The crown of thorns was the finalizing of their mockery, taking a symbol of royalty and majesty, a crown, and turning it into something painful and degrading.

For Christians, the crown of thorns is a reminder of two things: (1) Jesus was, and is, indeed a king. One day, the entire universe will bow to Jesus as the “King of kings and Lord of lords” (Revelation 19:16). What the Roman soldiers meant as a mockery, was in fact a picture of Christ’s two roles, first of suffering servant (Isaiah 53), and second of conquering Messiah-King (Revelation 19). (2) Jesus was willing to endure the pain, the insults, and the shame, all on our account. The crown of thorns, and the suffering that went with it, are long gone, and Jesus has now received the crown of which He is worthy. “But we see Him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone” (Hebrews 2:9, emphasis added).

There is further symbolism embodied in the crown of thorns. When Adam and Eve sinned, bringing evil and a curse upon the world, part of the curse upon humanity was “...cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you...” (Genesis 3:17-18, emphasis added). The Roman soldiers unknowingly took an object of the curse and fashioned it into a crown for the one who would deliver us from that curse. “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’” (Galatians 3:13). Christ, in His perfect atoning sacrifice, has delivered us from the curse of sin, of which a thorn is a symbol. While intended to be a mockery, the crown of thorns was, in fact, an excellent symbol of who Jesus is and what He came to accomplish. GotQuestions.org

Good Friday - Joni Eareckson Tada - More Precious than Silver.

They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him...Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him...And when they had mocked him...they led him out to crucify him. —Mark 15:17, 19-20

Some things are bitter and sweet at the same time. Certain kinds of fruit can be sour yet sweet. How about when a woman gives birth? She’s in pain yet she feels joy. Yes, a person can experience two different things at the same moment. Good Friday is both bitter and sweet.

That’s why, as a kid, I was so moved when I attended the Good Friday services at our little Reformed Episcopal church. The service was somber. Sometimes a black cloth was draped over the Communion table. Sad hymns were sung like “O Sacred Head Now Wounded”:

O sacred Head, now wounded,
With grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, Thine only crown;
O sacred Head, what glory,
What bliss till now was Thine!
Yet, though despised and gory,
I joy to call Thee mine.

Most of all I recall leaving the church in silence. No one casually chatted out in the narthex. It was the one day of the church year that our congregation would come together in a somber mood. As a child, the seriousness of the occasion was branded in my memory. I’m glad. Happy Scripture choruses were appropriate for Resurrection Sunday, but Friday night was for pondering the incredible weight of our sins on our Savior.

At some point today, even if just for ten minutes, meditate on Calvary. Think about the cross. Contemplate the pain our Savior went through to secure our right to sing lighthearted Scripture choruses. Good Friday is a day to taste something sweet and something sour.

Lord Jesus, bring to my mind during the bustle of everyday life that Good Friday was the day you died. Thank you for that unspeakably enormous sacrifice.

Mark 15:18 and they began to acclaim Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

NET Mark 15:18 They began to salute him: "Hail, king of the Jews!"

NLT Mark 15:18 Then they saluted him and taunted, "Hail! King of the Jews!"

ESV Mark 15:18 And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

NIV Mark 15:18 And they began to call out to him, "Hail, king of the Jews!"

- **Hail:** Mk 15:29-32 Ge 37:10,20 Mt 27:42,43 Lu 23:36,37 Joh 19:14,15
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:29 And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

John 19:3 and they began to come up to Him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and to give Him slaps in the face.

and they began to acclaim Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" - John 19:3 adds " and to give Him slaps in the face."

NET Note - "The statement Hail, King of the Jews! is a mockery patterned after the Romans' cry of Ave, Caesar ("Hail, Caesar!")."

Mark 15:19 They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him.

NET Mark 15:19 Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Then they knelt down and paid homage to him.

NLT Mark 15:19 And they struck him on the head with a reed stick, spit on him, and dropped to their knees in mock worship.

ESV Mark 15:19 And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him.

NIV Mark 15:19 Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him.

- **kept beating His head:** Mk 9:12 10:34 14:65 Job 13:9 30:8-12 Ps 22:6,7 35:15-17 Ps 69:12,19,20 Isa 49:7 50:6 52:14 53:3-5 Mic 5:1 Mt 20:18,19 Lu 18:32,33 22:63 23:11,36 Heb 12:2,3 13:13
- **and bowing:** Ge 24:52 43:28 1Ki 19:18 Es 3:2-5 Isa 45:23 Ro 11:4 14:10,11 Php 2:10
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:30 They spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head. 31 After they had mocked Him, they took the scarlet robe off Him and put His own garments back on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.

Luke 23:11 And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate.

John 19:1-5 Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him. 2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him; 3 and they began to come up to Him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and to give Him slaps in the face. 4 Pilate came out again and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him." 5 Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate *said to them, "Behold, the Man!"

Remember that Jesus had predicted He would be treated this way...

Mark 10:34+ "They will **mock** Him and **spit** on Him, and **scourge** Him and kill Him, and three days later He will rise again."

Compare Isaiah's prophecy

Isaiah 50:6 I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.

They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him - **Beating** and **spitting** and **bowing** are all in the [imperfect tense](#) depicting the soldiers one after another mercilessly carrying out these heinous acts of mockery and derision! What an evil contrast this depicts - beating and spitting, and then kneeling and bowing. One thinks of Jesus' words to Judas as apropos to these evil men, that it would be better that they had not even been born! Not only did they beat Jesus with the

reed, they then put the **reed** in His hand as if it were a king's scepter!

MacArthur- The Sanhedrin had scorned Him as a prophet just a few hours earlier (Matt. 26:68); now, Roman soldiers taunted Him as a joker-king.

Gilbrant - With raucous laughter, akin to that of hellish fiends, the soldiers mockingly bowed the knee and saluted Jesus as "King of the Jews." Pilate's soldiers were probably incited to this outrageous mockery by having observed that of Herod's soldiers. When Jesus refused to satisfy Herod's curiosity by performing a miracle, Herod led the soldiers in the mockery (Luke 23:8-12); to Pilate's credit, he did not join in. One after another, they took the reed from His hand and struck Him on the head, driving the thorns further in. Over and over, they spit on Him, as in their vulgar jesting they pretended to worship Him.

These cruel soldiers had no way of knowing that one day they would kneel and bow with all humanity in abject homage and submission to the King of kings whom they mocked on this fateful day...

For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11+).

Reed (measuring rod, pen, rod)([2563](#))([kalamos](#)) refers to a flexible stalk or stem of a plant. It refers to the stalk which is cut for use, in this case as a beating instrument and a mock scepter for Jesus. In classical Greek the reed is used as thatch, a flute, a fishing rod, a shaft for an arrow, a pen, a measure, and a measuring rod, a tube for physicians, and a stake for vines. All 12 uses in the NT - Matt. 11:7; Matt. 12:20; Matt. 27:29; Matt. 27:30; Matt. 27:48; Mk. 15:19; Mk. 15:36; Lk. 7:24; 3 Jn 13; Rev. 11:1; Rev. 21:15; Rev. 21:16

Mark 15:20 After they had mocked Him, they took the purple robe off Him and put His own garments on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him.

- **led**: Mt 27:31 Joh 19:16
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:31 After they had mocked Him, they took the scarlet robe off Him and put His own garments back on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.

John 19:16 So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified.

BEHOLD THE MAN John 19:5

After they had mocked Him - Their kneeling and bowing in the previous verse was mocking Him as King. They were treating the Creator of the universe contemptuously acting in an insolent and arrogant way, abusing Him, toying with Him as we might say. Had these [reprobates](#) known the Scriptures, they might have seen that their treatment of Jesus had been prophesied hundreds of years earlier in Isaiah when he wrote "**He was despised** ([bazah](#) = treated with contempt, as worthless, [despicable](#)!) and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like One from Whom men hide their face **He was despised** ([bazah](#)), and we did not esteem Him ("considered Him insignificant")." (Isa 53:3+) Notice that Isaiah uses **despised** twice in this verse which gives us a sense of the degree of disdain the Jews and these Roman soldiers would have for their Messiah! Woe!

Mocked ([1702](#))([empaizo](#) from **en** = in + **paizo** = to play as a child; cf synonym = [mukterizo](#)) means to deride, mock, ridicule, make fun of, taunt, scoff at. Most of the NT uses of [empaizo](#) describe the **mocking** of our Lord Jesus Christ, to make fun of by pretending that He is not what He is or by imitating Him in a distorted manner. It is therefore little surprise that if evil men mocked Him at His first coming, they would mock the sure promise of His Second Coming (Jn 14:3)! These individuals "trifle" with the things of God dealing with them as if they are of no temporal or eternal import. All NT uses - Matt. 2:16; Matt. 20:19; Matt. 27:29; Matt. 27:31; Matt. 27:41; Mk. 10:34; Mk. 15:20; Mk. 15:31; Lk. 14:29; Lk. 18:32; Lk. 22:63; Lk. 23:11; Lk. 23:36

Gilbrant - Pilate was still having difficulty accepting the seemingly total callousness of the crowd. He decided to try one more time to appeal to the people to have pity on our Lord. Perhaps, as they saw how terribly Jesus had been treated, they would feel that He had

already suffered enough

MacArthur fills in the gaps left in Mark's account but recorded in John's account -

John's gospel provides additional details regarding the mistreatment Jesus endured at the hands of Pilate's soldiers. After they scourged Him, crowned Him, mocked Him, and repeatedly slapped Him in the face, the soldiers brought Jesus back to Pilate who paraded Him once more before the Sanhedrin (John 19:4–5). Still wanting to release Jesus, the governor hoped that displaying Him in His weakened and bloodied condition would invoke pity from the chief priests and scribes (cf. Luke 23:16). But they would not relent in screaming for His death. Pilate responded indignantly, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him" (John 19:6). But the Jewish leaders insisted that Rome carry out the execution. Their response repeated their primary charge of blasphemy to indict and convict Jesus and, by implication, put the onus back on Pilate to execute: "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God" (John 19:7). Hearing that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, the pagan governor became increasingly afraid (John 19:8; cf. Matt. 27:19). He returned to Jesus and asked Him,

"Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him. (John 19:9–12a)

Though Pilate recognized Jesus was innocent of any crime or threat, the chief priests and scribes intensified their manipulative tactics, threatening to report Pilate to Caesar if he let Jesus go free: "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar" (Jn 19:12). Based on his dismal record as governor (for details on how Pilate had previously offended the Jewish people, see the previous chapter in this volume), Pilate knew that one more scandal would likely result in his removal by Rome, thus ending his political career. Crumbling under the pressure, he capitulated.

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!" So they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." (Jn 19:13–15)

The spiritual leaders of Israel and self-proclaimed representatives of God, in a tragic twist, declared their loyalty to a pagan emperor and son of the devil while simultaneously clamoring for the murder of the Messiah and Son of God.

They took the purple robe off Him and put His own garments on Him- They did not know but they had to **put His own garments on Him** because it would be those very garments that soldiers would gamble over and divide fulfilling another OT prophecy "They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots." (Ps 22:18) and quoted in all four Gospels (Mt. 27:35; Mk 15:24; Lk 23:34; Jn 19:23, 24).

And they led Him out to crucify ([stauroo](#)) **Him** - [What is the Via Dolorosa?](#) Led Him out outside of the city proper. A number of passages support this interpretation...

Numbers 15:35 Then the LORD said to Moses, "The man shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones **outside the camp.**"

Leviticus 24:23 (Then Moses spoke to the sons of Israel, and they brought the one who had cursed **outside the camp** and stoned him with stones. Thus the sons of Israel did, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

1 Kings 21:13 Then the two worthless men came in and sat before him; and the worthless men testified against him, even against Naboth, before the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him **outside the city** and stoned him to death with stones.

Acts 7:58+ (Stoning of Stephen) When they had driven him **out of the city**, they began stoning him; and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Hebrews 13:12+ Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, **suffered outside the gate.**

[Akin](#) - Completely alone, humiliated, naked and nearly beaten to death, our Savior endures yet again ridicule, shame and pain at the hands of sinful men, at the hands of those He came to save. Oh how heaven must have looked on in disbelief. Perhaps the angels

wept. The Father sent His beloved Son to rescue and redeem a rebel race. Look at what they have done to our Lord. But look, and never forget, what our Lord has done for us! One of the majestic hymns of the faith is "Crown Him With Many Crowns." The first line says, "Crown Him with many crowns, the Lamb upon His throne." The vision of this song rightly looks to heaven. However, if we direct our eyes earthward we see the Lamb upon a different throne, the throne of His cross. There He is taken crowned with a "crown of thorns" (15:17), a reminder of the curse from which He has redeemed us (Gen. 3:15- 18). Galatians 3:13 powerfully reminds us, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us – for it is written, "cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree" (Deut. 21:23). Jesus suffered the injustice and insult that I should have suffered. Jesus experienced the shame and pain I should have experienced. Jesus bore the guilt and curse I should have borne. The shepherd was struck that the sheep might be saved. The Great King was tortured and killed that His people might live. I truly stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene, and wonder how He could love me, a sinner condemned unclean! He bore my sin and my sorrow and made them His very own. He bore my burden to Calvary and suffered and died alone. Jesus is the Great King: the sacrifice for sinners!

THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST Mark 15:20–38 - Croft Pentz

Criminals who are executed by the gas chamber, the electric chair, or by hanging usually die quickly. But this was not true of Christ. The Romans would allow their criminals to die slowly. The criminals were tortured and often suffered much before dying. Christ suffered both physically and mentally.

1. THE DEGRADATION—vv. 20–28
2. THE DISGRACE—vv. 29–32
3. THE DEATH—vv. 33–38

Why did Jesus suffer all this torture? He was obeying the plan of God, which was foretold in Isaiah 53. Christ was willing to go all the way to the cross. If He went all the way for us, is it asking too much for us to go all the way for Him?

Mark 15:21 They pressed into service a passer-by coming from the country, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), to bear His cross.

- **They pressed into service:** Mt 27:32 Lu 23:26
- **Simon of Cyrene:** Ac 2:10 6:9 11:20 13:1
- **father of Alexander and Rufus** Ro 16:13
- **bear His cross** Lu 14:27 Joh 15:18-20
- [Via Dolorosa](#) - James Stalker - Matt. 27:31–33; Mark 15:20, 21; Luke 23:26; John 19:16, 17
- [Play the beautiful classic song Via Dolorosa sung by Sandy Patti](#) - try to keep a dry eye as you pause to ponder the poignant words!
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:32 As they were coming out, they found a man of Cyrene named Simon, whom they pressed into service to bear His cross.

Luke 23:26 When they led Him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, coming in from the country, and placed on him the cross to carry behind Jesus.

John 19:16; 17 So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified. 17 They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha.

Jesus Bears the Crossbeam or Patibulum

They pressed into service a passer-by coming from the country, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), to bear His cross -Little did Simon know that this day he would serve the King of kings in a most unusual, magnificent and unforgettable way. It was customary for a man condemned to die by crucifixion to be forced to carry his own cross (specifically the heavy horizontal crossbeam, as the vertical beam was already firmly in the ground) and John 19:17 says "They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha" (it is an Aramaic word derived from **gulgoleth**) But soon Jesus succumbed beneath the load was too weak to carry His cross. As a medical doctor, I feel the factor that probably contributed most to Jesus' weakened condition was the significant loss of blood from the scourging which had ripped open the large muscles of the back and exposed numerous blood vessels from which His blood was lost.

THOUGHT - Are you ready and willing to be pressed into service for Jesus at a moment's notice! If He calls and you are ready and willing, I can assure you that your willing surrender will be abundantly, eternally rewarded!!!

MacArthur has an interesting note - The soldiers' choice of Simon may seem random, but in reality it was anything but. God's invisible hand was sovereignly at work, providentially using the witless actions of Roman soldiers to draw this hapless bystander to saving faith (cf. John 6:44). Mark identifies Simon as the father of Alexander and [Rufus](#), an unexplained reference that indicates Mark's readers were familiar with Simon's sons. Since Mark wrote for Gentile believers in Rome, Alexander and Rufus were almost certainly active in the church there. That conclusion is supported by Paul's mention of Rufus and his mother (Simon's wife) in Romans 16:13. Wondrously, the man who carried Jesus' cross came to embrace Him in saving faith, as did his wife and sons.

William Lane notes that "The route followed normally led through busy streets in order to intimidate the people."

Akin - Normally a man condemned to death by crucifixion would carry the cross beam, called a patibulum, to the place of execution. It could weigh as much as 100 pounds. Jesus began his journey to the cross by carrying it (John 19:17), but in his weakened condition he apparently fell and needed help. A man named Simon of Cyrene, a coastal city in North Africa with a large Jewish Colony (see Acts 2:10) was enlisted to give aid (v.21). I

NET Note - Jesus was beaten severely with a whip before this (the prelude to crucifixion, known to the Romans as [verberatio](#), mentioned in Matt 27:26; Mark 15:15; John 19:1), so he would have been weak from trauma and loss of blood. Apparently he was unable to bear the cross himself, so Simon was conscripted to help (in all probability this was only the **crossbeam**, called in Latin the **patibulum** (see depiction above), since the upright beam usually remained in the ground at the place of execution). Cyrene was located in North Africa where Tripoli is today. Nothing more is known about this Simon.

Pressed (29)([aggareuo](#)) requisition, press into service (originally for the Persian royal post; in Rom. times for any military or civil service), then force, compel. From aggaros Persian messenger or courier with authority to compel others to assist him. Only in Mt 5:41, Mt 27:32, Mk 15:21

As Jesus was pressing on toward the Cross, He gave a final public message

And following Him was a large crowd of the people, and of women who were mourning and lamenting Him. But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For **behold**, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?" (Luke 23:27–31+)

Jesus' words were a solemn prophetic warning of the fate that would befall the Holy City of Jerusalem in 70 AD when it was destroyed by the Roman army under the leadership of the Roman general Titus. I agree with John MacArthur who adds that "Beyond that, His words also previewed the coming devastation of the great tribulation that will occur at the end of the age (cf. Mark 13:6–37+)."

Related Resources:

- [Who was Rufus in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who helped Jesus carry the cross? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Question - [Who was Simon of Cyrene?](#)

Answer: Simon of Cyrene is mentioned in three of the four Gospels as the man impelled by the Roman soldiers to carry Jesus' cross out of Jerusalem. His place of origin has led many to wonder if he was of African descent (and therefore black), or if he was simply born there as were many others of Greek, Roman, and Jewish descent.

Cyrene was situated in modern-day Libya, on the northern coast of the African continent. Settled by the Greeks in 630 B.C. and later infused with a significant Jewish population, Cyrene was the capital of the Roman district of Cyrenaica at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. By then, Cyrene was home to a large number of Greek-speaking, or Hellenistic, Jews.

Many Jews from Cyrene had returned to their native Israel and were part of a community in Jerusalem called the [Synagogue of the Freedmen](#) comprising Jews from many other provinces including Alexandria (Egypt), Cilicia and Asia (Acts 6:9). Luke records men from Cyrene being among those converted at Pentecost (Acts 2:10). After the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 7), believers from Cyrene were among the first to be scattered by the persecution in Jerusalem; arriving in Antioch, they preached to the Gentiles there (Acts 11:20). These believers were instrumental in the formation of the church at Antioch, where, for the first time, "the disciples were called Christians" (Acts 11:26).

Simon of Cyrene is mentioned in Matthew, Mark and Luke. Matthew only records his name and place of origin (27:32), but Mark and Luke say that he was “on his way in from the country” (Luke 23:26). Mark, uncharacteristically, provides the most information about Simon, adding that he was “the father of Alexander and Rufus” (Mark 15:21), men obviously well known to Mark’s readers. It is speculated that the Rufus mentioned here may be the same man Paul greets in his letter to Rome, whom he calls “chosen in the Lord” and whose mother “has been a mother to me, too” (Romans 16:13). Paul’s knowledge of Rufus’s family indicates that at some point they lived further east.

So does any of this indicate whether Simon was black? Ultimately, we don’t know for sure. There is always the possibility that Simon was an African who converted to Judaism, or that he was of mixed descent. However, considering that people of Jewish lineage lived throughout the Roman Empire, it is also possible that Simon of Cyrene was olive-skinned. (GotQuestions.org)

Allen Ross - Romans 16:13 “Rufus”

In Paul’s greetings at the end of the Book of Romans there is a mention of a man named Rufus: “Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me.” This verse clearly indicates that Rufus and his mother were close to the apostle Paul, and well-known in the church in Rome. But what makes the reference interesting is the probable link to Mark’s gospel. In Mark 15:21 we have this note: “A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they compelled him to carry the cross.” Everyone is familiar with the story of Simon carrying the cross of Jesus. But why does Mark bother to tell the readers who his sons were? Well, the traditional understanding of Mark is that it was composed in Rome. Mark refers to Rufus because the church in Rome would know him, and thereby make the connection to the account of his father’s carrying the cross. This makes it more than likely that Paul is referring to the same person in the letter to the Romans.

The translation “chosen in the Lord” may not be the best for this verse, since according to Paul every Christian is chosen or elect. But the term here might mean “choice, eminent” or “special”—something like that. His story may have made him somewhat famous in the community.

And then Rufus’ mother had become a mother to Paul. Here again we can only guess at the circumstances, but there are some hints in the Bible. According to Philippians 3:8 and other passages it may be that Paul’s conversion cost him dearly, including family ties. Conversion to Christ would naturally lead to being cut off from the family, perhaps even from a wife. It looks like Rufus’ mother had given Paul a special place in her family and in her life so that he would not feel so alone. Paul was looking forward to seeing this lovely Christian woman who had become a mother to him.

If these connections and explanations are valid, and there is no reason that they should not be, then we have a great story of the Gospel in the family of Simon of Cyrene. Not only did he carry the cross, but he and his family turned to Christ, and Rufus became a pillar in the church in Rome, and Simon’s wife cared for the apostle Paul. What marvelous grace.

Related Resource:

- [Who was Rufus in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

Bearing His Cross

They compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear His cross. —Mark 15:21

Today’s Scripture: Mark 15:16-21

In the eyes of most people in the crowd, Jesus was a common criminal going to the place of execution. So to help Him bear His cross was both degrading and humiliating.

Simon of Cyrene was pressed into this service (Mark 15:21). Yet this was perhaps the most glorious day in his life. It is possible that he believed in the Savior, and that his wife and children did also. Some Bible teachers come to that conclusion because many years later, when the apostle Paul sent his greetings to the Christians in Rome, he referred to a man named Rufus and his mother (Romans 16:13). I believe that he was the son of Simon mentioned by Mark in his gospel (15:21), which probably was written in Rome. This is likely the reason Mark said that Simon was the father of Rufus and Alexander.

When we walk with Jesus and “take up the cross” (Luke 9:23), we too will experience the ridicule of the world for identifying ourselves with the Savior. Yet through it all, like Simon of Cyrene, our lives will be transformed, and our testimony will have an influence on the lives of family and friends around us.

Simon was “compelled” to bear the cross (Mark 15:21), but Jesus invites us to take up our cross. Have you? By: Henry G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread](http://OurDailyBread.org), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

"Take up thy cross and follow Me,"
I hear the blessed Savior call;
How can I make a lesser sacrifice
When Jesus gave His all?
—Ackley

Following Jesus costs more than anything—except not following Him.

Spurgeon - Up from the country, and pressed into the service

'They compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.' Mark 15:21

It has always been part of the divine counsel that for the salvation of men from sin the Lord should be associated with his church. So far as atonement is concerned, the Lord has 'trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with' him, but as far as the conversion of the world is concerned and its rescue from the power of error and wickedness, Christ is not alone. We are 'workers together with' God. We are ourselves to be in the hands of God part-bearers of the sorrow and travail by which men are to be delivered from the bondage of sin and Satan and brought into the liberty of truth and righteousness. Hence it became important that in the bearing of the cross, though not in the death upon it, there should be yoked with the Christ one who should follow close behind him. To bear the cross after Jesus is the office of the faithful. Simon the Cyrenian is the representative of the whole church of God and of each believer in particular. Jesus said, 'whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple'; now at last he embodies that sermon in an actual person. The disciple must be as his Master: he that would follow the Crucified must himself bear the cross: this we see visibly set forth in Simon of Cyrene with the cross of Jesus laid upon his shoulder.

'Shall Simon bear the cross alone,
And all the rest go free?
No, there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me.'

Mark 15:22 Then they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull.

- **Golgotha:** Mt 27:33-44 Lu 23:27-33, Calvary, Joh 19:17-27
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:33 And when they came to a place called Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull, 34they gave Him wine to drink mixed with gall; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink.

Luke 23:33+ When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left.

John 19:17-27 They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha.

Then they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull- The likely location of Golgotha is outside the city gates, on a well traveled road, where travelers could see the agony of the crucified victim and put fear in their hearts to commit any crime that would result in them being placed on the old rugged cross! The name **Skull** refers (most common interpretation) to the fact that the site resembled a skull and today many consider this to be [Gordon's Calvary](#) which can still be viewed a short distance from Jerusalem's northern wall, not far from the [Damascus Gate](#). This site was well known in Jesus' day and associated with unspeakable suffering and pain for the victims taken there to die.

NET Note - The place called Golgotha (which is translated "Place of the Skull"). This location is north and just outside of Jerusalem. The hill on which it is located protruded much like a **skull**, giving the place its name. The Latin word for the Greek term kranion is calvaria, from which the English word "Calvary" is derived (cf. Luke 23:33 in the KJV).

What the Bible teaches - **Calvary** is a Latin word, and it means **"the skull"**; **Golgotha** in Hebrew. This event at Calvary is the climax of the ages; the hinge of the vast forever. All the ages preceding it looked forward to it, all eternity will look back to it. As Erich Sauer wrote, in "The Triumph of the Crucified" "Of all times, it is the turning point; of all love it is the highest point, and of all salvation it is the starting point, of all worship it is the central point". The words "Calvary" and "eternity" are found only once in the AV, and this is

important to us, for Calvary has changed eternity for every believing soul. It should be noted that most translations do not use the name "Calvary" but "the Skull". (What the Bible teaches – Luke)

Alexander Maclaren - The cross is the centre of the world's history. The incarnation of Christ and the crucifixion of our Lord are the pivot round which all the events of the ages revolve.

H. C. Trumbull - Calvary shows how far men will go in sin, and how far God will go for man's salvation.

Akin - 2000 years of Church history unfortunately have domesticated and sanitized the cross for modern persons. We have lost the horror of what it involved. And, our 4 gospels say almost nothing in terms of its details. Why? I think there are several reasons. First, people in Jesus' day were fully "up-to-date" on this method of capital punishment. They had seen it too many times. They knew all they wanted to know. Second, it was not the suffering that is important to the gospel writers but the one suffering. It is the Son of God hanging on the cross taking away the sins of the world (John 1:29). That is their rightful focus.

Rogers - There were three of them there that day. Three crosses. One of those men on the cross died in his sin and went to hell. Another man died to his sin and went to heaven because of the middle man who died for both....Three crosses, a cross of redemption, a cross of rejection, and a cross of reception. (Sound Theology)

Skull (2898)(**kranion**) our English "cranium", cf Latin "calvaria" which gives us "Calvary." This refers to the skull the bony framework of the head

THOUGHT - One of the most amazing truths of the crucifixion of Christ is that there were not just two criminals crucified with Him on that day, but there were in fact literally millions and millions of criminals (evil doers) crucified with Him that day! If you are a genuine believer in Christ, then as mysterious and miraculous as it sounds, you were crucified with Him on the Cross as Paul explains in Romans 6 (Read Romans 6:2-14+, especially Romans 6:6+ "our old self was crucified with Him"; cf Galatians 2:20+)

Related Resource:

- Take a moment and listen to the poignant song ["The Hammer"](#) (Who nailed Him there?...Then I looked and saw the hammer in my hand!)
- And if you want your heart to break (some more) take a few moments and [WATCH THE LAMB](#).

Question - [Where/what is Golgotha/Calvary?](#)

Answer - *Golgotha* is the Aramaic name of the location [where Jesus was crucified](#) outside of Old Jerusalem. In John 19:16-18 we read, "So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them." Golgotha is also mentioned in Matthew 27:32-34 and Mark 15:21-22.

In Luke 23:33 of the King James Version, the word *Calvary* is used in reference to the same location. In modern translations, the more literal term "the place that is called The Skull" (ESV) is generally used. The word *Calvary* is derived from the Latin phrase for this location, *Calvariae Locus*. Counting this reference, all four Gospels make specific reference to this particular hill as the place of Jesus' death.

According to early church fathers, the location was called "The Place of the Skull" due to the shape of the hill that apparently reminded people of a human skull.

There has been some dispute regarding the precise location of this hill, but the traditional place is underneath the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the northwest (Christian) quadrant of the Old City. The church is built over a point called the Rock of Golgotha, the supposed site of the crucifixion. As the name of the church suggests, the building also includes a cave-like tomb where Jesus' body was supposedly laid. The church's construction was overseen by Helena, the mother of Constantine, in A.D. 325 and has long held prominence as the traditional location of the crucifixion of Jesus.

The location of Golgotha is of interest to Christians due to the events that have taken place there. One fateful day, Jesus carried a cross, helped by a man named Simon, toward a hill where He was hung by nails through His wrists and feet. He hung between two thieves as one of three sentenced to death that day. One of these two men understood who Jesus was and asked the Lord to remember him in the kingdom. Jesus responded with a promise of glory soon to be revealed: "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). It's why Jesus was shedding His blood—to forgive and redeem sinners who placed their faith in Him.

Still today, this hill we call Golgotha or Calvary stands as a reminder of Jesus' great sacrifice—the only sacrifice capable of forgiving sin and reconciling man with God (Hebrews 10:12; Acts 4:12). ([GotQuestions.org](#))

'I Belong There!'

Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. — 1 Peter 3:18

Today's Scripture: Mark 15:22-39

A missionary was speaking to a remote tribe of people who had never heard about the life and ministry of Jesus. Seated in the front row, listening intently to all the missionary had to say, was the chief of the tribe.

As the story of Jesus came to its climax and the chief heard how Christ was cruelly crucified, he could restrain himself no longer. He jumped up and cried, "Stop! Take Him down from the cross! I belong there, not Him!" He had grasped the meaning of the gospel; he understood that he was a sinner, and that Christ was the sinless One.

As you consider that scene of the Son of God hanging on the cross in agony, with blood flowing from His wounds, can you say from your heart, "I belong there!" Then go one step further and put your trust in Him as your Savior, so that you can say with Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). Jesus took our place and died in our stead. Because He bore our sins, He has opened the way for us to be brought into fellowship with the Father. If you identify yourself with Christ and believe that He died for you, God will identify you with Christ and give you His righteousness.

Can you say, "I belong there!"—Henry G. Bosch (ODB Editor 1956-1981) By: Henry G. Bosch [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When Jesus died upon the cross,
He took our sin and shame;
He offers us His righteousness,
A gift for us to claim.
—Sper

Jesus took my place on the cross to give me a place in heaven.

Mark 15:23 They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it.

- **they:** Mt 27:34 Lu 23:36 Joh 19:28-30
- **but:** Mk 14:25 Mt 26:19 Lu 22:18
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:34 they gave Him wine to drink mixed with gall; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink.



Oil of [Myrrh](#)

They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it- Neither Luke nor John record the offer to Jesus of something to drink before the crucifixion. Mt 27:34 says that "they gave Him wine to drink mixed with [gall](#) (means something bitter = myrrh in Mark); and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink." Mark 15:23 says "They tried to give Him wine mixed with [myrrh](#) (Gk - [smyrnizo](#) - only here in NT; see [dictionary entry](#)); but He did not take it." It is a bit ironic and interesting that today **myrrh** is used as an antiseptic in mouthwashes, gargles, and toothpastes!

Akin - They offered Jesus "wine mixed with myrrh" (v.23, cf. Ps 69:21), a primitive drug that would dull the pain of the crucified victim. Jesus said no. He would face the agony to come with full control of his mental faculties

Gilbrant - A Jewish tradition says that honorable women of Jerusalem provided a narcotic drink to victims of capital punishment, for the purpose of deadening their nerves to the excruciating pain. When Jesus was offered the wine mixed with myrrh, He refused it. He chose to drink the cup of suffering, which He had accepted totally in Gethsemane, to its last bitter dregs.

MacArthur - Myrrh was a narcotic that was also used as an anointing oil (Ex. 30:23) and a perfume (Ps. 45:8; Prov. 7:17; Matt. 2:11; John 19:39). Based on Proverbs 31:6, the Jews had a custom of offering crucifixion victims a type of pain-deadening medication (cf. Ps. 69:21). But Jesus, wanting to maintain full awareness as He completed His atoning work, refused to drink it.

Myrrh mixed (4669)(smurnizo from smurna - used for embalming) means to treat, flavor or mix with myrrh. It was used of wine - flavor or spice with myrrh to create a stupefying effect. The ancients used to infuse myrrh into wine in order to give it a more agreeable fragrance and flavor. Only here in NT.

C H Spurgeon - “And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.” —Mark 15:23

A golden truth is couched in the fact that the Saviour put the myrrhed wine-cup from his lips. On the heights of heaven the Son of God stood of old, and as he looked down upon our globe he measured the long descent to the utmost depths of human misery; he cast up the sum total of all the agonies which expiation would require, and abated not a jot. He solemnly determined that to offer a sufficient atoning sacrifice he must go the whole way, from the highest to the lowest, from the throne of highest glory to the cross of deepest woe. This myrrhed cup, with its soporific influence, would have stayed him within a little of the utmost limit of misery, therefore he refused it. He would not stop short of all he had undertaken to suffer for his people. Ah, how many of us have pined after reliefs to our grief which would have been injurious to us! Reader, did you never pray for a discharge from hard service or suffering with a petulant and wilful eagerness? Providence has taken from you the desire of your eyes with a stroke. Say, Christian, if it had been said, “If you so desire it, that loved one of yours shall live, but God will be dishonoured,” could you have put away the temptation, and said, “Thy will be done”? Oh, it is sweet to be able to say, “My Lord, if for other reasons I need not suffer, yet if I can honour thee more by suffering, and if the loss of my earthly all will bring thee glory, then so let it be. I refuse the comfort, if it comes in the way of thine honour.” O that we thus walked more in the footsteps of our Lord, cheerfully enduring trial for his sake, promptly and willingly putting away the thought of self and comfort when it would interfere with our finishing the work which he has given us to do. Great grace is needed, but great grace is provided.

