

# **Bible Study September 13, 2023**

## **JOHN 19 (ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION)**

### **Jesus Delivered to Be Crucified**

***1 Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. 2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. 3 They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands.***

Flogging could have killed Jesus. The usual procedure was to bare the upper half of the victim's body and tie their hands to a pillar before whipping them with a three-pronged whip that had pieces of lead in the prongs. The number of lashes was determined by the severity of the crime; up to 40 were permitted under Jewish law (Deuteronomy 25:3).

Jesus told his Disciples what would happen:

**Matthew 20:17-19 (ESV)** *17 And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, 18 "See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death 19 and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day."*

Old Testament said this would happen:

**Isaiah 50: 6 (ESV)** *I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting.*

### **Isaiah 53:3-7 (ESV)**

*3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

*4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.*

*5 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.*

*6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—everyone—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

*7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.*

***4 Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him." 5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!"***

The soldiers went beyond their orders to whip Jesus—they also mocked his claim to royalty by placing a crown on his head and a royal robe on his shoulders.

***6 When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" 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 according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God.”***

The truth finally came out—the religious leaders had brought Jesus to Pilate not because he was causing rebellion against Rome but because they thought he had broken their religious laws. Blasphemy, one of the most serious crimes in Jewish law, deserved the death penalty. Accusing Jesus of blasphemy would give credibility to their case in the eyes of Jews; accusing Jesus of treason would give credibility to their case in the eyes of the Romans. They didn’t care which accusation Pilate listened to, as long as he would cooperate with them in killing Jesus.

***<sup>8</sup> When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. <sup>9</sup> He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> So Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?”***

Throughout the trial we see that Jesus was in control, not Pilate or the religious leaders. Pilate vacillated, the Jewish leaders reacted out of hatred and anger, but Jesus remained composed. He knew the truth, he knew God’s plan, and he knew the reason for his trial. Despite the pressure and persecution, Jesus remained unmoved.

***<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.”***

***<sup>12</sup> From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar’s friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.”***

***<sup>13</sup> So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha.***

This veiled threat by the Jewish leaders pressured Pilate into allowing Jesus to be crucified. As Roman governor of the area, Pilate was expected to keep the peace. Because Rome could not afford to keep large numbers of troops in the outlying regions, they maintained control by crushing rebellions immediately with brute force. Pilate was afraid that reports to Caesar of insurrection in his region would cost him his job and perhaps even his life. When we face a tough decision, we can take the easy way out or we can stand for what is right regardless of the cost. If we know the good we ought to do and don’t do it, we sin (James 4:17).

Matthew tells us that Pilate got message from his wife about Jesus: **Matthew 27:19 (ESV)**

***<sup>19</sup> Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.”***

***<sup>14</sup> Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” <sup>15</sup> 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.”***

The Jewish leaders were so desperate to get rid of Jesus that, despite their intense hatred for Rome, they shouted, “We have no king but Caesar.” How ironic that they feigned allegiance to Rome while rejecting their own Messiah! Their own words condemned them, for God was to be

their only true King, and they had abandoned every trace of loyalty to him. The priests had truly lost their reason for existence—instead of turning people to God, they claimed allegiance to Rome to kill their Messiah.

***16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.***

## **The Crucifixion**

***So they took Jesus,<sup>17</sup> and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.***

This place called Golgotha, “the Skull,” was probably a hill outside Jerusalem along a main road. Tradition says that the rock formation of the hill looked like a skull. Many were executed in this place so the Romans could use them as an example to the people who traveled along the road.

***18 There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.***

Crucifixion was a Roman form of execution. Those who were condemned would be forced to carry their crosses along a main road to their execution site as a warning to the people. Types of crosses and methods of crucifixion varied. Jesus was nailed to his cross; some people were tied to theirs with ropes. Either way, death came by suffocation because the weight of the victim’s body made breathing difficult as they lost strength. Crucifixion brought a hideously slow and painful death.

***1 Peter 2:24-25 (ESV)<sup>24</sup> He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.<sup>25</sup> For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.***

***19 Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”***

A king stripped nearly naked and executed in public view had obviously lost his kingdom forever. But Jesus, who turns the world’s wisdom upside down, was just coming into his Kingdom. His death and resurrection would strike the death blow to Satan’s rule and would establish Jesus’ eternal authority over the earth. Few people reading the sign that bleak afternoon understood its real meaning, but the sign was absolutely true. All was not lost. Jesus was King of the Jews—as well as the Gentiles and the whole universe.

***20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek.***

The sign was written in three languages: Hebrew for the native Jews, Latin for the Roman occupation forces, and Greek for foreigners and Jews visiting from other lands. Ironically, this sign, by virtue of being written in multiple languages, declared that Jesus was Lord of all.

***21 So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’”<sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”***

***23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, 24 so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the Scripture which says,***

***"They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots."***

***So the soldiers did these things,***

Roman soldiers in charge of crucifixions customarily took for themselves the clothes of the condemned men. They divided Jesus' clothing and threw dice to determine who would get his seamless garment, his most valuable piece of clothing. This fulfilled the prophecy in Psalm 22:18.

