

John 19 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE
To go directly to that verse
([John Commentaries](#))

- [John 19:1](#)
- [John 19:2](#)
- [John 19:3](#)
- [John 19:4](#)
- [John 19:5](#)
- [John 19:6](#)
- [John 19:7](#)
- [John 19:8](#)
- [John 19:9](#)
- [John 19:10](#)
- [John 19:11](#)
- [John 19:12](#)
- [John 19:13](#)
- [John 19:14](#)
- [John 19:15](#)
- [John 19:16](#)
- [John 19:17](#)
- [John 19:18](#)
- [John 19:19](#)
- [John 19:20](#)
- [John 19:21](#)
- [John 19:22](#)
- [John 19:23](#)
- [John 19:24](#)
- [John 19:25](#)
- [John 19:26](#)
- [John 19:27](#)
- [John 19:28](#)
- [John 19:29](#)
- [John 19:30](#)
- [John 19:31](#)
- [John 19:32](#)
- [John 19:33](#)
- [John 19:34](#)
- [John 19:35](#)
- [John 19:36](#)
- [John 19:37](#)
- [John 19:38](#)
- [John 19:39](#)
- [John 19:40](#)
- [John 19:41](#)
- [John 19:42](#)

John 19:1 Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him.

- **Pilate:** Mt 27:26-31 Mk 15:15-20 Lu 23:16,23
- **scourged:** Ps 129:3 Isa 50:6 Isa 53:5 Mt 20:19 23:34 Mk 10:33,34 Lu 18:33 Ac 16:22,23 22:24,25 2Co 11:24 Heb 11:36 1Pe 2:24
- James Stalker's classic [Trial and Arrest of Jesus Christ - 7. THE CROWN OF THORNS](#) Matt. 27:26–30; Mark 15:15–20; Luke 23:25; John 19:1–5.
- Alfred Edersheim - [The Morning of Good Friday](#) Mt 27:1, 2, 11–14; St. Mk 15:1–5; Lk 23:1–5; Jn 18:28–38; Lk 23:6–12; Mt 27:3–10; Mt 27:15–18; Mk 15:6–10; Lk 23:13–17; Jn 18:39, 40; Mt 27:19; Mt 27:20–31; Mk 15:11–20; Lk 23:18–25; Jn 19:1–16

Related Passages:

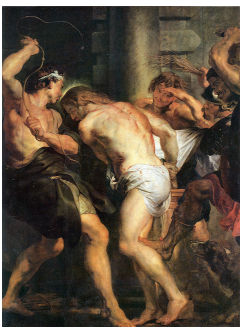
Isaiah 50:6 I gave My back to those who strike (Hebrew - nakah = smite; LXX = [mastix](#) = whip, lash, scourge) Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.

Isaiah 53:5+ But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening (LXX = [paideia](#)) for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His **scourging** (Hebrew = chabburah = stripe, blow, bruise; LXX = [molops](#) = MARKS LEFT BY A BLOW) we are healed.

Matthew 27:24-30+ 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.** 27 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, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 30 They spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head.

Mark 15:15-20+ **Wishing to satisfy the crowd**, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified. 16 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, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 19 They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him. 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.

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.** (IT IS INTERESTING THAT LUKE IS THE ONLY GOSPEL WRITER WHO DOES NOT DESCRIBE THE FLOGGING).



Note that many of the details in **Jn 19:1-15** are **NOT** found in the other Gospels. Surprisingly, the Gospel of Luke has no description of the scourging or mocking of Jesus by the soldiers.

Pilate then took Jesus and scourged ([mastigoo](#) different verb from phragelloo in Mt 27:26+, Mk 15:15+) **Him** - (See [Pilate's movements](#)) **NET** = "flogged severely" - Think about this for a moment -- what had Pilate declared in Jn 18:38? "Not guilty!" And yet now he scourges a man he knows is innocent. Some postulate that he may have reasoned that this punishment would satisfy the Jews and they would no longer demand the death penalty. For example, Lk 23:22 records Pilate spoke to the Jews and "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." The Jews limited flogging to 39 lashes but the Romans had no such rule so it is likely Jesus received more than 39 lashes which would have inflicted major tissue damage and blood loss from His back.

The scourging, crucifixion and resurrection fulfilled Jesus' prophecy in the Gospels:

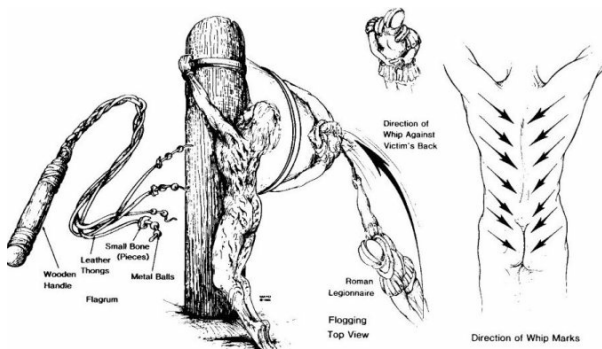
Mark 10:33-34+ "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles. "They will mock Him and spit on Him, and **scourge** Him and kill Him, and three days later He will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

Matthew 20:18-19+ "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, 19 and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and **scourge** and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up."

Luke 18:32-33+ For He will be handed over to the Gentiles (ROMAN SOLDIERS), and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, 33 and after they have **scourged** Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again."

The scourging of Jesus was considered to be the preparation of a criminal who was to be crucified. There as some writers [SEE NOTE DISCUSSING POSSIBILITY OF 2 FLOGGINGS - SEE EXCELLENT SUMMARY DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE BY D A CARSON](#)) who think that Jesus may have experienced two types of scourging, the first a milder form in an attempt to appease the Jews and a severe form in preparation for the Cross. Pilate clearly did not think Jesus was guilty of any crime and might have been attempting to appease the Jews with some degree of punishment. In any event, it is clear that Pilate underestimated the intense hatred the Jewish leaders had for Jesus. In fact the desire to murder Jesus had been on their heart and mind for a long time, John recording in Jn 5:18+ "the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God."

William L. 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 (**ED**: SEE DEPICTION BELOW). No maximum number of strokes was 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 (Josephus War VI. v. 3)." ([The Gospel According to Mark: The English Text - Page 557](#)).



Schematic of Roman Scourging - click to enlarge

A T Robertson - Pilate did not actually scourge Jesus. He simply ordered it done, perhaps to see if the mob would be satisfied with this penalty on the alleged pretender to royalty (Luke 23:22) whom Pilate had pronounced innocent (John 18:38+), an illegal act therefore. It was a preliminary to crucifixion, but Jesus was not yet condemned. ([What is the history of crucifixion?](#))

Marvin Vincent - The punishment was horrible, the victim being bound to a low pillar or stake, and beaten, either with rods, or, in the case of slaves and provincials, with scourges, called scorpions, leather thongs tipped with leaden balls or sharp spikes.

NET NOTE - had him flogged," or (traditional), "scourged him." The verb should be read as causative. Pilate ordered Jesus to be flogged. A Roman governor would not carry out such a sentence in person. BORROW [BDAG MASTIGOO](#) 1. states, "If John refers to the 'verberatio' given those condemned to death,..... it is odd that Pilate subsequently claims no cause for action (Jn 19:6); but if the latter statement refers only to the penalty of crucifixion, [mastigoo](#) in Jn 19:1 may be equivalent to [paideuo](#) in Lk 23:16, 22+ (**ED**: ALSO [SEE NOTE REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF 2 FLOGGINGS - ONE MILD IN AN ATTEMPT TO APPEASE THE JEWS AND THE OTHER SEVERE IN PREPARATION FOR CRUCIFIXION](#)).....This severe flogging was not administered by Pilate himself but his officers, who took Jesus at Pilate's order and scourged him. The author's choice of wording here may constitute an allusion to Isa 50:6, "I gave my back to those who scourge me."

Three forms of corporal punishment were employed by the Romans, in increasing degree of severity ([SEE NOTE](#)): (1) **fustigatio** (beating), (2) **flagellatio** (flogging), and (3) **verberatio** (severe flogging, scourging).

The first could be on occasion a punishment in itself, but the more severe forms were part of the capital sentence as a prelude to crucifixion. The most severe, **verberatio**, is what is indicated here by the Greek verb translated flogged severely (*mastigoō*). People died on occasion while being flogged this way; frequently it was severe enough to rip a person's body open or cut muscle and sinew to the bone. It was carried out with a whip that had fragments of bone or pieces of metal bound into the tips.

Carl Schneider in Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT Volume 4, page 519) has the following note on Jesus' scourging:

The scourging of Jesus in Jn 19:1 and in the prophecies of the passion in Mt. 20:19 == Mk. 10:34 == Lk. 18:33 is not the synagogue punishment but the Roman [verberatio](#).

Mt. 27:26 = Mk. 15:15 have the Lat. loan word *φραγελλῶ* ([phragelloo](#)) instead of *μαστιγῶ* ([mastigoo](#)). Lk. 23:16 has the weaker *παιδεύσας* ([paideuo](#)) and says nothing about its execution (ED: THAT IS LUKE DOES NOT DESCRIBE THE CARRYING OUT OF THE SCOURGING). Here is one of the many instances of Luke's softening of the passion story. John seems to think in terms of a compromise between true *verberatio* and a separate whipping. The aim of Pilate is to awaken pity by the scourging. It seems as though he wants to impose only a scourging without crucifixion. (This would be a kind of examination, cf. 3. and Schl. J. on 19:1.)

According to Roman law the [verberatio](#) always accompanied a capital sentence, *condemnatio ad metalla*, and other degrading punishments with the loss of freedom or civil rights.¹⁷ In many cases it was itself fatal. It usually preceded crucifixion.¹⁸ It was so terrible that even Domitian was horrified by it.¹⁹ Women were exempted.²⁰ We know little about the details. The number of strokes was not prescribed. It continued until the flesh hung down in bloody shreds. Slaves administered it, and the condemned person was tied to a pillar.²¹

Dr William Edwards on scourging - Scourging Practices - Flogging was a legal preliminary to every Roman execution,²⁸ and only women and Roman senators or soldiers (except in cases of desertion) were exempt.¹¹ The usual instrument was a short whip (*flagellum* or *flagellum*) with several single or braided leather thongs of variable lengths, in which small iron balls or sharp pieces of sheep bones were tied at intervals (Fig 2).^{5,7,11} Occasionally, staves also were used.^{8,12} For scourging, the man was stripped of his clothing, and his hands were tied to an upright post (Fig 2).¹¹ The back, buttocks, and legs were flogged either by two soldiers (*lictors*) or by one who alternated positions.^{5,7,11,28} The severity of the scourging depended on the disposition of the *lictors* and was intended to weaken the victim to a state just short of collapse or death.⁸ After the scourging, the soldiers often taunted their victim. ¹¹

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. ⁸

Scourging of Jesus At the Praetorium, Jesus was severely whipped. (Although the severity of the scourging is not discussed in the four gospel accounts, it is implied in one of the epistles [1 Peter 2:24]. A detailed word study of the ancient Greek text for this verse indicates that the scourging of Jesus was particularly harsh.³³) It is not known whether the number of lashes was limited to 39, in accordance with Jewish law.⁵ The Roman soldiers, amused that this weakened man had claimed to be a king, began to mock him by placing a robe on his shoulders, a crown of thorns on his head, and a wooden staff as a scepter in his right hand.¹ Next, they spat on Jesus and struck him on the head with the wooden staff.¹ Moreover, when the soldiers tore the robe from Jesus' back, they probably reopened the scourging wounds.⁷ The severe scourging, with its intense pain and appreciable blood loss, most probably left Jesus in a preshock state. Moreover, *hematidrosis* had rendered his skin particularly tender. The physical and mental abuse meted out by the Jews and the Romans, as well as the lack of food, water, and sleep, also contributed to his generally weakened state. Therefore, even before the actual crucifixion, Jesus' physical condition was at least serious and possibly critical. ([Read the entire article](#))

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:1-3 - Just as they were gathered to say, "Ave Imperator" — "Hail emperor" —so imitating that word which they applied to Caesar. and applying it to Jesus in mockery. "King of the Jews," the utmost scorn was thrown into the last word, "of the Jews." There had been a general tradition that there should arise among the Jews a king who would subdue the nations, and the Romans jested at the very thought that they should be conquered by the leader of such a despised race as the Jews, and so they said,

“King of the Jews.”

John 19:1. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him. - This was one of the most terrible punishments to which a man could be sentenced. The Roman scourge was no trifle. It tore off the quivering flesh of the agonized sufferer for it was constructed on purpose to do so. It was generally made of the sinews of oxen, intertwined with the knuckle bones of sheep, and small slivers of bone. This torture our blessed Saviour endured. These are the stripes with which we are healed.

Scourged (3146) **mastigoo** from **mástix** = plague, whip, scourge) means literally to flog or scourge. The **scourge** was first a whip used as an instrument of punishment and then figuratively came to mean to punish severely or to drive as if by blows of a whip. It was the normal and legal preliminary to crucifixion. In the case of Jesus (Luke 23:22) it was inflicted before the sentence of crucifixion was pronounced. Pilate hoped to avert the extreme punishment and satisfy the Jews at the same time. The Jewish method of scourging, as described in the Mishnah, was by the use of 3 thongs of leather, the offender receiving 13 stripes on the bare breast and 13 on each shoulder (cf. the “forty stripes save one,” as administered to Paul 5 times [2 Corinthians 11:24]). **Gilbrant** - Classical Greek and **Septuagint** Usage - **Mastigoō**, “to whip, flog, or beat,” is generally associated with punishment or discipline in classical Greek but is also used to describe unjustifiable “torment” or “mistreatment.” The variation appears in references to Roman or Jewish authorities administering the punishment. It appears in the Septuagint usually to translate the Hebrew *nākhāh* meaning “to strike or smite.” Typically it is used in the sense of unwarranted beating (cf. Ex 5:14), but for certain transgressions of the Law it was justified (Deut 25:2). Occasionally it is also used as a general term for fighting (cf. 1 Ki 12:24). (The Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

MASTIGOO - 7V - Matt. 10:17; Matt. 20:19; Matt. 23:34; Mk. 10:34; Lk. 18:33; Jn. 19:1; Heb. 12:6

ISBE Article on scourging - SCOURGE; SCOURGING - skurj, skur'-jing (@mastix), mastigoo; in Acts 22:25 mastizo, in Mk 15:15 parallel Mt 27:26 phragelloo): A Roman implement for severe bodily punishment. Horace calls it horribile flagellum. It consisted of a handle, to which several cords or leather thongs were affixed, which were weighted with jagged pieces of bone or metal, to make the blow more painful and effective. It is comparable, in its horrid effects, only with the Russian knout. The victim was tied to a post (Acts 22:25) and the blows were applied to the back and loins, sometimes even, in the wanton cruelty of the executioner, to the face and the bowels. In the tense position of the body, the effect can easily be imagined. So hideous was the punishment that the victim usually fainted and not rarely died under it. Eusebius draws a horribly realistic picture of the torture of scourging (Historia Ecclesiastica, IV, 15). By its application secrets and confessions were wrung from the victim (Acts 22:24). It usually preceded capital punishment (Livy xxxiii.36). It was illegal to apply the flagellum to a Roman citizen (Acts 22:25), since the Porcian and Sempronian laws, 248 and 123 BC, although these laws were not rarely broken in the provinces (Tac. Hist. iv.27; Cic. Verr. v.6, 62; Josephus, BJ, II, xiv, 9). As among the Russians today, the number of blows was not usually fixed, the severity of the punishment depending entirely on the commanding officer. In the punishment of Jesus, we are reminded of the words of Ps 129:3. Among the Jews the punishment of flagellation was well known since the Egyptian days, as the monuments abundantly testify. The word "scourge" is used in Lev 19:20, but the American Standard Revised Version translates "punished," the original word *biqqoreth* expressing the idea of investigation. Dt 25:3 fixed the mode of a Jewish flogging and limits the number of blows to 40. Apparently the flogging was administered by a rod. The Syrians reintroduced true scourging into Jewish life, when Antiochus Epiphanes forced them by means of it to eat swine's flesh (2 Macc 6:30; 7:1). Later it was legalized by Jewish law and became customary (Mt 10:17; 23:34; Acts 22:19; 26:11), but the traditional limitation of the number of blows was still preserved. Says Paul in his "foolish boasting": "in stripes above measure," "of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one," distinguishing it from the "beatings with rods," thrice repeated (2 Cor 11:23-25).

The other Old Testament references (Job 5:21; 9:23; Isa 10:26; 28:15,18 shot; Josh 23:13 shotet) are figurative for "affliction." Notice the curious mixture of metaphors in the phrase "over-flowing scourge" (Isa 28:15-18). Henry E. Dosker

John 19:1-16 Life's Two Magnitudes

A great mathematician once said that he was not concerned about spiritual matters until he vividly saw life's "two magnitudes - the shortness of time and the vastness of eternity." When this truth came home to him, he became a devoted disciple of Jesus Christ.

If Pilate had considered these two realities, he would not have condemned Jesus to die on the cross. He knew that the Savior was innocent of the charged against Him. He even had an uneasy feeling that Jesus was not just an ordinary man. but his desire to keep his high government post was greater than his determination to do right. Actually, he obtained little earthly benefit from his decision. The church father Eusebius, quoting from Greek historians, said that Pilate fell out of favor with his superiors and committed suicide before A.D. 40 - less than 10 years after his fateful decree. Since we have no indication that he ever repented of his sin and trusted Christ as his personal Savior, we must assume he died in a lost and hopeless condition. He had not reckoned with the "shortness of time and the vastness of eternity."

The Humiliation of Jesus John 19:1–3 - Archie Edwards

This humiliation consisted of a number of debasing and abusive acts performed at the instigation of the priests and promptings of the people.

- I. The Scouring. "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him" (v. 1).
- II. The Crowning. "And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head" (v. 2).
- III. The Robing. "And they put on him a purple robe" (v. 2).
- IV. The Shouting. "Hail, King of the Jews!" (v. 3).

James Stalker - see full chapter on [The Crown of Thorns](#) **THE CROWN OF THORNS** Matt. 27:26–30; Mark 15:15–20; Luke 23:25; John 19:1–5.

Excerpt - Thorns were the sign of the curse; that is, of their banishment from God's presence and of all the sad and painful consequences following

David Huffstutler has an interesting article entitled [The Two Beatings of Jesus](#) - Each gospel records one instance in which Jesus was beaten just before His crucifixion, but it seems that a comparison of these accounts indicates that Jesus was beaten more than once. In trying to sort out the details, it is helpful to remember that a beating by the Romans could vary in intensity, and three Latin terms for their beatings show that one beating could be worse than the other.

First, a *fustigatio* was the least intense of these beatings for criminal but lesser offenses. Pilate's suggestion to "punish" (*paideuō*) Jesus (Luke 23:16, 22) and his having Jesus "flogged" (*mastigoō*) in John 19:1 both refer to this type of punishment. Second, a *flagellatio* was "a brutal flogging administered to criminals whose offences were more serious."¹ Third, *averberatio* was the worst of the beatings, a punishment given to those who had been sentenced to death. It was sometimes so severe that this beating itself could bring about death.

Along with noting the differences in these beatings, it is helpful to point out the *timing* of Jesus' beatings. John 19:1 records a beating of Jesus *before* His being sent for crucifixion in John 19:16. Matthew 27:26 and Mark 15:15 record a beating that took *at the time when* He was sentenced in those same, parallel verses.

Putting the above data together in chronological order, we see that Pilate first said he would "punish" (*paideuō*) Jesus (Luke 23:16, 22). Pilate then made good on this promise and "flogged" (*mastigoō*) Jesus in John 19:1. Finally, when this *fustigatio* did not bring about the pity and release for which Pilate hoped, Jesus was sentenced to death and suffered the dreaded *verberatio* when "scourged" (*phragelloō*) in Matthew 27:26 and Mark 15:15. Then He went to the cross.

Having been tried by the Jewish leadership throughout the night before and then having experienced a *fustigatio* and then *verberatio*, it is no surprise that Jesus was unable to carry the crossbeam for His own cross (Matt 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26) and that He died within six hours on the cross (Mark 15:25, 34, 37). The average time suffering on a cross was 36 hours.²

"Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:4–5).

Related Resource:

- Dr D. A. Carson's [SUMMARY OF THE POSSIBILITY OF TWO FLOGGINGS OF JESUS](#)

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

BARABBAS RELEASED

NOTE: Words in bold & yellow highlight unique to that Gospel

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 Jesus **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 BUT [SEE NOTE ON POSSIBILITY OF TWO FLOGGINGS](#)

Jn 19:1 Pilate then took Jesus and **scourged** Him

JESUS MOCKED BY SOLDIERS

Mt 27:27-30+ 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, "**Hail, King of the Jews!**" 30 They spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head.

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, "**Hail, King of the Jews!**" 19 They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him.

LUKE DOES NOT DESCRIBE SOLDIER'S MOCKING JESUS

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, "**Hail, King of the Jews!**" and to give Him slaps in the face.

			<p>John 19:4-15 (Unique to John) 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>
--	--	--	--

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>

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. Then, as the flogging continued, the lacerations would tear into the underlying skeletal muscles and produce quivering ribbons of bleeding flesh. Pain and blood loss generally set the stage for circulatory shock. The extent of blood loss may well have determined how long the victim would survive on the cross. ([Read the entire article](#))

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;

- **the soldiers:** John 19:5 Ps 22:6 Isa 49:7 Isa 53:3 Mt 27:27-31 Mk 15:17-20 Lu 23:11

Related Passages:

Luke 23:11+ (THIS IS THE SECOND CIVIL TRIAL WHERE HE WAS ALSO MOCKED) 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 (FOR THE THIRD CIVIL TRIAL, THE LAST PART DESCRIBED IN JOHN 19).

ROMAN SOLDIERS MOCKED THE KING OF KINGS

And the soldiers ([stratiotes](#)) twisted ([pleko](#)) together a crown ([stephanos](#)) of thorns ([akantha](#)) and put it on His head, and put a purple ([porphura](#) - color of royalty!) robe ([himation](#)) on Him - This is the third time Jesus was mocked during His 6 trials. (See [chart for summary of the 6 trials of Jesus](#))

- (1) Jesus was mocked by the Jews at the second religious trial held before Caiaphas (not described in John's Gospel) (see Mk 14:65+, Mt. 26:67+, Lk 22:63-65+)
- (2) The second mocking of Jesus was carried out by Herod's soldiers at the second civil trial and recorded only by Luke writing "Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with **contempt** and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate." (Luke 23:11+, cf Lk 23:8-12)
- (3) The third mocking here in Jn 19:2-3 (paralleled in Mt 27:27-30+ and Mk 15:16-19+)

[A T Robertson](#) agrees adding that "The Sanhedrin had previously mocked Jesus (Mark 14:65=Matt. 26:67=Luke 22:63ff.) as the soldiers will do later (Mark 15:16-19=Matt. 27:27-30). This later mock coronation (Mark and Matthew) was after the condemnation."

In a touch of divine irony it is notable that the **crown** ([stephanos](#)) is one which was given to those who had attained victory in an athletic contest. Jesus would soon complete His race as the Victor of victors on the old rugged cross, defeating sin, satan and death forever. Hallelujah! Amen! It is also ironic that the [stephanos](#) described a garland or a laurel wreath worn by the Roman Emperor! See more discussion of [Crown of thorns](#)

THOUGHT - It is ironic that part of the curse in Ge 3:18+ was the "thorns (Lxx = [akantha](#)) 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** ([huper](#)) us—for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"" Notice the preposition **FOR** ([huper](#)) which signifies in our behalf or in our place, clearly reflecting His [substitutionary atonement](#) for us! By becoming a curse in our place, He takes away the curse we should have experienced and one day (soon) will take away the curse from the earth (cf Ro 8:22+)!

Here are the parallel accounts of the Roman soldiers mocking Jesus....

Matthew 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, "**Hail, King of the Jews!**" 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.

Mark 15:17-20+ 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, "**Hail, King of the Jews!**" 19 They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him. 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.

Spurgeon Study Bible - "The soldiers also twisted together a crown of thorns, put it on his head, and clothed him in a purple robe." Mockery was blended with cruelty. They might have made him a crown, yet surely it need not have been one of thorns unless they intended to put him to the utmost torment they could conceive. By this crown of thorns our blessed Lord was crowned king of the curse, for the earth was cursed through Adam's sin. And part of the sentence pronounced by God in the garden of Eden was, "It will produce thorns and thistles for you." So Christ wore the mark of the curse that man's sin had brought upon the world.

William MacDonald suggests 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!" (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary page 1562](#))

NET NOTE - The **crown of thorns** was a crown plaited of some thorny material, intended as a mockery of Jesus' "kingship." Traditionally it has been regarded as an additional instrument of torture, but it seems more probable the purpose of the thorns was not necessarily to inflict more physical suffering but to imitate the spikes of the "**radiant corona**," a type of crown portrayed on ruler's heads on many coins of the period; the spikes on this type of crown represented rays of light pointing outward (the best contemporary illustration is the crown on the head of the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor). The **purple color of the robe** indicated royal status. This was further mockery of Jesus, along with the crown of thorns.

Crown Him with many crowns.

The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark! how the heav'nly anthem drowns
All music but its own!

Awake, my soul, and sing
Of Him who died for thee,
And hail Him as thy matchless King
Thro' all eternity.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:2. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

Mockery was blended with cruelty. They might have made him a crown, yet surely it need not have been one of thorns unless they intended to put him to the utmost torment that they could conceive. By this crown of thorns our blessed Lord was crowned King of the curse, for the earth was cursed through Adam's sin, and part of the sentence pronounced by God in the garden of Eden was, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." So Christ wore the mark of the curse which man's sin had brought upon the world.

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. 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. Marvin Vincent adds "It is the crown of victory in the games; of military valor; the marriage wreath, or the festal garland, woven of leaves or made of gold in imitation of leaves. Thus it is distinguished from the royal crown, which is *διὰ δόρυ*, of which diadem is a transcript. In Paul, *στέφανος* is always used of the conqueror's crown, not of the king's (1 Cor. 9:24–26; 2 Tim. 2:5)."

STEPHANOS - 18V - Matt. 27:29; Mk. 15:17; Jn. 19:2; Jn. 19:5; 1 Co. 9:25; Phil. 4:1; 1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10; Rev. 3:11; Rev. 4:4; Rev. 4:10; Rev. 6:2; Rev. 9:7; Rev. 12:1; Rev. 14:14

Thorns (173) **akantha** from **ake** = a point or edge) means thorn; by **synecdoche**, of prickly plants in neglected fields thornbush, prickly weed, thistle. Thorns are a common negative figure for something destructive or for bad fruit. The Greek word **akantha** gives us our English words **acantha** (cf **acanthous** = spinous) which is defined as a pointed, projecting structure, such as a thorn or prickle. In classical Greek **akantha** stands for the thornbush and then for all thorns, including any prickling or stinging needle associated with plants, animals, or fish. In a figurative sense it could refer to a "stinging" question. In the famous use in Genesis God curses the land because of Adam's sin declaring "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field." How interesting that the same word associated with the curse in Genesis 3 is associated with the One Who became a curse for us, wearing a crown of thorns! Jesus wore a "crown of **thorns**" for believers who will one day cast their own crowns to the King of kings! All attempts to define the botanical character of the thorns used for Christ's crown are guesses.

Purple (4209) **porphura** is strictly speaking the **purple mussel**, a type of shellfish found on the coasts of the Mediterranean which was the source of a reddish–purple dye highly valued in the ancient world and in the last of the last days (cf Rev 18:12). When this shellfish was crushed, it would give off yellow fluid which would turn to a purple or blue color based on the exposure to sunlight. If it was a cloudy day, it would turn purple. If it was a clear, sunny day, it would turn blue. Used in 4v - Jn. 19:2; Jn. 19:5; Rev. 17:4; Rev. 18:16

In the NT **porphura** is used of expensive garments made from cloth dyed purple. Twice used of the purple robe placed on Jesus to mock His royalty (Mk 15:17, 20), once for the rich man (Lk 16:19) and once for the ostentation in the last days, specifically describing the destruction of the great wealth of Babylon and the mourning and lamenting of the world's merchants over their loss! (Rev 18:11-12). Note that in Mt. 27:28, the same robe used to mock the King of kings was described as **scarlet** (*kokkinos* - also used in Rev 18:12) derived from a worm whose fluids were the sources of the scarlet dye. See how this ties in with the incredible statement of our Lord in Psalm 22:6 **"I Am a Worm!"**

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)

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.

- **Hail:** Mt 26:49 Mt 27:29 Lu 1:28
- **King:** John 19:19-22 18:33

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!”

THE MOCKING CONTINUES

And they began to come up (imperfect tense - again and again) **to Him and say, “Hail** ([chairō](#) - wish for well being - [present imperative](#)), **King** ([basileus](#)) **of the Jews** ([loudaios](#))!” **and to give** (imperfect tense - again and again give) **Him slaps** ([rhapisma](#)) **in the face** - The imperfect tense suggests that the soldiers were coming up to slap Jesus one after another. Literally "kept giving Him blows with their hands." **NRSV** = “They kept coming up to him, saying” Roman soldiers greeting Him with “**Hail, King of the Jews!**” mimics how they would have greeted the Roman emperor with “Ave, Caesar!” (“Hail to Caesar!”). [See above for the parallel accounts](#) of this incredible mocking of the true King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16+)! Note the irony of the verb “**Hail**” which is a command for the person to experience continual well-being! What hypocrites! And the irony that mouths He had formed were now being used to mock and disparage Him! O, the depth of the humility of Christ for us!

[Marvin Vincent](#) on **come up** (imperfect tense) - The imperfect denotes the successive acts of homage of the soldiers as they came up one after the other.

Spurgeon - Even as Isaiah had prophesied: “I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.” An old writer says, concerning this shameful spitting, “What couldest thou have found on earth more vile and loathsome in order to thy abasement than that man should spit on thee? and this, moreover, with such railing and insult, as though thou wert the pest of mankind, a blasphemer and an outcast unworthy of the merest decencies of life! What, Lord, was there in thee to be loathed? Why, then, do they thus contemn and spit upon thee? Oh, my God, it is my due, not thine! Truly do I, Lord, deserve to be spitted on by every creature, as a vile and harmful thing, a wretched sinner, unworthy to live; but thou, Infinite Mercy, dost promote me to honour, dost spare me, and, for my sake, dost yield up the majesty of thy person and thy divine countenance to be humbled by such loathsome affronts and insults!”

Spurgeon’s expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:3-4. And they smote him with their hands. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

That is the second time he said it. He had declared it before; in the 38th verse of the previous chapter we read, “I find in him no fault at all.” And now again, “That ye may know that I find no fault in him.” “Then came Jesus forth” — you can see him going down the steps out of Pilate’s hall into that same courtyard — “wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them” — “Ecce Homo” — “behold the man.” He does not call him king; he only gives him the title of man. As if to say, “How foolish are you to think there is any danger from him; look at him in all his suffering and shame.”

John 19:3. And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

This was the homage which the Son of God received from men; harmless and gentle, he came here with no purpose but that of doing good, and this is how mankind treated him.

Slaps ([4475](#))([rhapisma](#) from [rhapizo](#) - to strike with a rod, hence to strike with the palm of the hand) means a blow (with a stick or the palm of the hand). To give a blow with the open hand, especially on the face or ear slap, cuff (Jn 18:22; possibly Mk 14:65 and Jn 19:3). A strike with a club or stick blow, hit (possibly Mk 14:65 and Jn 19:3).

Only 3x in NT - Mk. 14:65; Jn. 18:22; Jn. 19:3 slaps(2), struck*(1).

Once in Lxx - Isaiah 50:6 a Messianic prophecy of Jesus' suffering = "I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard (Lxx = "my cheeks to blows"); I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting. "

THE FOUR EPISODES OF MOCKING THE KING OF KINGS		
TRIAL	REFERENCE	MOCKING/ABUSIVE ACTIONS
Second Religious Trial Before Caiaphas	Mt 26:57,67-68+ Lk 22:54, 63-65+	Spat in face, beat, slapped, told to prophesy who hit Him Beating, blindfolded and told to prophesy, blaspheming
Second Civil Trial Before Herod	Lk 23:8-12+	Treated with contempt Mocking Him Dressed in gorgeous robe
Third Civil Trial Before Pilate	Mt 27:27-31+ Mk 15:16-20+ Jn 19:1-3+	Stripped, put scarlet/purple robe Wove crown of thorns & put on His head Reed in right hand Beating head with reed Spitting on Him Kneeling and bowing down Acclaiming "Hail, King of the Jews" Slaps to face
On the Cross	Mt 27:39-44+ Mk 15:29-32+ Luke 23:35-37+ Lk 23:39+ Mt 27:49+	Hurling abuse, wagging their heads If you are the Son of God come down from the cross Religious leaders mocking and sneering - cannot save Himself King come down from the cross & we will believe He trusts in God, let God deliver Him Soldiers mocked Him "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!" Robbers casting same insult - Are you the Christ? Save Yourself and us "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him."

John 19:4 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."

- **that:** John 19:6 John 18:38 Mt 27:4,19,24,54 Lu 23:41,47 2Co 5:21 Heb 7:26 1Pe 1:19 1Pe 2:22 3:18 1Jn 3:5

PILATE'S VERDICT "NOT GUILTY!"

Pilate came out again (See [Pilate's movements](#)) and ***said to them**, "**Behold** ([ide](#)) , I am bringing Him out to you so that ([hina](#) = purpose) **you may know** ([ginosko](#)) **that I find** ([heurisko](#) - discover after searching) **no** ([oudeis](#) - absolutely no) **guilt** ([aitia](#)) **in Him** - **TEV** = "I cannot find any reason to condemn Him." **Bringing** Him out is the verb ago which means to lead as one leads sheep (in contrast to cattle which are driven). **Pilate** says he has no case against Jesus for he can find no fault in Him. Are we surprised? Of course not because Jesus was the sinless Son of God and was never guilty of any crime and was always completely without spot or blemish (1Pe 1:19+)

*Here stands Jesus
wearing the consequences of Adam's sin.*

Brian Bell - ECCE HOMO! = BEHOLD THE MAN! Jesus and Pilate had been talking about a kingdom so it was only right that he king have a crown Obviously this was done for mockery but it preached a message, for Jesus was wearing the consequences of Adam's sins. In Ge 3:17-19+ it describes the results of Adams fall...cursed ground, toil, thorns and thistles the ground will bring forth. Here stands Jesus wearing the consequences of Adam's sin. Yet don't forget, a crown is a sign of victory. He has overcome (Jn 16:33+)!

[A T Robertson](#) has an interesting comment writing that Pilate's "exclamatory introduction of Jesus (**Behold**) in mock coronation robes to the mob was clearly intended to excite pity and to show how absurd the charge of the Sanhedrin was that such a pitiable figure should be guilty of treason. Pilate failed utterly in this effort and did not dream that he was calling attention to the greatest figure of history, the Man of the ages.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:4-5. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!

Was there ever such a sight of majesty in misery before or since? Yet he needed not to endure all that ignominy, he was no vanquished monarch unable to maintain his own rights. He was still "over all, God blessed for ever," and he could have smitten everyone there to death if he had pleased to do so. But he was the Lamb of God's passover, so he meekly suffered.

Guilt (156) **aitia** from **aiteo** = to ask or require because an accusation is that for which one is required to appear before a judge to be questioned) in Classical Greek was used to mean cause or reason (the reason or cause for an event or state Acts 28:20, Acts 19:40, Heb 5:9), but the most common nuance in the Greek was charge or accusation. The guilt or fault of the one accused is implied.

Friberg - (1) cause, reason, grounds (Mt 19:3); as the grounds in a particular situation case (Mt 19:10); (2) as a legal technical term (formal) charge, ground for accusation (Acts 23:28); (BORROW [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

BDAG has (1) that which is responsible for a condition = *cause, reason* (2) the actual state of affairs, case, circumstance, relationship (Latinism=*causa*) (3) a basis for legal action, legal technical term meaning a charge or a ground for complaint (Acts 23:28 = find a basis for a charge; Jn 18:38; 19:4, 6 = Pilate states that he has no 'case'. Ac 13:28; Acts 28:18 = reason/grounds for capital punishment . The charge specified Mt 27:37; Mk 15:26) or an accusation (Acts 25:18). (BORROW [A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament](#))

AITIA - 20V - charge(1), charge against(2), charges(2), ground(2), guilt(3), reason(9), relationship(1). Mt 19:3; Matt. 19:10; Matt. 27:37; Mk. 15:26; Lk. 8:47; Jn. 18:38; Jn. 19:4; Jn. 19:6; Acts 10:21; Acts 13:28; Acts 22:24; Acts 23:28; Acts 25:18; Acts 25:27; Acts 28:18; Acts 28:20; 2 Tim. 1:6; 2 Tim. 1:12; Tit. 1:13; Heb. 2:11

PILATE'S MOVEMENTS DURING 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 details of this 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'. (BORROW [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).

John 19:5 Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate *said to them, "Behold, the Man!"

- Behold: John 1:29 Isa 7:14 40:9 43:1 La 1:12 Heb 12:2

Related Passages:

Zechariah 6:12 ("Then say to him, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, '**Behold, a man** whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the LORD.



Jesus then came out (of the [Praetorium](#)), wearing the a crown ([stephanos](#)) of thorns ([akantha](#)) and the purple ([porphura](#)) robe ([himation](#)). Pilate *said to them, “**Behold, the Man!**” - Latin "Ecce homo!" probably conveys the idea "Look at this poor fellow." Does He look like someone who is a threat to Rome or to anyone else? Jesus' beaten condition would be Pilate's attempt to show that the Jewish charge of sedition was ludicrous. There is irony in Pilate's words for this **Man** was in fact the perfect representation of all mankind!

NET NOTE - Look, here is the man! Pilate may have meant no more than something like “Here is the accused!” or in a contemptuous way, “Here is your king!” Others have taken Pilate’s statement as intended to evoke pity from Jesus’ accusers: “Look at this poor fellow!” (Jesus would certainly not have looked very impressive after the scourging). For the author, however, Pilate’s words constituted an unconscious allusion to Zech 6:12, “Look, here is the man whose name is the Branch.” In this case Pilate (unknowingly and ironically) presented Jesus to the nation under a messianic title.

Spurgeon - A spectacle which ought to have broken their hearts (THE JEWS), and melted them to pity. Can we look on our suffering Lord and not love him? If so, we are as base as they.

Robert E Speer - “Behold the man!” was Pilate’s jeer. That is what all the ages have been doing since, and the vision has grown more and more glorious. As they have looked, the crown of thorns has become a crown of golden radiance, and the cast-off robe has glistened like the garments He wore on the night of the transfiguration. Martyrs have smiled in the flames at that vision. Sinners have turned at it to a new life. Little children have seen it, and have had awakened by it dim recollections of their Heaven-home. Toward it the souls of men yearn ever.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:5-6. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

That is the third time. It was well that he who had the principal hand in the slaughter of the Lamb of God should make his report that he was “a Lamb without blemish and without spot”; and, therefore, fit to be presented in sacrifice before God. For the third time he doth acquit him. The Jews answered him, “We have a law” — it may not be your law — “and by our law he ought to die because he made himself the son of God.” This is a reviving of the charge of blasphemy which they had brought against him in the palace of the high priest.

John 19:6-7. When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him. We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

They no doubt understood that he claimed to be divine, and so he did. I have heard some say that he was a good man, but not God. If he was not God, he was certainly not a good man, for no good man, who was only a man, would claim to be God, or lead others to believe that he was divine. If he was not actually divine, he was a rank impostor; but he was divine, and therefore we worship and adore him equally with the Father and the Spirit.

J R Miller - BEHOLD THE MAN - Pilate showed pitiful weakness at every step in his dealing with Jesus. He knew there was no sin in Him, and yet he brought Him out to the people and surrendered Him to them. "Behold the Man!" Our eyes should be fixed upon Jesus as He stands there in the presence of the multitude. On His head—is the crown of thorns, and around His torn and bleeding body—is a purple robe, mock emblems of royalty. Behold the Man! Behold the Man enduring shame and contempt, set forth as a spectacle of mockery, that He might be presented at last in glory, and honored before angels and the Father. Behold the Man, reviled—yet reviling not again; hated—but still loving on; cruelly wronged—but speaking no resentful word. Behold the Man, the God-Man, wearing

humanity, the Son of God humbling Himself and becoming obedient unto shame and death—that He might save our souls! Behold the Man, holy, sinless, undefiled, separate from sinners—yet bearing upon His own head as the Lamb of God, the sin of the world.

ARISE, MY SOUL, ARISE - Charles Wesley

First published in 1742 under the title, “**Behold the Man**,” this became one of the most useful of Charles Wesley’s numerous hymns. In universal use in English countries, and translated into many languages, it has been the direct instrumentality in the conversion of thousands of souls. It has found expression in the exultant cry on the lips of many a dying saint. “I have a record,” said a Wesleyan missionary laboring in the West Indies, “of two hundred persons, young and old, who received the most direct evidence of the forgiveness of their sins while singing ‘Arise, my soul.’ The conversion of the greater number of these persons took place while I was a missionary abroad.”

Arise, my soul, arise

Arise, my soul, arise,
shake off thy guilty fears.
The bleeding Sacrifice
in my behalf appears.
Before the throne my Surety stands,
before the throne my Surety stands;
my name is written on His hands.

Arise (arise), arise (arise), arise
Arise, my soul, arise
Arise (arise), arise (arise), arise
Arise, my soul, arise
Shake off your guilty fears and rise

He ever lives above,
for me to intercede;
His all-redeeming love,
His precious blood to plead,
His blood atoned for all our race,
His blood atoned for all our race,
and sprinkles now the throne of grace.

Five bleeding wounds He bears,
received on Calvary;
they pour effectual prayers,
they strongly plead for me.
"Forgive him, O, forgive," they cry,
"Forgive him, O, forgive," they cry,
"Nor let that ransomed sinner die!"

The Father hears Him pray,
His dear Anointed One;
He cannot turn away
the presence of His Son.
His Spirit answers to the blood,
His Spirit answers to the blood,
and tells me I am born of God.

My God is reconciled,
His pard'ning voice I hear;
He owns me for a child,
I can no longer fear.
With confidence I now draw nigh,
with confidence I now draw nigh,
and, "Father, Abba, Father," cry.

James Smith - BEHOLD THE MAN! John 19:5

1. The God-sent Man. John 3:16.
2. The Sinless Man. "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?"
3. The Sympathetic Man. "Wept over Jerusalem."
4. The Silent Man. "Answered him (Pilate) nothing."
5. The Suffering Man. John 19 5.
6. The Saving Man. "Came to seek and to save" (Acts 15:11).

C H Spurgeon - "Behold the man!" —John 19:5 Morning and Evening

If there be one place where our Lord Jesus most fully becomes the joy and comfort of his people, it is where he plunged deepest into the depths of woe. Come hither, gracious souls, and behold the man in the garden of Gethsemane; behold his heart so brimming with love that he cannot hold it in—so full of sorrow that it must find a vent. Behold the bloody sweat as it distils from every pore of his body, and falls upon the ground. Behold the man as they drive the nails into his hands and feet. Look up, repenting sinners, and see the sorrowful image of your suffering Lord. Mark him, as the ruby drops stand on the thorn-crown, and adorn with priceless gems the diadem of the King of Misery. Behold the man when all his bones are out of joint, and he is poured out like water and brought into the dust of death; God hath forsaken him, and hell compasseth him about. Behold and see, was there ever sorrow like unto his sorrow that is done unto him? All ye that pass by draw near and look upon this spectacle of grief, unique, unparalleled, a wonder to men and angels, a prodigy unmatched. Behold the Emperor of Woe who had no equal or rival in his agonies! Gaze upon him, ye mourners, for if there be not consolation in a crucified Christ there is no joy in earth or heaven. If in the ransom price of his blood there be not hope, ye harps of heaven, there is no joy in you, and the right hand of God shall know no pleasures for evermore. We have only to sit more continually at the cross foot to be less troubled with our doubts and woes. We have but to see his sorrows, and our sorrows we shall be ashamed to mention. We have but to gaze into his wounds and heal our own. If we would live aright it must be by the contemplation of his death; if we would rise to dignity, it must be by considering his humiliation and his sorrow.

"Behold the Lamb with glory crowned!

To Him all pow'r be given;

No place too high for Him is found—

No place too high in heaven.

He fills the throne—the throne above,

He fills it without wrong;

The object of His Father's love,

Theme of the ransomed's song.

To Him whom men despise and slight,

To Him be glory given;

The crown is His, and His by right

The highest place in heaven.

—T. Kelly.

James Stalker - BEHOLD THE MAN - Painters have chosen this moment, when Jesus came forth, bleeding from the cruel stripes and wearing the purple robe and crown of thorns, as the one in which to portray the Man of Sorrows; and many a priceless canvas bears the title **Ecce Homo**. From Pilate's lips there fell two words which the world will never forget—the question, "What is truth?" and this exclamation, "Behold the Man!" And the one may be taken as the answer to the other. When the question, "What is truth?" is put with deep earnestness, what does it mean but this?—Who will make God known to us? who will clear up the mystery of existence? who will reveal to man his own destiny? And to these questions is there any answer but this: "Behold the Man"? He has shown to the sons of men what they ought to be; His is the perfect life, after which every human life ought to be fashioned; He has opened the gates of immortality and revealed the secrets of the other world. And, what is far more important, He has not only shown us what our life here and hereafter ought to be, but how the ideal may be realised. He is not only the image of perfection but the Saviour from sin. Therefore ought the world to turn to Him and "behold the Man."

John Bennett - The Man - [Day by Day - Divine Titles](#)

In our text, Pilate is bearing witness to the humanity of the Lord Jesus. His deity had been asserted a short time earlier when He said, 'I AM'. He never ceased to be God. When He became a man, He became what He had never been before, without ceasing to be what He ever was.

Pilate presented to the nation a Man. His name was Jesus, the Nazarene. The writer of the Hebrews used the name Jesus repeatedly. This use of His human name is consistent with the stated qualification for priesthood, 'every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God', Heb. 5:1. Pilate rightly referred to Him as the Man.

The Hebrew writer presented a Man who, after the order of Melchizedek, would be King and Priest. In that treatise, the name Jesus is used alone first in chapter 2 verse 9, 'But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels ... that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man'. His manhood was necessary if He were to procure deliverance and provide propitiation. The name Jesus is used alone again, 'Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Jesus, who is faithful to him that constituted him, as Moses also in all his house', Heb. 3:1–2, JND. His humanity was a prerequisite to apostleship and priesthood. We see that because of the things He suffered, He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, Heb. 4:15. Later, we read concerning the Christian's hope that it is sure and steadfast and 'which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec', Heb. 6:19–20. He has secured a place. As a man He has become the guarantee of the new and better covenant, Heb. 7:22. In Him, we have 'boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus', Heb. 10:19. In Him, we have a pattern as 'Jesus the author and finisher of our faith', Heb. 12:2. He is 'Jesus the mediator of the new covenant', Heb. 12:24. Finally, we read that 'Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate', Heb. 13:12.

What a Man!

Robert Neighbour - BEHOLD THE MAN

Behold the Man! All love was He;
All filled with perfect good,
And yet assigned to Calvary.

Behold the Man! No word He spake;
Despised, misunderstood,
He suffered for the people's sake.

Behold the Man! In meekness, yet
All clothed with blest Godhood,
He died alone by foes beset.

Behold the Man! Now lifted high,
But not on cross of wood:
Now, with the Father in the sky.

Behold the Man! He comes again,
The One the world withstood,
As King of kings comes down to reign.

"**Ecce Homo**" is a famous painting ([see above](#)). It pictures Christ with His crown of thorns. We can see Him now bowed down with shame and spitting; with the blood falling from His thorn-pressed brow. We see Him with His back all bruised as He passes from the Roman whippingpost. We see Him fainting beneath His cross. Yet, above all of these we see Him hanging on the cross. The thieves and malefactors were hanging near by; the maddened mob cried out against Him. Mary, His mother, His disciples, and acquaintances were standing near. All of these groups add a strange, yet meaningful environment to that scene.

Behold the Man as the darkness gathered round the cross, and hung low over all the land! It was night in the clear day.

Behold the Man as He died! Having commended His soul unto God, He gave one loud cry, and yielded up His spirit. With that shout came the finished work of Calvary, and the accomplishment of full salvation.

On the cross of Calvary He died for me,
On the cross of Calvary He set me free;
To His cross I'm clinging,
Of His grace I'm singing,
Oh, the cross, the wondrous cross of Calvary!

James Smith - Behold the Man! John 19:5

They scourge Him, crown Him with thorns, clothe Him with an old purple robe, smite Him with their fists — and now Pilate brings Him forth, saying, "Behold the Man!"

In His whole life He was holy, harmless, undefiled, full of mercy, and went about doing good. Yet, because He condemned sin, and required submission to God's righteousness — He was hated, persecuted, and murdered!

Let us behold this Man! He exercised all the virtues which could adorn humanity. See His meekness, gentleness, patience, faith, fortitude, pity, and perfect love to God and man. O lovely character! O perfect pattern of holiness!

Behold — and adore Him heartily.
Behold — and trust in Him implicitly.
My soul, behold the man!

See . . .
His grief-stricken countenance,
His battered frame,
His breaking heart,
His bleeding brow;
He is enduring all this for you!

Behold Him, and . . .
do not doubt His love,
nor question His veracity,
nor fear your foes,
nor dread your heavenly Father's wrath!

Behold Him, as . . .
the proof of God's love to you,
the confirmation of all the promises made to you,
the pledge of all the blessings set before you.

Behold Him — and sympathize with Him; look on the pierced One, and "mourn for Him."

Behold Him — and give yourself afresh unto Him!

Behold Him — and crucify your flesh with its passions and lusts.

Behold Him — until a deep impression is made upon your heart, and the love of sin departs!

Behold Him — if tempted to murmur, or complain, or repine at any of the dispensations of Divine Providence.

Behold Him — when Satan or the world allures you to sin, or would draw you away from your God.

Behold Him — when death stares you in the face, and the grave is ready for you.

"Behold the Man!"

Behold — and love Him more!
Behold — and imitate Him more!
Behold — and serve Him more!

May the Man of Sorrows be daily before my eye!

And may I also behold Him — coming in power and great glory! What a contrast will there be, between His first and second coming:
His cross — and His throne;
His crown of thorns — and His crown of glory;
as He appeared before Pilate and the Jewish rabble — and as surrounded with all the armies of heaven, and all His saints with Him!
"Behold the Man!"

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded - Presbyterian pastor and professor James W. Alexander was a Virginian whose career alternated between teaching at Princeton University and pastoring in New Jersey and New York. His most lasting claim to fame, however, was in translating from Latin into English some of the medieval hymns of Bernard of Clairvaux, most notably "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded." St. Bernard (1091–1153) had written seven passion hymns, each addressed to one of the wounded parts of the Lord's

crucified body (feet, knees, hands, side, chest, heart, and head). This is Professor Alexander's 1830 translation of Bernard's hymn addressed to Christ's wounded head.

O sacred Head, now wounded.

With grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, Thine only crown:
How pale Thou art with anguish,
With sore abuse and scorn!
How does that visage languish,
Which once was bright as morn!

What language shall I borrow
To thank Thee, dearest Friend,
For this, Thy dying sorrow,
Thy pity without end?
O make me Thine forever,
And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never
Outlive my love for Thee

Robert Hawker —John 19:5.

My soul! thou art engaged in solemn subjects at this season, both night and morning; and here is one as solemn as any: thy Jesus coming forth in his coronation robes! Yes! For he, and he alone, is the prince of sufferers, as the prince of his people. Many of his dear children have been beset with thorns; and to many, indeed to all more or less, the Lord hedgeth up their way with thorns. But none but the ever-blessed Jesus was crowned with thorns. Now, my soul, ponder well the solemn subject. And oh! that God the Holy Ghost may open all the glories of it to thy view. And, first, look at thy Jesus, crowned with thorns. None but the Lord Jesus could properly wear this crown; because the curse pronounced by God at the fall, of thorns being brought forth to the man, could belong to none but him, the God-man Christ Jesus. This curse contained an abridgment of all the curses in the Bible; and which never fell upon any but the person of Christ, so as to crown him as having suffered all. He was first made sin, and then a curse for his redeemed. Now the three grand branches of this curse were never fulfilled in any but in Christ: as, first, a separation from God; secondly, a state of unequalled sorrow, subject to all the frailties of nature, in pain and misery; and thirdly, death: in dying he died; intimating thereby the very death, as comprehensive of all in one. All men in death are exposed to a cold and clammy sweat; but it was reserved to the Lord Jesus, in his death, to sweat a bloody sweat. My soul! do thou thus look at him, in his purple robe, and crown of thorns, who is here represented to thy view, and never, never forget, that in all this, he was, and is thy surety; the Lord thy righteousness! But there is another point to be regarded in this solemn scripture, which demands thy close attention; and let this form a second delightful consideration for thy evening's comforts. When Jesus thus came forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe, as the translation represents the passage, it is Pilate who saith, "Behold the man!" But this is a mistake, and a sad mistake indeed; for it is not Pilate that speaks, but Christ. The word Pilate, if you well observe, is printed in Italics, as not found in the original; and much to be lamented it is, that it should ever have been there. The Lord Jesus Christ had been all along pointed out in the Old Testament scripture as "the man," the very man, that should be a "man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" who should give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off his hair, and that would not hide his face from shame and spitting. When, therefore, Pilate brought the Lord Jesus to the view of his people, in direct and full testimony as answerable to those characters, Jesus saith unto them, "Behold the man!" He had before, under the spirit of prophecy, cried out, "Behold me! behold me!" (Isaiah 65:1;) and now, as if to show the wonderful and complete agreement of scripture prophecy with his sacred person, he saith, "Behold the man!" Oh! how blessed is it to receive this testimony from Jesus's own mouth! Oh! how refreshing to the soul, to perceive Christ's gracious attention, in such a moment of trial, to the security and comfort of his people! And what a blessed strengthening to the faith of his redeemed, to behold all the persons of the Godhead calling upon the Church to the same contemplation! "Behold" (saith God the Father) "my servant whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth!" (Isaiah 42:1.) "Behold" (saith God the Holy Ghost) "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29.) "Behold the man!" saith Christ himself, as in this most blessed scripture. Lord Jesus! give me to behold thee, with an eye of faith, and so to gaze, with holy joy and wonder, love and praise, upon thy glories, until my ravished soul shall go forth in longing desires after thee, and thus daily behold thee, until faith be swallowed up in sight, and hope be lost in absolute fruition!

John 19:6 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."

- **the chief priests:** John 19:15 Mt 27:22 Mk 15:12-15 Lu 22:21-23 Ac 2:23 3:13-15 7:52 Ac 13:27-29
- **Take:** John 18:31 Mt 27:24

JEWISH LEADERS CRY OUT TO CRUCIFY AN INNOCENT MAN

So when the chief priests ([archiereus](#)) and the officers ([huperetes](#)) saw Him, they cried out ([kraugazo](#)) saying, “**Crucify, crucify!**” ([stauroo](#) in [aorist imperative](#) = Do it now! Do not hesitate!) Seeing Jesus bloodied, beaten body only fueled their lust for His blood. Pilate's attempts to assuage the vitriol of the Jewish leaders had no effect for they had determined to settle for nothing less than Jesus' life blood. In the great irony of redemption, it would be His very life blood which would pay for the sin of the world, His death opening the door of eternal life to countless sinners otherwise dead in their trespasses and sins and headed for eternal hellfire. The Jews wanted Jesus crucified so He would fulfill the words in Dt 21:23+ that “he who is hanged is **accursed of God**”. Paul writes what they meant for evil God used for good for “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” (Gal 3:13+).

Cried out ([kraugazo](#)) was used by Luke to describe the shrieking of demons (Lk 4:41+). These Satanically inspired Jewish leaders (in fact Satan was their father! Jn 8:44+) were shouting (like the demons), demanding with loud voices the blood of Jesus. Earlier John used this same verb ([kraugazo](#)) to describe their shouts to Pilate to release Barabbas instead of Jesus!

THOUGHT - It is notable that it was the zealous religious men who led the charge to murder Christ. Indeed, over the centuries it has often been those in church leadership who have persecuted true believers. So don't be surprised if you are attacked by others in the church! I was once “put on trial” before 8 deacons and the pastor, because he had heard a rumor I was preparing to start my own church. It was false and ridiculous because I was a full time pathologist practicing up to 60 hours a week (and I had not plans to retire and start a church).

[Marvin Vincent](#) adds an interesting note that the verb cried out ([kraugazo](#)) describes “Peculiarly of a loud, importunate cry; a shout. Plato uses it of the howling of a dog: “The yelping hound, howling ([κραυγάζουσα](#)) at her lord” (“Republic,” 607). Others, of the cries of spectators in the theatres and of the croak of a raven.” (**Comment** - What a picture of these Jews, like a band of wild dogs yelping and howling for Jesus' blood!)

Pilate ***said** (historical present) **to them**, “**Take** ([aorist imperative](#) = Do it now!) **Him yourselves and crucify** ([stauroo](#) in [aorist imperative](#) = Do it now!) **Him, for I find** ([heurisko](#) - discover after searching) **no** (ou - absolutely no) **guilt** ([aitia](#)) **in Him.**” - See comment on Jn 18:31 where Pilate gives the same command “**Take** Him yourselves.” But there he had said “**...and judge Him**” but now he adds “**...and crucify Him.**” Pilate vainly tries to wash his hands of Jesus' blood by telling the Jews Jesus had **no guilt**. His words fell on deaf ears, because their necks were stiff and their hearts were uncircumcised (Acts 7:51+) and their faces fixed like flint to take His life. It is notable that this is the third time Pilate has rendered a not guilty verdict (Jn 18:38; Jn 19:4).

[A T Robertson](#) observes that here Pilate “surrenders in a fret to the mob and gives as his reason ([gar](#) = for ED: a term of explanation) for his surrender the innocence of Jesus (the strangest judicial decision ever rendered).”

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 statesman and orator Cicero (106–43 B.C.) called it “a cruel and disgusting penalty”; Josephus (J. W. 7.6.4 [7.203]) called it the worst of deaths.

NET NOTE - How are Pilate's words “You take him and crucify him” to be understood? Was he offering a serious alternative to the priests who wanted Jesus crucified? Was he offering them an exception to the statement in 18:31 that the Jewish authorities did not have the power to carry out a death penalty? Although a few scholars have suggested that the situation was at this point so far out of Pilate's control that he really was telling the high priests they could go ahead and crucify a man he had found to be innocent, this seems unlikely. It is far more likely that Pilate's statement should be understood as one of frustration and perhaps sarcasm. This seems to be supported by the context, for the Jewish authorities make no attempt at this point to seize Jesus and crucify him. Rather they continue to pester Pilate to order the crucifixion.

Cried out (shouted)(2905) [kraugazo](#) from [krauge](#) - outcry from [krazo](#) = clamor or cry = a word like “croak” ~ suggests a rough and guttural sound = croaking of ravens = croak or cry out with a loud, raucous voice like donkey in Job 6:5, childbirth Is 26:17, war cry in Josh 6:16) means to cry out loud, to clamor, yell loudly, to shout with intensity, to make an outcry, in some contexts to scream or howl (one especially thinks of the demons screaming, croaking and howling! What a scene!) Term was used of a dog's barking, a raven's squawking and even a drunk's bawling.

Kraugazo describes the cry of the demons (Lk 4:41), the cry of Jesus for Lazarus to “come forth” (Jn 11:43 - in utter irony for Jesus' cry to give life to Lazarus results in cries for His life!), as Jesus entered Jerusalem on Psalm Sunday the crowds cried out

"Hosanna" (Jn 12:13), the Jewish mob crying to Pilate to release Barabbas (Jn 18:40, 19:12), and finally the Jewish mob escalating their cry to "Crucify! Crucify!" (Jn 19:6). Notice all of these are emotion filled, tense moments.

KRAUGAZO - 10v - cried(5), cry(1), crying(2), shout(1), shouting(1). Matt. 12:19; Lk. 4:41; Lk. 18:39; Jn. 11:43; Jn. 12:13; Jn. 18:40; Jn. 19:6; Jn. 19:12; Jn. 19:15; Acts 22:23

Crucify (4717) **stauroō** 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). To *impale* on the cross; figurative to *extinguish* (*subdue*) passion or selfishness. In Galatians Paul uses **stauroō** in a metaphorical sense to refer to crucifixion of the flesh (as a result of the literal crucifixion) "Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (Gal 5:24+)

STAUROO - 46X/42V - crucified(29), crucifixion(1), crucify(16). Matt. 20:19; Matt. 23:34; Matt. 26:2; Matt. 27:22; Matt. 27:23; Matt. 27:26; Matt. 27:31; Matt. 27:35; Matt. 27:38; Matt. 28:5; Mk. 15:13; Mk. 15:14; Mk. 15:15; Mk. 15:20; Mk. 15:24; Mk. 15:25; Mk. 15:27; Mk. 16:6; Lk. 23:21; Lk. 23:23; Lk. 23:33; Lk. 24:7; Lk. 24:20; Jn. 19:6; Jn. 19:10; Jn. 19:15; Jn. 19:16; Jn. 19:18; Jn. 19:20; Jn. 19:23; Jn. 19:41; Acts 2:36; Acts 4:10; 1 Co. 1:13; 1 Co. 1:23; 1 Co. 2:2; 1 Co. 2:8; 2 Co. 13:4; Gal. 3:1; Gal. 5:24; Gal. 6:14; Rev. 11:8.

In the Septuagint only in Esther 7:9 and Esther 8:12.

Classical Greek and Septuagint Usage - Stauroō is a common verb in Greek literature. The noun form stauros (4567) was used to denote a "cross" as an instrument of torture or crucifixion, and the verb form stauroō was used to mean "to crucify," (ca. Second Century B.C.). In the Septuagint the noun is found once (Esther 7:9) where it refers to a pale (stake) on which an individual was impaled. That was a common means of torture and execution in the Persian Empire. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

New Testament Usage - In the New Testament the verb is used in both literally and figuratively. Matthew 20:19 employs the term literally to mean "to crucify on a cross" or "to put to death on a cross." The verb's occurrence in the other Gospels is translated in the same way. In Galatians 5:24 and 6:14 Paul employed stauroō as a picture of his high standard of personal holiness: "My desire for the things of the world has been crucified," or "The power of such has been destroyed, put to death" (author's translations). In 6:14 Paul made an appeal to those who would futilely try to "glory" in the Law, to embrace "the cross of . . . Christ," as he had done (verse 14), and to glory in the victory of the Cross by means of which the power of the world has been destroyed. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

See the 14 page [NIDNTT article on the Cross and Crucify beginning on page 390](#). - **Excerpt** - σταυρός G5089 (stauros), stake, cross; σταυρώω G5090 (stauroō), hang upon a cross, crucify; νασταυρώω G416 (anastauroō), crucify; συσταυρώω G5365 (systauroō), crucify with; κρεμάννυμι G3203 (kremannymi), hang.

Friberg says this metaphorical sense of **stauroō** in Gal 5:24 speaks of "of a believer's renouncing his old sinful way of living to be united to his Lord - crucify, put to death, i.e. be done with. (BORROW [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

BDAG says that in Gal 5:24 **stauroō** means "to destroy through connection with the crucifixion of Christ, crucify, a transcendent sense (and in Gal 6:14 refers to) the believer who is inseparably united to the Lord has died on the cross to the kind of life that belongs to this world (BORROW [A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament, and other early Christian literature](#))

Related Resource:

- [What is the history of crucifixion?](#)

David Black says "The [historical present](#) describes a past event as though it were actually taking place: λέγουσιν αὐτὴν περὶ αὐτοῦ, they spoke to him about her (Mark 1:30). Here the present is a pictorial tense, displaying the action vividly before our eyes. In English we often use the historical present when recounting personal experiences ("then he says to me"). (BORROW [It's Still Greek to Me page 106](#))

Historical presents in John 18-19 - Jn 18:3 - came; Jn 18:4 - said; Jn 18:17 - said; Jn 18:26 - said; Jn 18:29 - said; Jn 18:38 - said; Jn 19:4 said; Jn 19:5 - said, Jn 19:6 - said; Jn 19:9 - said; Jn 19:10 - said; Jn 19:14 - said; Jn 19:15 - said; Jn 19:26 - said; Jn 19:27 - said.

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!" (Mark 15:13, Jn 19:6).

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.

John 19:7 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."

- **We have:** Lev 24:16 De 18:20
- **because:** John 5:18 Jn 8:58-59 Jn 10:30-33,36-38 Mt 26:63-66 27:42,43 Mk 14:61-64 Mk 15:39 Ro 1:4

Related Passages:

Leviticus 24:16+ 'Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

Deuteronomy 18:20+ 'But the prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.'

**JEWS STATE JESUS' CRIME
WAS BLASPHEMY**

The Jews ([Ioudaios](#) - Jewish leaders) **answered him**, “**We have a law, and by that law He ought**([opheilo](#)) **to die because He made** ([poieo](#)) **Himself out to be the Son of God** - The point is that “Whatever *your* decision may be, we have a law!” They had failed to convince Pilate that Jesus was a threat to Rome so now they move into their area of expertise, religion! The Jewish leaders state the reason for their desire to crucify Jesus, a desire that has been festering in their corrupt, evil hearts for 3 years (cf Jn 5:18+).

Spurgeon Study Bible - “ ‘**We have a law,**’ the Jews replied to him, ‘and according to that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.’ ” They no doubt understood that he claimed to be divine and so he did. I have heard some say that Jesus was a good man but not God. If he was not God, he was certainly not a good man; for no good man, who was only a man, would claim to be God or lead others to believe he was divine. If he was not actually divine, he was a rank impostor.

Spurgeon - They first charged him with a civil, and then with an ecclesiastical offence. They cared not how they compassed his death so that they could be rid of him.

The Son of God - The Jews are alluding to Jesus' declarations of divinity as when He called Himself “I Am” (the Name of God) in Jn 8:58-59 and declared He was One with God in Jn 10:30-33.

The Jewish leaders had condemned Jesus for blasphemy (Mt 26:65+) at the second religious trial before Caiaphas (see Summary of Trials below - Mk 14:61-64, Mt 27:57-68, Lk 22:54, 63-65). Jesus was guilty of making Himself out to be the Son of God (Jn 5:18; Jn 8:53–59; Jn 10:33), but it was not a crime because He was the Son of God! Once again we see the sovereignty of God orchestrating every detail of this drama for normally the charge of blasphemy would have been punishable by stoning (Lev. 24:16+) but God ordained that Jesus would not die by stoning but by crucifixion.

Son of God - 43x in NT, most in the Gospels- Matt. 4:3; Matt. 4:6; Matt. 8:29; Matt. 26:63; Matt. 27:40; Matt. 27:43; Matt. 27:54; Mk. 1:1; Mk. 3:11; Mk. 15:39; Lk. 1:35; Lk. 3:38; Lk. 4:3; Lk. 4:9; Lk. 4:41; Lk. 22:70; Jn. 1:34; Jn. 1:49; Jn. 3:18; Jn. 5:25; Jn. 10:36; Jn. 11:4; Jn. 11:27; Jn. 19:7; Jn. 20:31; Acts 8:37; Acts 9:20; Rom. 1:4; 2 Co. 1:19; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 4:13; Heb. 4:14; Heb. 6:6; Heb. 7:3; Heb. 10:29; 1 Jn. 3:8; 1 Jn. 4:15; 1 Jn. 5:5; 1 Jn. 5:10; 1 Jn. 5:12; 1 Jn. 5:13; 1 Jn. 5:20; Rev. 2:18

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:7-8. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid:

It shows he was afraid all along — the coward — the vacillating coward — and now a fresh superstition seizes upon him. He believed, as a Roman in gods many. “What?” said he to himself. “What if, after all, I should have been torturing a divine Being, a God who has come among men in their likeness?”

A DEADLY DECISION, YET PART OF GOD'S PLAN The Jews insisted, “We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God”. JOHN 19:7

Pontius Pilate's otherwise obscure career will forever be remembered because of a decision he made: He condemned the Son of God to death.

Yet his deadly decision fulfilled God's will. As Jesus told him, “You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above” (John 19:11).

Martin Luther reflects on the purpose of God as revealed in the crucifixion of his Son.

WALK WITH MARTIN LUTHER

“The greatest wonder on earth is that the Son of God should die the shameful death of the cross.

“It is astonishing that the Father should say to his only Son, who by nature is God: ‘Go, let them hang you on the gallows.’

“The love of the everlasting Father was immeasurably greater toward his only begotten Son than the love of Abraham toward Isaac.

“Yet the Son was cast away like a worm, a scorn of men, an outcast of the people.

“At this the understanding of man stumbles, saying, ‘How does he deal so unmercifully with him? He showed himself more kind to Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate, than toward his only Son.’

“But to true Christians it is the greatest comfort; for we recognize that the merciful Father so loved the world, that he spared not his only begotten Son, but gave him up for us all, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

WALK CLOSER TO GOD

From the perspective of earth, Pilate condemned an innocent man to death. From the perspective of heaven, “God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son” (John 3:16).

In spite of the worst that human beings could do, God still brought forth the best. His loving purposes could not be undone. Divine love is like that—never failing, always pursuing, always prevailing. And think of it—you're part of his plan!
(SEE [NIV, Once-A-Day: Walk with Jesus: 365 Days in the New Testament](#))

SUMMARY OF THE SIX TRIALS OF JESUS

THE SIX MOCK TRIALS OF THE MESSIAH				
JESUS' THREE RELIGIOUS TRIALS				
	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
Before Annas (Nighttime)				Jn 18:12-14,19-24
Before Caiphias (Nighttime)	Mt 26:57-68	Mk 14:53-65	Lk 22:54, 63-65	-
Before Sanhedrin (Daytime)	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

John 19:8 Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid;

- **heard:** John 19:13 Acts 14:11-19
- James Stalker's classic [Trial and Arrest of Jesus Christ - 8. THE SHIPWRECK OF PILATE](#) Matt. 27:24, 25; Mark 15:15; Luke 23:25; John 19:5–16.

JEWISH DECLARATION STOKES PILATE'S FEARS

Therefore when Pilate heard this statement ([logos](#)), he was even more afraid ([phobeo](#)) - What statement by the Jews arrested Pilate's attention and stoked fears that he had already been wrestling with? Their words that Jesus had claimed to be the Son of God stirred his already fomenting fears. Recall that in Mt 27:19+ his wife had a divine encounter, Matthew recording "While he (PILATE) was sitting on the judgment seat ([bema](#)), 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'**" Pilate was a pagan and as such was aware that the so-called "gods" of the Greek and Roman pantheon were said (mythology) to visit humanity in human form. Perhaps this Jesus was such a "divine" visitation. Of course, He was such divine visitation, but not a false god but the true God, the Son of God just as He claimed to be!

Merrill Tenney adds "In pagan mythology the Olympian deities frequently consorted with men and women, and their semi-divine offspring, such as Hercules, had appeared on the earth and performed miraculous deeds. Hardened as he was, Pilate feared lest he should offend one of these visitors. His further questioning of Jesus was an attempt to ascertain who Jesus was. If Jesus really was a supernatural being, Pilate did not wish to be responsible for mistreating him. Divine judgment would certainly be the inevitable

consequence." (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Abridged Edition](#))

Godet on more afraid - "These words of the Jews produced an effect on Pilate for which they were not prepared. The saying gives strength to a dreadful presentiment which was gradually forming within him. All that he had heard related of the miracles of Jesus, the mysterious character of His person, of His words and of His conduct, the strange message which he had just received from his wife—all is suddenly explained by the term "Son of God." Was this extraordinary man truly a divine being who had appeared on the earth? The truth naturally presents itself to his mind in the form of pagan superstitions and mythological legends"

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:8-10. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

Pilate talks like some great one, yet how contemptibly little he was, vacillating, cowardly, unable to do what he knew was right. His poor Victim who stood before him was infinitely greater in character than he was.

Afraid (5399) **phobeo** from **phobos** = fear source of our English "phobia") means to be in an apprehensive state that can range from mild uneasiness to stark terror as when one is frightened, terrified or alarmed. (Mt 10:31). **Phobeo** can be a fear of man (Lk 20:19, Mt 2:22, Mt 21:26, 46) as when Peter feared "the party of the circumcision" (Gal 2:12) which motivated him "to withdraw and hold himself aloof." Pilate experienced fear when he was about to sentence Jesus to death (Jn 19:8). Fear of people kept religious leaders from laying hands on Jesus (Luke 20:19) On the other hand Moses did not fear man (pharaoh - Heb 11:27) Believers were afraid of Paul after his Damascus Road experience, not realizing he had been born again (Lk 9:26).

Wayne Detzler on the root word **phobos** - In ancient Greek the word phobos came from the word **phebomai** meaning to flee, or to be startled. Thus phobos meant flight or terror, and was connected with fear of the unknown, fear of the future, and fear of authorities. It also took on the meaning of fear or reverence for God. This was particularly true in the teaching of Aristotle. (New Testament Words in Today's Language)

John 19:9 and he entered into the Praetorium again and *said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer.

- **Where are You from?**: John 8:14 9:29,30 Judges 13:6
- **But**: Ps 38:13-15 Isa 53:7 Mt 27:12-14 Mk 15:3-5 Ac 8:32,33 Php 1:28

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:12-14+ And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He did not answer. 13 Then Pilate *said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" 14 And He did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so the governor was quite amazed.

Mark 15:3-5+ The chief priests began to accuse Him harshly. 4 Then Pilate questioned Him again, saying, "Do You not answer? See how many charges they bring against You!" 5 But Jesus made no further answer; so Pilate was amazed.

1 Peter 2:22-23+ WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;

PILATE SEEKS TO KNOW JESUS' ORIGIN

And he entered into the Praetorium again (see [Pilate's movements](#)) **and *said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer** - Pilate is panicking with the thought that Jesus might be visitation by a pagan god ([see note above](#)) and so seeks to know **where** He was **from**. But just as before Caiaphas Jesus remained silent (Mk 14:61+; Mt. 26:63+, cf silent before Herod Lk 23:6-11+ = "he answered him nothing").

It is interesting that Jesus was frequently questioned about where He was from (cf John 7:27–28; John 8:14; John 9:29–30)

Jesus' silence is interpreted as a fulfillment of Isaiah 53:7+ "He was oppressed and He was afflicted (HE HAS CERTAINLY BEEN AFFLICTED BY THE SCOURGING), **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**." Here we see another passage from Isaiah 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 (and they continue to miss it to this day). (See [Is the "The Suffering Servant" prophecy in Isaiah 53 about Jesus?](#))

THOUGHT - There is a Biblical principle here: God does not reveal new truth to us if we fail to act upon the truth that we already know. Christians do not grow spiritually if they don't apply the Scriptures in their lives. (Rod Mattoon)

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:9-10. And went again, into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. The, saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I hate power to crucify thee, And have power to release thee?

And he trembled with fear, "and went again into the judgment, hall," taking his prisoner with him — you can see the two sitting there alone — "and saith unto Jesus, 'Whence art thou? Tell me now, what is thy character, thine origin, thy rank? 'But Jesus gave him no answer." Pilate's day of grace was over; he had had his opportunity, but that was now ended; there was no answer. It is a very solemn thing when God gives no answer to a man; when a man turns to Scripture, but there is no answer; when he goes to hear the voice, but there is no voice from the oracle for him; when he even bows the knee in prayer, but gets no answer. The silence of the Christ of God is very terrible. "Then saith Pilate unto him," with all the pride of a Roman in his face, "Speakest thou not unto me Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and power to release thee?"

Praetorium (governor's palace)([4232](#)) [praitorion](#) 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. The praetorium has long been identified with the Antonia Fortress on the northwest corner of the Temple Mount; this large fortress allowed immediate access to the temple in order to suppress any disturbance.

Wikipedia on [praetorium](#) - The [Latin](#) term *praetorium* — or *praetorium* or *pretorium* — originally signified a general's tent within a Roman [castra](#), [castellum](#), or encampment. It derived from the name of one of the chief [Roman magistrates](#), the [praetor](#). *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](#).

Zodhiates on **praetorium** - Originally the general's tent in a camp, the house or palace of a governor of a province. Any large house, palace. In the NT a governor's house, palace. Spoken of:

(I) 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 (béma [968]) 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.

(II) The palace of Herod at Caesarea Maritime, perhaps in like manner the residence of the procurator (Acts 23:35).

(III) The praetorian camp at Rome, meaning the camp or quarters of the praetorian cohorts (Phil. 1:13). These were a body of select troops instituted by Augustus to guard him and to have charge of the city. (BORROW [The complete word study dictionary : New Testament page 1206](#))

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?"

- **know:** John 18:39 Da 3:14,15 5:19

JESUS' SILENCE WAS LIKE "CONTEMPT OF COURT"

So - Presumably Pilate took Jesus' silent treatment as an affront to his authority, so he seeks to educate Jesus on his authority.

Pilate *said to Him, "You do not speak to me? - NET "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate is irritated and like an irritated judge sees this as Jesus' "contempt of court" (so to speak) Jesus' failure to show deference to Pilate insulted his pride.

Do You not know (eido) that I have authority (exousia) to release (apoluo - to set free or pardon) You, and I have authority (exousia) to crucify You - Of course Jesus knew beyond a shadow of a doubt (the meaning of [eido](#)). Pilate asserts he has **authority**, the power of decision making regarding Jesus' fate, but he has just relinquished his **authority** to the Jewish mob.

Authority (1849) **exousia** from **éxesti** = it is permitted, it is lawful) means the power to do something and was a technical term used in the law courts, of a legal right. "**Authority** or right is the dominant meaning (of exousia) in the New Testament." (Vincent) **Exousia** refers to delegated **authority** and combines the idea of the "right and the might", these attributes having been granted to someone. Pilate's delegated authority was from Rome.

EXOUSIA IN GOSPEL OF JOHN - Jn. 1:12; Jn. 5:27; Jn. 10:18; Jn. 17:2; Jn. 19:10; Jn. 19:11

John 19:11 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."

- **You would have no authority over Me:** John 3:27 7:30 Ge 45:7,8 Ex 9:14-16 1Ch 29:11 Ps 39:9 62:11 Jer 27:5-8 La 3:37 Da 4:17,25,32,35 5:21 Mt 6:13 Lu 22:53 Ac 2:23 4:28 Ro 11:36 Ro 13:1 Jas 1:17
- **he:** John 11:49,50 18:3 Mt 26:65 27:2 Mk 14:44
- **the greater:** John 9:41 15:22-24 Lu 7:41,42 10:11-14 12:47,48 Heb 6:4-8 Jas 4:17

Related Passages:

John 18:24, 28 So Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.....28 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.

JESUS IMPLIES PILATE IS AN INSTRUMENT FOR GOD'S PURPOSES

Jesus answered, "You would have no authority (exousia) over Me, unless it had been given you from above - Paul echoed Jesus' words that "there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God." (Ro 13:1) Pilate's authority was Rome, but ultimately from God. In a sense Pilate was an instrument of the sovereign God in this divine drama of redemption, but of course that did not clear him of human responsibility for his judicial decisions. **From above** means from God or from Heaven.

For this reason ("this is why") **he** (masculine singular) **who delivered (paradidomi) Me to you has the greater sin** - Note the implication of the phrase **greater sin** clearly indicates there was lesser sin with the implication that Pilate himself was guilty of some degree of sin. **He** and **delivered** are both masculine singular so most writers feel this reference is to the high priest Caiaphas who because of hatred and malice handed Jesus over to Pilate. Caiaphas was the "leader of the pack" but of course the entire pack of the Sanhedrin and Jewish leaders would get their fair share of the **greater sin**!

Spurgeon on has the greater sin - It was the best he could say for Pilate, that though his sin was great yet there was a greater.

J C Ryle - That the possession of superior knowledge increases the sinfulness of a sinner's sin, seems taught by implication in this verse. It was more sinful in the Jews, with all their knowledge of the law and the prophets, to deliver up Christ to be crucified, than it was in Pilate, an ignorant heathen, to condemn Him and put Him to death.....This was the last word that Jesus spoke during His trial. Henceforth He was "like a lamb before his shearers, dumb."

A T Robertson points out that "Caiaphas has his authority from God also and has used Pilate for his own base end."

NET NOTE on **he who delivered Me** - **The one who handed me over to you** appears to be a reference to Judas at first; yet Judas

did not deliver Jesus up to Pilate, but to the Jewish authorities. The singular may be a reference to **Caiaphas**, who as high priest was representative of all the Jewish authorities, or it may be a generic singular referring to all the Jewish authorities directly. In either case the end result is more or less the same. Greek “**has the greater sin**” (an idiom). Because Pilate had no authority over Jesus except what had been given to him from God, the one who handed Jesus over to Pilate was guilty of **greater sin**. This does not absolve Pilate of guilt; it simply means his guilt was less than those who handed Jesus over to him, because he was not acting against Jesus out of deliberate hatred or calculated malice, like the Jewish religious authorities. These were thereby guilty of **greater sin**.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:11. Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Christ referred to Judas, and through him to the Jews who had conspired to put him to death; but what tenderness it was, on the part of Jesus, to make an excuse as it were even for Pilate! He was notable for making excuses for the guilty. That was a remarkable excuse that he pleaded for his murderers, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” There was never another such a tender heart as his; he was so gentle and so kind that all their cruelty only moved him to pity them, and pray for them.

Delivered (betray, commit, entrust, hand over) ([3860](#)) **paradidomi** from **para** = alongside, beside, to the side of, over to + **didomi** = to give) conveys the basic meaning of to give over from one's hand to someone or something, especially to give one over to the power of another. **Paradidomi** is used in legal parlance to describe handing someone into the custody of the police, authorities, etc. To deliver up one to custody, to be judged, condemned, punished, scourged, tormented, put to death.

PARADIDOMI IN JOHN - Jn. 6:64; Jn. 6:71; Jn. 12:4; Jn. 13:2; Jn. 13:11; Jn. 13:21; Jn. 18:2; Jn. 18:5; Jn. 18:30; Jn. 18:35; Jn. 18:36; Jn. 19:11; Jn. 19:16; Jn. 19:30; Jn. 21:20;

QUESTION - [What did Jesus mean when He referred to the greater sin?](#)

ANSWER - In John 19, we find Jesus before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea. In verse 10, Pilate boasted about his authority to release or crucify Jesus, prompting Jesus to say, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given to you from above. Therefore, he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin” (John 19:11, ESV).

The expression *from above* is a reference to God. In other words, Jesus tells Pilate that he would have no authority over Him unless it had been granted to Pilate by God the Father. Such a statement, then, emphasizes the divine origin of human authority: “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God” (Romans 13:1, ESV). Jesus subjected Himself to Pilate's authority, not because Pilate was superior to Him, but because He was obedient to the Father's will (John 6:38). It is within this context that Jesus mentions a “greater sin.”

Jesus' statement to Pilate that “he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin” (John 19:11, ESV) probably alludes to Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest who coordinated the arrest and subsequent trial of Jesus. In both John 18:24 and John 18:28, Caiaphas, in conjunction with other religious authorities, delivered Jesus into Pilate's custody.

Now, let us turn our attention to the meaning of *greater sin* (John 19:11), a phrase that raises questions about the nature of sin, divine sovereignty, and human responsibility.

First, we must acknowledge that the Bible distinguishes between [varying degrees of sin](#). References to lesser sins or greater sins can be found in Old Testament passages such as Leviticus 4:2, Numbers 15:30, and Ezekiel 8:6. Jesus spoke of “more important matters of the law” (Matthew 23:23) and taught lesser and greater punishments for different offenses (Luke 12:47–48).

Second, *lesser sins* implies that all sins are not equal in severity. Some sins, due to their nature or consequences, bear greater moral weight. In this regard, Jesus' statement to Pilate is a powerful theological assertion, conveying the compatibility of divine sovereignty in orchestrating the arrest and trial of Jesus, while also holding Caiaphas and Pilate morally responsible for their evil deeds (cf. Acts 2:23). Nonetheless, Caiaphas is guilty of the greater sin since he is the one who, from a human viewpoint, initiated the chain of events.

God, the supreme judge of the world, evaluates sin with an eye that extends beyond external human actions. Indeed, the all-knowing God sees into the “thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12, ESV). Pilate had a case brought to him to judge—a case he did not want to take (Luke 23:7; John 18:31). Pilate sinned in failing to execute justice, and an innocent Man was killed as a result. But the one who handed Jesus over to Pilate for trial was “guilty of a greater sin” because that man had plotted to murder Jesus (Mark 14:55) and freely and deliberately [suppressed the truth](#) in unrighteousness (see Romans 1:18).

As high priest, Caiaphas possessed thorough knowledge of the Law and the Prophets. Despite his knowledge, he actively conspired to have Jesus crucified, denying the very Scriptures that testified about Christ (John 5:39). For this reason, Caiaphas is guilty of a greater sin than Pilate, having willfully suppressed the truth about the One of whom the Old Testament prophesied. (See also [What is the greatest sin?](#))

Horatius Bonar - THE GREATER SIN—JOHN 19:11.

THESE words are directed against the Jews, though spoken to Pilate. They are a declaration of the great guilt of the Jewish nation and its rulers, in asking Pilate to exercise his God-given authority against the Son of God. Pilate has not yet committed the sin of condemning Christ; he was urged to it; he hesitated; he shrunk from it; and our Lord here utters the words of warning, to deter him from the consummation of his great crime. "Not the Roman emperor, but my Father; not the people, but my Father, gave you this power, and set you in that place where you have now to judge me, His Son; and these, His enemies and mine, are now asking you to exercise this power given you from above against me, the Son of God, who came from above." As when speaking to Simon (Luke 7:44) he turned to the woman, so here, when speaking to Pilate, he turned to the Jews.

The sin here spoken of is not so much Pilate's as Israel's. He did what he did "ignorantly and in unbelief"; they knew, he knew not; he thought he was only exercising his lawful power in the usual way, as a Roman governor. Israel knew the Scriptures concerning Messiah; Pilate did not; and the "greater sin" was committed by men who, with the Scriptures in their hand, called on him who had not these Scriptures to condemn their own Messiah.

This power of Pilate was acknowledged by the Jews, by Judas, by Annas, by Caiaphas. They appealed to him as one who had the power to "crucify" and to "release." Hence their sin, their special sin; their "greater sin,"—greater than in any ordinary case, greater than that of Pilate. It was "greater sin," because they knew what they did; and because they were making use of the God-given power of another, as well as taking advantage of his ignorance, to perpetrate a crime, which, in its lowest aspect, was the condemnation of the innocent, in its highest, the condemnation of their own Messiah, the Son of the living God.

Pilate's power was "from above," (1) as governor. There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God; the source of earthly power is heavenly; not in man or from man, but from the King of kings, the Prince of the kings of the earth. The recognition of this lies at the root of all true politics. Earthly crowns and thrones and sceptres are thus linked with that one heavenly crown and throne and sceptre. Kings and magistrates are, by reason of their office, responsible to God. Not personally, as other men merely; but officially, as rulers, they are directly responsible. It is just because of their office that they are so peculiarly accountable, and so solemnly bound to do everything to the glory of God. It is just because of their office, and not merely as other men, that they are bound to consecrate everything which their office gives them power over to the service of Him from whom they have received their power. (2.) As a Gentile governor. The Jews had, for their sins, been given over to Gentile dominion, till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled. So that in a double sense Pilate's power was not his own, nor from Rome, nor from the people. In a double sense it came from God, and was therefore to be specially used for God. He might not know all this; but Israel knew it; for their prophets, Daniel especially, had taught them this; and therefore they had the "greater sin." That God's purpose embraced something more than this, and had reference to the crucifixion of Messiah, is true; but that the appeal here made by our Lord to Pilate, though having special reference to Himself, is founded on a broader and more general truth seems evident.

(1.) Even a bad man's power is from God. Our Lord affirms this of Pilate; and of Pilate when using that power for the perpetration of the greatest crime ever committed in our world. Let no one therefore point to the crimes of kings, or the sins of magistrates, and say, Can the power of these men be given them from above? Look at Pilate. Listen to our Lord's words; or hear Paul when, in the days of Nero, he said (referring to the words of our Lord), "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers" (οὐσιας ἡγεμονίαις, authorities holding from above); and when he proclaims civil government to be "the ordinance of God"; nay, when he calls the monarch or magistrate "the minister of God."

(2.) His using his God-given power for a bad purpose is allowed of God. He is free to act; but he is responsible to God for his actings. God overrules his wickedness, and employs him as His instrument for carrying out His purposes. He ought to use his power for a good purpose; not for condemning the Son of God, but for honouring Him; and when he abuses his authority, he is doubly guilty; though that guilt is made use of by God for the development of His own purposes, as in the death of His own Son at the hands of Pilate. That the power which Pilate used was conferred by God only, made his act, as well as that of the Jews, the more criminal. What a reckoning is at hand with the kings of earth, for the abuse of their power! (See Psalm 82.)

(3.) God makes him His instrument. He is free. He might use his power for a good purpose; yet even when he uses it for a bad one, he is overruled of God. It is God's "determinate counsel" that comes out here (Acts 2:23). Like Pharaoh working out Israel's deliverance, so is Pilate here working out the Church's deliverance, according to the purpose of God.

The following truths come out here,—

- (1.) The thing which Pilate was preparing to do would have been sin in any circumstances; even if his power was not given from above. It was the condemnation of an innocent man. It was might trampling on right.
- (2.) It was greater sin, because the power was from above. It was abusing, for unrighteousness, the power received from the God of righteousness.
- (3.) It was still greater sin to use this God-given power to crucify the Son of God. The moment man gets into power, he uses it against God and against his Christ.
- (4.) It was yet greater sin in Israel to deliver up their own Messiah to be crucified by him who had this power. It was as much as calling on God to crucify his own Son. It was daring sin, committed with their eyes open. Pilate's sin was great; Israel's was greater far. Pilate, beware of thy sin, for it is great; Israel, beware of thy sin, for it is far greater. Thus He warns both at once; and bids them beware of the sin of crucifying the Lord of glory.

Streams in the Desert - "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." (John 19:11.)

NOTHING that is not God's will can come into the life of one who trusts and obeys God. This fact is enough to make our life one of ceaseless thanksgiving and joy. For "God's will is the one hopeful, glad, and glorious thing in the world"; and it is working in the omnipotence for us all the time, with nothing to prevent it if we are surrendered and believing.

One who was passing through deep waters of affliction wrote to a friend: "Is it not a glorious thing to know that, no difference how unjust a thing may be, or how absolutely it may seem to be from Satan, by the time it reaches us it is God's will for us, and will work for good to us? For all things work together for good to us who love God. And even of the betrayal, Christ said, "The cup which my Father gave me, shall I not drink it?" We live charmed lives if we are living in the center of God's will. All the attacks that Satan, through others' sin, can hurl against us are not only powerless to harm us, but are turned into blessings on the way.—H. W. S.

In the center of the circle
Of the Will of God I stand:
There can come no second causes,
All must come from His dear hand.
All is well! for 'tis my Father
Who my life hath planned.

Shall I pass through waves of sorrow?
Then I know it will be best;
Though I cannot tell the reason,
I can trust, and so am blest.
God is Love, and God is faithful,
So in perfect Peace I rest.

With the shade and with the sunshine,
With the joy and with the pain,
Lord, I trust Thee! both are needed,
Each Thy wayward child to train,
Earthly loss, did we but know it,
Often means our heavenly gain.

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."

- from: Mk 6:16-26 Ac 24:24-27
- thou art: John 18:33-36 Lu 23:2-5 Ac 17:6,7

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:19 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."

THE POLITICAL CARD

As a result of this Pilate (imperfect tense - repeatedly) **made efforts to release** ([apoluo](#)) **Him** (see [Pilate's movements](#)) Pilate seems to have a sense of justice or conscience after Jesus' words about authority and greater sin. And so he is motivated to make attempts to release Jesus.

Henry Morris (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.

but - This is a strong contrast between Pilate's attempts to release Jesus and the resistance of the Jews.

The Jews cried out saying, "If you release ([apoluo](#)) **this Man, you are no friend of Caesar** ([kaisar](#)) **; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar** ([kaisar](#)) - Their contempt of Jesus is palpable here calling Him **this Man** and not by His given name. These Jewish serpents are wise and now play their trump card which is Pilate's fear of the wrath of Caesar. Clearly this was a threat and Pilate knew if he released Jesus, the Jews would report this to Rome.

Spurgeon - Now they come back to the old charge. When men hate Jesus and his religion they will say anything; a wicked tongue is never short of arguments.

Marvin Vincent on **friend of Caesar** - A title conferred, since the time of Augustus, upon provincial governors. Probably, however, not used by the Jews in this technical sense, but merely as a way of saying "Thou art not true to the emperor."

Merrill Tenney points out that "The phrase **"a friend of Caesar"** was more than a casual allusion to Roman patriotism. It usually denoted a supporter or associate of the emperor, a member of the important inner circle. The cry was a veiled threat: if Pilate exonerated Jesus, the high priest would report to Rome that Pilate had refused to bring a rival pretender to justice and was perhaps plotting to establish a new political alliance of his own. Tiberias, the reigning emperor, was notoriously bitter and suspicious of rivals. If such a report were sent to him, he would instantly end Pilate's political career and probably his life, too." (SEE [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Abridged Edition](#))

If we are strictly honest today, we must confess that most of us have no king but Caesar.

We have sold out to the god of this age

Vance Havner - That was the finishing blow. Pilate sought to release Jesus, but the Jews cried, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar" (John 19:12). It was Caesar or Christ, and Pilate chose Caesar. Today that Rome has passed, and Caesar has passed, but Christ remains "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." If we are strictly honest today, we must confess that most of us have no king but Caesar. We have sold out to the god of this age. Modern America is repeating the story of decadent Rome. We have gone wild over the same things.... We are a befuddled generation, sick of old conditions and unable to create better; too ignorant to explain life, too shallow to endure it, too bitter to enjoy it, too weak to overcome it. We are not transformed but conformed to this world, slaves of its fashions, disciples of its philosophies, devotees of its pleasures. Wrapped in ourselves, we make small packages. Our eyes are glued to stocks and bonds, clothes and cars, and all the tinsel trappings of life's mad masquerade. Today we face the same alternatives that confronted Pontius Pilate. Shall we crown the cynic and try to find our way through the wilderness of life by the feeble candle of reason? Shall we take the way of the criminal, the way of the beast, instead of the best? Shall we crown Caesar and crucify the Christ? Shall we crown or crucify Jesus? He is the answer to cynicism, because He is the truth. He is the answer to criminality, because when we put on the Lord Jesus Christ we do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. He is the answer to Caesar, because in Him we become citizens of heaven. Let us crown Him now in our hearts that one day we may have part in the final coronation, when the nations will lay their tributes at His feet and crown Him Lord of all!

NET NOTE - Is the author using the phrase Friend of Caesar in a technical sense, as a title bestowed on people for loyal service to the Emperor, or in a more general sense merely describing a person as loyal to the Emperor? L. Morris (John [NICNT], 798) thinks it is "unlikely" that the title is used in the technical sense, and J. H. Bernard (St. John [ICC], 2:621) argues that the technical sense of the phrase as an official title was not used before the time of Vespasian (A.D. 69–79). But there appears to be significant evidence for much earlier usage. Some of this is given in BDAG 498–99 s.v. *Καίσαρ*. E. Bammel ("*φίλος τοῦ καίσαρος* (John 19:12)," TLZ 77 [1952]: 205–10) listed significant and convincing arguments that the official title was indeed in use at the time. Granting that the title was in use during this period, what is the likelihood that it had been bestowed on Pilate? Pilate was of the equestrian order, that is, of lower nobility as opposed to senatorial rank. As such he would have been eligible to receive such an honor. It also appears that the powerful Sejanus was his patron in Rome, and Sejanus held considerable influence with Tiberius. Tacitus (Annals 6.8) quotes Marcus Terentius in his defense before the Senate as saying that close friendship with Sejanus "was in every case a powerful recommendation to the Emperor's friendship." Thus it is possible that Pilate held this honor. Therefore it appears that the Jewish authorities were putting a good deal of psychological pressure on Pilate to convict Jesus. They had, in effect, finally specified the charge against Jesus as

treason: "Everyone who makes himself to be king opposes Caesar." If Pilate now failed to convict Jesus the Jewish authorities could complain to Rome that Pilate had released a traitor. This possibility carried more weight with Pilate than might at first be evident: (1) Pilate's record as governor was not entirely above reproach; (2) Tiberius, who lived away from Rome as a virtual recluse on the island of Capri, was known for his suspicious nature, especially toward rivals or those who posed a political threat; and (3) worst of all, Pilate's patron in Rome, Sejanus, had recently come under suspicion of plotting to seize the imperial succession for himself. Sejanus was deposed in October of A.D. 31. It may have been to Sejanus that Pilate owed his appointment in Judea. Pilate was now in a very delicate position. The Jewish authorities may have known something of this and deliberately used it as leverage against him. Whether or not they knew just how potent their veiled threat was, it had the desired effect. Pilate went directly to the judgment seat to pronounce his judgment.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:12. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

One of the Herods had put upon his coins the name, "Caesar's friend." and so they quoted the title which one of their kings had taken, and they tell Pilate that he will not be the friend of Tiberius. Here was a sore point with Pilate; he knew that just then Tiberius was gloomy and morose, too ready to catch anything against his servants; and the man by whose influence Pilate had come into power had just then lost all influence at court. So he was afraid it would be his disgrace and discharge as governor if the Jews brought a charge against him to Tiberius. Therefore he trembled.

John 19:12-14. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that crying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

What mockery there was in Pilate's use of this title, and yet how true it was! They asked to have Christ put to death, yet he was their King. Their accusation was transparently false, and Pilate made them see that it was so.

John 19:12. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

One of the Herods had put upon his coins the name, "Caesar's friend." and so they quoted the title which one of their kings had taken, and they tell Pilate that he will not be the friend of Tiberius. Here was a sore point with Pilate; he knew that just then Tiberius was gloomy and morose, too ready to catch anything against his servants; and the man by whose influence Pilate had come into power had just then lost all influence at court. So he was afraid it would be his disgrace and discharge as governor if the Jews brought a charge against him to Tiberius. Therefore he trembled.

John 19:13 Therefore 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.

- heard: John 19:8 Pr 29:25 Isa 51:12,13 57:11 Lu 12:5 Ac 4:19
- and sat: Ps 58:1,2 82:5-7 94:20,21 Ec 5:8 Am 4:7



The Judgment on the Gabbatha by James Tissot, c. 1890

THE INDICTMENT OF JESUS

Therefore when Pilate heard these words - What **words** sealed the deal for the Jews? The threat of reporting Pilate to Caesar!

He brought Jesus out (see [Pilate's movements](#)), **and sat down on the judgment seat** ([bema](#)) **at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha** - **The Pavement** (lithostrotos - lithos = stone + strotos = to spread) is used only here and means paved with stones, a [tesselated](#) pavement or mosaic.

NET NOTE - The precise location of the place called **'The Stone Pavement'** is still uncertain, although a paved court on the lower level of the Fortress Antonia has been suggested. It is not certain whether it was laid prior to A.D. 135, however. **"in Hebrew."**The author does not say that **Gabbatha** is the Aramaic (or Hebrew) translation for the Greek term Λιθόστρωτον (Lithostrōton). He simply points out that in Aramaic (or Hebrew) the place had another name. A number of meanings have been suggested, but the most likely appears to mean "elevated place." It is possible that this was a term used by the common people for the judgment seat itself, which always stood on a raised platform.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:13. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

The usual form of the Roman judgment-place, in the open air, with a stone pavement, and a raised throne.



Bema Seat Ruins in Corinth

Judgment seat ([968](#)) **bema** from **bainō**, "to step, ascend"; see also [Wikipedia](#)) (see also [Judgment by the Saints](#)) (see [picture of ancient bema](#)). in its most common NT use refers to a raised platform on which an official is seated when rendering judgment on certain legal cases or athletic events. The **judgment seat** (βῆμα, bēma) was a raised platform mounted by steps and usually furnished with a seat. It was used by officials in addressing an assembly or making official pronouncements, often of a judicial nature. It is a platform before which someone would walk up to receive judgment; (figuratively) the administration of justice, given from "a tribunal-chair" (throne) at which there is a meting out rewards and punishments. Pilate sat on a judgment seat (bēma) in Christ's trial (Mt 27:19; Jn 19:13). Gallio sat on a judgment seat (Acts 18:12-17). All believers must stand before the judgment seat of God/Christ (Ro 14:10; 2Cor 5:10). This divine judgment will reward our works – not judge our sins, for that judgment occurred 2000 years ago on the mighty Cross when the humble Lamb bore ALL our sins, His temporal death giving us eternal life! However, it is a mistake to assume God "doesn't care" about the small matters (decisions) of life. Far from it! Each and every scene of life is a "partnership invitation" from God to live with Him – not just for Him! (Cp Lk 16:10 with Eccl 12:14, 1Cor 4:5)

BEMA - 12V - ground(1), judgment seat(7), rostrum(1), tribunal(3). Matt. 27:19; Jn. 19:13; Acts 7:5; Acts 12:21; Acts 18:12; Acts 18:16; Acts 18:17; Acts 25:6; Acts 25:10; Acts 25:17; Rom. 14:10; 2 Co. 5:10

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!”**

- **the preparation:** John 19:31,32,42 Mt 27:62 Mk 15:42 Lu 23:54
- **the sixth:** . Mk 15:25,33,34
- **Behold:** John 19:3,5,19-22

Related Passages:

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! **Behold, your king** is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

ECCE REX VESTER BEHOLD YOUR KING!