Mark 15:24 And they crucified Him, and divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots for them to decide what each man should take.

- **crucified:** De 21:23 Ps 22:16,17 Isa 53:4-8 Ac 5:30 2Co 5:21 Ga 3:13 1Pe 2:24
- **divided up His garments):** Ps 22:18 Mt 27:35,36 Lu 23:34 Joh 19:23,24
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:35 And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves by casting lots. 36 And sitting down, they began to keep watch over Him there.

John 19:23-25 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece. 24 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: “THEY DIVIDED MY OUTER GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS.” 25 Therefore the soldiers did these things. But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

THE CLIMAX OF REDEPTIVE HISTORY: "THEY CRUCIFIED HIM"

One trembles when writing any thoughts on this most holy of days in all eternity when the Holy One of Israel becomes the sacrificial Lamb of God for all humanity. It will take all of eternity to even begin to fathom the significance and scope of this event marking the supreme expression of God's redeeming love for sinful men and women. On the other side, the Cross represents the ultimate manifestation of the depravity of our human nature!

And they crucified Him - These 3 words are found in all four Gospels (KJV) (Mt 27:35KJV, Mk 15:24KJV, Lk 23:33KJV, Jn 19:18KJV). Otherwise the Scripture is amazingly silent on the actual process of crucifixion. No description of the hammer pounding the

nails into His wrists or feet, no description of His body sagging in torment on the Cross, no description of the agonizing efforts to push up His legs to breath (the wounds on His back rubbing against the rough wood of the Cross), etc. An economy of words that describe vividly what happened to our Lord. Let us ponder this deeply. But even more let us ponder the 3 dark hours (Mt 27:45), for that was the more unspeakable agony for the sinless Lamb to be made sin for us and to experience being forsaken by the Father (Mt 27:46).

MacArthur - The Roman writer Cicero described it as "the cruelest and most hideous punishment possible." Apparently originating in Persia, crucifixion was later used by the Romans as a brutal means of inflicting death on its victims while also deterring other would-be criminals. It is estimated that, by the time of Christ, Rome had crucified some 30,000 people in Israel alone. After the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, so many Jewish rebels were killed by crucifixion that the Romans ran short of lumber to make crosses.

Gilbrant - Normally, the victim of crucifixion was stripped and his outstretched arms were nailed to the crossbeam, which was then lifted up with the body and fastened to an upright stake to which the feet were then nailed. A peg about midway up gave some support to the body. The height of the cross varied; that Jesus' was high is indicated by the fact that the soldier had to put the sponge on a reed to reach Jesus' mouth (Mk 15:36). Among the horrors a crucified man suffered were: severe inflammation of wounds; unbearable pain of torn tendons caused by the unnatural position of the body; throbbing headache; nausea; and burning thirst (John 19:28). The major suffering of Jesus was spiritual, as He became the sin offering for mankind (2 Corinthians 5:21+).

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf,
so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

And divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots for them to decide what each man should take- **NET Note** says "Grk "by throwing the lot" (probably by using marked pebbles or broken pieces of pottery). A modern equivalent, "throwing dice," was chosen here because of its association with gambling. According to L&N 6.219 a term for "dice" is particularly appropriate."

Akin - It is possible our Savior died completely naked. Maybe he was allowed to retain his loincloth. We cannot be certain. What we do know is He was humiliated. What we do know is this was a fulfillment of divine prophecy in Psalm 22:18, the "Crucifixion Psalm". John Calvin captures something of the theological import of this when he says, "The Evangelists portray the Son of God as stripped of His clothes that we may know the wealth gained for us by this nakedness, for it shall dress us in God's sight. God willed His Son to be stripped that we should appear freely, with the angels, in the garments of his righteousness and fullness of all good things."

In short they fulfilled the prophecy in Psalm 22:18

"They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots."

Charles H Spurgeon - The garments of the executed were the perquisites of the executioners in most cases, but it was not often that they cast lots at the division of the spoil; this incident shows how clearly David in vision saw the day of Christ, and how surely the Man of Nazareth is he of whom the prophets spake: "these things, *therefore*, the soldiers did." **He who gave his blood to cleanse us gave his garments to clothe us.** As Ness says, "this precious Lamb of God gave up his golden fleece for us." How every incident of Jesus' griefs is here stored up in the treasury of inspiration, and embalmed in the amber of sacred song; we must learn hence to be very mindful of all that concerns our Beloved, and to think much more of everything which has a connection with him. **It may be noted that the habit of gambling is of all others the most hardening, for men could practise it even at the cross foot while besprinkled with the blood of the Crucified. No Christian will endure the rattle of the dice when he thinks of this.**

J P Lange - They part my garments, etc. Perfectly naked did the cruciarii hang upon the cross, and the executioners received their clothes. There is nothing to show that there was a cloth even round the loins. The clothes became the property of the soldiers, after Roman usage. The outer garment was divided probably into four, by ripping up the seams. Four soldiers were counted off as a guard, by the Roman code. The under garment could not be divided being woven; and this led the soldiers to the dice throwing.

George Hutcheson - Instruments will not be wanting to crucify Christ, if it were but for his old clothes, and those but little worth; for these soldiers crucify him, though they got but his garments for their reward. Christ did submit to suffer naked, hereby to teach us: 1. That all flesh are really naked before God by reason of sin (Exodus 32:25, 2 Chronicles 28:19), and therefore our Surety behoved to suffer naked. 2. That he offered himself a real captive in his sufferings, that so he might fully satisfy justice by being under the power of his enemies, till he redeemed himself by the strong hand, having fully paid the price; for therefore did he submit to be stripped naked, as conquerors use to do with prisoners. 3. That by thus suffering naked he would expiate our abuse of apparel, and purchase to us a liberty to make use of suitable raiment, and such as becometh us in our station. 4. That by this suffering naked he would purchase unto them who flee to him, to be covered with righteousness and glory, and to walk with him in white for ever, and would point out the nakedness of those, who, not being found clothed with his righteousness, shall not be clothed upon with

immortality and glory. 2Co 5:2-3. 5. He would also by this, teach all his followers to resolve on nakedness in their following of him, as a part of their conformity with their Head (1 John 4:17, Romans 8:35, Hebrews 11:37), and that therefore they should not dote much on their apparel when they have it.

John Stevenson - Trifling as this act of casting the lot for our Lord's vesture may appear, it is most significant. It contains a double lesson. It teaches us how greatly that seamless shirt was valued; how little he to whom it had belonged. It seemed to say, this garment is more valuable than its owner. As it was said of the thirty pieces of silver, "A goodly price at which I was prized at of them; "so may we say regarding the casting of the lot, "How cheaply Christ was held!"

Related Resources:

- [When Jesus was nailed to the cross, did the nails go through His hands or His wrists? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Dr William Edwards on Crucifixion - CRUCIFIXION PRACTICES

Crucifixion probably first began among the Persians.³⁴ Alexander the Great introduced the practice to Egypt and Carthage, and the Romans appear to have learned of it from the Carthaginians.¹¹ Although the Romans did not invent crucifixions they perfected it as a form of torture and capital punishment that was designed to produce a slow death with maximum pain and suffering. (#10,17) It was one of the most disgraceful and cruel methods of execution and usually was reserved only for slaves, foreigners, revolutionaries, and the vilest of criminals. (#3,25,28) Roman law usually protected Roman citizens from crucifixion,⁵ except perhaps in the case of desertion by soldiers. In its earliest form in Persia, the victim was either tied to a tree or was tied to or impaled on an upright post, usually to keep the guilty victim's feet from touching holy ground. 8,11,30,34,38 Only later was a true cross used; it was characterized by an upright post (stipes) and a horizontal crossbar (patibulum), and it had several variations (Table). (#11) Although archaeological and historical evidence strongly indicates that the low Tau cross was preferred by the Romans in Palestine at the time of Christ (Fig 3), (#2, 7,11) crucifixion practices often varied in a given geographic region and in accordance with the imagination of the executioners, and the Latin cross and other forms also may have been used. (#28)

It was customary for the condemned man to carry his own cross from the flogging post to the site of crucifixion outside the city walls. 8,11,30 He was usually naked, unless this was prohibited by local customs.¹¹ Since the weight of the entire cross was probably well over 300 lb (136 kg), only the crossbar was carried (Fig 3).¹¹ The patibulum, weighing 75 to 125 lb. (34 to 57 kg),^{11,30} was placed across the nape of the victim's neck and balanced along both shoulders. Usually, the outstretched arms then were tied to the crossbar. 7,11 The procession to the site of crucifixion was led by a complete Roman military guard, headed by a centurion. 3,11 One of the soldiers carried a sign (titulus) on which the condemned man's name and crime were displayed (Fig 3).^{3,11} Later, the titulus would be attached to the top of the cross.¹¹ The Roman guard would not leave the victim until they were sure of his death.^{9,11}

Outside the city walls was permanently located the heavy upright wooden stipes, on which the patibulum would be secured. In the case of the Tau cross, this was accomplished by means of a mortise and tenon joint, with or without reinforcement by ropes.^{10,11,30} To prolong the crucifixion process, a horizontal wooden block or plank, serving as a crude seat (sedile or sedulum), often was attached midway down the stipes. 3,11,16 Only very rarely, and probably later than the time of Christ, was an additional block (suppedaneum) employed for transfixion of the feet.^{9,11}

At the site of execution, by law, the victim was given a bitter drink of wine mixed with myrrh (gall) as a mild analgesic. 7,17 The criminal was then thrown to the ground on his back, with his arms outstretched along the patibulum.¹¹ The hands could be nailed or tied to the crossbar, but nailing apparently was preferred by the Romans. 8,11 The archaeological remains of a crucified body, found in an ossuary near Jerusalem and dating from the time of Christ, indicate that the nails were tapered iron spikes approximately 5 to 7 in (13 to 18 cm) long with a square shaft 3/8 in (1 cm) across. 23,24,30 Furthermore, ossuary findings and the Shroud of Turin have documented that the nails commonly were driven through the wrists rather than the palms (Fig 4). 22-24,30

After both arms were fixed to the crossbar, the patibulum and the victim, together, were lifted onto the stipes. 11 On the low cross, four soldiers could accomplish this relatively easily. However, on the tall cross, the soldiers used either wooden forks or ladders.¹¹

Next, the feet were fixed to the cross, either by nails or ropes. Ossuary findings and the Shroud of Turin suggest that nailing was the preferred Roman practice. 23,24,30 Although the feet could be fixed to the sides of the

stipes or to a wooden footrest (suppedaneum), they usually were nailed directly to the front of the stipes ([Fig 5](#)).¹¹ To accomplish this, flexion of the knees may have been quite prominent, and the bent legs may have been rotated laterally ([Fig 6](#)).^{23-25,30}

When the nailing was completed, the titulus was attached to the cross, by nails or cords, just above the victim's head. ¹¹ The soldiers and the civilian crowd often taunted and jeered the condemned man, and the soldiers customarily divided up his clothes among themselves ^{11,25} The length of survival generally ranged from three or four hours to three or four days and appears to have been inversely related to the severity of the scourging.^{8,11} However, even if the scourging had been relatively mild, the Roman soldiers could hasten death by breaking the legs below the knees (crurifragium or skelokopia).^{8,11}

Not uncommonly, insects would light upon or burrow into the open wounds or the eyes, ears, and nose of the dying and helpless victim, and birds of prey would tear at these sites.¹⁶ Moreover, it was customary to leave the corpse on the cross to be devoured by predatory animals.^{8,11,12,28} However, by Roman law, the family of the condemned could take the body for burial, after obtaining permission from the Roman judge.¹¹

Since no one was intended to survive crucifixion, the body was not released to the family until the soldiers were sure that the victim was dead. By custom, one of the Roman guards would pierce the body with a sword or lance.^{8,11} Traditionally, this had been considered a spear wound to the heart through the right side of the chest—a fatal wound probably taught to most Roman soldiers. ¹¹ The Shroud of Turin documents this form of injury.^{5,11,22} Moreover, the standard infantry spear, which was 5 to 6 ft (1.5 to 1.8 m) long, ³⁰ could easily have reached the chest of a man crucified on the customary low cross.¹¹

MEDICAL ASPECTS OF THE CRUCIFIXION

With knowledge of both anatomy and ancient crucifixion practices, one may reconstruct the probable medical aspects of this form of slow execution. Each wound apparently was intended to produce intense agony, and the contributing causes of death were numerous.

The scourging prior to crucifixion served to weaken the condemned man and, if blood loss was considerable, to produce orthostatic hypotension and even hypovolemic shock.^{8,12} When the victim was thrown to the ground on his back, in preparation for transfixion of the hands, his scourging wounds most likely would become torn open again and contaminated with dirt.^{2,16} Furthermore, with each respiration, the painful scourging wounds would be scraped against the rough wood of the stipes. ⁷ As a result, blood loss from the back probably would continue throughout the crucifixion ordeal.

With arms outstretched but not taut, the wrists were nailed to the patibulum.^{7,11} It has been shown that the ligaments and bones of the wrist can support the weight of a body hanging from them, but the palms cannot.¹¹ Accordingly, the iron spikes probably were driven between the radius and the carpals or between the two rows of carpal bones,^{2,10,11,30} either proximal to or through the strong bandlike flexor retinaculum and the various intercarpal ligaments ([Fig 4](#)). Although a nail in either location in the wrist might pass between the bony elements and thereby produce no fractures, the likelihood of painful periosteal injury would seem great. Furthermore, the driven nail would crush or sever the rather large sensorimotor median nerve ([Fig 4](#)).^{2,7,11} The stimulated nerve would produce excruciating bolts of fiery pain in both arms. ^{7,9} Although the severed median nerve would result in paralysis of a portion of the hand, ischemic contractures and impalement of various ligaments by the iron spike might produce a clawlike grasp.

Most commonly, the feet were fixed to the front of the stipes by means of an iron spike driven through the first or second intermetatarsal space, just distal to the tarsometatarsal joint.^{2,5,8,11,30} It is likely that the deep peroneal nerve and branches of the medial and lateral plantar nerves would have been injured by the nails ([Fig 5](#)). Although scourging may have resulted in considerable blood loss, crucifixion per se was a relatively bloodless procedure, since no major arteries, other than perhaps the deep plantar arch, pass through the favored anatomic sites of transfixion.^{2,10,11}

The major pathophysiologic effect of crucifixion, beyond the excruciating pain, was a marked interference with normal respiration, particularly exhalation ([Fig 6](#)). The weight of the body, pulling down on the outstretched arms and shoulders, would tend to fix the intercostal muscles in an inhalation state and thereby hinder passive exhalation. ^{2,10,11} Accordingly, exhalation was primarily diaphragmatic, and breathing was shallow. It is likely that this form of respiration would not suffice and that hypercarbia would soon result. The onset of muscle cramps or tetanic contractions, due to fatigue and hypercarbia, would hinder respiration even further.¹¹

Adequate exhalation required lifting the body by pushing up on the feet and by flexing the elbows and adducting the shoulders ([Fig 6](#)).² However, this maneuver would place the entire weight of the body on the tarsals and

would produce searing pain.⁷ Furthermore, flexion of the elbows would cause rotation of the wrists about the iron nails and cause fiery pain along the damaged median nerves.⁷ Lifting of the body would also painfully scrape the scourged back against the rough wooden stipes. ^{2,7} Muscle cramps and paresthesias of the outstretched and uplifted arms would add to the discomfort.⁷ As a result, each respiratory effort would become agonizing and tiring and lead eventually to asphyxia.^{2,3,7,10}

The actual cause of death by crucifixion was multifactorial and varied somewhat with each case, but the two most prominent causes probably were hypovolemic shock and exhaustion asphyxia. ^{2,3,7,10} Other possible contributing factors included dehydration,^{7,16} stress-induced arrhythmias,³ and congestive heart failure with the rapid accumulation of pericardial and perhaps pleural effusions.^{2,7,11} Crucifracture (breaking the legs below the knees), if performed, led to an asphyxic death within minutes. ¹¹ Death by crucifixion was, in every sense of the word, **excruciating** (Latin, excruciatu, or "out of the cross"). (Read the full article "[On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ](#)."

F W Farrar on crucifixion - A death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death can have of the horrible and ghastly-dizziness, cramp, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, traumatic fever, shame, publicity of shame, long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of intended wounds-all intensified just up to the point at which they can be endured at all, but all stopping just short of the point which would give to the sufferer the relief of unconsciousness. The unnatural position made every movement painful; the lacerated veins and crushed tendons throbbed with incessant anguish; the wounds, inflamed by exposure, gradually gangrened [when a victim took several days to die]; the arteries-especially at the head and stomach-became swollen and oppressed with surcharged blood, and while each variety of misery went on gradually increasing, there was added to them the intolerable pang of a burning and raging thirst, and all these physical complications caused an internal excitement and anxiety, which made the prospect of death itself-of death, the unknown enemy, at whose approach man usually shudders most-bear the aspect of a delicious and exquisite release. ([Life of Christ](#))

Dr Truman Davis describes crucifixion from a medical standpoint - The left foot is now pressed backward against the right foot, and with both feet extended, toes down, a nail is driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees moderately flexed. The Victim is now crucified. As He slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists, **excruciating** (LATIN - "OUT OF THE CROSS") pain shoots along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain — the nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves. As He pushes Himself upward to avoid this stretching torment, He places His full weight on the nail through His feet. Again there is the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the metatarsal bones of the feet. At this point, as the arms fatigue, great waves of cramps sweep over the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain. With these cramps comes the inability to push Himself upward. Hanging by his arms, the pectoral muscles are paralyzed and the intercostal muscles are unable to act. Air can be drawn into the lungs, but cannot be exhaled. Jesus fights to raise Himself in order to get even one short breath. Finally, carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the blood stream and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically, he is able to push Himself upward to exhale and bring in the life-giving oxygen. ([A Physician's View of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ](#))

Darrell Bock has a summary of the differences in Luke's Gospel and the other Synoptic Gospels...

1. Luke does not mention Golgotha by name (Mark 15:22 = Mt. 27:33).
2. Luke does not mention the offer of drugged wine (Mark 15:23 = Mt. 27:34).
3. Luke 23:33 uses a different term for the criminals (κακοι ργος, as opposed to λ στής in Mark 15:27 = Mt. 27:38) and mentions them at a different point in his narrative.
4. Luke 23:34 uniquely records Jesus' prayer to forgive the sin of his executioners.
5. Luke does not mention the time that the crucifixion began (Mark 15:25), although he and Mark mention the time that it became dark (Luke 23:44 = Mark 15:33).
6. Luke 23:35 briefly refers to spectators, but does not supply the contents of their mocking: taunts about Jesus' saying that he would destroy the temple and raise it up in three days (Mark 15:29–30 = Mt. 27:39–40). (Luke exhibits a similar silence at Jesus' trial.)
7. Luke 23:35 speaks only of the rulers and does not name the chief priests, scribes, and elders (Mark 15:31 = Mt. 27:41).
8. Luke 23:35 mentions that the rulers mock Jesus with reference to being the Chosen One, rather than calling him the King of Israel (Mark 15:32 = Mt. 27:42).
9. Luke does not mention the rulers' other taunts (Mark. 15:32 = Mt. 27:42–43).
10. Luke 23:36 mentions the offer of wine vinegar at a different point in the narrative (Mark 15:36 = Mt. 27:48).
11. In Luke 23:36 the soldiers mock Jesus about being King of the Jews.
12. Luke 23:38 records the inscription over Jesus at a different point in the narrative (Mark 15:26 = Mt. 27:37).
13. Luke 23:39–43 uniquely records Jesus' discussion with the two thieves.

14. Luke 23:45 uniquely has a second reference to darkness.
15. Luke 23:45 mentions the tearing of the temple veil at a different point in the narrative (Mark 15:38 = Matt. 27:51).
16. Luke neither mentions nor records the content of Jesus' first cry from the cross (Mark 15:34 = Mt. 27:46, using Ps. 22:1).
17. Luke does not include the crowd's mention of Elijah (Mark 15:35–36 = Mt. 27:47, 49).
18. Luke 23:46 uniquely records the content of Jesus' second cry from the cross, using Ps. 31:5.
19. Luke does not record the earthquake that took place when Jesus died or the subsequent resurrection of many saints (Matt. 27:51–53).
20. Luke 23:47 quotes the centurion as declaring Jesus' innocence instead of his divine sonship (Mark 15:39 = Matt. 27:54).
21. Luke 23:48 uniquely records the crowd watching and mourning.
22. Luke 23:49 uniquely mentions that the disciples watched from a distance.
23. Luke 23:49 mentions that the women were present, but does not identify them other than to note that they are from Galilee (Mark 15:40–41 = Mt. 27:55–56). (BECNT-Luke)

Related Resources:

- [Crucifixion - Wikipedia](#)

Mark 15:25 It was the third hour when they crucified Him.

- **the:** Mk 15:33 Mt 27:45 Lu 23:44 Joh 19:14 Ac 2:15
- James Stalker - [Calvary](#)
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE SON OF MAN CALVARY'S LOVE

It was the third hour when they crucified Him- Using Jewish time this means the third hour after sunrise which would be about 9 AM.

Gilbrant - There is no contradiction in John 19:13, 14. When John wrote "about the sixth hour," he was giving a recap of the time when Pilate first sat down in the judgment seat for trial, according to Roman time. By Roman reckoning, Pilate started the trial at 6 a.m.; the intervening 3 hours were occupied by the trial and other events leading to the crucifixion. Other instances of John's use of Roman computation are John 1:39; 4:6; 4:52.

NET Note - "It was the third hour." This time would have been approximate, and could refer to the beginning of the process, some time before Jesus was lifted on the cross.

Steve Green sings a beautiful tribute to [Calvary's Love](#)..

Only Jesus, Only He
Brings redemption, full and free
There's a yearning, in all our lives
That only Jesus satisfies

Calvary's love will sail forever
Bright and shining, strong and free
Like an ark of peace and safety
On the sea of human need

Through the hours of all the ages
Those tired of sailing on their own
Finally rest inside the shadow
Cast by Calvary's love across their souls

Chorus:

Calvary's love, Calvary's love
Priceless gift Christ makes us worthy of
The deepest sin can't rise above
Calvary's love

Calvary's love can heal the Spirit
Life has crushed and cast aside
And redeem til Heaven's promise
Fills with joy once empty eyes
So desire to tell His story
Of a love that loved enough to die
Burns away all other passions
And fed by Calvary's love becomes a fire

Norman Geisler - MARK 15:25 (cf. John 19:14)—Was Jesus crucified in the third hour or the sixth hour?

PROBLEM: Mark's Gospel account says that it was the third hour (9 a.m. Jewish time) when Christ was crucified (15:25). John's Gospel says that it was about the sixth hour (12 noon Jewish time) when Jesus was still on trial (19:14). This would make His crucifixion much later than specified by Mark. Which Gospel is correct?

SOLUTION: Both Gospel writers are correct in their assertions. The difficulty is answered when we realize that each Gospel writer used a different time system. John follows the Roman time system while Mark follows the Jewish time system.

According to Roman time, the day ran from midnight to midnight. The Jewish 24 hour period began in the evening at 6 p.m. and the morning of that day began at 6 a.m. Therefore, when Mark asserts that at the third hour Christ was crucified, this was about 9 a.m. John stated that Christ's trial was about the sixth hour. This would place the trial before the crucifixion and this would not negate any testimony of the Gospel writers. This fits with John's other references to time. For example, he speaks about Jesus being weary from His journey from His trip from Judea to Samaria at the "sixth hour" and asking for water from the woman at the well. Considering the length of His trip, His weariness, and the normal evening time when people come to the well to drink and to water their animals, this fits better with 6 p.m., which is "the sixth hour" of the night by Roman time reckoning. The same is true of John's reference to the tenth hour in John 1:39, which would be 10 a.m., a more likely time to be out preaching than 4 a.m.

Mark 15:26 The inscription of the charge against Him read, "THE KING OF THE JEWS."

- **Inscription:** De 23:5 Ps 76:10 Pr 21:1 Isa 10:7 46:10
- **THE KING OF THE JEWS:** Ps 2:6 Zec 9:9 Mt 2:2 Mt 27:37 Lu 23:37,38 Joh 19:18-22
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:37 And above His head they put up the charge against Him which read, **"THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."**

Luke 23:37; 38 and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!" 38 Now there was also an inscription above Him, **"THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."**

John 19:18-22 There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between. 19 Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It was written, **"JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS."** 20 Therefore many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in **Hebrew, Latin and in Greek.** 21 So the chief priests of the Jews were saying to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews'; but that He said, 'I am King of the Jews.'" 22 Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

**THIS IS JESUS THE NAZARENE
THE KING OF THE JEWS**

The inscription of the charge against Him read, "THE KING OF THE JEWS." - "The victim of crucifixion was required to wear or have carried before him a wooden board on which his crime was proclaimed in ink or burned letters. This superscription was then

placed over his head as he was crucified. It was inscribed in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin (Luke 23:38)." (Gilbrant)

NET Note - Mention of the inscription is an important detail, because the inscription would normally give the reason for the execution. It shows that Jesus was executed for claiming to be a king. It was also probably written with irony from the executioners' point of view.

The phrase "**The King of the Jews**" had a double meaning for to Rome, it would be a warning to rebels and to the Jews it was a bitter insult so that Pilate could mock the Sanhedrin (Read John 19:20,21). **MacArthur** adds it was "a means of vengeance aimed at the chief priests and scribes who had blackmailed him into condemning an innocent man (cf. Luke 23:4, 14, 15, 22)."

Question: [What does it mean that Jesus is the King of the Jews?](#)

Answer: Jesus is referred to as the King of the Jews two times in His earthly life: at His birth by the wise men (Matthew 2:2) and at His trial and subsequent crucifixion (Mark 15:2). All four gospels record the words "King of the Jews" as part of Pilate's instructions to the angry mob (Matthew 27:37; Mark 15:9; Luke 23:38; John 19:3) and Pilate's direct address to Jesus (Matthew 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3; John 18:33). It is interesting that only non-Jews used this specific title to describe Jesus, underscoring the truth of John 1:11, which says, "He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him."

The title King of the Jews had both messianic and political implications. Kings in Israel were anointed with oil as a sign of God's choosing (see 1 Kings 1:39), and the meaning of [Messiah](#) is "Anointed One." As the Son of David, the Messiah was chosen by God to fulfill the [Davidic Covenant](#) and rule on the throne in Jerusalem. When the magi came to Jerusalem seeking the King of the Jews, they most likely had in mind a future political leader, much to King Herod's chagrin. But the Jews in Jerusalem, hearing the magi's question, would have thought of the long-awaited Messiah.

In Mark 15:32 some mockingly call Jesus the "King of Israel" and associate the title with "Christ" ("Messiah"). What they meant as jeering scorn—what kind of king would be hanging on a cross?—was, ironically, the exact truth. Jesus was the King of Israel, and He was on the cross to save them from their sins.

The sign that Pilate posted over Jesus on the cross identified the "criminal" in three languages: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" (John 19:19). The Jewish leaders objected to the application of a Messianic title to Jesus: "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews" (verse 21). For reasons he kept to himself, Pilate refused to alter the sign (verse 22), which was another ironic statement of truth.

During the trial of Jesus, Pilate had asked Him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" (Mark 15:2). Jesus answered, "It is as you say" (NASB). Later, Jesus expanded on the idea of His being a king: "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place" (John 18:36). The King of the Jews was rejected by Israel, but there is a broader spiritual kingdom that He still ruled.

After the conversation about Jesus' kingship, Pilate turns to the crowd and asks, "Do you want me to release 'the king of the Jews'?" (John 18:39). In no uncertain terms, the crowd shouts their answer: "No, not him! Give us Barabbas!" (verse 40). Pilate then allows the soldiers to give Jesus a beating, during which they clothe Jesus as a king, mock Him with cries of "Hail, king of the Jews!" and repeatedly slap Him in the face (John 19:3). After the mockery, Pilate again presents Jesus to the crowd as the King of the Jews: "Here is your king," he says (verse 14). In response they shout, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered" (verse 15). Their choice had been made, and Jesus, their true king, was led away to be crucified (verse 16).

Some people during Jesus' ministry recognized Jesus as the King of the Jews. As Jesus neared Jerusalem the final time, the crowd with Him "thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once" (Luke 19:11). In other words, they believed Jesus was the King of the Jews, and they were ready to help Him set up the earthly kingdom. Jesus told a parable indicating that the kingdom would be delayed (verses 12–27), but the crowd's enthusiasm did not wane. As He entered Jerusalem, Jesus was greeted with shouts of welcome for the King of the Jews: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" (verse 38).

God's people had been expecting a deliverer since God first promised one in Genesis 3:15. God Himself unified the Hebrews under Moses and told them that, as long as they followed and obeyed Him, He would bless and guide them (Deuteronomy 11:8–9; 27:9–10). But the children of Israel rejected the Lord as their leader and demanded an earthly king (1 Samuel 8:7, 19). God gave them what they wanted and appointed Saul as the first king over Israel (1 Samuel 9:17). When Saul disobeyed the Lord, he was then rejected by God, and his sons were not allowed to succeed him on the throne (1 Samuel 15:9–11, 23, 28). Instead, God chose David to be the next king of the Jews (1 Samuel 16:1). God promised David that his name would be forever associated with the throne of Israel (2 Samuel 7:12–16). Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, David penned the prophetic Psalm 22, which gave Israel hints about what their future Messiah and Deliverer would endure. But, in their desperation for an earthly king and an earthly kingdom, most of the Jews disregarded those prophetic words as well as the ones in Isaiah 53. When Jesus came, He fulfilled those prophecies. Importantly, He

was from the royal line of David (Matthew 1:1; John 7:42) and could rightly take the title King of the Jews, but because Jesus was not what they wanted, “his own people did not receive him” (John 1:11ESV).

A king is a supreme ruler. When the Jews clamored for a king in Samuel’s day, they were rejecting God as their Supreme Ruler (1 Samuel 8:7). Because of their hard hearts, He allowed them temporary kings. But this led to bondage and their destruction as a nation, highlighting the reality that what they wanted was not what they needed. The kingdom was divided after King Solomon’s rule, and both parts of the divided kingdom eventually fell to foreign enemies. Jerusalem was destroyed at least twice, once by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:8–10) and again by the Romans under Titus in AD 70. The Jews who rejected their true King were scattered among the nations for centuries until 1948.

Isaiah 11 announced that one day a “shoot from the stem of Jesse” (verse 1) would come and set the world to rights. The Jews have long interpreted such prophecies as foretelling an earthly king for Israel. We understand Jesus to be that King; however, God had bigger plans than just an earthly kingdom. He never resigned Himself to Israel’s rejection of His kingship, but rather used their rejection of Him as an opportunity to demonstrate His love for the whole world (John 3:16). The Son of God took on human flesh, came in the form of a servant, and showed His people what a real Deliverer was like (Philippians 2:5–11; Mark 10:44).

Because this King of the Jews did not fit the ideas they had cherished for thousands of years, the Jews again rejected the One they needed. Many Jews are still waiting for the wrong kind of king. Revelation 19:16 describes the day when Jesus will return to rule over the earth. At that time, the ancient prophecies of an earthly kingdom of God will be fulfilled, and no one will doubt that Jesus is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Every nation, tribe, and tongue will bow to the King of the Jews (1 Timothy 6:14–16; Romans 14:11; Philippians 2:10; Revelation 5:9). (Source: GotQuestions.org)

Norman Geisler - MATTHEW 27:37 (cf. Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19)—Why are all the Gospel accounts of the inscription on the cross different?

PROBLEM: The wording of the accusation above Christ’s head on the cross is rendered differently in each Gospel account.

Matthew: “This is Jesus the king of the Jews” (27:37).

Mark: “The king of the Jews” (15:26).

Luke: “This is the king of the Jews” (23:38).

John: “Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews” (19:19).

SOLUTION: While there is a difference in what is omitted, the important phrase, “the king of the Jews,” is identical in all four Gospels. The differences can be accounted for in different ways.

First, John 19:20 says, “Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.” So then, there are at least three different languages in which the sign above Christ’s head was written. Some of the differences may come from it being rendered in different languages.

Further, it is possible that each Gospel only gives part of the complete statement as follows:

Matthew: “This is Jesus [of Nazareth] the king of the Jews.”

Mark: “[This is Jesus of Nazareth] the king of the Jews.”

Luke: “This is [Jesus of Nazareth] the king of the Jews.”

John: “[This is] Jesus of Nazareth the king of the Jews.”

Thus, the whole statement may have read “This is Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews.” In this case, each Gospel is giving the essential part (“the king of the Jews”), but no Gospel is giving the whole inscription. But neither is any Gospel contradicting what the other Gospels say. The accounts are divergent and mutually complementary, not contradictory.

THE ATTITUDE OF UNBELIEF Mark 15:26–32 - James Smith

“A cross without a Christ; the heavens dumb;

Oh, who may dare the mystery to plumb?

Or who to such a God will longer come?”

