

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 3-24-13 AM NOTES
"CHRIST CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED"
JOHN 19:17-42
#75 in Series, "Verse-by-Verse Through John"

I. He Was Crucified (vv. 17-27)

A. An Act of Government (vv. 17-24)

1. The Sentence (vv. 17-18)

Hebrews 13:11-12 (NIV) "11 The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. 12 And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood."

Isaiah 53:12b (NKJV) "And He was numbered with the transgressors."

2. The Superscription (vv. 19-22)

3. The Soldiers (vv. 23-24)

B. An Act of Grace (vv. 25-27)

Luke 2:35 (NKJV) "yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also."

John 19:26b-27 (HCSB) ²⁶ "Woman, here is your son.' ²⁷ Then He said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his home."

II. Dead (vv. 28-30)

A. The Lord Receives the Sponge (vv. 28-29)

Matthew 27:46b (NKJV) "*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*"

B. The Lord Reveals Success (v. 30a)

Tetelestai—"It is finished"

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV) “⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God,* ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

C. The Lord Releases His Spirit (v. 30b)

“Christ died as no other man has ever died. In one sense, He was murdered by the hands of wicked men (Acts 2:23). In another sense, it was the Father who sent Him to the cross and bruised Him there, putting Him to grief—and it pleased the Father to do so (Isaiah 53:10). Yet, in still another sense, no one took His life. He gave it up willingly for those whom He loved (John 10:17-18).”

—John MacArthur

III. And Buried (vv. 31-42)

Isaiah 53:9 (NASB) “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.”

A. Divine Protection of the Lord's Bones (vv. 31-37)

Psalms 34:20 (NKJV) “He guards all his bones; not one of them is broken.”

B. Divine Provision for the Lord's Body (vv. 38-42)

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 3-24-13 AM
“CHRIST CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED”
JOHN 19:17-42
#75 in Series, “Verse by Verse through John”

One of the earliest creeds of Christianity is the Apostles' Creed. Many of you grew up quoting it in worship services. The section of the creed that deals with Jesus' death says, “...suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried...” I took the title of the message from that line in the Apostles' Creed. Today we are looking at John's account of Christ crucified, dead, and buried. It is very important that we understand from both a historical view and a doctrinal view what happened after Jesus was unjustly condemned to die. To put it another way, we need to understand both what happened and why it happened.

The cross was the ultimate expression of the love of God and the sinfulness of man. We live in a culture that consistently tells us that human beings are basically good. The Biblical doctrine of the sinfulness of man is rejected by almost 100% of those in the world and by a surprisingly large percent of those in the organized church. The cross however, is overwhelming evidence for the depravity of man. Here was a perfect man (yes, He was also God, but don't ever minimize that He was perfect man also). Many of the people involved with this perfect man (the Jews and the gentiles) despised Him, tortured Him and nailed Him to a cross. Jonathan Edwards said, "Unconverted men would kill God if they could get at Him" [Quoted in J. C. Ryle, "Expository Thoughts on the Gospels", Page 387]. At the cross they "got at" God the Son and they did kill Him.

It is so easy to become desensitized to that which we are so familiar with. Even though you may be very familiar with both the historical and doctrinal truths of what we are focusing on today, I am praying that we will see these truths afresh and allow the Holy Spirit to bring us to genuine worship and a freshness in our devotion to the one who manifested His love for us in such an extreme way. Using the words from the Apostles' Creed, let's look at John's account of Christ crucified, dead, and buried.

I. He Was Crucified (V17-27)

The Roman philosopher Cicero said of crucifixion, "It was the most cruel and shameful of all punishments". Crucifixion was so extreme that a Roman citizen could not be crucified except by order of the Emperor himself. Crucifixion probably had its origin among the Phoenicians or the Persians, but it was the Romans that made it famous in history. Today we think of the cross as something admirable. We even have cross jewelry, cross pulpits, and crosses on our clothing, but in the first century it was considered despicable, shameful, and caused people great discomfort to even think of it. Crucifixion was not designed to just take a life; it was designed to make the one crucified severely suffer physically over a long period of time and also to cause them shame and to send a stern message to all – "This is what happens to those who defy the authority of Rome". Only the lowest, most evil, and often treasonous criminals were crucified. Let's look with more detail at the crucifixion of Christ.