Now it was the day of preparation ([paraskeue](#)) **for the Passover** ([pascha](#)); **it was about the sixth hour** - This is Friday the 14th Nisan. The time was **sixth hour** and if this was using the Roman system indicating it would have been about 6 AM. Others argue that this refers to the Jewish mode of keeping time and therefore would be about 12 noon (See [discussion of timing](#)) (See Gleason Archer's discussion of the question **Was Christ crucified on Thursday or Friday?** - [Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties page 379](#))

E. C. Hoskyns on preparation “The hour of double sacrifice is drawing near. It is midday. The Passover lambs are being prepared for sacrifice, and the Lamb of God is likewise sentenced to death” (BORROW [The Fourth Gospel page 524](#)) This does not refer to the lambs that were slaughtered and eaten in private homes to celebrate Passover, but the lambs to be offered on the altar of the Lord on behalf of the whole nation of Israel. The thousands of lambs that had been sacrificed over the centuries were but shadows pointing to Christ our Passover (1Cor 5:7+).

And he *said to the Jews ([Ioudaios](#)), “**Behold** ([ide](#)), **your King** ([basileus](#)) - [Ecce Rex Vester](#). You can imagine the chagrin of the the Jews when Pilate used this designation. It only served to infuriate them even more.

NET NOTE - The term **day of preparation** (παρασκευή, [paraskeue](#)) appears in all the gospels as a description of the day on which Jesus died. It could refer to any Friday as the day of preparation for the Sabbath (Saturday), and this is the way the synoptic gospels use the term (Matt 27:62, Mark 15:42, and Luke 23:54). John, however, specifies in addition that this was not only the day of preparation of the Sabbath, but also the day of preparation of the Passover, so that the Sabbath on the following day was the Passover (cf. Jn 19:31).

NET NOTE on timing - For John, the time was especially important. When the note concerning the hour, about noon, is connected with the day, the day of preparation for the Passover, it becomes apparent that Jesus was going to die on the cross at the very time that the Passover lambs were being slain in the temple courts. Ex 12:6 required that the Passover lamb be kept alive until the 14th Nisan, the eve of the Passover, and then slaughtered by the head of the household at twilight (Grk “between the two evenings”). By this time the slaughtering was no longer done by the heads of households, but by the priests in the temple courts. But so many lambs were needed for the tens of thousands of pilgrims who came to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast (some estimates run in excess of 100,000 pilgrims) that the slaughter could not be completed during the evening, and so the rabbis redefined “between the two evenings” as beginning at noon, when the sun began to decline toward the horizon. Thus the priests had the entire afternoon of 14th Nisan in which to complete the slaughter of the Passover lambs. **According to the Fourth Gospel, this is the time Jesus was dying on the cross.**

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:14-15. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

“To crucify your king.” In bitter sarcasm: “You call him king, and ask to have him crucified.” “The Chief Priests

answered, 'We have no king but Caesar.'" Verily they thus proved the truth of that word, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come." And here he was sent, of God. He has come at last, for the scepter has evidently departed from Judah; and these men are crying, We have no king but the alien monarch, the all-conquering Caesar."

They had accused him of being a King, or of pretending to be one. Pilate had scourged him, the soldiers had mocked him, and there he stood piteous spectacle of woe. What cruel sarcasm there was in the tones of the Governor when he said to the Jews, " Behold your King."

Spurgeon - Ecce Rex (or, Behold the King) (Full sermon [Ecce Rex](#))

'He saith unto the Jews, Behold your King.' John 19:14

When you look at him you are struck at once with the thought that if he be a king he is like no other monarch, for other kings are covered with rich apparel and surrounded with pomp, but he has none of these. Their glories usually consist in wars by which they have made others suffer, but his glory is his own suffering; no blood but his own has flowed to make him illustrious. He is a king, but he cannot be put in the list of sovereigns such as the nations of the earth are compelled to serve. When Antoninus Pius set up the statue of Jesus in the Pantheon as one of a circle of gods and heroes, it must have seemed strangely out of place to those who gazed upon its visage if the sculptor was at all true to life. It must have stood apart as one that could not be numbered with the rest. Neither can you set him among the masters of the human race who have crushed mankind beneath their iron heel. He was no Caesar; you cannot make him appear like one: call him not autocrat, emperor or czar—he has an authority greater than all these, yet not after their kind. His purple is different from theirs, and his crown also, but his face differs more, and his heart most of all. 'My kingdom is not of this world', he said. For troops he has a host of sorrows, for pomp a surrounding of scorn, for lofty bearing humility, for adulation mockery, for homage spitting, for glory shame, and for a throne a cross. Yet was there never truer king; indeed all kings are but a name, save this King, who is a real ruler in himself and of himself, and not by extraneous force. Right royal indeed is the Nazarene, but he cannot be likened unto the princes of earth, nor can his kingdom be reckoned with theirs.

Spurgeon - Sermon Notes - John 19:14—"He saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!"

Pilate spake far more than he understood, and therefore we shall not confine ourselves to his meaning.

Everything concerning our Lord was more than ever full of meaning just then; the saying of Caiaphas, the fleeing of the disciples, the dividing of his garments, the soldier piercing his side, &c.

It was to the Jews that Jesus was brought forth, and by them he was rejected; yet was he distinctly declared to be their King.

The same is repeated at this day among those favoured with special privileges; but whether they accept him or not, he is assuredly in some sense or other their King.

To the summons of the text the answer was mockery.

We would with deepest reverence draw near, and behold our King.

I. BEHOLD HIM PREPARING HIS THRONE.

1. He lays the foundation of it in his suffering nature.

2. He makes it a throne of grace by his atoning griefs.

3. He prepares access to it through his ability to have compassion on those who come to him, by partaking in all their sorrows.

4. He canopies and glorifies it by the shame to which he willingly and unreservedly yields himself.

Believe in the perpetuity of a throne thus founded.

II. BEHOLD HIM CLAIMING OUR HOMAGE.

He claims and wins our adoration—

1. By the right of supreme love.

2. By the right of complete purchase.

3. By the right of grateful consecration, which we heartily accord to him under a sense of loving gratitude.

Glory in rendering homage thus made due.

III. BEHOLD HIM SUBDUING HIS DOMINIONS.

1. Jews and Gentiles are won to obedience by beholding his sufferings for them.

2. This brings in his own elect everywhere.

3. This restores backsliders. They look to him whom they have wounded, and return to their allegiance.

4. This holds all his true servants captive: they glory in yielding their all to him who was thus put to shame for them.

5. This subdues all things unto him. By his cross and passion he reigns in heaven, earth, and hell.

Bow low before the sceptre of his Cross.

IV. BEHOLD HIM SETTING FORTH THE PATTERN OF HIS KINGDOM.

He stands there the Prophet and the Type of his own dominion.

1. It is no earthly kingdom: the difference is palpable to all.
2. It is associated with shame and suffering, both on the part of the King and of his loyal subjects.
3. It is based on his love and self-sacrifice: this is his right of sovereignty, this his force of arms, this the source of his revenue.
4. It is made resplendent by his woes: these are the insignia and ornaments of his court; his glory even in heaven.

Glory only in the cross.

V. BEHOLD HIM PROVING THE CERTAINTY OF HIS KINGDOM.

1. Is he King there in his shame? Then, assuredly, he is King now that he has risen from the dead, and gone into the glory.
2. Is he King amid shame and pain? Then he is able to help us if we are in like case.
3. Is he King while paying the price of our redemption? Then, certainly, he is King now that it is paid, and he has become the author of eternal salvation.
4. Is he King at Pilate's bar? Then truly he will be so when Pilate stands at his bar to be judged.

Come hither, saints, and pay your accustomed worship!

Come hither, sinners, and adore for the first time!

GLIMPSES

It is far worse to despise a Saviour in his robes than to crucify him in his rags. An affront is more criminal to a prince upon his throne than when he is disguised as a subject, and masked in the clothes of his servant. Christ is entered into glory after his sufferings; all who are his enemies must enter into misery after their prosperity: and whosoever will not be ruled by his golden sceptre shall be crushed by his rod.—Stephen Charnock.

Did Pilate hope to melt the Jewish heart to a sort of scornful pity? Did he think that they would turn away from so wretched an object, and be ashamed of having accused him of treason? Perhaps so. But he failed. The sorrows of Jesus do not of themselves overcome the hate of man; but this fact proves how desperately hardened his heart has become.

Given the Holy Spirit, there is nothing more likely to win men to Jesus than beholding him in his sorrows. Behold, O man, and see what thy sin has done, what thy Redeemer has borne, and what he claims of thee! Behold him not as another's, but as thine! Behold him not only as thy Friend, thy Saviour, but thy King! Behold him, and at once fall at his feet, and own thyself his loving subject!—C. H. S.

"Behold your King."—This is neither an impossible nor a delusive command. The eye that looks away up to Jesus will behold him now: and what shall we behold? The vision is all of beauty, and glory, and coronation now. The sorrow and the marred visage are past; and even when we behold him as the Lamb of God, it is the Lamb "in the midst of the throne" now.

O daughters of Zion, who gaze by faith upon Jesus our King, what do you see? Oh the music of the answers!—"We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour!" "Fairer than the children of men." "Beautiful and glorious!" "How great is his beauty!" "His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars," and "as the sun shineth in his strength!" "Yea, he is altogether lovely!"—Frances Ridley Havergal.

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

Day of Preparation (3904) **paraskeue** from **paraskeuazo** = make preparation from **para** = for + **skeuazo** = to prepare) in secular Greek was generally used to mean "preparation," hence "to equip oneself" but all the NT uses the word to denote the day of preparation for the Jewish Sabbath. The word is literally preparation; in Jewish, NT, and early Christian usage, only of a definite day, the sixth day of the week, the term for the Friday preceding the Sabbath, when all preparation for the Sabbath had to be completed and after which no work was permitted

PARASKEUE - 6V - day(1), day of preparation(3), preparation(2), preparation day(1). Matt. 27:62; Mk. 15:42; Lk. 23:54; Jn. 19:14; Jn. 19:31; Jn. 19:42

Passover (3957) **pascha** is the transliteration of the Hebrew word **pesach/pesah** (06453) which is a masculine noun thought by some writers (Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon) to have its origin from **pacach/pasah** which apparently means to pass over; to spare (Ex 12:13, 23, 27 - "Jehovah will pass"). Depending on the context, **pascha** refers to the **Passover lamb** (Lk 22:7), the **Passover meal** (Lk 22:8), or the **festival of Passover** (Lk 22:1+). The **Passover** as used in Lk 22:1+ is combined with the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** by Luke in a **metonymy** (one word or phrase is substituted for another with which it's closely associated) writing "the **Feast of Unleavened Bread**...called the **Passover**, was approaching." (Lk 22:1+) **Rooker** adds that "These two ceremonies were apparently combined at the beginning, for the Passover lamb was to be eaten with unleavened bread (Ex 12:8)." (New American Commentary). The whole feast, including the paschal eve, is called the **festival of Unleavened Bread** (Ex 23:15; Lv 23:6; Ezra 6:22; Lu 22:1, 7; Acts 12:3; 20:6); but the simple name "**Passover**" (when they celebrate the "Passover Seder") is the one commonly used by the Jews to the present day for the festival of Unleavened Bread (2Chr 30:15; 35:1, 11; Mk 14:1)

Zodhiates on **pascha** - The Passover, an exemption, immunity (Sept.: Ex. 12:11, 21). The great sacrifice and festival of the Jews which was instituted in commemoration of God's sparing the Jews when He destroyed the firstborn of the Egyptians. It was celebrated on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan. For the institution and particular laws of this festival see Ex. 12; Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:2-6. The later Jews made some additions. In particular they drank four cups of wine at various intervals during the paschal supper. The third of these cups, called the cup of benediction, is referred to in 1 Cor. 10:16 (cf. Matt. 26:27). In the NT, *tó páscha*, the Passover, may refer to the festival or to the paschal lamb. (I) The paschal lamb, a year-old lamb or kid, **slain as a sacrifice** (Ex 12:27). According to Josephus, the number of lambs sacrificed at Jerusalem in his time was 256,500. They were slain between the ninth and eleventh hour, which is from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. (**ANOTHER SOURCE**: The lamb was slain "between the two evenings" (twilight Ex 12:6, Lev 23:5; Nu 9:3, 5, 11), "between 3 p.m. and sunset" Edersheim - see also **NET Note** below). Metaphorically used of Christ (1 Cor. 5:7). (II) *Páscha* also referred to the paschal supper as the commencement of the seven day festival of unleavened bread called *tá ázuma* <G106>. See Ex. 12:15ff.; Lev. 23:5ff. (A) It was used of the paschal supper alone (Matt. 26:18 meaning to keep or celebrate the paschal supper). Heb. 11:28 means that Moses instituted and kept the Passover (Sept.: Ex. 12:48; Num. 9:4ff.). (B) In a wider sense it also included the seven days of unleavened bread, the paschal festival (Matt. 26:2; Mark 14:1+; Luke 2:41; 22:1; John 2:13, 23; 6:4; 11:55; 12:1; 13:1; 18:39; 19:14; Acts 12:4). The whole Passover is sometimes called the Feast of Unleavened Bread. See *ázumos* <G106>, unleavened; *arníon* <G721>, lamb; *amnós* <G286>, sacrificial lamb; *arén* <G704>, lamb. (C) The expression "to eat the pass-over" means to keep the festival (Matt. 26:17; Mark 14:12, 14; Luke 22:11, 15; John 18:28; Sept.: Ex. 12:43 [cf. 2 Chr. 30:18]); "to make ready the passover" (a.t.) means to prepare for eating (Matt. 26:19; Mark 14:16; Luke 22:8, 13); to kill the passover (Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7; Sept.: Ex. 12:21; Deut. 16:2, 5, 6). (BORROW [The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament page 1126](#))

NET Note on when the Lamb was slain in Exodus 12:6 - "**Twilight**" = Heb "between the two evenings" or

"between the two settings" (ben ha'arbayim). This expression has had a good deal of discussion. (1) Targum Onq. says "between the two suns," which the Talmud explains as the time between the sunset and the time the stars become visible. More technically, the first "evening" would be the time between sunset and the appearance of the crescent moon, and the second "evening" the next hour, or from the appearance of the crescent moon to full darkness (see Dt 16:6 – "at the going down of the sun"). (2) Saadia, Rashi, and Kimchi say the first evening is when the sun begins to decline in the west and cast its shadows, and the second evening is the beginning of night. (3) The view adopted by the Pharisees and the Talmudists (b. Pesahim 61a) is that the first evening is when the heat of the sun begins to decrease, and the second evening begins at sunset, or, roughly from 3–5 P.M. **The Mishnah (m. Pesahim 5:1) indicates the lamb was killed about 2:30 P.M. – anything before noon was not valid.** S. R. Driver concludes from this survey that the first view is probably the best, although the last view was the traditionally accepted one (Exodus, 89–90). **Late afternoon or early evening** seems to be intended, the time of twilight perhaps.

ISBE on Passover - The Passover was the annual Hebrew festival on the evening of the 14th day (Wikipedia says 15th day) of the month of Abib or [Nisan](#), as it was called in later times. It was followed by, and closely connected with, a 7 days' **festival of unleavened bread**, to which the name **Passover** was also applied by extension (Leviticus 23:5+ and here in Luke 22:1). Both were distinctly connected with the Exodus, which, according to tradition, they commemorate; the Passover being in imitation of the last meal in Egypt, eaten in preparation for the journey, while Yahweh, passing over the houses of the Hebrews, was slaying the firstborn of Egypt (Ex 12:12f; Ex 13:2, Ex 13:12ff); the festival of unleavened bread being in memory of the first days of the journey during which this bread of haste was eaten (Ex 12:14-20).

John Bennett - The King - [Day by Day - Divine Titles](#)

In the first book of the New Testament, the Lord Jesus is presented as the King. Following the visit of the Magi, Herod asked the question 'Where is he that is born **King of the Jews?**', Matt. 2:2.

In the closing book of the New Testament, He is introduced as the King. As the conqueror, He has 'on his thigh a name written, **King of Kings, and Lord of Lords**', Rev. 19:16.

He was promised by the prophets as a King. Isaiah said, 'Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness', Isa. 32:1. Zechariah spoke of Him when he wrote, 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass', Zech. 9:9. Again, Zechariah said, 'And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one', Zech. 14:9.

Many of the psalms present a King who will rule over Israel and over the entire world. Then, He will be a lofty King. Israel could not accept a lowly King. It is interesting that He will be the Priest-King. Melchizedek was the only Old Testament character who combined in his person the offices of priest and king. In the millennium, a Priest shall be King. His reign, typified by that of Solomon, will be one of righteousness and peace.

Pilate, even in his darkness, was impressed with the character of the King. He said, 'I find no fault in him', John 19:6. He was impressed by the composure of the King. Jesus said to him, 'Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above', John 19:11. Pilate was determined to prevent the crucifixion of the King, Acts 3:13, but was persuaded by the chief priests, and 'delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified', John 19:16.

But this King is the coming, conquering King. He conquered death and arose, Acts 2:24. He, who conquered death in His resurrection, will conquer all the armies of the earth at His return, Rev. 19:11–21. Do we recognize His dominion in our lives even today?

Norman Geisler - **MARK 15:25 (cf. John 19:14)—Was Jesus crucified in the third hour or the sixth hour?** [When Critics Ask page 320](#)

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.

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: Gospel of 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 six hours later or 12 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. (See [Bible Knowledge Commentary - Page 188](#))

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. (See [Mark New Testament Commentary](#))

Tasker agrees writing that “Westcott gives good reasons for supposing that this evangelist, instead of reckoning hours from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., and 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., as was the Jewish custom, reckoned them from midnight to noon, and noon to midnight – a practice which we know from the Martyrdom of Polycarp was in use in Asia Minor at the time that document was written, and which is still followed in the West today. On this reckoning, it was... about 6 a.m. when Pilate passed sentence on Jesus.”

At what hour was Christ crucified? - Gleason Archer - [Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties page 379](#)

There is an apparent discrepancy between Mark 15:25, which states that Jesus was crucified at the “third” hour on Good Friday, and John 19:14, which indicates that the trial of Jesus was still going on at the “sixth” hour, indicating that the time of His crucifixion was later yet. John 19:14 reads: “And it was the preparation [paraskeuē] of the Passover, and it was about the sixth hour, and he [Pilate] says to the Jews, ‘Behold your king!’ ” Obviously one of these Evangelists is in error, or else his text has been miscopied, or else the hours of the day have been numbered by John according to a different system from that followed by Mark.

It should be noted that Matthew and Luke both follow the same system as Mark; for all three indicate that as Jesus hung on the cross, a great and terrible darkness came on the earth at the sixth hour and lasted until the ninth hour, when Jesus breathed His last (Matt. 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44). It is universally agreed that in the Synoptics the hours were numbered from sunrise, approximately 6:00 A.M. This would mean that Christ was crucified at 9:00 A.M. and the preternatural darkness lasted from 12:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

This apparent contradiction was unsuccessfully handled by ancient commentators through textual correction. Eusebius pointed out that the numeral “three” was indicated by capital gamma, whereas “six” was indicated by a digamma (a letter resembling our F). The copyist thought he saw the extra horizontal stroke and changed “three” to “six.” But this does not really solve the problem at all, because John 19:14 does not indicate the time Christ was crucified but only the time of His appearance before Pilate’s judgment seat. And so even though many fine scholars have favored this textual-error theory (such as Beza, Bengel, Alford, and Farrar), it is basically unsound—and completely unnecessary.

There is no difficulty at all in the received textual reading, provided we understand that John was following the official numbering system of the Roman civil day. The evidence for a civil day that began numbering the hours right after midnight is quite decisive. Pliny the Elder (Natural History 2.77) makes the following observation: “The day itself has been differently observed in different countries: by the Babylonians between two sunrises; by the Athenians between two sunsets; by the Umbrians from noon to noon; by the Roman priests and those who have defined the civil day, as the Egyptians also and Hipparchus, from midnight to midnight.” This is confirmed by Macrobius (Saturnalia 1.3): “the day, which the Romans have declared to begin at the sixth hour of the night.” (It should be explained that the ancients did not maintain hours of uniform length throughout the year but simply divided the interval between sunrise and sunset into twelve equal parts, known as horae—regardless of the season of the year.) So what would be 6:00 A.M. according to the Roman civil day (and likewise according to our modern practice) would be the first hour according to Athenian and Hebrew practice. Thus it was 9:00 A.M. when Christ’s trial was winding up, and He was led away to Golgotha to be crucified. This perception of a differing system of hour numbering removes all discrepancy between John and the Synoptics.

But we may very well ask, Why should John have followed the official Roman system when he had the same cultural background as the Synoptics? The answer lies in the time and location of the composition of John’s gospel. As McClellan points out, “St. John wrote his Gospel in Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia, and therefore in regard to the civil day he would be likely to employ the Roman reckoning. And as a matter of fact, he does employ it, extending his day until midnight—John 12:1; John 20:19” (Christian Evidences, 1:741).

The point of the John 20:19 reference is that John reckons Christ’s first appearance to the disciples in the house of John Mark as occurring in the latter part (opsia) of the first day of the week. This proves conclusively that John did not regard the second day of the week as having begun at sunset, as the Palestinian reckoning followed by the other Evangelists would have regarded the late supper hour. (We know from the return of the two disciples from the Emmaus journey at sundown that it was already well past sundown by the time they had delivered their report to the Eleven, and thus before Jesus Himself appeared to them all as a group.) The fact that John followed the Roman civil day is thus established; his reason for doing so is found in the probable place of composition of his gospel, presumably in Ephesus around A.D. 90 or shortly thereafter. ([Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties page 379](#))

Related Resource:

QUESTION - [What time was Jesus crucified?](#)

ANSWER - The gospel writers make several references regarding the time of [Jesus' crucifixion](#). Putting all those references together gives us an idea of the time of day that Jesus died. In this article, we will use the NASB because it presents a literal translation of the time references recorded in the original Greek.

We know that Jesus was arrested at night and was brought to Pilate the next morning. Matthew 27:1–2 tells us, “Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death; and they bound Him, and led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate the governor.”

There was a series of hearings before [Pilate](#) and [Herod](#), who was in Jerusalem for the Passover (see Luke 23:6–15). But Pilate had to make the final decision. Pilate had wanted to set Jesus free (Luke 23:20), but ultimately felt it more advantageous to appease the crowd. “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.’ And all the people said, ‘His blood shall be on us and on our children!’ Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified” (Matthew 27:24–26).

Matthew provides some clues as to the time Jesus was crucified: “Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’ And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, ‘This man is calling for Elijah.’ 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. But the rest of them said, ‘Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him.’ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split” (Matthew 27:45–51). So according to Matthew, Jesus died “about the ninth hour.” Luke 23:44–47 agrees with Matthew about the darkness at the sixth hour and Jesus’ death about the ninth hour. Mark 15:25 adds further information: “It was the third hour when they crucified Him,” and the rest of the account agrees with Matthew and Luke about the times of darkness and Jesus’ death.

So, putting Synoptic Gospels’ accounts together, Jesus was crucified at the third hour Darkness descended at the sixth hour until the ninth hour, and Jesus died about the ninth hour. Jesus was on the cross for about six hours, three of those in total darkness.

In modern reckoning, a new day starts at midnight, so the third hour would be 3:00 AM. However, the Jewish day started at sundown, but hours were counted from sunup, which would be roughly 6:00 AM. So the third hour when Jesus was crucified would be three hours after sunup, or about 9:00 AM. The sixth hour when darkness descended would be roughly noon, and the ninth hour when Jesus died would be about 3:00 PM. This is all rather straightforward, except that John seems to record something different.

John 19:13–14 says,

“Therefore 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.”

John seems to place the hearing before Pilate “about” noon, which would conflict with Mark, who records that Jesus was crucified at the third hour or 9:00 AM.

There are several possible solutions to the seeming discrepancy.

Some have suggested that John is counting hours from midnight (the “Roman” method), so the sixth hour would be about 6:00 AM. This solves the problem of chronology; however, D. A. Carson, citing research by Henry Morris, thinks this unlikely, as this reckoning was normally reserved for Roman legal documents (BORROW [Pillar New Testament Commentary, “John,” Eerdmans, 1991, p. 605](#)). Merrill Tenney points out that this “Roman” method would be inconsistent with John’s other notations of time (NIV Bible Commentary, Volume 2, New Testament, “John,” Zondervan, 1994, p. 363). Andreas Kostenberger also notes that John appears to use the traditional sunup-to-sundown frame of reference when referring to time in John 1:39 where the tenth hour seems to refer to late afternoon (4:00 PM), not 10:00 AM (SEE [Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, “John,” Baker Academic, 2004, Page 75](#)). So the “Roman time” solution seems to be unlikely.

Another proposed solution is to attribute John’s mention of the sixth hour to a scribal error. In this theory, an early copyist of John mistakenly wrote (the Greek numeral digamma, or Ϟ) instead of Γ (the Greek numeral gamma, or 3). This would make John and Mark to be in complete agreement; however, **Carson** points out that there is absolutely no manuscript evidence for this variant ([op cit, p. 606](#)). Therefore, this solution rests upon conjecture entirely.

Kostenberger, although he does not necessarily endorse the idea, suggests that John may be making a theological point here and is not attempting to give a literal indication of the time (op cit, p. 536). The Paschal lamb selection would normally take place at noon on the day before Passover. Therefore, when Jesus was selected for crucifixion, John makes reference to noon (the sixth hour) to emphasize the fact that the Lamb of God had been selected. However, this solution has its own chronological difficulties. The "[day of preparation](#)" mentioned in John 19:14 is most likely preparation for the Passover Sabbath, not the Passover Feast that would require the lamb to be selected. The fact that Jesus had already eaten the Passover with His disciples would seem to indicate that the meal itself has already occurred.

Kostenberger ([John - Page 538](#)) and Carson ([p. 605](#)) prefer a solution based on the imprecise methods of ancient timekeeping. Before the use of watches and other precise timekeeping devices, the day was usually divided up into three-hour blocks, and people often estimated and rounded off the time. If it was mid-morning, say 10:30, one person might have rounded down and called it the third hour (9:00 AM); another person might have rounded up and called it the sixth hour (noon). In this solution, there is no discrepancy, just a difference in the way each writer estimated the time. (Even in modern times with digital clocks that tell time down to the second, we often round to the nearest quarter or half hour.) According to this solution, the choice between the third and the sixth hour would be a matter of personal estimation. It is possible that John and Mark "rounded off" the times in keeping with custom.

In the final analysis, this may be a case of expecting modern scientific precision from an ancient book. **Carson** puts it this way:

"More than likely we are in danger of insisting on a degree of precision in both Mark and John which, in the days before watches, could not have been achieved. The reckoning of time for most people, who could not very well carry sundials and astronomical charts, was necessarily approximate. If the sun was moving toward mid-heaven, two different observers might well have glanced up and decided respectively that it was 'the third hour' or 'about the sixth hour'" ([p. 606](#))

Taking all the evidence together, Jesus was crucified at some time in the morning, and He died at some time in the afternoon. He would have spent somewhere between three and six hours on the cross, with a good portion of that time in total darkness. The gospel writers were not overly interested in precision in this matter. They were far more concerned with the theological implications, which they faithfully recorded.

QUESTION - [How long was Jesus on the cross?](#)

ANSWER - Jesus was on the cross for about six hours. "The chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. 'He saved others,' they said, 'but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, "I am the Son of God"' (Matthew 27:41–43). Crucifixion was a method the ancient Roman Empire used to carry out the death penalty for those found guilty of a capital offense. Crucifixion was usually reserved for slaves, foreigners, insurrectionists, and those guilty of the vilest crimes.

The Jewish theocrats, in order to eliminate Jesus and maintain their power, devised a plan to convince Roman authorities that Jesus must be killed (Mark 14:1; cf. John 19:12; 19:15). The Jewish leaders accused Christ of encouraging rebellion and proclaiming Himself as King. This charge of insurrection is how Jesus ended up on a Roman cross rather than being stoned to death, the ancient Jewish method of execution.

Crucifixion was designed not only to kill but to dissuade others from criminal actions. Victims of crucifixion were to be humiliated, often left to hang completely naked. The cross carried a stigma, and Jewish Law said it brought a curse (Galatians 3:13; 5:11). The term *excruciating* literally means "out of crucifying"; crucifixion was an "excruciating" way to die because it was a very slow and painful means to death. Depending on the circumstance, some people could live for days after being nailed to a cross.

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" (Mark 15:24–25, ESV). 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" (Matthew 27:45, ESV). 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" (Matthew 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" (John 19:14, ESV). Since the Romans started counting their hours at midnight, the "sixth hour" would start at 6:00 A.M.

So, using the Roman system:

“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 begins.

“the sixth hour” = 12:00 P.M. (noon). Darkness begins.

“the ninth hour” = 3:00 P.M. Jesus dies.

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.

QUESTION - [On what day was Jesus crucified? \(SEE VIDEO\)](#)

ANSWER- The Bible explicitly states, in all four Gospels, that Jesus was crucified on **preparation day** (Matthew 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:14,31). He rose again on the first day of the week (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1; John 20:1). Determining the day of the week for the crucifixion would seem to be straightforward, but it’s not. Several factors must be considered: the Jewish mode of reckoning a day, the start of [Passover](#) and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and three calendars: Jewish, Julian, and Gregorian.

Three possibilities emerge: Jesus was crucified on what we would call a Friday, on a Thursday, or on a Wednesday. Here is a brief look at each viewpoint:

Jesus was crucified on a Friday

Early Friday: Jesus eats the Passover.

Late Friday: Jesus is crucified and buried.

Early and late Saturday (the Sabbath): Jesus is in the tomb.

Early Sunday: Jesus rises from the dead, and the women find the empty tomb.

The traditional view is that Jesus was crucified on a Friday. According to this timeline, Jesus was killed in AD 30, and the day of preparation was Passover, Friday, Nisan 14. That was the time to eat the Passover meal and to ready dwellings for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which began the next day, Saturday, Nisan 15. The fact that Jesus was killed on Passover accords well with 1 Corinthians 5:7, which calls Christ “our [Passover lamb](#).”

Mark 15:42 says that Jesus was crucified on “the day before the Sabbath”; proponents of the Friday view consider the “Sabbath” here to be the weekly observance held on Saturday. Immediately after Jesus was taken down from the cross, the women present followed the body of Jesus to the tomb to see where it was laid. This happened “late on Friday afternoon, the day of preparation, as the Sabbath was about to begin” (Luke 23:54, NLT). On the day after the crucifixion (Saturday, Nisan 15), the chief priests and the Pharisees met with Pilate, who agrees to have the tomb sealed and guarded (Matthew 27:62).

The Friday view has Jesus in the tomb for three days by reckoning part of a day as a full day: Jesus was buried late in the day Friday (Day 1) and was entombed Saturday (Day 2) and the first part of Sunday (Day 3). Another argument for Friday points to verses such as Matthew 16:21 and Luke 9:22, which say that Jesus would rise “on the third day.” Sunday is the third day from Friday.

According to the Friday view, the “three days and three nights” prophecy of Matthew 12:40 was fulfilled in that both Jesus and Jonah were “confined” in difficult situations where they could not move about freely for three periods of darkness (night) and three periods of light (day). The three nights of confinement for Jesus were His arrest on Thursday night and His time in the tomb Friday night and Saturday night (or, as reckoned in the Jewish method—in which a day begins at sunset—early Friday, early Saturday, and early Sunday). The three days for Jesus were all day Friday, all day Saturday, and part of Sunday.

Jesus was crucified on a Thursday

Late Thursday: Jesus is crucified and buried.

Late Thursday through early Sunday: Jesus is in the tomb.

Early Sunday: Jesus rises from the dead, and the women find the empty tomb.

One point to be made in favor of the Thursday view is that Jesus’ prophecy of the sign of Jonah specifically includes *three nights* as well as *three days* (Matthew 12:40). If the crucifixion occurred on Thursday afternoon, the three days and three nights are all accounted for.

As for Luke’s statement that Jesus was taken down from the cross because “the sabbath was about to begin” (Luke 23:54), the Thursday view points out that there were actually *two* Sabbaths that week, the first Sabbath starting at sundown Thursday, followed by

the regular Sabbath starting at sundown Friday. In fact, John's account says that "the next day was to be a special Sabbath" (John 19:31); Passover was considered a special Sabbath (see Leviticus 16:29–31; 23:7, 24–32, 39).

Further, Matthew 28:1 says that the resurrection occurred "after the Sabbaths" (Berean Literal Bible)—the plural *sabbaths* being in the original, confirming there were multiple Sabbaths between the crucifixion and the resurrection. So, the "Passover" Sabbath was followed immediately by the "weekly" Sabbath, making the first opportunity to prepare the body for burial on Sunday at first light—and the women came to the tomb to do just that.

Thursday advocates also point to several passages that indicate the number of days between the crucifixion and the resurrection. For example, in John 2:19, Jesus says, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." Three days from Thursday is Sunday. In addition, when Jesus appears to the two men on the [road to Emmaus](#) on resurrection Sunday, they state that "it is the third day since all this took place" (Luke 24:21). A natural reading of this sentence would place the crucifixion on Thursday.

Advocates for a Thursday crucifixion consider the "Preparation Day" to be the day before the Passover, the High Sabbath (John 19:14). Preparation day was the day that the Passover lamb was killed prior to the Passover meal that evening—which, according to Jewish reckoning, was the beginning of the next day (Mark 14:12). It is clear from the Old Testament instructions on the Passover (Exodus 12:6; Leviticus 23:5) that the lamb was to be slaughtered late in the day on the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Nisan—which was Thursday afternoon in AD 32. Thursday advocates point out that at the same time Israel was slaughtering their Passover lambs on Nisan 14, Jesus, the "Lamb of God" (John 1:29) was dying on a cross. Thus was fulfilled the prophetic symbolism of the Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7).

Based on this timeline, Thursday proponents also argue that the Last Supper, eaten on Wednesday evening, was not the Passover meal. The main course at Passover was a lamb, and there is no lamb mentioned at the Last Supper. Only bread and wine are mentioned.

Jesus was crucified on a Wednesday

Late Wednesday: Jesus is crucified and buried.

Early Thursday (Passover) through Late Saturday (Sabbath): Jesus is in the tomb.

Friday (between the two Sabbaths): the women buy and prepare the spices.

Early Sunday: Jesus rises from the dead, and the women find the empty tomb.

Those who argue for a Wednesday crucifixion agree with the Thursday view that there were two Sabbaths that week, but they separate them by a day. The first Sabbath, in this view, was the Passover Sabbath starting Wednesday evening following the crucifixion (Mark 15:42; Luke 23:52–54). Then came a non-Sabbath day (Friday) and then the weekly Sabbath starting Friday evening. The women purchased spices *after* the Sabbath, according to Mark 16:1—meaning the Passover Sabbath. Luke 23:56 says that, after the women saw where Jesus was buried, "they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment." The Wednesday argument states that the women could not purchase the spices *after* the Sabbath and prepare those spices *before* the Sabbath unless there were two Sabbaths that week, separated by a day.

Supporters of the Wednesday viewpoint see theirs as the only explanation that does not violate the biblical account of the women and the spices and holds to a literal understanding of Matthew 12:40. The "three days and three nights" of Matthew 12:40 are reckoned as follows: early Thursday (Day 1), late Thursday (Night 1), early Friday (Day 2), late Friday (Night 2), early Saturday (Day 3), and late Saturday (Night 3).

A difficulty with the Wednesday view is that the disciples who walked with Jesus on the road to Emmaus did so on "the same day" of His resurrection (Luke 24:13). The disciples, who do not recognize Jesus, tell Him of Jesus' crucifixion (verse 20) and say that "today is the third day since these things happened" (verse 21). Wednesday to Sunday is four days. A possible explanation is that they may have started their count on Wednesday *evening* at Christ's burial, which begins the Jewish Thursday, and Thursday to Sunday could be counted as three days.

Conclusion

While the day of the crucifixion is debated, the day of the resurrection is absolutely clear: Scripture says that [Jesus rose](#) on the first day of the week. What's more important than knowing the day of the week of Jesus' death is believing that He *did* die and that He rose from the dead. Equally important is *why* He died—to take the punishment that all sinners deserve. Jesus is truly the [Lamb of God](#) who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). Putting your trust in Him results in eternal life (John 3:16, 36)! This is true whether He was crucified on a Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday.

Related Resource:

- Gleason Archer - **Was Christ crucified on Thursday or Friday?** - [Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties page 368](#)

QUESTION - [If Jesus was crucified on the Day of Preparation, why had He already eaten the Passover meal?](#)

ANSWER - All four Gospels state that Jesus was crucified on the Day of Preparation (Matthew 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:14, 31, 42). Mark, Luke, and John all state that the following day was the Sabbath. John's account uses this wording: "It was the day of Preparation of the Passover" (John 19:14). The question becomes, since Jesus was killed on the Day of Preparation, why had He already observed the [Passover](#) with His disciples (Matthew 26:17–29; Mark 14:12–25; Luke 22:7–22; John 13:1–30)?

First, we should discard the theory that the writers of the New Testament made a mistake. Theorizing that all four of the Gospel writers got the chronology wrong stretches credulity to the breaking point. Are we really to believe that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all forgot what they had written from one chapter to the next? No, there must be a better explanation for why Jesus ate the Passover before the Day of Preparation.

Next, we need to identify what the Day of Preparation was preparing for. Every week, preparations had to be made for the Sabbath—food had to be prepared ahead of time. This led to the "Day of Preparation" becoming the common term for "Friday." Although many preparations also had to be made for the Passover, there is no record of "Passover Eve" being called the Day of Preparation. The Day of Preparation was always Friday, the day before the Sabbath. Mark 15:42 makes this clear.

How then do we explain John's statement that Jesus died on "the day of Preparation of the Passover" (John 19:14)? It's quite possible that John simply meant that this particular Friday fell during Passover week; we could understand his words this way: "It was the day of Preparation, the one that happened to come during the season of Passover." So, the Day of Preparation was to prepare for the Sabbath, not the Passover.

The Mosaic Law stipulated what day the Passover lamb was to be eaten: Nissan 14 (Numbers 9:2–3). We must assume that Jesus kept the Law and observed Passover at the appointed time (see Galatians 4:4). After the Passover (Thursday) came the Day of Preparation (Friday) on which Jesus was killed. The Sabbath (Saturday) followed, of course, and then the first day of the week (Sunday)—the third day after the crucifixion and the day on which Jesus rose from the dead.

One objection to the above chronology is based on John 18:28, which says, "The Jewish leaders took Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness they did not enter the palace, because they wanted to be able to eat the Passover." At first glance, it seems that, whereas Jesus had eaten the Passover the night before, the Jewish leaders had not yet eaten the Passover—they still "wanted to be able to eat" it after Jesus was arrested. To reconcile this verse with the [Synoptic](#) narratives, we must remember this: Passover was the first day of the week-long Feast of [Unleavened Bread](#).

The Feast (or Festival) of Unleavened Bread (*Chag HaMatzot*) lasted for a full week, from Nissan 15 to Nissan 22. The first day of Unleavened Bread coincided with the day of Passover. Because of the close relation between Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the whole week was sometimes referred to as "Passover." The two holidays were (and still are) considered a single celebration. This explains John 18:28. The Jewish leaders had already eaten the Passover proper, but there still remained other sacrifices to be made and meals to be eaten. They were unwilling to defile themselves (Pilate's palace contained leaven) because it would disqualify them from participating in the remainder of the week's ceremonies (see Leviticus 23:8).

There are other difficulties in pinpointing the exact chronology of Jesus' arrest, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection. But this seems to be a workable solution:

Thursday – Passover proper. The lamb is killed, and Jesus and His disciples eat the Passover meal in the upper room.

Friday – the Day of Preparation. Jesus is tried and executed (although never convicted). The Jews continue their "Passover" celebrations with the *chagigah*, offerings made during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Saturday – the weekly Sabbath.

Sunday – Resurrection Day.

John 19:15 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."

- **Away:** John 19:6 Lu 23:18 Ac 21:36 22:22
- **We have:** John 18:31 Ge 49:10 Eze 21:26,27
- [See Trial & Crucifixion of Jesus - Parallel Passages](#) - to arrange the events chronologically and bring out details unique to each

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:26-31+ Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified. 27 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, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 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.

Mark 15:15-20+ Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified. 16 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, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 19 They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him. 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.

WE HAVE NO KING

They could and should have stopped their protest with the words "We have no king," for this was more true. Caesar was not their king and sadly Christ was not their King!

So they cried out ([kraugazo](#)), "**Away** ([airo](#) in [aorist imperative](#) - Do it now! Do not delay!) **with Him, away with Him, crucify** ([stauroo aorist imperative](#) - Do it now! Do not delay!) **Him!**"

Luke 23:18+ But they cried out all together, saying, "**Away** ([airo](#)) with this Man (NOTE THEIR CONTEMPT), and release for us Barabbas!"

Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify ([stauroo](#)) **your King** ([basileus](#))?" - Pilate in vain tries to appeal to their senses, but the Jews are "out of control" by now.

Recall earlier Pilate had called Jesus **King** declaring to the Jews "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?**" (Jn 18:39+)

Utley on "**them**" - In Matt. 27:26-27 and Mark 15:15-16 the pronoun refers to the Roman soldiers. In John the inference may be that Pilate hand Jesus over to the wishes of the Jewish leaders and the mob.

The chief priests ([archiereus](#)) **answered, "We have no king** ([basileus](#)) **but Caesar** ([kaisar](#)) - This was the "proverbial straw" that broke Pilate's resolve to release Jesus. He knew the potential repercussions if he was seen as not recognizing Caesar as king. The irony is that when the Romans first came into Palestine, they had the most bloody rebellion on their hands, because the Jews had insisted that "God alone was their king!" Now these Jews showing utter hypocrisy! God was to have been their king but they had rejected His rule long ago (cf 1Sa 8:7).

Judges 8:23 But Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; **the LORD shall rule over you.**"

1 Samuel 8:7 The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.

I am reminded of the rebellious days of the book of Judges where the tagline was "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes." (Jdg 21:25+) Indeed, these Jews were unwilling to submit to the true King and as a result crucified their King because in their delusion, they thought they were doing what was right! But they were wrong, so, so wrong!

THOUGHT - That's what happens when Jesus is not the King of our heart! We become delusional!

And don't miss the irony of these Jews only 5 days earlier hailing Jesus as "King" because they thought He had arrived to overthrow Caesar! Now in their delusional mindset, they decry Jesus as King and instead hail hated Caesar as "King!" (cf Lk 19:38+, Mt 21:5) So great is their hatred of Jesus, that the Jews hypocritically declare their allegiance to a pagan power!

A T Robertson on **no king but Caesar** - The chief priests (hoi archiereis) were Sadducees, who had no Messianic hope like that of the Pharisees. So to carry their point against Jesus they renounce the principle of the theocracy that God was their King (1 Samuel

[Marvin Vincent](#) adds that "These words, uttered by the chief priests, are very significant. These chief representatives of the theocratic government of Israel thus formally and expressly renounce it, and declare their allegiance to a temporal and pagan power. This utterance is "the formal abdication of the Messianic hope."

Spurgeon - What a sarcasm was that! "Shall I crucify your King?" It was clear as noonday that he was no dangerous rival of Cæsar, for how could he be really a temporal king of the Jews when the Jews themselves were clamouring for his execution? Are any of us, like these Jews, rejecting the kingship of Jesus? We may be doing so practically, and that will be as fatal to our souls as if we did so in words. Lord Jesus, thou art our King, reign over us and in us, that we may one day reign with thee.

[Utley](#) - The irony is stunning. These Jewish leaders were guilty of blasphemy, the very charge of which they accused Jesus. In the OT only God is King of His people (cf. 1 Sam. 8).

[Brian Bell](#) - This (THE JEWS TURNING ON JESUS) must have taken Pilate's breath away. The Jews abandoned every principle they had in order to eliminate Jesus. In their hatred they forgot all mercy, they forgot all sense of proportion, they forgot all justice, they forgot all their principles, they even forgot God! Never in history was the insanity of hatred so vividly shown. (William Barclay) Pilate washed his hands (Mt 27:24) At whatever point Pilate stubbornly tried to wash the stain of his decision away, it would follow him to his grave. And worse, beyond it! Face-to-face with the One whose life he washed his hands of. Seriousness of unbelief of Jesus? To reject Him as King of your life is just like washing your hands of Him.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:15. But they cried out, away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King?

"How could you call him King, and bring against him a charge of setting up a rival kingdom when you, who would be his subjects, are all crying out, 'Crucify him'? 'Shall I crucify your King?'" How false they were their own actions proved.

John 19:15. The chief priests answered, we have no king but Caesar.

They said this with all the coolness in the world. The mob had been stirred up and excited, but the chief priests, the principal ecclesiastics of the day, coolly said, "We have no king but Caesar." Did they not recollect that the scepter was not to pass away from Judah until Shiloh came, so that, as it had evidently passed away, Shiloh must have come? After all their Bible-reading, did they not know that? Oh, how easy it is to read much of Scripture and yet to know little about its teaching! Dear friends, let us not join the Jews in refusing to have Christ as King. They cried, "Away with him, away with him," when he was set before them as King. Let us not do that, but let us rather accept the Crucified as our Master and Lord, and cheerfully bow at his feet.

John 19:15-17. But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

The inspired writers seem to delight to give us the Hebrew names of these notable places that are linked with Christ's last agonies, and they are still very precious to Christians, Gethsemane, Gabbatha, Golgotha, three names never to be forgotten by those who were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.

Caesar (2541) **kaisar** - of Latin origin) refers to the emperor of Rome. It was originally a surname of Julius Caesar, later taken as a title by the chief Roman ruler.

Gilbrant on **kaisar** - The proper noun **Kaisar** is the Greek transliteration of the Latin word **Caesar**. "Caesar" was originally the family name of [Gaius Julius Caesar](#). Julius Caesar was the final leader of the Roman Republic. He was assassinated on March 15, 44 B.C., by opponents in the Roman Senate who were concerned that he had amassed too much power. In his testament he had adopted his nephew Octavian, who assumed not only the name "**Caesar**" but also the military support and ultimately the political power previously held by Julius Caesar. By the year 27 B.C. Octavian had gained for himself the Republic's ancient sacral title "[Augustus](#)" and was officially known as Imperator Caesar divi filius Augustus ("**the Emperor Caesar Augustus, sacred son of god**"). Caesar Augustus, as he was popularly called (cf. Luke 2:1), gradually consolidated virtual monarchic power in the imperial office, bringing the Roman Republic to a close and founding what is known as the

"Principate." Following his death in A.D. 14 each of his successors took the name "**Caesar**" as their imperial title. For an excellent brief summary of the political and military intrigue surrounding Julius and Augustus Caesar and the transition from the Republic to the Principate, see Koester, History, Culture and Religion of the Hellenistic Age, pp.298-307. **Kaisar** is used in the New Testament to refer to **Augustus** (Luke 2:1); **Tiberius** (Luke 3:1 - A.D. 14–37), who was emperor during Jesus' ministry; **Claudius** (Acts 17:7 and Acts 18:2 - A.D. 41–54); and **Nero** (probably the Caesar to whom Paul appealed in Acts 25:8-12, mentioned specifically in the subscript to 2 Timothy - A.D. 54–68). As mentioned above, "Caesar" was a name when applied to Augustus, but a title when referring to his imperial successors. It is possible that the title "Caesar" is used figuratively to refer to any human ruler or to the state in general in Jesus' famous aphorism, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (Mark 12:13-17; cf. Matthew 22:15-22; Luke 20:20-26). However, the context of the politically sensitive issue of paying taxes to support the Roman occupation makes this figurative use unlikely. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

Marvin Vincent on **kaisar** - The term, which was at first a proper name, the surname of Julius Cæsar, adopted by Augustus and his successors, became an appellative, appropriated by all the emperors as a title. Thus the emperor at this time was Tiberius Cæsar. A distinction was, however, introduced between this title and that of Augustus, which was first given to Octavianus the first emperor. The title "Augustus" was always reserved for the monarch, while "Cæsar" was more freely communicated to his relations; and from the reign of Hadrian at least (A.D. 117–138) was appropriated to the second person in the state, who was considered as the presumptive heir of the empire.

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

- Mt 27:26-31 Mk 15:15-20 Lu 23:24
- James Stalker's classic [Trial and Arrest of Jesus Christ](#) - **10.** **VIA DOLOROSA** Matt. 27:31–33; Mark 15:20, 21; Luke 23:26; John 19:16, 17.

Related Passages:

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.

Matthew 27:24-27 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!" 26 Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified. 27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him.

Golgotha (in foreground) in Relation to Temple Mount (click diagram to enlarge)
[Click for excellent explanation of this diagram from ESV Global Study Bible](#)

PILATE FINALLY "BACKED INTO A CORNER"

The idiom [backed into a corner](#) means to force one into a difficult or unpleasant situation that cannot be easily resolved or escaped.

So ([oun](#)) - Term of conclusion. Pilate was forced to make this uncomfortable conclusion because of the insistent pressure from the Jews. His greatest fear was their threat of sending a political report back to Rome which might cost him his position and even his life.

He then ([tote](#)) **handed Him over** ([paradidomi](#)) **to them** ([hina](#) - purpose clause - in order) **to be crucified** ([stauroo](#)) - Pilate now felt he had no other choice but to capitulate to the requests of the Jews to crucify Jesus. **Handed Him over** ([paradidomi](#)) means that Pilate released Jesus into the power of His enemies. Some writers point out that the Jews had no power to carry out crucifixion and feel that the pronoun **them** is more appropriately applied to the Roman soldiers (see [table and note below](#)). It is the same verb ([paradidomi](#)) used of the Sanhedrin when they handed Jesus over to Pilate Jn 18:30, 35. Luke adds that that Pilate **delivered Jesus to their will** (Lk 23:25). In Matthew 27:24-25 (see above) Pilate claims innocence but Christ's blood is on his hands also. He may have physically washed his hands, but did not let the blood of Jesus wash away his sin. He should have been asking the question of the hymn writer

[What can wash away my sin](#)

Nothing but the blood of Jesus

What can make me whole again
Nothing but the blood of Jesus...

[Marvin Vincent](#) has an interesting note that "Pilate pronounced no sentence, but disclaimed all responsibility for the act, and delivered Christ up to them (α το ς), they having invoked the responsibility upon themselves.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:16. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

So was he led as a sheep to the slaughter, as Isaiah had long before foretold that he would be.

Spurgeon - The procession of sorrow (Full Sermon [The Procession of Sorrow](#))

'And they took Jesus, and led him away.' John 19:16

I will not say it is because we are unfaithful to our Master that the world is more kind to us, but I half suspect it is, and it is very possible that if we were more thoroughly Christians the world would more heartily detest us, and if we would cleave more closely to Christ we might expect to receive more slander, more abuse, less tolerance, and less favour from men. You young believers, who have lately followed Christ, should father and mother forsake you, remember you were bidden to reckon upon it; should brothers and sisters deride, you must put this down as part of the cost of being a Christian. Godly working men, should your employers or your fellow-workers frown upon you; wives, should your husbands threaten to cast you out, remember, without the camp was Jesus' place, and without the camp is yours. O you Christian men, who dream of trimming your sails to the wind, who seek to win the world's favour, I do beseech you cease from a course so perilous. We are in the world, but we must never be of it; we are not to be secluded like monks in the cloister, but we are to be separated like Jews among Gentiles; men, but not of men; helping, aiding, befriending, teaching, comforting, instructing, but not sinning. The more manifestly there shall be a great gulf between the church and the world, the better shall it be for both; the better for the world, for it shall be thereby warned; the better for the church, for it shall be thereby preserved. Go then, like the Master, expecting to be abused, to wear an ill name, and to earn reproach; go, like him, without the camp.