“Throned upon the awful tree” is how John Ellerton puts it. The crucifixion was the coronation of the Son of God as our Substitute. The immeasurable soul-exalting power of it lies in the fathomless depths of the humiliation of it. This is foolishness in the eyes of men, but it is the wisdom of God. “Let Christ descend from the Cross that we may see and believe” (v. 32). Like modern rationalists, they would prefer a crossless Christ. It was not the nails that held Him to the tree, but His love for the perishing and His determination to finish the work given Him to do. The—

1. Titles given Him. “Christ the King of Israel” (v. 32). This they said in mockery, because they knew He claimed to be—

1. THE CHRIST. The Messiah, the Lord’s Anointed. They spoke the truth nevertheless. When Jesus said, “Whom say ye that I am?” Peter said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matt. 16:16).

2. THE KING OF ISRAEL. It was hard for human reason to believe that this despised and rejected One was God’s appointed Ruler of

His ancient people. Wise men, inspired by the message of God, come saying, "Where is He that is born KING OF THE JEWS?" Yes, this is His true title.

2. Place appointed Him was a place of—

1. SHAME AND SUFFERING. "They crucify Him, and with Him two thieves." The chosen and anointed One, the One preferred by God above all others, because of His holy devotedness, is classed by religious men with the vilest of the vile. What place has He now, even amongst so-called Christian men?

2. DERISION AND DEATH. "They that passed by railed on Him, and they that were crucified with Him reviled Him" (vs. 29–32; Psa. 22:7, 8). Yet this is He who cried with a loud voice "Lazarus, come forth," and he that was dead came forth. He who of old "spoke and it was done."

3. Proposal made to Him. "Descend from the Cross that we may see and believe" (v. 32). They might as well say let God change His character and purposes that they might see and believe. This presumptuous God-dethroning we. "That we might see." Why, He could not descend from the Cross because—

1. HE COULD NOT DISOBEY HIS FATHER. He had already said "Not My will, but Thine be done." To die was the will of Him that sent Him.

2. THE SCRIPTURES COULD NOT BE BROKEN. The prophet Daniel had said, "The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself" (chap. 9:26). Isaiah also by the same Spirit declared that "He would make His grave with the wicked, and be numbered with transgressors" (chap. 53). If He came down from the Cross the Scriptures, as the pillar of truth, would be broken.

3. HE COULD NOT SUFFER MAN TO PERISH. Without shedding of His Blood there was no remission of sin and guilt for us. His love constrained Him to give His life a ransom for many.

4. HE COULD NOT BE UNTRUE TO HIMSELF. The Cross is the evidence of His truthfulness, to His own inner consciousness, as the Redeemer of men, the Saviour of the world. What a revelation of the hidden man of His heart! He abideth faithful.

4. Reasons why some prefer a crossless Christ. Because—

1. THE CROSS REVEALS THEIR GUILT. It is the manifestation of man's inert hatred to holiness and Godlikeness. To have no personal dealings with the Son of God any more than with the dead in their graves is just another way of appointing Christ to the place of death.

2. IT IS GOD'S ONLY WAY OF LIFE. The Cross reveals the need of a Substitute, the need of an atonement by the Blood of His Cross, and the only possible way of access unto the Father (John 14:6; Heb. 10:19, 20). That we can only be saved as sinners through the Blood of His Cross is rather humbling to the pride of man's self-confident and deceitful heart. A crossless Christ can only make life to be a Christless cross.

Mark 15:27 They crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left.

- Mt 27:38 Lu 23:32,33 Joh 19:18
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:38 At that time two robbers *were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.

Luke 23:32; 33 Two others also, who were criminals, were being led away to be put to death with Him.
33 When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left.

They crucified two robbers with Him - Pilate may have wanted to goad the Jews even further by having two robbers on either side.

MacArthur - Whatever his motives, Pilate's decision to execute Jesus with criminals accorded perfectly with Old Testament prophecy (cf. Acts 4:27–28).

one on His right and one on His left - Arms of Jesus were spread out toward each robber, but only one "grasped" His hand by grace through faith.

Technical Note - Most later MSS add 15:28 "And the scripture was fulfilled that says, 'He was counted with the lawless ones.'" Verse 28 is included in L Q 083 0250 {1, 13 }33 Ū lat, but is lacking in important Alexandrian and Western MSS and some others (a A B C D Y pc). The addition of the verse with its quotation from Isa 53:12 probably represents a scribal assimilation from Luke 22:37. It was almost certainly not an original part of Mark's Gospel. The present translation follows NA(27) in omitting the verse number, a procedure also followed by a number of other modern translations. (NET Note)

Mark 15:28 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with transgressors."

- Isa 53:12 Lu 22:37 Heb 12:2
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Isaiah 53:12+ Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.

And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with transgressors"- Again we see another OT passage that had predicted the Messiah would first be a Suffering Messiah, but for the most part the Jews totally missed this truth about the Messiah.

Gilbani - Unknowingly, both Jews and Romans participated in the fulfillment of many prophecies. Taking Jesus outside the city, they were fulfilling the typology of the sin offering on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:27; Hebrews 13:11). In its highest sense, His being identified with sinners teaches the great doctrine of His substitutionary, vicarious atonement for all the sins of all people who will receive Him.

Akin - Ironically James and John had asked to be on Jesus' right and left hands "in your glory" (10:38). Jesus informed them that they did not know what they were asking and truly they did not. This is the hour when the Father will glorify the Son and the Son will glorify the Father (John 17:1). This is not the glory James and John had in mind.

Mark 15:29 Those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days,"

- **Those passing by:** Ps 22:7,8,12-14 35:15-21 69:7,19,20,26 109:25 La 1:12 2:15 Mt 27:39,40
- **Ha:** Mk 14:58 Ge 37:19,20 Mt 26:61 Joh 2:18-22
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Hebrews 12:2+ fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, **despising the shame**, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Luke 23:35 And the people stood by, looking on. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One."

MacArthur -Everything about crucifixion was designed to humiliate and debase its victims, sending a clear message about the repercussions of being an enemy of Rome. Moreover, the Jews regarded anyone hanging on a tree or a cross to be cursed by God (Deut. 21:23; Isa. 53:4, 10; Gal. 3:10–13), which heightened their disdain for those who were crucified (cf. 1 Cor. 1:23).

Those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads- Hurling is [imperfect tense](#) meaning over and over. Wagging is [present tense](#) indicating continually! These were gestures of hatred and scorn (cf. 2 Ki 19:21; Ps. 22:7; Ps 44:14; 109:25; Jer. 18:16; Lam. 2:15).

"The reaction of the bystanders was one amounting to blasphemy. "Wagging (kinountes) their heads" may have been shaking them laterally as a gesture of negation, denying His messiahship. It may have been vertical movement, expressing assent to His condemnation as a just one. It could have been a tossing motion as a scornful gesture of triumph (Psalm 22:7)." (Gilbrant)

Psalms 22:7 All who see me sneer at me; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying,

Spurgeon - Read the evangelistic narrative of the ridicule endured by the Crucified One, and then consider, in the light of this expression, how it grieved him. The iron entered into his soul. Mockery has for its distinctive description "cruel mockings; "those endured by our Lord were of the most cruel kind. The scornful ridicule of our Lord was universal; all sorts of men were unanimous in the derisive laughter, and vied with each other in insulting him. Priests and people, Jews and Gentiles, soldiers and civilians, all united in the general scoff, and that at the time when he was prostrate in weakness and ready to die. Which shall we wonder at the most, the cruelty of man or the love of the bleeding Saviour? How can we ever complain of ridicule after this?

They shoot out the lip, they shake the head. These were gestures of contempt. Pouting, grinning, shaking of the head, thrusting out of the tongue, and other modes of derision were endured by our patient Lord; men made faces at him before whom angels veil their faces and adore. The basest signs of disgrace which disdain could devise were maliciously cast at him. They punned upon his prayers, they made matter for laughter of his sufferings, and set him utterly at nought. Herbert sings of our Lord as saying, "œ"

"Shame tears my soul, my body many a wound;
Sharp nails pierce this, but sharper that confound;
Reproaches which are free, while I am bound.
Was ever grief like mine?"

John Stevenson - Imagine this dreadful scene. Behold this motley multitude of rich and poor, of Jews and Gentiles! Some stand in groups and gaze. Some recline at ease and stare. Others move about in restless gratification at the event. There is a look of satisfaction on every countenance. None are silent. The velocity of speech seems tardy. The theme is far too great for one member to utter. Every lip, and head, and finger, is now a tongue. The rough soldiers, too, are busied in their coarse way. The work of blood is over. Refreshment has become necessary. Their usual beverage of vinegar and water is supplied to them. As they severally are satisfied, they approach the cross, hold some forth to the Saviour, and bid him drink as they withdraw it. Lu 23:36. They know he must be suffering an intense thirst, they therefore aggravate it with the mockery of refreshment. Cruel Romans! and ye, O regicidal Jews! Was not death enough? Must mockery and scorn be added? On this sad day Christ made you one indeed! Dreadful unity which constituted you the joint mockers and murderers of the Lord of glory! John Stevenson.

John Newton - There have been persons in our own days, whose crimes have excited such detestation that the populace would probably have torn them in pieces, before, and even after their trial, if they could have had them in their power. Yet when these very obnoxious persons have been executed according to their sentence, if, perhaps, there was not one spectator who wished them to escape, yet neither was one found so lost to sensibility as to insult them in their dying moments. But when Jesus suffers, *all that see him laugh him to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head;* they insult his character and his hope.

and saying, "Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days- The word Ha is **Oua**, only here in the New Testament, is a term of respect or amazement; "wow" is a vernacular equivalent.

Gilbrant says "**Ha**" was "used sarcastically. Their "aha" (RSV), in mock amazement and sarcasm, showed they did not understand Jesus' prophecy regarding His resurrection (John 2:19-21). This particular taunt is in line with the charge on which He would have been condemned if they could have found witnesses who could agree together (14:57-59). They could not foresee what the third day would bring!

Those Who Passed By

Those who passed by blasphemed Him. —Mark 15:29

Today's Scripture: Mark 15:24-38

Consider the people who callously passed by the Savior as He hung on the cross. How heartless they were! But before we rush to judge them, let's remember that many are still doing it today. They fall into three groups:

Those who want a cross without Christ. It's possible to revere a symbol without the Savior. Some may clasp in their hand a miniature cross made of wood or gold, but that emblem will never atone for even one sin. It is Christ alone who redeems our souls with His precious blood.

Those who want a Christ without a cross. They want a conqueror, not a dying Lamb. They would cry, "Come down from the cross!" (Mark 15:30). Many desire a good example, or a great teacher, or a triumphant king. Their gospel is one of works. They despise the gospel that declares we are justified by faith in One who shed His blood on the cross.

Those who want neither Christ nor His cross. They are untouched by His sorrow, unmoved by His suffering, and unrepentant of their sins that He bore. Never have they exclaimed as did the songwriter John M. Moore, "All my iniquities on Him were laid—He nailed them all to the tree. Jesus the debt of my sin fully paid—He paid the ransom for me." By: Paul Van Gorder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

■ **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Luke 23:35+ And the people stood by, looking on. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One."

Comment - Sneering (1592)([ekmukterizo](#) from **ek** = out + [mukterizo](#) = mock from **mukter** = nose, nostril) means literally they were holding up their nose at Jesus! They were [ridiculing](#) Him, [sneering](#) at Him, treating Him with [disdain](#) and [contempt](#). This is [repudiation](#) in the most severe degree! In the only other NT use of this verb Luke writes "Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things (Read Lk 16:1-13+) and **were scoffing** ([imperfect tense](#)) at Him." (Lk 16:14+) Luke uses **ekmukterizo** in the [imperfect tense](#) signifying that the rulers were sneering at Jesus again and again, over and over. One can envision them watching Him in agony on the cross, and casting one scoff after another! But oh my were they deceived, for unbeknownst to them they were perfectly fulfilling the 1000 year old prophecy of one of their heroes, King David! The irony deepens when one realizes that the word **scoff** means to laugh at with contempt and derision. The Greek Septuagint translation of **sneer** in Psalm 22:7 is the verb **ekmukterizo** and this same verb is also used in messianic Psalm 2:4 which says "**He who sits in the heavens laughs**, The Lord **scoffs** (**ekmukterizo**) at them." They may have scoffed at Jesus at Calvary, but woe to them, for God gets the last laugh (or the last "scoff"). God gets the last laugh so to speak! Indeed, Psalm 2 says "Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth (INCLUDING YOU SNEERING JEWISH RULERS!). Worship the LORD with reverence And rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!" (Psalm 2:10-12) (cf Messianic Prophecy)

Save Yourself, and come down (climb down, step down) **from the cross!"** - The one's saying this in context are those **passing by** (Mk 15:29). **Save** is [aorist imperative](#) a brazen command from these foolish men to "Do it now!" They were not admitting that He could actually do this but were continuing their evil taunts to the very last breath. Despite His many miracles the leaders willfully refused to believe in Him (John 5:36; Jn 10:38). There is an ironic play on words in their request to **come down** ([katabaino](#)) which also means "descend" which in fact did do according to Paul in Eph 4:9,10+ ([katabaino](#) in both verses)!

MacArthur points out the irony of their scornful speech - Though the mockers intended their words as an insult, they unintentionally hit on a profound gospel truth: it is because the Lord Jesus submissively refused to rescue Himself from the cross that He is able to save others from sin and death (cf. Mark 10:45; Rom. 5:19; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 2:9-10; 5:7-8).

Several years later Paul summed up the problem of Jews writing "we preach **Christ crucified** (stauroo), to **Jews a stumbling block** ([skandalon](#) - think "[scandalized](#)") and to Gentiles foolishness." (1 Cor 1:23)

Save (4982)([sozo](#)) means to rescue, liberate, bring out safely and as often used in the NT refers to rescue from God's judgment and eternal death. The wicked cry of these Jewish rulers shows their ignorance of their own Scriptures (cf Isa 53:1-12), which teach that the Messiah did not come to conquer Rome, but to conquer sin and Satan by drinking the full cup of God's holy wrath against sin. The last thing Jesus would do now is save Himself, for it was for this hour that He had come to earth. He had come to die in time, that others might live forever in eternity.

NET Note - - There is rich irony in the statement of those who were passing by, "Save yourself and come down from the cross!" In summary, they wanted Jesus to come down from the cross and save his physical life, but it was indeed his staying on the cross and giving his physical life that led to the fact that they could experience a resurrection from death to life. There is a similar kind of irony in the statement made by the chief priests and experts in the law in 15:31.

Akin - This temptation to "come down from the cross" is not new. It was the same one Satan threw at Him in the wilderness temptations (Matt 4:1- 11; Luke 4:1-13). It is the same temptation He faced just a few hours earlier in the Garden of Gethsemane to forego the cup of suffering (14:36). Even up to the last moment the evil one is trying his best to persuade Jesus to reject the cross. He did not want Him there! He knew it would be his ruin and our redemption.

Gilbrant - The temple Jesus had spoken of was His body (John 2:21). Either out of their spiritual blindness or their malice, the Jewish leaders had falsely accused Jesus of blaspheming the temple. They spread the rumor that Jesus had said that He would destroy the temple and build it back in 3 days. This false accusation had spread to the general populace. They used it as a basis to taunt Him to save himself if He had such power as would be required to rebuild the temple in 3 days.

Over a millennium earlier David had prophesied regarding the Messiah's unconscionable treatment by His fellow Jews writing...

But I am a worm and not a man, A reproach of men and despised by the people. **7All who see me sneer** (Lxx = **ekmukterizo**) **at me**; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, 8 "Commit yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him." (Ps. 22:6-8)

Comment: See study of the deeper meaning of the incredible statement of Jesus - **I am a worm**.

Mark 15:31 In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; He cannot save Himself.

- **In the same way:** Ps 2:1-4 22:16,17 Mt 27:41-43 Lu 23:35-37
- **He :** Joh 11:47-52 12:23,24 1Pe 3:17,18
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

RULERS NEEDING SALVATION MOCK CHRIST'S ABILITY TO SAVE

In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves- This is interesting. Note the leaders were mocking but it was **among themselves** (ESV has "to one another!"). They did not want to be accused of playing a role in Jesus' death for fear of the people, so they maintained their mocking in their "unholy huddle!" Not surprisingly, **mocking** is in the [present tense](#), continual mock all the while the Son of Man is hanging in agony on the Cross. Talk about heartless, evil men! And these were the "religious" leaders of Israel! Religion does not regenerate an evil heart. Only relationship with Christ can do that, so these men were in effect slamming the door of salvation in their own faces (so to speak)!

And saying, "He saved others; He cannot save Himself- These hypocritical leaders were taunting Jesus, using "**save**" in a physical sense, being ignorant of the more vital salvation in the spiritual sense. Their eyes were spiritually blinded and hearts hardened (2 Cor 3:10+) to the truth. The truth was that Jesus did not attempt to **save Himself** (which He could have easily done), so that He would die as the Lamb of God Who takes the way the sins of the world (Jn 1:29+), specifically the sins of every soul that believes in His substitutionary fully atoning sacrifice. MacArthur adds "Though the mockers intended their words as an insult, they unintentionally hit on a profound gospel truth: it is because the Lord Jesus submissively refused to rescue Himself from the cross that He is able to save others from sin and death (cf. Mark 10:45; Rom. 5:19; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 2:9-10; 5:7-8)."

Luke says "And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One." (Luke 23:35+) Regarding their comments in Luke's parallel passage, this is one of the few correct things these evil men ever said about Jesus, because He did indeed "save others," performing many miracles in Israel, none of which they could deny. They persisted however in their refusal to believe He was God and therefore could not save Himself. Note that it is very doubtful that these sarcastic comment that "**He saved others**" is a reference to salvation of one's soul from eternal damnation, but referred to physical, temporal salvation. For a few of the examples of Jesus "saving" others in one form or another see Luke 7:50+; Lk 8:36+, 48, 50; Lk 17:19+; Lk 18:42+. There hypocritical taunt is ironic, almost prophetic, for it was by His death that He would **save others** spiritually and eternally! Glory!

MacArthur adds that "The rulers viewed anyone hanging on a tree or a cross as cursed by God (Deut. 21:23), which was true of Jesus (Isa. 53:4, 10; Gal. 3:10-13). But what they did not recognize was that He became a curse for sinners to redeem them from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13+). (MNTC— Luke)

While the statement about **salvation** is not a direct quote it clearly overlaps with the phrase **"let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him."** (Ps 22:8). Matthew in fact has the quote from Psalm 22:8 in Mt 27:43 ("HE TRUSTS IN GOD; LET GOD RESCUE Him now, IF HE DELIGHTS IN HIM; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'"). In the Septuagint the Hebrew word for "**rescue**" is translated with the same Greek verb [sozo](#) used in their disdainful remarks. The upshot is that David was alluding to what they would say when they mocked Jesus a thousand years later. The irony of course is that in three days God would indeed "rescue" (save) His Son, raising Him from the dead! God's Chosen One would be supremely vindicated!

Mocked ([1702](#)) see note above on [empaizo](#)

Saved...save ([4982](#)) see note above on [sozo](#)

saved others; himself he cannot save" (Mark 15:31).

In their scorn, they were declaring a truth greater than they knew. While they meant to belittle Him, the real truth of their statement is to His eternal glory. To save others He must give Himself: it is the stupendous heart of the atonement. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).

In a lesser sense, and one applicable to you and me, it was also a fulfillment of Jesus' own paradox: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it" (Luke 9:24). If Jesus had decided in Gethsemane to save His life, He would have lost it as our Savior: but in losing it, He truly saved it as our Redeemer.

Here is the application for us: In saving others, we cannot save ourselves. I speak of saving others in the sense of winning them to Christ and God. If we are to rescue others, we must expect to spend and be spent. So long as life revolves around self—self-advancement, self-promotion, self-satisfaction—we are wretched and miserable. If we are to save others, we must forget ourselves. When the family is sick, mother forgets herself in caring for others—and generally the Lord seems to keep mothers going in such times. In service, we Christians must lose ourselves with the spirit of Paul: "Neither count I my life dear unto myself" (Acts 20:24).

Then there is the other side of the paradox: In losing our lives to save others we most truly save ourselves. I am not here speaking of saving our souls; no good works can save the soul, but faith in Christ only. We can save our lives, our time, our talents as we spend them in saving others. The only time you ever save is the time you spend for others. The only money you ever save is the money you spend for others. It is the only certain investment in this gold-brick age. Paul has it in mind when he bids the Ephesians redeem the time. Jesus has it in mind when He says to lay up treasure in heaven. It is the principle of the parable of the unjust steward: use your earthly assets to make for yourself friends through service. Bread cast on the waters of service returns even if after many days.

How slow men are to learn that in saving life they lose it, but in losing it for Christ's sake they save it. Mind you, Jesus said, "Whosoever will lose his life for My sake"—not for one's own sake, not to be called a hero, not for consciences sake, but for Christ's sake. Mere idealistic service is not meant here. Often that is a price men offer for salvation.

This is a day of introverted living. We look at everything in the light of self: what it will profit us, where we can gain by this and that move. Christ turns life outward so that selfish Saul, proud of his legal righteousness, becomes a Paul who could wish himself accursed for his brethren's sake. Spend life and you save it; give it and you get it.

We do not save our lives while we save others, but because we save others. We often lose our money, our health, our temporal fortunes. But if we leave all for His sake, we shall be compensated in this world—and in the world to come, receive eternal life.

In saving others you cannot spare yourself. Yet in saving others you do most surely preserve yourself! All that you save is what you spend on others for His sake.

Mark 15:32 "Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!" Those who were crucified with Him were also insulting Him.

- **Christ:** Mk 14:61,62 Isa 44:6 Zep 3:15 Zec 9:9 Joh 1:49 12:13 19:12-15 Joh 20:25-29
- **that:** Ro 3:3 2Ti 2:18
- **And:** Mt 27:44 Lu 23:39-43
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:44 The robbers who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words.

Luke 23:39-43+ One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" 40 But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 "And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." 42 And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" 43 And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

INSULTS FROM THE RELIGIOUS AND THE ROBBERS!

Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross- One can even see these evil men pointing their bony fingers

at the superscription on the sign above Christ's head which identified Him (and His crime) as King of the Jews.

Gilbrant has an interesting note - As they scornfully referred to the wording of the superscription, they called Him "Messiah (Christos), the King of Israel," rather than "King of the Jews." By using the term "Israel," they were using the term more closely related to their being the chosen people of God. They were unwittingly giving Jesus His truly accurate title, even though in mockery. Pilate always said "King of the Jews"; the term "King of Israel" was not used politically.

Ryrie has an interesting note - Let this Christ. I.e., Let the (to them) false Christ.

So that we may see and believe - They are lying. They would not believe (cf Mk 8:11-12+). Jesus spoke of men like this in Luke 16:31+ declaring "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead." So if they would not believe the greater miracle of resurrection of Jesus from the dead, they would hardly believe the lesser miracle of Jesus descending from the Cross. In short, the chief priests and scribes would not have believed if He had actually come down from the cross. They did not believe after He rose from the dead. With few exceptions, they became more and more steeped in unbelief (Mt 12:38-40; Acts 4:1-3+; Acts 5:17+; etc.).

Akin - How ignorant and ironic. If our Lord saved Himself He could not save other! If He was to save others, Himself He could not save. And save Himself He would not do. These men claim that they would have believed if He had come down from the cross, but we believe precisely because He stayed on it!

As **MacArthur** says "they bribed the Roman soldiers to spread lies about what happened, claiming the disciples stole Jesus' body (Matt. 28:11-15). No miracle would have persuaded them to believe. They loved their sin far too much."

Disciples Study Bible rightly reminds us that "Unprecedented miracles do not create faith, for faith is a personal relationship of trust in a personal God. Faith is not reluctant intellectual assent prompted by an overwhelming display of power. At the beginning of His ministry Jesus had resisted the temptation (Mt 4:7) to perform a sign which might attract the multitudes to a spurious faith. Consistent with that earlier decision, He refused to appeal to a shallow faith. He followed God's plan of atoning death and resurrection, not human plans of magical displays of power. The church must follow Christ's humble servant approach to provoke faith (ED: PREACH THE WORD WHETHER IT IS CONVENIENT OR NOT!), not the world's call for dazzling entertainment.

Those who were crucified with Him were also insulting Him- Insulting is in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating the robbers were hurling one insult after another at Jesus! Mt 27:44 adds they were insulting Jesus "with the same words." When the two criminals were hanged beside the Lord, the one was no better than the other. Here it appears that both were hurling insults at Jesus. However one would soon experience "instantaneous grace." It is only the grace of God and belief in the cross of Christ that can instantly transform a belligerent sinner a man who repents and believes. The repentant thief began to see (1) the justice of his own punishment (Lu 23:41); (2) the sinless character of Christ (Lu 23:41); (3) the Deity of Christ (Lk 23:42); (4) a living Christ beyond the grave (Lu 23:42); and (5) a kingdom beyond the cross, with Jesus as its coming King (Lu 23:42).

Akin - However, Luke 22:34-43 tells us one of them will have a change of heart before the day ends. He saw something in Jesus that moved him from insulting Him to trusting Him. He would not be disappointed. He would meet the Lord after death in Paradise. We must never forget. No sinner will be disappointed who flees to the crucified King. It is never too late!

MacArthur comments that "it was against that dark backdrop of venomous hate that the grace and mercy of God was displayed. The Father could have destroyed the blasphemers on the spot and rescued His Son from the cross. Instead, He was pleased to crush Him and put Him to death (Isa. 53:10), so that He might rescue many of those very blasphemers, along with countless others, from sin and eternal destruction. Of the thieves who mocked Him, one became a trophy of God's grace that very day (Lk 23:39-43). Of the soldiers who mistreated Him, a centurion would soon realize, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" (Mark 15:39). Of the people in the crowd who scorned Him, many would believe on the day of Pentecost and in the subsequent weeks and months (cf. Acts 2:37-38, 41; 4:4; 6:1). Even many of the priests of Israel, Acts 6:7 reports, "were becoming obedient to the faith." The apostle Paul was a former Pharisee who violently persecuted the church out of antagonism toward the Lord Jesus. Yet, by His grace, God transformed that murderous blasphemer into a courageous missionary.

Were...insulting (casting insults, reviling, reproaching) ([3679](#))([oneidizo](#) from **óneidos** = disgrace, abuse, or object of disgrace or shame) means to assail with abusive words, upbraid (), slander, revile, falsely accuse or to speak disparagingly of a person in manner not justified, to find fault in a way that demeans the other, to mock, to heap insults upon as a way of shaming. The idea is to find fault in a way that demeans the one being reproached. It means to **upbraid**, which in turn means to criticize severely, find fault with, reproach severely or scold vehemently. **Oneidizo** "to cast into the teeth," as in "hurling an insult." It means that Christians can expect to be made the butt of public jokes and open ridicule (BUT they can expect to be blessed! - see Mt 5:11+). **Oneidizo** refers to especially strong verbal abuse which is interesting because the Jewish culture at that time considered verbal abuse to be extremely vicious. The Jewish rabbis even considered reviling to be as evil

as idolatry, fornication, and bloodshed all combined! Why so serious? Because by the defamation of one's character the victim would lose his or her place in the community and, according to the circumstance of that day, almost the possibility of continuing their life. The insulting word itself was believed to have a power of its own.

Mark 15:33 When the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour.

- **When the sixth hour came:** Mk 15:25 Mt 27:45 Lu 23:44-45
- **darkness fell over the whole land:** Ps 105:28 Isa 50:3,4 Am 8:9,10
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Resources:

Matthew 27:45 Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour.

Luke 23:44-45+ It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour, 45 because the sun was obscured; and the veil of the temple was torn in two.

THE THREE HOURS OF TOTAL DARKNESS

John MacArthur entitles Mark 15:33-41 "God Visits Calvary!" adding that "Verses 33–38 depict the highpoint of salvation history, the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ. His sacrificial work of redemption was planned by God in eternity past (Titus 1:2; 1 Peter 1:18–21; cf. Eph. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9) and will be celebrated in heaven through eternity future (Rev. 5:6–12; cf. 22:3). It was there, at Calvary, that the long-awaited and acceptable Lamb of God died to satisfy divine righteousness by paying sin's penalty in full for all who would believe in Him (cf. Col. 2:14)."

Akin sums up this last section - Mark in climatic fashion selects 6 specific events that took place as Jesus died on the cross:

1. the darkness (v. 33);
2. His cry of anguish (v.34-36);
3. a final cry and His death (v. 37);
4. the tearing from top to bottom of the temple curtain (v. 38);
5. the confession of the Roman centurion (v. 39); and
6. the witness of women (v. 40-41).

When the sixth hour came - Recall that "It was the third hour when they crucified Him." (Mk 15:25+) so that Jesus had already been in agony on the Cross for 3 hours. But now came high noon which marked the beginning of the most important three hour period in the history of the world. **Spurgeon** refers to this hour as "the awful darkness of that midday midnight."

R C Sproul - It is the cross ... that reveals the most violent and mysterious outpouring of the wrath of God that we find anywhere in Scripture.

Darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour - This is supernatural darkness, for it was the middle of the day. This was the Father crushing His Son just as prophesied in Isaiah 53:10-11 "The Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief" in order that "as a result of the anguish of His soul," He might justify many by bearing their iniquities." How widespread was the darkness? We cannot state with certainty but given that the Greek word for **land** (ge) is translated "earth" (165 times in 213 NT occurrences), would strongly suggest this was global darkness. And although Satan is the prince of the power of the air and of darkness, this darkness was not devilish but divine. Neither was it natural (an eclipse) but it was supernatural.

Was in global **darkness**? The scriptures do not really tell us. Lk 23:45 does say "the sun was obscured" which might suggest global darkness (but I am speculating). The main point is that Jesus bore the **WHOLE** sin debt for the **WHOLE** world so "that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (Jn 3:16). And that's **NOT** speculation!

Akin - This is nothing less than a miracle of God, a cosmic sign of God's judgment on sin poured out on His Son (cf Isa. 5:25-30; Amos 8:9-10; Micah 3:5-7; Zeph 1:14-15). Warren Wiersbe says, "all Creation sympathized with the Creator as He suffered" (Be Diligent, 148). Might the Jews have remembered the 9th plague in Egypt was a **3 day period of darkness followed by the final plague**, the death of the firstborn (Ex. 10:22-11:9)? Wiersbe again notes, "The darkness of Calvary was an announcement that God's firstborn and Beloved Son, the Lamb of God, was giving His life for the sins of the world!" (148-149)

Gilbrant - The darkness was a visible sign of God's judgment on sin (cf. Exodus 10:21f.+). While His blood was being shed, Jesus was under the curse (Galatians 3:13, 14), having become, by imputation, the sin offering for all men (2 Corinthians 5:21), thus receiving the wages of sin (Romans 6:23; Isaiah 53:5, 6).

MacArthur - The darkness at Calvary did not represent the absence of God but His holy, terrifying presence. The Father descended in judgment on Golgotha in thick gloom as the divine executioner to unleash His fury not against sinners but against the sin bearer (cf. 1 Peter 2:24). The full weight of God's wrath was poured out on the Son of God (cf. Isa. 53:5), as the spotless Lamb of God was sacrificed for sin so that sinners might be justified through Him (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:28; cf. Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:3; 1 John 4:10). Moved by His perfect justice, God's infinite wrath released an eternity of punishment on the incarnate Son who, as an infinite and eternal person, absorbed the tortures of hell in a finite span of time. This was the dreadful cup of divine judgment that Jesus anticipated while sweating blood in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:36; Luke 22:44).

Ian Paisley - The Ninth Hour

"And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour." Mark 15:33

"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour." Acts 3:1

The Ninth Hour of Darkness

"darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour"

Both John and Peter were at the cross. Whether they were together we do not know. Peter was most certainly at the cross. Here is what he said, "I am a witness of the sufferings of Christ" (1 Peter 5:1).

Ah, Peter never forgot that ninth hour and neither did John. What a ninth hour that was—the climax of the cross.

The Ninth Hour of Deliverance

The ninth hour for the lame man at the temple gate was a dark one. Through the bright light of the ninth hour of Calvary it was to become for that poor, lame man the hour of deliverance. This ninth hour light was what John and Peter had and they had it to impart. Soon the lame man was walking, leaping and praising God. (A Text a Day)

Standing Firm

Today's Scripture & Insight: Mark 15:33–41

In the Middle Eastern country where they live, Adrian and his family suffer persecution for their faith. Yet, through it all, they demonstrate Christ's love. Standing in his church courtyard, which was pummeled by bullets when terrorists used it as training ground, he said, "Today is Good Friday. We remember that Jesus suffered for us on the cross." And suffering, he continued, is something that believers in Jesus there understand. But his family chooses to remain in their homeland: "We're still here, still standing."

These believers follow the example of the women who stood watching as Jesus died on the cross (Mark 15:40). They—including Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and Salome—were brave to stay there, for friends and family members of an enemy of the state could be ridiculed and punished. Yet the women showed their love for Jesus by their very presence with Him. Even as they "followed him and cared for his needs" in Galilee (v. 41), they stood with Him at His hour of deepest need.

On this day when we remember the greatest gift of our Savior, His death on a cross, take a moment to consider how we can stand for Jesus as we face trials of many kinds (see James 2:2–4). Think too about our fellow believers around the world who suffer for their faith. As Adrian asked, "Can you please stand with us in your prayers?" Watch Moti Vaknin's devotional video, "Jesus, the Divine," to learn more about Christ's death and resurrection. By: Amy Boucher Pye ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Mark 15:34 At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" which is translated, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?"

- **At the ninth hour:** Da 9:21 Lu 23:46 Ac 10:3
- **ELOI, ELOI:** Ps 22:1 Mt 27:46 Heb 5:7
- **WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME:** Ps 27:9 42:9 71:11 Isa 41:17 La 1:12 5:20
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Psalm 22:1 For the choir director; upon >Ajeleth Hashshahar. A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why have

You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.

Matthew 27:45 Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour.