A. An Act of Government (V17-24)

While the Jewish leaders bore the guilt of falsely accusing Jesus and manipulating the Roman Governor Pilate, it was the Roman government that ordered and carried out the crucifixion.

1. The Sentence (V17-18)

Jesus was sentenced to be crucified. The Romans demanded that the convicted person carry his own cross to the place of crucifixion. This was a part of the shame involved in the cross. The sight of a bloodied, beaten condemned man paraded through the streets carrying his own cross sent a message to all, "Crime against Rome doesn't pay". It is uncertain whether Jesus was made to carry just the cross beam (the Latin word is "patibulum") or the whole cross. The crossbeam would have weighed about 100 pounds and the complete cross would have been around 200 pounds. In the other Gospels we are told that the soldiers conscripted a man named Simon to carry the cross for Him. Though not stated it is often assumed that Simon was forced to do this task because Jesus was so weak from the beatings that He fell beneath the load. Scholars are unsure exactly where the crucifixion took place. It could have been at the traditional sight west of Jerusalem where now sits the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. A more recent possibility is a place north of Jerusalem called Gordon's Calvary. There is good evidence for both. The text tells us that it was called the place of the skull. In Hebrew that is Golgotha and the Latin word is the word we get "Calvary" from. Gordon's Calvary is on a hill that seems to somewhat resemble a skull [picture]. However, with all of the erosion over the last almost 2,000 years and the changes made to the topography of Jerusalem, it is hard to determine with certainty the correct location of Calvary. Both places are outside the gates of the first century city of Jerusalem. That fact in itself is the fulfillment of a type or picture in the Old Testament. According to Mosaic Law, the sin offerings were to be taken outside the camp of Israel. Jesus was the final and perfect sin offering so it is fitting that He was crucified "outside the camp" – the city walls. The writer of Hebrews picked up on this picture or type of Jesus' crucifixion in **Hebrews 13:11-12 (NIV)** "¹¹ The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a

sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. ¹² And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood.”

Instead of dwelling on the details of Jesus’ suffering as did the other Gospel writers, John simply states, “they crucified Him”. While John certainly doesn’t treat His physical suffering as irrelevant, he knows that Matthew, Mark, and Luke have already dealt with this. Along with Jesus, there were two others who were crucified (possibly accomplices of Barabbas who was released instead of Jesus). John knows that Luke has already written of one of these other condemned men trusting Christ from the cross. The fact of the two thieves being crucified with Him fulfills the prophecy of **Isaiah 53:12b (NKJV)** “And He was numbered with the transgressors”. John’s burden is that we see not a humiliated Christ dying with criminals, but an exalted Christ fulfilling prophecy.

2. The Superscription (V19-22)

It was customary that when a convicted man was being led through the city to be crucified that around the criminal’s neck or the neck of a person who walked in front of him was a placard that spelled out his crime. This placard was then put on the cross with the criminal. This custom caused a dilemma for Pilate because Jesus was not convicted of a crime. Pilate said more than once, “I find no guilt in this man”. Pilate decided to use this custom to give a parting shot at these Jewish leaders that he despised. The inscription which was then put on the cross said “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews”. The Romans usually crucified their prisoners alongside a major road so more people would see it and fear Rome’s authority. Because of all the people from outside Jerusalem who were there for the Passover, Pilate had the inscription written in the three languages commonly spoken in Palestine – Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. As Pilate must have anticipated, the Jewish leaders were furious. They demanded that he change it to “He said he was King of the Jews”. That would have made Jesus seem to be an imposter. Pilate refused to budge.

3. The Soldiers (V23-24)

It has been the custom in many places that those who carry out the execution get the belongings of the one being executed. These soldiers did not realize that in their actions at the cross they fulfilled prophecy. The quote in verse 24 is from Psalm 22:18. It is interesting how this fulfillment came about. There were likely four soldiers (from extra-biblical sources), and Jesus had five garments. They agreed on the outer garments as to who got what – the sandals, the robe, the turban, and the belt. Then there was the undergarment called the tunic that was woven in one piece. They decided to gamble for that and in doing so, they fulfilled Scripture. Here again we see this theme of John that the Father is in control even of the details as to what the soldiers did with Jesus’ clothing.

