

CRUCIFIXION & BURIAL

Matthew 27:27-60; Luke 23:26-43; John 19:16-42,

Place

Jerusalem: The principal city of ancient Israel, location of the temple capital of the kingdom of Judah, chief city of nascent Judaism, the city where Jesus Christ was tried and crucified¹ It was to this city the wise men who sought Jesus after His birth came because it was considered the city of the king (Matt 2:1-2). Although Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Jerusalem played a significant role in His life and ministry. It was to Jerusalem that He went when He was 12 years old. Here He amazed the Temple leaders with His knowledge and wisdom (Luke 2:47). In Jerusalem He cleansed the Temple, chasing away the moneychangers who desecrated the holy place with their selfish practices. And, finally, it was Jerusalem where He was crucified, buried, and resurrected.²

Place of the Skull (Golgotha): The location of the site is disputed. The biblical references give us only general indications. It was outside the city proper (John 19:20; Heb 13:12). It may have been on an elevated site, since it could be seen from a distance (Mk 15:40). It was perhaps near a road since "passersby" are mentioned (Mt 27:39; Mk 15:29). John's account places it near a garden that contained the tomb in which Jesus was buried (John 19:41). The use of the definite article, "*the* place of the skull," would indicate that it was a well-known place.³

Occasion

The culmination of Christ's earthly ministry ... that evening the Passover would begin at 6:00 p.m.

People

Roman soldiers
Jesus
Large crowd
Two thieves
Pilate
Mary (Jesus' mother)
John
Chief priests
Religious leaders
Resurrected saints
Joseph of Arimathea
Nicodemus

¹ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

² Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary

³ Elwell, Walter A.; Comfort, Philip Wesley: Tyndale Bible Dictionary. Wheaton, IL.

Phrase(s)

The Praetorium may have been at Pilate's residence, the Castle of Antonia, though others suggest Herod's palace. The Praetorium was a large area; for 600 soldiers were there ("company of soldiers" is lit., "cohort," one-tenth of a legion).⁴

A scarlet robe, An outer garment that hung loosely over the shoulders, was open in front, reached down to the knees or lower, and was fastened across the chest with a clasp, which, by the motions of the wearer, sometimes shifted to either shoulder. It was commonly either white or purple. It was a military cloak, and, in mockery of the royalty of Jesus, was put upon him after he had been "stripped" of the outer garment that he usually wore.⁵

A man of Cyrene, Simon of Cyrene, a city in North Africa populated with many Jews, was forced... to carry the cross (actually the crossbeam) when Jesus could no longer carry it Himself, being weak from the beatings (Mark 15:21).⁶

A place called Golgotha, a little knoll rounded like a bare skull. It appears to be a well-known spot outside the gate (Heb. 13:12), and near the city (Luke 23:26), containing a "garden" (John 19:41), and on a road that lead into the country. Therefore it's unlikely that it's within the present "Church of the Holy Sepulchre." The hill above *Jeremiah's Grotto*, to the north of the city, is in all probability the true site of Calvary. The rock in the southern precipice of the hill has a remarkable skull-like appearance.⁷

Wine mingled with gall, a drink made of light wine rendered acid, the common drink of Roman soldiers ... the vinegar was made bitter by the infusion of wormwood. This mixture was commonly given as an anesthetic to those who were crucified to make them less sensitive to pain.⁸

He would not drink, Jesus refused to drink the mixture, for He wanted to be in complete control of His senses even while hanging on the cross.⁹

Then they crucified Him, Crucifixion, A common mode of punishment among heathen nations in early times ... regarded as the most horrible form of death, and to a Jew it would acquire greater horror from the curse in Deut. 21:23.¹⁰ The Gospels, however, give no detailed description of our Lord's physical sufferings, but simply say "they crucified him."¹¹

The accusation ... John noted that Pilate had the charge written there in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek (John 19:20).¹² The wording on the placard ('The King of the Jews') reveals that the crime for which Jesus was condemned was not the Sanhedrin's charge of blasphemy, but the political crime of high treason, generated by messianic claims, which to Roman ears sounded like a threat to Caesar's sovereignty. Thus Pilate pronounced the death sentence reserved for treason, and Jesus was flogged (Mark 15:19) and led away to be crucified.¹³

⁴ Bible Knowledge Commentary/New Testament

⁵ Freeman, James M.; Chadwick, Harold J.: *Manners & Customs of the Bible*. Rev. ed.

⁶ Bible Knowledge Commentary New Testament

⁷ Freeman, James M.; Chadwick, Harold J.: *Manners & Customs of the Bible*. Rev. ed.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Bible Knowledge Commentary New Testament

¹⁰ Easton, M.G.: *Easton's Bible Dictionary*. Oak Harbor, WA

¹¹ Wood, D. R. W.: *New Bible Dictionary*. Intersity Press

¹² Bible Knowledge Commentary New Testament

¹³ Achtemeier, Paul J.; Harper & Row, Publishers; Society of Biblical Literature: *Harper's Bible Dictionary*. 1st ed.