Luke 23:44-46+ It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour, 45 because the sun was obscured; and the veil of the temple was torn in two. 46) And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT." Having said this, He breathed His last.

FOURTH OF SEVEN SAYINGS OF JESUS ON THE CROSS

This is the only saying of Jesus that occurs in more than one Gospel

At the ninth hour - This would have been 3 PM on Friday, the Passover. From 9 AM to 12 noon Jesus had made 3 statements recorded in the table below.

Akin - The cry of v. 34 may be the most heart-wrenching in all of the Bible. It is a quote from Psalm 22:1 and identifies Jesus as the righteous sufferer of that Psalm. **The Hebrews never saw it as Messianic.** We now know that it is. The cry was not one of physical pain, psychological confusion, or dread of death. No, it was the cry of the Son of God who was now experiencing something He had never known in all of eternity, separation from and forsakenness by God.....Jesus' cry and the darkness that covered the land declared the same truth: there was real abandonment from the Father as He took on every sin of every man, woman, and child. As Isaiah 53:6 teaches, "the Lord laid on Him the iniquities of us all." This was the price He paid "as a ransom for many" (Mk 10:45) And why "my God" and not "my Father?" Because in this one moment in all of time and eternity, He views Himself and knows Himself not as the Father's Son, but as the sinner's sacrifice...."God separated from God, who can understand?" I may never understand it, but I will forever praise Him for it.

Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" - This was the first of 3 sayings Jesus made on the Cross as the time of His death was approaching.

In some of His dying words Jesus goes back to where He has so often the previous three years - to the Word of God, quoting from Psalm 22:1

A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.

Spurgeon writes - **My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?** This was the startling cry of Golgotha: **Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani.** The Jews mocked, but the angels adored when Jesus cried this exceeding bitter cry. Nailed to the tree we behold our great Redeemer in extremities, and what see we? Having ears to hear let us hear, and having eyes to see let us see! Let us gaze with holy wonder, and mark the flashes of light amid the awful darkness of that midday midnight. First, our Lord's faith beams forth and deserves our reverent imitation; He keeps his hold upon His God with both hands and cries twice,

My God, my God! The spirit of adoption was strong within the suffering Son of Man, and He felt no doubt about His interest in his God. Oh that we could imitate this cleaving to an afflicting God! Nor does the sufferer distrust the power of God to sustain Him, for the title used "El" signifies strength, and is the Name of the Mighty God. He knows the Lord to be the all sufficient support and succour of His spirit, and therefore appeals to Him in the agony of grief, but not in the misery of doubt. He would fain know why He is left, He raises that question and repeats it, but neither the power nor the faithfulness of God does He mistrust. What an enquiry is this before us!

Why hast Thou forsaken me? We must lay the emphasis on every word of this saddest of all utterances. **"Why?"** what is the great cause of such a strange fact as for God to leave His own Son at such a time and in such a plight? There was no cause in Him, why then was He deserted? **"Hast:"** it is done, and the Saviour is feeling its dread effect as He asks the question; it is surely true, but how mysterious! It was no threatening of forsaking which made the great Surety cry aloud, He endured that forsaking in very deed. **"Thou:"** I can understand why traitorous Judas and timid Peter should be gone, but Thou, My God, My faithful friend, how canst Thou leave Me? This is worst of all, yea, worse than all put together. Hell itself has for its fiercest flame the separation of the soul from God. **"Forsaken:"** if thou hadst chastened I might bear it, for Thy face would shine; but to forsake Me utterly, ah! why is this? **"Me:"** thine innocent, obedient, suffering Son, why leavest thou Me to perish? A sight of self seen by penitence, and of Jesus on the cross seen by faith will best expound this question. Jesus is forsaken because our sins had separated between us and our God.

Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? The Man of Sorrows had prayed until his speech failed him, and he could only utter moanings and groanings as men do in severe sicknesses, like the roarings of a wounded animal. To what extremity of grief was our Master driven? What strong crying and tears were those which made him too hoarse for speech! What must have been his anguish to find his own beloved and trusted Father standing afar off, and neither granting help nor apparently hearing prayer! This was good cause to make him "roar." Yet there was reason for all this which those who rest in Jesus as their Substitute well know.

Gilbrant - Ordinarily, crucifixions were marked by screams of pain and wild curses of rage and despair. Jesus' demeanor was such that the centurion later declared Him an innocent victim. Jesus' poignant cry was the inevitable sequel to His acceptance of the cup of horror first encountered in Gethsemane (Mk 14:33-36). It can only be understood by one who has a revelation of God's holy wrath against sin. Its full significance is beyond the comprehension of finite minds. James Morrison has said: "In the sphere of the Divine moral government He was, as the world's Representative and Substitution left alone with the world's sin, 'bearing' it" (p. 435). Jesus was experiencing the alienation from God which sin inevitably brings. His unfathomed anguish in being cut off from fellowship with the Father is not describable in human terms. He tasted both physical death and spiritual separation from God's manifest presence (Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 2:14). The sinless Son of God died the sinner's death, feeling the bitter desolation of alienation from a holy God. His cry was the sound of sin's price being paid in full, as He was a ransom for many (10:45).

Which is translated, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME - It was a human cry, a cry of desperation, springing from his heart's agony at the prospect of being put into the hands of wicked men and actually becoming sin for you and me. Even in His hour of despair the likes of which we cannot comprehend, we see He still cries out "**My God**." He clings to the assurance of His relationship with His Father in spite of the inevitable alienation from Him because of Jesus becoming the bearer of mankind's sin. The Saviour's outcry is not **against** God, but **to** God. Note that God did not respond with an audible answer -- this underscores the depth and certainty of the forsaking! On the other hand there was in a sense a "delayed divine response" - This rejection of Jesus has, of course, been answered by the Resurrection. Note Acts 2:27 uses the same verb -- but this is AFTER the forsaking and now is a promise of the resurrection - Acts 2:27 BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES. Acts 2:31 reiterates that the Father will not abandon the Son which speaks of the resurrection.

Repetition of "**MY GOD, MY GOD**" - "He makes a double effort to draw near. True Sonship is here. The child in the dark is crying after His Father—"My God, my God." Both the Bible and prayer were dear to Jesus in His agony." (Spurgeon)

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I agree with **Norman Crawford** that "All eternity will not exhaust the story of what the holy soul of the Lord Jesus endured in those dark hours on Calvary's cross." (What the Bible teaches – Luke)

Spurgeon - As to our Lord, this forsaking was singular. Did His Father ever leave Him before?Will you read the four Evangelists through and find any previous instance in which He complains of His Father for having forsaken Him? No. He said, "I know that thou hearest me always." He lived in constant touch with God. His fellowship with the Father was always near and dear and clear; but now, for the first time, He cries, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" It was very remarkable. It was a riddle only to be solved by the fact that He loved us and gave Himself for us, and in the execution of His loving purpose came even unto this sorrow, of mourning the absence of His God.

Spurgeon - This forsaking was terrible. Who can fully tell what it is to be forsaken of God?We can only form a guess by what we have ourselves felt under temporary and partial desertion. God has never left us altogether; for He has expressly said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb 13:5); yet we have sometimes felt as if He had cast us off. We have cried, "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him!" The clear shinnings of His love have been withdrawn. Thus we are able to form some little idea of how the Saviour felt when His God had forsaken Him. The mind of Jesus was left to dwell upon one dark subject, and no cheering theme consoled Him. It was the hour in which He was made to stand before God as consciously the sin-bearer, according to that ancient prophecy, "He shall bear their iniquities." Then was it true, "He hath made him to be sin for us." Peter puts it, "He his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Sin, sin, sin was everywhere around and about Christ. He had no sin of His own; but the Lord had "laid on Him the iniquity of us all." He had no strength given Him from on high, no secret oil and wine poured into His wounds; but He was made to appear in the lone character of the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world; and therefore He must feel the weight of sin and the turning away of that sacred face which cannot look thereon.

Spurgeon - His Father at that time gave Him no open acknowledgment. On certain other occasions a voice had been heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"; but now, when such a testimony seemed most of all required, the oracle was dumb. He was hung up as an accursed thing upon the cross; for He was "made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree"; and the Lord His God did not own Him before men. If it had pleased the Father, He might have sent Him twelve legions of angels; but not an angel came after the Christ had quitted Gethsemane. His despisers might spit in His face, but no swift seraph came to avenge the indignity. They might bind Him, and scourge Him, but none of all the heavenly host would interpose to screen His shoulders from the lash. They might fasten Him to the tree with nails, and lift Him up, and scoff at Him; but no cohort of ministering spirits hastened to drive back the rabble, and release the Prince of life. No, He appeared to be forsaken, "smitten of God and afflicted," delivered into the hands of cruel men, whose wicked hands worked Him misery without stint. Well might He ask, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Spurgeon - But this was not all. His Father now dried up that sacred stream of peaceful communion and loving fellowship which had flowed hitherto throughout His whole earthly life. He said Himself, as you remember, "Ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." Here was His constant comfort: but all comfort from this source was to be withdrawn. The divine Spirit did not minister to His human spirit. No communications with His Father's love poured into His heart. It was not possible that the Judge should smile upon one who represented the prisoner at the bar. Our Lord's faith did not fail Him, as I have already shown you, for He said, "My God, my God"; yet no sensible supports were given to His heart, and no comforts were poured into His mind.

MacArthur- With intense agony, the Son of God experienced that which He had never known before, the abandonment of His Father. That separation was not one of nature or essence; the Lord Jesus never ceased to be the second member of the Trinity. Rather, it was a separation of the loving communion He had eternally known with the Father (cf. John 17:21–24). This is the only place in the gospel record where Jesus referred to God by any other title than "Father." The repeated name, My God, My God, expressed the Son's profound affection and longing for the Father, mingled with the agony and pain of His separation from Him. Unmistakably, the Father visited Calvary in massive judgment, but He was absent in comfort. Unlike the temptations Jesus endured in the wilderness and the garden of Gethsemane, after which the Father sent angels to minister to His Son (Mark 1:13; Luke 22:43), no relief was given to Jesus on the cross. Such is a picture of hell, in which the full fury of God's wrath is ever present, but the comfort of His love and compassion is utterly absent. On the cross, the Lord Jesus endured the full reality of hell's torments, including being forsaken by His Father.

THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF THE SAVIOR SPOKEN ON THE CROSS				
	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
THE FOLLOWING WORDS WERE SPOKEN FROM 9 AM - 12 NOON				
Father forgive them			Lk 23:34	
Today you shall be with Me in Paradise			Lk 23:43	
Woman, behold, your son! Behold, your mother!				Jn 19:26- 27
THE FOLLOWING WORDS WERE SPOKEN ABOUT 3 PM				
ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI? MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?	Mt 27:46	Mk 15:34		
I am thirsty				Jn 19:28
It is finished!				Jn 19:30+

Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT			Lk 23:46	
James Stalker's devotional thoughts on the "Seven Sayings"... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The First Word from the Cross ▪ The Second Word from the Cross ▪ The Third Word from the Cross ▪ The Fourth Word from the Cross ▪ The Fifth Word from the Cross ▪ The Sixth Word from the Cross ▪ The Seventh Word from the Cross 				

Forsaken (desert, abandon, leave) (1459) [egkataliepo](#) from **en** = in + [kataliepo](#) = forsake, desert) means literally to leave down in. It conveys the sense of deserting someone in a set of circumstances that are against them. The idea is to let one down, to desert, abandon, leave in the lurch, leave one helpless. **Vine** - [egkataliepo](#) denotes (a) "to leave behind, among, leave surviving," [Romans 9:29](#); (b) "to forsake, abandon, leave in straits, or helpless," said by, or of, Christ, Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34; Acts 2:27,31; of men, 2 Corinthians 4:9; 2 Timothy 4:10,16; by God, Hebrews 13:5; of things, by Christians (negatively), Hebrews 10:25 ([Forsake - Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words](#)) [Egkataliepo](#) - Matt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34; Acts 2:27; Acts 2:31; Ro 9:29; 2 Co. 4:9; 2 Ti 4:10; 2 Ti 4:16; Heb. 10:25; Heb. 13:5

Jesus was **forsaken** in a moment, but was not **forsaken** forever.

EXTRA NOTES -

WHY did the Father turn away?

(1) Fulfillment of Psalm 22:1 - The Son forsaken by the Father fulfills prophecy. Here is the Septuagint = eis to telos huper tes antilempseos (help, aid, support) tes eothines psalmos to Daidid o theos o theos mou prosches (2SAMM: give attention) moi hina ti egkatelipes (2SAAI: leave, desert) me makran (far) apo tes soterias mou oi logoi ton paraptomaton mou

Note Septuagint uses same verb [egkataliepo](#). Also Aorist Active Indicative just as in Mark 15:34b

Note even in the Psalm there is repetition of "o theos o theos" - speaks of emphasis, passion, intensity

(2) The Sacrifice for Sin had to be completely consumed to fully atone for sins - Therefore the Father had to completely and utterly forsake the Son and could not help Him.

Cambridge English Dictionary - to leave someone forever, especially when they need you (THIS IS A GOOD DEFINITION IN CONTEXT OF JESUS' WORDS ON MARK -- JESUS NEEDED THE FATHER, BUT THE FATHER HAD TO TURN AWAY/FORSAKE BECAUSE JESUS HAD TO BE THE SACRIFICIAL LAMB OF GOD FOR SIN. HE HAD TO BE CONSUMED SO TO SPEAK EVEN AS THE OLD TESTAMENT BURNT OFFERING SACRIFICE FOR SIN HAD TO BE COMPLETELY CONSUMED - BY PARALLEL JESUS HAD TO BE COMPLETELY ABANDONED.

(3) The Father had to forsake the Son because the Son was made sin - several passages are notable...

2Cor 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1Peter 2:24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

Isaiah 53:4-6 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. 5But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

Isaiah 53:10 But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief (THEREFORE THE LORD,

JEHOVAH, HAD TO FORSAKE HIM); If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.

WHEN did the Father turn away?

Possibly just before the "ninth hour" (Mk 15:33) See above discussion of "DOES THE VERB PARSING GIVE ANY CLUE?"

THE MYSTERY OF THE FATHER FORSAKING THE SON DEMONSTRATES THE DEPTH OF THE LOVE THE FATHER HAS FOR SONS WHO BELIEVE IN THE SON!

ELOI ("My God"), ELOI "My God"), LAMA ("why?") SABACHTHANI ("you have forsaken me")? - This is transliterated Aramaic followed by the Greek translation. From Mk 15:35 it appears some in the crowd misheard (or misinterpreted) ELOI as if Jesus were crying out for the OT prophet Elijah.

DOES THE VERB PARSING GIVE ANY CLUE?

Aorist tense - reflects action at point in time - suggests that at some point in the Crucifixion event the Son was made sin or bore the sin of the world. In other words while we know Jesus was the "sin offering" portrayed in the Levitical sacrifices, the fact that forsaken is aorist suggest that at some point in the crucifixion the Father abandoned Jesus. Did He abandon Him the moment the stakes were driven in His hands and feet or did He abandon Him later. The Scripture does not state specifically "when" Jesus was "made sin" for us. While one might propose He was made sin the entire time on the Cross, if one compares the seven sayings of Jesus on the Cross Mark 15:34 does not appear to be the first statement, but may have been the fourth statement. Was it at this time that Jesus was made sin for us? Possibly but one cannot be dogmatic. All we can say for sure is that the Father had left Him because "have forsaken" in context describes an act that takes place before He made the declaration. Did this act of forsaking take place at the beginning of the crucifixion? One consideration is that the Father abandoned Jesus before the ninth hour because Mk 15:33-34a says "33 **When the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice...**" Did the Father abandon Him at the sixth hour? Or did He abandon Him at the ninth hour? One cannot state dogmatically but clearly Jesus' statement in answers the **WHEN QUESTION** one would ask in performing an inductive Bible Study. The fact that Jesus did not cry out "ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" at the sixth hour but at the ninth hour (Matthew says "about the ninth hour" - Mt 27:46) Note the NET and NLT versions "paraphrase" (or interpret) the "ninth hour" as "three o'clock." There is evidence that it was at this hour that the Passover lambs were actually sacrificed in the Temple. It was at that moment that they "typically" shed blood and made atonement. That could suggest that it was at the ninth hour that Jesus the Lamb of God was made sin on our behalf and it was at that time that the Father forsook Him or abandoned Him. It is difficult to be dogmatic on this point.

FORSAKEN is ACTIVE VOICE - This means God the Father made the decision of His perfect will that He would undertake this action - forsake, abandon, desert, leave His Son helpless, knowing Jesus had to die for death was the penalty for sin (Ro 6:23).

FORSAKEN is INDICATIVE MOOD - This is the mood of reality and this indicates (pun intended) that the Father actually did forsake the Son.

How does one interpret the Father forsaking the Son? He has to take off his shoes and kneel down because we are on holy ground. Human intellect and reasoning cannot grasp the height and depth and length and breadth of this abandonment. God is Triune, infinite, and One (Dt 6:5), so how could the Father forsake the Son in this moment when the Son was made sin for the world? We cannot answer. We dare not answer. We may be told in eternity future, but we may never fully grasp the spiritual interaction that took place that day on Calvary between the sixth and the ninth hour. Deut 29:29 says "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law." This mystery of the Father forsaking the Son may be one of the "secret things" that "belong to the LORD our God." In the meantime, we express thanksgiving, praise and worship for such a profound divine love from our Father that would prompt Him to forsake His only begotten Son and to do it because "God so loved the world." (Jn 3:16). In sum, forsaken in Mk 15:34 is a description of God's great love for us and should motivate in us a great love for Him or as John says "We love because He first loved us" (1Jn 4:19)

C H SPURGEON adds this thought - "this cry came out of that darkness. Expect not to see through its every word, as though it came from on high as a beam from the unclouded Sun of Righteousness. There is light in it, bright, flashing light; but there is a center of impenetrable gloom, where the soul is ready to faint because of the terrible darkness.".... I do not think that the records of time, or even of eternity, contain a sentence more full of anguish. Here the wormwood and the gall, and all the other bitterness, are outdone. Here you may look as into a vast abyss; and though you strain your eyes, and gaze till sight fails you, yet you perceive no bottom; it is measureless, unfathomable, inconceivable. This anguish of the Saviour on your behalf and mine is no more to be measured and weighed than the sin which needed it, or the love which endureth it. We will adore where we cannot comprehend....You shall measure the height of His love, if it be ever measured, by the depth of His grief, if that can ever be known. See with what a price He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law! As you see this, say to yourselves: What manner of people ought we to be! What measure of love ought we to return to One who bore the utmost penalty, that we might be delivered from the wrath to come? I do not profess that I

can dive into this deep: I will only venture to the edge of the precipice, and bid you look down, and pray the Spirit of God to concentrate your mind upon this lamentation of our dying Lord, as it rises up through the thick darkness—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?".... All the tortures of His body He endured in silence; but when it came to being forsaken of God, then His great heart burst out into its "Lama sabachthani?" His one moan is concerning His God. It is not, "Why has Peter forsaken Me? Why has Judas betrayed Me?" These were sharp griefs, but this is the sharpest. This stroke has cut Him to the quick; "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" It was no phantom of the gloom; it was a *real absence* which He mourned.

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The Trial and Death of Jesus Christ: Chapter 17 - The Fourth Word from the Cross By James Stalker

[1]The Seven Words from the Cross may be divided into two groups. In the first three--namely, the prayer for His crucifiers, the word to the penitent thief, and the directions about His mother--our Lord was dealing with the interests of others; in the last four, to which we now pass, He was absorbed in His own concerns. This division is natural. Many a dying man, after arranging his affairs and saying his farewells, turns his face to the wall, to encounter death and be alone with God. It was highly characteristic of Jesus, however, before turning to His own things, first to mind the things of others.

Between these two groups of sayings there seems to have elapsed a long interval. From the sixth hour to the ninth Jesus was silent. And during this interval there was darkness over all the land. Of what precise nature this atmospheric effect may have been it is impossible at this distance to say. But the Evangelists, three of whom mention it, evidently consider it to have indicated in some sense the sympathy of nature with her Lord. It was as if the sun refused to look on such a deed of shame. It may be supposed that by this weird phenomenon the noises round the cross were in some degree hushed. At length the silence was broken by Christ Himself, who, in a loud voice, gave utterance to the Fourth Word from the cross. This was a word of astonishment and agony, yet also of victory.

I. Of what nature had been the meditations of our Lord during the three hours of silence? Had He been in an ecstasy of communion with His heavenly Father? Not infrequently has this been vouchsafed to dying saints. And it has sometimes enabled them completely to overcome physical suffering. Martyrs have occasionally been so exalted at the last as to be able even to sing in the flames. It is with awe and astonishment we learn that the very opposite of this was the state of mind of Jesus. The word with which He burst out of the trance of silence may be taken as the index of what was going on in His mind during the preceding hours; and it is a cry out of the lowest depths of despair. Indeed, it is the most appalling sound that ever pierced the atmosphere of this earth. Familiar as it is to us, it cannot be heard by a sensitive ear even at this day without causing a cold shudder of terror. In the entire Bible there is no other sentence so difficult to explain. The first thought of a preacher, on coming to it, is to find some excuse for passing it by; and, after doing his utmost to expound it, he must still confess that it is quite beyond him. Yet there is a great reward in grappling with such difficult passages; for never does the truth impress us so profoundly as when we are made to feel that all the length which we are able to go is only into the shallows of the shore, while beyond our reach lies the great ocean.

Even in Christ's own mind the uppermost thought, when He uttered this cry, was one of astonishment. In Gethsemane, we are told, "He was sore amazed." And this is obviously the tone of this utterance also. We almost detect an accentuation of the "Thou" like that in the word with which the murdered Caesar fell. All His life Jesus had been accustomed to find Himself forsaken. The members of His own household early rejected Him. So did His fellow-townsmen in Nazareth. Ultimately the nation at large followed the same course. The multitudes that at one time followed Him wherever He went and hung upon His lips eventually took offence and went away. At last, in the crisis of His fate, one of His nearest followers betrayed Him and the rest forsook Him and fled. But in these disappointments, though He felt them keenly, He had always had one resource: He was always able, when rejected of men, to turn

away from them and cast Himself with confidence on the breast of God. Disappointed of human love, He drank the more deeply of the love divine. He always knew that what He was doing or suffering was in accord with the will of God; His feelings kept constant time with the Divine heart; God's thoughts were His thoughts; He could clearly discern the divine intention leading through all the contradictions of His career to a sublime result. Therefore He could calmly say, even at the Last Supper, with reference to the impending desertion of the Twelve, "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." Now, however, the hour had come; and was this expectation fulfilled? They were scattered, as He had predicted, and He was left alone; but was He not alone? was the Father still with Him? His own words supply the answer: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

F F Bruce, et al - Why Have You Forsaken Me?

This is the hardest of all the hard sayings. It is the last articulate utterance of the crucified Jesus reported by Mark and Matthew; soon afterward, they say, with a loud cry (the content of which is not specified) he breathed his last.

P. W. Schmiedel adduced this utterance as one of the few "absolutely credible" texts which might be used as "foundation pillars for a truly scientific life of Jesus," on the ground that it could not be a product of the worship of Jesus in the church. No one would have invented it; it was an uncompromising datum of tradition which an Evangelist had to either reproduce as it stood or else pass over without mention.

It would be wise not to make the utterance a basis for reconstructing the inner feelings which Jesus experienced on the cross. The question "Why?" was asked, but remained unanswered. There are some theologians and psychologists, nevertheless, who have undertaken to supply the answer which the record does not give. Their example is not to be followed. This at least must be said: if it is a hard saying for the reader of the Gospels, it was hardest of all for our Lord himself. The assurances on which men and women of God in Old Testament times rested in faith were not for him. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all," said a psalmist (Ps 34:19 RSV), but for Jesus no deliverance appeared.

It seems certain that the words are quoted from the beginning of Psalm 22. Arguments to the contrary are not convincing. The words are not quoted from the Hebrew text, but from an Aramaic paraphrase. (For the Aramaic form Eloi, "my God," in Mark, the Hebrew form Eli appears in Matthew. Any attempt to determine the precise pronunciation would have to reckon with the fact that some bystanders thought that Jesus was calling for Elijah to come and help him.) Psalm 22, while it begins with a cry of utter desolation, is really an expression of faith and thanksgiving; the help from God, so long awaited and even despaired of, comes at last. So it has sometimes been thought that, while Jesus is recorded as uttering only the opening cry of desolation, in fact he recited the whole psalm (although inaudibly) as an expression of faith.

This cannot be proved, but there is one New Testament writer who seems to have thought so—the author of the letter to the Hebrews. This writer more than once quotes other passages from Psalm 22 apart from the opening cry and ascribes them to Jesus. In particular, he says that Jesus "offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him" (Heb 5:7–9).

In these words the writer to the Hebrews expounds, in terms of sufferings which Jesus endured, the acknowledgment of Psalm 22:24: God "has not despised or disdained the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help." But when he says that Jesus' prayer "to the one who could save him from death" was answered, he does not mean that Jesus was delivered from dying; he means that, having died, he was "brought back from the dead" to live henceforth by "the power of an indestructible life" (Heb 13:20; 7:16).

The same writer presents Jesus in his death as being a willing and acceptable sacrifice to God. That martyrs in Israel should offer their lives to expiate the sins of others was not unprecedented. Instead of having his heart filled with bitter resentment against those who were treating him so abominably, Jesus in dying offered his life to God as an atonement for their sins, and for the sins of the world. Had he not said on one occasion that "the Son of Man [came] ... to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk 10:45)? But now he did so the more effectively by entering really into the desolation of that God-forsakenness which is the lot of sinners—by being "made ... to be sin for us," as Paul puts it (2 Cor 5:21). "In His death everything was made His that sin had made ours—everything in sin except its sinfulness."

Jesus "learned obedience from what he suffered," as the writer to the Hebrews says, in the sense that by his suffering he learned the cost of his wholehearted obedience to his Father. His acceptance of the cross crowned his obedience, and he was never more pleasing to the Father than in this act of total devotion; yet that does not diminish the reality of his experience of being God-forsaken. But this reality has made him the more effective as the deliverer and supporter of his people. He is no visitant from another world, avoiding too much involvement with this world of ours; he has totally involved himself in the human lot. There is no depth of dereliction

known to human beings which he has not plumbed; by this means he has been "made perfect"—that is to say, completely qualified to be his people's sympathizing helper in their most extreme need. If they feel like crying to God, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" they can reflect that that is what he cried. When they call out of the depths to God, he who called out of the depths on Good Friday knows what it feels like. But there is this difference: he is with them now to strengthen them—no one was there to strengthen him. (Hard Sayings of the Bible)

Octavius Winslow - devotional

Consider Jesus— as Forsaken by God

"My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" —Matt. 27:46

My soul! was it not enough that your Lord should be forsaken of man in His sorrow? Was it essential to the accomplishment of your salvation, and to your support and comfort in seasons of soul desertion and darkness, that He should likewise be forsaken of God? Yes! it must be so. The history of the universe never presented such an abandonment--a being so holy, and yet so entirely and so severely forsaken of God and man--as that which Jesus was now experiencing upon the accursed tree. With what a depth of emphasis that word must have sounded from His pale lips, quivering with agony--"My God, my God, why have YOU FORSAKEN me?" You, my Father--You whose glory I am vindicating, whose government I am honoring, whose Name I am glorifying, whose Church I am redeeming--why, my God, my God, have YOU forsaken me? I can endure to be abandoned by man, but to be forsaken by YOU, my Father, in the hour of my deepest sorrow, at the moment of my keenest suffering, is the bitterest ingredient in my cup of bitter, the darkest hue in my cloud of darkness." Let us devoutly consider Jesus as passing through this eclipse of His soul, and receive the holy instruction and comfort the spectacle was designed to convey.

Of WHOM was Jesus forsaken? His Father. And when, O my soul! you walk in a sense of divine desertion, who is it that says to you, "For a small moment have I forsaken you, but with great mercies will I gather you?" --it is your Father in heaven. It is a Father's momentary withdrawal; and although this thought adds keenness to the discipline and intensity to the cloud, is there no consolation in knowing that the hiding is paternal--a Father secreting Himself from His child--and but for a moment? Thus, though He hides Himself, He is a Father still.

But, what was a cloud of thick, all-enshrouding darkness to Jesus is salvation's light to us. Even as His sorrow is our joy, His wounds our healing, His death our life--so His abandonment on the cross, as a foreign divine expresses it, is "our bridge to heaven; an unfathomable abyss for all our sins, cares, and anxieties; the charter of our citizenship, the key whereby we may open the secret chamber of communion with God."

Thus, if you are, O my soul! walking in darkness and have no light, let the thought be as a ray playing on the brow of your cloud, that, it is not the darkness of hell and condemnation, but the darkness only through which all the 'children of light' more or less travel--the darkness with which the Sun of Righteousness Himself was enshrouded--and which, when it is past, will make the sunshine of God's love and the Savior's presence all the sweeter, dearer, brighter.

And how did Jesus deport Himself in this season of Divine forsaking? What supported and comforted Him during this total and dreadful eclipse through which His sinless soul passed? He trusted in God. His faith could still exclaim, "MY God, MY God." So lean upon your covenant God, O you children of light walking in darkness. As the veiling clouds, though they hide, cannot extinguish the sun, neither can your gloomy seasons of Divine desertion extinguish one beam of the Savior's love to you. If all is dark--a hidden God, an absent Savior, a frowning providence--now is the time to have faith in God. "Who is among you that walks in darkness, and has no light? let him trust in the name of the lord, and stay upon his God." Stay yourself upon His covenant faithfulness and unchanging love, and believe that Jesus intercedes for you in heaven, and that soon you shall reach that blissful world where your sun shall no more go down, nor your moon withdraw itself.

"Through waves, and clouds, and storms,

He gently clears your way:

O Wait His time--your darkest night

Shall end in brightest day."

From Pastor Ray Pritchard

When God looked down and saw his Son bearing the sin of the world, he didn't see his Son, he saw instead the sin that he was bearing. In that awful moment, the Father turned away. Not in anger at his Son. No, he loved his Son as much at that moment as he ever had. He turned away in anger over all the sin of the world that sent his Son to the cross. He turned away in sorrow and deepest

pain when he saw what sin had done. He turned away in complete revulsion at the ugliness of sin.

When he did that, Jesus was alone. Completely forsaken. God-forsaken. Abandoned. Deserted. Disowned.

We may not understand that. Indeed, it is certain that we do not. But that is what these words mean.

Thus did the Son of God make complete identification with sinners. Jesus became a curse for us. He died in our place. All our sins were laid on him. It was for that reason—and only for that reason—that God the Father forsook his beloved Son.

When Charles Wesley wrote his great hymn *And Can It Be?*, he began the second verse with a line that could have been written with this statement in view:

'Tis mystery all: th' Immortal dies: Who can explore His strange design?

We will never fully understand what it meant for Christ die in our place, taking our sins upon himself, bearing our punishment, that we might be forgiven forever.

Rest in this simple truth. He was forsaken that we might never be forsaken. Those who trust in him will never be disappointed, in this life or in the life to come.

Amazing love! How can it be, That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me? Amen.

WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME? - Cyril Hocking

THE LORD'S birth had been marked by a supernatural burst of light during the night-time, Luke 2:9–11; His death was now marked by a supernatural darkness for three hours from mid-day, 23:44. God shrouded the land in darkness to hide from man's prying gaze the momentous transaction which took place between Him and His Son. It was at the end of this period of darkness that Jesus loudly uttered the most harrowing cry ever to pierce the skies—'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?', Mark 15:33, 34.

It was the cry of One who had fathomed the very abyss of suffering and sorrow. Earlier, at the 'place' Gethsemane, He had been forsaken by His disciples, Mark 14:32, 50. At the 'place' Gabbatha, He had been forsaken by His nation, John 19:13–16. Now, at the 'place' Golgotha He was forsaken by His God.

Our Lord was the true 'scapegoat', who entered the 'land not inhabited (i.e. a land cut off, separated, solitary)', Lev. 16:8–10; 20–26. Imagine the 'live goat', on Israel's Day of Atonement, alone in some desolate and barren land, with its weary feet, its drooping head, its sunken eyes and its hoarse, pitiable bleat. Why, we enquire, did this goat have to suffer so? Because, scripture replies, all the sins, iniquities and transgressions of the people had been 'put' upon it, vv. 21–22. The goat had become the people's representative before God and had to bear their sins away for another year. God laid our every sin on Christ and, in the darkness and the distance, He bore them away for ever, Isa. 53:6; 1 Pet. 2:24.

Our Lord's physical sufferings were, in effect, only the door through which He passed to something infinitely more fearful beyond. Nevertheless His cry of desolation provides us with some small window into His unspeakable spiritual anguish. Yet, when we have ventured as far as we are able, we are conscious that we stand only in the shallows of a vast, unplumbed ocean.

The apostle Paul knew what it was to be forsaken by men, 2 Tim. 4:16. At that very time, however, he experienced the uninterrupted presence of the One who knew what it was to be forsaken by all—even by God Himself, v. 17. That very same Saviour, once forsaken for us, has pledged that by no means will we ever be forsaken by Him, Heb. 13:5.

Acts 2:22-36 The Greatest Wrong

God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. —Acts 2:36

Followers of Christ see His crucifixion as the greatest wrong in all of history. Yet they decorate church buildings with the cross, wear it as jewelry, and sing about it. Why would anyone cherish such a terrible symbol of suffering and shame?

In ancient times many criminals and rebels died by crucifixion. It's said that in the unrest after the death of Herod the Great in 4 BC, Roman soldiers lined a road in Galilee with 2,000 crosses, each bearing the body of an insurrectionist. Their purpose was to strike terror into the heart of anyone who even contemplated rebellion against Rome.