B. An Act of Grace (V25-27)

Jesus’ enemies weren’t the only ones at the cross. Along with John, there were four women that John identifies. First, there was Mary, the mother of Jesus; second, there was Mary’s sister, possibly Salome, the mother of James and John. There was also Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. It took great courage for them to be there. Let’s focus in on Mary, the mother of Jesus. She was now experiencing what Simeon had predicted some 33 years earlier as he held the baby Jesus in His arms and proclaimed He was the Messiah that Israel had longed for. He also said to Mary in **Luke 2:35 (NKJV)** “yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also”. As John and Mary looked in sorrow at the one they loved more than their own lives, Jesus in His agony spoke to them: **John 19:26b-27 (HCSB)** “²⁶ He said to His mother, ‘Woman, here is your son.’ ²⁷ Then He said to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.” Nowhere in the Gospels does Jesus call Mary “Mother”. The term “woman” was not used in a disrespectful manner; it does indicate that Christ was much more to Mary than just a son. Jesus was also Mary’s Savior. Mary was no sinless “co-redemptrix” to whom our prayers must go before they can get to Jesus. It is idolatry to confer on Mary titles or attributes that make her of equal status to Christ in His redemptive work or to elevate her as a special object of veneration. Mary was as dependent on divine grace as you and I are. Nevertheless, Christ honored His mother as a mother. He fulfilled the fifth commandment to Honor your father and mother. Mary was likely a widow now since Joseph is not mentioned. We see Christ’s compassion in that while He was

experiencing the agony of drinking the cup of God's wrath for our sins, He makes arrangements with His most trusted disciple to care for her earthly needs. The last time we see Mary, she was waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit with the other disciples of Jesus in the upper room (Acts 1:14).

II. Dead (V28-30)

In these verses we see the fifth, sixth, and seventh of the seven words Jesus spoke from the cross. We see Him in control even as He died.

A. The Lord Receives the Sponge (V28-29)

What are the "all things" that were now accomplished? He had now drunk of the cup of God's wrath that He surrendered to in the Garden of Gethsemane. He had suffered the horrible separation from the Father when as Matthew records He cried out in **Matthew 27:46b (NKJV)** "*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*" Earlier, Jesus had refused the drink that was mixed with a natural painkiller (Matthew 27:34). He wanted to be fully alert as He bore the cup of wrath that we deserved. Now, to fulfill prophesy, He states the fact that He thirsts. This thirst would be intense because of the horrible dehydration He was experiencing. The Scripture fulfilled was likely Psalm 69:21. The drink was likely the cheap vinegar wine mixed with water that was the common drink of Roman soldiers. The soldiers did not give him a drink out of compassion; it was to prolong His time of suffering. Think of it: The eternal God the Son became flesh and suffered from extreme dehydration on the cross and cried "I thirst" that we might drink of the water of life and thirst no more (John 4:13-14).

B. The Lord Reveals Success (V30a)

It is a gross misunderstanding to see this sixth of Jesus' words from the cross as a word of resignation to the inevitable. Luke tells us that He made this cry with a loud voice (Luke 23:46). This was a victory shout! This was not the last despairing gasp of a helpless martyr; it was the satisfying confession of a mission completed. While this declaration from Jesus is three words in the English, it is one word in the Greek language – *tetelestai*. It is a word that is rich in meaning. To understand this word is to open up the purpose for Jesus' dying. This one who to the world looked like a pathetic helpless victim was in reality the one in total control and the one who had accomplished the purpose for His taking on flesh.