Stephen Olford - "They took Jesus and led Him away." – John 19:16

Isaiah prophesies the same matchless grace of the Lord Jesus when he writes, "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).

Peter also says, "When He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Pet. 2:23). A little before this verse are the words, "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps" (1 Pet. 2:21).

"They took Jesus and led Him away" (John 19:16). What grace and humility are here manifest. He did not refuse to be led to the slaughter. Indeed, sacred love caused Him to be led in utter weakness that I might learn by His matchless example.

Lord, give me a measure of Your grace and humility
when I face those who would persecute me.

Stephen Olford - "They took Jesus and led Him away." – John 19:16

Isaiah prophesies the same matchless grace of the Lord Jesus when he writes, "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).

Peter also says, "When He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Pet. 2:23). A little before this verse are the words, "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps" (1 Pet. 2:21).

"They took Jesus and led Him away" (John 19:16). What grace and humility are here manifest. He did not refuse to be led to the slaughter. Indeed, sacred love caused Him to be led in utter weakness that I might learn by His matchless example.

Lord, give me a measure of Your grace and humility when I face those who would persecute me.

THERE IS A GREEN HILL FAR AWAY - (Borrow [Amazing Grace - Kenneth Osbeck - page 116](#))

Mrs. Cecil Frances Alexander, 1823–1895

Finally Pilate handed Him over to them to be crucified. (John 19:16)

The full understanding of the depth of suffering that our Savior endured at Calvary for our redemption is difficult to grasp. When Mrs. Cecil Alexander, one of England's finest hymn writers, was attempting to explain to her Sunday school class the meaning of the phrase from the Apostles' Creed, "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried," she felt inadequate. She had always believed that one of the most effective ways to teach sound spiritual truths to children is through the use of appropriate hymns. She decided, therefore, to put the details of Christ's suffering and death on the cross into a simply worded but appealing song that could be easily understood by the children in her class. Although the hymn with its direct style of wording and clearly expressed thoughts was originally intended for youth, it had an immediate appeal to adults as well. After the lilting melody was composed for the text in 1878 by George C. Stebbins, the hymn became widely used in the Moody-Sankey evangelistic campaigns, as it has been in church services since then.

Friends of Mrs. Alexander said that her life was even more beautiful than her writing. After her marriage to William Alexander, archbishop and primate of the Anglican church for all of Ireland, she engaged herself in parish duties and charity work. Her husband said of her, "From one poor home to another she went. Christ was ever with her, and all felt her influence." Mrs. Alexander had been active before her marriage in the Sunday school movement, and her love of children and interest in their spiritual instruction never diminished. Almost all of the 400 poems and hymns that she wrote were prompted by this concern.

Adults as well as children have loved this particular hymn, written by a devoted woman who had a sincere desire to help others to truly appreciate the extent of Christ's agony on the cross and the magnitude of His love.

There is a green hill far away, outside a city wall, where the dear Lord was crucified, who died to save us all.

We may not know, we cannot tell, what pains He had to bear; but we believe it was for us He hung and suffered there.

He died that we might be forgiv'n. He died to make us good, that we might go at last to heav'n, saved by His precious blood.

There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin; He only could unlock the gate of heav'n and let us in.

Chorus: O dearly, dearly has He loved! And we must love Him too, and trust in His redeeming blood, and try His works to do.

For Today: John 19; Romans 5:6–11; Ephesians 1:7, 8; Titus 2:13, 14

Express your gratitude for Christ's "redeeming blood." Let the truth of His great love motivate you to "try His works to do."

THE DEATH OF CHRIST John 19:16–30 - Croft Pentz

Christ's death was first mentioned in Genesis 3:15. This was 4004 B.C. The writers of the Old Testament point to the coming Messiah. Now, the Messiah comes, lives, teaches, and dies. The perfect Lamb of God becomes God's sacrifice for man's sins.

1. THE PLACE—vv. 16–18
2. THE PERSON—vv. 19–22
3. THE PROPHECY—vv. 23–24
4. THE PLEASURE—vv. 25–27
5. THE PAIN—vv. 28–29
6. THE PARDON—v. 30

What does the death of Christ mean to you? He died for all people—Isaiah 53:5, 6. Because all men are sinners, Christ died to save all men. Now all we must do is to accept Him as our Savior.

C H Spurgeon - "They took Jesus, and led him away." —John 19:16 - Morning and Evening

He had been all night in agony, he had spent the early morning at the hall of Caiaphas, he had been hurried from Caiaphas to Pilate, from Pilate to Herod, and from Herod back again to Pilate; he had, therefore, but little strength left, and yet neither refreshment nor rest were permitted him. They were eager for his blood, and therefore led him out to die, loaded with the cross. O dolorous procession! Well may Salem's daughters weep. My soul, do thou weep also.

What learn we here as we see our blessed Lord led forth? Do we not perceive that truth which was set forth in shadow by the scapegoat? Did not the high-priest bring the scapegoat, and put both his hands upon its head, confessing the sins of the people, that thus those sins might be laid upon the goat, and cease from the people? Then the goat was led away by a fit man into the wilderness, and it carried away the sins of the people, so that if they were sought for they could not be found. Now we see Jesus brought before the priests and rulers, who pronounce him guilty; God himself imputes our sins to him, "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all;" "He was made sin for us;" and, as the substitute for our guilt, bearing our sin upon his shoulders, represented by the cross; we see the great Scapegoat led away by the appointed officers of justice. Beloved, can you feel assured that he carried your sin? As you look at the cross upon his shoulders, does it represent your sin? There is one way by which you can tell whether he carried your sin or not.

Have you laid your hand upon his head, confessed your sin, and trusted in him? Then your sin lies not on you; it has all been transferred by blessed imputation to Christ, and he bears it on his shoulder as a load heavier than the cross.

Let not the picture vanish till you have rejoiced in your own deliverance, and adored the loving Redeemer upon whom your iniquities were laid.

JESUS DELIVERED OVER TO BE CRUCIFIED			
Matthew 27:31 After they (SOLDIERS) 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.	Mark 15:20 And they (SOLDIERS) led Him out to crucify Him.	Lk 23:25b+ but he delivered Jesus to their will . (TO THE WILL OF THE JEWS - BUT THEY COULD NOT CARRY OUT CRUCIFIXION)	John 19:16 So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified . NOTE: Some think THEM is the Jews, but others think THEM is the Roman soldiers. It seems that both were involved - the Jews convincing Pilate to crucify Jesus and the Romans being necessary to carry out the crucifixion.

John 19:17 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.

- **He:** Mt 10:38 16:24 27:31-33 Mk 8:34 10:21 15:21,22 Lu 9:23 14:27 Lu 23:26,33
- **went:** Lev 16:21-22 Lev 24:14 Nu 15:35-36 1Ki 21:13 Lu 23:33 Ac 7:58 Heb 13:11-13
- **Golgotha:** Mt 27:33,34 Mk 15:21,22 Lu 23:33
- See Trial & Crucifixion of Jesus - Parallel Passages - arranges events chronologically and brings out details unique to each Gospel
- James Stalker's classic [Trial and Arrest of Jesus Christ](#) - **10. VIA DOLOROSA** Matt. 27:31–33; Mark 15:20, 21; Luke 23:26; John 19:16, 17.

Related Passages:

Exodus 29:14+ “But the flesh of the bull and its hide and its refuse, **you shall burn with fire outside the camp**; it is a **sin offering**.

Leviticus 16:21-22+ “Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and **send it away into the wilderness** by the hand of a man who stands in readiness. 22 “The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.

Leviticus 16:27+ “But the bull of the **sin offering** (A PICTURE OF JESUS THE ULTIMATE SIN OFFERING) and the goat of the **sin offering**, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, **shall be taken outside the camp**, and they shall burn their hides, their flesh, and their refuse in the fire.

Leviticus 4:21+ (DESCRIBES THE "SHADOW" - Col 2:17+! NOTE WHERE SIN OFFERING WAS TO BE TAKEN - SEE ALSO Lev 8:17) Then he is to bring out the bull to a place **outside the camp** and burn it as he burned the first bull; it is the **sin offering** for the assembly. (See also Ex 29:14; Lev.9:11; Lev 16:27; Nu 19:3.

Colossians 2:17+ things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

Hebrews 13:11-13+ (FULFILLMENT OF THE OT "SHADOWS") For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an **offering for sin**, are **burned outside the camp**. 12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, **suffered outside the gate**. 13 So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

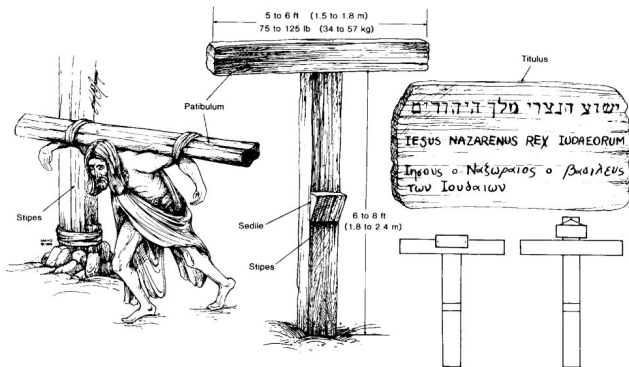
Luke 9:23+ And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

Luke 14:27+ “Whoever does not carry ([bastazo](#)) his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

Matthew 27:33+ And when they came to a place called Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull,

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

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.



Jesus Bears the Crossbeam or Patibulum

JESUS BEARING HIS CROSS

They took Jesus, therefore - They in this context is not the Jewish leaders but the Roman soldiers, the execution squad, normally consisting of four soldiers and a centurion (Mt 27:54+, Lk 23:47+). Why do we say four soldiers in addition to the centurion ? Because in Jn 19:23 they divided Jesus' outer garment into 4 parts.

A T Robertson says "This is after the shameful scourging between 6 A.M. and 9 A.M. when the soldiers insult Jesus [ad libitum](#)." Compare the accounts in Mark and Matthew:

Mark 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, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 19 They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him.

Matthew 27:27-30 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, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 30 They spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head.

And He went out ([exerchomai](#)), **bearing ([bastazo](#)) His own cross ([stauros](#))** - **Went out ([exerchomai](#))** means He moved out of or away from an area (BDAG) and in context means He moved out of the confines of the city to Golgotha. So just as carcass of the animal used for the sin offering (its blood having been offered as atonement) were to be burned outside of the camp of Israel (Lev 4:21+), so too the sin offering of the Lamb of God was to be killed outside of the Holy City (see [above](#) for Heb 13:11-12+).

Bearing His own cross - This probably refers to the horizontal crossbeam, not to the entire cross because the upright portion was probably already in the ground. In any event, this was a heavy load for a healthy man, much less one scourged and suffering blood loss. At some point Simon from Cyrene was requisitioned to carry Jesus' cross, presumably because Jesus was simply too weak to continue carrying it.

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.

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.

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.

There is another OT shadow of Jesus' bearing His own cross when Abraham was told to sacrifice Isaac and Abraham laid the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac his son (Ge 22:6+).

Brian Bell - **Bearing His cross** - The crossbeam where love and justice meet. Later Simon was drafted to carry it for Him (Mk 15:21). Not told why. Tradition says Jesus fell and couldn't carry it. Criminals carried their own cross as a sign of guilt, and Jesus was not guilty!

Bell's comment reminds me of Psalm 85:10⁺ which says "Lovingkindness and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

NET NOTE - was customary practice in a Roman crucifixion, the prisoner was made to carry his own cross. In all probability this was only the crossbeam, called in Latin the patibulum, since the upright beam usually remained in the ground at the place of execution. According to Matt 27:32 and Mark 15:21, the soldiers forced Simon to take the cross; Luke 23:26 states that the cross was placed on Simon so that it might be carried behind Jesus. A reasonable explanation of all this is that Jesus started out carrying the cross until he was no longer able to do so, at which point Simon was forced to take over.

To the place called the Place of a Skull([kranion](#)), **which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha** - The origin of the name **Place of a Skull** is not absolutely certain but some say it comes from the hill having the appearance of a skull.

Marvin Vincent - **Golgotha**. An Aramaic word, Gulgotha, = the Hebrew, Gulgoth, and translated **skull** in Jdg. 9:53; 2Ki 9:35. The word **Calvary** comes through the Latin **calvaria**, meaning skull, and used in the Vulgate. The New Testament narrative does not mention a mount or hill. The place was probably a rounded elevation. The meaning is not, as Tyndale's Version of the NT, a place of dead men's skulls, but simply skull.

Merrill Tenney on Golgotha's topography - Contrary to current hymnology, there is no evidence that it was a hill. (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Abridged Edition](#))

NET NOTE - Jesus was led out to the place called "The Place of the Skull" where he was to be crucified. It is clear from v. 20 that this was outside the city. The Latin word for the Greek κρανιον (kranion) is calvaria. Thus the English word "Calvary" is a transliteration of the Latin rather than a NT place name (cf. Luke 23:33 in the KJV).

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned He stood;
Sealed my pardon with His blood;
Hallelujah! What a Saviour!
—Philip P. Bliss

R Kent Hughes gives us an excellent summary of Jesus treading the Via Dolorosa to Calvary....

Jesus was placed in the center of a quaternion, a company of four Roman soldiers. The crossbeam or patibulum of the cross was placed on his torn shoulders like an oar. This weighed over 100 pounds. As Christ stumbled along the route to Calvary, an officer preceded him carrying a placard describing Jesus' crime. It read, "Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews." Customarily, a man about to be crucified was led to the site of his execution by the longest route possible, so that everyone might see that "crime does not pay" and also to give opportunity to anyone who might speak up in his defense. So it was that Christ trod the Via Dolorosa so weakened, finally, that a bystander had to be drafted to carry the cross the rest of the way.

At the place of the execution, Christ was laid upon the patibulum. Spikes were driven through his hands or wrists and the crossbar was hoisted into place. His legs were nailed, leaving only enough flex in the knees so that he could begin the horrible up-and-down motion necessary for breathing. The medical assessments of the written misery provide a terrible picture (BORROW [Behold the man PAGE 146](#)).

Almost every time I listen to the following classic by Sandi Patty it brings tears to my eyes. Hallelujah, what a Savior!

VIA DOLOROSA

Sandi Patty

Down the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem that day
The soldiers tried to clear the narrow street
But the crowd pressed in to see
The man condemned to die on Calvary

He was bleeding from a beating, there were stripes upon His back
And He wore a crown of thorns upon His head
And He bore with every step
The scorn of those who cried out for His death

Down the Via Dolorosa called the way of suffering
Like a lamb came the Messiah, Christ the King
But He chose to walk that road out of
His love for you and me
Down the Via Dolorosa, all the way to Calvary

Por la Vía Dolorosa, triste día en Jerusalén
Los soldados le abrían paso a Jesús
Mas la gente se acercaba
Para ver al que llevaba aquella cruz

Por la Vía Dolorosa, que es la vía del dolor
Como oveja vino Cristo, rey, Señor
Y fue Él quien quiso ir, por su amor por ti y por mí
Por la Vía Dolorosa al Calvario y a morir

The blood that would cleanse the souls of all men
Made its way to the heart of Jerusalem

Down the Via Dolorosa called the way of suffering
Like a lamb came the Messiah, Christ the King
But He chose to walk that road out of His love for you and me
Down the Via Dolorosa, all the way to Calvary

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:17. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha:

Probably a knoll of rock which today stands outside the city gate looking wonderfully like a skull, with two depressions in the rock which at distance appear like eyes. This was the common place of execution, the Tyburn, the Old Bailey of Jerusalem.

Cross (4716) **stauros** from **histemi** = to stand) was an an upright stake, especially a pointed one. Thayer adds the stauros was a well-known instrument of most cruel and ignominious punishment, borrowed by the Greeks and Romans from the Phoenicians; to it were affixed among the Romans, down to the time of Constantine the Great, the guiltiest criminals, particularly the basest slaves, robbers, the authors and abettors of insurrections, and occasionally in the provinces, at the arbitrary pleasure of the governors, upright and peaceable men also, and even Roman citizens themselves. Stauros is used somewhat in with a figurative (but still very real) supernatural significance as the source of the the doctrine concerning the saving power of the death on the cross endured by Christ (1 Co 1:18 = where "being saved" = present tense).

The cross—1. literally. Mt 27:32, 40, 42; Mk 15:21, 30, 32; Lk 23:26; J 19:17, 19, 25, 31; Phil 2:8; Heb 12:2.—2. symbolically, of suffering and death Mt 10:38; 16:24; Mk 8:34; 10:21 v.l.; Lk 9:23; 14:27.—3. the cross of Christ as one of the most important elements in Christian teaching 1 Cor 1:17f; Gal 5:11; 6:12, 14; Eph 2:16; Phil 2:8; 3:18; Col 1:20; 2:14.

QUESTION - Was Jesus crucified on a cross, pole, or stake?

ANSWER - The cross is arguably the most beloved symbol in all of Christianity. It adorns our churches and cathedrals, our jewelry, our books and music, and is used in numerous marketing logos. The empty cross symbolizes the work performed there by our Savior who went to death willingly to pay the penalty for our sins. Among Jesus' last words before He died were "It is finished" (John 19:30). The Law was fulfilled, the Messianic prophecies pertaining to His first advent were accomplished, and redemption was complete. It is no wonder that the cross has come to symbolize all that is the greatest story ever told—the story of the sacrificial death of Christ.

This may come as a surprise to many, but the precise shape of the object on which Jesus was crucified cannot be proved explicitly from the Bible. The Greek word translated "cross" is *stauros*, meaning "a pole or a cross used as an instrument of capital punishment." The Greek word *stauroo*, which is translated "crucify," means "to be attached to a pole or cross." Outside of the Bible, the same verb was also used in the context of putting up a fence with stakes. Though *stauros* can mean either "pole" or "stake," many scholars argue that Jesus most likely died on a cross in which the upright beam projected above the shorter crosspiece. But a biblical, airtight case cannot be made for either a cross or a pole/stake. The Romans were not picky in regards to how they would crucify people.

Historically, we know the Romans crucified people on crosses, poles, stakes, upside-down crosses, X-shaped crosses (such as the apostle Andrew is said to have been martyred on), walls, roofs, etc. Jesus could have been crucified on any of these objects, and it would not have affected the perfection or sufficiency of His sacrifice.

Certain cults, most notably the [Jehovah's Witnesses](#), are adamant that Jesus did not die on a cross and that the cross is in fact a pagan symbol. Their insistence on this point is curious, given the ambiguity of the Greek word. But they have worded their [New World Translation](#) to say that Jesus died on a "torture stake" rather than a cross. Given that the Jehovah's Witnesses also deny the deity of Christ and His [bodily resurrection](#), it stands to reason that they should object to other details of traditional Christianity.

Arguing against the Jehovah's Witnesses' teaching that Jesus died on a "torture stake" are some indirect clues in the New Testament. One of these is found in John 21. Jesus gives Peter a glimpse of the manner of his death: "'When you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.' Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God" (John 21:18–19). The fact that Peter (who tradition says was crucified) would "stretch out" his hands indicates that Roman crucifixion usually involved outspread arms such as would be positioned on a crosspiece.

The other clue that Jesus was crucified on a cross is found in John 20. Thomas, in his famous moment of doubt, said, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe" (Jn 20:25). Note Thomas's mention of the *nails* (plural) that had scarred Jesus' hands. If Jesus had been crucified on a stake or a pole, only one nail would have been used. The fact of two nails in the hands suggests a traditional cross.

Completely lost in arguments over the shape of the cross is its significance to us. Jesus said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it" (Matthew 16:24–25). The cross/stake/pole was an instrument of death. By telling us to take up our cross and follow Him, Jesus says that, in order to be His true followers, we must die to self. If we call ourselves "Christians," then we must deny ourselves and give up our lives for His sake. This may take the extreme form of being martyred for our faith, but even in the most peaceful political settings, we must be willing to lose the self—crucifying self-righteousness, self-promotion, selfish ambitions—in order to be His followers. Those who are not willing to do so are "not worthy" of Him (Matthew 10:38).

So, did Jesus die on a cross? We believe He did. Could it have been a pole or stake instead? Possibly, if we ignore Thomas's words in John 20:25. But even more important than the shape of the object on which Jesus was crucified is that Jesus shed His blood for our sins and that His death purchased for us eternal life.

QUESTION - [Who helped Jesus carry the cross?](#)

ANSWER - After being ruthlessly tortured by the Romans, Jesus was forced to carry His cross to the place where He would be crucified. At first, Jesus carried His own cross (John 19:17). But, eventually, likely due to the extreme torture He had already endured, Jesus was no longer able to carry His cross. As a result, the Roman soldiers forced another man to help Jesus carry the cross.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all identify the man who helped Jesus carry the cross as Simon, a man from Cyrene (Matthew 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26). Cyrene was an ancient city in Libya, Africa. Its location has led to many traditional depictions of Simon as an African black man. It is possible that Simon was black, but, since Scripture does not say, we cannot be sure. Cyrene was a Greek colony and a major cultural center of Greek philosophy and medicine. The city also had a significant population of Jews and Jewish proselytes (see Acts 2:10).

Mark and Luke add that Simon "was on his way in from the country," and Mark further adds that Simon "was the father of Alexander and Rufus." Alexander and [Rufus](#), therefore, must have been known to Mark's readers. Other than these three verses in [the Synoptic Gospels](#), Simon of Cyrene is nowhere else mentioned in Scripture.

There is speculation, based on some church tradition, that Simon of Cyrene later became a Christian—some theories state that he was already a follower of Christ before the crucifixion—and was a leader in the early church. There is also tradition that the Rufus mentioned in Mark 15:21 is the same Rufus mentioned in Romans 16:13. If this is the case, then it would lend credence to the idea that Simon and his family were prominent in the early church. But, again, Scripture nowhere explicitly makes this connection between the two Rufuses.

Simon of Cyrene was the man who helped Jesus carry the cross. For that, he is "immortalized" in the pages of Scripture. Hopefully, after receiving an extreme close-up of the suffering Jesus endured on our behalf, Simon of Cyrene also came to trust Jesus as His Savior. Simon may have borne the cross part of the way to Golgotha, but Jesus bore Simon's sin (1 John 2:2).

QUESTION - [Why does Golgotha mean "place of the skull"?](#)

ANSWER - As Matthew recounts Jesus' [crucifixion](#), he describes that "they came to a place called Golgotha (which means 'the place

of the skull") (Matthew 27:33)(**ED:** cf John 19:17). Matthew doesn't directly answer the question of why *Golgotha* means "place of the skull," but he uses the term *Golgotha*, which was "the Aramaic name of a hill near Jerusalem where executions took place" (BORROW Louw, J. P., and Nida, E. A., [*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*](#), United Bible Societies, 1996, p. 834). Luke references the crucifixion site as "the place called The Skull" (Luke 23:33), or more literally, "the place called *Kranion*"—the general Greek term for "skull." What Matthew writes in Aramaic, Luke recounts in Greek, as both languages were commonly used among the people in Israel in that day.

Luke, like Matthew, offers no direct explanation why the name of the location means "place of the skull," but his use of the Greek *kranion*, along with Matthew's use of *Golgotha*, might be indicative of a location that somewhat resembled a skull and was named for its appearance, or the term could simply reference a place of death, as it appears this was a common crucifixion site for criminals.

John also makes note of the location where Jesus was crucified, adding that "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. There they crucified Him" (John 19:17–18a, NASB). John first uses the Greek *kranion* and then clarifies that in Hebrew the name was Golgotha. While John provides both terms in his description, he does not address the question of why *Golgotha* means "place of the skull."

Mark provides the most direct answer to the question of why *Golgotha* means "place of the skull," as he recounts that "they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull" (Mark 15:22, NASB). From Mark's account, we may understand the place to simply be named Golgotha and that the association with the skull was merely a translation, but of course that would still not provide an answer as to why the name *Golgotha* was used in the first place. Because the exact location is unknown, the place may not be observed today to determine whether the terrain resembles a skull, nor is there additional historical documentation explaining why this location was the place of the skull.

It is worth noting that, in later Latin translations, the term *calva* was used, translating the Greek and Aramaic terms for "skull" with the Latin equivalent, and the term *Calvary* has become a commonly identified name to reference the place where Jesus was crucified. Both *Golgotha* and *Calvary* have become part of popular Christian vocabulary, though *Golgotha* seemed to be in wider use in the early church (see, for example, the ancient Coptic hymn "Golgotha"). The term *Calvary* is usually preferred in more contemporary usage (for example, in Jennie Evelyn Hussey's 1921 hymn "[Lead Me to Calvary](#)")(**ED:** SEE LYRICS BELOW).

While we are never told in the pages of Scripture exactly why Golgotha was called the "place of the skull," the imagery of that name sets a sober mood for our recalling that our Savior died there, paying the price for our sin. That imagery reminds that He conquered death, rising from the dead victorious and able to give us eternal life.

King of my life I crown Thee now-

Thine shall the glory be;
Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow,
Lead me to Calvary.

Refrain:

Lest I forget Gethsemane,
Lest I forget Thine agony,
Lest I forget Thy love for me,
Lead me to Calvary.

Show me the tomb where Thou wast laid,
Tenderly mourned and wept;
Angels in robes of light arrayed
Guarded Thee whilst Thou slept. [*Refrain*]

Let me like Mary, thru the gloom,
Come with a gift to Thee;
Show to me now the empty tomb-
Lead me to Calvary. [*Refrain*]

May I be willing, Lord, to bear
Daily my cross for Thee;
Even Thy cup of grief to share-
Thou hast borne all for me. [*Refrain*]

How would every incident in the life of Jesus lead out the souls of his redeemed in endless contemplation, were grace always in lively exercise! Alas! my honoured Lord, how little do I think of thee, and of thy sufferings! Will Jesus, this evening, awaken me to the solemn subject?—The bell of the neighbouring church is now tolling the curfew of the day. I hear it from my window. Ah! why should I want such a call to think on my Lord? Awake, awake, my soul, and let thy meditation take wing, and flee to Gethsemane, and from the garden and the hall, behold the Lamb of God bearing his cross towards the place of execution. O Pilate, thou unjust judge! is this thy pretended innocency, to suffer him—whom thou didst declare to be innocent, in the moment thou didst pass sentence for his death—to bear his cross also? See what long furrows the ploughers have ploughed upon his sacred back! and wilt thou compel him to bear the heavy weight upon a part so tender? See! Jesus faints under it! Will none of those, whose souls he hath redeemed, and whose bodies he hath healed, help the Lord of life and glory? Where are his disciples? Are there none to aid? Not one to be found that dares assist him?—Pause, my soul, over the sad contemplation! Christ is here, as his type represents him, the gospel Isaac, carrying the wood for his own burnt-offering. “In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.” It was his office to be led as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. “It pleased the Father to bruise him, and to put him to grief.” The cross was ponderous. The body fainted under its pressure. But the sins of his redeemed made it heavier to his soul: and the weight of the Father’s wrath against sin aggravated the dreadful load. Precious Redeemer, dying Lamb of God! were my sins adding to thy sorrow? Have I been reproaching Pilate, and all the while forgetting that every transgression of mine became more painful to thy soul than the cross, or the thorns, or the soldier’s spear that pierced thine heart? Oh! for grace to crucify those sins which nailed thee to the cursed tree! Oh! for grace to take up the cross and follow thee, day by day. Lord Jesus, I would pray thee to give me grace, to go forth unto thee, “without the camp, bearing thy reproach!”

WHEN I SURVEY THE WONDROUS CROSS - (Borrow [Amazing Grace - Kenneth Osbeck - page 106](#))

Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Carrying His own cross, He went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). Here they crucified Him. (John 19:17, 18)

While preparing for a communion service in 1707, Isaac Watts wrote this deeply moving and very personal expression of gratitude for the amazing love that the death of Christ on the cross revealed. It first appeared in print that same year in Watts’ outstanding collection, Hymns and Spiritual Songs. The hymn was originally titled “Crucifixion to the World by the Cross of Christ.” Noted theologian Matthew Arnold called this the greatest hymn in the English language. In Watts’ day, texts such as this, which were based only on personal feelings, were termed “hymns of human composure” and were very controversial, since almost all congregational singing at this time consisted of ponderous repetitions of the Psalms. The unique thoughts presented by Watts in these lines certainly must have pointed the 18th century Christians to a view of the dying Savior in a vivid and memorable way that led them to a deeper worship experience, even as it does for us today.

Young Watts showed unusual talent at an early age, learning Latin when he was 5, Greek at 9, French at 11 and Hebrew at 12. As he grew up, he became increasingly disturbed by the uninspiring psalm singing in the English churches. He commented, “The singing of God’s praise is the part of worship most closely related to heaven; but its performance among us is the worst on earth.” Throughout his life, Isaac Watts wrote over 600 hymns and is known today as the “father of English hymnody.” His hymns were strong and triumphant statements of the Christian faith, yet none ever equaled the colorful imagery and genuine devotion of this emotionally stirring and magnificent hymn text.

When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride.
Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the death of Christ, my God;
all the vain things that charm me most—I sacrifice them to His blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down;
did e’er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?
Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small:
Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

For Today: Matthew 26:28; Luke 7:47; Romans 5:6–11; Galatians 6:14
Can you say with Isaac Watts: “my soul, my life, my all”? Sing as you go—

The Wondrous Cross

He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, . . . where they crucified Him. —John 19:17-18

Today's Scripture : John 19:14-30

Mahatma Ghandi asked some missionaries who visited him during one of his numerous fasts to sing a hymn for him. "Which hymn?" they asked. "The one that expresses all that is deepest in your faith," he replied. They thought for a moment and then with full hearts sang these words written by Isaac Watts:

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Yes, there is something wondrous about the cross that stirs our hearts. When we think back to Calvary, our souls are saddened and yet thrilled with the wonder of it all. With heartfelt gratitude we exclaim, "Thank You, Lord, for saving my soul!"

When George Briggs was governor of Massachusetts, three of his friends visited the Holy Land. While they were there, they climbed Golgotha's slope and cut from the hilltop a stick to be used as a cane. On their return they presented it to the governor, saying, "We want you to know that when we stood on Calvary, we thought of you." He accepted the gift with gratitude and then remarked, "I appreciate your consideration of me, gentlemen, but I am still more thankful for Another who thought of me there!"

Yes, Jesus thought of you and me when hanging there in agony. A life of gratitude would be our appropriate response. With Isaac Watts we can say, "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all!" By: Henry G. Bosch (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

The cross reveals God's heart for the lost.

Jesus' Love For All

He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, . . . where they crucified Him. — John 19:17-18

Today's Scripture & Insight : John 19:17-24

It was a bit unusual, but three times in one day I heard the same song. In the early afternoon, I attended a hymnsing at a home for the elderly. As part of her prayer at the end of our time together, Willie, one of the residents, said, "Sing with me, 'Jesus Loves Me.'" In the evening, I attended a gathering with young people who sang it while pounding out the beat with their hands and feet. Later that evening, I received a text message on my phone with an audio recording of my 2 1/2-year-old grandniece with a sweet little voice, singing, "I am weak, but He is strong." People in their nineties, teenagers, and a toddler all sang that song that day.

After hearing that simple song three times, I began to think the Lord might be telling me something. Actually, He gave us all this message long ago: "I love you." We read in John 19 that He allowed people to put a crown of thorns on His head, mock Him, strike Him, strip Him, and crucify Him (vv.1-6). He had the power to stop them, but He said very little (v.11). He did it all for love's sake to pay for our sins and to rescue us from punishment.

How much does God love us? Jesus spread out His arms and was nailed to the cross. He died for us, then rose again. That's a precious fact for young and old. By: Anne Cetas (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak but He is strong.
—Warner

The truest measure of God's love is that He loves without measure! —Bernard of Clairvaux

Dictionary of Biblical Imagery PAGE 654 - CROSS -

In the ancient world the word cross was often synonymous with crucifixion. It sometimes only consisted of an upright stake, but usually a cross beam was attached either on the top or in the middle of the stake. Crucifixion as a form of execution probably originated with the Persians. It was later appropriated by Alexander the Great, adopted by the Romans and finally abolished by Constantine. It should be noted that the reference to the condemned person hanging on a tree in Deuteronomy 21:22–23 is not a reference to execution but is a public display of God's curse subsequent to stoning.

In the first century A.D. crucifixion was one of the strongest forms of deterrence against insurrection or political agitation in Roman provinces. Crucifixion was preceded by scourging. When the victim was affixed to the cross, he was stripped and mocked. The pain was extreme. After the victim died, the body was often left on the cross to decay and become food for scavengers.

The imagery of cross in the Synoptic Gospels expresses radical discipleship that leads to suffering and sometimes to martyrdom. Jesus demands that his followers be willing to deny themselves and “take up the cross” (Mt 16:24; Mk 8:34). Luke’s version (9:23) emphasizes a daily commitment to this task. The expression “take up the cross” recalls the common practice of the condemned person carrying the cross beam to the place of execution. Such a demand entails that all who follow Jesus must be prepared to suffer and be crucified. Jesus’ road to suffering and eventual death by means of the cross became an example of obedience and commitment to God for all who would become disciples. In this respect the call to discipleship is a call to both self-denial and suffering. In John the notion of being “lifted up,” which is understood as being part of the glorification process, is associated with Jesus’ crucifixion (Jn 3:14; 12:32–34). Here the cross signifies victory.

The image of cross in Paul is theological in import. Paul’s interest is in the saving significance of the cross as atonement and not in the historical reconstruction of the event. Paul interpreted Jesus’ agonizing and humiliating experience on the cross as an expression of obedience (Phil 2:8), which accomplished the required redemption. Paul’s preaching of the cross, namely the crucifixion of the Messiah, does not correspond to established ideas of salvation in the Greco-Roman and Jewish religions (1 Cor 1:17–18). Rather it is seen as divine wisdom. Not only does cross become associated with the death of Jesus, but more importantly it becomes inseparably bound to all components of Christian salvation. For Paul the cross is the revelation of God’s power and wisdom. It dramatically signifies an all-encompassing reconciliation: it bridges the gap between humanity and God (Col 2:14); it breaks the barrier between Jew and Gentile (Eph 2:16); and it restores the entire cosmos (Col 1:20). Similar emphases on the effects of the cross are also described in Hebrews 12:2 and 1 Peter 2:24.

See also [ATONEMENT](#); [SUFFERING SERVANT](#) CRIME AND PUNISHMENT; CURSE; SUFFERING; ; WISDOM.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

- BORROW [M. Hengel, Crucifixion in the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross](#) (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977).

Streams in the Desert - “And he went out carrying his own cross.” (John 19:17.)

THERE is a poem called “The Changed Cross.” It represents a weary one who thought that her cross was surely heavier than those of others whom she saw about her, and she wished that she might choose another instead of her own. She slept, and in her dream she was led to a place where many crosses lay, crosses of different shapes and sizes. There was a little one most beautiful to behold, set in jewels and gold. “Ah, this I can wear with comfort,” she said. So she took it up, but her weak form shook beneath it. The jewels and the gold were beautiful, but they were far too heavy for her.

Next she saw a lovely cross with fair flowers entwined around its sculptured form. Surely that was the one for her. She lifted it, but beneath the flowers were piercing thorns which tore her flesh.

At last, as she went on, she came to a plain cross, without jewels, without carvings, with only a few words of love inscribed upon it. This she took up and it proved the best of all, the easiest to be borne. And as she looked upon it, bathed in the radiance that fell from Heaven, she recognized her own old cross. She had found it again, and it was the best of all and lightest for her.

God knows best what cross we need to bear. We do not know how heavy other people’s crosses are. We envy someone who is rich; his is a golden cross set with jewels, but we do not know how heavy it is. Here is another whose life seems very lovely. She bears a cross twined with flowers. If we could try all the other crosses that we think lighter than our own, we would at last find that not one of them suited us so well as our own.—Glimpses through Life’s Windows.

If thou, impatient, dost let slip thy cross,
Thou wilt not find it in this world again;
Nor in another: here and here alone
Is given thee to suffer for God’s sake.
In other worlds we may more perfectly
Love Him and serve Him, praise Him,
Grow nearer and nearer to Him with delight.
But then we shall not any more
Be called to suffer, which is our appointment here.
Canst thou not suffer, then, one hour or two?
If He should call thee from thy cross today,

Saying: "It is finished—that hard cross of thine
From which thou prayest for deliverance,"
Thinkest thou not some passion of regret
Would overcome thee? Thou would'st say,
"So soon? Let me go back and suffer yet awhile
More patiently. I have not yet praised God."
Whensoever it comes, that summons that we look for,
It will seem soon, too soon. Let us take heed in time
That God may now be glorified in us.
—Ugo Bassi's Sermon in a Hospital.

Jesus' Love For All

He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, . . . where they crucified Him. —John 19:17-18

It was a bit unusual, but three times in one day I heard the same song. In the early afternoon, I attended a hymn sing at a home for the elderly. As part of her prayer at the end of our time together, Willie, one of the residents, said, "Sing with me, 'Jesus Loves Me.'" In the evening, I attended a gathering with young people who sang it while pounding out the beat with their hands and feet. Later that evening, I received a text message on my phone with an audio recording of my 2 1/2-year-old grandniece with a sweet little voice, singing, "I am weak, but He is strong." People in their nineties, teenagers, and a toddler all sang that song that day.

After hearing that simple song three times, I began to think the Lord might be telling me something. Actually, He gave us all this message long ago: "I love you." We read in John 19 that He allowed people to put a crown of thorns on His head, mock Him, strike Him, strip Him, and crucify Him (vv.1-6). He had the power to stop them, but He said very little (v.11). He did it all for love's sake to pay for our sins and to rescue us from punishment.

How much does God love us? Jesus spread out His arms and was nailed to the cross. He died for us, then rose again. That's a precious fact for young and old. By Anne Cetas (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak but He is strong.
—Warner

The truest measure of God's love is that He loves without measure!
—Bernard of Clairvaux

Insight Although history is obscure about many details of Pontius Pilate's life and death, we do know that he served as the prefect, or governor, of Judea for 10 years from ad 26 to 36. An artifact discovered in 1961 verifies his existence and underscores once again that the Bible can be trusted.

The order of events at the crucifixion:

- (1) Arrival at Golgotha (Mt 27:33; Mk 15:22; Lu 23:33; Jn 19:17).
- (2) Offer of the stupefying drink refused (Mt 27:34; Mk 15:23).
- (3) Crucified between 2 thieves (Mt 27:35-38; Mk 15:24-28; Lu 23:33-38; Jn 19:18).
- (4) Utters 1st cry from the cross, "Father, forgive," (Lu 23:34).
- (5) Soldiers part His garments (Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Lu 23:34; Jn 19:23).
- (6) Jews mock Jesus (Mt 27:39-43; Mk 15:29-32; Lu 23:35).
- (7) Thieves rail Him, one repents (Mt 27:44; Mk 15:32; Lu 23:39-43).
- (8) Second cry from cross, "Today you will be with me," (Lu 23:43).
- (9) Third cry, "Dear woman, here is your son," etc. (Jn 19:26-27).
- (10) Darkness (Mt 27:45; Mk 15:33; Lu 23:44).
- (11) Fourth cry, "My God," etc. (Mt 27:46-47; Mk 15:34-36).
- (12) Fifth cry, "I am thirsty" (Jn 19:28).
- (13) Sixth cry, "It is finished" (Jn 19:30).
- (14) Seventh cry, "Father, into your hands," etc. (Lu 23:46). And

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
JESUS ON THE VIA DOLOROSA			
Play song Via Dolorosa			
NOTE: Words in bold & yellow highlight unique to that Gospel			
Mt 27:31-32 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. 32 As they were coming out, they found a man of Cyrene named Simon , whom they pressed into service to bear His cross.	Mk 15:20-22+ 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. 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.	Lk 23:26-29+ 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.	Jn 19:16-17a So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified. 17 They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross,
		Lk 23:27-32+ And following Him was a large crowd of the people, and of women who were mourning and lamenting Him. 28 But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 "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.' 30 "Then they will begin TO SAY TO THE MOUNTAINS, 'FALL ON US,' AND TO THE HILLS, 'COVER US.' 31 "For if they do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?" Lk 23:32+ Two others also, who were criminals, were being led away to be put to death with Him.	

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](#)

Related Resource:

- [Who helped Jesus carry the cross?](#)

JESUS CRUCIFIED

Mt 27:33+ And when they came to a place called Golgotha , which means Place of a Skull .	Mk 15:22+ Then they *brought Him to the place Golgotha , which is translated, Place of a Skull	Lk 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. (cf Mk 15:27, Mt 27:38, Jn 19:18)	Jn 19:17b ...to the place called the Place of a Skull , which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha .
Mt 27:34+ they gave Him wine to drink mixed with gall ; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink.	Mk 15:23+ They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it.		
		Lk 23:34a+ But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." (1st Word from Cross)	

<p>Mt 27:35-36+ 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. (N)</p>	<p>Mk 15:24 And they crucified Him, and divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots for them to decide what each man should take.</p>	<p>Lk 23:34b+ And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.</p>	<p>Jn 19:23-24 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 (Ps 22:18): "THEY DIVIDED MY OUTER GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS." (N)</p>
	<p>Mk 15:25 It was the third hour (9 AM) when they crucified Him (N)</p>		
<p>Mt 27:37+ And above His head they put up the charge against Him which read, "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS." 38 At that time two robbers *were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.</p>	<p>Mk 15:26+ The inscription of the charge against Him read, "THE KING OF THE JEWS." 27 They crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left. 28 <i>[And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with transgressors."]</i></p>	<p>Lk 23:38+ Now there was also an inscription above Him, "THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."</p>	<p>Jn 19:18-19 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."</p> <p>John 19:20-22 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." (N)</p>

<p>Mt 27:39+ And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads (Ps 22:7) 40 and saying, “You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”</p> <p>Mt 27:41+ In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him and saying, 42 “He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him. 43 “HE TRUSTS IN GOD; LET GOD RESCUE Him now, IF HE DELIGHTS IN HIM; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”</p>	<p>Mk 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, 30 save Yourself, and come down from the cross!”</p> <p>Mk 15:31+ In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves and saying, “He s a v e d others; He cannot s a v e Himself. 32 “Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!”</p>	<p>Lk 23:35a+ And the people stood by, looking on.</p> <p>Lk 23:35b+ And even the rulers were sneering (ekmukterizo imperf tense - over and over) at Him (Ps 22:7), saying, “He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One.”</p> <p>Lk 23:36+ The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine (ED: Presumably a different mocking than Mt 27:27-31), 37 and saying, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!”</p>	
<p>Mt 27:44+ The robbers who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words.</p>	<p>Mk 15:32b+ Those who were crucified with Him were also insulting Him.</p>	<p>Note: <i>Something Supernatural happened to one criminal who initially was insulting Jesus!</i></p>	
		<p>Lk 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.” (2nd Word from Cross or here)</p>	

			Jn 19:25-27 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 . 26 When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He *said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" 27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" (3rd Word from Cross) From that hour the disciple took her into his own household. (N)
Mt 27:45+ Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour .	Mk 15:33+ When the sixth hour came (NOON), darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour .	Lk 23:44-45+ It was now about the sixth hour (noon), and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour (3PM), 45 because the sun was obscured (N) ; and the veil of the temple was torn in two .	
Mt 27:46-49+ About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?" see note (4th Word from Cross) - fulfills Ps 22:1 -) 47 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."	Mk 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?" see note (4th Word from Cross) - fulfills Ps 22:1) 35 When some of the bystanders heard it, they began saying, "Behold, He is calling for Elijah." 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."		Jn 19:28-30 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, (Ps 69:21) said, "I am thirsty." (5th Word from Cross or Here) 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.
			Jn 19:30 Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine , He said, "It is finished!" (Paid In Full - see tetelestai) (6th Word from Cross or Here)
Mt 27:50+ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up (aphiemi) His spirit.	Mk 15:37+ And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed His last.	Lk 23:46+ And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT." (Fulfills Ps 31:5)(7th Word from Cross) Having said this, He breathed His last. (N)	Jn 19:30b And He bowed His head and gave up (paradidomi) His spirit.

EVENTS FOLLOWING CHRIST'S DEATH

<p>Mt 27:51a+ And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom;</p>	<p>Mk 15:38+ And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.</p>	<p>Note: Luke places the tearing of the veil before Jesus gives up His spirit. Matthew and Mark would seem to be more chronologically accurate.</p>	
<p>Mt 27:51b-53+ 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.</p>			
			<p>Jn 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) (Dt 21:22, 23), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken (<i>crurifragium</i>), 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 (APOSTLE JOHN) 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.” (Ps 34:20, cf Ex 12:46+, Nu 9:12+) 37 And again another Scripture says, “THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED.” (Ps 22:16,17 Zec 12:10+ Rev 1:7+) N)</p>

<p>Mt 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!”</p>	<p>Mk 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!”</p>	<p>Lk 23:47-49+ Now when the centurion saw what had happened, he began praising God, saying, “Certainly this man was innocent.”(righteous - see N)</p>	
		<p>Lk 23:48+ And all the crowds who came together for this spectacle, when they observed what had happened, began to return, beating their breasts. (N)</p>	
<p>Mt 27:55-56+ Many women were there looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee while ministering to Him. (Lk 8:1-3+) 56 Among them was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.</p>	<p>Mk 15:40-41+ 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. ⁴¹ When He was in Galilee, they used to follow Him and minister to Him (Lk 8:1-3+); and there were many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.</p>	<p>Lk 23:49+ And all His acquaintances and the women who accompanied Him from Galilee were standing at a distance, seeing these things.</p>	

THE BURIAL OF JESUS

<p>Mt 27:57-60+ When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph (<i>Fulfills Isa 53:9+</i>), who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. 58 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. 59 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 and laid it in his own new tomb, (<i>See note, cf Isa 53:9+</i>) which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.</p>	<p>Mk 15:42-45+ When evening had already come, because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, 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. 44 Pilate wondered if He was dead by this time, and summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether He was already dead. 45 And ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. 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.</p>	<p>Lk 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. (NB: <i>Jesus' Body buried on day before the Sabbath began - the first of 3 days before resurrection</i>).</p>	<p>Jn 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.</p>
<p>Mt 27:61+ And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the grave.</p>	<p>Mk 15:47+ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were looking on to see where He was laid.</p>	<p>Lk 23:55-56 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.</p>	

N - Mark 15:25+ third hour. "The third hour" means the **third hour** after sunrise, using the usual Jewish nomenclature at the time, making it about 9:00 a.m. Many years later, John, writing mainly for Gentile readers, used the Roman nomenclature, commenting that Jesus was before Pilate at "**about the sixth hour**" (John 19:14). Since the Roman day started at midnight, this would have been about 6:00 a.m. (Henry Morris) **A T Robertson** adds "This is Jewish time and would be nine A.M. The trial before Pilate was the sixth hour Roman time (John 19:14), six A.M."

These actions were in precise fulfillment of an unlikely prophecy given a thousand years before (see Psalm 22:17-18). It is one of the few events in the life of Christ recorded in all four Gospels. (Henry Morris)

Jesus was providing here for His mother, not for John as some have thought. John's own mother was also there at the crucifixion (Matthew 27:56+). (Henry Morris)

This volitional death of Jesus before His legs could be broken (John 19:31-33) was in fulfillment of the prophecy in Psalm 34:19,20. Also, Jesus was fulfilling the symbolism of the sacrificial Passover lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7+), the bones of which were not to be broken (Exodus 12:46+; Numbers 9:12+).

Lk 23:36+ - "I COMMIT MY SPIRIT" - **Commit** is in middle voice indicating Jesus initiated this act and participated in the completion of it! He was in full control of His life up to His very last breath! Compare Mt 27:50+ where yielded is **aphiemi** in the active voice signifying volitional choice.

Why keeping watch? After all He was fastened to the Cross? This was to prevent someone from rescuing Jesus from the cross. "Men were known to have lived after being taken down from a cross." (Carson see [The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

Jn 19:22 - Why the title over Jesus on the Cross? "The written charge (or titulus) was normally carried before a criminal on the way to execution, or hung around his neck, and would then be fixed to the cross, thus reinforcing the deterrent effect of the punishment." (France - see [The Gospel According to Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary](#))

Lk 23:45+ - Was this a Solar Eclipse? - Since Passover occurred at full moon, this **darkness could not have been a solar eclipse**. It was clearly supernatural in its timing - ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary](#)) "[Solar eclipses happen only at the new moon phase](#), when the Moon is between Earth and the Sun. During a solar eclipse, the Moon casts a shadow on Earth, and blocks or partially blocks our view of the Sun." (NASA Science)

John 19:31+ Day of preparation...High Day - Day of preparation was the day before the Passover, during which all leaven was to be disposed of and all ceremonial cleansing was to be finished. "**High day**" means that the regular Sabbath and the Passover were the same day, making the one day especially important. The request to remove the corpses was based on Deut. 21:22-23, as dead bodies hanging on a tree would defile the land! What irony, for it was their entire life that was defiled by their rejection of the Messiah. These hypocrites are ever worried about the Law and about externals, never admitting they had a far more urgent internal/eternal need for cleansing (circumcision) of their hard hearts (cf Acts 7:51+)! The Jews had seen many crucifixions by the Romans (up to 30,000 some report) and knew the Romans would let the bodies decay on the crosses in some cases. Breaking a crucified victims legs preventing them from breathing (inspiring) and without adequate oxygen death would occur quickly.

Luke 23:47+ Centurion...praising God...this Man was innocent. - The word **innocent** is [dikaios](#) which is used 74v in NT and almost always is translated righteous as do some of the translations (HCSB, NIV, KJV).

Luke 23:48+ Beating their breasts is clearly a sign of grief and mourning and is the exact phrase (tupto stethos) used to describe the penitent tax collector in Lk 18:13+ who "was **beating his breast** (tupto tethos), saying "God, be merciful to me, the sinner." Luke's description does not go that far, but one cannot help but wonder whether some of these were also present at Peter's Pentecostal sermon, having had their hearts "tenderized" by witnessing the drama of Jesus' crucifixion.

Mt 27:60+ Own new tomb - "his own new tomb. There is more here than meets the eye. Joseph was a rich man who lived in Arimathea, so why would he build a new tomb in Jerusalem, especially one in the rock on a hillside close to Golgotha within easy earshot of the cries of crucified criminals? It could hardly have been planned for himself; all indications point to his having prepared it ahead of time to receive the body of Jesus (Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42)." (Henry Morris)

QUESTION - [Why did Jesus say "Father, forgive them" on the cross?](#)

ANSWER - Jesus' words "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" are found in Luke 23:34. Jesus looked down from the cross upon a scene that must have been distressing to Him. The Roman soldiers were gambling for His clothing (John 19:23-24); the criminals on the crosses to either side of Him were reviling Him (Matthew 27:44); the religious leaders were mocking Him (Matthew 27:41-43); and the crowd was blaspheming Him (Matthew 27:39). Surrounded by this most unworthy lot, Jesus prayed for them. "Father, forgive them" is a prayer of unmatched mercy and love.