Jesus' death, however, was unlike any of these. Yes, He endured the same physical agony, but He underwent such a terrible sense of abandonment that He cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Mark 15:34). As the Son of God, He was experiencing the righteous wrath of His Father against the sin of all mankind. In dying, He fully paid the penalty for our sin and broke the power of death. To vindicate Christ's work on the cross, God raised Him up from the grave (Acts 2:24; Romans 1:4).

History's greatest wrong secured our pardon from sin. And His resurrection assures our ultimate victory over death. That's why we

cherish the cross! —Herb Vander Lugt

The cross of Christ reveals God's love at its best and man's sin at its worst.

F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?

This was the darkest hour of the Savior's human life. Lover and friend stood away from Him; and those for whom his blood was being shed covered Him with contumely and abuse. Let us consider:—

His quotation of Scripture. — He is quoting Psalm 22:1, which is truly known as the Psalm of the Cross. It may be that He recited to Himself that wonderful elegy, in which David was to anticipate so minutely the sufferings of his Lord. What meaning there was for those dying lips in Psalm 22:7: "All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn"; in Psalm 22:13: "They gape upon Me"; in Psalm 22:14: "All my bones are out of joint"; in Psalm 22:17: "I may tell all my bones"; or in Psalm 22:18: "They part my garments and cast lots." What sacred feet trod those well-worn steps!

His vicarious sufferings. — There is no possible way of understanding, or interpreting, these words, except by believing that He was suffering for sins not his own; that He was being made sin for us; that He was bearing away the sin of the world. It is not for a moment conceivable that the Father could have ever seemed to forsake his well-beloved Son, unless He had stood as the Representative of a guilty race, and during those hours of midday, midnight had become the propitiation for the sins of the world.

His perfect example of the way of Faith. — In doing the Father's will, He yielded up his life even to the death of the cross. But amid it all He said, "My God, my God." He still held to the Father with his two hands. And his faith conquered. The clouds broke; the clear heaven appeared; He died with a serene faith. "My God" was exchanged for "Father, into thy hands."

HERE IS THE ENTRY FROM CHARLES H SPURGEON'S "CHRIST'S WORDS FROM THE CROSS" FROM THE CHAPTER ENTITLED "THE FOURTH WORD"

The Fourth Word: (Anguish)

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Matthew 27:46

"There was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour": this cry came out of that darkness. Expect not to see through its every word, as though it came from on high as a beam from the unclouded Sun of Righteousness. There is light in it, bright, flashing light; but there is a center of impenetrable gloom, where the soul is ready to faint because of the terrible darkness.

Our Lord was then in the darkest part of His way. He had trodden the winepress now for hours, and the work was almost finished. He had reached the culminating point of His anguish. This is His dolorous lament from the lowest pit of misery—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" I do not think that the records of time, or even of eternity, contain a sentence more full of anguish. Here the wormwood and the gall, and all the other bitterness, are outdone. Here you may look as into a vast abyss; and though you strain your eyes, and gaze till sight fails you, yet you perceive no bottom; it is measureless, unfathomable, inconceivable. This anguish of the Saviour on your behalf and mine is no more to be measured and weighed than the sin which needed it, or the love which endureth it. We will adore where we cannot comprehend.

I hope this subject will help the children of God to understand a little of their infinite obligations to their redeeming Lord. You shall measure the height of His love, if it be ever measured, by the depth of His grief, if that can ever be known. See with what a price He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law! As you see this, say to yourselves: What manner of people ought we to be! What measure of love ought we to return to One who bore the utmost penalty, that we might be delivered from the wrath to come? I do not profess that I can dive into this deep: I will only venture to the edge of the precipice, and bid you look down, and pray the Spirit of God to concentrate your mind upon this lamentation of our dying Lord, as it rises up through the thick darkness—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Our first subject of thought will be the fact, or, what He suffered—God had forsaken Him.

Secondly, we will note the inquiry, or, why He suffered: this word "why" is the edge of the text: "Why hast thou forsaken me?"

Then, thirdly, we will consider the answer, or, what came of His suffering. The answer flowed softly into the soul of the Lord Jesus without the need of words, for He ceased from His anguish with the triumphant shout of, "It is finished." His work was finished, and His bearing of desertion was a chief part of the work He had undertaken for our sake.

I. By the help of the Holy Spirit, let us first dwell upon The Fact or, what our Lord suffered. God had forsaken Him.

Grief of mind is harder to bear than pain of body. You can pluck up courage and endure the pang of sickness and pain, so long as the

spirit is hale and brave; but if the soul itself be touched, and the mind becomes diseased with anguish, then every pain is increased in severity, and there is nothing with which to sustain it. Spiritual sorrows are the worst of mental miseries. A man may bear great depression of spirit about worldly matters, if he feels that he has his God to go to. He is cast down, but not in despair. Like David, he communes with himself, and he inquires, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him." But if the Lord be once withdrawn, if the comfortable light of His presence be shadowed even for an hour, there is a torment within the breast, which I can only liken to the prelude of hell. This is the greatest of all weights that can press upon the heart. This made the psalmist plead, "Hide not thy face from me; put not thy servant away in anger." We can bear a bleeding body, and even a wounded spirit; but a soul conscious of desertion by God is beyond conception unendurable. When He holdeth back the face of His throne, and spreadeth His cloud upon it, who can endure the darkness?

This voice out of "the belly of hell" marks the lowest depth of the Saviour's grief. The desertion was real. Though under some aspects our Lord could say, "The Father is with Me," yet was it solemnly true that God did forsake Him. It was not a failure of faith on His part which led Him to imagine what was not actual fact. Our faith fails us, and then we think that God has forsaken us; but our Lord's faith did not for a moment falter, for He says twice, "My God, my God." Oh, the mighty double grip of His unhesitating faith! He seems to say, "Even if Thou hast forsaken Me, I have not forsaken Thee." Faith triumphs, and there is no sign of any faintness of heart towards the living God. Yet, strong as is His faith, He feels that God has withdrawn His comfortable fellowship, and He shivers under the terrible deprivation.

It was no fancy, or delirium of mind, caused by His weakness of body, the heat of the fever, the depression of His spirit, or the near approach of death. He was clear of mind even to this last. He bore up under pain, loss of blood, scorn, thirst, and desolation, making no complaint of the cross, the nails, and the scoffing. We read not in the gospels of anything more than the natural cry of weakness, "I thirst." All the tortures of His body He endured in silence; but when it came to being forsaken of God, then His great heart burst out into its "Lama sabachthani?" His one moan is concerning His God. It is not, "Why has Peter forsaken Me? Why has Judas betrayed Me?" These were sharp griefs, but this is the sharpest. This stroke has cut Him to the quick; "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" It was no phantom of the gloom; it was a real absence which He mourned.

This was a very remarkable desertion. It is not the way of God to leave either His sons or His servants. His saints, when they come to die, in their great weakness and pain, find Him near. They are made to sing because of the presence of God: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." Dying saints have clear visions of the living God. Our observation has taught us that if the Lord be away at other times, He is never absent from His people in the article of death, or in the furnace of affliction.

Concerning the three holy children, we do not read that the Lord was ever visibly with them till they walked the fires of Nebuchadnezzar's furnace; but there and then the Lord met with them. Yes, beloved, it is God's use and wont to keep company with His afflicted people; and yet He forsook His Son in the hour of His tribulation! How usual it is to see the Lord with His faithful witnesses when resisting even unto blood! Read the Book of Martyrs, and I care not whether you study the former or the later persecutions, you will find them all lit up with the evident presence of the Lord with His witnesses.

Did the Lord ever fail to support a martyr at the stake? Did He ever forsake one of His testifiers upon the scaffold? The testimony of the church has always been, that while the Lord has permitted His saints to suffer in body, He has so divinely sustained their spirits that they have been more than conquerors and have treated their sufferings as light afflictions. The fire has not been a "bed of roses," but it has been a chariot of victory. The sword is sharp, and death is bitter; but the love of Christ is sweet, and to die for Him has been turned into glory. No, it is not God's way to forsake His champions nor to leave even the least of His children in the trial hour.

As to our Lord, this forsaking was singular. Did His Father ever leave Him before? Will you read the four Evangelists through and find any previous instance in which He complains of His Father for having forsaken Him? No. He said, "I know that thou hearest me always." He lived in constant touch with God. His fellowship with the Father was always near and dear and clear; but now, for the first time, He cries, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" It was very remarkable. It was a riddle only to be solved by the fact that He loved us and gave Himself for us, and in the execution of His loving purpose came even unto this sorrow, of mourning the absence of His God.

This forsaking was terrible. Who can fully tell what it is to be forsaken of God? We can only form a guess by what we have ourselves felt under temporary and partial desertion. God has never left us altogether; for He has expressly said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb 13:5); yet we have sometimes felt as if He had cast us off. We have cried, "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him!" The clear shinnings of His love have been withdrawn. Thus we are able to form some little idea of how the Saviour felt when His God had forsaken Him. The mind of Jesus was left to dwell upon one dark subject, and no cheering theme consoled Him. It was the hour in which He was made to stand before God as consciously the sin-bearer, according to that ancient prophecy, "He shall bear their iniquities." Then was it true, "He hath made him to be sin for us." Peter puts it, "He his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Sin, sin, sin was everywhere around and about Christ. He had no sin of His own; but the Lord had "laid on Him the iniquity of us all." He had no strength given Him from on high, no secret oil and wine poured into His wounds; but He was made to appear in the lone character of the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world; and therefore He must feel the weight of sin and the turning

away of that sacred face which cannot look thereon.

His Father at that time gave Him no open acknowledgment. On certain other occasions a voice had been heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"; but now, when such a testimony seemed most of all required, the oracle was dumb. He was hung up as an accursed thing upon the cross; for He was "made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree"; and the Lord His God did not own Him before men. If it had pleased the Father, He might have sent Him twelve legions of angels; but not an angel came after the Christ had quitted Gethsemane. His despisers might spit in His face, but no swift seraph came to avenge the indignity. They might bind Him, and scourge Him, but none of all the heavenly host would interpose to screen His shoulders from the lash. They might fasten Him to the tree with nails, and lift Him up, and scoff at Him; but no cohort of ministering spirits hastened to drive back the rabble, and release the Prince of life. No, He appeared to be forsaken, "smitten of God and afflicted," delivered into the hands of cruel men, whose wicked hands worked Him misery without stint. Well might He ask, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

But this was not all. His Father now dried up that sacred stream of peaceful communion and loving fellowship which had flowed hitherto throughout His whole earthly life. He said Himself, as you remember, "Ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." Here was His constant comfort: but all comfort from this source was to be withdrawn. The divine Spirit did not minister to His human spirit. No communications with His Father's love poured into His heart. It was not possible that the Judge should smile upon one who represented the prisoner at the bar. Our Lord's faith did not fail Him, as I have already shown you, for He said, "My God, my God"; yet no sensible supports were given to His heart, and no comforts were poured into His mind.

One writer declares that Jesus did not taste of divine wrath, but only suffered a withdrawal of divine fellowship. What is the difference? Whether God withdraw heat or create cold is all one. He was not smiled upon, nor allowed to feel that He was near to God; and this, to His tender spirit, was grief of the keenest order.

A certain saint once said that in his sorrow he had from God "necessaries, but not suavities"; that which was meet, but not that which was sweet. Our Lord suffered to the extreme point of deprivation. He had not the light which makes existence to be life, and life to be a boon. You that know, in your degree, what it is to lose the conscious presence and love of God, you can faintly guess what the sorrow of the Saviour was, now that He felt He had been forsaken of His God. "If the foundations be removed, what can the righteous do?" To our Lord, the Father's love was the foundation of everything; and when that was gone, all was gone. Nothing remained, within, without, above, when His own God, the God of His entire confidence, turned from Him. Yes, God in very deed forsook our Saviour.

To be forsaken of God was much more a source of anguish to Jesus than it would be to us. "Oh," say you, "how is that?" I answer, because He was perfectly holy. A rupture between a perfectly holy being and the thrice holy God must be in the highest degree strange, abnormal, perplexing and painful. If any man here, who is not at peace with God, could only know his true condition, he would swoon with fright. If you unforgiven ones only knew where you are, and what you are at this moment in the sight of God, you would never smile again till you were reconciled to Him. Alas! we are insensible, hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, and therefore we do not feel our true condition. His perfect holiness made it to our Lord a dreadful calamity to be forsaken of the thrice Holy God.

I remember, also, that our blessed Lord had lived in unbroken fellowship with God and to be forsaken was a new grief to Him. He had never known what the dark was till then: His life had been lived in the light of God. Think, dear child of God, if you had always dwelt in full communion with God, your days would have been as the days of heaven upon earth; and how cold it would strike to your heart to find yourself in the darkness of desertion. If you can conceive such a thing as happening to a perfect man, you can see why to our Well-beloved it was a special trial. Remember, He had enjoyed fellowship with God more richly, as well as more constantly, than any of us. His fellowship with the Father was of the highest, deepest, fullest order; and what must the loss of it have been? We lose but drops when we lose our joyful experience of heavenly fellowship; and yet the loss is killing; but to our Lord Jesus Christ the sea was dried up—I mean His sea of fellowship with the infinite God.

Do not forget that He was such a One that to Him to be without God must have been an overwhelming calamity. In every part He was perfect, and in every part fitted for communion with God to a supreme degree. A sinful man has an awful need of God, but he does not know it; and therefore he does not feel that hunger and thirst after God which would come upon a perfect man could be deprived of God. The very perfection of His nature renders it inevitable that the holy man must either be in communion with God, or be desolate.

Imagine a stray angel! a seraph who has lost his God! Conceive him to be perfect in holiness, and yet to have fallen into a condition in which he cannot find his God! I cannot picture him; perhaps a Milton might have done so. He is sinless and trustful, and yet he has an overpowering feeling that God is absent from him. He has drifted into the nowhere—the unimaginable region behind the back of God. I think I hear the wailing of the cherub: "My God, my God, my God, where art thou?" What a sorrow for one of the sons of the morning!

But here we have the lament of a Being far more capable of fellowship with the Godhead. In proportion as He is more fitted to receive the love of the great Father, in that proportion is His pining after it the more intense. As a Son, He is more able to commune with God

than ever a servant-angel could be; and now that He is forsaken of God, the void within is the greater, and the anguish more bitter.

Our Lord's heart, and all His nature were, morally and spiritually, so delicately formed, so sensitive, so tender, that to be without God, was to Him a grief which could not be weighed. I see Him in the text bearing desertion, and yet I perceive that He cannot bear it. I know not how to express my meaning except by such a paradox. He cannot endure to be without God. He had surrendered Himself to be left of God, as the representative of sinners must be, but His pure and holy nature, after three hours of silence, finds the position unendurable to love and purity; and breaking forth from it, now that the hour was over, He exclaims, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" He quarrels not with the suffering, but He cannot abide in the position which caused it. He seems as if He must end the ordeal, not because of the pain, but because of the moral shock. We have here the repetition after His passion of that loathing which He felt before it, when He cried, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt," "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" is the holiness of Christ amazed at the position of substitute for guilty men.

There, friends; I have done my best, but I seem to myself to have been prattling like a little child, writing of something infinitely above me. So I leave the solemn fact, that our Lord Jesus was on the tree forsaken of His God.

II. This brings us to consider The Inquiry or, why He suffered.

Note carefully this cry—"My God, my god, why hast thou forsaken me?" It is pure anguish, undiluted agony, which crieth like this; but it is the agony of a godly soul; for only a man of that order would have used such an expression. Let us learn from it useful lessons. This cry is taken from "the Book." Does it not show our Lord's love of the sacred volume, that when He felt His sharpest grief, He turned to the Scripture to find a fit utterance for it? Here we have the opening sentence of the twenty-second Psalm. Oh, that we may so love the inspired Word that we may not sing to its score, but even weep to its music!

Note, again, that our Lord's lament is an address to God. The godly, in their anguish, turn to the hand which smites them. The Saviour's outcry is not against God, but to God. "My God, my God": He makes a double effort to draw near. True Sonship is here. The child in the dark is crying after His Father—"My God, my God." Both the Bible and prayer were dear to Jesus in His agony.

Still, observe, it is a faith-cry; for though it asks, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" yet it first says, twice over, "My God, my God." The grip of appropriation is in the word "my"; but the reverence of humility is in the word "God." It is "'My God, My God,' Thou art ever God to me, and I a poor creature. I do not quarrel with Thee. Thy rights are unquestioned, for Thou art my God. Thou canst do as Thou wilt, and I yield to Thy sacred sovereignty. I kiss the hand that smites me, and with all my heart cry, 'My God, My God.'" When you are delirious with pain, think of your Bible still: when your mind wanders, let it roam toward the mercy seat; and when your heart and your flesh fail, still live by faith, and still cry, "My God, My God."

Let us come close to the inquiry. It looked to me, at first sight, like a question of one distraught, driven from the balance of His mind—not unreasonable, but too much reasoning, and therefore tossed about. "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Did not Jesus know? Did He not know why He was forsaken? He knew it most distinctly, and yet His manhood, while it was being crushed, pounded, dissolved, seemed as though it could not understand the reason for so great a grief. He must be forsaken; but could there be a sufficient cause for so sickening a sorrow? The cup must be bitter; but why this most nauseous of ingredients? I tremble lest I say what I ought not to say. I have said it, and I think there is truth—the Man of Sorrows was overborne with horror. At that moment the finite soul of the man Christ Jesus came into awful contact with the infinite justice of God. The one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, beheld the holiness of God in arms against the sin of man, whose nature He had espoused. God was for Him and with Him in a certain unquestionable sense; but for the time, so far as His feeling went, God was against Him and necessarily withdrawn from Him.

It is not surprising that the holy soul of Christ should shudder at finding itself brought into painful contact with the infinite justice of God, even though its design was only to vindicate that justice, and glorify the Law-giver. Our Lord could now say, "All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over Me"; and therefore He uses language which is all too hot with anguish to be dissected by the cold hand of a logical criticism. Grief has small regard for the laws of the grammarian. Even the holiest, when in extreme agony, though they cannot speak otherwise than according to purity and truth, yet use a language of their own, which only the ear of sympathy can fully receive. I see not all that is here, but what I can see I am not able to put in words for you.

I think I see, in the expression, submission and resolve. Our Lord does not draw back. There is a forward movement in the question: they who quit a business ask no more questions about it. He does not ask that the forsaking may end prematurely, He would only understand anew its meaning. He does not shrink, but He rather dedicates Himself anew to God by the words, "My God, my God," and by seeking to review the ground and reason of that anguish which He is resolute to bear even to the bitter end. He would fain anew the motive which has sustained Him, and must sustain Him to the end. The cry sounds to me like deep submission and strong resolve, pleasing with God.

Do you not think that the amazement of our Lord, when He was "made sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21), led Him thus to cry out? For such a sacred and pure being to be made a sin-offering was an amazing experience. Sin was laid on Him, and He was treated as if He had been guilty, though He had personally never sinned; and now the infinite horror of rebellion against the most holy God fills His

holy soul, the unrighteousness of sin breaks His heart, and He starts back from it, crying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Why must I bear the dread result of conduct I so much abhor?

Do you not see, moreover, there was here a glance at His eternal purpose, and at His secret source of joy? That "why" is the silver lining of the dark cloud, and our Lord looked wishfully at it. He knew that the desertion was needful in order that He might save the guilty and He had an eye to that salvation as His comfort. He is not forsaken needlessly, nor without a worthy design. The design is in itself so dear to His heart that He yields to the passing evil, even though that evil be like death to Him. He looks at that "why," and through that narrow window the light of heaven comes streaming into His darkened life.

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Surely our Lord dwelt on that "why" that we might also turn our eyes that way. He would have us see the why and the wherefore of His grief. He would have us mark the gracious motive for its endurance. Think much of all your Lord suffered, but do not overlook the reason of it. If you cannot always understand how this or that grief worked toward the great end of the whole passion, yet believe that it has its share in the grand "why." Make a life-study of that bitter but blessed question, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Thus the Saviour raises an inquiry not so much for Himself as for us; and not so much because of any despair within His heart as because of a hope and a joy set before Him, which were wells of comfort to Him in His wilderness of woe.

Remember, for a moment, that the Lord God, in the broadest and most unreserved sense, could never, in very deed, have forsaken His most obedient Son. He was ever with Him in the grand design of salvation. Toward the Lord Jesus, personally, God Himself, personally, must ever have stood on terms of infinite love. Truly the Only Begotten was never more lovely to the Father than when He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross! But we must look upon God here as the Judge of all the earth, and we must look upon the Lord Jesus also in His official capacity, as the Surety of the covenant, and the Sacrifice for sin. The great Judge of all cannot smile upon Him who has become the substitute for the guilty. Sin is loathed of God; and if, in order for its removal, His own Son is made to bear it, yet, as sin, it is still loathsome, and He who bears it cannot be in happy communion with God. This was the dread necessity of expiation; but in the essence of things the love of the great Father to His Son never ceased, nor ever knew a diminution. Restrained in its flow it must be, but lessened at its founta

its fountain-head it could not be. Therefore, do you wonder at the question, "Why hast thou forsaken me?"

III. Hoping to be guided by the Holy Spirit, I am coming to The Answer

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" What is the outcome of this suffering? What was the reason for it? Our Saviour could answer His own question. If for a moment His manhood was perplexed, yet His mind soon came to clear apprehension; for He said, "It is finished"; and, as I have already pointed out, He then referred to the work which in His lonely agony He had been performing. Why, then, did God forsake His Son? I cannot conceive any other answer than this—He stood in our stead. There was no reason in Christ why the Father should forsake Him: He was perfect and His life was without spot. God never acts without reason; and since there were no reasons in the character and person of the Lord why His Father should forsake Him, we must look elsewhere. I do not know how others answer the question. I can only answer it in this one way.

Yet all the griefs He felt were ours,
Ours were the woes He bore;
Pangs, not His own, His spotless soul
With bitter anguish tore.
We held Him as condemn'd of heaven,
An outcast from His God;
While for our sins, He groaned, He bled,
Beneath His Father's rod.

He bore the sinner's sin, and He had to be treated, therefore, as though He were a sinner, though sinner He could never be. With His own full consent He suffered as though He had committed the transgressions which were laid on Him. Our sin, and His taking it upon Himself, is the answer to the question, "Why hast thou forsaken me?"

In this case we now see that His obedience was perfect. He came into the world to obey the Father, and He rendered that obedience to the very uttermost. The spirit of obedience could go no farther than for one who feels forsaken of God still to cling to Him in solemn, avowed allegiance, still declaring before a mocking multitude His confidence in the afflicting God. It is noble to cry, "My God, my God," when one is asking, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" How much farther can obedience go? I see nothing beyond it. The soldier at the gate of Pompeii remaining at his post as sentry when the shower of burning ashes is falling, was not more true to his trust than He who adheres to a forsaking God with loyalty of hope.

Our Lord's suffering in this particular form was appropriate and necessary. It would not have sufficed for our Lord merely to have been pained in body, nor even to have been grieved in mind in other ways: He must suffer in this particular way. He must feel forsaken of God, because this is the necessary consequence of sin. For a man to be forsaken of God is the penalty which naturally and inevitably

follows upon his breaking his relation with God. What is death? What was the death that was threatened to Adam? "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Is death annihilation? Was Adam annihilated that day? Assuredly not: he lived many a year afterwards. But in the day in which he ate of the forbidden fruit he died, by being separated from God. The separation of the soul from God is spiritual death; just as the separation of the soul from the body is physical death. The sacrifice for sin must be put in the place of separation and must bow to the penalty of death. By this placing of the Great Sacrifice under forsaking and death, it would be seen by all creatures throughout the universe that God could not have fellowship with sin. If even the Holy One, who stood the Just for the unjust, found God forsaking Him, what must the doom of the actual sinner be! Sin is evidently always, in every case, a dividing influence, putting even the Christ Himself, as a sin-bearer, in the place of distance.

This was necessary for another reason; there could have been no laying on of suffering for sin without the forsaking of the vicarious Sacrifice by the Lord God. So long as the smile of God rests on the man the law is not afflicting him. The approving look of the great Judge cannot fall upon a man who is viewed as standing in the place of the guilty. Christ not only suffered from sin, but for sin. If God will cheer and sustain Him, He is not suffering for sin. The Judge is not inflicting suffering for sin if He is manifestly succoring the smitten one. There could have been no vicarious suffering on the part of Christ for human guilt, if He had continued consciously to enjoy the full sunshine of the Father's presence. It was essential to being a victim in our place that He should cry, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?"

Beloved, see how marvelously, in the person of Christ, the Lord our God has vindicated His law! If to make His law glorious, He had said, "These multitudes of men have broken My law, and therefore they shall perish," the law would have been terribly magnified. But, instead thereof, He says, "Here is My Only Begotten Son, My other self; He takes on Himself the nature of these rebellious creatures, and He consents that I should lay on Him the load of their iniquity, and visit in His person the offenses which might have been punished in the persons of all these multitudes of men: and I will have it so." When Jesus bows His head to the stroke of the law, when He submissively consents that His Father shall turn away His face from Him, then myriads of worlds are astonished at the perfect holiness and stern justice of the Lawgiver. There are, probably, worlds innumerable throughout the boundless creation of God, and all these will see, in the death of God's dear Son, a declaration of His determination never to allow sin to be trifled with. If His own Son is brought before Him, bearing the sin of others upon Him, He will hide His face from Him, as well as from the actually guilty. In God infinite love shines over all, but it does not eclipse His absolute justice any more than His justice is permitted to destroy His love. God hath all perfections in perfection, and in Christ Jesus we see the reflection of them. Beloved, this is a wonderful theme! Oh, that I had a tongue worthy of this subject! but who could ever reach the height of this great argument?

Once more, when inquiring, Why did Jesus suffer to be forsaken of the Father? we see the fact that the Captain of our salvation was thus made perfect through suffering. Every part of the road has been traversed by our Lord's own feet. Suppose, beloved, the Lord Jesus had never been thus forsaken, then one of His disciples might have been called to that sharp endurance and the Lord Jesus could not have sympathized with him in it. He would turn to his Leader and Captain, and say to Him, "Didst Thou, my Lord, ever feel this darkness?" Then the Lord Jesus would answer, "No. This is a descent such as I never made." What a dreadful lack would the tried one have felt! For the servant to bear a grief his Master never knew would be sad indeed.

There would have been a wound for which there was no ointment, a pain for which there was no balm. But it is not so now. "In all their affliction He was afflicted." "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Wherein we greatly rejoice at this time, and so often as we are cast down. Underneath us is the deep experience of our forsaken Lord.

This chapter is completed with the saying of three things. The first is, you and I that are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and are resting in Him alone for salvation, let us lean hard, let us bear with all our weight on our Lord. He will bear the full weight of all our sin and care. As to my sin, I hear its harsh accusings no more when I hear Jesus cry, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" I know that I deserve the deepest hell at the hand of God's vengeance; but I am not afraid. He will never forsake me, for He forsook His Son on my behalf. I shall not suffer for my sin, for Jesus has suffered to the full in my stead; yea, suffered so far as to cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Behind this brazen wall of substitution a sinner is safe. These "munitions of rock" guard all believers, and they may rest secure. The rock is cleft for me; I hide in its rifts, and no harm can reach me. You have a full atonement, a great sacrifice, a glorious vindication of the law; wherefore rest at peace, all you that put your trust in Jesus.

Next, if ever in our lives henceforth we should think that God hath deserted us, let us learn from our Lord's example how to behave ourselves. If God has left you, do not shut up your Bible; no, open it, as your Lord did, and find a text that will suit you. If God has left you, or you think so, do not give up prayer; no, pray as the Lord did and be more earnest than ever. If you think God has forsaken you, do not give up your faith in Him; but, like your Lord, cry, "My God, my God," again and again. If you had one anchor before, cast out two anchors now, and double the hold of your faith. If you can not call Jehovah "Father," as was Christ's wont, call Him your "God." Let the pronouns take their hold—"My God, my God." Let nothing drive you from your faith. Still hold on Jesus, sink or swim.

As for me, if ever I am lost, it shall be at the foot of the cross. To this pass have I come, that if I never see the face of God with acceptance, yet I will believe that He will be faithful to His Son and true to the covenant sealed by oaths and blood. He that believes in Jesus has everlasting life; there I cling, like the limpet to the rock. There is but one gate of heaven, and even if I may not enter it, I will cling to the posts of its door. What am I saying? I shall enter in; for that gate was never shut against a soul that accepted Jesus; and

Jesus says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

The last of the three points is this, let us abhor the sin which brought such agony upon our beloved Lord.

What an accursed thing is sin, which crucified the Lord Jesus!

Do you laugh at it?

Will you go and spend an evening to see a mimic performance of it?

Do you roll sin under your tongue as a sweet morsel, and then come to God's house, on the Lord's-day morning, and think to worship Him?

Worship Him!

Worship Him, with sin indulged in your breast!

Worship Him, with sin loved and pampered in your life!

O, if I had a dear brother who had been murdered, what would you think of me if I treasured the knife which had been crimsoned with his blood?—if I made a friend of the murderer, and daily consorted with the assassin, who drove the dagger into my brother's heart?

Surely I, too, must be an accomplice in the crime!

Sin murdered Christ; will you be a friend to it?

Sin pierced the heart of the Incarnate God; can you love it?

Oh, that there was an abyss as deep as Christ's misery, that I might at once hurl this dagger of sin into its depths, whence it might never be brought to light again!

Begone, O sin! You are banished from the heart where Jesus reigns! Begone, for you have crucified my Lord, and made Him cry, "Why hath thou forsaken me?"

O my readers, if you did but know yourselves, and know the love of Christ, you would each one vow that you would harbor sin no longer. You would be indignant at sin, and cry,

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Lord, I will tear it from its throne,
And worship only Thee.

May that be the issue of this discourse, and then I shall be well content. The Lord bless you! May the Christ who suffered for you, bless you, and out of His darkness may your light arise! Amen.

J C Philpot - It was not the nails

"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Mark 15:34

It was not the nails driven through His hands and feet—it was not the crown of thorns placed upon His brow—it was not the stripes which mangled His back—it was not the languor and faintness under which He suffered—that caused the Lord to die. It was not the mere bodily agony of the cross—it was not the mere pain, though most acute and severe, of the nails driven through His sacred hands and feet. It was not the being stretched upon the cross six hours, that constituted the chief part of the Redeemer's suffering.

But it was the almost intolerable load of imputed sin—the imputed sins of millions—it was the tremendous pouring of the wrath of God into His holy soul—it was the hiding of His Father's face, and the very pangs of hell that there caught hold of Him! Our suffering Savior drank the cup of the wrath of God to the very dregs—when our vile, dreadful, and horrible sins were laid upon Him! "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief: when You shall make His soul an offering for sin." Isaiah 53:10

C H Spurgeon - FORSAKEN BY GOD? Mark 15:34

Some of you are called to suffer in your minds, not because of any wrong but for the sake of others. Some years ago, I preached a sermon from the text, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Mark 15:34). I preached my own cry. I felt an agony of spirit. I was under an awful sense of being forsaken by God, and I could not understand why I was surrounded by such thick darkness. I wanted to clear myself if any sin remained in me, but I could not discover any evil that I was tolerating.

When I went back into the vestry, I learned the secret of my personal distress. There was an elderly man in a horror of great darkness. He said, "I have never met any person who has been where I am. I trust there is hope." I asked him to sit down, and we talked. I hope I conducted him from the verge of insanity to the open healthy place of peace through believing. I could never have helped if I had not been in the miry clay myself. Then I understood why I felt like one forsaken. The Lord was leading me to where I would be taught to know this man, to where I would be willing to sit with him in the dark prison-house and lend him a hand to escape.

In presenting myself to my Lord for service since then, I have said to Him, "Make me useful to the doubting and depressed. I do not bargain for comfort, peace, or joy if I can be more helpful to Your poor, weary children without them. Place me where I can best answer Your purpose by being made to sympathize with Your troubled people. I only want to bring them to heaven, to the praise of the glory of Your grace. As for me, let me rejoice or suffer as best suits their case."

For this you must have faith in God and be sure that your trials will have great compensation. Be satisfied to endure hardness with the full belief that it is all right and that God will not only bring you through, but also bless somebody through your trials.

The Daily Sacrifice - H A Ironside -

"And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?—Mark 15:33, 34.

In considering the sufferings of our Lord on the cross, it is important to remember that the six hours during which He hung upon the cross were divided into two parts. From the third hour (9 a. m.) to the sixth hour (noon) the sun was shining down upon the scene. During these hours the emphasis is put upon His sufferings at the hands of sinful men. Nothing that man could do to or against Him had anything to do with making atonement for sin. But from the sixth to the ninth hour (3 p. m.) darkness enshrouded the scene, and the Son of Man was hidden from the eyes of the throngs gathered about the cross, while God was dealing with Him about our sins. Then He was made sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21). Then the bitter cup was pressed to His lips, and He drained it to the dregs. His awful cry of agony and abandonment, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" tells us as nothing else could something of what it meant for Him, the Holy One, to stand before God as our Surety and to bear the judgment which our sins deserved.

"Should worldly pleasures so attract,
The vision of my soul to dim,
Lord, lead me back to Calvary,
That I'll again remember Him.

Should I my love for souls thus lose,
Thy claims, Thy cause, Thy call neglect,
And other friends and interests choose,
May I not then Thy thorns forget.

Should bright success or weary toil,
Thy dealings, or Thy firm commands,
Tempt me to boast or to complain,
Show me Thy bleeding feet and hands.
—T. J. Bach.

Lawrence Richards - DEVOTIONAL Why? (Mark 15:21–41)

As Jesus died, He cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (v. 34)

These words are undoubtedly the most mysterious in Scripture. It's not that we can't grasp what they mean. Some, of course, say the words reflect the pained surprise of a God-intoxicated man, who finally realized that God would not lift Him from the cross. But the New Testament gives us a better explanation. Paul said that Jesus was made "sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21). In a moment of time, the dammed-up flood of human sin was released, and cascaded with awful force upon and into the Son of God.