Let's look a little more in depth as to how this word was used in everyday language. It was the word used by a servant to his master reporting that he had accomplished the task that his master had given him. It was the word used by an artist when he had completed his painting. But perhaps the best illustration of how this word was used in everyday life was the way it was used in a transaction with a merchant. When the merchant had been paid the agreed on price for a product, *tetelestai* meant "paid in full". The perfect tense renders it, "It has been finished, it is finished, and it will always be finished". In other words, full atonement for sin has been made. Nothing can be added to it. Do see how insulting to Christ it is to believe that salvation is a combination of Christ's payment and our merit? No, it is finished! You can't add anything. No human work can be made a requirement for salvation lest we denigrate Christ's sacrifice. I read about an eccentric evangelist named Alexander Wooten. He was approached by a rather disrespectful, flippant young man who asked him, "What must I do to be saved?" Wooten replied, "Its too late!" Wooten then just went about the work he was doing when the young man came to him. This got the young man's attention and even alarmed him. He said, "Do you mean its too late for me to be saved? Is there nothing I can do?" Wooten said, "Too late! Its already been done! The only thing you can do is believe." I would suggest that we make what it means to believe a little clearer, but the evangelist made his point! We cannot add to Christ's finished work. That is why we read in **Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV)** "⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast."

C. The Lord Releases His Spirit (V30b)

Listen to this description of Jesus' death. "Christ died as no other man has ever died. In one sense He was murdered by the hands of wicked men (Acts 2:23). In another sense it was the Father who sent Him to the cross and bruised Him there, putting Him to grief – and it pleased the Father to do so (Isaiah 53:10). Yet, in still another sense, no one took His life. He gave it up willingly for those whom He loved (John

10:17-18).” [John MacArthur, *The Murder of Jesus*, Page 223]. That last part of John 19:30 can be translated, “He dismissed His spirit”. I like that translation. The point is that He was in control.

III. And Buried (V31-42)

Why would the Holy Spirit inspire John to give all of these details about Jesus’ burial? There are two main reasons. First, the burial proves that Jesus was really dead! If the burial had not been specified, many would have speculated that since he died sooner than most victims of crucifixion, He wasn’t really dead and He simply regained strength and then made His appearances to His disciples. Even with the burial being so clearly specified, some desperate skeptics have postulated that He only fainted (often called the “swoon theory”). The burial is concrete evidence that He was dead. Second, the burial fulfilled prophesy. **Isaiah 53:9 (NASB)** “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.” This passage is in the context of Isaiah’s prophesy of the cross. Let’s examine the events leading up to His burial and then the burial itself.

A. Divine Protection of the Lord’s Bones (V31-37)

It was not unusual for those being crucified to live for several days. Jesus died after only about 6 hours. It was getting close to the Sabbath and being Passover, it was a special Sabbath. The religious leaders didn’t want Jesus to hang on the cross on the Sabbath. These hard hearted religious leaders were so blind that they were trying to get Jesus’ death hastened and get Him off the cross so they could celebrate the Passover which was a picture of Him – the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! The normal way that the soldiers hastened death was to break the legs of the ones being crucified. This made it impossible for them to push themselves up which was necessary for them to exhale. They usually died a short time later of asphyxiation. When the soldiers came to Jesus, He was already dead. Instead of breaking His legs, they simply pierced His side with a spear, probably penetrating the heart to be absolutely certain of death. Again we see the providence of God because about 1,000 years earlier the Psalmist had prophesied of the coming Messiah in **Psalms 34:20 (NKJV)** “He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken.” In addition, the Passover Lamb in Exodus that pictured Jesus was to have no bones broken (Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12). Because the Lord had prophesied that no bones would be broken, all the legions of Rome could not have broken a bone of His body. The Scripture quoted in verse 37 is Zechariah 10:12. This piercing is not a normal part of crucifixion, but hundreds of years earlier, God said that it would be done. I have only touched on all of the prophesies fulfilled in Christ’s crucifixion.

B. Divine Provision for the Lord’s Body (V38-42)

Joseph of Arimathea was a prominent member of the Jewish Sanhedrin. He had become a disciple of Jesus, even though he did not publically follow Him. Nicodemus, also a member of the Sanhedrin was the one who came to Jesus by night in John 3. He also has now become a disciple of Jesus. It was these two unlikely disciples that the Lord used to provide for the burial of His son and to fulfill the prophesy found in **Isaiah 53:9 (NASB)** “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.” These two disciples partially prepared Jesus’ body for burial and buried Him in Joseph’s tomb. There are two possible locations of this tomb. I have been to both. They are both empty!