Even in His agony, Jesus' concern was for the forgiveness of those who counted themselves among His enemies. He asked the Father to forgive the thieves on the cross who jeered at Him. He asked the Father to forgive the Roman soldiers who had mocked Him, spit on Him, beat Him, yanked out His beard, whipped Him, put a crown of thorns on His head, and nailed Him to the cross. Jesus asked forgiveness for the angry mob that had mocked Him and called for His crucifixion (Mark 15:29-30).

It is important to note that Jesus' prayer, "Father, forgive them," does not mean that everyone was forgiven, unilaterally, without repentance and faith. It does mean that Jesus was willing to forgive them—forgiveness was, in fact, the reason He was on the cross. The words "Father, forgive them" show the merciful heart of God.

Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them," because He was fulfilling Old Testament prophecy: "He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12). From the cross, Jesus interceded for sinners. Today, risen and glorified, Jesus remains the "one mediator between God and mankind" (1 Timothy 2:5). Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them," because He was putting into practice the principle He had taught in the [Sermon on the Mount](#): "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:43-44). Jesus, the persecuted, prayed for His persecutors.

Coupled with the willingness of Jesus to forgive His tormentors is the fact that they did not know what they were doing (Luke 23:34). The sinners who put Jesus on the cross were ignorant of the true import of their actions. The soldiers personally held no ill will toward Him. They were simply following orders. This was how they normally treated condemned men, and they believed that He truly

deserved it. They didn't know that they were killing the Son of God (see 1 Corinthians 2:8). The mob didn't really know whom they were trying to destroy. The Jewish leaders had deceived them into believing that Jesus was a fake and a troublemaker (Acts 3:17). In praying "Father, forgive them," Jesus revealed His infinite mercy; He still loved them and would forgive them if only they would humble themselves and repent (Matthew 18:14; 2 Peter 3:9).

Jesus' prayer "Father, forgive them" was answered in the lives of many people. The Roman centurion at the foot of the cross, upon seeing how Jesus died, exclaimed, "Surely this man was the Son of God!" (Mark 15:39). One of the two [thieves](#) crucified with Jesus exercised faith in Christ, who promised him [paradise](#) (Luke 23:39–43). A member of the [Sanhedrin](#) publicly aligned himself with Jesus (John 19:39). And, a little over a month later, three thousand people in Jerusalem were saved in one day as the church began (Acts 2:41).

On the cross Jesus provided forgiveness for all those who would ever believe in Him (Matthew 20:28). Jesus paid the penalty for the sins that we commit in our ignorance, and even the ones we've committed deliberately. **When we are [born again](#), we, too, become an answer to Jesus' prayer "Father, forgive them."**[GotQuestions.org](#)

QUESTION - [What was the significance of the temple veil being torn in two when Jesus died?](#)- SEE VIDEO

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).

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 profound significance of the tearing of the veil 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](#)

QUESTION - [Why did Jesus say, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"](#)

ANSWER - "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, KJV). This cry is a fulfillment of Psalm 22:1, one of many parallels between that psalm and the specific events of the crucifixion. It is difficult to understand in what sense Jesus was "forsaken" by God. It is certain that God approved His work. It is certain that Jesus was innocent. He had done nothing to forfeit the favor of God. As [God's own Son](#)—holy, harmless, undefiled, and obedient—God still loved Him. In none of these senses could God have forsaken Him.

The prophet Isaiah says this about the Messiah: "Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:4–5). Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us (Galatians 3:13). He was made a sin-offering, and He died in our place, on our account, that He might bring us near to God. It was this, doubtless, that intensified His sufferings and part of why Jesus said, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" It was the manifestation of God's hatred of sin, in some unexplained way, that Jesus experienced in that terrible hour. The suffering He endured was due to us, and it is that suffering by which we can be saved from eternal death.

In those awful moments, as evil men were allowed to do whatever they wanted to Jesus, our Lord expressed His feelings of abandonment. God placed the sins of the world on His Son, and Jesus for a time felt the desolation of being unconscious of His Father's presence. It was at this time that "God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

There is another possible reason for Jesus to cry out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" It could be that Jesus' intent in quoting Psalm 22:1 was to point His hearers to that psalm. When they read Psalm 22, they would no doubt see the many fulfilled prophecies included in that song of David. Even while experiencing the agony of the cross, Jesus was teaching the crowds and proving yet again that He was the Messiah who fulfilled the Scriptures. [GotQuestions.org](#)

John 19:18 There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between.

- John 18:32 Ps 22:16 Isa 53:12 Mt 27:35-38,44 Mk 15:24-28 Lu 23:32-34 Ga 3:13 Heb 12:2
- James Stalker's classic [Trial and Arrest of Jesus Christ](#) - **12. CALVARY** Matt. 27:33–8; Mark 15:27, 28; Luke 23:32, 33; John 19:18–22.

Related Passages:

Psalm 22:16 For **dogs** have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet.

Note that Plato uses [kraugazo](#) of the howling of a dog! (See [kraugazo](#) for "cried out" Jn 19:6, 19:15).

Spurgeon - We are to understand every item of this sad description as being urged by the Lord Jesus as a plea for divine help; and this will give us a high idea of his perseverance in prayer. "*For dogs have compassed me.*" Here he marks the more ignoble crowd, who, while less strong than their brutal leaders, were not less ferocious, for there they were howling and barking like unclean and hungry dogs. Hunters frequently surround their game with a circle, and gradually encompass them with an ever-narrowing ring of dogs and men. Such a picture is before us. In the centre stands, not a panting stag, but a bleeding, fainting man, and around him are the enraged and un pitying wretches who have hounded him to his doom. Here we have the "hind of the morning" of whom the psalm so plaintively sings, hunted by bloodhounds, all thirsting to devour him. *The assembly of the wicked have inclosed me:* thus the Jewish people were unchurched, and that which called itself an assembly of the righteous is justly for its sins marked upon the forehead as an assembly of the wicked. This is not the only occasion when professed churches of God have become synagogues of Satan, and have persecuted the Holy One and the Just. *They pierced my hands and my feet.* This can by no means refer to David, or to any one but Jesus of Nazareth, the once crucified but now exalted Son of God. Pause, dear reader, and view the wounds of thy Redeemer.

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.

Matthew 27:38, 44+ At that time two **robbers** ([lestes](#) like Barabbas) *were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left....44 The **robbers** ([lestes](#) like Barabbas) who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words.

Mark 15:27-28+ They *crucified two **robbers** ([lestes](#) like Barabbas) with Him, one on His right and one on His left. [And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with transgressors."]

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.

CRUCIFIED BETWEEN TWO ROBBERS

There they crucified ([stauroo](#)) Him - It is notable that John does not describe any of the horrible agony which Jesus must have suffered for those six hours on the Cross. John does not state definitively but given that the soldiers had all of Jesus garments, our Lord was stripped naked. It is interesting that victims were usually tied to the cross rather than nailed because nails were expensive. Another reason victims were tied is because tying resulted in victims taking longer to die than if they were nailed. For an excellent discussion of the pathophysiology of crucifixion see Dr William Edwards' article [Death of Jesus](#).

*It has been well said that the person who was crucified
"died a thousand deaths."*

--William Hendriksen

And with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between - John does not say they are criminals but we know from the synoptic gospels these two men were robbers ([lestes](#) violent robbers like Barabbas) (Mt 27:38,44+, Mk 15:27+), criminals (Lk 23:33+). And from a prophetic perspective there were transgressors (Isa 53:12+). The upshot is that Jesus identified with sinners on the cross, even though He Himself was sinless.

Two other men, one on either side - The arms of Jesus were spread out toward each robber, but only one "grasped" His hand by grace through faith.

John MacArthur - Whatever his motives, Pilate's decision to execute Jesus with criminals accorded perfectly with Old Testament prophecy (cf. Acts 4:27-28+). (See [MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

Brian Bell - In the center - or in-between! Between 2 thieves; between life & death; between heaven & earth. There He hangs with outstretched arms, aching for a prodigal world's return. In the meanwhile, Jesus is blessed with the last kind words He'd hear on earth. Not from a religious leader, not from a disciple, not even from His mother but from a common thief. We don't know anything about this criminal. Not how much he stole nor how often. From whom or why. We only know he was a thief. A wayward son over whom some mother's heart has been broken; over whom some father's hopes have been dashed. I wonder, was his mother even there? If she was, could she hear or even perceive what just took place? [Lk 24:39-43+] Oh and, what did Jesus' eyes of forgiveness look like? **Jesus in the center - may it be said of our lives!** Not: God #1; marriage #2; kids #3; ministry #4; work #5; hobbies #6; etc. But, **Jesus the center of our life**; Jesus the **center** of our marriage; Jesus the **center** of our kids; Jesus the **center** of our ministry; Jesus the **center** of our work; Jesus the **center** of our hobbies.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:18. Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

As if to show that they thought him the worst of the three, and therefore gave him ¼shall I call it the place of chief dishonour?

John 19:18-19. Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was, Jesus Of Nazareth The King Of The Jews.

What could have moved Pilate to write that title? Perhaps he did it just to let the Jews know that they had forced him to put the Christ to death; he would put over him their accusation without any endorsement of his own: "JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS;" and so he is, and King of the Gentiles, too.

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](#))

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](#))

The order of events at the crucifixion:

- (1) Arrival at Golgotha (Mt 27:33; Mk 15:22; Lu 23:33; Jn 19:17).
- (2) Offer of the stupefying drink refused (Mt 27:34; Mk 15:23).
- (3) Crucified between 2 thieves (Mt 27:35-38; Mk 15:24-28; Lu 23:33-38; Jn 19:18).
- (4) Utters 1st cry fr the cross, "Father, forgive," (Lu 23:34).
- (5) Soldiers part His garments (Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Lu 23:34; Jn 19:23).
- (6) Jews mock Jesus (Mt 27:39-43; Mk 15:29-32; Lu 23:35).
- (7) Thieves rail Him, one repents (Mt 27:44; Mk 15:32; Lu 23:39-43).
- (8) Second cry from cross, "Today you will be with me," (Lu 23:43).
- (9) Third cry, "Dear woman, here is your son," etc. (Jn 19:26-27).
- (10) Darkness (Mt 27:45; Mk 15:33; Lu 23:44).
- (11) Fourth cry, "My God," etc. (Mt 27:46-47; Mk 15:34-36).
- (12) Fifth cry, "I am thirsty" (Jn 19:28).
- (13) Sixth cry, "It is finished" (Jn 19:30).
- (14) Seventh cry, "Father, into your hands," etc. (Lu 23:46). And
- (15) Lord dismisses His spirit (Mt 27:50; Mk 15:37; Lu 23:46; Jn 19:30).

John 19:19 Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It was written, "JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS."

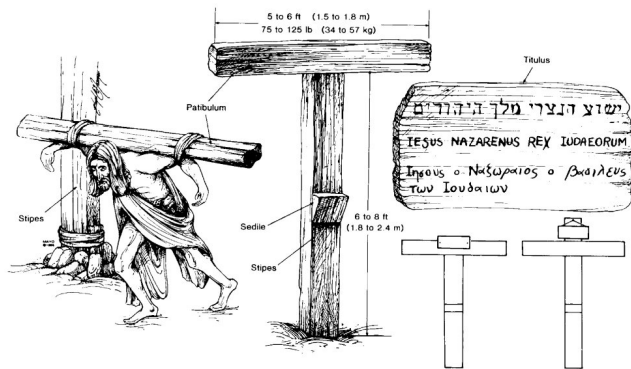
- **wrote:** Mt 27:37 Mk 15:26 Lu 23:38
- **JESUS:** John 19:3,12 1:45,46,49 18:33 Ac 3:6 26:9

Related Passages:

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

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

Luke 23:38+ Now there was also an inscription above Him, "THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."



SEE TITULUS - Hebrew, Latin and Greek Inscription

THE CAUSE FOR CRUCIFIXION "KING OF THE JEWS"

You may have seen the acronym **INRI** which stands for the Latin inscription **IESVS·NAZARENVS·REX·IVDAEORVM** = Iesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum.

Pilate also wrote an inscription (**titlos**; Latin "titulus") **and put it on the cross** (**stauros**) - This suggests to some commentators that Pilate himself wrote this inscription, but others feel he caused it to be written and controlled the content. The **inscription** (**titlos**) was a brief notice used for identification and giving the reason for condemnation. The point is that Jesus' "crime" in Pilate's eyes was that He claimed to be a King.

Gilbrant - "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 (ED: BUT SEE **NN BELOW**)."

A T Robertson - Only John tells us that Pilate himself wrote it and John alone uses the technical Latin word **titlos** (several times in inscriptions), for the board with the **name of the criminal** and the **crime in which he is condemned**; Mark 15:26 and Luke 23:28 use **ἐπιγραφὴ** [epigraphē] (superscription). Matthew 27:37 has simply **αἰτίαν** [aitian] (accusation). The inscription in John is the fullest of the four and has all in any of them save the words "this is" (**οὗτος ἐστίν** [houtos estin]) in Matt. 27:37.

The name (Nazarene) stands for devotion and love, it is equally certain that on the other side it represented the bitter and undying hatred of His enemies.

--- Henry E. Dosker

It was written (**grapho** - perfect tense = stands written), **"JESUS (Iesous) THE NAZARENE (Nazoraiois), THE KING (basileus) OF THE JEWS (Ioudaiois)** - Note there are slight differences in the 4 gospel accounts (**see above**) but all include the phrase **"King of the Jews."**

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 (cf John 19:20,21).

What Pilate meant in sarcasm, God meant in truth.

Jesus really was the promised King of the Jews

-- Steven Cole

John MacArthur on the phrase **"The King of the Jews"** 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)." (See **Mark Commentary**)

Spurgeon Study Bible - "Pilate also had a sign made and put on the cross. It said: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS." How wondrous was the condescension that he, whom all heaven adored as the ever-blessed Son of the Highest, should be hanged on a tree with his accusation written over his head just as if he had been a common malefactor! It was God's purpose that his Son should not die on the cross without a public proclamation of his innocence and an official recognition that he was what he had said he was, namely, the King of the Jews. Who was to put up such a notice over his head as he hung there? Peter might have been bold enough to attempt to do it, but he would certainly not have succeeded, for the Roman legionaries jealously guarded every place of execution. Even John, daring as he might have been in such a crisis, could not have achieved the task. It was best that it should be done by authority, done by the Roman governor, done with an official pen and so secured that no envious chief priest dared to pluck it down, and no hand of a scoffer could be lifted up to blot out its testimony. It was privileged writing because it was written with the pen of a Roman official. And there it must stay, under the authority of the Roman law as long as the body of Jesus hung on the cross. See what God can do!

Steven Cole - When He was born, magi from the east came to Jerusalem asking (Matt. 2:2), "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?" When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to tell her that she would be with child through the Holy Spirit, he said regarding Jesus (Luke 1:32–33), "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." Although in His first coming, He died as the sacrifice for our sins, in His second coming, He will rule the nations with a rod of iron as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:15–16). So, like Caiaphas who inadvertently prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, so Pilate unknowingly proclaimed the truth that Jesus is the King of the Jews and of all nations. Make sure He's your king! ([So Great a Salvation John 19:17-30](#))

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. John says simply that the notice was fastened to the cross. Luke 23:38 says the inscription was placed "over him" (Jesus), and Matt 27:37 that it was placed over Jesus' head. On the basis of Matthew's statement Jesus' cross is usually depicted as the **crux immissa**, the cross which has the crossbeam set below the top of the upright beam. The other commonly used type of cross was the **crux commissa**, which had the crossbeam atop the upright beam. But Matthew's statement is not conclusive, since with the **crux commissa** the body would have sagged downward enough to allow the placard to be placed above Jesus' head. The placard with Pilate's inscription is mentioned in all the gospels, but for John it was certainly ironic. **Jesus really was the King of the Jews, although he was a king rejected by his own people** (cf. John 1:11). Pilate's own motivation for placing the title over Jesus is considerably more obscure. He may have meant this as a final mockery of Jesus himself, but Pilate's earlier mockery of Jesus seemed to be motivated by a desire to gain pity from the Jewish authorities in order to have him released. More likely Pilate saw this as a subtle way of getting back at the Jewish authorities who had pressured him into the execution of one he considered to be an innocent man.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:19-20. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was near to the city and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

So that all who gathered around the cross might read it.

Inscription ([5102](#)) **titulos** which was a brief notice used for identification giving the reason for condemnation and only used in John 19:19-20. It is a Latin loanword (Latin - titulus) and in the NT is the notice giving the reason for Jesus' condemnation and crucifixion. **France** adds that "'The written charge (or **titulus**) was normally carried before a criminal on the way to execution, or hung around his neck, and would then be fixed to the cross, thus reinforcing the deterrent effect of the punishment.'" (TNTC-Matthew) **Lane** is probably correct when he says "The wording was designed to convey a subtle insult to Jewish pretensions and to mock all attempts to assert the sovereignty of a subject territory." (NICNT-Mark)

Nazarene ([3480](#)) **Nazoraiois** from **Nazara** = Nazareth) describes an inhabitant of Nazareth and as in this passage is used to describe Jesus. In the plural nazoraiois is used once to describe Christians (in a derogatory sense) (Acts 24:5+) This was in the inscription on the Cross (Jn 19:19). Zodhiates adds that "In Mt 2:23, we find the expression "He shall be called a Nazarene," i.e., according to the meaning of the Hebrew word netser (05342), "he shall be called a shoot" or branch. This is in allusion to such passages as Isa 11:1⁺; Isa 53:2⁺ and Zech 3:8; 6:12, but here also it implies reproach from the contempt in which Nazareth was held." (Ibid)

Nazoraiois - 13x in 13v - Nazarene(9), Nazarenes(1), Nazareth(3). Matt. 2:23; Matt. 26:71; Lk. 18:37; Jn. 18:5; Jn. 18:7; Jn. 19:19; Acts 2:22; Acts 3:6; Acts 4:10; Acts 6:14; Acts 22:8; Acts 24:5; Acts 26:9

NAZARENE [ISBE] - naz-a-ren; naz'-a-ren Nazarenos; Nazaraiois in Matthew, John, Acts and Luke): A derivative of Nazareth, the birthplace of Christ. In the New Testament it has a double meaning: it may be friendly and it may be inimical.

1. An Honourable Title:

On the lips of Christ's friends and followers, it is an honorable name. Thus Matthew sees in it a fulfillment of the old Isaiah prophecy (Isa 11:1 (Hebrew)): "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophets, that he should be called a Nazarene (Mt 2:23). According to an overwhelming array of testimony (see Meyer, Commentary, in loc.), the name Nazareth is derived from the same natsar, found in the text quoted from Isa. We have here undoubtedly to do with a permissible accommodation.

It is not quite certain that Matthew did not intend, by the use of this word, to refer to the picture of the Messiah,

as drawn in Isa 53, on account of the low estimate in which this place was held (Jn 1:46). Nor is permissible, as has been done by Tertullian and Jerome, to substitute the word "Nazarite" for "Nazarene," which in every view of the case is contrary to the patent facts of the life of the Saviour.

Says Meyer, "In giving this prophetic title to the Messiah he entirely disregards the historical meaning of the same Septuagint reading in Isa 11:1, (anthos), keeps by the relationship of the name Nazareth to the word natsar, and recognizes by virtue of the same, in that prophetic Messianic name netser, the typical reference to this--that Jesus through His settlement in Nazareth was to become a Nazoraio, a 'Nazarene.'" This name clung to Jesus throughout His entire life. It became His name among the masses: "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by" (Mk 10:47; Lk 24:19). Perhaps Matthew, who wrote after the event, may have been influenced in his application of the Isaian prophecy by the very fact that Jesus was popularly thus known. Even in the realm of spirits He was known by this appellation. Evil spirits knew and feared Him, under this name (Mk 1:24; Lk 4:34), and the angels of the resurrection morning called Him thus (Mk 16:6), while Jesus applied the title to Himself (Acts 22:8). In the light of these facts we do not wonder that the disciples, in their later lives and work, persistently used it (Acts 2:22; 3:6; 10:38).

2. A Title of Scorn:

If His friends knew Him by this name, much more His enemies, and to them it was a title of scorn and derision. Their whole attitude was compressed in that one word of Nathanael, by which he voiced his doubt, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (Jn 1:46). In the name "**Nazarene**," the Jews, who opposed and rejected Christ, poured out all the vials of their antagonism, and the word became a Jewish heritage of bitterness. It is hard to tell whether the appellation, on the lips of evil spirits, signifies dread or hatred (Mk 1:24; Lk 4:34). With the gatekeepers of the house of the high priest the case is clear. There it signifies unadulterated scorn (Mt 26:71; Mk 14:67). Even in His death the bitter hatred of the priests caused this name to accompany Jesus, for it was at their dictation written above His cross by Pilate (Jn 19:19). The entire Christian community was called by the leaders of the Jewish people at Jerusalem, "the sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5). If, on the one hand, therefore, the name stands for devotion and love, it is equally certain that on the other side it represented the bitter and undying hatred of His enemies. Henry E. Dosker

QUESTION - [What does INRI stand for?](#)

ANSWER - John 19:19 records, "Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS." John 19:20 continues, "Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek." Today, many times when the cross of Jesus is displayed, the letters INRI are placed on the sign above the cross. In Latin, the text "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS" would have been written, "Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum." Abbreviated, this phrase results in "INRI." It is unlikely that the letters INRI were truly on the sign that Pilate placed over Jesus' head, as John 19:20 specifically states that the sign was written in Aramaic, Greek, and Latin.

Although John's gospel refers to the writing as a "title," Mark and Matthew both refer to it as an "accusation." It was customary to set up over the heads of persons crucified the crime for which they suffered, and the name of the sufferer. The accusation on which Jesus had been condemned by Pilate was his claiming to be the King of the Jews. Ironically, the "crime" for which Jesus was crucified is not a crime at all, but an absolutely true statement. Not only is Jesus King of the Jews, He is the King of all – the King of kings and the Lord of lords (Revelation 17:14 and 19:16). He is King over all the universe and all its inhabitants. And it was not any crime of His own that was nailed to the cross; it was the crimes (sins) of everyone who would ever put his or her faith in Him for salvation. He has "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14).

Just as the title King of the Jews was written in three languages, so do those of all nations and languages recognize Him as Savior, as indeed He is of all the elect of God whom He saves from all their sins, by bearing them in His own body on the cross, and of whom He is the able and willing, the perfect and complete, the only and everlasting Savior.

[King Of Our Lives](#)

I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. —
1 Corinthians 15:3

Today's Scripture : John 19:16-22

More than 2,000 years ago in Jerusalem, Pontius Pilate commanded that a placard be placed on the cross that read: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Perhaps Pilate sought to induce fear among the people and discourage them from crowning their own

king.

King of the Jews. Was it an original thought at the time? Perhaps it had been introduced when the wise men asked, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?” (Matthew 2:2). They had sought the fulfillment of this promise: “For unto us a Child is born . . . ; the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). They believed Jesus was this Child.

Later, when Christ was crucified, some jeered, “If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross” (Matthew 27:40). They wanted to see if Jesus really was King. But Jesus did not come down. The true meaning of the cross is that “Christ died for our sins” (1 Corinthians 15:3). He who paid the penalty of our sins has made God’s forgiveness possible.

Those who accept God’s forgiveness and ask Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord can have only one appropriate response—to serve Him. He is King of our lives. By: Albert Lee (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

King of my life I crown Thee now—
Thine shall the glory be;
Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow,
Lead me to Calvary.
—Hussey

Jesus is King of our lives, so we must serve Him all of our lives.

QUESTION - [What prophecy is Matthew 2:23 referring to regarding Jesus being a Nazarene?](#)

ANSWER - Matthew 2:23 says about Jesus, “He went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.” Where is this prophecy in the Old Testament?

Matthew is obviously not quoting a prophecy directly, as there is no Old Testament passage with the wording he uses. Three major options exist for interpreting this verse.

First, it may be that Matthew is associating the word *Nazarene* with the Hebrew word *netser* (“branch or sprout”). The “Branch” was a common term for the Messiah, such as in Isaiah 11:1: “A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.” Hebrew was written with only consonants, and *netser* would have appeared as *NZR*—the same main consonants as *Nazareth*. In fact, in Aramaic, the common language of Jesus’ day, the word for “Nazareth” and the Hebrew word for “branch” sounded very much alike. Matthew’s point could be that Jesus was “sprouting up” from an obscure village in Galilee; Jesus was the Branch predicted by the prophets, and the name of the town He grew up in happens to sound just like the prophets’ word for “branch.”

A **second** option is that Matthew is citing a prophecy not found in the Old Testament but in another source. If so, Matthew referred to a prophecy known to his original audience yet unknown to us today. However, this is unlikely and an argument from silence.

A **third** option is that Matthew uses the word *Nazarene* in reference to a person who is “despised and rejected.” In the first century, Nazareth was a small town about 55 miles north of Jerusalem, and it had a negative reputation among the Jews. Galilee was generally looked down upon by Judeans, and Nazareth of Galilee was especially despised (see [John 1:46](#)). If this was Matthew’s emphasis, the prophecies Matthew had in mind could include these two passages concerning the Messiah:

“But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads” (Psalm 22:6–7).

It’s true that Nazarenes were “scorned by everyone,” and so one could see this messianic prophecy as an allusion to Jesus’ hometown of Nazareth.

“He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem” ([Isaiah 53:3](#)). Again, in Jesus’ day, Nazarenes were “despised and rejected,” and so Isaiah’s prophecy could be viewed as an indirect reference to Jesus’ background as the supposed son of a carpenter from Nazareth.

If Psalm 22:6–7 and Isaiah 53:3 are the prophecies that Matthew had in mind, then the meaning of “**He shall be called a Nazarene**” is something akin to “He shall be despised and mocked by His own people.” Jesus not only identified with humanity by coming to our world; He also identified with the lowly of this world. His upbringing in an obscure and despised town served as an important part of His mission. Jesus identified Himself as “Jesus of Nazareth” during His encounter with Saul on the [road to Damascus](#) (Acts 22:7–8). After his conversion, Paul mentioned Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 26:9). One of the names of the early Christians was “Nazarenes” (Acts 24:5), and the term *Nasara*, meaning “Nazarene,” is still used today by Muslims to identify a Christian.

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.

Walter Kaiser - John 19:19 What Was the Crime? ([Hard Sayings of the Bible - page 471](#))

It was Roman custom to post on the cross the crime of the one being executed. When we read John 19:19, it seems very clear what was written on the cross: “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” However, then we read the other Gospels:

Mt 27:37: This is Jesus, the king of the Jews.

Mk 15:26: The king of the Jews.

Lk 23:38: This is the king of the Jews.

What was the crime that was posted over Jesus?

It is clear that the Gospels agree on the charge: “king of the Jews.” That is, officially he was being executed as one who had proclaimed himself a king, specifically, king of the Jews, and so was being executed for rebellion against Caesar. This charge is consistent with the trial accounts and consistent with what we know of the concerns of the Roman government of the day about any popular Jewish movement. It is further reinforced by the fact that those executed with Jesus are called “thieves,” for the Jewish historian Josephus uses the same term to describe revolutionaries. In fact, Jesus may well have replaced Barabbas, who is clearly described as a revolutionary and could have been the leader of the other two.

What about the rest of the charge? Did it identify Jesus by name? How much of his name did it use? In all probability it did identify Jesus by name. A crucified person was not easy to recognize, given how brutally he or she had been treated. Furthermore, the purpose of crucifixion was not simply execution, but terror, for by crucifying a person in a public place (usually along a road leading into the city), the dying (and usually afterward, rotting) person would be a warning to anyone contemplating doing what the victim had done. Obviously identifying the victim would serve as more of a warning than leaving them unidentified.

Why, then, the differences in the Gospel accounts? First, each of the Gospel writers knows that words are precious. Papyrus only

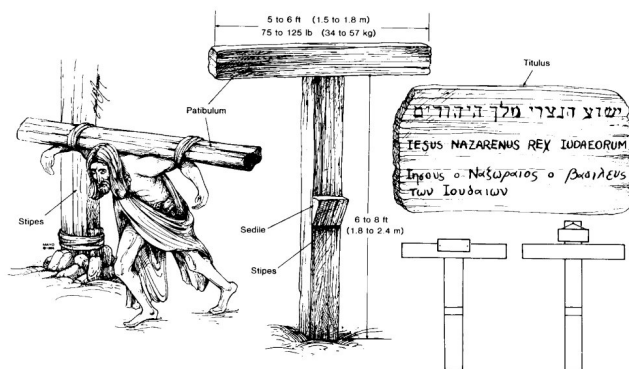
came in certain lengths, and three of our four Gospels fill the longest papyrus scrolls of the day. Mark, of course, could have bought a longer scroll, but by the time he came to this point in the story the scroll was already purchased and mostly used. The readers of the Gospels have no doubt about who is on the cross, so the only reason to include the name is for effect, if one has space. John includes the full name for he is going to make a comment on the accusation and the reaction it caused among the Jews (Jn 19:20–22). The other Gospels have not chosen to discuss the charge, so they can use a shortened form.

Second, while the accusation, according to John, was written in Aramaic (or Hebrew), Greek and Latin, we do not know in what form it passed into the Gospel tradition. Did one person remember the Aramaic and another the Greek? Or was the Aramaic the only form in which the charge was remembered? There is plenty of room here for various versions to be passed on, especially since only the charge itself was the essential part of what was written.

Thus this passage reminds us again of the process of writing the Gospels. The early oral accounts probably circulated in Aramaic and were then translated into Greek as needed. The significant point is that despite their history of transmission they agree on the central issue. This reminds us to focus on the core point, that Jesus was crucified as a revolutionary, and not on the details, which did not bother the writers of the Gospels.

John 19:20 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.

- in: John 19:13 5:2 Ac 21:40 22:2 26:14 Rev 16:16
- and Greek: Ac 21:37 Rev 9:11



SEE TITULUS - Hebrew, Latin and Greek Inscription

MANY JEWS READ PILATE'S INSCRIPTION

Only John gives the detail of the inscription written in 3 languages.

Therefore many of the Jews read this inscription - There would have been Jews from throughout the Roman Empire because of the Passover, and that the inscription was in 3 languages would ensure that it was legible to all who saw it.

for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city and it was written in Hebrew, Latin and in Greek Golgotha was near Jerusalem but outside of the city [as discussed above](#). John is explaining why **many of the Jews** were able to read the **inscription**, and he gives 2 reasons - (1) It was **near the city** (and many writers say it was on a main thoroughfare) and (2) it was in 3 languages which would accommodate Jews who spoke languages other than Hebrew.

John Trapp makes an interesting somewhat "interpretative" observation that "This venerable eulogy and epitaph, set upon our Savior's cross, proclaimed Him King of all religion, having reference to the Hebrews; of all wisdom, to the Greeks; of all power, to the Latins...." "In Hebrew, for the Jews who gloried in the law; in Greek, for the Grecians who gloried in wisdom; in Latin, for the Romans who most gloried in dominion and power.

Merrill Tenney - "Aramaic, for the local inhabitants; Latin, for the officials; Greek, the lingua franca of the eastern Mediterranean world." (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Abridged Edition](#))

Warren Wiersbe - The fact that this title was written in Hebrew (Aramaic), Greek, and Latin is significant. For one thing, it shows that our Lord was crucified in a place where many peoples and nations met, a cosmopolitan place. Hebrew is the language of religion, Greek of philosophy, and Latin of law; and all three combined to crucify the Son of God. But what He did on the cross, He did for the

whole world! In this Gospel, John emphasizes the worldwide dimensions of the work of Christ. Without realizing it, Pilate wrote a "Gospel tract" when he prepared this title; for one of the thieves discovered that Jesus was King, and he asked entrance into His kingdom. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#)).

One way to look at this tripartite title is that it spoke clearly (and accurately from a Biblical perspective, albeit that was certainly not Pilate's intent) to all classes of spectators who either passed by that fateful day or came and stood to see the entire spectacle. In short, the title spoke (1) to the world of religion (Hebrew), the world of politics (Latin - Rome) and the world of philosophy (Greek). In addition, by writing "**the King**" in three languages, Pilate clearly annoyed the Jews by making them read the title three times. Pilate was now back in control of the situation and he responded with an interesting Greek phrase which contained a double Greek [perfect tense](#), *ho gegrapha gegrapha*— which means in essence that the past act of writing the words remained, would continue to remain and would not be altered. [A T Robertson](#) adds that the Greek phrase *ho gegrapha gegrapha* places "emphasis on the permanence of the accusation on the board. Pilate has a sudden spirit of stubbornness in this detail to the surprise of the chief priests. Technically he was correct, for he had condemned Jesus on this charge made by the chief priests."

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:20. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

So that everybody could read it, for some one or other of these languages would be known to everybody in the crowd; they were not dead languages then as they are now.

QUESTION - [Where was Jesus crucified?](#)

ANSWER - The precise location of where Jesus was crucified is a matter of debate. The location is declared to be "[Golgotha](#)," the "[place of the skull](#)," in Matthew 27:33, Mark 15:22, Luke 23:33, and John 19:17. The Gospels give a few other clues as to the location. John 19:20 says that it was "near the city," which very likely indicates that it was outside of the city walls. Mark 15:40 states that the location of Jesus' crucifixion could be seen from a distance, which likely indicates that it was elevated. Matthew 27:39 and Mark 15:29 describe the crucifixion site as being accessible to passers-by.

The two most popular proposed sites of where Jesus was crucified are the [Church of the Holy Sepulchre](#) and Gordon's Calvary. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is the traditional site, dating back to the early fourth century AD in the writings of Eusebius. Gordon's Calvary was first proposed in the mid-nineteenth century by Otto Thenius, Fisher Howe, and Claude Conder, and then popularized in the late nineteenth century by Charles Gordon.

The problem with knowing exactly where Jesus was crucified is that Jerusalem has experienced a massive amount of change in the past two thousand years. Major sections of the city itself have been destroyed and rebuilt multiple times. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is inside the current city walls, but would its location have been outside of the city walls in the early first century? Gordon's Calvary is definitely outside of the city walls, but did it even exist in its current form in the early first century, or is it the result of quarrying work that has occurred sometime in the past 2,000 years?

It is not the purpose of this article to settle the debate of where Jesus was crucified. There are strong opinions on both sides. Some favor the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and others favor Gordon's Calvary. There are arguments for other locations as well.

Ultimately, the exact location of where Jesus was crucified does not matter. Wherever the location is, there is no biblical reason to revere it. There is no spiritual power or promised blessing at the spot where Jesus was crucified or where He was buried. We are no closer to God in the [tomb](#) beneath the Church of the Holy Sepulchre or on the top of Gordon's Calvary than we are in our homes. Jesus was crucified, buried, and [resurrected](#) (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). That is what is important.

Related Resource:

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

John 19:21 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.'"

**JEWS PROTEST PILATE'S
INSCRIPTION**

So ([oun](#)) - Term of conclusion. It is very likely that Pilate wrote the inscription to irritate the Jews who have gotten the best of him in arguing that Jesus must die.

The chief priests of the Jews were saying to Pilate, “Do not write ([present imperative with a negative](#)), ‘The King of the Jews’; but that He said, ‘I am King of the Jews.’” - Pilate seems to have achieved his goal of irritating the Jewish leaders who had been such an irritation to him (cf Jn 19:12)!

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:21-22. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

He could sometimes be firm; perhaps when there was least excuse for it but when there was need of firmness, this vacillating Governor was swayed by the will of cruel men.

He could be stubborn about some things which shows that he had strength of mind if he had chosen to use it; yet he was beaten to and fro like a shuttlecock by these wicked men, and seemed to have no power to resist them.

John 19:22 Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

- **What:** John 19:12 Ps 65:7 Ps 76:10 Pr 8:29

PILATE IS FINALLY FIRM BUT TOO LATE!

Pilate answered, “What I have written ([grapho](#)) I have written ([grapho](#)) - Pilate stands his ground against the Jewish protests. Both verbs **written** are in the perfect tense which speaks of the permanence of the inscription. Pilate says in effect it is complete and final!

[A T Robertson](#) - With emphasis on the permanence of the accusation on the board. Pilate has a sudden spirit of stubbornness in this detail to the surprise of the chief priests. Technically he was correct, for he had condemned Jesus on this charge made by the chief priests.

Adam Clarke has an interesting note on Pilate's *ho gegrapha gegrapha*— “That is, I will not alter what I have written. The Roman laws forbade the sentence to be altered when once pronounced; and as this inscription was considered as the sentence pronounced against our Lord, therefore, it could not be changed.”

Merrill Tenney adds this comment regarding the inscription and the reaction of the Jews -- "Its content was Pilate's psychological revenge on the Jewish hierarchy for forcing his decision. It proclaimed loudly to all passers-by that Rome had crucified the king of the Jews as a common criminal. Stung by the insult, the priests remonstrated, asking that Pilate make clear that it was Jesus' claim to be King of the Jews, not that it was in fact true. Having succeeded by his unjust compromise in removing any possible ground of accusation that he was derelict in his duty to the Roman state, Pilate resumed his haughty attitude and refused to change the wording. “What I have written, I have written” means essentially, “Take it and like it!” (SEE [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Abridged Edition](#))

John 19:23 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.

- **the soldiers:** Mt 27:35 Mk 15:24 Lu 23:34
- **now:** Such was the chiton or coat, **of the Jewish high-priest**, as described by Josephus.
- **woven:** Ex 39:22,23
- James Stalker's classic [Trial and Arrest of Jesus Christ](#) - **13. THE GROUPS ROUND THE CROSS** Matt. 27:39–44, 55, 56; Mark 15:29–32; Luke 23:35–7, 49; John 19:23–5.

Related Passages:

Exodus 28:31-32 "You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. 32 "There shall be an opening at its top in the middle of it; around its opening there shall be a binding of woven work, like the opening of a coat of mail, so that it will not be torn.

Matthew 27:35-38 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.

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.

Luke 23:34 But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."**And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.**



FOUR SOLDIERS DIVIDE OUTER GARMENTS

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified ([stauroo](#)) Jesus - In other words when they had completed their job of nailing Jesus' wrists and feet to the old rugged cross, they sat down to keep watch over His naked body, having taken His clothing as their "spoil!" (Mt 27:38+).

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+)

Took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier- The saying is to the victor go the spoils and to the Roman soldiers who had guard duty at crucifixions, they spoil was whatever possessions they crucified person had.

Steven Cole - The prophecy that the soldiers inadvertently fulfilled was Psalm 22:18[±], "They divide my garments among them; and for my clothing they cast lots." None of these pagan soldiers were aware of that psalm or of the fact that they were fulfilling a prophecy made 1,000 years before. But John points this out to let us know that these were not random happenstance. Although these soldiers were not pre-programmed robots and were only doing what soldiers tend to do, the sovereign hand of God behind the scenes was controlling even these minor details surrounding Jesus' death. While Jesus died naked to bear our shame, He clothes us who believe with His robe of perfect righteousness! ([So Great a Salvation John 19:17-30](#))

Marvin Vincent - All the Synoptists relate the parting of the garments. The four pieces to be divided would be, the head-gear, the sandals, the girdle, and the [tallith](#) or square outer garment with fringes.

Merrill Tenney has a slightly different wardrobe - Jesus' simple wardrobe was composed of five items: a turban or headdress; an

outer robe; a sash or girdle, the folds of which would provide pockets; sandals; and a fairly long tunic, woven in one piece, that was an undergarment. The first four were easily divided among the four legionnaires, but the fifth would be of no value if cut into four parts. Gambling was as well known in the Roman army as it is among soldiers today. So the tunic was awarded to one of them at the cast of the dice. (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Abridged Edition](#))

And also the tunic ([chiton](#)); now the tunic ([chiton](#)) was seamless, woven in one piece - The tunic was **seamless** and so would not be divided but in the next passage will be awarded to the one who won it by casting lots. And given the fact that Scripture says they took Jesus' garments, it seems that the only conclusion one can arrive at is that he hung on the cross for those 6 horrible hours completely naked (contra what most paintings present)! This also puts the phrase in Hebrews 12:2+ in a striking light "who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, **despising the shame** (THINK OF HIM HANGING NUDE ON THE CROSS FOR 6 HOURS)."

In the OT the High Priest wore a garment ([chiton](#)) similar to Jesus' garment, which is fascinating because the OT high priest was a shadow of the priesthood of Jesus, the Great High Priest. See **D A Carson's** discussion of the possible symbolic meaning of the **seamless** garment - Borrow [The Gospel According to John Page 614](#)

R V G Tasker adds "It is as the great High Priest offering the perfect sacrifice that Jesus is dying; and it is stated in the Jewish law that the robe of the priest's ephod shall be of woven work and so constructed that it be not rent (Ex 28:31-32+)" (BORROW [The Gospel according to St. John : an introduction and commentary PAGE 210](#))

NET NOTE - Four shares, one for each soldier. The Gospel of John is the only one to specify **the number of soldiers** involved in the crucifixion. This was a quaternion, a squad of four soldiers. It was accepted Roman practice for the soldiers who performed a crucifixion to divide the possessions of the person executed among themselves. **tunic was seamless, woven in one piece** Or "shirt" (a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin). The name for this garment (χιτών, chitōn) presents some difficulty in translation. Most modern readers would not understand what a 'tunic' was any more than they would be familiar with a 'chiton.' On the other hand, attempts to find a modern equivalent are also a problem: "Shirt" conveys the idea of a much shorter garment that covers only the upper body, and "undergarment" (given the styles of modern underwear) is more misleading still. "Tunic" was therefore employed, but with a note to explain its nature. Or "shirt" (a long garment worn under the cloak next to the skin). See the note on the same word earlier in this verse.

David Guzik has an interesting note regarding Christ's crucifixion: This was the most important act of this most important life, and this is reflected even in ancient secular histories. The existing mentions of Jesus in ancient extra-biblical literature each highlight His death on the cross. ([Luke 23](#))

- A letter written by Mara bar Serapion to his son (ca. a.d. 73)
- Josephus, the Jewish historian (ca. a.d. 90)
- Tacitus, the Roman historian (ca. a.d. 110-120)
- The Babylonian Talmud (ca. a.d. 200)

Related Resources: Two Songs that Relate to the Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Take a moment and listen to the poignant song ["The Hammer"](#)
THE LYRIC THAT SHOULD PIERCE US ALL IS **"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](#).

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:23. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments,

For they had stripped him. He must be naked, because sin makes us naked, and his garments must be a covering for us. They "took his garments," —

The common robe of the country, for Christ assumed no garment or vesture that would make him seem great. He was too great to need the adornment of any special style of clothes.

It was the custom with executioners to take the garments of the criminal.

They knew nothing about that ancient prophecy, yet God ordained that they should act thus "that the Scripture might be fulfilled," —

They had already stripped him, no element of shame was wanting in his substitution for us. He stooped as low as our sins could have thrust us, that he might bring us up from the very depths of degradation and shame.

Quite unaware of the ancient prophecy, yet in complete accord with divine predestination these soldiers did exactly according to the eternal purposes of God. It is very wonderful how, in practice, the free agency of man tallies exactly with the predestination of God. We need not enquire how it is, but we may admire that so it is. "These things therefore the soldiers did," yet the motive which swayed them was not the fulfillment of the divine will, but simply the commonsense thought that it would be a pity to spoil such a garment by rending it apart ¾also by that innate love of gambling which is found everywhere, in every age, so that often men would sooner run the hazard of winning all than take the safe one fourth which might fall to their lot. Let us reverently adore the whole scheme of providence by which God's determinate purpose is carried out in every jot and little, while the free agency of man is left unfettered.

Tunic (garment) ([5509](#)) **chiton** is a masculine noun. which refers to a close-fitting inner vest, an inner garment, an undergarment or in some contexts to any garment. At times two tunics seem to have been worn, probably of different materials for ornament or luxury (Mt. 10:10; Mk 6:9; Lu 3:11; 9:3). The high priest rent his clothes (Mk 14:63). In the Septuagint chiton is used of Adam's garment of skin (Ge 3:21). Chiton is used 5x in Genesis to describe Joseph's "varicolored **tunic**." (Ge 37:3, 23, 31-33) Jesus uses both **chiton** and **himation** in (Lk 6:29). In Mk 14:63 the high priest tore "his **clothes**" referring to an outer cloak, which in this context was equivalent to **himation**.

Friberg on **chiton** - tunic, an undergarment worn next to the skin by both men and women, a sleeveless shirt reaching below the knees; more generally clothing, garment; plural clothes

Webster on **tunic** - a simple slip-on garment made with or without sleeves and usually knee-length or longer, belted at the waist, and worn as an under or outer garment by men and women of ancient Greece and Rome.

CHITON - 10V - clothes(1), coats(1), garment(1), shirt(2), tunic(2), tunics(4). Matt. 5:40; Matt. 10:10; Mk. 6:9; Mk. 14:63; Lk. 3:11; Lk. 6:29; Lk. 9:3; Jn. 19:23; Acts 9:39; Jude 1:23

The order of events at the crucifixion:

- (1) Arrival at Golgotha (Mt 27:33; Mk 15:22; Lu 23:33; Jn 19:17).
 - (2) Offer of the stupefying drink refused (Mt 27:34; Mk 15:23).
 - (3) Crucified between 2 thieves (Mt 27:35-38; Mk 15:24-28; Lu 23:33-38; Jn 19:18).
 - (4) Utters 1st cry fr the cross, "Father, forgive," (Lu 23:34).
 - (5) Soldiers part His garments (Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Lu 23:34; Jn 19:23).
 - (6) Jews mock Jesus (Mt 27:39-43; Mk 15:29-32; Lu 23:35).
 - (7) Thieves rail Him, one repents (Mt 27:44; Mk 15:32; Lu 23:39-43).
 - (8) Second cry from cross, "Today you will be with me," (Lu 23:43).
 - (9) Third cry, "Dear woman, here is your son," etc. (Jn 19:26-27).
 - (10) Darkness (Mt 27:45; Mk 15:33; Lu 23:44).
 - (11) Fourth cry, "My God," etc. (Mt 27:46-47; Mk 15:34-36).
 - (12) Fifth cry, "I am thirsty" (Jn 19:28).
 - (13) Sixth cry, "It is finished" (Jn 19:30).
 - (14) Seventh cry, "Father, into your hands," etc. (Lu 23:46). And
 - (15) Lord dismisses His spirit (Mt 27:50; Mk 15:37; Lu 23:46; Jn 19:30).
-

QUESTION - [Who killed Jesus?](#)

ANSWER - Who killed Jesus? Who is [responsible for Christ's death](#)? Is it the Jews who condemned Jesus for blasphemy and had Him arrested? Or was it the Romans who physically tortured and crucified Him? What about God the Father or all of sinful humanity? The answer to this question is multi-faceted and involves more than just one particular group bearing the responsibility for Christ's death.

Undoubtedly, the Jews, especially the scribes, Sadducees, and Pharisees, greatly opposed Jesus (Matthew 21:15; Luke 11:53; John 5:18; 7:45-52; 12:37). They accused Him of blasphemy on multiple occasions and sought to stone Him for it (Matthew 9:3; Mark 2:6-7; John 8:52-58; 10:31-33). The chief priests and elders accused Jesus (Matthew 27:12), mocked Him (Matthew 27:41), and held council to have Him arrested and to condemn Him to death (Mark 15:1). Judas, a Jew, betrayed Him (John 18:2). The Jews shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" as He stood trial before Pilate (Luke 23:21), and they asked for Barabbas, a thief, to be released instead of Jesus (Matthew 27:21). The Jews wanted to kill Jesus (Matthew 12:14).

Paul writes that the Jews bear part of the blame in killing Jesus: "For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own people the same things those churches suffered from *the Jews who*

killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to everyone” (1 Thessalonians 2:14–15, emphasis added). Who killed Jesus? Part of the blame falls on the Jews who plotted against Him.

However, the blame does not just fall on the Jews. In his sermon on the Day of Pentecost, Peter indicates that the Jews alone did not kill Jesus: “Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and *you, with the help of wicked men*, put him to death by nailing him to the cross” (Acts 2:22–23, emphasis added). The Romans were the “wicked men” by whom Jesus was killed. The Romans also share the blame in killing Jesus.

Although the Romans did not invent [crucifixion](#), they perfected it and the torture that came along with it. Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor who sentenced Jesus to be flogged and crucified (Matthew 27:26; John 19:1). Roman soldiers “stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. ‘Hail, king of the Jews!’ they said” (Matthew 27:28–29). The Roman soldiers drove the nails into Jesus’ hands and feet on the cross (John 19:23) and pierced His side with a spear to make sure He was dead (John 19:34). The Romans killed Jesus.

What was God the Father’s role in Jesus’ death? Romans 3:25 says that “God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood,” and Romans 8:32 says that God “did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all.” Isaiah 53:10 also reveals that it was God’s will for Christ to die: “It was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and . . . the Lord makes his life an offering for sin.” It’s not that God actually put Jesus on the cross or pounded the nails, but the cross was God’s plan to redeem humanity. Peter preached that Jesus’ betrayal and death was according to “God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge” (Acts 2:23). Jesus’ death was God’s will (see Luke 22:42).

God willed to save His people, and salvation required a payment for sin. Jesus had to die. God could not spare Him. In Genesis 22, Abraham, in obedience to God’s command, was about to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac. The angel of the Lord stayed Abraham’s hand and provided a ram as a replacement sacrifice. In the death of Jesus on the cross, God the Father did not spare Him because Jesus *was* the substitute. Jesus dying in our place as our substitute was the only way God could spare us (Romans 3:25–26). Jesus’ death satisfied God’s holy wrath against sin and allowed God to bring sinners to heaven without violating His justice.

Jesus willingly laid down His life to save us from our sins (John 10:17–19), took the punishment we deserved for our sin, and reconciled us to God (2 Corinthians 5:21). The atonement of Christ was prophesied in Isaiah 53:5: “But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.” Because of God’s great love, He provided the only way to redeem all who would believe in Him. Yet God did not allow death to have the final say, but He raised Jesus from the dead (Acts 2:24; Psalm 16:10). Ultimately, all of humanity is guilty of killing Jesus. It was our sin that put Him on the cross. Because of our sin, God sent Jesus to save us. Humanity is both the cause and beneficiary of Jesus’ death. God can use even the wickedest of actions to bring about His perfect plan (see Genesis 50:20). Sinful people killed Jesus, but God used that unlawful killing as the means of our salvation. God’s response to evil is redemptive and shows His great love for us: “You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:6–8).

Related Resource:

- [Who was responsible for Christ’s death?](#)

John 19:24 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.”

- that: John 19:28,36,37 10:35 12:38,39
- They parted: Ps 22:18 Isa 10:7 Ac 13:27

Related Passage:

Matthew 27:35 And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves by casting lots.

**GAMBLING FOR THE
SEAMLESS TUNIC**

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 ([graphe](#)): "THEY DIVIDED MY OUTER GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS. To this point, every prophecy regarding the Messiah has been fulfilled and now even to point of gambling for His clothing. David recorded the prophecy that "They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots." (Psalm 22:18⁺)

*He who gave His blood to cleanse us
gave His garments to clothe us.*

Spurgeon on Ps 22:18 - Verse 18. "*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*" 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.