In that moment, when the Son of God became sin for us, the Father looked away. For the first and only time in all eternity, within the matrix of the one God, Father and Son were brutally torn apart.

So we do know what the words mean. What we can never understand is what the experience they represent meant to Father and to Son. We can never plumb the depths of Jesus' anguish, or sense the waves of pain that echoed out through all eternity. We can never envision the corrosive scars that sin engraved on sinlessness.

All we can do is stand at the foot of the cross, hear that cry, and realize that what Jesus did for us cost Him more than we can begin to imagine.

And say, "Thank You, Lord."

Personal Application

The best thanks we can give is not framed in words, but in our lives.

Quotable

Thou has given so much to me,
Give me one more thing—a grateful heart,
Not thankful when it pleases me,
As if Thy blessings had spare days,
But such a heart
Whose pulse may be Thy praise.
-George Herbert

Mark 15:35 When some of the bystanders heard it, they began saying, "Behold, He is calling for Elijah."

- **He is calling for Elijah:** Mk 9:11-13 Mt 17:11-13 Mt 27:47-49
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:47-49 And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, "This man is calling for Elijah." 48 Immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink. 49 But the rest of them said, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him."

When some of the bystanders heard it, they began saying, "Behold, He is calling for Elijah- Some writers (Morris below) think the bystanders misheard "Eloi" as "Elijah." The NLT paraphrase has "Some of the bystanders **misunderstood** and thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah." Clearly that is an interpretative rendering and is a good reminder that while the NLT is an excellent paraphrase, one needs to be discerning when using it for serious study. Always compare more literal translations (NAS, ESV, CSB, NET).

NET Note - Perhaps the crowd thought Jesus was calling for Elijah because the exclamation "my God, my God" (i.e., in Aramaic, Eloi, Eloi) sounds like the name Elijah.

MacArthur has a different interpretation writing that "It was not that they misunderstood what Jesus said, since Psalm 22:1 was a well-known portion of Scripture. Rather, they were responding to His anguished cry with more mockery. Malachi 4:5–6 predicted that Elijah, or a prophet like him, would come as the forerunner to the Messiah (cf. Matt. 11:13–14). By accusing Jesus of calling for Elijah, the derisive bystanders were scornfully taunting Him, asserting that if He really were the Messiah, perhaps Elijah would appear to rescue Him."

Henry Morris - When Christ called out: "Eloi, Eloi" (addressing God), some mistook Him as calling on Elijah. Already smitten in conscience for the crime being committed, and knowing the Old Testament prophecy of the future return of the translated Elijah (Malachi 4:5), some were suddenly fearful that this might be the time when Elijah would "come and smite the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:6). At this time, having already endured in full measure the three hours of hell on the cross (complete separation from the Father--see notes on Matthew 27:45,50), He accepted the vinegar He had previously refused (see note on Matthew 27:34), in fulfillment of the one final prophecy yet to be fulfilled in the crucifixion (Psalm 69:21--see John 19:28-30), and then volitionally "gave up the ghost" (Mark 15:37)

Mark 15:36 Someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink, saying, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to take Him down."

- Mk 15:23 Ps 69:21 Lu 23:36 Joh 19:28-30
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Psalm 69:21 They also gave me gall for my food And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Luke 23:36 The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine,

John 19:28-30 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, *said, "I am thirsty." 29 A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth. 30 Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

SOUR WINE FOR THE SAVIOR

Someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink- Earlier "They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it." (Mk 15:23) Note the fact that they had to **put it on a reed** indicates Jesus' Cross was well off the ground level.

NET NOTE - Sour wine refers to cheap wine that was called in Latin posca, a cheap vinegar wine diluted heavily with water. It was the drink of slaves and soldiers, and was probably there for the soldiers who had performed the crucifixion.

Gilbrant - Such a drink is described both in Scripture (Numbers 6:3; Ruth 2:14) and in Greek and Roman literature as a beverage which relieved thirst more effectively than water.

Saying, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to take Him down- This sounds like more derisive mockery and would tend to support MacArthur's interpretation in the preceding verse.

Mark 15:37 And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed His last.

NET Mark 15:37 But Jesus cried out with a loud voice and breathed his last.

NLT Mark 15:37 Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed his last.

ESV Mark 15:37 And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last.

NIV Mark 15:37 With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

- Mt 27:50 Lu 23:46 Joh 19:30
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

Luke 23:46 And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT." Having said this, He breathed His last.

John 19:30 Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

JESUS' LAST CRY AND LAST BREATH

And Jesus uttered a loud cry (megas phone - cf "megaphone"), **and breathed ([expneo](#)) His last** - **Breathed** is in the [aorist tense](#) and the [active voice](#). You say "so what?" First, the [aorist tense](#) indicates that a specific point in time/eternity Jesus' respirations ceased. Second, the [active voice](#) signifies it was His volitional choice. It was an act of His own will that He breathed that last breath! In John Jesus had declared "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father." ((John 10:18))

THOUGHT - It is easy to read over these words **Jesus uttered a loud cry** and miss what Mark is saying. Have you ever been at the bedside of a dying person? One day I received an urgent call that my mom had suffered an abdominal aneurysm beginning to leak and since she did not want surgical repair probably had only hours to live. I was 300 miles away but God allowed me to make it to her side. She was conscious but weak and clearly

near death's door. I leaned over to tell her that Jesus was there with her and He would take care of her. The next words she could only whisper but they were emphatic "What's taking Him so long?" She fell asleep in Jesus several hours later that night as I lay on the floor at the side of her bed. Jesus had answered her weak cry for Him to come quickly. Here in Luke 23:46 Jesus is near death but the difference is that He cries out with a loud voice. Recall that the Greek words for "**loud voice**" are "*megas*" and "*phone*" (gives us English [megaphone](#)) which indicate this was a very audible cry. To even speak while being crucified was difficult but to cry out loudly would be far more difficult. Was Jesus supernaturally enabled? Perhaps we will discover the answer in heaven. **In any event, it was not a cry of defeat, but a triumphant cry of victory, victory over sin and Satan, and paradoxically victory over death even though He would momentarily die!**

[Hallelujah! What a Savior!](#)

Augustine - He gave up his life because He willed it, when He willed it, and as He willed it.

Breathed His last (1606)([ekpneo](#) from **ek** = out + **pneo** = breath, to blow upon as wind Jn 3:8, Mt 7:25, etc) means literally to breathe out and so to breath out one's life/soul, thus to expire or die. To engage in the final act of dying. Only in Lk 23:46 and Mk 15:37, 39 (Not in Lxx).

THOUGHT - In Genesis 2:7+ we read that "the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and **breathed into** his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." When Jesus was on the Cross, Mk 15:37 says "And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and **breathed His last.**" The Greek word **breathed his last** is one word [ekpneo](#) meaning to breath out (to expire), in the active voice signifying this was His volitional choice, the choice of His will (cf Jn 10:18). In Ge 2:7+ God breathed in the **first Adam** to give him life, while in Mk 15:37+ (and Lk 23:46+) the **last Adam** breathed out, thus assuring that all Adam's descendants who believed in Him would have eternal life ("breathe forever")!

Dying Well - Dying words, especially when spoken in the throes of persecution or great suffering, are significant. They often reveal a man's true values. Some of my favorite last words came from the English martyr Hugh Latimer. He was tied back to back with Nicolas Ridley as the two were burned at the stake. He called out as the flames were lit, "Be of good comfort, brother Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust never shall be put out." As the fire was kindled, Ridley cried out, "Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit: Lord, receive my spirit!" He repeated the latter phrase often. Latimer cried out, "Father of heaven, receive my soul!" (J. C. Ryle, Light from Old Times [Evangelical Press], p. 163.)

Another English martyr, John Bradford, turned to a young man who suffered with him and said, "Be of good comfort, brother; for we shall have a merry supper with the Lord this night." His final words as the flames licked around him were, "Strait is the way, and narrow is the gate, that leadeth to eternal salvation, and few there be that find it" (Ryle, p. 197).

Shortly before he died, John Calvin dictated a letter to his friend, William Farel, in which he said, "I have great difficulty in breathing and expect at any time to breathe my last. It is enough for me to live and to die in Christ, who is gain to those who belong to him, whether in life or in death." Calvin's friend and successor, Theodore Beza, who was with him at his death, wrote, "We can truly say that in this one man God has been pleased to demonstrate to us in our day the way to live well and to die well" (Theodore Beza, The Life of John Calvin [Evangelical Press], pp. 116, 118). (Steven J. Cole)

DID JESUS REALLY DIE? - Lee Strobel

Jesus cried out in a loud voice, . . . "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" . . . With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. MARK 15:34, 37

"THE FACT THAT JESUS IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN SEEN ALIVE after the crucifixion may mean that he survived the attempt on his life, unless we have clear evidence that he died in the process," writes Muslim apologist Shabir Ally. "Rumours of his death have been greatly exaggerated."

This claim—that Jesus didn't die on the cross—is commonly called the Swoon Theory. It was made popular in Hugh Schonfield's 1965 book, The Passover Plot.

It's easy to see why this theory would make an intriguing storyline for a novel or movie—but it is quickly demolished by the facts:

- There is no record of anyone surviving a Roman crucifixion.
- Jesus was beaten dozens of times with whips that had jagged bones and balls of lead woven into them. The historian Eusebius described such a flogging: "The sufferer's veins were laid bare, and the very muscles, sinews, and bowels of the victim were open to exposure."
- Then, while Jesus was in hypovolemic shock, the spikes were driven through his wrists and feet, and he was

hung on the cross. Crucifixion results in slow asphyxiation because stress on the chest locks the person's lungs into an inhaled position.

- After Jesus "breathed his last," a soldier plunged a spear between his ribs, puncturing his heart, and proving that he was indeed dead.
- "Clearly the weight of the historical and medical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead before the wound to his side was inflicted," concluded the Journal of the American Medical Association.
- Each of the four Gospels, which are rooted in eyewitness accounts, makes it clear that Jesus died on the cross (Matthew 27:45–56; Mark 15:33–41; Luke 23:44–49; John 19:28–37).
- The apostle Paul passed on to us one of the earliest creeds of the church: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures . . . [and] was raised on the third day" (1 Corinthians 15:3–4).
- Jesus predicted he would die for our sins (three times in Mark alone: 8:31–33; 9:30–32; 10:32–34), and explained he came to "give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).
- Even liberal scholar John Dominic Crossan affirmed, "Jesus' death by execution under Pontius Pilate is as sure as anything historical can ever be." Atheist historian Gerd Lüdemann acknowledged that the historical evidence for Jesus' execution is "indisputable."⁵

The verdict is clear: Jesus really did die on the cross.

Truth for Today - The evidence makes it clear Jesus died. But that doesn't tell us why he died. Fortunately Jesus explained it when he said he came to "give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). He laid down his life for us.

Mark 15:38 And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

- Ex 26:31-34 40:20,21 Lev 16:2-19 2Ch 3:8-14 Mt 27:51-53 Lu 23:45 Heb 4:14-16 6:19 9:3-12 Heb 10:19-23
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:51-53 And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. 52 The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

Hebrews 4:14-16+ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 10:19-23+ Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

THE VEIL OF THE TEMPLE IS TORN FOREVER. AMEN

And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom- The veil of the Temple was a sobering symbol that sin separated man from a holy God. **Top to bottom** indicates it was a supernatural severing, torn by the omnipotent "hand of God," clearly indicating that the Father had accepted the sin offering of the Great High Priest once and for all time.

Note that Matthew's account reveals that when the veil was torn from top to bottom there was (1) a great earthquake and (2) a resurrection of many saints who had fallen asleep. (Matthew 27:51-53)

MacArthur explains - "Earthquakes, like darkness, are often associated in Scripture with the presence of God (cf. Ex. 19:18; 1 Kings 19:11–12; Pss. 18:7; 68:8; Isa. 29:6; Nah. 1:5; Zech. 14:5; Rev. 16:18). The power to raise the dead, similarly, belongs only to Him (cf. John 5:21; Acts 2:24; 3:15; 5:30; Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:14; 2 Cor. 4:14; Gal. 1:1). Both of these miraculous signs prefigured the resurrection of Jesus (which was likewise accompanied by a severe earthquake, Matt. 28:2) and demonstrated the truth that life after death is only

possible because of Christ's victory over sin at the cross (cf. 1 Cor. 15:26; 2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14)." So, the presence of God the Father at Golgotha was powerfully displayed through four remarkable miracles: an ominous darkness that covered the land, the veil of the temple being torn in two, an earthquake powerful enough to split rocks, and the resurrection of many Old Testament saints. At Mt. Sinai, God's presence was similarly accompanied by stormy darkness and a great earthquake (cf. Ex. 19:18). But unlike Sinai, where the law and its penalties were given, at Calvary the law and its penalties were forgiven by the divine lawgiver Himself, for all who believe in the person and work of His Son (cf. Rom. 8:3–4).

The writer of Hebrews clearly associates the tearing of the veil with the "tearing" of Jesus' flesh, calling it "a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh." (Hebrews 10:20+)

Gilbrant has an interesting thought on the **torn veil** - Undoubtedly the priests who served in the Holy Place saw the torn veil as they entered the temple that day and on following days. The Gospels say no more about the veil. Is it possible they kept the torn veil a secret from the people? For it to be known would tend to undermine the Levitical system from which they derived their status and their income—an interesting possibility.

And as far as I am aware Josephus makes not notation of the torn veil, something he surely would have recorded had it been public knowledge!

So once again it seems that the religious leaders keep the truth about God from the people instead of revealing it to the people!

MacArthur - Jesus' death, as the perfect sacrifice for sin, marked the end of the Old Testament sacrificial system and all of the trappings that went with it (Heb. 10:4–10; cf. Rom. 14:1–6; Col. 2:16–17). God signaled that termination with a dramatic sign: the veil of the temple, the massive woven curtain that permanently separated the Holy of Holies from the outer sanctuary (cf. Ex. 26:31–33; 40:20–21; Lev. 16:2; Heb. 9:3), was miraculously torn in two from top to bottom. The curtain that blocked the Holy of Holies served as a continual reminder of the sinner's separation from God's holy presence. No animal sacrifice ever tore that curtain open. But on that Friday afternoon, at the very time the priests in the temple were sacrificing lambs for Passover, God demonstrated that the work of atonement symbolized by animal deaths had been finished by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. The barrier to God had been permanently removed. Access to God's presence was now open through the completed work of Christ (cf. Heb. 4:16). At that moment, the old covenant passed away, and the new covenant was ratified. Although the temple edifice would survive another forty years (being destroyed in A.D. 70, cf. Mark 13:2), Christ's death immediately rendered its sacrifices, rituals, ceremonies, and worship practices obsolete (cf. John 4:21–24; Heb. 9:11–14; 10:19).

Akin - The significance of the tearing of the curtain, probably the one that separates the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, is highly theological and rich in symbolism. Pastor Sam Storms notes at least 3: "What was the symbolic significance of this rending of the veil? Surely three things: (1) It points to the complete, perfect, and altogether sufficient sacrifice for sins that Jesus has offered in himself on the cross. The sin that had created a barrier both spiritually and naturally between God and man has been atoned for. (2) It also points to the end of the Mosaic Covenant and its laws, which have been fulfilled in Christ. The "old order" has passed away! (3) It points to the fact that God in all his glory is now freely and fully accessible to all men and women who come to him by faith in Jesus Christ. For centuries before the coming of Christ, God had confined the revelation of his glory and majesty to the Holy of Holies. Now he bursts forth to dwell no longer behind a veil in a house built with wood and stone and precious jewels, but to dwell in the hearts of his people. See Hebrews 10:19–22."

THE VAIL Exodus 26:30–32; Mark 15:38; Hebrews 10:19, 20 - James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose

I. The Name. The name "vail" suggests something which conceals, a something hidden behind which cannot yet be seen. The vail on the face of Moses screened the glory gleaming within. The vail of unbelief in the heart hides from the soul the glory of the grace of God, as seen in the face of Jesus. The vail of the Tabernacle hid—or came between—the priest and the glory of the divine presence, which rested on the mercy-seat in the holy of holies. It is a type of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. He took upon Him "the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3). This flesh, like a vail, concealed the glory of His divine character. His transfiguration on the mount was an incidental outburst of the hidden glory which dwelt within. The divine majesty was always there, but the weak body of flesh vailed it. Our own bodies are but vails which hide from us the face of our loving and glorified Lord. Death is but the rending of the vail, the opening of the way for our access into His immediate presence. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8). Just now—how sweet the thought—only a vail between.

II. The Character. 1. It was made of "FINE TWINED LINEN." May we not see here the moral purity of Jesus Christ as a Man. His character was as "fine linen," pure and spotless. Satan came but found nothing in Him. The garment of His thoughts and life was without spot. This linen was to be "fine twined." Who can look at the texture of Christ's life and character without exclaiming how wonderful! The divine and human natures were indeed finely twined. So beautiful were they wrought together, so closely were they united, that in looking on one can only say, "Behold the Man" (John 19:5).

2. It was to be of "CUNNING WORK." Now we must look deeper down than the visible texture of the life of Jesus. We come to His birth, the mystery of the incarnation. This is in truth "cunning work," because it is the work of the Holy Ghost. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (1 Tim. 3:16). Cunning work! "Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh!" (1 Tim. 3:16). Who but Christ Himself could ever have suggested such a type.

3. It was "BLUE, PURPLE, AND SCARLET." The same colours appear in the gate and the door, because it is the same Divine Man all the way. The "blue" speaks of Him who came from Heaven. The scarlet of Him who was born of a woman. The purple, formed by mingling blue and scarlet, speak of Him as God and Man in one Person, the Mediator, the Royal Priest, Emmanuel. Can we join with Mary in saying, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in GOD my SAVIOUR" (Luke 1:46).

III. The Position. This holy veil hung right in front of the ark of the mercy-seat. It was the only wall of separation between the holy place and the holy of holies. It was only through the veil that the priest could enter into the HOLY PRESENCE. It is only through Christ that we can have access unto God, "I am the Way" (John 14:6). This veil could only be parted once a year, as the priest entered in not without blood. But notice that before he could enter in the veil had to be removed. This must have been a deeply solemn act on the part of the priest. In putting aside the veil he had at once to do with Jehovah Himself. How significant! Let us approach the truth with profound reverence. Christ must be removed. The holy One must needs be set aside ere man through atoning blood can enter into fellowship with God. When those sin-blinded priests and rulers cried, "Away with Him! Away with Him!" (John 19:15), they were ruthlessly tearing the holy veil aside, and exposing themselves to the wrath of the God of Israel (Acts 2:23). Yet the purpose of God was being fulfilled.

IV. The Rending. As soon as Jesus gave up the ghost "the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom" (Matt. 27:51). The veil of the Temple is supposed to be the same veil that was used in the Tabernacle. The death of Christ on the Cross and the rending of the veil on the pillars are closely linked together, because they signify the same thing, that we may have liberty to enter into the holiest "by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh" (Heb. 10:19, 20). It was—

1. DIVINELY RENT. It was rent from the top. Rent from above, rent by God. Had it been the work of man it would have been torn from the bottom. There is a deep meaning in all this. It was true that "with wicked hands" they crucified and slew Him. Yet He could say, "No man taketh My life from Me." Here is the point. "It pleased the LORD to bruise Him, HE hath put Him to grief" (Isa. 53:10). "My God, my God, why hast THOU forsaken me?" (Psa. 22:1). He made our sins to meet on Him. The veil was rent from the top, the hands of God were stretched forth, they took hold of it and opened it up, indicating that the death of His beloved Son has met every righteous claim, and that now He sets before us an open door into the presence of His mercy-seat.

2. RENT IN THE MIDST. Not down the side. It was no side entrance Christ made for us by His atoning death. The ark, with its mercy-seat and shekinah glory, stood in the centre of the holy of holies and close to the veil. The veil, being rent in the midst, was rent right in front of the mercy-seat. Faith in Christ brings the sinner into immediate touch with a merciful God (Rom. 3:25).

3. RENT COMPLETELY. From the top to the bottom. Not a thread was left in the way. Grace began it and grace completed it. "It is FINISHED!" He hath indeed perfected that which concerneth us. Every difficulty in God's way of saving men is now removed, and removed by Himself. The LAMB OF GOD has taken away the sin of the world (John 1:29). God rises up and rends asunder the separation veil, that He might offer His mercy to all who approach Him in the Name and through the blood of Jesus Christ His Son. "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses" (2 Cor. 5:19). "I flee to Thee to hide me" (Psa. 143:9). There is salvation in "none other Name" (Acts 4:12). Now that the veil is rent all human priestly pretensions are worthless. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Rick Renner - The Day the Veil Was Rent And the Earth Shook

Matthew 27:50, 51

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record that on the day Jesus was crucified, the sky turned eerily dark at the sixth hour of the day. Matthew 27:45 says, "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour."

Notice the choice of words Matthew uses to describe this event. First, he says that "there was darkness." The words "there was" are from the Greek word *ginomai*, which describes an event that slowly crept up on them before they knew what was happening. Suddenly and unexpectedly, the clouds started rolling over the land, becoming darker and darker until finally an ominous, dark gloom filled the entire sky and loomed over the landscape. The word "dark" is the Greek word *skotos*, used all over the New Testament to depict something very dark.

Verse 45 says that this sudden and unexplainable darkness covered all the "land." The word "land" is the word *ges*, the Greek word for the earth, and it refers to the entire earth, not just a small geographical region. The Greek word *ges* emphatically tells us that the whole world literally became simultaneously darkened.

The historians Phlegon, Thaddus, and Julius Africanus all referred to the darkness that covered the earth at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. Critics of the Bible have attempted to explain away this supernatural darkness by alleging that it was due to an eclipse of the sun. This is impossible, however, for the Passover occurred at the time of a full moon.

The Bible informs us that the darkening of the sky started at the sixth hour (see Matthew 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:45). This is significant, for the sixth hour (noontime) was the very moment that the high priest Caiaphas, arrayed in his full priestly garments, began the procession in which he would enter the temple to slaughter a pure, spotless Passover lamb. This darkness that covered the land lasted until the ninth hour—the exact moment the high priest would be making his entrance into the Holy of Holies to offer the blood of the Passover lamb to cover the sins of the nation.

It was at this moment that Jesus cried out, "It is finished!" (John 19:30). As He heaved upward to breathe for the last time, Jesus gathered enough air to speak forth a victory shout! His assignment was complete! After proclaiming those words with His last ounce of strength, Matthew 27:50 tells us that He "... yielded up the ghost."

What Matthew tells us next is simply amazing. He writes, "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom...." The word "behold" is the Greek word *idou*. This is a very difficult word to translate, for it carries such intense feeling and emotion. The King James Version most often translates this word as behold. But in our contemporary world, it might be better rendered, Wow!

This word *idou* carries the idea of shock, amazement, and wonder. It's almost as if Matthew says, "Wow! Can you believe it? The veil of the temple itself rent in twain from top to bottom!" Matthew wrote about this event many years after the fact, yet he was still so dumbfounded by what happened that day that he exclaimed in effect, "Wow! Look what happened next!"

There were two veils inside the temple—one at the entrance to the Holy Place and a second at the entrance to the Holy of Holies. Only the high priest was allowed to pass through the second veil once a year. That second veil was sixty feet high, thirty feet wide, and an entire handbreadth in thickness! One early Jewish writing states that the veil was so heavy, it took three hundred priests to move or manipulate it. It would have been impossible humanly speaking to tear such a veil.

At the exact moment Jesus was breathing His last breath on the Cross at Golgotha, Caiaphas the high priest was standing at his station in the inner court of the temple, preparing to offer the blood of a spotless Passover lamb. At the very instant Caiaphas stepped up to kill the Passover sacrifice, Jesus exclaimed, "It is finished!" At that same instant, miles away from Golgotha inside the temple at Jerusalem, an inexplicable, mystifying supernatural event occurred. The massive, fortified veil that stood before the Holy of Holies was suddenly split in half from the top all the way to the bottom!

The sound of that veil splitting must have been deafening as it ripped and tore, starting from the top and going all the way down to the floor. It was as if invisible, divine hands had reached out to grab it, rip it to shreds, and discard it.

Imagine how shocked Caiaphas must have been when he heard the ripping sounds above his head and then watched as the veil was torn in half, leaving two sides of the once-massive curtain lying collapsed to his right and his left. Just think what must have gone through this evil high priest's mind when he saw that the way to the Holy of Holies was opened—and that God's Presence was no longer there!

You see, when Jesus was lifted up on that Cross, that Cross became the eternal mercy seat on which the blood of the final sacrifice was sprinkled. Once that sacrifice was made, it was no longer necessary for a high priest to continually make sacrifices year after year, for Jesus' blood had now settled the issue forever!

For this cause, God Himself ripped the veil of the temple in half, declaring that the way to the Holy of Holies was now available to everyone who came to Him through the blood of Jesus! This is why the apostle Paul wrote that Jesus "... hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Ephesians 2:14).

Jesus' death was such a dramatic event that even the earth reacted to it. Matthew 27:51 says, "... the earth did quake, and the rocks rent." The word "earth" is the word *ges*, the same word seen in verse 45 (see above) that describes the whole earth. The word "quake" is the Greek word *seiso*, which means to shake, to agitate, or to create a commotion. It is where we get the word for a seismograph, the apparatus that registers the intensity of an earthquake. It is interesting to note that Origen, the early Christian leader, recorded that there were "great earthquakes" at the time of Jesus' crucifixion.

I find it so amazing that although Israel rejected Jesus and the Roman authorities crucified Him, creation always recognized Him! During His life on this earth, the waves obeyed Him; water turned to wine at His command; fishes and bread multiplied at His touch; the atoms in water solidified so He could walk across it; and the wind ceased when He spoke to it. So it should come as no surprise that Jesus' death was a traumatic event for creation. The earth shook, trembled, and shuddered at the death of its Creator, for it instantly felt its loss.

The earth shuddered so violently when Jesus died that even "... the rocks rent...." The word "rocks" is *petra*, referring to large rocks. The other word that could have been used for "rocks" is the word *lithos*, which meant small stones. But Matthew tells us that huge, large rocks were "rent" by the shaking of the earth. The word "rent" is *schidzo*, meaning to rend, to tear, to violently tear asunder, or to terribly fracture. This was a serious earthquake! It makes me realize all over again the incredible significance of the death of Jesus Christ!

When Jesus' blood was accepted at the Cross as final payment for man's sin, the need to habitually offer sacrifices year after year was eliminated. The Holy of Holies, a place limited only to the high priest once a year, has now become open and accessible to all of us! As "believer-priests," each of us can now enjoy the Presence of God every day. This is why Hebrews 10:19, 22 says, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.... Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience...."

Since the way to the Holy of Holies has been thrown wide open to us, we need to take a few minutes each day to enter into the Presence of God to worship Him and to make our requests known. Because of what Jesus did, we can now "... come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). Since this is God's promise to us, let's drop everything we're doing and come boldly before that throne of grace for a few minutes today!

Rod Mattoon - CHRIST AND THE VEIL OF THE TABERNACLE

A. Its Identification

There were two sets of pillars with veils or curtains in the Tabernacle. The entrance into the Holy Place contained five pillars made of *shittim* wood overlaid with gold, picturing the humanity (wood) and deity (gold) of Jesus Christ. They called this veil the door of the Tabernacle. Five is the number of grace in the Bible. We enjoy the bread of God (fellowship), the light of God (guidance), and intercession with the Lord because of God's saving grace.

Inside the Tabernacle there was a second set of pillars, four in number that were set upon sockets of silver. Each pillar had a hook for the veil to rest upon. This veil was made of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work. The Jewish Mishnaoth records the veil of the Temple as 73 feet by 52 feet. It was a handbreadth in thickness (3.65 inches). Two curtains were made each year. The Temple had an inner and outer curtain with a cubit space corridor (18 inches). They would enter at the south end of the corridor and enter the Holy of Holies at the north side. This curtain was woven very securely. It was so strong that two teams of oxen going in opposite directions could not pull it apart. When it was rent in two during the crucifixion of Christ, it could not be repaired for no thread could hold it.

The colors of the veil were blue, purple, and red. They spoke of the Lord Jesus Christ in His incarnation.

- Blue= Speaks of Heaven, the place of origin. He is the Son of God.
- Scarlet= Speaks of His passion and His role as Son of Man. Jesus was the last Adam. Adam means "red." The first Adam was the Great Subtractor. Man became lost. The Last Adam (Jesus) was the Great Adder. Men could be saved and have hope. Christ adds to Heaven's inhabitants.
- Purple= It is formed from blue and red and speaks of Christ's position and power. With the color purple, you can't tell where the blue ends and the red begins. In Christ, Deity is perfectly blended with humanity. So perfect was the blend that you cannot tell where one ends and the other starts. He was the God man. Purple is the color of power for it is the color of kings. Jesus is the King of kings.

B. Its Indication

This word "veil" means to "separate." Its function was to hide the Holy Place from public view and it separated the priests from the Holy of Holies where the Ark of God rested. The Ark was the symbol of God's presence. Once a year, only the High Priest could come into the presence of God. By barring the way to God's presence, the veil revealed God's holiness. God would not tolerate sin in His presence and would not reveal Himself until the sin question was settled. The Lord Jesus Christ settled this matter on the Cross of Calvary.

Ephesians 2:13— But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

C. Its Interpretation

The separation between God and man because of sin has been spanned in the Lord Jesus Christ. As a result...

1. There is no longer any discrimination between Gentile and Jew (Ephesians 2:11 -15).
2. Both Gentile and Jew are saved through the finished work of Christ on the Cross (Ephesians 2:16,17).
3. Through Him we have access to God. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. (Ephesians 2:18)
4. Through Christ, God no longer dwells in the Holy of Holies between the cherubims, but in the bodies of Christians. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:22)
5. When Jesus Christ died on the Cross, He permanently removed forever the barrier between God and all who will by faith believe in Him.

Ephesians 2:14— For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Hebrews 10:19-23... Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, [20] By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh: [21] And having an high priest over the house of God; [22]

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. [23] Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

The veil spoke of the incarnate Christ. Jesus was the veil. He said, "I am the door!" Through Christ we enter into God's presence. He is the new and living way. The veil separated even good men from God. It shut out the priests from the Holy of Holies. Good men even today cannot go to Heaven unless they go through Christ.

In Matthew we find the veil being rent in two.

Matthew 27:46-51... And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? [47] Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. [48] And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. [49] The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. [50] Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. [51] And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent: It was torn from top to bottom. God did the tearing. It was a miracle. The veil was removed because Jesus completed the paying of the price for sin. Jesus Christ gives us access into the presence of God. At the very moment of His death, the veil was torn and the way was open to God.

Ephesians 2:6... And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

We have access now for we are seated in Heavenly places.

Hebrews 4:14-16.... Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. [15] For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. [16] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Ray Pritchard - THE TORN CURTAIN

Sometimes the best sermons have no words.

Years ago I had several small books in my library filled with "object lessons" for children. The lessons used common household objects like buttons, balloons and spoons to teach basic biblical truth. Many churches today have a section of the worship service called "children's church," in which an adult will call the children forward and give them an object lesson based on the sermon the pastor is about to preach.

The church we attend often does that. It's always fun to watch the congregation because the adults seem to like that part of the service as much as the children do.

It's not hard to understand why.

We all love a story or an apt illustration. Well-chosen object lessons are a great way to teach spiritual truth. At the moment Jesus died on the cross, God gave us one of the most dramatic object lessons in the Bible when the curtain in the temple (sometimes called the veil) was torn from top to bottom.

Well-chosen object lessons are a great way to teach spiritual truth.

No one dreamed such a thing could happen. No thoughtful Jewish person could miss the impact of that unprecedented event.

- Matthew mentions it.
- Mark mentions it.
- Luke mentions it.

What does it mean? Let's consider three answers to that question. (When James Stewart preached on this topic, he offered a simple online, which I have adapted for this message.)

A Barrier Removed

Everything about the Jewish temple reminded people to stay away. There were courts set aside for the women and the Gentiles. There was a brazen altar upon which sacrifice must be made. There were steps leading up to the temple itself. Inside the temple were two main rooms, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place (sometimes called the Holy of Holies). Only the priests could enter the Holy Place and only in a certain way at certain times to do certain prescribed religious functions. No one ever just "hung out" in the Holy Place. You came to do God's business, and then you left. It was not a place for leisure. Important work was being done there, performed by men set apart by God.

But there was yet a place even more sacred than the Holy Place called the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of Holies. The very center of Jewish worship took place in that small area. If you read Leviticus 16, you can find the details spelled out. But we can summarize them thusly:

The very center of Jewish worship took place in the Most Holy Place. Only one man could enter the Most Holy Place-the High Priest. He could only enter the Most Holy Place one day each year-the Day of Atonement. He must wear special garments. He must bring with him the blood of a goat. He must sprinkle the blood on the golden Mercy Seat that was the lid of the Ark of the Covenant, which contained a copy of the Ten Commandments.

If anyone else besides the High Priest ever entered the Most Holy Place, he would be struck down. If the High Priest entered on any day other than the Day of Atonement, he would be struck down. If the High Priest came without the blood of a goat, he would be struck down.

Everything about the whole system screamed, "Stay away," "Do not come near," "You are not qualified to come on your own." It was as if the temple itself was a giant roadblock, making sure that no one could come into God's presence uninvited.

If the Jews were tempted to forget about the prohibitions, if they decided to take matters into their own hands, God had ordered that a thick curtain be hung between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. Only God could tear apart a curtain like that.

When we think of a curtain, we imagine something like our living room drapes. The curtain in the temple was nothing like that. Exodus 26:31 describes it as "a curtain of blue, purple and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen, with cherubim worked into it by a skilled craftsman." Jewish writers say that it was 60 feet long, 20 feet wide, woven to the thickness of a man's hand, requiring 300 men to lift it up.