***25 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 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!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.***

Even while dying on the cross, Jesus was concerned about his family. He instructed John to care for Mary, Jesus' mother. Our families are precious gifts from God, and we should value and care for them under all circumstances. Neither Christian work nor key responsibilities in any job or position excuse us from caring for our families. What can you do today to show your love to your family?

Jesus asked his close friend John, the writer of this Gospel, to care for Jesus' mother, Mary, whose husband, Joseph, must have been dead by this time. Why didn't Jesus assign this task to his brothers? As the oldest son, Jesus entrusted his mother to a person who stayed with him at the cross—and that was John. Tradition says that Mary moved to Ephesus later with John and that both are buried there.

## **The Death of Jesus**

***28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." 29 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.***

This sour wine was a cheap form of wine normally mixed with water that the Roman soldiers drank to quench their thirst while waiting for those crucified to die.

***30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.***

Until this time, a complicated system of sacrifices had atoned for sins. Sin separates people from God, and only through the sacrifice and shed blood of an animal, a substitute, could people be forgiven and become clean before God. But people sin continually, so frequent sacrifices were required. Jesus, however, became the final and ultimate sacrifice for sin. The word translated "finished" also means "paid in full." Jesus came to finish God's work of salvation (4:34; 17:4), to pay the full penalty for our sins. With his death, the complex sacrificial system ended because

Jesus took all sin upon himself. Now we can freely approach God because of what Jesus did for us. Those who believe in Jesus' death and resurrection can live eternally with God and escape the penalty that comes from sin.

The transaction had been complete. 2 Corinthians 5:21 <sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

### **Jesus' Side Is Pierced**

***<sup>31</sup> Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would 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.***

It was against God's law to leave the body of a dead person exposed overnight (Deuteronomy 21:23), and it was also against the law to work after sundown on Friday, when the Sabbath began. This is why the religious leaders urgently wanted to get Jesus' body off the cross and buried by sundown.

***<sup>32</sup> So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him.***

The Roman soldiers would break victims' legs to hasten the death process. When a person hung on a cross, death would come by suffocation, but the victim could push against the cross with their legs to hold up their body and keep breathing. With broken legs, they would suffocate almost immediately.

***<sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup> But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. <sup>35</sup> He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe.***

These Romans were experienced soldiers. They knew from many previous crucifixions how to tell whether a man was dead or alive. There was no question that Jesus was dead when they checked him, so they decided not to break his legs as they had done to the other victims. Piercing his side and seeing the sudden flow of blood and water (indicating that the sac surrounding the heart and the heart itself had been pierced) was further proof of his death. Some people say that Jesus didn't really die, that he only passed out—and that's how he appeared to come back to life. But we have the witness of an impartial party, the Roman soldiers, that Jesus died on that cross (see Mark 15:44-45)

The graphic details of Jesus' death are especially important in John's record because he was an eyewitness. They certified his accounts as authentic.

***<sup>36</sup> For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken." <sup>37</sup> And again another Scripture says, "They will look on him whom they have pierced."***

Jesus died as the lambs for the Passover meal were being slain. Not a bone was to be broken in these sacrificial lambs (Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12). Jesus, the Lamb of God, was the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world (1 Corinthians 5:7).

## Jesus Is Buried

***38 After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. 39 Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight.***

Four people were changed in the process of Jesus' death. The criminal dying on the cross beside Jesus asked Jesus to include him in his Kingdom (Luke 23:39-43). The Roman officer proclaimed that Jesus was surely the Son of God (Mark 15:39). Joseph and Nicodemus (John 7:50-52), members of the Jewish high council and secret followers of Jesus, came out of hiding. These men were changed more by Jesus' death than by his life. They realized who Jesus was, and that realization brought out their belief, proclamation, and action. When confronted with Jesus and his death, we should be changed—to believe, proclaim, and act.

***40 So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths 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 So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.***

To grasp the full picture of Jesus' crucifixion, read John's perspective along with the other three accounts in Matthew 27, Mark 15, and Luke 23. Each writer adds meaningful details, but each has the same message—Jesus died on the cross, in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, so that we could be saved from our sins and be given eternal life.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were secret followers of Jesus. They were afraid to make this allegiance known because of their positions in the Jewish community. Joseph was a leader and honored member of the Jewish high council (the Sanhedrin). Nicodemus, also a member of the council, had come to Jesus by night (3:1) and later had tried to defend him before the other religious leaders (7:50-52). Yet they risked their reputations to provide for Jesus' burial. Are you a secret believer? Do you hide your faith from your friends and fellow workers? This is an appropriate time to step out of hiding and let others know whom you follow.

As they buried Jesus, Nicodemus and Joseph had to hurry to avoid working on the Sabbath, which began Friday evening at sundown. This tomb was probably a cave carved out of the stone hillside. It was large enough for a person to walk into, so Joseph and Nicodemus carried Jesus' body into it. A large stone was rolled in front of the entrance.