NET NOTE - Greek "but choose by lot" (probably by using marked pebbles or broken pieces of pottery). A modern equivalent, "throw dice," was chosen here because of its association with gambling.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:24. Which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

Doubtless, on the dice there fell the blood of Christ, yet they still gambled there. There is, perhaps, no sin which so effectually hardens the heart as that of gambling; it is a sin with which Christians should not have even the reluctant connection.

Those rough Roman soldiers knew nothing about the ancient prophecy, yet a divine destiny guided them. God's Word must be fulfilled; and they, in the freedom of their will, did exactly what God had ordained, and the Spirit had long before prophesied. There are two things that are true; that men act freely and are therefore responsible when they sin, but that there is a divine predestination that rules all things according to the purpose and will of God. It would have puzzled us to explain how such a prophecy could be fulfilled at all, ³/₄parting Christ's raiment among them, and then casting lots for his vesture; yet so it was, they divided what could be divided, and they cast lots upon what would have been spoilt if they had rent it. I think that no Christian man will ever like the rattle of dice when he remembers that they were used at the cross; all games of chance should be put away from us, for we can, as it were, see our Master's blood bespattered upon them.

Scripture (1124) [graphe](#) from [grapho](#) = to write; English = graphite - the lead in a pencil!) means first a writing or thing written, a document. The majority of the NT uses refer to the Old Testament writings, in a general sense of the whole collection when the plural (= Scriptures - Matt. 21:42; 22:29; 26:54; Mk. 12:24; 14:49; Lk. 24:27, 32, 45; Jn. 5:39; Acts 17:2, 11; 18:24, 28; Rom. 15:4; 2Pe 3:16) is used and other times of a particular passage when the singular is used (= the Scripture - Mk. 12:10; 15:28; Lk. 4:21; Jn. 13:18; 19:24, 36, 37; Acts 1:16; 8:35; Ro 11:2; Jas. 2:8, 23) and is used in such a way that quoting Scripture is understood to be the same as quoting God! It is worth noting that the majority of the OT passages quoted in the NT Scriptures are not from the original Hebrew but are from the Greek translation of the Hebrew, the [Septuagint \(LXX\)](#). The full title, "the Holy Scriptures," is found only in Romans 1:2 ([see note](#)). The terms are almost invariably preceded by the definite article, the only exceptions being in Jn 19:37 and 2Ti 3:16 where the art. before [graphe](#) is replaced by *hetéra* (2087), another, and *pása* (3956), all of it together and every part of the whole respectively.

NIDNTT notes that the root word of [graphe](#) is [graph-](#) which "has the primary meaning of to scratch on, engrave, with reference to an ornament, reports, letters, lists, and instructions. From it are derived the English "graphic", "graph" etc. The material can be various: stone, wood, metal, wax, or leather. The verb form [grapho](#) is found in its original sense in Homer, Il. 17, 599. In Herodotus., 4, 36 the word is used meaning to draw, of lines on maps; and scholars of the 3rd cent. B.C. used it of drawing of mathematical figures. In Homer [grapho](#) is already used

in the sense of scratching signs on a tablet as a kind of letter (Il. 6, 169). From the time of Herodotus it is used generally in the normal sense of to write, and from the time of Pindar in the derived sense of to prescribe, to order. From the practice of handing in a written accusation, grapho came in judicial language to mean to accuse (Plato, Euthyphro 2b).

The noun **graphe** originally carried the abstract verbal sense of the act of writing, drawing or painting; then the concrete sense of writing, inscription, letter (generally from 4th cent. B.C. onwards), indictment; in papyri of the 3rd cent. a list; in Plato the written law (Leg. 11, 934c). (SEE online [Brown, Colin, Editor. New International Dictionary of NT Theology](#). PAGE 482 - FOR A 14 PAGE ARTICLE RELATED TO GRAPHE)

GRAPHE IN NT - 51V - Matt. 21:42; Matt. 22:29; Matt. 26:54; Matt. 26:56; Mk. 12:10; Mk. 12:24; Mk. 14:49; Mk. 15:28; Lk. 4:21; Lk. 24:27; Lk. 24:32; Lk. 24:45; Jn. 2:22; Jn. 5:39; Jn. 7:38; Jn. 7:42; Jn. 10:35; Jn. 13:18; Jn. 17:12; Jn. 19:24; Jn. 19:28; Jn. 19:36; Jn. 19:37; Jn. 20:9; Acts 1:16; Acts 8:32; Acts 8:35; Acts 17:2; Acts 17:11; Acts 18:24; Acts 18:28; Rom. 1:2; Rom. 4:3; Rom. 9:17; Rom. 10:11; Rom. 11:2; Rom. 15:4; Rom. 16:26; 1 Co. 15:3; 1 Co. 15:4; Gal. 3:8; Gal. 3:22; Gal. 4:30; 1 Tim. 5:18; 2 Tim. 3:16; Jas. 2:8; Jas. 2:23; Jas. 4:5; 1 Pet. 2:6; 2 Pet. 1:20; 2 Pet. 3:16

Henry Morris - Gambling at Calvary

"They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (Ps. 22:18).

The Twenty-second Psalm is justly famous as a remarkable prophetic preview of the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus on the cross, written by David approximately 1,000 years before it was fulfilled. It describes in accurate detail the sufferings of the Lord, and the actions of the sneering spectators as they watched Him die.

One of the most heartless acts of the Roman soldiers carrying out the crucifixion was the indignity of stripping Him of the garments He was wearing and then dividing them among themselves, even gambling to determine who would get His seamless vesture. The significance of this cruel scene is indicated by the fact that it is one of the very few specific events in the life of Christ recorded in all four Gospels.

We must not forget that the Lord Jesus Christ once had been arrayed, as it were, in beautiful garments that "smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces" (Ps. 45:8). He who was "equal with God" chose to be "made in the likeness of men" that He might eventually suffer "even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:6-8) in order to save our unworthy souls. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9).

He who had created the heavens, when He came to earth, had to say that "the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20). His few remaining possessions were scavenged by His executioners as He died. Yet through His great sacrifice, He has provided "everlasting habitations" for us (Luke 16:9) and "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places" (Eph. 1:3). Indeed, we do know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!

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.

- **his mother:** Lu 2:35
- **His mother's sister:** Mt 27:55,56 Mk 15:40,41 Lu 23:49
- **Cleopas,** Lu 24:18
- **Mary Magdalene:** John 20:1,11-18 Mk 16:9 Lu 8:2
- Alfred Edersheim - [CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED](#)

Related Passages:

Luke 2:34-35+ (SIMEON'S PROPHECY BEING FULFILLED FOR MARY) And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed— 35 and **a sword will pierce even your own soul**—to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

CROSS OF CHRIST

Therefore the soldiers did these things - That is they divided up Jesus garments and gambled for His tunic

But standing by the cross ([stauros](#)) **of Jesus were His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene** - While all but one of His disciples had fled, these women stood vigil as Jesus' life faded away over those 6 agonizing hours on the cross.

NET NOTE - Several women are mentioned, but it is not easy to determine how many. It is not clear whether his mother's sister and Mary the wife of Clopas are to be understood as the same individual (in which case only three women are mentioned: Jesus' mother, her sister Mary, and Mary Magdalene) or as two different individuals (in which case four women are mentioned: Jesus' mother, her sister, Mary Clopas' wife, and Mary Magdalene). It is impossible to be certain, but when John's account is compared to the synoptics it is easier to reconcile the accounts if four women were present than if there were only three. It also seems that if there were four women present, this would have been seen by the author to be in juxtaposition to the four soldiers present who performed the crucifixion, and this may explain the transition from the one incident in 23–24 to the other in 25–27. Finally, if only three were present, this would mean that both Jesus' mother and her sister were named Mary, and this is highly improbable in a Jewish family of that time. If there were four women present, the name of the second, the sister of Jesus' mother, is not mentioned. It is entirely possible that the sister of Jesus' mother mentioned here is to be identified with the woman named Salome mentioned in Mark 15:40 and also with the woman identified as "the mother of the sons of Zebedee" mentioned in Matt 27:56. If so, and if John the Apostle is to be identified as the beloved disciple, then the reason for the omission of the second woman's name becomes clear; she would have been John's own mother, and he consistently omitted direct reference to himself or his brother James or any other members of his family in the Fourth Gospel. (ED: For an excellent analysis of the number of women BORROW [D A Carson's Gospel of John PAGE 615-616](#))

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:25. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

These gracious women stood by the cross: we call them the feebler sex; but we must grant that they are the stronger of the two in anything which has to do with pure disinterested love. Yield the first place to them.

Last at the cross, first at the sepulcher. No woman's lip betrayed her Lord; no woman's hand ever smote him; their eyes wept for him; they gazed upon him with pitying awe and love. God bless the Marys! When we see so many of them about the cross, we feel that we honour the very name of Mary.

John 19:26 When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He *said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!"

- **whom:** John 13:23 20:2 21:7,20,24
- **Woman:** John 2:4

THE THIRD SAYING FROM THE CROSS

When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple ([mathetes](#)) **whom He loved** ([agapao](#) = John cf Jn 13:23; 19:26; 21:7, 20) **standing nearby** ([paristemi](#)), **He *said to His mother, "Woman, behold** ([idou](#)), **your son** - Even with His dying breaths we see the compassion and sympathy of Jesus! Jesus is clearly remembering His mother and commits her care to John who would outlive all of the other disciples and thus would surely be available to carry for Mary all the days of her life.

THOUGHT - There is a principle inherent in Jesus' action here. When we are in Christ and going through suffering or affliction ourselves, we too (by His Spirit) have the potential to be able to comfort others who are suffering physically or emotionally.

D A Carson notes that "How many women John enumerates has been disputed. It is possible to read the list as two, three or four." I am going with 4 on the basis of a simple reading of Jn 19:25, but I will not be dogmatic. If you are interested Dr Carson has a discussion of the number of women at the foot of the Cross. (BORROW [Carson's Gospel of John PAGE 615-616](#))

A T Robertson - But the brothers of Jesus are not present and disbelieved his claims. John is the only one of the apostles with courage enough to take his stand with the women by the Cross. There is no disrespect in the use of "Woman" (Γυναι [Gunai]) here as

there was not in 2:4.

NET NOTE - The term **Woman** is Jesus' normal, polite way of addressing women (Matt 15:28, Luke 13:12; John 4:21; 8:10; 19:26; 20:15; see BDAG 208–9 s.v. *γυνή* 1). But it is unusual for a son to address his mother with this term. The custom in both Hebrew (or Aramaic) and Greek would be for a son to use a qualifying adjective or title. Is there significance in Jesus' use here? Jesus probably used the term here to help establish Mary and the beloved disciple in a new "mother-son" relationship. Someone would soon need to provide for Mary since Jesus, her oldest son, would no longer be alive. By using this term Jesus distanced himself from Mary so the beloved disciple could take his place as her earthly son (cf. John 2:4). BORROW [D. A. Carson, Gospel of John, PAGE 617–18](#), for discussion about symbolic interpretations of this relationship between Mary and the beloved disciple.

NET NOTE - the disciple whom He (Jesus) loved: This individual also is mentioned in Jn 19:26, Jn 20:2, Jn 21:7, and Jn 21:20. Some have suggested that this disciple is to be identified with Lazarus, since the Fourth Gospel specifically states that Jesus loved him (Jn 11:3, 5, 36). From the terminology alone this is a possibility; the author is certainly capable of using language in this way to indicate connections. But there is nothing else to indicate that Lazarus was present at the last supper; Mark 14:17 seems to indicate it was only the twelve who were with Jesus at this time, and there is no indication in the Fourth Gospel to the contrary. Nor does it appear that Lazarus ever stood so close to Jesus as the later references in John 19, 20 and 21 seem to indicate. **When this is coupled with the omission of all references to John son of Zebedee from the Fourth Gospel, it seems far more likely that the references to the beloved disciple should be understood as references to him.**

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:26-27. And the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother. Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

Here was another pang for him: he could not be spared anywhere. He must recollect in his death everything that would cause him grief: "When Jesus therefore saw his mother," —

Sad, sad spectacle! Now was fulfilled the word of Simeon, "Yes, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Did the Saviour mean, as he gave a glance to John, "Woman, thou art losing one Son; but yonder stands another, who will be a son to thee in my absence"? "Woman, behold thy son!"

QUESTION - [Was Jesus being rude to Mary when He referred to her as "woman" in John 2:4 \(AND JOHN 19:26\)?](#) (See also commentary on John 2:4)

ANSWER - In John 2, Mary, Jesus, and some of the disciples are attending a wedding. In John 2:3, Mary tells Jesus that the host has run out of wine. Mary obviously wants Jesus to do something special to fix the situation; He had performed no miracles up to this point (John 2:11), and Mary undoubtedly thought it was time He showed who He was. Jesus' response, read in modern English, strikes some people as abrupt, even impolite or rude. He responds, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come" (ESV). It's Jesus' addressing His mother as "Woman" that seems most rude to us.

One of the problems with translating from one language to another is that certain phrases have meanings not easily transferred. Phrases that don't mean exactly what they say are often called "idioms," and they can cause confusion in translation. For example, exclamations such as "heads up!" or "look out!" actually mean the opposite of their literal words—if someone yells, "Heads up!" we usually duck our heads. A native English speaker understands such idioms instinctively, but in order to translate them, we'd have to pick words that aren't synonyms—*heads up!* might translate into words that mean "get down!"—or end up with a confusing phrase.

What Jesus says to His mother in John 2:4 sounds almost rude *in English*. However, in the original language, and in that culture, Mary would not have interpreted Jesus' words that way. The term *woman* was used like we use the term *ma'am*. By addressing Mary this way, Jesus does distance Himself from His mother somewhat—He was exerting His independence from her wishes—but in no way was it a rude manner of speaking. Jesus lovingly uses the same word from the cross when He tells Mary that He is entrusting her to John's care (John 19:26).

The question Jesus asks His mother isn't rude, either. It may sound rude in the KJV: "What have I to do with thee?" (John 2:4), but it was a common idiom. In the Greek, Jesus' question is "*Ti emoi kai soi?*" The phrase was used to ask of the connection between two people. The question could be translated as "What business do we have with each other?" Or, in less formal terms, "What does this have to do with me?" (ESV) or "Why do you involve me?" (NIV). Again, Jesus is expressing the fact that He is independent of His mother; as eager as Mary was to see Jesus do a miracle, she had no right to determine the time or the manner in which Jesus publicly revealed His glory. Jesus makes His point gently and without being rude, however.

Jesus concludes His statement to Mary with, “My hour has not yet come.” The reference to His “hour” or “time” (NET) means that Jesus was constantly working from a divine timetable. So, He wasn’t going to reveal His power sooner than God the Father intended (see John 5:30). One of the points Jesus made in His temptation in the desert was that there is such a thing as doing the right thing for the wrong reasons (Matthew 4:1–10). That is, it would be wrong to perform a miracle if the time and place are not according to God’s will.

Jesus did act, performing His [first miracle](#). He turned the water into wine, but He did so in a very subtle, subdued way. Only the servants, Mary, and a few disciples even knew what He had done. The miracle was to introduce the disciples to His ability, not to show off or to go public with His power (see John 2:11).

So, Jesus isn’t being rude or dismissive in John 2:4. He’s politely pointing out that He follows God’s timing, not Mary’s; and that this is not His moment to be publicly revealed. Some of the respectful tone is lost in translation, perhaps, but Jesus was not being rude.

John 19:17–27 **BEHOLD THY MOTHER** John Bennett [Day by Day: Bible Commands](#)

A band of faithful women gathered under the shadow of the cross. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was prominent among them. The strong had fled. The weak, emboldened by love, were drawn to Calvary. At incredible emotional cost, they bravely identified themselves with the condemned Nazarene. What grief filled Mary’s heart. Simeon’s prophecy of more than thirty years before was fulfilled fully that day. The sword of sorrow pierced the utmost depths of her soul, Luke 2:35.

Only one man stood with these courageous women, John the beloved disciple. With the rest of the eleven, he had forsaken his Master. He had run away in Gethsemane. Now on Golgotha, he takes his stand beneath the cross of Jesus.

The Lord Jesus addressed both Mary and John. He commended her to his care. From now on Mary should rely on John for her defence and protection. Jesus ‘told John to look on her as his mother and told His mother to look on John as her son’, RYLE.

Amidst His own sufferings, the Lord did not forget His mother. In His anguish, He thought of Mary with selfless love. Conscious of her distress and desolation, He graciously provided for her. What tender sympathy filled His heart and inspired these words to the disciple whom He loved. In heaven, He is still expressing His deep care for all His own.

In committing Mary to John’s care, the Lord wholly fulfilled the letter and the spirit of the fifth commandment, Exod. 20:12. In His words to them, He honoured His mother. He ensured that all her needs were met. Mary was almost certainly already widowed. The death of Jesus would leave her bereft emotionally and possibly destitute financially. Perhaps there was, as yet, little sympathy among her other children for her faith in her Son as God’s Messiah. However, she could have full confidence in John. He may well have been her nephew. Much more importantly, he loved the Saviour with the same fervour as she did. He could support her materially and spiritually.

John readily accepted his task. He took Mary to his own home and ‘received her into his heart’, KRUMMACHER.

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" ...click chapter # to go to the article (e.g., 14) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 14. THE FIRST WORD FROM THE CROSS Luke 23:34. ■ 15. THE SECOND WORD FROM THE CROSS Luke 23:39–43. ■ 16. THE THIRD WORD FROM THE CROSS John 19:25–27. ■ 17. THE FOURTH WORD FROM THE CROSS Matt. 27:46–9; Mark 15:34–6. ■ 18. THE FIFTH WORD FROM THE CROSS John 19:28. ■ 19. THE SIXTH WORD FROM THE CROSS John 19:30. ■ 20. THE SEVENTH WORD FROM THE CROSS Luke 23:46. <p>SEE ALSO - What were the seven last words of Jesus Christ on the cross and what do they mean? GotQuestions.org</p>				

The order of events at the crucifixion:

- (1) Arrival at Golgotha (Mt 27:33; Mk 15:22; Lu 23:33; Jn 19:17).
- (2) Offer of the stupefying drink refused (Mt 27:34; Mk 15:23).
- (3) Crucified between 2 thieves (Mt 27:35-38; Mk 15:24-28; Lu 23:33-38; Jn 19:18).
- (4) Utters 1st cry fr the cross, "Father, forgive," (Lu 23:34).
- (5) Soldiers part His garments (Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Lu 23:34; Jn 19:23).
- (6) Jews mock Jesus (Mt 27:39-43; Mk 15:29-32; Lu 23:35).
- (7) Thieves rail Him, one repents (Mt 27:44; Mk 15:32; Lu 23:39-43).
- (8) Second cry from cross, "Today you will be with me," (Lu 23:43).
- (9) Third cry, "Dear woman, here is your son," etc. (Jn 19:26-27).
- (10) Darkness (Mt 27:45; Mk 15:33; Lu 23:44).
- (11) Fourth cry, "My God," etc. (Mt 27:46-47; Mk 15:34-36).
- (12) Fifth cry, "I am thirsty" (Jn 19:28).
- (13) Sixth cry, "It is finished" (Jn 19:30).
- (14) Seventh cry, "Father, into your hands," etc. (Lu 23:46). And
- (15) Lord dismisses His spirit (Mt 27:50; Mk 15:37; Lu 23:46; Jn 19:30).

QUESTION - [Who was the disciple whom Jesus loved?](#)

ANSWER - The Gospel of John is the only Gospel which mentions "the disciple whom Jesus loved." John 13:23 tells us, "One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to Him." John 19:26 declares, "When Jesus saw His mother there, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, 'Dear woman, here is your son.'" John 21:7 says, "Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!'" This disciple is never specifically identified, but the identity of the disciple whom Jesus loved is clear. The disciple whom Jesus loved self-identifies as the author of the gospel (John 21:24), whom most scholars believe to be the apostle John, the son of Zebedee and brother of James.

First, only the Gospel of John mentions the "disciple whom Jesus loved." Second, John 21:2 lets us know who was fishing with Peter: "Simon Peter, Thomas (called Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together..." The apostle John was a son of Zebedee (Matthew 4:21). Third, there were three disciples who were especially close to Jesus: Peter, James, and John (Matthew 17:1; Mark 5:37; 14:33; Luke 8:51). The "disciple whom Jesus loved" could not be Peter, as Peter asks Jesus a question in regards to this disciple (John 21:20-21). That leaves us with James or John. Jesus made a statement about the possible "longevity" of the life of the disciple whom He loved in John 21:22. James was the first of the apostles to die (Acts 12:2). While Jesus did not promise the disciple whom He loved long life, it would be highly unusual for Jesus to say, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?" if the disciple whom He loved was going to be the first disciple to die.

Church history tells us that the apostle John lived into the A.D. 90s and was the last surviving apostle. Early church tradition was unanimous in identifying John as the disciple whom Jesus loved. It seems that John had a closer relationship with Jesus than any of the other disciples. Jesus and John were essentially "best friends." Jesus entrusted John with the care of His mother, gave John the vision of the transfiguration, allowed John to witness His most amazing miracles, and later gave John the Book of Revelation. [GotQuestions.org](#)

QUESTION - [What did Jesus mean when He said, “Woman, behold your son” on the cross?](#)

ANSWER - As Jesus hung on the cross, the Bible records that He spoke seven final statements. The third saying, recorded in John 19:26–27, expresses the Lord’s care and concern for His mother: “When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, ‘Woman, here is your son,’ and to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.” The unnamed disciple whom Jesus addressed was the [apostle John](#) himself.

Despite His excruciating physical agony, Jesus was concerned about the welfare of His mother and the pain she was experiencing. With His thoughts on Mary’s future security and protection, Jesus entrusted her into the care of John, His beloved disciple.

Most scholars believe Joseph, Mary’s husband, was already dead by this time. Traditionally, the oldest son in a Jewish family was duty-bound to provide for his mother’s care if she became a widow. By entrusting Mary to John’s care, Jesus was fulfilling His family responsibility as a devoted son.

Typically, a dying son would commit his mother into the care of another member of his immediate family. In the case of Jesus, that would have been James, Jude, or another male sibling. But Jesus knew that none of His half-brothers were disciples yet—they had not accepted Christ’s claims or committed to His mission. Thus, Jesus most likely chose John out of profound spiritual concern for His mother. Even in death, Christ was focused on spiritual matters.

With the words, “Woman, behold your son,” Jesus invited His mother to look to John, His much-loved disciple and friend, to be her son now. Jesus was departing from her, but John would take the Lord’s place in her life as much as was possible. John was the only apostle brave enough to take a stand with the women who had accompanied Jesus to the cross (Luke 23:49; Mark 15:40; John 19:25). The rest of Christ’s disciples had scattered, abandoning the Lord in fear (John 16:32).

There is no disrespect in the Lord’s use of the title *woman* instead of *mother*. He had addressed her as “Woman” before (John 2:4). The address may sound disrespectful in English, but not in Greek. *Woman* was, in fact, “a highly respectful and affectionate mode of address” (Marvin Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1887, entry for Jn. 2:4). The Amplified Bible translates it as “[Dear] Woman.”

A symbolic meaning can be drawn from Jesus’s words “Woman, behold your son.” Establishing the [family of God](#) was at the heart of Christ’s mission and ministry. Through relationship with Jesus Christ, believers become members of a new family (John 1:12). As the Lord completed His earthly ministry, His words to Mary, “Woman, behold your son,” and to John, “Here is your mother,” were profoundly illustrative of God’s new family being born at the foot of the cross.

QUESTION - [Why did Jesus entrust Mary to the apostle John instead of to His brothers? \(WATCH VIDEO\)](#)

ANSWER - When Jesus was on the cross, both the apostle John and Mary the mother of Jesus stood nearby. In John 19:26–27 we read, “When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, ‘Woman, here is your son,’ and to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.” The clear understanding of the passage is that Jesus commanded John to care for Mary after His death.

Mary was most certainly a widow at this point in her life and also an older woman. Though she had other sons, Jesus chose John to provide care for Mary after His death. Why? Jesus’ brothers did not become believers until after His resurrection (John 7:5). Further, Jesus’ brothers were not present at His crucifixion. Jesus was entrusting Mary to John, who was a believer and was present, rather than entrusting her to His brothers, who were not believers and who were not even present at His crucifixion.

As the oldest son in His family, Jesus had a cultural obligation to care for His mother, and He passed that obligation on to one of His closest friends. John would have certainly obeyed this command. Mary was most likely one of the women in the upper room and was present when the church was established in Jerusalem (Acts 1:12–14). She probably continued to stay with John in Jerusalem until her death. It is only later in John’s life that his writings and church history reveal John left Jerusalem and ministered in other areas.

This is also confirmed by Acts 8:1 that reads, “On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.” John was still in the city at this time (perhaps one or two years after the resurrection) and was still there three years after the conversion of Paul (Galatians 2:9).

There is no contextual proof within Scripture itself that would point to Jesus broadening Mary’s role as “mother” of all Christians. In fact, Catholic teaching can only point to early church leaders as proof that Jesus meant to establish Mary’s “motherhood” to all believers in Christ or that Mary was a cooperative participant in salvation. John took Mary into his home to care for her. The Bible does not say “from that time on Mary became the mother of all believers.”

The beauty of John 19:26–27 is reflected in the care Jesus had for His mother, as well as the care John provided for her. Scripture clearly teaches the importance of caring for widows and the elderly, something Jesus personally applied during His final hours of His

earthly ministry. James, the half-brother of Jesus, would later call such care for widows “pure religion.” “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world” (James 1:27).

Robert Hawker —John 19:26, 27.

THIS was the second among the dying words of the Lord Jesus; and, no doubt, of high importance in their full sense and meaning: not simply to recommend Mary to the care of the beloved Apostle John, but probably of greater moment in reference to the church of Jesus at large. My soul; is it not very certain that the Lord Jesus knew all the events which would take place in all generations of his people? And, as such, did not Jesus perfectly well know also that the time would come when divine honours would be offered to Mary? These points cannot be disputed. Well, then, is it not worthy the closest observation, that Jesus, both in this place and upon all other occasions, when speaking of Mary, called her woman? Why so? if as Jesus knew that there would be some who would pray to her, and call her Mother of God, by which name the Holy Ghost never distinguished her, neither the Lord Jesus himself; could there have been a more decided method adopted than this to discountenance such idolatry, than when Jesus, in his dying moments, called Mary only woman? Besides, was it not on another account, that as Jesus was to be the seed of the woman which was promised to bruise the serpent's head, such a dying testimony might serve instead of a thousand witnesses in proof of the confirmation of the fact: and Mary's song might be the song of thousands—“My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.” But when we have thus attended to the second cry of Christ upon the cross in reference to those sweet points, do thou my soul remember also how tenderly those expressions of thy Lord recommend all the endearing affections of love and regard through all the members of Christ's mystical body. To behold our mother, or to behold our sons, are only different expressions to intimate that all true believers in Jesus are members of one another and of his body, his flesh, and his bones? And as it was by our Lord himself in this life, so is it with all his redeemed, both in this life and in that which is to come; they who do the will of his Father, which is in heaven, the same are Christ's brethren, and sisters, and mother.

Tangible Love

When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother,
“Woman, behold your son!” — John 19:26

Today's Scripture : John 19:25-30

The Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, Ireland, houses a wonderful collection of ancient Bible fragments. One very small fragment is a portion of John 19. This piece of John's gospel describes the moment, as Jesus was being crucified, when He spoke to His mother in a display of love and concern for her. The words are from verse 26, where we read, “When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold your son!’ ”

As I stared at that ancient fragment, it struck me afresh how tangible Jesus' love was for His mother and friend. With clear words He let the world know of His love and affection by showing His concern that Mary be cared for by His friend John when He was gone. Hanging on the cross, Jesus said to John, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home” (v.27).

I think that today, on this Mother's Day, would be a wonderful time to declare publicly your love for your mom if you still have her—or to give thanks to the Lord for her if she is no longer with you. Then show in some tangible ways how much you love her and how much she has meant to you. By: Bill Crowder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Since this priceless gift God gave us
Must from us one day depart,
Lavish her with love and kindness,
Real true love, with all your heart.
—Stairs

God bless my mother; all I am or hope to be I owe to her. —Abraham Lincoln

John 19:27 Then He *said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” From that hour the disciple took her into his own household.

- **Behold:** Ge 45:8 47:12 Mt 12:48-50 25:40 Mk 3:34 1Ti 5:2-4
- **took:** 1Jn 3:18,19
- **his:** John 1:11 16:32

JESUS COMMIT HIS MOTHER TO CARE OF JOHN

Then He *said to the disciple, “**Behold, your mother!**” From that hour the disciple took her into his own household - Jesus did not need to explain to John the task He had just given him to watch over his mother Mary the rest of her life.

Merrill Tenney - The anguish and terror of Jesus’ mother at the Crucifixion must have been indescribable. His tender concern for her in the hour of his mortal agony illustrates his true humanity and compassion. (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Abridged Edition](#))

Note that this is the third of seven sayings of Jesus from the cross ([SEE TABLE](#)). John records three of the seven sayings.

Larry Richards - The closer we are to the Lord, the more likely He is to commit precious things and precious people to our care. Let’s love Him deeply, that we might be privileged to serve our Lord as John served Christ. (BORROW [The 365 day devotional commentary PAGE 810](#))

Spurgeon’s expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:27. Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother!

“John, take her home, and treat her as a mother should be treated.”

“Take her as thy mother, stand thou in my place, care for her as I have cared for her.” Those who love Christ best shall have the honour of taking care of his church and of his poor. Never say of any poor relative or friend, the widow or the fatherless, “They are a great burden to me.” Oh, no! Say, “They are a great honour to me; my Lord has entrusted them to my care.” John thought so; let us think so. Jesus selected the disciple he loved best to take his mother under his care. He selects those whom he loves best today, and puts his poor people under their wing. Take them gladly, and treat them well.

He was the disciple whom Jesus specially loved, so as a token of Christ’s great love to him, he left his mother to his charge. Have you any poor folk dependent upon you? Do you know any of God’s very poor people? Take care of them, and do not think the charge a burden; but do it for the sake of him who loves you so much that he entrusts his poor ones to

There was no specific direction given to John to entertain Mary. It was quite enough for the Lord to call his attention to her by saying “Behold thy mother.” How I wish we were always in such a state of heart that we did not need specific precepts, a hint would suffice. Dear friends, do not need pressing or driving to holy duty; be not as bullocks that must be goaded, but rather have within you such a spring of love that it shall be a delight to do anything that may give joy to the heart of the Well-beloved. When you see him on the cross, is there anything you can deny him? Will you not think spontaneously of what you can do to please him?

You expected him to do it, did you not? He loved his Lord so well.

John 19:28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, *said, “I am thirsty.**”**

- **Jesus:** John 19:30 13:1 18:4 Lu 9:31 12:50 18:31 22:37 Ac 13:29
- **that the:** Ps 22:15 Ps 69:21
- James Stalker’s classic [Trial and Arrest of Jesus Christ](#) - **18. THE FIFTH WORD FROM THE CROSS** John 19:28.

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:46+ About the ninth hour (3 PM AFTER 3 HOURS OF DARKNESS) Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “**ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?**” that is, “**MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?**”

Spurgeon - “*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 — *"Ei"*—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.

Psalms 22:15 **My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And my tongue cleaves to my jaws;** And You lay me in the dust of death.

Spurgeon - *"My strength is dried up like a potsherd."* Most complete debility is here portrayed; Jesus likens himself to a broken piece of earthenware, or an earthen pot, baked in the fire till the last particle of moisture is driven out of the clay. No doubt a high degree of feverish burning afflicted the body of our Lord. All his strength was dried up in the tremendous flames of avenging justice, even as the paschal lamb was roasted in the fire. *"My tongue cleaveth to my jaws;"* thirst and fever fastened his tongue to his jaws. Dryness and a horrible clamminess tormented his mouth, so that he could scarcely speak. *"Thou hast brought me into the dust of death;"* so tormented in every single part as to feel dissolved into separate atoms, and each atom full of misery; the full price of our redemption was paid, and no part of the Surety's body or soul escaped its share of agony. The words may set forth Jesus as having wrestled with Death until he rolled into the dust with his antagonist. Behold the humiliation of the Son of God! The Lord of Glory stoops to the dust of death. Amid the mouldering relics of mortality Jesus condescends to lodge! Bishop Mant's version of the two preceding verses is forcible and accurate:—

"Pour'd forth like water is my frame;
My bones asunder start;
As wax that feels the searching flame,
Within me melts my heart.
My wither'd sinews shrink unstrung
Like potsherd dried and dead:
Cleaves to my jaws my burning tongue
The dust of death my bed."

JESUS' FIFTH SAYING FROM THE CROSS

After this - To what time does **after this** refer? (Remember when you are observing Scripture and spot a time phrase, always PAUSE

and ask "What time is it?," examining the context to discern the answer). In context the **after this** is after His fourth saying, as He cried out to His Father (Matthew 27:46+).

Jesus, knowing (eido) that all things had already (by this time, now) **been accomplished (teleo)** - Jesus knew **all things** beyond a shadow of a doubt because He was omniscient. In context He knew that His mission of redemption **had been accomplished**. This fifth saying from the Cross occurred at about 3 PM (cf Mt 27:46+), so that by this time Jesus would have already borne the sins during those 3 hours of darkness over all the land (from 6th hour to the 9th hour - Mt 27:45), and it was during these 3 hours that He was made sin on our behalf (**huper** = **substitutionary atonement**) so that (**hina** - term of purpose) we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2Co 5:21+, cf 1Pe 2:24, 25+)

Had been accomplished is the verb **teleo** in the **perfect tense, tetelestai**, the **sixth saying** that Jesus would cry out in Jn 19:30 after expressing His thirst (the **fifth saying** on the cross).

To fulfill (teleioo) the Scripture (graphe), *said, "I am thirsty (dipsao) - This declaration emphasizes Jesus' humanity. He did not just seem to be human like the heresy of **Docetism** taught, but He was indeed fully human! It was not so much what He said that fulfilled the **Scripture** but it was what the soldiers did when they gave Him the sour wine that fulfilled the **Scripture**. They could have given Him water, but that is not what the **Scripture** prophesied, so the soldiers unknowingly fulfilled **Scripture**. Once again we see God's sovereignty over even the smallest detail in this grand drama of redemption.

What **Scripture** does this **fulfill**? There are 2 considerations but the most likely one is Psalm 69:21⁺.

Psalm 69:21⁺ They also gave me gall for my food And for my thirst they gave me **vinegar to drink**.

COMMENT - "Sour wine" was cheap vinegar wine diluted heavily with water.

Psalm 22:15⁺ My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And You lay me in the dust of death.

Jesus' statement here in John 19:28 amounts to an admission that at this point he has been forsaken by God

NET NOTE - In light of the connection in the Fourth Gospel between thirst and the living water which Jesus offers, it is highly ironic that here Jesus himself, the source of that living water, expresses his thirst. And since John 7:39 associates the living water with the Holy Spirit, Jesus' statement here in John 19:28 amounts to an admission that at this point he has been forsaken by God (cf. Ps 22:1, Matt 27:46, and Mark 15:34).

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:28. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst!

It seems a strange thing that Jesus should have said, "I thirst," because, out of all the pains that he endured upon the cross, and they were very many and very sharp, he never mentions one except thirst. A person in such terrible agony as he was enduring might have mentioned fifty things, but he singles out this one because there was a prophecy concerning it.

There was a prophecy to that effect in the Psalms, and he must needs fulfill that. Think of a dying man prayerfully going through the whole of the Scriptures and carefully fulfilling all that is there written concerning him: "That the scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus saith, I thirst."

It seems a strange thing that Jesus should have said, "I thirst," because, out of all the pains that he endured upon the cross, and they were very many and very sharp, he never mentions one except thirst. A person in such terrible agony as he was enduring might have mentioned fifty things, but he singles out this one because there was a prophecy concerning it.

Accomplished (completed, carried out, finished) (5055) **teleo** from **telos** = goal, an end, a purpose, an aim, a fulfillment, an achievement; See discussion of related words - **Mature** = **teleios**; **Maturity** [perfect] = **teleiotes**) means to bring to an end (e.g., Jesus **finished** speaking - see below) as one brings a process, a course, a task or an undertaking to the end. It means to make an end or to accomplish and complete something, not merely by bringing it to end but bringing it to perfection, in the context of Romans 2:27 signifying that one keeps the law perfectly. **Teleo** means to accomplish an obligation or demand in the sense of to bring about a result by effort. The idea is to achieve a goal or to conclude it successfully. This meaning is especially poignant in the context of Jesus' life purpose which was to die on the Cross, the purpose He pointed to and which He accomplished ("It is finished" John 19:30).

This same meaning of fulfilling or bringing about the completion or achievement of a goal or objective is also a prominent meaning in the Revelation (e.g. Rev 11:7⁺; Rev 17:17⁺) **Teleo** in some contexts (Mt 17:24; Ro 13:6⁺) means to **pay**, and in the NT uses refers to payment of obligatory taxes or tolls. Secular uses of teleo include the idea of carrying out instructions, of fulfilling obligations and religiously of carrying out religious acts including consecrating initiates (as into a mystery cult). This latter sense is not used in the NT but is used in the LXX translation of Numbers 25:3, 5 where Israel *joined themselves to* (consecrated themselves) the pagan idol Baal peor. See **Resources related to teleo:** (1) "It is finished" = [tetelestai](#) = [perfect tense](#) of [teleo](#) (2) [Commentary](#) on John 19:30

TELEO - 28V - accomplished(3), carried(1), carry(1), completed(3), finish(1), finished(11), fulfilled(2), fulfilling(1), keeps(1), pay(2), perfected(1), performed(1). Matt. 7:28; Matt. 10:23; Matt. 11:1; Matt. 13:53; Matt. 17:24; Matt. 19:1; Matt. 26:1; Lk. 2:39; Lk. 12:50; Lk. 18:31; Lk. 22:37; Jn. 19:28; Jn. 19:30; Acts 13:29; Rom. 2:27; Rom. 13:6; 2 Co. 12:9; Gal. 5:16; 2 Tim. 4:7; Jas. 2:8; Rev. 10:7; Rev. 11:7; Rev. 15:1; Rev. 15:8; Rev. 17:17; Rev. 20:3; Rev. 20:5; Rev. 20:7

The order of events at the crucifixion:

- (1) Arrival at Golgotha (Mt 27:33; Mk 15:22; Lu 23:33; Jn 19:17).
- (2) Offer of the stupefying drink refused (Mt 27:34; Mk 15:23).
- (3) Crucified between 2 thieves (Mt 27:35-38; Mk 15:24-28; Lu 23:33-38; Jn 19:18).
- (4) Utters 1st cry fr the cross, "Father, forgive," (Lu 23:34).
- (5) Soldiers part His garments (Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Lu 23:34; Jn 19:23).
- (6) Jews mock Jesus (Mt 27:39-43; Mk 15:29-32; Lu 23:35).
- (7) Thieves rail Him, one repents (Mt 27:44; Mk 15:32; Lu 23:39-43).
- (8) Second cry from cross, "Today you will be with me," (Lu 23:43).
- (9) Third cry, "Dear woman, here is your son," etc. (Jn 19:26-27).
- (10) Darkness (Mt 27:45; Mk 15:33; Lu 23:44).
- (11) Fourth cry, "My God," etc. (Mt 27:46-47; Mk 15:34-36).
- (12) Fifth cry, "I am thirsty" (Jn 19:28).
- (13) Sixth cry, "It is finished" (Jn 19:30).
- (14) Seventh cry, "Father, into your hands," etc. (Lu 23:46). And
- (15) Lord dismisses His spirit (Mt 27:50; Mk 15:37; Lu 23:46).

Robert Hawker —John 19:28.

AFTER this, that is, I conceive, (though I do not presume to mark the very order in which the Lord Jesus uttered his loud cries upon the cross,) after his complaint of desertion: for whether this was the fourth or the fifth of the seven last words of the Redeemer, I dare not determine; yet the words themselves were highly important, and significant of great things, in reference to Jesus and his people. Jesus thus cried that the scriptures might be fulfilled, it is said; for it had been prophesied of him, that gall was given him to eat—and, when thirsty, vinegar to drink, Psalm 69:21. And the soldiers, unconscious what they did of fulfilling this very prophecy, gave him sponge dipped in vinegar. But, my soul, was it the thirst of the body thy Jesus complained of? I think not. He had before declared, at his last supper, that he would drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until the day he drank it new in the kingdom of his Father. What could be then the thirst of Jesus, but the thirst of his soul for the accomplishment of redemption for his people, and the accomplishment of redemption in his people. He thirsted with an holy vehement thirst for the everlasting salvation of his ransomed, and seemed to anticipate the hour, by this expression, when he should see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. But did not Jesus also in this hour, as bearing the curse and wrath of God for sin, thirst in soul with that kind of thirst which, in hell, those who bear the everlasting torments of condemnation feel, when they are under an everlasting thirst which admits of no relief? That representation the Lord Jesus gives of this state, in the parable of the rich man's thirst, serves to afford a lively but alarming view of such superlative misery. Oh! that those who now add drunkenness to thirst, would seriously lay this to heart. Did God suffer his dear Son, to whom sin was but transferred, and not committed by him—did he suffer him to cry out under this thirst; and what may we suppose will be the everlasting cry of such as not only merit his wrath for sin, but merit yet more, his everlasting wrath for refusing redemption by Jesus, who thirsted on the cross to redeem sinners from endless thirsting in despair and misery? My soul! did Jesus thirst for thee? Were his dying lips parched, and his soul made deeply athirst for thy salvation? And shall not this thirst of thy Redeemer kindle an holy thirst in thee for him, and his love, and his great salvation? Wilt thou not now this morning, anew, look up by faith to the cross, and to the throne, and catch the flame of love from his holy, loving, longing, languishing eyes, untill thy powers go forth in vehement desires, like him of old, crying out—"As the hart thirsteth for the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for thy love is better than wine."

QUESTION - [Why did Jesus say, "I thirst," from the cross?](#)

ANSWER - During the approximately six hours Jesus Christ hung on the cross, our Lord spoke seven final statements. One of those statements is recorded in John 19:28: “Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, ‘I am thirsty.’”

The apostle John links Jesus’ statement “I thirst” to the fulfillment of Scripture. There were, in fact, at least twenty Old Testament prophecies fulfilled during the twenty-four hours surrounding the Lord’s death. By highlighting how Old Testament Scriptures were fulfilled throughout Jesus’ crucifixion, John showed that everything was happening according to God’s plan.

When Jesus said, “I thirst,” from the cross, He was alluding to a prophecy in Psalm 22:15: “My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death.” The apostle John had cited this same psalm earlier regarding the dividing of Jesus’ garments among the Roman soldiers (John 19:23).

In response to Jesus’ request for something to drink, the soldiers offer Him wine vinegar: “A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips” (John 19:29). Wine vinegar was the cheapest and easiest wine for soldiers to acquire. It was probably diluted with water.

Earlier, Jesus refused a drink of vinegar, gall, and myrrh offered to Him to relieve His suffering (Matthew 27:34 and Mark 15:23). After that, the soldiers mockingly offered Him wine vinegar but did not allow Him to drink (Luke 23:36). But here, several hours later, Jesus states, “I am thirsty,” thus asking for a drink. This time, the soldiers give Him some. This action was a fulfillment of Psalm 69:21: “They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst.”

Immediately after receiving the drink, Jesus says, “[It is finished](#),” and then bows His head and gave up His spirit (John 19:30). There is another, very practical reason Jesus says, “I thirst,” from the cross. The Lord asks for a drink so that He might clearly and powerfully declare His final statement, “It is finished.”

Hanging on the cross, Jesus suffered bitter agony and darkness while covered in our guilt, sin, and shame. When the act of purchasing our redemption was complete, nothing more was needed. Everything Jesus had come to do on earth was now finished. The Scriptures were fulfilled. Christ’s work was done, the battle was over, the victory was won. All that God had purposed and all the prophets had foretold was complete, and Jesus surrendered Himself to death.

From the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, we learn that, as Jesus died, He cried out with a loud voice (Matthew 27:50; see also Mark 15:37). Luke reports, “Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.’ When he had said this, he breathed his last” (Luke 23:46).

Jesus said, “I thirst,” from the cross because He wanted His lips and throat moistened to utter one final victorious shout before He died. The death of Jesus Christ finished His work of redemption, atonement, and reconciliation. Through Christ’s substitutionary and sacrificial death on the cross, the Lamb of God paid our debt and took away our sin. Our ransom complete, Jesus, with a resounding voice, wanted all people to hear these words—words that still ring strong today: “It is finished!”

QUESTION - [What does it mean that all things were now accomplished?](#)

ANSWER - John 19:28 says, “After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, ‘I thirst’” (KJV). The Greek word translated as “accomplished” means “finished,” which is how the ESV translates the word. In fact, two verses later, Jesus utters the words “[It is finished](#)” (verse 30). In both instances, the idea is that Jesus accomplished, finished, and completed His earthly assignment: “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28, ESV). To appreciate the depth of His sacrifice, we must review the context of John 19:28–30.

Returning to John 19:28, we read, “After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, ‘I thirst’” (KJV). Here, the word *know* indicates awareness of (and submission to) the Father’s will: “I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me” (John 6:38, ESV). On the cross, Jesus knew that His imminent death signified the completion of the Father’s redemptive plan. This does not mean that there is nothing else to be fulfilled now, but that everything up to that point was designed to fulfill both the Father’s will and Old Testament prophecies about the Suffering Messiah (see Isaiah 53).

The inhumane and unimaginable suffering that Jesus endured for our sins caused Him to become dehydrated. For this reason, Jesus said, “I thirst” (John 19:28). Here, John explains to his readers that Jesus’ thirst was so Scripture might be fulfilled. This does not suggest that Jesus only said He was thirsty because He wanted Scripture to be fulfilled. To the contrary, it means that Jesus understood the relevance of the messianic prophecies to Himself (cf. John 5:39). For example, in Psalm 22:15, the psalmist says, “My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death” (ESV). And in Psalm 69:21, the psalmist says, “They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink” (ESV). The mention of “sour wine” both in Psalm 69:21 and John 19:30 indicates a strong connection between both passages.

John 19:29–30 continues this fulfillment theme: “A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a [hyssop branch](#) and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, ‘It is finished,’ and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit” (ESV). In Exodus 12:22, hyssop was sprinkled above doorposts during Passover. So, it seems that John wants his readers to see a connection between the first Passover and “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The price and penalty for our sins have been paid in full. This is primarily what Jesus means when He says, “It is finished.”

In John’s Gospel, especially in John 19:28–30, Jesus is consistently presented not as a helpless victim but as the exemplar of self-conscious obedience to the Father. Jesus had earlier explained that “the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father” (John 10:17–18, ESV; see also John 14:31).

John 19:29 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.

- **was standing there:** Mt 27:34,48 Mk 15:36 Lu 23:36
- **[hyssop](#):** Ex 12:22 Nu 19:18 1Ki 4:33 Ps 51:7

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:34, 48 (FIRST ATTEMPT TO GIVE JESUS LIQUID) they gave Him wine to drink mixed with gall; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink (BECAUSE HE WANTED TO EXPERIENCE THE FULL BRUNT OF THE WRATH OF GOD)....48 (TO FULL Ps 69:21) 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.

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.”

Luke 23:36 The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine,

SOUR WINE FOR JESUS' THIRST

A jar full of sour wine was standing there- As alluded to above, can we not see the sovereignty of God even in a **jar full of sour wine**? Of course we can, for it could have been a **jar full of water**, but if that had been given to Jesus, the words of Psalm 69:21 would not have been fulfilled! God is the God of infinite details down to the most minute point! I am reminded of elderly Joshua’s word to Israel “Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that **not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed**; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed.” (Joshua 23:14+) Indeed, not one word of God will ever fail to be fulfilled, “For all the promises of God in Him (Christ) are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” (2Co 1:20+)

[A T Robertson](#) - Not vinegar drugged with myrrh (Mark 15:23) and gall (Matt. 27:34) which Jesus had refused just before the crucifixion.

So they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of [hyssop](#) and brought it up to His mouth - The use of [hyssop](#) reminds us of a couple of OT passages that somewhat parallel the use in the present passage.

For example, [hyssop](#) was used in Ex 12:22 to apply the blood of the male lamb to the doorposts so that the death angel would pass over. And here after the Lamb of God had accomplished redemption that [hyssop](#) would be used to quench His thirst.

Secondly, [hyssop](#) was also used at the time of the inauguration of the first covenant, the Mosaic Covenant in Hebrews 9:19 to sprinkle blood of the sacrificial animal on the book and the people. And now in the present context [hyssop](#) is used at time of the inauguration of the New Covenant in Christ’s blood!

NET NOTE - The cheap **sour wine** was called in Latin [posca](#), and referred to 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. [Hyssop](#) was a small aromatic bush; exact identification of the plant is uncertain. The [hyssop](#) used to lift the wet sponge may have been a form of reed (κόλαμος, [kalamos](#), “reed,” is used in Matt 27:48 and Mark 15:36); the biblical name can refer to several different species of plant (at least eighteen different plants have been suggested).

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:29. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

He did receive that; he had refused the drugged draught which they had first offered to him to lull his pain, but he accepted this, which was simply weak wine, no doubt a little sour, possibly bitter. When he "had received the vinegar," —

For he did receive it. It was a weak kind of wine, commonly drunk by the soldiery. This is not that mixed potion which he refused, wine mingled with myrrh, which was intended to stupefy the dying in their pains: "When he had tasted thereof, he would not drink;" for he would not be stupefied. He came to suffer to the bitter end the penalty of sin; and he would not have his sorrow mitigated; but when this slight refreshment was offered to him, he received it. Having just expressed his human weakness by saying, "I thirst," he now manifests his all-sufficient strength by crying, with a loud voice as Matthew, Mark, and Luke all testify.

Why is hyssop mentioned here? You remember that the hyssop was used in the cleansing of the leper, and that David prayed, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." The hyssop was also used in the sprinkling of blood under the law, so it is introduced here with a set purpose. The sponge is introduced here too; it always seems to me very remarkable that, in the death of Christ the circle of life was completed. The sponge is the very lowest form of animal life, and Christ is the very highest type of life of any kind. The sponge was lifted to the lip of the King of glory, and carried refreshment to him; and you and I, like the sponge, the very least of God's living ones, may yet bring refreshment to our Saviour's lips.

ISBE ARTICLE ON HYSSOP - HYSSOP - his'-up ('ezobh; husspos, Ex 12:22; Lev 14:4,6,4:9 ff; Nu 19:6,18; 1 Ki 4:33; Ps 51:7; Jn 19:29; Heb 9:19): A plant used for ritual cleansing purposes; a humble plant springing out of the wall (1 Ki 4:33), the extreme contrast to the cedar.

The common hyssop (*Hyssopus officinalis*) of the Natural Order Labiatae, an aromatic plant with stomatic properties, cannot be the hyssop of the Bible as it is unknown in Palestine, but allied aromatic plants of the same Natural Order have by Maimonides (Neg. xiv.6) and other Jewish writers been identified with it. Probably hyssop is identical with the Arabic zat'ar, a name applied to a group of aromatic plants of the genus marjoram and thyme. They would any of them furnish a bunch suitable for sprinkling, and they have the important recommendation that they grow everywhere, being found even in the desert. Post thinks of all varieties the *Origanum maru*, a special variety of marjoram which favors terrace walls and rocks, is the most probable.