Such a curtain could never be torn in two by the hands of man. Only God could tear apart a curtain like that. That's why Matthew tells us that the curtain was torn "from top to bottom," signifying that God had done what only God could do.

A Road Opened

Hebrews 10:19-20 says that "we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body."

"We have" speaks of privileges. I looked up "privilege" in the dictionary and it said

"An advantage held by one person or group of people," and

"An opportunity to do something special or enjoyable."

It's a great privilege to be a Christian because we have certain advantages given to us by God. Hebrews 10:19 says that we have the right to enter God's presence directly.

It's a great privilege to be a Christian. I have wondered what it would be like to gain an audience with the Queen of England. To enter the fabled halls of Buckingham Palace. To be escorted by the Royal Guards with their spangled uniforms. To sit in the inner chamber and be greeted by the Queen. To have her say, "What can I do for you?" To know she has the power to grant my request. Meeting the Queen would indeed be a privilege. But it is not likely to happen. The Queen is a Very Important Person, and I am not even a British subject. I live in "the Colonies" on the other side of the pond. I do not have the standing in any sense to gain an audience with the Queen of England. That privilege does not belong to me.

But in the eyes of God I have standing through the blood of Jesus to enter the throne room of heaven. That's what Hebrews 10 means when it says that Jesus opened a way for us through the curtain. By his death on the cross, he tore down the wall that stood between God and us. Now we can go directly to God anytime, as long as we go in the name of Jesus, claiming nothing but the blood of Jesus as the only ground of admission. I have standing through the blood of Jesus to enter the throne room of heaven.

Compared to the old system that kept men out, this is truly a "new" way. Because Jesus rose from the dead, it is a "living" way.

I am a personal friend of God's own Son.

I am a member of God's own family.

I am a citizen of heaven.

That gives me standing, advantage, entrance, privilege.

And this standing is given to every blood-bought child of God. It is not for me alone. This is God's gift to those who trust in his Son.

We have the privilege of an audience with God himself.

Anytime. Anywhere. As often as we like.

Rank has its privileges.

I found a list on the Internet of the most influential people in the world. It has names like Hillary Clinton, Sting, Chris Christie, Amy Chua, Mark Zuckerberg, Angela Merkel, and a host of people I've never heard of. I didn't bother to look for my name on that list because it's not there. As a man said to us yesterday, "No problems. No worries." I freely confess that the folks on that list have advantages from an earthly standpoint I'll never have. Rank has its privileges. When they talk, everyone listens. They can go where I can't go. They have access to the best of everything this world offers, things like tickets to sold-out events, the best seats in the finest restaurants, and rooms in any hotel in the world. Their every word is quoted in the press.

That's how the world rolls.

And I say, "No problems. No worries."

Through the blood of Jesus I have instant access to the throne of God. That means I can come anytime, anywhere, as often as I like, for any reason at all. My Heavenly Father will not turn me away. It's wonderful to have that kind of access. When our oldest son was 4 or 5 years old, he came with us to an all-night prayer meeting at the church. The format called for me to begin each hour with a brief greeting to the people who had gathered to pray. After one greeting, a friend came up to me and said, "Did you see what Josh did?" "No. What did he do?" "You didn't see it?" My friend told me that while I was talking to the people, Josh came up and said someone to me. I stopped what I was doing and talked to him for a moment. When we were finished, he turned and walked away, and I turned and continued talking to the crowd.

We have an All-Access Pass to the throne room of the universe.

Now here's the amazing part. I didn't even remember it because it seemed so natural that Josh should come and talk to me anytime he wanted. And even better, Josh knew he had that right by virtue of the fact that he was my son. He knew he could come to me anytime. So it is for every child of God. We have rights greater than those the world counts as Very Important People. They may get insider tips and tickets to the best Broadway shows, but we have an All-Access Pass to the throne room of the universe. It doesn't get better than that.

A Hope Confirmed

Not only is there a barrier removed and a road opened, the tearing of the curtain means that our hope of eternal life has been confirmed by God himself.

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 6:19, 20).

These verses declare in plain language that we have an anchor for our soul that cannot be moved. It happens that I am writing these words on a cruise ship in the Caribbean Sea. Because our ship is vast, it has an enormous anchor to hold the ship in place when the storms roll in. An anchor that holds only in fair weather would not be of much use. An anchor proves its worth when the sea and wind threaten to move the ship out of the harbor.

An anchor that holds only in fair weather would not be of much use.

In order to hold the ship in place, the anchor must be firmly lodged on the ocean floor. If the anchor rests in sand, it will not hold the ship in place. Hebrews 6 says that our anchor is firm because it is lodged behind the curtain in the very presence of God.

We have an anchor that cannot be moved, the Lord Jesus who as our high priest opened the way into the presence of God. Because he cannot be moved, we cannot be moved. In 1834 Edward Mote wrote the words of a poem that became a beloved gospel song. The first verse of The Solid Rock goes like this:

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

The second verse uses words borrowed from Hebrews 6:

When darkness seems to hide his face,
I rest on his unchanging grace.
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.

And the chorus declares the glorious truth in words both simple and profound:

On Christ the solid rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand.
All other ground is sinking sand.

This is good news for all who struggle with a sense of their own weakness and failure. Many Christians feel like the man in Mark 9:24 who exclaimed "I believe. Help my unbelief." Down deep inside we do believe, we know that Jesus is our Lord, and we do love him, imperfect though our love may be. But when we look in the mirror, our sins rise up to condemn us, and we remember with shame the broken promises, the harsh words, the unkind deeds, and how we have failed those who trusted in us.

If we meditate on those things, we will soon begin to doubt that we are Christians at all.

We have a hope even our shame cannot erase.

And it is right here—right here!—that good theology can save the day. As long as our Christian faith depends on us, we are in trouble. But if our faith ultimately depends on Jesus Christ, then we have a hope that even our shame cannot erase. If Christ is the anchor of our soul, then we can rest well because our anchor can hold against any storm, even the storms of a guilty conscience.

When James Stewart preached on this topic, he told of an old Scottish believer who went to church one day feeling down because of his sins. When the communion plate was passed, he refused to partake of the elements, thinking himself unworthy. Then he saw a young woman in the congregation who also refused to partake, and then broke into tears. Stewart tells what happened next:

Her tears jarred him back to the truth of the gospel he himself needed to recall. In a whisper that could be heard across the church, he was heard to say: “Take it, lassie. Take it. It is meant for sinners.” And he himself partook.

That’s the deeper meaning of the tearing of the curtain. The law that condemned us has come to an end, having been put to death in the death of Christ. When Jesus died, the old law died with him.

So there is therefore now no condemnation to those who believe in Jesus.

So the road to heaven is open to anyone, anytime, anywhere. So we know that we have eternal life. God has opened the door of heaven. It is possible that you feel such a great weight of sin that you wonder if Jesus would receive you. Perhaps you think your sins are too great, your transgressions so many that even Jesus cannot help you. Many people feel that way, and in truth we would all feel that way if we got a clear view of how rotten we really are. But there is a message for you from the torn curtain in the temple.

Fear not.

Do not let your sins keep you away. God has opened the door to heaven. Come to Jesus and see how great his mercy is.

J. C. Ryle summarized the true meaning of the torn curtain in this one sentence: “Our sins may be many and great, but the payment made by our Great Substitute far outweighs them all.”

Do you believe that? Then come and see for yourself. Come and see. Come to Jesus and see how great his mercy is.

The cross reveals the great heart of God, and that heart is filled with love. When Jesus died, the Father preached a sermon without words when he tore the curtain in two from the top to the bottom. It was God’s way of saying, “You are welcome in my family. Let nothing keep you away.”

We may be great sinners, but Jesus is a greater Savior. Fear not, and trust in him.

Question - [What was the significance of the temple veil being torn in two when Jesus died?](#)

Answer: During the lifetime of Jesus, the holy temple in Jerusalem was the center of Jewish religious life. The temple was the place where animal sacrifices were carried out and worship according to the Law of Moses was followed faithfully. Hebrews 9:1-9 tells us that in the temple a veil separated the Holy of Holies—the earthly dwelling place of God’s presence—from the rest of the temple where men dwelt. This signified that man was separated from God by sin (Isaiah 59:1-2). Only the high priest was permitted to pass beyond this veil once each year (Exodus 30:10; Hebrews 9:7) to enter into God’s presence for all of Israel and make atonement for their sins (Leviticus 16).

- [Watch Video](#)

Solomon’s temple was 30 cubits high (1 Kings 6:2), but Herod had increased the height to 40 cubits, according to the writings of Josephus, a first century Jewish historian. There is uncertainty as to the exact measurement of a cubit, but it is safe to assume that this veil was somewhere near 60 feet high. An early Jewish tradition says that the veil was about four inches thick, but the Bible does not confirm that measurement. The book of Exodus teaches that this thick veil was fashioned from blue, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen.

The size and thickness of the veil make the events occurring at the moment of Jesus’ death on the cross so much more momentous. “And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom” (Matthew 27:50-51a).

So, what do we make of this? What significance does this torn veil have for us today? Above all, the tearing of the veil at the moment of Jesus’ death dramatically symbolized that His sacrifice, the shedding of His own blood, was a sufficient atonement for sins. It signified that now the way into the Holy of Holies was open for all people, for all time, both Jew and Gentile.

When Jesus died, the veil was torn, and God moved out of that place never again to dwell in a temple made with human hands (Acts 17:24). God was through with that temple and its religious system, and the temple and Jerusalem were left “desolate” (destroyed by the Romans) in A.D. 70, just as Jesus prophesied in Luke 13:35. As long as the temple stood, it signified the continuation of the Old Covenant. Hebrews 9:8-9 refers to the age that was passing away as the new covenant was being established (Hebrews 8:13).

In a sense, the veil was symbolic of Christ Himself as the only way to the Father (John 14:6). This is indicated by the fact that the high priest had to enter the Holy of Holies through the veil. Now Christ is our superior High Priest, and as believers in His finished work, we partake of His better priesthood. We can now enter the Holy of Holies through Him. Hebrews 10:19-20 says, “we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body.” Here we see the image of Jesus’ flesh being torn for us just as He was tearing the veil for us.

The veil being torn from top to bottom is a fact of history. The profound significance of this event is explained in glorious detail in Hebrews. The things of the temple were shadows of things to come, and they all ultimately point us to Jesus Christ. He was the veil to the Holy of Holies, and through His death the faithful now have free access to God.

The veil in the temple was a constant reminder that sin renders humanity unfit for the presence of God. The fact that the sin offering was offered annually and countless other sacrifices repeated daily showed graphically that sin could not truly be atoned for or erased by mere animal sacrifices. Jesus Christ, through His death, has removed the barriers between God and man, and now we may approach Him with confidence and boldness (Hebrews 4:14-16). GotQuestions.org

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- [Watch Youtube video on the Veil is torn](#)

Mark 15:39 When the centurion, who was standing right in front of Him, saw the way He breathed His last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

- **The centurion** Mk 15:44 Mt 8:5-10 Ac 10:1 Mt 27:1-3,43
- **he said:** Mt 27:43,54 Lu 23:47-48
- James Stalker - [The Signs; The Dead Christ](#)
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the **Son of God**.

Mark 3:11 Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, “You are the **Son of God!**”

Matthew 16:13-17 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.” 15 He *said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered, “**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**” 17 And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 27:43 “HE TRUSTS IN GOD; LET GOD RESCUE Him now, IF HE DELIGHTS IN HIM; for He said, ‘I am the **Son of God.**’”

Matthew 27:54 Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, “Truly this was the **Son of God!**”

Luke 23:47-48 Now when the centurion saw what had happened, **he began praising God**, saying, “**Certainly this man was innocent.**” 48 And all the crowds who came together for this spectacle, when they observed what had happened, began to return, beating their breasts.

Comment - While several of the soldiers had declared “Truly this man was the Son of God,” (Mt 27:54), the Gospels record that only the [Centurion](#) actually praised God. What was the fate of the other soldiers? We do not know but here Luke records that a mocker is turned into a praiser! A pagan testifies to two profound theological truths that all the erudite, legalistic, hypocritical religious leaders could not see and/or refused to acknowledge -- (1) that Jesus was **innocent** and (2) that “**Truly this was the Son of God.**” (Mt 27:54) He did not go so far as to say Jesus was sinless, but the word Luke uses for **innocent** is [dikaio](#) which means **righteous**, the very word Pilate’s wife had used when she warned her husband “Have nothing to do with

that **RIGHTEOUS** ([dikaos](#)) Man." (Mt 27:19) John refers to our "Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the **righteous** ([dikaos](#)). (1 Jn 2:1, cf 1Jn 2:29, Rev 15:3+) **Peter** uses [dikaos](#) in his summary of the crucifixion writing "Christ also died for sins once for all, the **just** ([dikaos](#)) for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit." (1 Peter 3:18).

When the centurion, who was standing right in front of Him, saw the way He breathed His last What caused the reaction of the **centurion**? Matthew 27:54 says (1) saw the earthquake and (2) things that had happened (cf Lk 23:47) and (3) the way He breathed His last. This pagan Roman centurion had several reactions (2 only found in Luke's account) to Jesus' death - (1) He began praising God (2) he declared Jesus was certainly innocent, (3) he became frightened (Mt 27:54) and (4) he declared Him to be the Son of God. How could a pagan Roman soldier recognize Jesus was the Son of God? The only way he could have done this is the same way that Peter was able to do it in Mt 16:17, where Jesus explained "flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."

Akin - At this point we arrive at the destination Mark has intended since Mark 1:1. On the lips of a Gentile Roman Centurion, we hear the confession, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (v. 39). Amazingly, it was not one of His marvelous miracles or tremendous teachings that evoked this confession: it was His passion. Like the centurion, Mark wants his readers to confess Jesus as the Christ. The question is have you? Will you? It is a question only you can answer.

MacArthur observes that "Because he was standing right in front of Him, the centurion must have heard the words spoken by the Lord Jesus from the cross. He watched as Jesus responded to the scorn and derision of His enemies by asking the Father to forgive them. He listened as the Lord extended the hope of heaven to a penitent thief who had previously mocked Him. From noon to 3:00 P.M., the centurion stood guard in the midst of inexplicable and menacing darkness. When the darkness finally lifted, he heard Jesus' triumphant shout, "It is finished" and saw the way He breathed His last. Though he had likely participated in countless executions, he had never before encountered anyone like this victim—who suffered with such dignity and died with such triumphant authority. Then, the violent earthquake ensued. As the centurion felt the earth tremble, he could contain his astonishment no longer. Speaking for himself and the other soldiers (cf. Matt. 27:54), he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" Significantly, this is the first time in Mark's gospel that a human being made that confession (cf. Mark 1:1). The Father articulated it at Jesus' baptism (1:11) and transfiguration (9:7). The demons acknowledged it on several occasions (3:11; 5:7).

NET Note - "the way he breathed his last"; or "the way he expired"; or "that he thus breathed no more."

Thomas Constable writes that "The torn veil was a Jewish testimony to Jesus' identity, and the centurion's confession was a Gentile testimony to the same thing. Taken together they provide a double witness that Jesus was the Son of God (Mk 15:39)."

he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God" - In the related passages above we the fact that Jesus is the Son of God is affirmed by a saved man (Mark writing the Gospel), by the demons and by a pagan Roman. Notice he says **WAS** (past tense) **the Son of God**. Clearly He did not know about the resurrection or he would have declared "this Man IS the Son of God!"

Matthew helps answer this question recording that "And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. 52 The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many. 54 Now the [centurion](#), and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, **when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened** and said, "**Truly this was the Son of God!**" (Mt 27:51-54). It is interesting to note that the verb "**said**" (in Mt 27:54) is not singular but plural (Mk 15:39 **said** = singular) indicating that it was not only the [centurion](#) who acclaimed Jesus' deity, but the other Roman soldiers who were on guard. Note also that the soldiers undoubtedly had heard the Jewish by passers referring to Jesus as the "**Son of God**." (Mt 27:40).

Wiersbe on the reaction of the **centurion** - He must have been shocked when Jesus shouted and then instantly died, for victims of crucifixion often lingered for days and did not have the strength to speak. (Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Courageous - Luke).

NET Note - A **centurion** was a noncommissioned officer in the Roman army or one of the auxiliary territorial armies, commanding a centuria of (nominally) 100 men. The responsibilities of centurions were broadly similar to modern junior officers, but there was a wide gap in social status between them and officers, and relatively few were promoted beyond the rank of senior centurion. The Roman troops stationed in Judea were auxiliaries, who would normally be rewarded with Roman citizenship after 25 years of service. Some of the centurions may have served originally in the Roman legions (regular army) and thus gained their citizenship at enlistment. Others may have inherited it, like Paul.

Norman Crawford comments that "Matthew tells us that he was "watching Jesus" and adds, "and those things which were done" (Mt 27:54). He saw a sight that day that he had never seen before and would never see again. It was customary for four soldiers to crucify a victim (John 19:23) because not only did victims curse with rage, but the cruelty of being nailed often made it necessary to forcibly wrestle with a victim and by brute strength hold the arms and legs while another soldier with a hammer drove in the nails. Such sights

must have been common, but on this day, the victim offered no resistance; when His hands were held against the wood to be nailed there was no struggle, no drawing back of the hand, but He was "as a lamb led to the slaughter and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth." (Isaiah 53:7). (What the Bible teaches – Luke)

Keep in mind the [centurion](#) and those who were with him had sat through three hours of supernatural darkness. One can only imagine how they processed this divinely orchestrated cosmic phenomenon! Then superimposed on that frightening heavenly sign, God then sent an tumultuous earthly sign in the form of an earthquake that split rocks. What was happening? I submit that all creation was giving witness to the Creator. Heaven and earth were bearing witness to the divinity of Jesus! (cp "I call heaven and earth to witness..." in Dt 4:26, Dt 30:19, cf 2 Ki 19:15, 2 Chr 2:12). And the [centurion](#) and his associates acknowledged that indeed **"Truly, this was the Son of God."** Note they did not say "this *is*" which would have implied they understood that though Jesus was physically dead, He was still alive.

Mark's version adds that the it was not just the external changes that impacted the [centurion](#), but it was something about the way Jesus died. Mark recording that "When the [centurion](#), who was standing right in front of Him (Greek [enantios](#) = FACE TO FACE WITH THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE!!!), **saw the way He breathed His last**, he said, **"Truly this man was the Son of God!"** (Mark 15:39)

What was it that the Roman soldier witnessed? Undoubtedly he had witnessed many executions (as we mentioned up to 30,000 crucifixions had been performed in Israel in Jesus' day) and yet he had never seen a man die with such control and dignity as Jesus. He heard the reviling, but witnessed a Man of Whom Peter wrote "while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats" (1 Pe 2:23). He had also heard all the words Jesus had spoken from the Cross, including the promise to a penitent thief (who had previously mocked Jesus) that he would be with Jesus today in paradise. And it is fascinating this is Mark's first record of a confession of the divinity of Jesus from the lips of a human being, and a pagan at that! Did he remain a pagan? I think not and so it is very possible that we will see him in heaven! (see MacArthur's comment below). Won't heaven be an interesting place? Paul acknowledges that "now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known." (1 Cor 13:12) Interesting thought to ponder!

In **MacArthur's** comments in his Luke Commentary, he writes "This was more than merely the seventh affirmation of Jesus' innocence; it was an affirmation of His divine righteousness as the Son of God. These Roman soldiers became the first converts to Christ at His crucifixion, just moments after He died." (New Testament Commentary – Luke)

I tend to agree with **Norman Crawford's** more cautious comment regarding the state of the centurion's soul - We must await the day when the saved will be all joined in the Father's house to know with certainty if this man was saved, but it may well be that he saw in Christ his Saviour God....The thief was a Jew and the centurion a Gentile, giving an example of blessing reaching out to all men from the cross. (What the Bible teaches – Luke)

Akin - Jesus is dead. John 19:34 tells us "one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear" just to be certain. Normally a man who died by crucifixion would be left on the cross to rot or be eaten by predators like dogs or birds of prey. What was left of the corpse would then be thrown into the garbage heap outside the city known as the Valley of Hinnom. Jesus, however, would be spared this humiliation because 1) Jewish law demanded that even executed criminals receive a proper burial and that those hanged on a tree be taken down and buried before sunset (Deut 21:23) and 2) a member of the 17 Sanhedrin named Joseph of Arimathea "took courage" and asked for permission to bury the body of Jesus" (v. 43). Luke 23:51 informs us he did not support the Council's decision to seek Jesus' execution.

A W Tozer -A SELFISH LUST: MAN'S DESIRE FOR FIRST PLACE

And when the centurion...saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God. MARK 15:39

The current mania of men and women to succeed in the world is a good thing perverted. The desire to fulfill the purpose for which we were created is of course a gift from God, but sin has twisted this impulse about and turned it into a selfish lust for first place and top honors. By this lust the whole world of mankind is driven as by a demon, and there is no escape.

When we come to Christ we enter a different world. The New Testament introduces us to a spiritual philosophy infinitely higher than and altogether contrary to that which motivates the world. According to the teaching of Christ the poor in spirit are blessed; the meek inherit the earth; the first are last and the last first; the greatest man is the one that best serves others and the one who loses everything is the only one that will have everything at last. The successful man of the world will see his hoarded treasures swept away by the tempest of judgment; the righteous beggar goes to Abraham's bosom and the rich man burns in the fires of hell.

Our Lord died an apparent failure, discredited by the leaders of established religion, rejected by society and forsaken by His friends. The man who ordered Him to the cross was the successful statesman whose hand the ambitious hack politician kissed. It took the

resurrection to demonstrate how gloriously Christ had triumphed and how tragically the governor had failed. The resurrection and the judgment will demonstrate before all worlds who won and who lost. We can wait!

Norman Geisler - MATTHEW 27:54 (cf. Mark 15:39; Luke 23:47)—What did the centurion really say about Christ on the cross?

PROBLEM: Matthew records the centurion saying, “Truly this was the Son of God,” while Mark says substantially the same thing, adding only the word “man,” rendering it, “Truly this Man was the Son of God.” Luke records the words of the centurion as follows: “Certainly this was a righteous Man!” What did he really say?

SOLUTION: He may have said both. The centurion’s words need not be limited to one phrase or sentence. The centurion could have said both things. In accordance with his own emphasis on Christ as the perfect man, Luke may have chosen to use this phrase rather than the ones used by Matthew and Mark. There is no major difference between Matthew and Mark, for in Greek the word “man” is implied by the masculine singular use of the word “This.” It is also possible that Luke may have been paraphrasing or drawing an implication from what was actually said.

Christian scholars do not claim to have the exact words of the speakers in every case, but only an accurate rendering of what they really said. First of all, it is generally agreed that they spoke in Aramaic, but the Gospels were written in Greek. So the words we have in the Greek text on which the English is based are already a translation. Second, the Gospel writers, like writers today, sometimes summarized or paraphrased what was said. In this way, it is understandable that the renderings will be slightly different. But in this case, as in all other cases, the essence of what was originally said is faithfully produced in the original text. While we do not have the exact words, we do have the same meaning. Finally, when the sentences are totally different (but not contradictory), then we may reasonably assume that both things were said on that occasion and that one writer uses one and another writer the other. This is a common literary practice even today. (When Critics Ask)

Remember the Cross

“Surely this man was the Son of God!” Mark 15:39

Today’s Scripture & Insight: Mark 15:19–20, 33–39

In the church I attend, a large cross stands at the front of the sanctuary. It represents the original cross where Jesus died—the place where our sin intersected with His holiness. There God allowed His perfect Son to die for the sake of every wrong thing we have ever done, said, or thought. On the cross, Jesus finished the work that was required to save us from the death we deserve (Rom. 6:23).

The sight of a cross causes me to consider what Jesus endured for us. Before being crucified, He was flogged and spit on. The soldiers hit Him in the head with sticks and got down on their knees in mock worship. They tried to make Him carry His own cross to the place where He would die, but He was too weak from the brutal flogging. At Golgotha, they hammered nails through His flesh to keep Him on the cross when they turned it upright. Those wounds bore the weight of His body as He hung there. Six hours later, Jesus took His final breath (Mark 15:37). A centurion who witnessed Jesus’s death declared, “Surely this man was the Son of God!” (v. 39).

The next time you see the symbol of the cross, consider what it means to you. God’s Son suffered and died there and then rose again to make eternal life possible. By: Jennifer Benson Schuldt

Dear Jesus, I can’t begin to thank You enough for taking care of my sin when You died on the cross. I acknowledge Your sacrifice, and I believe in the power of Your resurrection. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The cross of Christ reveals our sin at its worst and God’s love at its best.

THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS - Charles Stanley

SCRIPTURE READING: MARK 15:33–39 KEY VERSE: MARK 15:39

So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said,
“Truly this Man was the Son of God!”

Two men of different faiths sat across from each other at a restaurant table. In an effort to understand the other’s views, the first man asked, “Can you sum up the essence of Christianity in one word?”

Without pause, the second man replied, “Forgiveness.”

Would you have given the same answer? There are so many words that could have been said: love, sacrifice, joy, assurance, eternity. Yet forgiveness seems to carry the most meaning and power. What other religion offers its believers the ability to be set free from sin with no penance to pay?

We can count ourselves among the most fortunate in the world. When we pledge our lives to God and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, we are guaranteed forgiveness and eternal life.

Though none of us are exempt from the storms and trials of life, we can live with inner joy and peace. We will never pay the penalty of eternal death for our sins. That price was paid for us at the cross by a loving God who is merciful and longsuffering.

The blood that Christ shed upon the cross is truly the key to heaven for those who believe. Today, why not reach out to someone who may not be aware of the gift God gave to the world through the atoning death of His only Son?

Lord, Your blood shed on the cross spelled forgiveness for me. I cannot repay You, but I can share this key to heaven with others.

Fix Your Eyes on Jesus - Fix your eyes on Jesus crucified

If you've ever been the victim of an action that's blatantly unfair, consider Jesus. Acquitted by the highest court of the land ("I find no basis for a charge against him," John 19:4, 6), He is led away and roughly nailed to a cross to die anyway!

Even in this crisis, the habit of His life continues: He prays. "Father, forgive them . . ."

Who is "them"?

Not just the Roman soldiers carrying out the act.

Not just the Jewish mob shouting, "Let His blood be on us and on our children!"

Father, forgive all people from Adam on: "all have sinned." All are responsible for His death.

Forgive me, Anne Ortlund.

Forgive you, reader.

". . . For they do not know what they are doing."

You didn't know; I didn't know -- we weren't even born yet!

Remember the Old Testament Israelites who qualified to live in one of the Cities of Refuge because they'd accidentally killed somebody? We're like that. We crucified Jesus "accidentally and without malice aforethought" (Joshua 20:5).

Nevertheless, we did it: We killed Him. We sinned -- and to pay for us, He had to die.

Wrote Johann Heerman in about 1630 -- and he was right --

Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon Thee?

Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone Thee!

'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied Thee:

I crucified Thee.

And it was so terrible, when it happened all nature went bonkers.

From high noon to mid afternoon, a thick blanket of darkness covered everything.

An earthquake rattled the land so violently that rocks split.

Tombs broke open, and people long dead got up and walked out of their graves and into the city!

The walls of the temple were left undamaged -- and yet inside, the great thirty-by-sixty-foot curtain separating the Holy Place (where humans could go) from the Most Holy Place (where dwelt the presence of God) was split right down the middle -- interestingly, from the top to the bottom.

"Surely this man was the Son of God! said one soldier (Mark 15:39).

There was no other explanation. And yet --

The scandal of the incarnation....[is] the shame of a God Who has so wallowed in the muck and misery of the world that He has become indistinguishable from it.¹

When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not (Isaiah 53:2-3).

By Thy sweat bloody and clotted! Thy soul in agony,

Thy head crowned with thorns, bruised with staves,

Thine eyes a fountain of tears,

Thine ears full of insults,

Thy mouth moistened with vinegar and gall,

Thy face stained with spitting,

Thy neck bowed down with the burden of the Cross,

Thy back ploughed with the wheals and wounds of the scourge,
Thy pierced hands and feet,
Thy strong cry, Eli, Eli,
Thy heart pierced with the spear,
The water and blood thence flowing,
Thy body broken, Thy blood poured out --
Lord forgive the iniquity of Thy servant
And cover all his sin.²

The Lancelot Andrewes quotation above was to end this chapter. But when I'd written these words I got down on my face on the floor.

I groaned, "O God, O God! Have I written this chapter hoping I've written 'powerfully' to touch people about Your crucifixion -- so they'd buy the book and I'd make money? Am I standing near the cross hawking my wares to take advantage of the Great Event?

"Then I'm another Demetrius!" (You remember him, the silversmith. He lived under the shadow of the great goddess idol Artemis, and he didn't want Christ preached because he made a good income selling little silver shrines to the tourists who came to worship her.)

Oh, a thousand, thousand curses on all Demetriuses!

I, too, bow myself at Jesus' cross, in humility and shame. I repent of all my personal sin that put Him there.

You do the same.

O Lord, Lord! Forgive us our dry eyes. (Anne Ortlund - [Fix Your Eyes on Jesus](#))

David Jeremiah - THE CHANGED CENTURION

So when the centurion . . . saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!" MARK 15:39

An African woman became a Christian, which enraged her husband. He decided to get rid of her by accusing her of thievery—of stealing his keys. He threw his key ring in a river and planned to accuse her of taking it. Later that day, his wife bought a large fish for their supper and discovered her husband's keys in its stomach! When her husband came home later that night demanding to know where his keys were, she calmly handed them to him—and he was instantly converted to Christ!

While Christians are warned against walking by sight, sometimes it's true that seeing is believing. At some point, it becomes difficult to deny the evidence of the power and presence of a miracle-working God. A Roman centurion who watched Jesus suffer on Calvary—and then felt the earth shake when an earthquake accompanied His death—concluded that Jesus was truly the Son of God. Was he converted? The Bible doesn't say, but we know he was changed.

Think about how your life has changed since seeing Jesus. Seeing Jesus for who He really is always precedes seeing ourselves for who we really are. ([David Jeremiah Morning and Evening Devotions](#))

Mark 15:40 There were also some women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses, and Salome.

- **women:** Ps 38:11 Mt 27:55-56 Lu 23:49 Joh 19:25-27
- **Mary Magdalene:** Mk 16:9 Mt 28:1 Lu 8:2,3 Joh 20:11-18
- **Mary the mother of James the Less:** Mk 15:47 16:1 Mt 13:55 27:55,61 Joh 19:25 1Co 9:5 Ga 1:19 Jas 1:1
- **and Salome:** Mk 16:1
- James Stalker - [The Groups Round the Cross](#)
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:55-56 Many women were there looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee while ministering to Him. 56 Among them was **Mary Magdalene**, and **Mary the mother of James and Joseph**, and **the mother of the sons of Zebedee**. (James and John).

Luke 23:49 And all His acquaintances and the women who accompanied Him from Galilee were standing at a distance, seeing these things.

John 19:25 Therefore the soldiers did these things. But standing by the cross of Jesus were **His mother**, and **His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas**, and **Mary Magdalene**.

There were also some women looking on from a distance - Note that John 19:25 says they were initially **'standing by the cross of Jesus.'** Now they are **looking on from a distance.** These women are noted in all 4 Gospels - (Mt. 27:55–56; Mk 15:40–41; Lk 23:49; Jn 19:25–26) The only disciple of the Twelve that was present at the Crucifixion was John. And so after most of the men who had been with Jesus were absent from the scene, these four women remained (now from a distance), watching carefully to see what would happen to Jesus' body. These women displayed rare courage to remain near Jesus after all the men had fled.

Akin - Their presence establishes eyewitnesses to his death and burial (v. 47). Further, they were “true disciples” who had “followed him and ministered to him” (v. 41). They, along with “many other women”, were faithful to Him to the bitter end. They may have watched the brutal events of the cross “from a distance”, but unlike His male disciples, their devotion was not marked by absence. Their love and devotion to Jesus would not go unrewarded (16:4-8)!

Swete remarks: “There were others besides the centurion who viewed the crucifixion seriously, and were present throughout. ‘There were also women’—many women (Mt.)—‘looking on at a long distance,’ where they could be safe from the ribaldry of the crowd, and yet watch the Figure on the Cross—not the ‘daughters of Jerusalem’ who had bewailed Jesus on the way to Golgotha, but followers from Galilee.” The

MacArthur - The obvious implication is that while ten of the eleven disciples scattered and hid, these women came boldly to display their courageous and sympathetic loyalty to Christ.

Gilbrant - The main significance of their presence is that they were eyewitnesses of Jesus' death (verses 40, 41) and His burial (verse 47). After His resurrection, over 500 saw Him at one time. Of all His followers, however, only these few women stayed to observe throughout the process of His burial which may have taken between 2 and 3 hours.

These women were present at His burial (Lk 23:55; Mt 27:61; Mk 15:47) and on Sunday morning would be the first to learn of His glorious resurrection (cf. Mark 16:1–8; John 20:11–18; Matt. 28:8–10). were eyewitnesses to all the crucial events of the Gospel (cf. 1 Co 15:3, 4).

Looking on (observing, watching) ([2334](#))([theoreo](#) from [theaomai](#) = to look at closely or attentively or contemplatively - even with a sense of wonder; cp **theoros** = a spectator)) means to view attentively and with interest and for a purpose, carefully observing details. The [present tense](#) indicates this was their continual attitude. To behold intensely or attentively. Our English word *scrutinize* conveys this sense, for it means to examine closely and minutely. To be a spectator and thus to understand or perceive.

