

Theme: Jesus Christ on the Cross (Palm Sunday, 2024)

Setting

At this point in John’s gospel account, Jesus had already been tried, first before the Jewish authorities (Caiaphas, the high priest) and then before Roman authorities (Pilate, the governor of Judea). Though he found Jesus guiltless, Pilate flogged him, scourged him, and released him to the Jews to be crucified on a Roman cross (19:15–16).

Now, Jesus heads toward Golgotha, carrying His own cross.

Story Moments

The King of the Jews (19:17–24)

19:19. Roman authorities would often write and post a criminal’s charges on his cross. What does Pilate write and post for Jesus’s so-called crimes? _____

19:20–21. How do the Jewish observers respond to what Pilate had written? _____

19:23–24. How do these events fulfill prophecies of the Old Testament? _____

Look back: how was Jesus’s role as “King of the Jews” mocked by the men in the verses below:

- 19:2 _____
- 19:5 _____
- 19:14 _____

Jesus Entrusts His Mother to His Disciple (19:25–27)

How does Jesus show care for his own family while He hangs on the cross? _____

Note: the “disciple whom He loved” is another name for John, the writer of this gospel.

Why might Jesus have entrusted His mother to someone like John at this time instead of His own brothers? (See John 7:5.) _____

It Is Finished! (19:28–30)

Look up these verses in John and note how Jesus described His mission on earth:

- 4:34 _____
- 5:36 _____
- 17:4 _____

19:30. What does Jesus declare for all to hear? “It is _____ !”

Note: the word “finished” could be translated “accomplished” or “paid in full.”

What does He do after this declaration? _____

Jesus Is Dead (19:31–37)

19:31–33. Why did the Jews ask Pilate to break the legs of the three men? _____

What did the soldiers discover when they came to Jesus? _____

19:34. How does the blood and water prove Jesus’s true humanity?¹ _____

19:35. Why does John tell the reader that he is an eyewitness and his testimony is true? _____

¹ Note that Docetism (from the Greek word *dokeō*, “to seem”) is the ancient false teaching that Jesus only appeared (or “seemed”) to have a human body but did not actually possess a physical body.

19:36–37. In these verses, John connects two Old Testament passages to the crucifixion account as fulfillment of prophecy. Which details do these passages anticipate?

- Exodus 12:43–36² _____

- Zechariah 12:10 _____

Ask Yourself

How does meditating on the crucifixion and the reason for Jesus’s death on the cross help me recognize the seriousness of my own sin (see 1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 2:24)?

How does the fact that Jesus “finished” his mission by paying our sin debt in full on the cross give us confidence to come boldly to God (see Hebrews 10:19–20)?

This story shows how Jesus—the innocent sufferer—was mistreated and abused. How can I (or others who face abuse) take comfort in knowing Jesus has felt this pain (see Hebrews 4:15)?

Cross References

John 7:5

For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

John 4:34

Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.”

John 5:36

“But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.”

John 17:4

I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.

Exodus 12:43–46

⁴³ And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it. ⁴⁴ But every man’s servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it. ⁴⁵ A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it. ⁴⁶ In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones.”

Zechariah 12:10

And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

1 Corinthians 15:3

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

1 Peter 2:24

Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.

Hebrews 10:19–20

¹⁹ Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh.

Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as we are, yet without sin.

² Note that this passage was written in the context of Passover meal regulations.