The proposal (Royle, Jour. Royal Asiatic Soc., VII, 193-213) to identify the caper (*Capparis spinosa*) with hyssop, which has been popularized by the works of Tristram, has not much to recommend it. It is true that the caper is very commonly seen growing out of walls all over Palestine (1 Ki 4:33), but in no other respect is it suitable to the requirements of the Biblical references. The supposed similarity between the Arabic 'acaf ("caper") and the Hebrew 'ezobh is fanciful; the caper with its stiff, prickly stems and smooth, flat leaves would not furnish a bunch for sprinkling as serviceable as many species of zat'ar. It has been specially urged that the hyssop suits the conditions of Jn 19:29, it being maintained that a stem of caper would make a good object on which to raise the "sponge full of vinegar" to the Saviour's face, the equivalent of the "reed" of Mt 27:48; Mk 15:36. For such a purpose the flexible, prickly stems of the hyssop would be most unsuitable; indeed, it would be no easy matter to find one of sufficient length. It is necessary to suppose either that a bunch of hyssop accompanied the sponge with the vinegar upon the reed, or, as has been proposed by several writers (for references see article "Hyssop," EB), that hussopo is a corruption of husso, "javelin," and that the passage should read "They put a sponge full of vinegar upon a javelin." E. W. G. Masterman

QUESTION - What is hyssop?

ANSWER - Since people in the biblical era did not have access to the products we do today, they often relied on naturally occurring resources such as plants, animal byproducts, and minerals for cleaning, cooking, food, medicine, and more. Hyssop, an herb in the mint family with cleansing, medicinal, and flavoring properties, was prolific in the Middle East and was used in a variety of ways.

The Bible mentions hyssop several times, mostly in the Old Testament. In Leviticus, God commanded His people to use hyssop in the ceremonial cleansing of people and houses. In one example, God tells the priests to use hyssop together with cedar wood, scarlet yarn, and the blood of a clean bird to sprinkle a person recently healed from a skin disease (likely [leprosy](#)). This act would ceremonially cleanse the formerly diseased person and allow him to reenter the camp (Leviticus 14:1–7). The same method was used to purify a house that had previously contained mold (Leviticus 14:33–53).

Hyssop is also used symbolically in the Bible. When the Israelites marked their doorposts with lamb's blood in order for the angel of

death to pass over them, God instructed them to use a bunch of hyssop as a “paintbrush” (Exodus 12:22). This was probably because hyssop was sturdy and could withstand the brushing, but it also likely signified that God was marking His people as “pure” and not targets of the judgment God was about to deal out to the Egyptians.

David also mentions hyssop in Psalm 51:7: “Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.” David does not refer to physical cleansing—rather, he is asking God to cleanse him spiritually as he confesses his sin.

Hyssop also appears at Jesus’ crucifixion, when the Roman soldiers offered Jesus a drink of wine vinegar on a sponge at the end of a stalk of hyssop (John 19:28–30). This was, in fact, Jesus’ last act before He declared His work on earth finished and gave up His spirit. While the hyssop stalk may have been used for purely practical purposes (i.e., it was long enough to reach to Jesus’ mouth as He hung on the cross), it is interesting that that particular plant was chosen. It is possible that God meant this as a picture of purification, as Jesus bought our forgiveness with His sacrifice. Just as in the Old Testament blood and hyssop purified a defiled person, so Jesus’ shed blood purifies us from the defilement of our sin.

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.

- **It is finished:** John 19:28 John 4:34 Jn 17:4 Ge 3:15 Ps 22:15 Isa 53:10,12 Da 9:24,26 Zec 13:7 Mt 3:15 Ro 3:25 10:4 1Co 5:7 Col 2:14-17 Heb 9:11-14,22-28 Heb 10:1-14 12:2
- **And He bowed His head:** John 10:11,18 Mt 20:28 27:50 Mk 15:37 Lu 23:46 Php 2:8 Heb 2:14,15
- **See devotional study on [It is Finished](#)**
- **See more detailed [commentary](#) on John 19:30**
- James Stalker's classic [Trial and Arrest of Jesus Christ](#) - 19. **THE SIXTH WORD FROM THE CROSS** John 19:30

Related Passages:

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.

Psalm 31:5+ (JESUS DIED WITH WORDS OF SCRIPTURE UPON HIS LIPS!) **Into Your hand I commit my spirit;** You have ransomed me, O LORD, God of truth.

John 10:18+ “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.”

TETELESTAI!
IT IS FINISHED!

NOTE: See in depth study of [It is Finished](#), one word in the Greek text, **Tetelestai**. For an in depth discussion of John 19:30 see [separate commentary notes](#).

Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished([teleo](#) in perfect tense = [tetelestai](#))!” - This is the [6th of the sayings](#) of Jesus from the cross. Jesus knew that He had borne the sins of the world on Himself and that the wrath of God had been propitiated and sin had been atoned for. And so He declares the greatest single word ever spoken [tetelestai](#), which is translated into English with 3 words **“It is finished!”** One practical point about Jesus’ word [tetelestai](#) is that we can add nothing to it! We can only refuse His full payment or accept it by faith (Eph 2:8-9+). We can do nothing to merit His full payment for our sin!

Jesus’ focus had always been on accomplishing this mission. In Samaria He explained to His disciples ““My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and **to accomplish ([teleioo](#))** His work.” (Jn 4:34) And then in His high priestly prayer He spoke of this mission in the past tense, so certain He was that it would be consummated, praying ““I glorified You on the earth, **having accomplished ([teleioo](#))** the work which You have given Me to do..” (Jn 17:4)

*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf,
so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*
-- 2 Corinthians 5:21+

[A T Robertson](#) - A cry of victory in the hour of defeat like **overcome** [nenikēka] in John 16:33. Jesus knew the relation of his death to redemption for us (Mk 10:45; Mt 20:28; 26:28).

Spurgeon Study Bible - “**It is finished.**” There is only one Greek word for this utterance of our Lord, although to translate it into

English, we have to use three words—an ocean of meaning in a drop of language. Yet it would need all the other words ever spoken, or ever can be spoken, to explain this one word. It is altogether immeasurable. It is high—I cannot attain to it. It is deep—I cannot fathom it.

The perfect satisfaction of the Father with Christ's work for his people so that Christ could say, "**It is finished**," is a ground of solid comfort to his church forevermore. Take comfort from this—the redemption of Christ's church is perfected. Not another penny need be paid for her full release. Those whom he bought with blood are forever clear of all charges, paid for to the utmost. All those overwhelming debts that would have sunk us to the lowest hell have been discharged, and they who believe in Christ will appear with boldness before the throne of God itself.

"**Finished!**" By that one word Jesus declared that he had broken the head of the old dragon. We have a stern battle yet to fight, but what does that matter? Our Lord has defeated the foe, and we have to fight with one who is already vanquished. Surely, "It is finished," sounds like the trumpet of victory. Let us have faith to claim that victory through the blood of the Lamb. And let all Christians, as one mighty army, take comfort from this dying word of the now risen and ever-living Savior. His church may rest perfectly satisfied that his work for her is fully accomplished.

And He bowed ([klino](#)) His head ([kephale](#)) and gave up ([paradidomi](#)) His spirit ([pneuma](#)) - **Bowed His head** is a vivid detail only in John an idiom for going to sleep, in this case the sleep of death. This pictures Jesus as calm in the last moments. Earlier Jesus had declared "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep....¹⁸ **"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." (Jn 10:11,18+)

And so here John says Jesus gave up His spirit, where **gave up ([paradidomi](#))** in in the **active voice** which means Jesus made a **choice of His will** to give **up His spirit**. He was in full control of the drama of redemption even to His last breath (and of course also in control in the grave, resurrection, etc). Lk 23:46+ records the last words of Jesus on the cross as **"Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT."**

[Utley](#) - From the Synoptic Gospels we learned that He shouted this with loud cry (cf. Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; Matt. 27:50). This refers to the finished work of redemption. This form of the term (telos) in the Egyptian papyri was a commercial idiom for "paid in full." The Gospel parallels in Mark 15:37 and Luke 23:46 have "He breathed His last." The Hebrew word for "spirit" and "breathe" are the same. His last breath was viewed as His spirit leaving the body (cf. Gen. 2:7).

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:30. It is finished;

Consummatum est. "The work is done, redemption is accomplished; the salvation of my people is forever secured."

What "it" was it that was finished? I will not attempt to expound it. It is the biggest "it" that ever was. Turn it over and you will see that it will grow, and grow, and grow, and grow, till it fills the whole earth: "It is finished."

Incarnate love has fulfilled its self-imposed task. Jesus, as the substitute for sinners, was condemned to die, and he died that he might finish the work of our redemption.

It is not that he died, and that then his head fell forward; but while he yet lived, having before maintained an erect, noble bearing even in the pangs of death, he now, to show his perfect resignation to his Father's will bows his head, and yields up that saved spirit of his which dwelt within his body.

He did not give up the ghost, and then bow his head, because he was dead; but he bowed his head as though in the act of worship, or as leaning it down upon his Father's bosom, and then gave up the ghost. Thus have we had two gospel pictures of our dying Lord. May we remember them, and learn the lessons they are intended to teach.

[The Cost](#)

When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.
John 19:30

Today's Scripture & Insight : John 19:25–30

Michelangelo's works explored many facets of the life of Jesus, yet one of the most poignant was also one of the most simple. In the 1540s he sketched a pieta (a picture of Jesus' mother holding the body of the dead Christ) for his friend Vittoria Colonna. Done in chalk, the drawing depicts Mary looking to the heavens as she cradles her Son's still form. Rising behind Mary, the upright beam of

the cross carries these words from Dante's Paradise, "There they don't think of how much blood it costs." Michelangelo's point was profound: when we contemplate the death of Jesus, we must consider the price He paid.

The price paid by Christ is captured in His dying declaration, "It is finished" (John 19:30). The term for "it is finished" (tetelestai) was used in several ways—to show a bill had been paid, a task finished, a sacrifice offered, a masterpiece completed. Each of them applies to what Jesus did on our behalf on the cross! Perhaps that's why the apostle Paul wrote, "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Galatians 6:14).

Jesus' willingness to take our place is the eternal evidence of how much God loves us. As we contemplate the price He paid, may we also celebrate His love—and give thanks for the cross. By: Bill Crowder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

How could each meaning of tetelestai be applied to the cross of Jesus and what He accomplished there? Why does each one have meaning to you?

Father, when I consider the sacrifice Jesus made on my behalf, I am humbled and deeply grateful. Thank You for Jesus, and thank You for the cross.

NO NEED FOR ADDITIONS Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. JOHN 19:30

Most Christians begin well; but finishing well—or even at all (**ED: TO NO FINISH "AT ALL" WOULD BE WORRISOME - SEE Mt 24:13, Mk 13:13, Heb 3:6, Heb 3:14 [Perseverance of the Saints](#)**)—is another matter entirely.

Jesus was a finisher. He completed the work of redemption that he came to accomplish. He left nothing undone.

In the closing hours of his life he could pray to his Father, "I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do" (John 17:4).

John Flavel shares this thought on the completed work of Christ.

WALK WITH JOHN FLAVEL

"Did Christ finish his work? How dangerous it is to join anything of our own to the righteousness of Christ, in pursuit of justification before God! Jesus Christ will never endure this; it reflects upon his work dishonorably. He will be all, or none, in our justification.

"If he has finished the work, what need is there of our additions? And if not, to what purpose are they? Can we finish that which Christ himself could not complete?

"Did he finish the work, and will he ever divide the glory and praise of it with us? No, no; Christ is no half-Savior.

"It is a hard thing to bring proud hearts to rest upon Christ for righteousness. God humbles the proud by calling sinners wholly from their own righteousness to Christ for their justification."

WALK CLOSER TO GOD

If these thoughts from the apostle Paul are the expression of your heart, pray them back to God

"I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death ... I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:10,13–14).

SEE [NIV. Once-A-Day: Walk with Jesus: 365 Days in the New Testament](#)

Finished!

When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. —
John 19:30

Today's Scripture : John 19:16-30

The Lord Jesus ended His work and suffering on the cross of Calvary with the words "It is finished!" (Jn. 19:30). In the original language in which John recorded these words, only one word is spoken by the Lord Jesus—tetelestai. Not three words but one—finished.

It was the cry of consummation, the cry of victory and of completion. In this one word, the Savior declared a fact, a truth so wonderful that Satan has been busy ever since trying to hide from the minds of men and women the meaning of Jesus' last triumphant cry.

As a result, there are millions of earnest, sincere, seeking souls who long for peace and rest but have not yet realized that salvation is a completed work. There is nothing more to be done. Yet these dear souls work and sacrifice, doing things they feel will merit for them the favor of God.

Stand with me once more before that cross. In that deep darkness when God hid His face, hear the Savior's powerful cry, "It is

finished!" At that moment the earth shook, the rocks were split, and the graves were opened (Mt. 27:51-52). His work of salvation was complete. Aren't you glad you can say, "Praise God, it is finished for me!" By: M.R. DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lifted up was He to die,
"It is finished," was His cry;
Now in heaven exalted high:
Hallelujah, what a Savior!
—Bliss

Salvation cannot be earned; it must be accepted.

[Adding To A Masterpiece](#)

When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" — John 19:30

Today's Scripture : Ephesians 2:1-10

Could you improve on a masterpiece? Imagine that you are walking through the Louvre museum in Paris. As you approach the Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci, would you think about taking a palette and brushes and touching up the painting? Maybe put some more color in her cheeks? Perhaps change her nose a little?

"That's ridiculous!" you say. For nearly 500 years the Mona Lisa has been considered one of the greatest artistic works of all time. How absurd to think we could add anything to this masterpiece!

Yet that's what many people try to do with Christ's masterpiece—salvation. They think they must improve on it with some work of their own. But that masterpiece was completed when Jesus said, "It is finished," while hanging on the cross (John 19:30). Then He proved that His work of redemption was done when He rose from the dead.

When you hear that Jesus paid the price for your sin and that you don't have to do anything to merit God's grace, do you think it's too good to be true? Do you think there's something you must do to earn it?

You can't add anything! Receive God's gift of salvation. Jesus paid it all. The masterpiece is complete. By: Dave Branon (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Christ's work for my salvation is complete!
No work of mine can add to what He's done;
I bow to worship at the Master's feet,
And honor God the Father's only Son.
—Hess

Salvation is a gift to be received—not a goal to be achieved.

He said, "It is finished!" JOHN 19:30

Author Joseph Conrad had just finished writing a lengthy

and intense novel about domination and rescue. Because Conrad's native language was Polish, the task of working out precise English words and phrases was very difficult. When he finally completed the book, he scrawled a single word across the last page. It was not the word Finished or Completed, but the word Victory! And that became the title of the novel.

Early in Jesus' ministry, He told His disciples, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work" (John 4:34). It would be a task more difficult than anyone had ever undertaken. By His sinless life and sacrificial death, He would purchase redemption for the entire human race. On the eve of His death He prayed, "I have finished the work which You have given Me to do" (John 17:4). And on the cross, before committing His Spirit into His Father's hands, He said, "It is finished!" Jesus had won the victory. —D. C. Egner (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

LIFTED UP TO DIE,
"IT IS FINISHED!"
WAS CHRIST'S CRY.

[Done!](#)

When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" — John 19:30

Today's Scripture : John 19:25-30

So many of our hopes and dreams remain unfulfilled. Composer Franz Schubert departed this world leaving behind his "Unfinished Symphony." Similarly, prolific author Charles Dickens was unable to fully develop the plot of his novel *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

We too undoubtedly have aspirations that we will be unable to fulfill. But what a blessing to know that the work of our redemption was totally and perfectly accomplished by Jesus on the cross.

The last words of Jesus, "It is finished," are actually a single word in the original language (John 19:30). But that word holds oceans of meaning. What Jesus gasped was "Completed!" or "Ended!" That cry from the cross announced that not only had His suffering come to an end but also His redemptive work was eternally accomplished. All that He had come to achieve in His human life was finished. Done!

We can do nothing to add to His sacrifice. Christ's self-giving death was all-sufficient. We stretch out the empty hand of faith, and God in grace puts into it the gift of eternal life.

Have you stretched out your hand of faith to receive this gift? By: Vernon Grounds (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

"It is finished," Jesus cried,
Then on Calvary's cross He died;
Christ the Lord atonement made,
And sin's debt was fully paid.
—Hess

Christ's sacrifice was what God desired and what our sin required.

Shout Of Triumph

It is finished! —John 19:30

Today's Scripture : John 19:28-37

Recently I read about Aron Ralston, a hiker who was trapped alone at the bottom of a remote canyon. With scant hope of being found and his strength ebbing away, he had to take drastic measures to save his life. During a moment of excruciating pain, he shouted in agony and in victory, because he had freed himself and now had a chance to escape and live.

Those who witnessed the crucifixion of Jesus saw His hours of agony and heard Him cry out in a loud voice, "It is finished!" as He gave up His spirit (John 19:30). His final words from the cross were not a cry of painful defeat but a shout of triumph, because He had accomplished all that the Father sent Him to do.

When Jesus died, He shared in what all of us must experience. But far beyond that, He did what none of us can do. He paid the price for our sins that we might be forgiven and have eternal life through faith in Him.

"It is finished!" was the Lord's shout of victory because now, through Him, we can escape the power of sin; we can live and be free.

Because of Jesus' sacrifice for us, we call the day of His death Good Friday. By: David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

How Will You Finish?

In 1981 Bill Broadhurst entered the Pepsi Challenge 10,000-meter road race in Omaha, Nebraska. Ten years earlier, surgery for a brain aneurysm left him paralyzed on his left side. But on a misty July morning, he stood with 1,200 lithe-looking men and women at the starting line. The gun cracked. The crowd surged ahead. Bill threw his stiff left leg forward and pivoted on it as his right foot hit the ground. His slow plop-plop-plop rhythm seemed to mock him as the pack disappeared into the distance. Sweat rolled down his face, pain pierced his ankle, but he kept going. Six miles, two hours, and twenty-nine minutes later, Bill reached the finish line. A man approached from a small group of bystanders. Bill recognized him from pictures in the newspaper.

"Here," the man said. "You've worked harder for this than I have."

With those words, Bill Rodgers, the famous marathon runner, put his newly won medal around Broadhurst's neck, proclaiming him a

winner.

The sight of Jesus hanging "helpless" on a cross looked like a tragic defeat. But three little words from His lips amounted to a victory shout: "It is finished!" Three days later the truth of His words would be known. The empty tomb confirmed His claim. He had finished His work by defeating death and atoning for sin.

The Christian life is not a race to see who comes in first, but an endurance run to see who finishes faithfully. Remaining faithful to the finish makes us true winners. —D J DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

We are judged by what we finish,
not by what we start.

Henry Morris - It Is Finished!

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" (John 19:30).

"On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made" (Gen. 2:2). Furthermore, "every thing that he had made... was very good" (Gen. 1:31).

So is His work of salvation! Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, It is finished. (John 19:28, 30). The emphasized words ("accomplished," "fulfilled," "finished") are all the same in the Greek original.

When all the relevant Scriptures had been fulfilled and the price of reconciliation ("the blood of his cross," Col. 1:20) fully paid, He could finally shout the great victory cry (Matt. 27:50), "It is finished!" As the finished creation was "very good," so is our finished salvation. The salvation which Christ our Creator thus provided on the cross is "so great" (Heb. 2:3) and "eternal" (Heb. 5:9), that the hope thereof is "good" (2 Thess. 2:16).

Then, finally, having finished the work of redemption, Christ rested once again, on the seventh day. As He had rested on that first seventh day, now He could rest again, His body sleeping in Joseph's tomb.

He had died quickly, and the preparations for burial had been hurried (Luke 23:54-56), so that He could be buried before the Sabbath. On the third day (that is, the first day of the new week), He would rise again, as He had said (Matt. 16:21, et al.). His body rested in the tomb all the Sabbath Day, plus part of the previous and following days, according to Hebrew idiomatic usage, "three days and three nights" (Matt. 12:40)—but death could hold Him no longer. He arose from the dead and is now "alive for evermore" (Rev. 1:18).

Robert Hawker —John 19:30.

PERHAPS these words formed the sixth cry of the Lord Jesus on the cross. The glorious close of all his sufferings was now arrived; and, full of these high ideas which occupied his holy mind, he cried out, "It is finished." What is finished? Redemption work is finished. All the long series of prophecies, visions, types, and the shadow of the good things to come, which pointed to Jesus, and redemption by him, were now finished in their accomplishment. The law was finished in its condemning power; and the gospel commenced its saving influence. Jesus, by that one sacrifice now offered, had for ever perfected them that were sanctified. The separation between Jew and Gentile was now finished, and done away for ever. Jesus had now gathered together in one all the children of God which were scattered abroad. The iron reign of sin and Satan, of death and hell, were now broken in pieces by this Stone cut out of the mountain without hands; and life and immortality, pardon, mercy, and peace, were brought to light, and secured to the faithful, by this finished redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ. The peace, the love, the favour of God the Father, was now manifested, and that spiritual kingdom of the Lord Jesus, which shall have no end, was from this moment set up in the hearts and minds of his people. The sure descent of the Holy Ghost was now confirmed; and the Lord Jesus already, by anticipation, beheld his Israel of old, and his Gentile church, as well as Ethiopia and the multitude of the isles, stretching forth their hands unto God. With these and the like glorious prospects the mind of Jesus was filled; and having received the vinegar, as the last prophecy remaining then to be completed, he cried out, "It is finished." My soul! never let these precious, precious words of Jesus depart from thy mind. Do by them as Moses commanded Israel concerning the words he gave them; let them be in thy heart and in thy soul: bind them as a sign upon thine hand, and let them be as frontlets between thine eyes. Tell thy God and Father what thy Jesus has told thee—"It is finished." He hath finished redemption for thee; and He will finish redemption in thee. He hath destroyed death, hath satisfied and glorified the law, taken away the curse, made full restitution for sin, brought in an everlasting righteousness, and opened the glorious mansions of the blessed as the home and rest of all his people. Oh! my soul, let these dying words of thy Jesus be made by thee as an answer to all thy prayers, and begin that song to the Lamb, which, ere long thou wilt fully and loudly sing among the church above—Worthy is the Lamb that was slain; for thou wast slain, and has redeemed us to God by thy blood.

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" click chapter # to go to the article (e.g., 14)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 14. THE FIRST WORD FROM THE CROSS Luke 23:34. ▪ 15. THE SECOND WORD FROM THE CROSS Luke 23:39–43. ▪ 16. THE THIRD WORD FROM THE CROSS John 19:25–27. ▪ 17. THE FOURTH WORD FROM THE CROSS Matt. 27:46–9; Mark 15:34–6. ▪ 18. THE FIFTH WORD FROM THE CROSS John 19:28. ▪ 19. THE SIXTH WORD FROM THE CROSS John 19:30. ▪ 20. THE SEVENTH WORD FROM THE CROSS Luke 23:46. 				

The order of events at the crucifixion:

- (1) Arrival at Golgotha (Mt 27:33; Mk 15:22; Lu 23:33; Jn 19:17).
- (2) Offer of the stupefying drink refused (Mt 27:34; Mk 15:23).
- (3) Crucified between 2 thieves (Mt 27:35-38; Mk 15:24-28; Lu 23:33-38; Jn 19:18).
- (4) Utters 1st cry fr the cross, "Father, forgive," (Lu 23:34).
- (5) Soldiers part His garments (Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Lu 23:34; Jn 19:23).
- (6) Jews mock Jesus (Mt 27:39-43; Mk 15:29-32; Lu 23:35).
- (7) Thieves rail Him, one repents (Mt 27:44; Mk 15:32; Lu 23:39-43).
- (8) Second cry from cross, "Today you will be with me," (Lu 23:43).
- (9) Third cry, "Dear woman, here is your son," etc. (Jn 19:26-27).
- (10) Darkness from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. (Mt 27:45; Mk 15:33; Lu 23:44).
- (11) Fourth cry, "My God," etc. (Mt 27:46-47; Mk 15:34-36).
- (12) Fifth cry, "I am thirsty" (Jn 19:28).
- (13) Sixth cry, "It is finished" (Jn 19:30).
- (14) Seventh cry, "Father, into your hands," etc. (Lu 23:46). And
- (15) Lord dismisses His spirit (Mt 27:50; Mk 15:37; Lu 23:46; Jn 19:30).

Metaphorical Pictures of Jesus' Death in Gospel of John

1. Lamb of God - John 1:29
 2. Temple torn down - John 2:19
 3. Serpent suspended - John 3:14
 4. Shepherd dying for sheep - John 10:11
 5. Seed planted and dying to bear fruit - John 12:24
-

Norman Geisler —Did Jesus die on the cross or just swoon? - [When Cultists Ask - page 310](#)

PROBLEM: Many skeptics, as well as Muslims, believe that Jesus did not die on the cross. Some say that He took a drug that put Him in a comalike state and that He later revived in the tomb. Yet the Bible says repeatedly that Christ died on the cross (cf. Rom. 5:8 ; 1 Cor. 15:3 ; 1 Thes. 4:14).

SOLUTION: Jesus never fainted or swooned, nor was He drugged on the cross. In fact, He refused the drug customarily offered to the victim before crucifixion to help deaden pain (Matt. 27:34), and He accepted only “vinegar” later (v. 48) to quench His thirst. Jesus’ actual physical death on the cross is supported by overwhelming evidence.

First of all, the OT predicted that Christ would die (Isa. 53:5–10 ; Ps. 22:16 ; Dan. 9:26 ; Zech. 12:10). And Jesus fulfilled the OT prophecies about the Messiah (cf. Matt. 4:14–16 ; 5:17–18 ; 8:17 ; John 4:25–26 ; 5:39).

Second, Jesus announced many times during His ministry that He was going to die (John 2:19–21 ; 10:10–11 ; Matt. 12:40 ; Mark 8:31). Typical is Matthew 17:22–23 that says, “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.”

Third, all the predictions of His resurrection, both in the OT (cf. Ps. 16:10 ; Isa. 26:19 ; Dan. 12:2) and in the NT (cf. John 2:19–21 ; Matt. 12:40 ; 17:22–23), are based on the fact that He would die. Only a dead body can be resurrected.

Fourth, the nature and extent of Jesus’ injuries indicate that He must have died. He had no sleep the night before He was crucified. He was beaten several times and whipped. And He collapsed on the way to His crucifixion carrying His cross. This in itself, to say nothing of the crucifixion to follow, was totally exhausting and lifedrainning.

Fifth, the nature of the crucifixion assures death. Jesus was on the cross from 9 o’clock in the morning until just before sunset. He bled from wounded hands and feet plus from the thorns that pierced His head. There would be a tremendous loss of blood from doing this for more than six hours. Plus, crucifixion demands that one constantly pull himself up in order to breathe, thus sending excruciating pain from the nails. Doing this all day would kill nearly anyone even if they were previously in good health.

Sixth, the piercing of Jesus’ side with the spear, from which came “blood and water” (John 19:34), is proof that He had physically died before the piercing. When this has happened, it is a medical proof that the person has already died (see point eleven below).

Seventh, Jesus said He was in the act of dying on the cross when He declared “Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit” (Luke 23:46). And “having said this, He breathed His last” (v. 46). John renders this, “He gave up His spirit” (John 19:30). His death cry was heard by those who stood by (vv. 47–49).

Eighth, the Roman soldiers, accustomed to crucifixion and death, pronounced Jesus dead. Although it was a common practice to break the legs of the victim to speed death (so that the person can no longer lift himself and breathe), they did not even break Jesus’ legs (John 19:33).

Ninth, Pilate double-checked to make sure Jesus was dead before he gave the corpse to Joseph to be buried. “Summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. And when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph” (Mark 15:44–45).

Tenth, Jesus was wrapped in about 75 pounds of cloth and spices and placed in a sealed tomb for three days (John 19:39–40 ; Matt. 27:60). If He was not dead by then, which He clearly was, He would have died from lack of food, water, and medical treatment.

Eleventh, medical authorities who have examined the circumstances and nature of Christ’s death have concluded that He actually died on the cross. An article in the Journal of the American Medical Society (March 21, 1986) concluded: Clearly, the weight of historical and medical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead before the wound to his side was inflicted and supports the traditional view that the spear, thrust between his right rib, probably perforated not only the right lung but also the pericardium and heart and thereby ensured his death. Accordingly, interpretations based on the assumption that Jesus did not die on the cross appear to be at odds with modern medical knowledge (See William Edwards [Death of Jesus](#)).

QUESTION - [What is the Swoon Theory? Did Jesus survive the crucifixion?](#)

ANSWER - The Swoon Theory is the belief that Jesus didn't really die at His crucifixion, but was merely unconscious when He was laid in the tomb and there He resuscitated. Accordingly, His appearances after three days in the tomb were merely perceived to be resurrection appearances. There are several reasons why this theory is invalid and can be easily proven as false, and there were at least three different persons or groups involved in Jesus' crucifixion who were all satisfied concerning the fact of His death on the cross. They are the Roman guards, Pilate, and the Sanhedrin.

The Roman Guards - There were two separate groups of Roman soldiers given the task of ensuring the death of Jesus: the executioners and the tomb guards. The soldiers in charge of execution were specialists in capital punishment, and crucifixion was one of the most brutal forms of execution in history. Jesus was nailed to a cross after enduring horrible beatings at the hands of these professional death merchants, and every person put to death by way of crucifixion was dealt with by these soldiers. Their job was to ensure the task was completed. Jesus could not have survived crucifixion, and these soldiers made certain that Jesus was dead before His body was allowed to be taken from the cross. They were completely satisfied that Jesus was truly dead. The second group of soldiers was given the task of guarding the tomb of Jesus because of the request made to Pilate by the Sanhedrin. Matthew 27:62-66 tells us "On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, 'sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, "After three days I will rise." Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, "He has risen from the dead." So the last deception will be worse than the first.' Pilate said to them, 'You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.' So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard" (NKJV). These guards ensured that the tomb was secure, and their lives depended upon completion of their mission. Only the resurrection of the Son of God could have stayed them from their task.

Pilate - Pilate gave the order for Jesus to be crucified and entrusted this task to be carried out by a [Roman centurion](#), a trusted and proven commander of 100 Roman soldiers. After the crucifixion, a request for the body of Jesus was made by [Joseph of Arimathea](#), in order that His body could be placed in a tomb. Only after confirmation was given to him by his centurion did Pilate release the body into the care of Joseph.

Mark 15:42-45: "Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. And when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph" (NKJV).

Pilate was completely satisfied that Jesus was truly dead.

The Sanhedrin - The Sanhedrin was the ruling council of the Jewish people, and they requested that the bodies of those crucified, including Jesus, be taken down from the cross after their death because of the ensuing Sabbath day.

John 19:31-37: "Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, 'Not one of His bones shall be broken.' And again another Scripture says, 'They shall look on Him whom they pierced.'"

These Jews who demanded that Jesus be crucified, and even going so far as to suggest an insurrection had He not been crucified, would never have allowed Jesus' body to be removed from the cross were He not already dead. These men were completely satisfied that Jesus was truly dead.

There is other evidence that the Swoon Theory is invalid, such as the condition of Jesus' body after the resurrection. At every appearance, Jesus' body was shown to be in a glorified state, and the only marks remaining as proof of His crucifixion were the nail prints He asked Thomas to touch as proof of who He was. Anyone who had experienced what Jesus experienced would have needed months to recover physically. Jesus' body bore only the marks of the nails in His hands and feet. The way in which Jesus' body was prepared after the crucifixion is further evidence to refute the theory. Had Jesus only been unconscious, the linens He was wrapped in would have been impossible for Him to escape from, had He been merely a man. The way in which the women attended to Jesus' body is further evidence of his death. They came to the tomb on the first day of the week to further anoint His body with

embalming ointments as they had little time to prepare His body prior to the beginning of the Sabbath after His crucifixion. Had He been merely unconscious as the theory supposes, they would have brought medicinal tools to help in His resuscitation.

The purpose for the Swoon Theory is not to dispute His death, but rather, it seeks to disprove His resurrection. If Jesus didn't resurrect, then He's not God. If Jesus truly died and rose from the dead, His power over death proves that He is the Son of God. The evidence demands the verdict: Jesus truly died on the cross, and Jesus truly rose from the dead.

F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily

John 19:30 When Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished.

Comparing the Gospels, we discover that these words were said "with a loud voice." It was the shout of a conqueror, who has fought through a long and terrible day, but greets victory as evening closes in.

Finished, the long line of sacrificial rite. — From the gates of Eden the blood of sacrifice had begun to flow, augmented by the confluent streams of the years. From that moment, however, not another drop need be shed. The types were finished now that the Antitype had been realized.

Finished, his fulfilment of prophecy. — How contradictory some had seemed! Ancient of Days, yet a babe; the Mighty God, yet marred of visage, and led to the slaughter; Son of Man, yet scion of David's stock; ruling in the midst of enemies, yet a bruised and broken Sufferer. But all of them, even to the last pathetic intimation of his dying thirst, fulfilled.

Finished, his mortal life. — Never again to be weary, hungered, tempted, buffeted, or to bear the contradiction of sinners. Never again to sweat the bloody sweat, or bear the accumulated faults of men. Nevermore to die.

Finished, a world's redemption. — He had wrought out and brought in a perfect salvation. The world, so far as God could make it so, was already reconciled. Sin was put away.

Finished, the perfect obedience. — He alone of all born of woman was able to say that there was nothing which the Father had asked that He had not given; nothing that the Father had imposed that He had not gladly borne. He had finished the work given Him to do.

G Campbell Morgan - It is finished. John 19. 30. Luke tells us that, "When Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father into Thy hands I commend My spirit, and having said this He gave up the ghost" (Luke 23.46). John says that, "He said, It is finished, and He bowed His head and gave up His spirit." There can be no doubt that what He said "with a loud voice" was "It is finished." It was the cry of triumph. The hour was come, and He had accomplished all that was within the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. He had entered into, and passed through, the deep mystery of spiritual death. In that experience He had cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and in that mystic cry revealed all that it is possible for men to know of that experience. All was over, except the physical dissolution which was the sacramental symbol of the spiritual death. To that He passed with calm composure as He said: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." In that exultant cry of accomplishment the soul of man hears the good news, of emancipation from all the slavery of sin, and of the possibility of realizing all the purposes of God. While there is much for man to do in working out his own salvation with fear and trembling, there is nothing for him to do to make his salvation possible. Everything is done, and now it is possible for God to work in us to will and to work of His good pleasure. (BORROW [Life applications from every chapter of the Bible PAGE 324](#))

John 19:31 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.

- **because:** John 19:14,42 Mt 27:62 Mk 15:42
- **that the:** Dt 21:22-23
- **that sabbath:** Lev 23:7-16
- **their:** John 19:1 Pr 12:10 Mic 3:3
- James Stalker's classic [Trial and Arrest of Jesus Christ](#) - 22. **THE DEAD CHRIST** John 19:31-37.
- Alfred Edersheim - [CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED](#)

Related Passages:

John 19:42 Therefore because of the Jewish day of preparation, since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Mark 15:42-47+ When evening had already come, because it was **the preparation day**, that is, the day before the Sabbath (SABBATH WOULD BEGIN ON THIS FRIDAY AT SUNSET), 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. 44 Pilate wondered if He was dead by this time, and summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether He was already dead. 45 And ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. 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. 47 Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus were looking on to see where He was laid.

Then (marks progress in narrative) **the Jews** ([Ioudaios](#)), **because it was the day of preparation** ([paraskeue](#)), **so that** ([hina](#) - term of purpose) **he bodies would not remain on the cross** ([stauros](#)) **on the Sabbath** ([sabbaton](#)) **(for that Sabbath was a high day)** - That bodies would not remain on the cross was in keeping with the OT Law in Deuteronomy 21:22-23+

"If a man has committed a sin worthy of death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, **this corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day** (for he who is hanged is accursed of God), so that you do not defile your land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance.

[Uteley](#) - **"(for the Sabbath was a high day)"** This has been interpreted in two ways: (1) the Passover meal and the Sabbath coincided this particular year (Jews used a lunar calendar) or (2) the feast of Unleavened Bread coincided with the Sabbath this year. The feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread (cf. Exod. 12) had become an eight-day festival.

[A T Robertson](#) on **for the Sabbath was a high day** - A double reason therefore for wanting the bodies removed before sunset when the Sabbath began.

Asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away- Once again we see these hypocritical legalists seeking to keep their religious laws even while they kill the only One Who ever perfectly kept the law. Here is the OT passages which motivated their request...

"If a man has committed a sin worthy of death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, **this corpse shall not hang all night on the tree**, but you shall surely bury him on the same day (for he who is hanged is accursed of God), so that you do not defile your land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance. (Dt 21:22-23+)

Crucifixion usually caused death by asphyxiation so breaking the legs caused this almost immediately because the person could not push up on his legs to breathe. The legs were necessary to allow one to exhale.

Edwards explains that "With elbows flexed and shoulders adducted and with weight of body on nailed feet, exhalation is accomplished as active, rather than passive, process. Breaking legs below knees would place burden of exhalation on shoulder and arm muscles alone and soon would result in exhaustion asphyxia." ([Death of Jesus](#))

ESV Study note - The Romans typically left decaying bodies on crosses long after death ([see note on crucifixion on Mt. 27:35+](#)). However, on certain ceremonial occasions (such as the emperor's birthday, see [Philo. Against Flaccus 83](#) - scroll down to #83), they could take the bodies down early, and breaking the legs would facilitate a quick death by preventing a person from prolonging his life by pushing himself up with his legs to be able to breathe. Arm strength soon failed, and asphyxiation ensued. The excavated bones of a crucified man from [Givat ha-Mivtar](#) (discovered near Jerusalem in 1968), whose legs had been broken, provide confirmation of this practice. (BORROW [The ESV Study Bible page 2068](#))

[A T Robertson](#) - This crurifragium was done with a heavy mallet and ended the sufferings of the victim.

[Wikipedia](#) - Frequently, the legs of the person executed were broken or shattered with an iron [club](#), an act called **crurifragium**, which was also frequently applied without crucifixion to slaves.^[78] This act hastened the death of the person but was also meant to [deter](#) those who observed the crucifixion from committing offenses.^[78]

NET NOTE - The Jewish authorities, because this was the day of preparation for the Sabbath and the Passover (cf. 19:14), requested Pilate to order the legs of the three who had been crucified to be broken. This would hasten their deaths, so that the bodies could be removed before the beginning of the Sabbath at 6 p.m. This was based on the law of Deut 21:22-23 and Josh 8:29 that specified the bodies of executed criminals who had been hanged on a tree should not remain there overnight. According to Josephus this law was interpreted in the 1st century to cover the bodies of those who had been crucified (J. W. 4.5.2 [4.317]). Philo of Alexandria also mentions that on occasion, especially at festivals, the bodies were taken down and given to relatives to bury (Flaccus 10 [83]). The normal Roman practice would have been to leave the bodies on the crosses, to serve as a warning to other would-be offenders. **To**

have the legs ... broken. Breaking the legs of a crucified person was a way of speeding up his death, since the victim could no longer use his legs to push upward in order to be able to draw a breath. This breaking of the legs was called in Latin **crurifragium**, and was done with a heavy mallet.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:31. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath day, for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

The breaking of the legs was intended to hasten death, ^{3/4}a very cruel method, but a very effectual one. Passing by Christ hanging in the center it was a strange thing for them to do, yet it had to be done, although they were quite unconscious of the reason why they so acted.

To prevent a ceremonial error, they are willing to commit brutal cruelty; indeed, they had already committed the more brutal cruelty of putting Christ to death. How particular some men are about some merely human rubric, yet the divine precepts of the law they violate with impunity. God save us from a conscience which will stick at home minute point which is of no consequence, but will allow us to commit great sin! We have heard of a Spanish bandit who confessed to his priest, after having murdered a great many persons, not his robberies and his murders, but the fact that a drop of blood had spurted on to his lips on a Friday, and thus he had defiled the feast day by taking animal food! Ah me! Conscience is a strange thing, yet some call it "the vicegerent of God." I believe it is no such thing, but that it very soon becomes as depraved as any other power of the human mind: we have need of far more than conscience to keep us right.

QUESTION - [What is a high Sabbath?](#)

ANSWER - A "high Sabbath" is any one of the seven annual festivals commanded by God for the Israelites in the Old Testament books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. Leviticus 23:1-44 explains the rules for the weekly Sabbath and then goes through the other days throughout the year that required a "sabbath rest" in which no customary work could be done.

Beginning in the spring, the seven high Sabbaths were [Passover](#), the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Firstfruits, the [Feast of Weeks](#) (Pentecost), the [Feast of Trumpets](#), the [Day of Atonement](#), and the [Feast of Tabernacles](#). The Jewish feasts are closely related to Israel's spring and fall harvests. They reminded the Israelites each year of God's ongoing protection and provision, but, even more importantly, they foreshadowed the redemptive work of the Messiah. The high Sabbaths symbolize the complete story of salvation—that is, the work of Christ—beginning with His death on the cross as the Passover Lamb and ending with His second coming after which He will "tabernacle" or dwell with His people forever.

The Gospel of John says the day following Christ's death and burial was a high Sabbath, or, as the NIV puts it, "a special Sabbath" (John 19:31). In this case, the high Sabbath was a regular Sabbath day that coincided with the Passover festival. It was a "double Sabbath," so to speak, and considered "doubly holy": to the weekly Sabbath, as normally observed, was added the first day of the Passover feast, Nissan 15, which also carried the solemnity of a Sabbath (see Leviticus 23:7–15).

Jesus was crucified on the day before a high Sabbath

So Jesus was crucified on the day before a high Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want Jerusalem desecrated on such a holy day as a high Sabbath, they petitioned the governor that the bodies of Jesus and those crucified with Him be taken down before evening (see Deuteronomy 21:22–23).

John 19:32 So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with Him;

- **of the first man and of the other.** John 19:18 Lu 23:39-43

SOLDIERS BREAK THE TWO CRIMINALS LEGS

Note that the Scriptures in John 19:31-37 are unique to the Gospel of John and are not found in the synoptic Gospels.

So ([oun](#) - term of conclusion - to appease the Jews) **the soldiers ([stratigotes](#)) came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the**

other who was crucified with ([sustauroo](#)) Him - In other words these two men were still breathing but the breaking of their legs would result in asphyxiation and death.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:32. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

With a huge iron bar smashing the great bones of their legs. To make sure that he should not survive,

John 19:33 but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.

Related Passage:

Exodus 12:46+ "It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor **are you to break any bone of it**.

Numbers 9:12+ "They shall leave none of it until morning, **nor break a bone of it**; according to all the statute of the Passover they shall observe it.

LAMB'S LEG NOT TO BE BROKEN

but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead ([thnesko](#)), **they did not break His legs** - Jesus died before the robbers. In not breaking Jesus' legs the soldiers in essence fulfilled prophecy, for Moses recorded "'It (PASSOVER LAMB) is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, **nor are you to break any bone of it**" (Ex 12:46+, cf Nu 9:12+) As Paul said in 1Co 5:7+ "Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed," clearly identifying Jesus as the substance (Col 2:17+) Who would fulfill the shadow of the Passover lamb in Exodus 12.

THOUGHT - It was necessary for the blood of the sacrificed lamb to be applied to the lintel and the two doorposts (Ex 12:7, 22+) so that the destroyer (Ex 12:23+) would see the blood and the LORD would pass over the door and would not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite the Jews. Dear reader, have you "applied the blood of Christ" to your life by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9+) so that you might experience eternal life and escape the death penalty and eternal punishment? Dear reader, if you have not yet accepted Christ's payment for your sins then "behold, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME," behold, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION." (2Co 6:2+). Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved forever (Acts 16:30-31+).

John 19:34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

- **pierced His side with a spear:** John 13:8-10 Ps 51:7 Eze 36:25 Zec 13:1 Mt 27:62 Ac 22:16 1Co 1:30 1Co 6:11 Eph 5:26 Tit 2:14 3:5-7 Heb 9:13,22 10:19-22 1Pe 3:21 1Jn 1:6-9 5:6,8 Rev 1:5 7:14

Related Passages:

John 20:27+ Then He *said to Thomas, '**Reach** here with your finger, and **see** My hands; and **reach** here your hand and **put** it into My side; and **do not be** unbelieving, but believing."

PIERCED SIDE BRINGS FORTH BLOOD AND WATER

But one of the soldiers pierced His side ([pleura](#)) **with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out** - This fulfills Scripture according to John 19:37. And clearly this was not just a "pen prick" or minor puncture wound because it left a scar large enough to put your hand into (John 20:27)! It proves Jesus did not just "[swoon](#)" but was truly dead.

As a pathologist I would deal with blood samples daily. One of the tubes of blood we used for testing was a "red top" which allowed the blood to coagulate fairly quickly so that there would be relatively clear serum on top

(having appearance of murky water) and the heavier clotted red blood cells sedimented on the bottom. Assuming the spear went in the right side of Jesus' chest, it would have penetrated the pericardial sac and into the right ventricle. What would have come forth first from the ventricular cavity would have been the heavier clotted red blood cells followed by the lighter "watery" appearing serum. It follows that this small detail is absolutely in agreement with what one would expect medically in a person's body that had been dead long enough for the blood to begin to clot. Thus out came blood first and then "water" which as a pathologist I interpret as serum. The accuracy of the details of God's word are absolutely amazing!

As an aside there are some absurd interpretations, the most common suggestion from Chrysostom being that the water represents baptism and the blood represents the Lord's table. This is definitely reading into the text something that is not present! Others say the blood and water point to the eternal life and cleansing that flow from Jesus' death. Others say the blood refers to the fact that Jesus' blood cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7). The water also pictures cleansing, as well as eternal life and the Holy Spirit. While some of these have a lesser degree of absurdity, the very fact that there are several interpretations should make us hesitate to give the blood and the water allegorical or spiritualized meanings. I think it is clear that a more literal interpretation of what came forth from Jesus' side was blood followed by serum.

Some have penned hymns that seem to relate to the blood and water and I think Augustus Toplady is closer to the correct interpretation because we know that it is the blood of Jesus which cleanses us from all sin (1Jn 1:7):

Rock of Ages

"Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure;
Cleanse me from its guilt and power."

And I see no problem with the Biblical accuracy of William Cowper's hymn:

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:34-37. And forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true, and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."

So his side must be pierced, but his bones must not be broken. See how the hand of God carries out the Word of God, and value every line of Scripture. Our Lord Jesus Christ seemed to go out of his way so as to ensure that every single word in the Old Testament in reference to himself should be fulfilled, so mind that you do not think little of the Old Testament which he so highly prized.

Side ([4125](#)) (pleura) refers to a part of the body, specifically the side. Herodotus says "mostly in pleura, the ribs, the side. The side of things and places,

PLEURA - 5X/5V IN NT ALL TRANSLATED "SIDE" - Jn. 19:34; Jn. 20:20; Jn. 20:25; Jn. 20:27; Acts 12:7

PLEURA - 23X IN THE SEPTUAGINT - Ge 2:21; Gen. 2:22; Ex 27:7; Nu 33:55 "thorns in your **sides**"; 2Sa 2:16 "in his opponent's **side**"; 2Sa 13:34 "**side** of the mountain"; 2Sa 16:13KJV "along on the hill's **side**"; 2Sa 21:14 "Zela" = rib or side ; 1Ki 6:5 "**side** chambers"; 1Ki 6:6; 1Ki 6:8; 1Ki 6:15; 1Ki 7:3; 1Ki. 7:20; 1Ki 8:19; Job 40:18; Pr 22:27; Isa 11:5; Ezek 34:21; Ezek 41:5; Ezek 41:7; Ezek 41:8; Ezek 41:9;

Here the two uses that have some parallel with John 19:

Genesis 2:21+ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then **He took one of his ribs** ([pleura](#)) and closed up the flesh at that place.

Genesis 2:22 The LORD God fashioned into a woman **the rib** ([pleura](#)) which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.

QUESTION - [Why did blood and water come out of Jesus' side when He pierced?](#) (See [my medical interpretation of "blood and water."](#))

ANSWER - The Roman flogging or scourging that Jesus endured prior to being crucified normally consisted of 39 lashes, but could have been more (Mark 15:15; John 19:1). The whip that was used, called a flagrum, consisted of braided leather thongs with metal balls and pieces of sharp bone woven into or intertwined with the braids. The balls added weight to the whip, causing deep bruising as the victim was struck. The pieces of bone served to cut into the flesh. As the beating continued, the resulting cuts were so severe that the skeletal muscles, underlying veins, sinews, and bowels of victims were exposed. This beating was so severe that at times victims would not survive it in order to go on to be crucified.

Those who were flogged would often go into hypovolemic shock, a term that refers to low blood volume. In other words, the person would have lost so much blood he would go into shock. The results of this would be:

- 1) The heart would race to pump blood that was not there.
- 2) The victim would collapse or faint due to low blood pressure.
- 3) The kidneys would shut down to preserve body fluids.
- 4) The person would experience extreme thirst as the body desired to replenish lost fluids.

There is evidence from Scripture that Jesus experienced hypovolemic shock as a result of being flogged. As Jesus carried His own cross to Golgotha (John 19:17), He collapsed, and a man named Simon was forced to either carry the cross or help Jesus carry the cross the rest of the way to the hill (Matthew 27:32–33; Mark 15:21–22; Luke 23:26). This collapse indicates Jesus had low blood pressure. Another indicator that Jesus suffered from hypovolemic shock was that He declared He was thirsty as He hung on the cross (John 19:28), indicating His body's desire to replenish fluids.

Prior to death, the sustained rapid heartbeat caused by hypovolemic shock also causes fluid to gather in the sack around the heart and around the lungs. This gathering of fluid in the membrane around the heart is called pericardial effusion, and the fluid gathering around the lungs is called pleural effusion. This explains why, after Jesus died and a Roman soldier thrust a spear through Jesus' side, piercing both the lungs and the heart, blood and water came from His side just as John recorded in his Gospel (John 19:34).

Related Resources:

- [How did Jesus die? What was the precise cause of Jesus' death?](#)
- [What is the meaning of the blood of Christ?](#)

John 19:35 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.

- **he who has seen has testified** John 19:26 21:24 Ac 10:39 Heb 2:3,4 1Pe 5:1 1Jn 1:1-3
- **so that you also may believe:** John 11:15,42 14:29 17:20,21 20:31 Ro 15:4 1Jn 5:13



THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH!

And he who has seen has testified ([martureo](#) - eye witness in this case) - Who had seen the scene? John was the sole disciple at the foot of the cross and thus was an eyewitness and here testifies twice to the **truth**. In context, what is it that John has seen? Clearly, he witnessed the spear puncture Jesus' side and the blood and water (serum) gush forth. The upshot is that John saw Jesus die! And he wants everyone to know this truth so that they might believe!