Among whom were Mary Magdalene - Jesus had cast out 7 demons from her Luke recording "Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out." (Luke 8:2+). "She was from the village of Magdala, near Capernaum on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. The fact that Mary was known by her place of origin, rather than by the name of her husband or children, may indicate she was unmarried." (MacArthur)

And Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses (Joseph in Mt 27:56) - **James the Less** is one of the Twelve Disciples who was called James, the son of Alphaeus (Mt. 10:3; Acts 1:13) MacArthur points out that "In John 19:25, **Mary** is alternately identified as “Mary the wife of Clopas,” an apparent variant of Alphaeus."

And Salome - If we compare Mt 27:56 it seems clear that**Salome** was the wife of Zebedee and the **mother of the sons of Zebedee** (Mk 10:35 = James and John.) According to John 19:25 (= "mother's sister"), **Salome** was the sister of Jesus’ mother, Mary.

WOMEN WHO OBSERVED THE CRUCIFIXION		
Matthew 27:56	Mark 15:40	John 19:25
Mary Magdalene	Mary Magdalene	Mary Magdalene
		Mary mother of Jesus
Mary mother of James & Joseph =	Mary mother of James the less & Joses =	Mary the wife of Clopas
Mother of Zebedee's sons =	Salome =	Sister of Jesus' mother

Related Resources:

- [Who was Mary Magdalene?](#)
- [How many Marys are in the Bible?](#)
- [Who was Salome in the Bible?](#)

WHY SO MANY MARYS?

In reading the New Testament, one discovers that Mary was a popular name in first-century Palestine. For example, we find:

- Mary of Nazareth, the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:26–2:52).
- Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus (10:38–42; John 11). She anointed Jesus with perfume before His death (12:3).
- Mary of Magdala, a financial supporter of Jesus (Luke 8:2–3). The Lord had cast seven demons out of her. She watched Jesus' crucifixion and was the first witness of His resurrection (Mark 15:40; 16:9).
- Mary the mother of James and Joses. She was present at Jesus' crucifixion and was probably the same woman described as the "other" Mary (Matt. 27:61; 28:1) and Mary the wife of Clopas (John 19:25).
- Mary the mother of Mark, making her a relative of Barnabas (Acts 12:12; Col. 4:10).
- Mary of Rome, known simply as a woman who worked hard for Paul and his companions (Rom. 16:6).

Why were so many Jewish women named Mary? The name is the Greek form of the Hebrew Miriam, which was the name of one of Israel's most famous women:

- Miriam was the sister of Moses (Num. 26:59) and one of the nation's first prophets (Ex. 15:20).
- She, her brother, and Aaron were the leadership team that God appointed to lead Israel out of Egypt and through the wilderness toward the Promised Land (Mic. 6:4).
- Miriam displayed courage early in life when she saved her baby brother from death (Ex. 2:4–7).
- Later, after Israel escaped across the Red Sea from the Egyptian army, she helped lead the people in songs of celebration and praise (15:20–21).
- However, on one occasion she spoke against Moses. As a consequence she experienced God's judgment by contracting leprosy. For seven days she was shut out of the camp, the time required before a person healed of leprosy could rejoin the community (Num. 12:1–15).
- While she was on "forced sick leave," the people remained in one place until she returned to her work of leading the people (12:15). (Source: [The Word in life Study Bible online copy you can check out](#) - Very interesting format. **Not your routine study Bible**)

Mark 15:41 When He was in Galilee, they used to follow Him and minister to Him; and there were many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.

- **and minister to Him:** Mt 27:56 Lu 8:2,3
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

When He was in Galilee They used to follow Him and minister to Him- **Follow** and **minister** are both in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating they did both of these activities over and over. These women "had followed Jesus when He was in Galilee, throughout the second year of His public ministry of preaching and miracles. From that time on, they used to follow Him and minister to Him." (MacArthur)

A T Robertson on **follow** and **minister** - Two imperfections describing the long Galilean ministry of these three women and many other women in Galilee (Luke 8:1–3) who came up with him (ai sunanabāsai autōi) to Jerusalem.

THOUGHT - The verb follow is [akoloutheo](#) which means to walk the same road (Ponder that simple definition dear believer - Am I willing to walk the same road as Jesus?) Literally it meant to follow (like the crowds followed Jesus) but more importantly in a figurative sense it meant to follow Jesus as a disciple. Yes there were 11 faithful followers of Jesus for 3 years, but Mark points out that there were faithful female followers or disciples. As we will see in Luke 24 female disciples played a pivotal role regarding Jesus' resurrection.

Follow (190) ([akoloutheo](#) from **a** = expresses union with, likeness + **keleuthos** = a road, way) means to walk the same road (Ponder that simple definition dear believer - Am I willing to walk the same road as Jesus?) Literally to follow (like the crowds followed Jesus) and in a figurative sense to follow Jesus as a disciple. To follow (closely) and was used of soldiers, servants and pupils. Uses in Mark - Mk. 1:18; Mk. 2:14; Mk. 2:15;

Mk. 3:7; Mk. 5:24; Mk. 6:1; Mk. 8:34; Mk. 9:38; Mk. 10:21; Mk. 10:28; Mk. 10:32; Mk. 10:52; Mk. 11:9; Mk. 14:13; Mk. 14:54; Mk. 15:41;

Minister (serve , wait on) (1247)(**diakoneo**) means to minister by way of rendering service in any form or to take care of by rendering humble service.

And there were many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem- These are not named here but are known in Heaven. "This summary description in Mark is paralleled in Matt. 27:55f. and Luke 23:49. These faithful women were last at the Cross as they stood afar and saw the dreadful end to all their hopes." (Robertson)

Mark 15:42 When evening had already come, because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath,

- Mt 27:57,62 Lu 23:50-54 Joh 19:38
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

When evening had already come - This is some time between 3 PM and 6 PM or sunset. After sunset no work was allowed. So the taking down of Jesus from the Cross and burying Him in the tomb had to be accomplished before sunset.

Gilbrant - According to the ancient Hebrew way of speaking, there were two "evenings," the first beginning at 3 p.m. and the second at 6 p.m. Since both Sanhedrin law and the Scripture (Deuteronomy 21:23) prescribed that those hanged must be taken down and buried before sundown, it was most likely the early evening. As soon as Jesus dismissed His spirit, His burial was being provided. In ancient times, the execution of a condemned man was not the end of his humiliation. Roman law proscribed the right of burial, except by magisterial decree. In actual practice, if the relatives sought a permit for burial, the body was usually released to them. The Scriptures are clear that the burial of the dead was considered to be a duty and an act of piety (Deuteronomy 21:23; 2 Samuel 21:12-14; Acts 8:2).

What is so important about establishing the time of **"evening"** (defined as from 3 PM to 6 PM)? From a religious standpoint, as observant Jews, Joseph and Nicodemus would have been zealous to complete their work before the Sabbath began at 6 PM and also to comply with the OT law in Dt 21:22-23 that a body would not "not hang all night on the tree." Recall also that no work was to be done on the Sabbath. However there is an even more profound reason, and one regarding which they were probably not aware. Recall that Jesus had given a prophecy explaining the "Sign of Jonah" (Mt 12:39) in declaring "for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be **three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**" (Mt 12:40) In other words, Jesus had to be buried in the grave before the day ended and the Sabbath began at 6 PM. If He were buried before 6 PM (which He was) then Friday is one day, Saturday (Sabbath) is the second day and Sunday is the third day. You might be saying that Friday was almost finished with less than 3 hours left. That is not a problem because the Jews counted any part of a day as constituting a day (Compare 1 Ki 12:5 with 1 Ki 12:12 and Esther 4:16 with Esther 5:1). This is an amazing story for God sovereignly used two men to accomplish Jesus' burial on Friday which resulted in fulfillment of His prophecy in Mt 12:40! As MacArthur says "In His burial, as well as His death, Jesus orchestrated all the details to accomplish God's already revealed purpose." And I would add He did so using men who were "sold out" to Him, two men who did not at the time even comprehend that they were playing a critical role in the fulfillment of one of the greatest prophecies in the Bible, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead after 3 days! God grant us by Your Spirit to be in the sweet center of Your good and acceptable and perfect will (Ro 12:2) in our lives just as were these two Old Testament saints! In the Name of the Resurrected Lord. Amen.

Because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath- See note below. This day had begun at 6 PM on Thursday and would terminate at 6 PM on Friday.

Holman Bible Dictionary - Day of Preparation - Sixth day of week (FRIDAY) in which Jews prepared life's necessities to avoid work on the Sabbath (compare Ex 20:8-11 ; Matthew 12:1-14; John 9:14-16). Preparation of food, completing work, and spiritual purification were included. The Hebrew day began and ended at 6 PM (or Sunset), so the **day of preparation** extended from 6 p.m. on Thursday until the beginning of the Sabbath at 6 p.m. Friday. The Feast of Passover was immediately followed by the holy convocation of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:1-7). No one worked on either of these holy days, so a day of preparation was set aside to prepare for the holiday period (John 19:14). John explicitly identified the **day of preparation** as the day of Jesus' execution (John 19:14, Jn 19:31, 42) and placed the Last Supper before Passover (John 13:1). The Synoptic Gospels, however, dated the Last Supper on the day of Passover (Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7). This apparent contradiction in dating may depend on whether the gospel writers were referring to the preparation day for the sabbath or to the preparation day for the Passover.

Mark 15:43 Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.

NET Mark 15:43 Joseph of Arimathea, a highly regarded member of the council, who was himself looking forward to the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

NLT Mark 15:43 Joseph of Arimathea took a risk and went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. (Joseph was an honored member of the high council, and he was waiting for the Kingdom of God to come.)

ESV Mark 15:43 Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

NIV Mark 15:43 Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body.

- **Joseph of Arimathea:** Mk 10:23-27
- **who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God:** Lu 2:25,38 23:51
- **went in before Pilate:** Mk 14:54,66-72 Mt 19:30 20:16 Ac 4:8-13 Php 1:14
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Luke 23:50; 51+ And a man named Joseph, who was a member of the Council, a **good and righteous man 51 (he had not consented to their plan and action)**, a man from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who was waiting for the kingdom of God;

John 19:38 After these things Joseph of Arimathea, **being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews**, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away His body.

Luke 23:50-54 And a man named Joseph, who was a member of the Council, a good and righteous man 51 (he had not consented to their plan and action), a man from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who was waiting for the kingdom of God; 52 this man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 53 And he took it down and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb cut into the rock, where no one had ever lain. 54 It was the preparation day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

John 19:38-42 After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away His body. 39 Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. 40 So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. 41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. 42 Therefore because of the Jewish day of preparation, since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

OBTAINING COURAGE TO OBTAIN PERMISSION

Joseph of Arimathea came - Luke 23:50-51 tells us of Joseph's character (good and righteous) and his conduct (had not consented to murder Jesus). John 19:38 adds that Joseph of Arimathea was "a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews."

A prominent member of the Council - He was a well known member of the Sanhedrin.

Who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God - **Waiting** is in the present tense indicating that this was his continual hope! He lived with a sense of expectancy, which will radically affect how one lives! Like most Jews Joseph expected a coming Messianic Kingdom in which Israel would once again be the head of all the nations and Messiah would reign and rule as Kingdom over the world (cf the same hope in the minds of the disciples **EVEN AFTER** Jesus was resurrected - Acts 1:6+).. Needless to say Joseph would have been horrified by the non-biblical doctrine of [replacement theology](#) that is being so widely taught in evangelical circles in America!

THOUGHT - Remember what you are looking for (waiting for) will surely influence what (how) you are living for! Are you looking for the King's return? Don't answer with a simple "yes" but with a radical future focused lifestyle!

Waiting (4327)(**prosdechomai** from **pros** = in compound Greek words implies motion or direction toward + **dechomai** = a deliberate and ready reception) means to accept favorably, to receive one into intercourse/companionship, to give access to oneself or receive to oneself. This great Greek verb describes one who is waiting for something (in most contexts actually **Someone**) with a sense of expectancy ("like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast" = Lk 12:36, "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus," = Titus 2:13+, "waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life." = Jude 1:21+). Does this verb typify your life beloved? If not what "earthly cargo" do you need to jettison in order to assure a safe voyage and an "abundant" arrival at port (see 2Pe 1:10, 11_±, He 6:19, 20_±)?

This is a characteristic of many of the believers in Luke.

Luke 2:25+ And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous (dikaios - same word for Joseph in Lk 23:50+) and devout, (continually) **looking for** (**prosdechomai** in present tense = this was his lifestyle!) the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

Luke 2:38+ At that very moment she (Anna the prophetess) came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who **were looking for** (**prosdechomai** in present tense = this was their lifestyle!) the redemption of Jerusalem (i.e., they were looking for the REDEEMER!).

And he gathered up courage- He was coming forward to in essence confess Christ as His Lord and King and petulant Pilate was unpredictable except that he undoubtedly was predictably angry at the Jews for harassing him and forcing him to convict a man he thought was innocent. And so here comes another Jewish man, a prominent man in the Sanhedrin (which had been the main "thorn" in his side) and he is asking for more favors. So this took great courage on the part of Joseph.

Courage is the ability to confront fear, pain, danger, uncertainty, or intimidation, all of which were potentially at play in his going to Pilate. He ventured to go, where **Venture** speaks of an undertaking that is dangerous, daring, or of uncertain outcome. Clearly Joseph's courage is a reflection of his faith, for without faith in Jesus he never would have risked his own life. But in going to Pilate he did risk his life which reminds us of Jesus' words

If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must (NOT MIGHT BUT MUST) **deny** himself, and **take up** his cross and **follow** Me. 35 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? 37 "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation (JOSEPH WAS NOT ASHAMED OF JESUS) the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." (Mk 8:34-38+).

Gathered up courage (emboldened himself)(5111)(**tolmao** from **tólma** = courage in turn from **tlao** = to sustain, support, endure) means to have courage, to be bold, to dare to do something, to take heart to do something difficult.. To be courageous enough to try or to do something. **Louw-Nida** - "to be so bold as to challenge or defy possible danger or opposition." **BDAG** says **tolmao** means "to show boldness or resolution in the face of danger, opposition, or a problem."

and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus - There was no time to waste for the burial had to be carried out before sunset.

Constable's comment on Jesus' dead **body** or corpse - It was also unusual to give the corpse of a person condemned for treason to anyone but a near relative. Consequently Pilate's willingness to give Jesus' body to Joseph shows that he really did not believe that Jesus was guilty of treason (cf. Mark 15:14-15).

NET Note - Asking for the body of Jesus was indeed a bold move on the part of Joseph of Arimathea, for it clearly and openly identified him with a man who had just been condemned and executed, namely, Jesus. His **faith** is exemplary, especially for someone who was a member of the council that handed Jesus over for crucifixion (cf. Luke 23:51+). He did this because he sought to give Jesus an honorable burial.

D L Moody - Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.—Mark 15:43.

I CONSIDER this one of the sublimest, grandest acts that any man ever did. In the darkness and gloom, His disciples having all forsaken Him, Judas having sold Him for thirty pieces of silver, the chief apostle Peter having denied Him with a curse, swearing that

he never knew Him, the chief priests having found Him guilty of blasphemy, the council having condemned Him to death, and when there was a hiss going up to heaven from over all Jerusalem, Joseph went right against the current, right against the influence of all his friends, and begged the body of Jesus.

Blessed act! Doubtless he upbraided himself for not having been more bold in his defence of Christ when He was tried, and before He was condemned to be crucified. The Scripture says he was an honorable man, an honorable councillor, a rich man, and yet we have only the record of that one thing—the one act of begging the body of Jesus. But what he did for the Son of God, out of pure love for Him, will live forever; that one act rises up above everything else that Joseph of Arimathea ever did.

Henry Morris - Joseph of Arimathea

"Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counselor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus" (Mark 15:43).

The unique service of Joseph, in giving Jesus an honorable burial after His execution as a criminal, is noted in all four gospels. He was a disciple of Jesus, as well as a rich man (Matt. 27:57). Although his home was in Arimathea, he buried Jesus "in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock" (Matt. 27:60) on the side of Mount Calvary just outside Jerusalem—evidently built specifically for Jesus. Joseph "was a good man, and a just" man—a member of the Sanhedrin, who "had not consented to the counsel and deed of them" as they condemned Jesus to die (Luke 23:50-51).

These actions of Joseph soon would cost him his riches and his position. The same was true of his colleague on the council, Nicodemus, who had also become a disciple of Jesus, and who worked together with Joseph to plan the burial of their Lord, "secretly for fear of the Jews" (John 19:38). Once Christ had died, Joseph went to Pilate to request the body—so quickly that "Pilate marveled if He were already dead" (Mark 15:44). After checking this, "he gave the body to Joseph" (verse 45), and the two friends proceeded to prepare it for burial.

Nicodemus "brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight" (John 19:39), evidently from a cache in the tomb, and they wound Jesus' body in linen clothes with the spices and quickly buried Him, before sundown.

This loving ministry was performed to fulfill an ancient prophecy: "He made His grave... with the rich in His death" (Isa. 53:9). Somehow, Joseph and Nicodemus realized that God had called them to play this particular role in its fulfillment, enabling Jesus' body to rest in dignity until that morning when "He shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand" (verse 10).

C H Spurgeon - Joseph of Arimathea

'Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.' 'And he bought fine linen ... and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.' Mark 15:43, 46

Years ago, when they talked of the French invading England, an old lady grew very indignant and threatened deadly resistance. When she was asked what the women of England could do, she said they would rise to a man. I have no doubt whatever that they would do their best in any such emergency. Every iron in the fire-place, whether it be poker or shovel, would be grasped to defend our hearths and homes, and just so now, when error knows no bounds, we must stand up for the defence of the truth. Since they push error to extremes, it becomes us to hold by every particle of the faith. I will not, for my own part, give up a corner of my creed for any man. Even if we might have been prepared to modify expressions had the age been different, we are not in that mood now. A generation of vipers shall have a naked file to bite at. We will modify nothing. If truth bears a stern aspect we will not veil it. If there be an offence in the cross we will not conceal it. This shall be my answer to those who would have us attune ourselves to the spirit of the age: I know no Spirit but one, and he is unchanging in every age. Your extravagance of doubt shall have no influence over us except to make us bind the gospel more closely to our hearts. If we gave you an inch you would take a mile, and so no inch shall be given you. Our resolve is to live for the Book as we read it, for the gospel as we rest in it, for the Lord as he made atonement, for the kingdom as it rules over all. I beg every trembling Christian to take heart, put on his Lord's livery, and advance to the fray. Come out now, if you never did before! Come out, if there is any manliness in you, in these days of blasphemy and rebuke.

Mark 15:44 Pilate wondered if He was dead by this time, and summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether He was already dead.

Related Passages:

John 19:31-37 Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. 32 So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with Him; 33 but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. 34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. 35 And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. 36 For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, "NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN." 37 And again another Scripture says, "THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED."

Pilate wondered if He was dead by this time - Why would he wonder? Pilate could hardly believe, however, that Jesus was already dead. It was common knowledge (crucifixions were not rare in these days) that a man might hang on the cross for several agonizing days before actually dying. It follows that Christ dying in only 6 hours was unusual and it should have been another prick to his conscience that something was indeed different about this innocent Man!

And summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether He was already dead.

Mark 15:45 And ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph.

- **he granted the body:** Mt 27:58 Joh 19:38
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph- The word **granted** is [doreomai](#) (from **doron** means to bestow gratuitously or to make a gift of) and thus emphasizes the generosity of the giver. The idea is that Pilate presented Jesus' body in as sense as a gift.

Wuest writes "The word **"granted"** is dōreō "to freely give." After satisfying himself officially that Jesus was dead, Pilate freely gave His body to Joseph, not out of any feeling of generosity, but because he would be rid of this most inconvenient and troublesome affair."

Mark 15:46 Joseph bought a linen cloth, took Him down, wrapped Him in the linen cloth and laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.

- **took Him down:** Mt 27:59,60 Lu 23:53 John 19:38-42
- **and laid Him in a tomb:** Isa 53:9
- **which had been hewn out in the rock** Isa 22:16
- **rolled a stone against the entrance:** Mk 16:3,4 Mt 27:60 28:2 John 11:38
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:59; 60 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.

Luke 23:53 And he took it down and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb cut into the rock, where no one had ever lain.

John 19:38-42 After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away His body. 39 **Nicodemus**, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. 40 So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. 41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. 42 Therefore because of the Jewish day of preparation, since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Joseph bought a linen cloth, took Him down wrapped Him in the linen cloth- John 19:38 says after ' Pilate granted permission' Joseph "came and took away His body. Joseph was aided by "**Nicodemus**, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews." (Jn 19:39-40) There was no embalming of bodies so Nicodemus brought "a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight."

Took Him down - This is an important act by Joseph because Romans would let the bodies of crucified criminals rot on the cross and not even bury them! One needed to obtain permission to bury someone. Joseph had jumped that first hurdle, but now taking the body down would have been no small task, for Jesus was impaled with iron spikes up to one inch thick in His hands and feet. And the "[dead weight](#)" of Jesus' body as a full grown man would have been fairly heavy for a single individual. How Jesus was removed from the nails is not clear. Apparently Joseph carried out the removal of Jesus' body from the Cross by himself, for Nicodemus did not join him until he had brought Jesus' body to the tomb (Jn 19:39). Imagine, lovingly removing the hands and feet from the iron spikes and carrying the bloodied body of the Creator in your hands as you walked probably many yards to the site of the tomb! What thoughts must have coursed through Joseph's grieving mind as he carried out this labor of love! As **G. Campbell Morgan** said "No hand but the hand of love ever touched the dead body of Jesus."

MacArthur notes that "As soon as a victim was declared dead, his body was taken down from the cross and ordinarily was thrown into a common grave for criminals, as Isaiah had prophesied the Messiah's enemies had planned for Him (Isa. 53:9). The Romans had absolutely no respect for the corpses, which often were thrown into a grave left open to scavenger animals and birds. Sometimes the bodies were simply cast onto a burning garbage dump, such as the one that continually smoldered in the [Hinnom Valley](#) (Gehenna) just south of Jerusalem. (New Testament Commentary – Matthew)

A T Robertson on **wrapped** - This word is only here in the N. T. As *entulissōis* only in Mt. 27:59; Luke 23:53; John 20:7. Both verbs occur in the papyri, Plutarch, etc. They both mean to wrap, wind, roll in. The body of Jesus was wound in the linen cloth bought by Joseph and the hundred pounds of spices brought by Nicodemus (John 19:39) for burying were placed in the folds of the linen and the linen was bound around the body by strips of cloth (John 19:40). The time was short before the sabbath began and these two reverently laid the body of the Master in Joseph's new tomb, hewn out of a rock.

Gilbrant writes "The fine linen and the tight wrapping of the corpse indicate an honorable burial. Being a devout Jew, Joseph would surely wash the body; this practice was considered so important by Jews that it was even permitted on the Sabbath. John states that the body was buried according to the Jewish tradition with spices placed on the body inside the linen, John 19:40 recording that "they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews."

Wrapped it in the linen cloth- It should be noted that some have proposed the **Shroud of Turin** is the linen cloth in which Jesus was wrapped, but this has been clearly proven to be a [hoax](#). ([Is the Shroud of Turin authentic?](#)) ([see pictures](#)) John 19:40 adds that Joseph and Nicodemus "took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews."

The **NET Note** comments on a **linen cloth** ([sindon](#)) in Luke 23:53 (Mt 27:59, Mk 15:46) versus [linen wrappings](#) in John - The Fourth Gospel uses ([othoniois](#)) to describe the wrappings, and this has caused a good deal of debate, since it appears to contradict the synoptic accounts which mention a [sindon](#), a large single piece of linen cloth. If one understands [othoniois](#) to refer to smaller strips of cloth, like bandages, there would be a difference, but diminutive forms have often lost their diminutive force in Koine Greek, so there may not be any difference.

Robert Stein - With the negative results from carbon 14 testing, all speculation about the authenticity of the Shroud of Turin should now cease. This was not the linen cloth spoken of in this verse. (NAC-Luke)

Linen cloth ([4616](#))([sindon](#)) a light piece of clothing like a chemise. Liddell-Scott- sindon, a fine cloth, a kind of cambric or muslin." Friberg - (1) as a loosely fitting sleeping garment tunic, (night)shirt (Mk 14:51); (2) as a cloth used to wrap a corpse for Jesus' burial clothes - "Joseph bought a **linen** cloth, took Him down, wrapped Him in the **linen** cloth and laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb." (Mk 15:46, Mt 27:59) 5x in NT - Matt. 27:59; Mk. 14:51; Mk. 14:52; Mk. 15:46; Lk. 23:53 Septuagint uses - Jdg. 14:12; Jdg. 14:13; Prov. 31:24;

None of the Gospels record the details of preparing Jesus' body before wrapping, but given the fact that it was almost the Sabbath, the preparations had to be performed expediently.

And laid Him in a tomb - From Matthew 27:60 we learn that the tomb was "his own new tomb." **MacArthur** comments that "The body would decompose until only the bones were left; then the bones would be collected in an ossuary and the tomb would become available again. But Joseph placed Jesus in a tomb in which no one had ever been buried (Luke 23:53; John 19:41).

The fact that a prominent man Joseph **laid Him in a tomb** is a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy...

Isaiah 53:9+ His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man (only in Mt 27:57) in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

Morris comments that "The tomb was rock-hewn and had not been used previously (tombs, being expensive, would tend to be given maximum use; surviving Jewish tombs of the period often have several chambers so that they can accommodate a number of bodies). Elsewhere we learn that Joseph had prepared this tomb for himself ("his own new tomb" = Mt. 27:60). (TNTC-Luke)

D A Carson gives us some details about ancient **tombs** - "Tombs were of various kinds. Many were sealed with some sort of boulder wedged into place to discourage wild animals and grave robbers. But an expensive tomb consisted of an antechamber hewn out of the rock face, with a low passage (cf. 'bent over,' John 20:5, 11) leading into the burial chamber that was sealed with a cut, disk-shaped stone that rolled in a slot cut into the rock. The slot was on an incline, making the grave easy to seal but difficult to open: several men might be needed to roll the stone back up the incline." (Matthew Commentary)

MacArthur comments that "It would not have been possible to fully comprehend the implications of that prophecy until after Jesus died. Only then did it become clear that, although the Romans planned to discard His body as if He were a common criminal, the Messiah would actually be buried in the tomb of a prominent and wealthy man. God was also at the burial, working to ensure everything happened according to the divine schedule. The timing was crucial, so that Jesus' body would be in the grave for at least part of three different days, just as He had predicted (cf. Matt. 12:40; 16:21; 17:23; 20:19). To assure that, God moved the religious leaders to demand that the bodies be taken down on Friday and prompted Pilate to grant their request. Then, He compelled Joseph to be courageous and ask for Jesus' body, and again moved the governor to give permission. Now, God enabled Joseph to secure, transport, prepare, and bury Jesus' body, and do it all before the Sabbath began so that He was in the tomb on Friday.

Which had been hewn out in the rock and he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb- Gilbrant explains that "Jesus' body was then carried to the tomb, which had been cut from bedrock, and placed on a stone bench or shelf. Ordinarily such a tomb was sealed with a flat stone slab wedged into place to shut out wild animals or intruders. Since Mark spoke twice of the stone being "rolled," it is likely that this tomb was an exceptionally fine one, befitting the wealth and standing of its owner. (See Isaiah 53:9) Such a tomb would have an elaborate, disc-shaped stone, like a millstone, about a yard in diameter. The stone could be easily rolled to seal the tomb, being placed in a groove which sloped down to the doorway. To roll it away, however, would require the strength of several men"

Mark 15:47 Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were looking on to see where He was laid.

- Mk 15:40 16:1 Mt 27:61 28:1 Lu 23:55,56 24:1,2
- **Mark 15 Resources** - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Resources:

Matthew 27:59-61 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away. 61 And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the grave.

Luke 23:55 Now the women who had come with Him out of Galilee followed, and saw the tomb and how His body was laid. 56 Then they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were looking on to see where He was laid- The verb were looking is the same one used to describe the women looking at the Crucifixion. They were looking attentively and with interest. Whether they helped Joseph and Nicodemus with the burial of Jesus is not stated. But it is clear that they knew **where He was laid**. They knew where the tomb **hewn out of rock** was located.

Akin - Mark informs us that in addition to Joseph of Arimathea and also Nicodemus (see John 19:38-42), Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses (and James the younger, v. 40) "saw where he was laid" (v. 47). Thus the only people at His grave as the sun set that "Black Friday" was two Pharisees who had up until now been "silent" or "anonymous" disciples and two women. The apostles are nowhere to be found. Those who had professed proudly and loudly that they would die for Him (14:31) are in hiding. In contrast those who once remained in the shadows or were hardly noticed by the really important people are there by His grave. They do not care who knows of their loyalty to Jesus. They do not care who see their love for Jesus

Constable on Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses - The writer mentioned the presence of these two women at the tomb during Jesus' burial to prepare for his statement that they were present to witness the empty tomb (Mk 16:1, 5). They had seen

Jesus die (Mk 15:40), and now they saw Him buried. There was no question that they went to the right tomb on Sunday morning since they had been there Friday afternoon. Again Mark guarded against any wrong conclusion that the disciples were mistaken about Jesus' resurrection. The Servant of the Lord had paid the ultimate price for the sins of humankind, His own life. Mark's narrative stressed Jesus' exemplary service and the reality of His death. (Expository Notes - Mark)

Looking on (observing, watching) (2334) see note above on [theoreo](#)

Life Application Bible Commentary – DO WHAT YOU CAN - These women could not do "great" things for Jesus—they were not permitted to stand up before the Jewish Council or the Roman governor and testify on his behalf—but they did what they could. They stayed at the cross when most of the disciples had fled, and they got ready to anoint their Lord's body. Because of their devotion, they were the first to know about the Resurrection. Believers may feel that they can't do much for Jesus. But they must take advantage of the opportunities given to them by doing what they can do and not worrying about what they cannot do.

CROFT PENTZ - THE DEATH OF CHRIST—Mark 15

I. THE SUBSTITUTE—vv. 1–15

- A. Patient—vv. 1–6. Though questioned, persecuted, and mistreated, He remained calm. He didn't have to prove He was the Messiah.
- B. People—vv. 7–13. Pilate asks what the people wanted. Who should go free: Christ, who did no wrong? or Barabbas, a murderer?
- C. Perfection—v. 14. Pilate asks what evil He had done. The people cry out, "Crucify Him."
- D. Politics—v. 15. To please the people, Pilate released Barabbas. Pilate didn't consider right or wrong—He wanted to please the people. He was thinking of his own political future.

II. THE SENTENCE—vv. 16–21

- A. Court—vv. 16–19. Christ was brought into court and mocked. He was given a crown of thorns. He was beaten and spat upon.
- B. Crucified—vv. 20–21. After being mocked, He was led away to be crucified. Simon of Cyrene bore the cross for Christ.

III. THE SHAME—vv. 22–32

- A. Place—v. 22. Golgotha, or the place of the skull.
- B. Pain—v. 23. A drink was offered to help kill the pain, but He refused. He wanted to bear all the pain!
- C. People—vv. 24–25. When He was crucified, they gambled for His robe. He was crucified at the third hour—9:00 A.M.
- D. Plan—vv. 26–28. The writing above His head read—KING OF THE JEWS. Two thieves were crucified with Him.
- E. Persecution—vv. 29–32. They mocked Him, saying if He were the Son of God, He would save Himself. He could have saved Himself. He didn't come to save Himself, but others!

IV. THE SUFFERING—vv. 33–41

- A. Darkness—v. 33. Darkness from 12 noon until 3:00 P.M.
- B. Death—vv. 34–38. Christ cries out, asking why God forsook Him. Some felt He was crying for help. He gives up the ghost.
- C. Decision—v. 39. The Roman officer was convinced Christ was the Son of God.
- D. Dedication—vv. 40–41. The dedicated people remained with Christ until His death.

V. THE SEPULCHRE—vv. 42–47

- A. Request—vv. 42–45. Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Jewish high court, asks for Christ's body. He opposed His death—Luke 23:51.
- B. Respect—vv. 46–47. Respect is shown for Christ by burying Him in a tomb.

**IT'S FRIDAY
BUT SUNDAY'S COMING**

[Listen on youtube](#)

S.M. Lockridge (1913-2000), pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in San Diego from 1953 to 1993.

It's Friday
Jesus is praying
Peter's a sleeping
Judas is betraying

But Sunday's comin'

It's Friday

Pilate's struggling

The council is conspiring

The crowd is vilifying

They don't even know

That Sunday's comin'

It's Friday

The disciples are running

Like sheep without a shepherd

Mary's crying

Peter is denying

But they don't know

That Sunday's a comin'

It's Friday

The Romans beat my Jesus

They robe him in scarlet

They crown him with thorns

But they don't know

That Sunday's comin'

It's Friday

See Jesus walking to Calvary

His blood dripping

His body stumbling

And his spirit's burdened

But you see, it's only Friday

Sunday's comin'

It's Friday

The world's winning

People are sinning

And evil's grinning

It's Friday

The soldiers nail my Savior's hands

To the cross

They nail my Savior's feet

To the cross

And then they raise him up

Next to criminals

It's Friday

But let me tell you something

Sunday's comin'

It's Friday

The disciples are questioning

What has happened to their King

And the Pharisees are celebrating

That their scheming

Has been achieved

But they don't know

It's only Friday

Sunday's comin'

It's Friday

He's hanging on the cross

Feeling forsaken by his Father
Left alone and dying
Can nobody save him?
Ooooh
It's Friday
But Sunday's comin'

It's Friday
The earth trembles
The sky grows dark
My King yields his spirit

It's Friday
Hope is lost
Death has won
Sin has conquered
and Satan's just a laughin'

It's Friday
Jesus is buried
A soldier stands guard
And a rock is rolled into place

But it's Friday
It is only Friday
Sunday is a comin'!