Those who passed by blasphemed Him, blaspheme i.e. to speak with impious irreverence concerning God Himself or what stands in some particular relation to Him, to blaspheme.¹⁴

Even the robbers, Two Greek words are translated robber the word used here is of one who uses violence while the other denotes one who does his work in a secret manner, this word is used to describe Judas.¹⁵

Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? These Aramaic words mean, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? (a quotation of Psalm 22:1) Jesus sensed a separation from the Father He had never known, for in becoming sin the Father had to turn judicially from His Son (Rom 3:25-26).¹⁶

It is finished! With that He bowed His head and died, With one last cry Jesus... gave up His spirit, committing it into the hands of His Father (Luke 23:46). Jesus was in complete control of His life and died at the precise moment He determined by dismissing His spirit.¹⁷

Veil of the temple ... this veil was the curtain that hung between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. It was sixty feet in length, and reached from floor to ceiling. Note that it wasn't torn in two from bottom to top as human hands would do it, but from top to bottom as only God could do it¹⁸ ... the rending of the veil symbolized the wonderful truth that the way was now open to God (Heb 10:14-26). There was no more need of temples, priests, altars, or sacrifices. Jesus had finished the work of salvation on the cross.¹⁹

The earth quaked, at Christ's death a strong earthquake occurred, splitting rocks (Matt 27:51). Truly the death of Christ was a powerful, earthshaking event with repercussions affecting even the creation.
[Bible Knowledge Commentary/New Testament](#)

Many ... of the saints who had fallen to sleep were raised, we are not told who these saints were; they were simply believers who had died. The King James Version suggests that they did not come out of the graves until after His resurrection; the New American Standard Bible agrees with this. It is difficult to believe that they were given life on Friday afternoon and yet remained in their tombs until Sunday. The New International Version suggests that these saints were resurrected immediately and came out of their tombs, but that they did not visit in Jerusalem until after Jesus had been raised from the dead. It is not likely that many Jews would be in the cemetery on Passover, since they might be defiled by the dead. These resurrections could have taken place with nobody finding out at that time.²⁰

The centurion and those with him, the result of all of this was the testimony of the centurion and those watching. "Truly this was the Son of God." Did this indicate saving faith? Not necessarily. But certainly it indicated hearts that were open to the truth.²¹

A rich man ... named Joseph, was a member of the Sanhedrin, who had not agreed with the council's decision to crucify Jesus (Luke 23:51). Instead he was one who had been looking for the kingdom of God and was a believer in Jesus ... Another account reported Joseph was assisted in the burial by Nicodemus (John 19:39; cf. John 3:1-21).²² Joseph and Nicodemus could very well have been in the garden waiting

¹⁴ The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Bible Knowledge Commentary/New Testament

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Freeman, James M.; Chadwick, Harold J.: *Manners & Customs of the Bible*. Rev. ed.

¹⁹ The Bible Exposition Commentary, Wiersbe

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ The Bible Exposition Commentary, Wiersbe, W. W.

²² Bible Knowledge Commentary/New Testament

for Jesus to die. When they took Him from the cross, they defiled themselves and were not able to eat the Passover. But what difference did it make? They had found the Lamb of God!²³

Questions by chapter

Matthew 27:27-60

This chapter records only two brief sentences spoken by Jesus. Investigate them and talk about their significance for Jesus Himself and for all other Christians.

From what you recall answer the following question without looking at your Bible: After they crucified Jesus, the Roman soldiers placed a sign above Him that contained the so called charge against Him. What did this sign say? (See verse 37)

No one is trying to physically crucify us today – but what does Jesus' example in this chapter mean personally in your life?

Of the most important events and truths in this chapter, which do you think are the easiest for Christians to forget about?

Luke 23:26-43

See how many single word descriptions you can come up with to appropriately describe each of the following men who appear in this passage: Simon of Cyrene (26); the first criminal (39); the second criminal (40-42); the centurion (47) and finally Jesus Himself.

What do you think Jesus meant by His words in verse 31?

What exactly do you think prompted the centurion to say what he did in verse 47?

From what you recall answer the following question without looking at your Bible: Jesus spoke two prayers from the cross to God the Father. What were these two prayers? (See verses 34 and 46)

What good illustrations would you say this chapter gives us of the most common aspects of human nature?

What universal lessons about salvation can you draw from the example of the two criminals in verses 38-43?

John 19:16-42

In the three words Jesus spoke in verse 30, what do you think the word "it" refers to, and why?

If you had only this chapter in Scripture to refer to, how would you use it to help show someone that Jesus is truly God?²⁴

²³ The Bible Exposition Commentary, Wiersbe, W. W.

²⁴ The Complete Bible Discussion Guide: New Testament