And his testimony ([martureo](#)) **is true** ([alethinos](#)); **and he knows** ([eido](#)) **that he is telling the truth** ([alethes](#)) - The verb for means he knew beyond a shadow of a doubt! Note that **has seen** is in the perfect tense which indicates that he saw it at a point in time in the past and his memory of it continues. The point is that although John would have written this Gospel 40-50 years after the actual event, his memories of the events that occurred on this fateful night and next day are crystal clear. John is clearly referring to himself as still alive. He wrote these words, not some "final editor" as some writers (Bernard) have suggested.

Utley - This verse is a comment by John, who was the only eyewitness to all the events of (1) the night trials, (2) the Roman trial; and (3) the crucifixion.

A T Robertson - John the Apostle was there and saw this fact (still sees it, in fact). This personal witness disproves the theory of the Docetic Gnostics that Jesus did not have a real human body.

So that ([hina](#) - purpose - What's purpose of eyewitness to truth?) **you also may believe** ([pisteuo](#)) - John's purpose for giving his eyewitness testimony is the same as he has for the entire Gospel! In John 20:31+ he said "these have been written so that ([hina](#) - purpose) you may believe ([pisteuo](#)) that Jesus is the Christ (THE MESSIAH), the Son of God; and that believing ([pisteuo](#)) you may have life in His Name." The only life worth having is life in Christ, for that life alone is truly abundant and truly eternal!

John 19:36 For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, "NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN."

- that the: Ex 12:46 Nu 9:12 Ps 22:14 34:20 35:10

Related Passages:

Exodus 12:46+ It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, **nor are you to break any bone of it.**

Numbers 9:12+ 'They shall leave none of it until morning, **nor break a bone of it;** according to all the statute of the Passover they shall observe it.

Psalms 34:20+ **He keeps all his bones, Not one of them is broken.**

Spurgeon - *He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.* David had come off with kicks and cuffs, but no broken bones. No substantial injury occurs to the saints. Eternity will heal all their wounds. Their real self is safe; they may have flesh wounds, but no part of the essential fabric of their being shall be broken. This verse may refer to frequent providential protections vouchsafed to the saints; but as good men have had broken limbs as well as others, it cannot absolutely be applied to bodily preservations; but must, it seems to me, be spiritually applied to great injuries of soul, which are for ever prevented by divine love. Not a bone of the mystical body of Christ shall be broken, even as his corporeal frame was preserved intact. Divine love watches over every believer as it did over Jesus; no fatal injury shall happen to us, we shall neither be halt or maimed in the kingdom, but shall be presented after life's trials are over without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, being preserved in Christ Jesus, and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Andrew Bonar - The passover lamb, of which not a bone was broken, prefigured Jesus as one, "not a bone of whose body should be broken;" and yet, at the same time, it prefigured the complete keeping and safety of Christ's body, the church; as it is written, *He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken.*

NOT A BONE OF JESUS BROKEN FULFILLING PROPHECY

For these things came to pass to fulfill ([pleroo](#)) **the Scripture** ([graphe](#)), **"NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN"** ([suntribo](#)) - Considering all of the trauma Jesus had been subjected to, it is surprising that some bones had not already been broken. But that

could not have happened because God's prophecies (and His promises) are always perfectly fulfilled!

Steven Cole makes an interesting comment - It's significant that these soldiers who were under orders to break the legs of the crucified men would skip Jesus, who was in the middle! Even when they saw that He was dead, it would have been normal for them to break His legs, too, so that they didn't get in trouble. But God sovereignly prevented the soldiers from obeying their orders so that Jesus would fulfill Messianic prophecy! Also, a soldier thrust his spear into Jesus' side, probably to make sure that He was dead. He wasn't under orders to do this; it was just something that he did on a whim. ([The Cross and Our Commitment John 19:31-42](#))

NET NOTE - A quotation from Ex 12:46, Nu 9:12, and Ps 34:20. A number of different OT passages lie behind this quotation: Ex 12:10 LXX, Ex 12:46, Nu 9:12, or Ps 34:20. Of these, the first is the closest in form to the quotation here. The first three are all more likely candidates than the last, since the first three all deal with descriptions of the Passover lamb.

Broken (crushed) ([4937](#)) **suntribo** from **sun** = together or intensification of meaning of the root word + **tribo** = wear away, rub, break in pieces; see cognate word **suntrimma** means to crush completely, to shatter, or to break in pieces and in context of Ro 16:20 it means to break the strength and power of Satan once and for all! This is a strong verb which leaves no doubt as to who is the winner in this battle. Glory! **Suntribo** is used of a reed, to break so as to have a flaw or crack. (Mt 12:20). To tear apart chains (Mk 14:3).

SUNTRIBO - 7V - Matt. 12:20; Mk. 5:4; Mk. 14:3; Lk. 9:39; Jn. 19:36; Rom. 16:20; Rev. 2:27

John 19:37 And again another Scripture says, "THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED."

- **They:** Ps 22:16-17 Zec 12:10 Rev 1:7

Related Passage:

Psalm 22:16-17+ For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; **They pierced my hands and my feet.** 17I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me;

Zechariah 12:10+ "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that **they will look on Me whom they have pierced** ([ekkenteo](#)); and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

Zechariah 13:1+ (THE FOUNTAIN HAD ITS ORIGIN AT THE ALMIGHTY CROSS) "In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity.

Revelation 1:7+ BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, **even those who pierced** ([ekkenteo](#)) Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.

FUTURE FULFILLMENT OF ZECHARIAH 12:10

And again another Scripture ([graphe](#)) **says, "THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED** ([ekkenteo](#)) - Who pierced Jesus' side? A Roman soldier of course, but he was simply the representative of the Jews who were guilty by association. So the "they" John refers to in context is the Jews who incessantly cried out "Crucify, crucify!"

Revelation 1:7+ says "**BEHOLD**, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen" The specific quote however is taken from Zechariah 12:10+ the context of which is the end of the Great Tribulation when the world will see the King of kings in His glory (Rev 19:16+).

This is a prophecy that is yet to be fulfilled but will be as Christ's second coming when 1/3 of Israel will look upon Him and repent and believe. Zechariah 13:8-9+ says

"It will come about in all the land (OF ISRAEL)," Declares the LORD, "That two parts (2/3'S OF ISRAEL) in it will be cut off and perish; But the third (OF ISRAEL) will be left in it. 9 "And I will bring the third part through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'" (THIS DESCRIPTION IS THE LANGUAGE OF COVENANT AND INDICATES THIS 1/3 HAVE ENTERED INTO THE NEW COVENANT THAT HAD BEEN PROMISED AND PROPHESED TO JUDAH AND ISRAEL in Jeremiah 31:31-34+).

NET NOTE - A quotation from Zech 12:10. Here a single phrase is quoted from Zech 12, but the entire context is associated with the events surrounding the crucifixion. The "Spirit of grace and of supplication" is poured out on the house of David and the inhabitants of

Jerusalem in the first part of v. 10. A few verses later in Zech 13:1+ Yahweh (typically rendered as "Lord" in the OT) says **"In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity."** (ED: There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, The sinners, sinners plunged beneath that blood/Lose all their guilty stains... [play this great hymn](#)) The blood which flowed from Jesus' pierced side may well be what the author saw as the connection here, since as the shedding of the blood of the sacrificial victim it represents cleansing from sin. Although the Jewish authorities and Roman soldiers certainly **"looked on the one whom they have pierced"** as he hung on the cross, the author may also have in mind the parousia (second coming) here (ED: INDEED I THINK JOHN DID SEE THE GREAT CONSUMMATION OF THIS PRESENT AGE). The context in Zech 12–14 is certainly the second coming, so that these who crucified Jesus will look upon him in another sense when he returns in judgment.

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.

- **Joseph:** Mt 27:57-60 Mk 15:42-46 Lu 23:50
- **but:** John 9:22 Jn 12:42 Pr 29:25 Php 1:14
- James Stalker's classic [Trial and Arrest of Jesus Christ](#) - **23. THE BURIAL** Matt. 27:57–61; Mark 15:42–47; Luke 23:50–56; John 19:38–42.

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:57-61+ When it was evening (BETWEEN 3PM TIME OF JESUS' DEATH AND SUNSET BEGINNING OF SABBATH), there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. 58 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. 59 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.

Mark 15:42-47+ When evening had already come, because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, 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. 44 Pilate wondered if He was dead by this time, and summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether He was already dead. 45 And ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. 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. 47 Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus were looking on to see where He was laid.

Luke 23:50-56+ 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 (FULFILLING PROPHECY - Isa 53:9+ = "Yet He was with a rich man in His death") 54 It was the preparation day, and the Sabbath was about to begin. 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.

John 12:42+ Nevertheless many even of the rulers **believed in Him**, but because of the Pharisees **they were not confessing Him**, for **fear** that they would be put out of the synagogue;

THE SECRET DISCIPLES STEPS INTO THE OPEN

After these things - What **things**? The final events of the crucifixion and death of Christ. This would include the fact that the disciples who had been closest to Jesus for 3 years had fled in fear for their lives. And up to the plate steps a "secret" disciple!

Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple ([mathetes](#)) of Jesus ([Iesous](#)), but a secret ([krupto](#)) one for fear ([phobos](#) - cf Jn 12:42) of the Jews ([loudaios](#)), asked Pilate that ([hina](#) - purpose clause) he might take away ([airo](#)) the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission ([epitrepo](#)) - Joseph may have been a **secret one** in the past but now he steps out in the open and does so boldly in approaching Pilate, for such a move could **have** placed his life in jeopardy. One other point to consider, would any of the legalistic

Jewish leader dared to touch a dead body? That's rhetorical! And yet Joseph, a member of the Sanhedrin (Lk 23:50) and a rich man by earthly standards, had counted the cost and heeded his Lord's words

"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he 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? (Mk 8:34-36+)

These two earthly rich men counted the cost when they surveyed the wondrous cross and would have joyfully sung Isaac Watts great hymn...

When I survey the wondrous cross

On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
save in the death of Christ, my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them through his blood.

See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down.
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

Steven Cole points out that "Joseph walks into Pilate's presence to ask for Jesus' body and then he and Nicodemus defile themselves by preparing that body for burial. In so doing, they lost their religion, but they gained Christ! By "religion," I'm referring to those who are scrupulous about outward appearances, but don't deal with God on the heart level (see Mark 7:1–23). Religious people are fastidious about cleaning the outside of the cup, while inwardly they are full of sinful self-indulgence (Matt. 23:25). Religious people do things to look good before people, but they don't come to Christ as needy sinners to receive mercy and to live in holiness on the thought level. To be committed to Jesus Christ, you've got to give up religion and replace it with reality with God. Joseph and Nicodemus were rejected by the Jewish leaders, but by confessing Christ on earth they gained eternal acceptance in heaven (Matt. 10:32–33). They lost their rules-keeping religion, but they gained an eternal relationship with the risen Savior. They lost their earthly riches, but they gained treasures in heaven. ([The Cross and Our Commitment John 19:31-42](#))

So ([oun](#) - term of conclusion - What's being concluded?) - The conclusion of Joseph's daring ask was an affirmative reply. In Pilate's reply I see a hint of divine intervention because the sovereign God was still orchestrating the events of His Son's drama of redemption and the exclamation point on that drama (resurrection) had to now be brought to fruition. And as so often in the Bible, God used men to bring this about, one a pagan name Pilate (reminiscent of God's use of other pagans such as Cyrus, Isa 44:28, 45:1 or Nebuchadnezzar, Jer 25:9, 27:6, 43:10) and the other a bold new believer named Joseph. God's work will always be completed just as He has ordained.

He came and took away ([airo](#) as in Mt 14:12) **His body** ([soma](#)) - And remember that Joseph had to move fast to carry out this burial because Jesus died at 3 PM and sunset was only 3 hours away, at which time no work could be done because it was the Sabbath! So Joseph quickly responded to Pilate's affirmative reply to his request and beat the time deadline of making sure no corpse remained hanging until the night as recorded by Moses...

his corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day (for he who is hanged is accursed of God), so that you do not defile your land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance. (Dt 21:23+)

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:38-40. And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus,

Oh, how tenderly, and with how many tears, did they take their Lord's body from the cross!

Secret (hidden) (2928) **krupto** English = crypt, cryptic) is a verb meaning to cover, to hide, to conceal, to keep secret (either protectively or for selfish reasons). To keep something from being seen. In some contexts **krupto** means to hide so as to keep secret (eg, Lk 19:42).

The first use in the Bible (Septuagint) is sad describing when Adam and Eve who had just committed the first sin "heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife **hid** themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden." (Ge 3:8,10) In Ge 4:15 because of his sin of murdering Abel Cain cries "Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Your face **I will be hidden** (Ge 4:14). In Ge 18:17 we see the first figurative use when God asked "Shall I **hide** from Abraham what I am about to do?"

Krupto speaks of literal hiding in many Gospel passages, but also of figurative hiding, as in Lk 18:34 (cp Lk 19:42) where the meaning of Jesus' words was "hidden from" the disciples (Cp Webster's definition of "cryptic" = having or seeming to have a hidden or ambiguous meaning). In Jn 19:38, **krupto** is used adverbially to refer to the "secret" (under cover, in hiding) discipleship of Joseph of Arimathea.

Gilbrant - In classical Greek **kruptō** means "to lay one on the other," "to cover," or "to conceal." It carries with it the idea of keeping something secret or protected. It is often used in reference to things "hidden" for selfish reasons. The Septuagint uses **kruptō** to refer to the baby Moses being "concealed" from the Egyptians so his life might be spared (Ex 2:3). Jeremiah was commanded to "hide" or "bury" a linen girdle in the earth for a certain length of time causing it to decay and thus painting a graphic picture of God's judgment on Judah (Jer 13:1-11). In the New Testament **kruptō** is often used of things which are hidden for the purpose of keeping them secret (Matthew 13:35,44; 25:25; John 19:38). Money is buried under the false notion that what is not used will not be wasted or lost (Matthew 25:18,25). Jesus used **kruptō** in Matthew 5:14 to teach that some things cannot be hidden and are simply not meant to be. Paul wrote that believers can have their lives hidden with Christ in God in the sense that they do not have to conform to the carnality of this present world (Colossians 3:3). John described the futile efforts of men to hide from the face and wrath of God when the Day of the Lord comes (Revelation 6:15,16). The contrast is obvious: Man can be hidden "safely" in God now, or he can try unsuccessfully to hide from God then. ([The Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#)).

QUESTION - [Who was Joseph of Arimathea? | GotQuestions.org](#)

ANSWER - Joseph of Arimathea was a biblical figure who played an important role in the burial of Jesus Christ. His account can be found in each of the four Gospels: Matthew 27:57–60; Mark 15:42–46; Luke 23:50–53; and John 19:38–42. He is called "Joseph of Arimathea" because "he came from the Judean town of Arimathea" (Luke 23:51) and to distinguish him from other Josephs in the Bible.

While there is not much information in the Bible about Joseph of Arimathea, there are certain things we can glean from the text. In Luke 23:50, we learn that Joseph was actually a part of the Council, or [Sanhedrin](#)—the group of Jewish religious leaders who called for Jesus' crucifixion. However, as we read on to verse 51, we see that Joseph was opposed to the Council's decision and was in fact a secret follower of Jesus (see also Mark 15:43). Joseph was a wealthy man (Matthew 27:57), although the source of his wealth is unknown. In addition, the Bible refers to Joseph as a "good and upright man" (Luke 23:50).

After Jesus' death on the cross, Joseph, at great risk to himself and his reputation, went to the Roman governor [Pilate](#) to request Jesus' body. [Nicodemus](#), the Pharisee who had visited Jesus at night to ask questions about God's Kingdom (John 19:39; cf. John 3), accompanied Joseph. The two men were granted custody of Jesus' body, and they immediately began to prepare the body for burial. Following Jewish custom, they wrapped the body in strips of linen and mixed in myrrh and aloë. However, it was the Day of Preparation—the sixth day of the week, just before the Jewish Sabbath—and it was late in the day. So Joseph and Nicodemus hurriedly placed Jesus in Joseph's own tomb, located in a garden near the place of Jesus' crucifixion.

Unbeknownst to Joseph and Nicodemus, their choice to put Jesus in Joseph's tomb fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy spoken hundreds of years before Jesus' death: "He was assigned a grave with the wicked, *and with the rich in his death*, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth" (Isaiah 53:9, emphasis added). This is one of the many prophecies that have confirmed Jesus' identity as the Messiah and Son of God.

The day after Jesus' burial, the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate to request that the stone Joseph had placed in front of the tomb be sealed, and a guard posted, for three days. They cited Jesus' assertion that He would rise after three days and claimed the disciples might attempt to steal the body in order to fabricate a resurrection (Matthew 27:63–64). Their precautions were for naught, as Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, just as He had predicted (Matthew 28).

Many spurious stories and legends have arisen regarding Joseph. Some purport that Joseph of Arimathea was the uncle of Jesus'

mother, Mary. However, the Bible makes no such connection, so the claim is unsubstantiated. In addition, Joseph supposedly made many trips to Britain for trade and is said to have eventually brought the gospel to that country. Again, though, the Bible is silent about Joseph after Jesus' burial, so we cannot know for sure what path he took later in life. What we do know is what we find in the Scriptures: Joseph of Arimathea was a rich man and part of the Sanhedrin, and he procured Jesus' body and laid it in his own tomb—from which Jesus would rise again in power three days later.

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).

ILLUSTRATION OF THE TOTAL COMMITMENT OF JOSEPH - A hen and a pig saw a church sign announcing the sermon: "What Can We Do to Help the Poor?" The hen suggested that they feed them bacon and eggs. The pig thought about it and replied, "There's one thing wrong with your idea: for you it requires only a contribution, but for me it requires total commitment!"

Steven Cole - When I was in college, there was an ad for Clairol hair-coloring that had the tag line, "Only her hairdresser knows for sure." You couldn't tell by looking whether she dyed her hair or not. So we used to refer to certain Christians, who were quiet about their faith, as "Clairol Christians," because only God knew for sure that they were believers. Up to this point, both Joseph and Nicodemus had been "Clairol Christians." Nobody except God knew that they were followers of Jesus. John 19:38 says that Joseph was "a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews." ([The Cross and Our Commitment John 19:31-42](#))

James Butler - SECRET DISCIPLE John 18:40 - [Sermon Starters](#)

Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus" (John 19:38).

Joseph of Arimathea will always have the "secret disciple" stigma attached to him. It is a shameful designation, but many of us have at times been "secret disciples of Jesus" unwilling to let others know where we stand in regards to Christ. Secret discipleship is a shameful thing, but many belong in this category. A young man who had spent the summer in a lumber camp where the ungodly thrive, was asked by others how he fared, being a Christian, in a lumber camp, and he replied that he did well for no one found out that he was a Christian. This illustrates the dishonorableness of secret discipleship. We note here three things about the secret discipleship of Joseph of Arimathea. His problem and performance are seen in every secret disciple.

FIRST—HE HAD A CONCEALED PROBLEM

"A disciple of Jesus, but secretly."

The first problem of a secret disciple shows up in his failure to confess Christ publically. He does not tell people by his mouth or manners that he is a Jesus follower. He cleverly and consistently conceals the fact of his faith—if you can call it faith. This attitude and action of Joseph of Arimathea is a perilous situation to be in for Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him

will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven, But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32, 33). We all want Christ to confess us very prominently before God the Father but this will not happen to those who are secret disciples.

SECOND—HE HAD A COWARDLY PROBLEM

"For fear of the Jews."

A secret disciple is basically a coward. Joseph of Arimathea was afraid of the Jews and did not want to lose his status in society. He was a coward, for he was more afraid of the Jews than of Jesus. The animosity of the Jews toward one who confessed Christ is seen in John 9:33. Joseph was a rich man (Matthew 27:57) and had high position (Mark 15:43). The Jews could hurt both if Joseph made a public profession of faith. So he feared the Jews.

THIRD—HE HAD A CEMETERY PROBLEM

"Besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus."

Joseph was too late to support Christ in the crisis. Like all secret disciples, his role was the cemetery. Many church members are like this. They say nothing until an issue is defeated or a pastor is run off, then they show up with cemetery sympathy for the defeated. This is not the kind of help that is needed. They should have stood up for the cause when the issue was around. But as a secret disciple they are cemetery Christians. They are good at burying that for which they would not take a stand. We do not need that kind in the church. ([Sermon Starters](#))

John 19:39 Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight.

- **Nicodemus:** John 3:1-21 7:50-52 Mt 12:20 19:30
- a: John 12:7 2Ch 16:14 Song 4:6,14

Related Passages:

John 3:1-2+ Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; **2this man came to Jesus by night** and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for (term of explanation) no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

John 7:50-52+ Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them **[MEMBER OF SANHEDRIN]**) *said to them, 51 "Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?" 52 They answered him, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? **Search**, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee." (WRONG!!!)

NICODEMUS COMES OUT IN THE OPEN WITH DEVOTION

Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night (Jn 3:1-2+), also came, bringing a mixture of [myrrh](#) and [aloes](#), about a hundred pounds weight - It is notable that 100 pounds of spices would have been very costly because spices had to be imported. This teaches us that not only was Nicodemus wealthy, but also that he was generous, which clearly indicates his love for Jesus.

D L Moody - Did Nicodemus remember that evening when he heard Christ say, "The Son of man must be lifted up"?

Larry Richards - At last Nicodemus was ready to declare his allegiance to Jesus, even though Jesus was dead. It's one thing to jump on the bandwagon of a person or movement then at the height of popularity. It's another thing entirely to come out publicly in support of a leader who has been rejected and lies dead. The test of our faith is faithfulness to Jesus when things go wrong, not when everything is going right. (BORROW [The 365 day devotional commentary PAGE 810](#))

A T Robertson - The Synoptics tell about Joseph of Arimathea, but only John adds the help that Nicodemus gave him in the burial of Jesus, these two timid disciples, Nicodemus now at last taking an open stand.

NET NOTE - **Aloes** refers to an aromatic resin from a plant similar to a lily, used for embalming a corpse. The Roman pound (λίτρα, litra) weighed twelve ounces or 325 grams. Thus 100 Roman pounds would be about 32.5 kilograms or 75 pounds.

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews" (John 3:1).

The man named Nicodemus appears only on three occasions in the New Testament, but these three reveal a most remarkable character. In a way, he has become a "type" of all those who come to Christ for salvation. This was not easy for him, both because he was a member of the Pharisees who vigorously opposed Jesus, and also because he was a member of the Sanhedrin, the governing council which would eventually vote to have Jesus executed.

First, Nicodemus was an interested inquirer, coming to seek an understanding of Jesus and His mission. Similarly, those who come to Christ today must come with an open mind and heart, willing to take the time to learn of Christ and of their own need of salvation.

The Lord told Nicodemus his need of regeneration and then of God's gift of eternal life to those who would receive Christ and His sacrificial death. Nicodemus evidently believed, for we next see Him as a confessing convert, defending Christ in the midst of his own peers as they were seeking to arrest and imprison Him. "Nicodemus saith unto them.... Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" (John 7:50-51). This was perhaps a weak defense, but Nicodemus was a new convert, and even this stand was resented, and identified him with Christ in the minds of these powerful adversaries.

Finally, we see him as a devoted disciple, along with his friend Joseph, who also was on the council, willing to suffer the loss of position and riches for Christ's sake—for this is undoubtedly what their actions at the cross entailed. "And there came also Nicodemus.... and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus.... for the sepulcher was nigh at hand" (John 19:39-42).

John 19:40 So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.

- **bound it in linen wrappings:** John 11:44 John 20:5-7 Ac 5:6

Related Passages:

Matthew 27:59 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

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.

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 20:5-7 and stooping and looking in, he *saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he did not go in. 6 And so Simon Peter also *came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he *saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself.

JESUS BOUND FOR BURIAL

So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews -Joseph and Nicodemus had to move fast. Assuming Jesus died at 3 PM and Sabbath began at 6 PM, they only had 3 hours to make all the proper burial arrangements.

As an aside, had Joseph and Nicodemus understood that Jesus' body would not suffer decay (Acts 2:27, 31+), they could have saved a lot of money on 100 pounds of spices!

NET NOTE - The Jews did not practice embalming, so these materials were used to cover the stench of decay and slow decomposition. The Fourth Gospel uses θονιοίς (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 σινδών (sindōn), a large single piece of linen cloth. If one understands θονιοίς 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 (BDF §111.3), so there may not be any difference.

Spurgeon's expository comments - note there may be some repetition as this is simply a collection of all his thoughts on a given passage or section.

John 19:40-42. And wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulcher was nigh at hand.

John's Gospel contains some particulars not mentioned by Mark; and the same may be said of Matthew's account, and Luke's. Read them all when you are at home, and ponder the wonderful story. The apostle Paul, speaking of our Lord's resurrection, mentions his burial. We will now read in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, just a few verses from the fifteenth chapter.

QUESTION - [Where was Jesus for the three days between His death and resurrection?](#) (WATCH VIDEO)

ANSWER - After Jesus said, "[It is finished](#)," on the cross, "he bowed his head and gave up his spirit" (John 19:30). His dead body remained on the cross until it was taken down and placed in a nearby tomb (John 19:40–42). His spirit, however, was elsewhere. Three days later, His body and spirit were reunited, and He rose from the dead (John 20). There is some speculation about where Jesus was—that is, where His spirit was—for the three days between His death and [resurrection](#).

The clearest indication we have in Scripture of where Jesus was between His death and resurrection comes in His conversation on the cross with one of the thieves crucified next to Him. The believing thief asks to be remembered when Jesus comes into His kingdom (Luke 23:42), and Jesus replies, "Truly I tell you, [today](#) you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). So, after His death, Jesus went to the place of blessing where God is—heaven. And that's where the believing thief went, too.

In the discussion of where Jesus was for the three days between His death and resurrection, another passage is often mentioned. 1 Peter 3:18–20 says,

"Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared" (ESV).

Some take this to mean that Jesus, sometime between His death and resurrection, went to [hell/Hades](#) and made an announcement of some type to the "spirits" imprisoned there. Within this interpretation, the spirits Jesus addressed could be either demonic or human.

If the spirits mentioned in 1 Peter 3:19 are fallen angels, then those spirits were probably imprisoned because they were involved in a grievous sin before the flood in Noah's time—Peter mentions Noah's flood in verse 20. Peter does not tell us what Jesus proclaimed to the imprisoned spirits, but it could not have been a message of redemption, since angels cannot be saved (Hebrews 2:16). If these were fallen angels, what Jesus proclaimed was probably a declaration of His victory over Satan and his hosts (1 Peter 3:22; Colossians 2:15).

But there is another interpretation of the 1 Peter passage. In this interpretation, the "spirits" are people currently in hell, but Peter is not saying Jesus made a special trip to Hades/hell to preach or proclaim anything. Rather, Peter is giving parenthetical information about something Jesus had done previously in history, namely, that He had "in spirit" preached to the people of Noah's day while they were still living on earth. That wicked generation heard the message, rejected it, perished in the flood, and are *now* in prison. The word *now* in 1 Peter 3:19 is provided for clarity in the Amplified Bible and the New American Standard Bibles of 1977 and 1995, and it contrasts with the "long ago" (NIV) and "formerly" (ESV) of 1 Peter 3:20.

According to this alternate interpretation, Christ was in Noah (spiritually) when Noah preached to his doomed neighbors. To better explain, here is a paraphrase of 1 Peter 3:18–20: "Jesus was put to death in the flesh, but He was made alive in the Spirit (it was through this same Spirit that Jesus long ago preached to those who are right now in prison—those souls who disobeyed during the time of God's great patience when Noah was building the ark)." According to this view, Jesus preached *spiritually* to the people of Noah's time, and He did this through the prophet Noah, in much the same way that God speaks through us today when we proclaim God's Word.

Ephesians 4:8–10 is another passage used in the discussion regarding Jesus' activities in the three days between His death and resurrection. Quoting Psalm 68:18, Paul says about Christ, "When he ascended on high, he took many captives" (Ephesians 4:8). The ESV puts it that Christ "led a host of captives." Some say this refers to an event not elsewhere described in Scripture, namely, that Jesus gathered all the redeemed who were in paradise and took them to their permanent dwelling in heaven. That is, after securing their salvation on the cross, Jesus brought Abraham, David, Joshua, Daniel, the beggar Lazarus, the thief on the cross, and everyone else who had previously been justified by faith, and led them from Hades (the abode of the dead in general) to their new spiritual home.

Another view of Ephesians 4 is that *ascended on high* is a straightforward reference to Jesus' [ascension](#). Christ returned to heaven

victoriously, as God. In His triumph, Jesus had defeated and taken captive our spiritual enemies: the devil, death, and the curse of sin.

the Bible gives scant information about what exactly Christ did for the three days between His death and resurrection.

All of this is to say that the Bible gives scant information about what exactly Christ did for the three days between His death and resurrection. The only thing we know for sure is that, according to Jesus' own words on the cross, He went to [paradise](#). We can also say with confidence that, His work of redemption finished, Jesus did not have to suffer in hell.

Related Resource:

- [What was the significance of Jesus being dead for three days?](#)

QUESTION - [Is the Shroud of Turin authentic? | GotQuestions.org](#)

ANSWER - The Shroud of Turin is a linen cloth that some believe to have been the cloth that Jesus Christ was buried in. Each of the three Synoptic Gospels mentions Jesus being wrapped in a cloth when He was taken down from the cross (Matthew 27:59; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53). The Shroud of Turin was "discovered," or at least made public, in the 14th century AD. The Shroud of Turin is named for the city where it is kept, Turin, Italy.

Here is a web page that contains some pictures / images of the Shroud of Turin: <http://www.shroud.com/examine.htm>. Upon examination, the Shroud of Turin appears to be that of a man who was crucified. There are markings in the hands and feet that are consistent with the wounds inflicted by crucifixion. There also appear to be wounds indicative of torture similar to what is described in the Gospels, around the head, back, and legs.

Is the Shroud of Turin truly the cloth Jesus Christ was buried in? There is much debate on the authenticity of the Shroud of Turin. Some are absolutely convinced that it is the burial cloth of Christ. Others believe it to be a fabrication or a work of art. There have been some dating tests that date the Shroud of Turin to the 10th century BC or later. Other tests have found pollen spores that are common to Israel and that could be dated to the 1st century AD. But there is no conclusive date either way.

Arguing against the authenticity of the Shroud of Turin is the Bible's complete lack of evidence for such a burial shroud. As mentioned earlier, the Bible mentions a whole piece of linen that was used to take Jesus' body from the cross. This linen was probably also used to transport the body to [Joseph of Arimathea's](#) nearby tomb. At the tomb hasty preparations for burial were made; these would have included washing the body and rewrapping it. Luke 24:12 mentions "the strips of linen." These same strips (plural) are mentioned twice in John 20:5–6. And John 20:7 says there was a "cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head." This description of the actual burial clothes—"strips" of linen, rather than one large piece; and a separate cloth to cover the head—seems to negate the claim that the Shroud of Turin is the burial shroud of Christ.

So, what are we to make of the Shroud of Turin? It might have been the burial shroud for some crucified man, but it is not likely to have any association with the death of Christ. Even if it were the authentic burial cloth of Christ, the Shroud of Turin is not to be worshiped or adored. Because of the doubtful nature of the Shroud of Turin, it cannot be used as proof for the resurrection of Christ. Our faith does not rely on the Shroud of Turin but on the written Word of God.

[Faith-Stand](#)

Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. John 19:40

Today's Scripture & Insight : John 19:38–42

Desmond Doss enlisted to serve in World War II as a non-combatant. Though his religious beliefs prevented him from carrying a gun, Doss ably served as a combat medic. In one battle, he withstood intense and repeated enemy fire to pull seventy-five soldiers in his unit to safety after they had been injured. His story is told in the documentary *The Conscientious Objector* and dramatized in the film *Hacksaw Ridge*.

A roll call of the heroes of Christian faith includes such courageous characters as Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Peter, and Paul. Yet there are some unsung heroes like Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who risked their standing with the Jewish leaders to take Christ's crucified body and give Him a decent burial (John 19:40–42). This was a bold move from a fearful, secret disciple of Jesus and another, Nicodemus, who had previously dared to visit Him only at night (vv. 38–39). Even more impressive is that they took their faith-stand before Jesus rose victorious from the grave. Why?

Perhaps the manner of Jesus's death and the events that immediately followed (Matthew 27:50–54) crystallized the fledgling faith of these fearful followers. Maybe they learned to focus on who God is rather than what man could do to them. Whatever the inspiration,

may we follow their example and exhibit courage to take risks of faith in our God—for others today. By: Remi Oyedele (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

In what ways have you lived courageously for your faith in Jesus? What can you do differently that might show your faith to the world?

John 19:41 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.

- **and in:** John 20:15 2Ki 23:30 Isa 22:16 Mt 27:60,64-66 Lu 23:53

Related Passages:

Isaiah 53:9+ His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

THE SAVIOR'S GARDEN TOMB

Now in the place where He was crucified([stauroo](#)) **there was a garden** - In the place indicates the garden was very near Calvary which was convenient because Joseph and Nicodemus had only 3 hours to carry out all the burial arrangements.

And in the garden a new([kainos](#)) **tomb** ([mnemeion](#)) **in which no one had yet been laid** - ([See depiction of where the tomb may have been located](#)) The fact that this new tomb was owned by the rich man Joseph of "Arimathea is a fulfillment of Isaiah 53:9+. It is interesting to ponder the word garden for it was in a garden in Eden where the agony of sin began (cf Ge 3:3+) and we see Jesus move from His agony in a garden named Gethsemane (Mt 26:36) to His repose in this garden tomb near the cross in Jn 19:41.

Henry Morris has an interesting note - The area had been purchased and specially constructed by Joseph, including even a garden, evidently as a special act of devotion to Christ. Since his home was in Arimathea, not Jerusalem, he would hardly have prepared such a place for himself or any members of his family, especially within sight and sound of dying criminals. The only reasonable inference is that he--possibly with Nicodemus--had prepared the tomb and the graveclothes well in advance of the time they would be needed, precisely for this very temporary but eternally significant ministry.

Tomb ([3419](#)) [mnemeion](#) from mneme = memory, remembrance) literally means a memorial and then a monument to commemorate the dead (Mt 23:29), but most often referred to a tomb, grave or sepulcher. Most uses refer to the tomb in which Jesus' dead body was laid - Mt 27:60; Mt 28:8; Mk 15:46; 16:2, 3, 5, 8; Lk 23:55; 24:1, 2, 9, 12, 22, 24; John 19:42; 20:1-4, 6, 8, 11 Acts 13:29.

The first NT use describes "demon-possessed met Him as they were coming out of the tombs" (Mt 8:28), the second Jesus' rebuke of the Jewish religious leaders who were "hypocrites" building "the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous" who they would have willingly murdered,(Mt 23:29, 30), the third describes the tombs opened and dead rising when Jesus died (Mt 27:52, 53), the fourth describes Jesus' burial tomb (Mt 27:60).

F B Meyer - THE GARDEN OF THE CROSS

"In the place where He was crucified, there was a Garden." --John 19:41.

IT WAS in a Garden that Paradise was lost, and in a Garden it was regained! The sweet flowers of spring waved their incense-cups around the Cross, on which their Creator, to whose thought they owed their beauty, was dying for man's redemption.

Amid all the anguish of this human world, nature pursues her unbroken routine. Spring with its green, summer with its glory, autumn with its gold--these in perennial beauty carry on their unbroken succession through all the days of human sorrow. Sometimes her unchanging order almost drives men to madness. It seems as though she has no sympathy with man in his stern battle for existence! Yet surely it is better so! Our tears and strife and storm are transient, whilst the order of creation will be the basis of that "new heaven and earth" for which we wait. Yes, there were flowers at the foot of the Saviour's Cross, and they have blossomed at the foot of every cross since His!

Where there is a Cross, there will be a garden. Of course, the cross must be properly borne. We must suffer for others, not careful about ourselves. We must take the cup from the hands of the Father, even though it is presented by the hands of a Judas! We must

suffer silently. No man or woman, who really suffers deeply for another's salvation, talks about it, save to God. Suffer for others in your Gethsemane-garden, and when you have been crucified after that fashion, then look for a garden in bloom. Set up a Calvary in your own heart! Let the cross there be a splint from the Cross of your Saviour! Bring thither your self-love, your ambitions, your moods and vagrant, selfish thoughts. Fasten your self-life, vain and proud as it is, to the Cross of Jesus, and let it remain there. Then in the garden of your character will arise a profusion of the rarest and sweetest flowers. If the world shuns your company, if you go lonely and unappreciated through life, yet you may find that the Lord Jesus will walk in the glades of your garden in the cool of the day, as He did in Paradise.

PRAYER

Your heart's a garden God has sown
To give your life the work it needed.
Some day He'll come to pluck His flowers,
So mind you keep your garden weeded.

[Rick Renner](#) - Buried! John 19:41, 42

John's Gospel tells us that near the crucifixion site, there was a garden. The Greek word for "garden" is kepos, and it refers to any garden with trees and spices. It can also be translated as an orchard. The same word is used in John 18:1 to describe the Garden of Gethsemane, which was an olive tree orchard.

All four Gospels suggest that this tomb was near the place where Jesus was crucified, but John 19:42 says, "... The sepulchre was nigh at hand." The word "nigh" is the Greek word aggos, meaning nearby. Most crucifixions were performed along a roadside. Evidently this garden was located in an orchard-like place, just down the road from where Jesus was crucified.

John 19:41 tells us that in the garden was "... a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid." The word "new" is the Greek word kainos, meaning fresh or unused. This doesn't necessarily mean that the tomb had recently been made but that it was a tomb that had never been used—thus, the reason John writes, "... Wherein was never man yet laid."

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record that this tomb belonged to Joseph of Arimathea, suggesting that it was the tomb he had prepared for his own burial. The fact that it was a tomb "hewn out in the rock" (Matthew 27:60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53) confirms the personal wealth of Joseph of Arimathea. Only royalty or wealthy individuals could afford to have their tombs carved out of a wall of stone or in the side of a mountain. Poorer men were buried in simple graves.

The word "hewn" in Matthew, Mark, and Luke comes from the Greek word laxeuo, meaning not only to cut out, but to polish. It implies that it was a special tomb, a highly developed tomb, a refined tomb, or a tomb that was splendid and expensive. Isaiah 53:9 had prophesied that the Messiah would be buried in a rich man's tomb, and the word laxeuo strongly suggests that this was indeed the expensive tomb of a very rich man.

John 19:42 says, "There laid they Jesus...." The word "laid" comes from the word tithimi, which means to set, to lay, to place, to deposit, or to set in place. As used here, it portrays the careful and thoughtful placing of Jesus' body in its resting place inside the tomb. Luke 23:55 tells us that after Jesus' body was placed in the tomb, the women who came with Him from Galilee, "... beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid." The word "beheld" in Greek is theaomai, from which we get the word theater. The word theaomai means to gaze upon, to fully see, or to look at intently. This is very important, for it proves the women inspected the tomb, gazing upon the dead body of Jesus to see that it had been honorably laid in place.

Mark 15:47 identifies these women as Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus and says that these women "... beheld where he was laid" at the tomb. The imperfect tense is used in Mark's account, alerting us to the fact that these women took their time in making sure Jesus was properly laid there. It could be translated, "they carefully contemplated where he was laid." If Jesus had still been alive, those who buried Him would have known it, for they spent substantial time preparing His body for burial. Then after His dead body was deposited into the tomb, they lingered there, checking once again to see that the body was treated with the greatest love and attention.

Once they were certain everything was done correctly, Joseph of Arimathea "... rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed" (Matthew 27:60; Mark 15:46). It was rare to find a stone entrance to a Jewish tomb in biblical times; most Jewish tombs had doors with certain types of hinges. A large stone rolled before the tomb would be much more difficult to move, making the burial site more permanent.

However, the chief priests and Pharisees weren't so sure that the site was secure. Fearing that Jesus' disciples would come to steal the body and claim that Jesus had been resurrected, the Jewish leaders came to Pilate and said, "... Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the

third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first" (Matthew 27:63, 64).

When the chief priests and Pharisees asked that "... the sepulchre be made sure ...," the Greek word sphragidzo is used. This word described a legal seal that was placed on documents, letters, possessions, or, in this case, a tomb. Its purpose was to authenticate that the sealed item had been properly inspected before sealing and that all the contents were in order. As long as the seal remained unbroken, it guaranteed that the contents inside were safe and sound. In this case, the word sphragidzo is used to signify the sealing of the tomb. In all probability, it was a string that was stretched across the stone at the entrance of the tomb, which was then sealed on both sides by Pilate's legal authorities.

Before sealing the tomb, however, these authorities were first required to inspect the inside of the tomb to see that the body of Jesus was in its place. After guaranteeing that the corpse was where it was supposed to be, they rolled the stone back in place and then sealed it with the official seal of the governor of Rome.

After hearing the suspicions of the chief priests and Pharisees, "Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can" (Matthew 27:65). The word "watch" is the Greek word coustodia, from which we get the word custodian. This was a group of four Roman soldiers whose shift changed every three hours. The changing shifts assured that the tomb would be guarded twenty-four hours a day by soldiers who were awake, attentive, and fully alert. When Pilate said, "Ye have a watch ...," a better rendering would be, "Here—I'm giving you a set of soldiers; take them and guard the tomb."

Matthew 27:66 says, "So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch." Wasting no time, the chief priests and elders hastened to the tomb with their government-issued soldiers and the special officers assigned to inspect the tomb before placing Pilate's seal upon it. After a full inspection had been made, the stone was put back in place, and the soldiers stood guard to protect the tomb from anyone who would attempt to touch it or remove its contents. Every three hours, new guards arrived to replace the old ones. These armed soldiers guarded the entrance to Jesus' tomb so firmly that no one would have been able to come near it.

The purpose of the seal was to authenticate that Jesus was dead; therefore, we can know that His body was thoroughly inspected again for proof of death. There is no doubt that Jesus was dead, for He was examined again and again, even as He lay in the tomb. Some critics have claimed that Jesus' body was inspected only by His own disciples and that they could have lied about Him being dead. However, the body of Jesus was also examined by an officer from Pilate's court. We can also be fairly certain that the chief priests and elders who accompanied the soldiers to the burial site demanded the right to view His dead body as well so they could verify that He was truly dead.

When Jesus came out of that grave several days later, it was no hoax or fabricated story. In addition to all the people who saw Him die on the Cross, the following individuals and groups verified that His dead body was in the tomb before the stone was permanently sealed by an officer from the Roman court of law:

- Joseph of Arimathea carefully laid Him inside the tomb.
- Nicodemus provided the embalming solutions, assisted in embalming Him, and helped Joseph of Arimathea lay Him in His place in the tomb.
- Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus lovingly examined His body and carefully contemplated every aspect of the burial site to ensure everything was done properly and respectfully.
- Rome's official officer ordered the stone rolled back; then he went into the tomb and examined the body of Jesus to verify that it was Jesus and that He was really dead.
- The chief priests and elders entered the tomb with Rome's official officer so they could look upon Jesus' dead body and put an end to their worries that He had somehow survived.
- Roman guards checked the contents of the tomb because they wanted to know for sure a body was there. They didn't want to be guarding an empty tomb that would later be used as a claim of resurrection, while they got blamed for the disappearance of Jesus' body.
- After all of these inspections were complete, Rome's official officer ordered the stone rolled back in its place. While the chief priests, elders, and Roman guards watched, he secured the site and sealed it shut with the seal of the governor of Rome.

Regardless of these efforts to secure the site and to keep Jesus inside the grave, it was impossible for death to hold Him. When preaching on the day of Pentecost, Peter proclaimed to the people of Jerusalem, "... Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain [Jesus]: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:23, 24).

Today the tomb in Jerusalem is empty because Jesus arose on the third day! Now He is seated on His throne at the right hand of the Father on High, where He ever lives to make intercession for you and for me (Hebrews 7:25).

Since He has become your High Priest and lives to make intercession for you, there is no need for you to struggle alone. Jesus is sitting at the Father's right hand, waiting for you to come boldly to Him for help and assistance. There is no mountain He cannot move, so go to Him today to make your requests known!

John 19:42 Therefore because of the Jewish day of preparation, since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

- **laid:** Ps 22:15 Isa 53:9 Mt 12:40 Ac 13:29 1Co 15:4 Col 2:12
- **because:** John 19:14,31

Therefore because of the Jewish day of preparation, since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. The Passover and the Sabbath would begin at 6 p.m., so those who had come to prepare and bury the body could not afford to waste time.

NET NOTE - The **day of preparation** was the day before the Sabbath when everything had to be prepared for it, as no work could be done on the Sabbath.

QUESTION - [Can the various resurrection accounts from the four Gospels be harmonized?](#)

ANSWER - The events surrounding Jesus' resurrection can be difficult to piece together. We must remember two things: first, the news of Jesus' resurrection produced much excitement in Jerusalem, and in the ensuing chaos many people were going many different directions. Groups were separated, and several different groups paid visits to the tomb, possibly more than once. Second, the writers of the Gospels did not attempt an exhaustive narrative; in other words, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John had no intention of telling us every detail of the resurrection or every event in the order that it happened.

In the battle with skeptics regarding Jesus' resurrection, Christians are in a "no-win" situation. If the resurrection accounts harmonize perfectly, skeptics will claim that the writers of the Gospels conspired together. If the resurrection accounts have some differences, skeptics will claim that the Gospels contradict each other and therefore cannot be trusted. It is our contention that the resurrection accounts can be harmonized and do not contradict each other.

However, even if the resurrection accounts cannot be perfectly harmonized, that does not make them untrustworthy. By any reasonable evaluation, the resurrection accounts from the four Gospels are superbly consistent eyewitness testimonies. The central truths - that Jesus was resurrected from the dead and that the resurrected Jesus appeared to many people - are clearly taught in each of the four Gospels. The apparent inconsistencies are in "side issues." How many angels did they see in the tomb, one or two? (Perhaps one person only saw one angel, while the other person saw two angels.) To how many women did Jesus appear, and to whom did He appear first? (While each Gospel has a slightly different sequence to the appearances, none of them claims to be giving the precise chronological order.) So, while the resurrection accounts may seem to be inconsistent, it cannot be proven that the accounts are contradictory.

Here is a possible harmony of the narratives of the resurrection of Christ and His post-resurrection appearances, in chronological order:

1. Jesus is buried, as several women watch (Matthew 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42).
2. The tomb is sealed and a guard is set (Matthew 27:62-66).
3. At least 3 women, including Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, prepare spices to go to the tomb (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1).
4. An angel descends from heaven, rolls the stone away, and sits on it. There is an earthquake, and the guards faint (Matthew 28:2-4).
5. The women arrive at the tomb and find it empty. Mary Magdalene leaves the other women there and runs to tell the disciples (John 20:1-2).
6. The women still at the tomb see two angels who tell them that Jesus is risen and who instruct them to tell the disciples to go to Galilee (Matthew 28:5-7; Mark 16:2-8; Luke 24:1-8).
7. The women leave to bring the news to the disciples (Matthew 28:8).
8. The guards, having roused themselves, report the empty tomb to the authorities, who bribe the guards to say the body was stolen (Matthew 28:11-15).
9. Mary the mother of James and the other women, on their way to find the disciples, see Jesus (Matthew 28:9-10).
10. The women relate what they have seen and heard to the disciples (Luke 24:9-11).
11. Peter and John run to the tomb, see that it is empty, and find the grave clothes (Luke 24:12; John 20:2-10).
12. Mary Magdalene returns to the tomb. She sees the angels, and then she sees Jesus (John 20:11-18).

13. Later the same day, Jesus appears to Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5).
14. Still on the same day, Jesus appears to Cleopas and another disciple on their way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32).
15. That evening, the two disciples report the event to the Eleven in Jerusalem (Luke 24:32-35).
16. Jesus appears to ten disciples—Thomas is missing (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25).
17. Jesus appears to all eleven disciples—Thomas included (John 20:26-31).
18. Jesus appears to seven disciples by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-25).
19. Jesus appears to about 500 disciples in Galilee (1 Corinthians 15:6).
20. Jesus appears to His half-brother James (1 Corinthians 15:7).
21. Jesus commissions His disciples (Matthew 28:16-20).
22. Jesus teaches His disciples the Scriptures and promises to send the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:4-5).
23. Jesus ascends into heaven (Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:6-12).

Robert Hawker —John 19:42.

MY soul! it is usual for the relations and friends of those that are deceased to attend the funeral. Art thou a friend, a relation of Jesus? Oh! yes; I trust thou art. He was, and is, the dearest of all friends, the nearest of all relations. He is at once all and every one—the Father, the Husband, the Brother. The invitation is therefore sent to thee, personally to thee. Every voice of affection calls thee to the tomb of Jesus, saying, “Come, see the place where the Lord lay.” And if, like Mary Magdalene, from more abundant love, thou art asking, “Where have they laid him?”—the answer immediately is returned, Come and see. Yes, thou dear Redeemer! by that faith thou hast graciously given me, I will come and see. Let my faith take wing, and light down in Joseph of Arimathea’s garden, and behold the place where the Lord lay. Was this the memorable spot? Did Jesus lay here? Did he here make (according to the ancient prophecy foretold of him) his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death, because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth? Here let me look; here let my soul wander in contemplation! Oh! what a marvellous sight to behold Jesus thus lain in the grave! Surely we may cry out, as the church did in the view, “My beloved is white and ruddy.” Never did death so triumph before. Never did the grave receive and hold such a prisoner. But, my soul, behold also, in the view, how Jesus triumphed even in death. It was through death he destroyed him that had the power of death—that is, the devil, that he might deliver them who, through fear of death, are all their life-time subject to bondage. And what saith Jesus to my soul from the grave? Fear not, I have the keys of death and the grave: fear not to go down to the Egypt of the grave; I will go with thee, and will surely bring thee up again from thence. And observe, my soul, as the grave could not detain thy Lord, thine Head, a prisoner; so neither can the grave beyond the appointed time, detain any of his members. And as the union between the Godhead and the manhood in Jesus was not broken off by death, so neither can the union between Jesus and his people be interrupted by death. The covenant of redemption, the union of Jesus with his people, the love of God in Christ to the souls and bodies of his redeemed, all these rot not in the grave: nay, where sin is taken out, the very enmity of the grave is slain: and though it acts as a devourer of our corrupt bodies, yet it acts as a preserver also of the refined part, that the dust and ashes of his saints Jesus may visit, and manifest his care over from day to day. Precious Lord! here then, as in every thing, thou hast the pre-eminence. Thou hast gone before: thou hast sweetly perfumed the grave by having lain there. And where should the dying members be but where their living Head hath been before? Hence, then, my soul, take comfort, and fear not when thy partner the body is called upon to go down to the grave. When the soul flies to Jesus in heaven, the body will sweetly rest in Jesus till summoned from the grave. Thy God, thy Jesus, hath the appointment for thy departure; both the place where, the time when, and the manner how, are all with him. He hath the keys both to open the door of death, and to open the kingdom of heaven. Leave all then with him. Frequently, by faith, visit his sepulchre, and behold where they laid him. And in the triumphs of thy Jesus, as thine head, already take part, as a member of his body, crying out with the Apostle, “O death, where is thy sting; O grave, where is thy victory? God be praised who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”