



The Crucified Son of God (John 19)

Notes: Week Nineteen

John 19 (HCSB)

Jesus Flogged and Mocked

¹⁹ Then Pilate took Jesus and had Him flogged. ² The soldiers also twisted together a crown of thorns, put it on His head, and threw a purple robe around Him. ³ And they repeatedly came up to Him and said, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and were slapping His face.

⁴ Pilate went outside again and said to them, “Look, I’m bringing Him outside to you to let you know I find no grounds for charging Him.”

Pilate Sentences Jesus to Death

⁵ Then Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Here is the man!”

⁶ When the chief priests and the temple police saw Him, they shouted, “Crucify! Crucify!”

Pilate responded, “Take Him and crucify Him yourselves, for I find no grounds for charging Him.”

⁷ “We have a law,” the Jews replied to him, “and according to that law He must die, because He made Himself^[a] the Son of God.”

⁸ When Pilate heard this statement, he was more afraid than ever. ⁹ He went back into the headquarters and asked Jesus, “Where are You from?” But Jesus did not give him an answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate said to Him, “You’re not talking to me? Don’t You know that I have the authority to release You and the authority to crucify You?”

¹¹ “You would have no authority over Me at all,” Jesus answered him, “if it hadn’t been given you from above. This is why the one who handed Me over to you has the greater sin.”^[b]

¹² From that moment Pilate made every effort^[c] to release Him. But the Jews shouted, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar’s friend. Anyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar!”

¹³ When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside. He sat down on the judge’s bench in a place called the Stone Pavement (but in Hebrew *Gabbatha*). ¹⁴ It was the preparation day for the Passover, and it was about six in the morning.^[d] Then he told the Jews, “Here is your king!”

¹⁵ But they shouted, “Take Him away! Take Him away! Crucify Him!”

Pilate said to them, “Should I crucify your king?”

“We have no king but Caesar!” the chief priests answered.

¹⁶ So then, because of them, he handed Him over to be crucified.

The Crucifixion

Therefore they took Jesus away.^[e] ¹⁷ Carrying His own cross, He went out to what is called Skull Place, which in Hebrew is called *Golgotha*.¹⁸ There they crucified Him and two others with Him, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle. ¹⁹ Pilate also had a sign lettered and put on the cross. The inscription was:

JESUS THE NAZARENE
THE KING OF THE JEWS.

²⁰ Many of the Jews read this sign, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew,^[f] Latin, and Greek. ²¹ So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Don’t write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that He said, ‘I am the King of the Jews.’”

²² Pilate replied, “What I have written, I have written.”

²³ When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took His clothes and divided them into four parts, a part for each soldier. They also took the tunic, which was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. ²⁴ So they said to one another, “Let’s not tear it, but cast lots for it, to see who gets it.” They did this to fulfill the Scripture that says: They divided My clothes among themselves, and they cast lots for My clothing.^[g] And this is what the soldiers did.

Jesus’ Provision for His Mother

²⁵ Standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple He loved standing there, 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.

The Finished Work of Jesus

²⁸ After this, when Jesus knew that everything was now accomplished that the Scripture might be fulfilled, He said, “I’m thirsty!” ²⁹ A jar full of sour wine was sitting there; so they fixed a sponge full of sour wine on hyssop^[h] and held it up to His mouth.

³⁰ When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” Then bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Jesus’ Side Pierced

³¹ Since it was the preparation day, the Jews did not want the bodies to remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a special^[i] day). They requested that Pilate have the men’s legs broken and that their bodies be taken away. ³² So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man and of the other one who had been crucified with Him. ³³ When they came to Jesus, they did not break His legs since they saw that He was already dead. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. ³⁵ He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows he is telling the truth. ³⁶ For these things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled: Not one of His bones will be broken.^[j] ³⁷ Also, another Scripture says: They will look at the One they pierced.^[k]

Jesus' Burial

³⁸ After this, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus—but secretly because of his fear of the Jews—asked Pilate that he might remove Jesus' body. Pilate gave him permission, so he came and took His body away. ³⁹ Nicodemus (who had previously come to Him at night) also came, bringing a mixture of about 75 pounds^[1] of myrrh and aloes. ⁴⁰ Then they took Jesus' body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the aromatic spices, according to the burial custom of the Jews. ⁴¹ There was a garden in the place where He was crucified. A new tomb was in the garden; no one had yet been placed in it. ⁴² They placed Jesus there because of the Jewish preparation and since the tomb was nearby.

Footnotes:

- a. [John 19:7](#) He claimed to be
- b. [John 19:11](#) To *have sin* is an idiom that refers to guilt caused by sin.
- c. [John 19:12](#) Lit *Pilate was trying*
- d. [John 19:14](#) Lit *the sixth hour*; see note at [Jn 1:39](#); an alt. time reckoning would be *about noon*
- e. [John 19:16](#) Other mss add *and led Him out*
- f. [John 19:20](#) Or *Aramaic*
- g. [John 19:24](#) [Ps 22:18](#)
- h. [John 19:29](#) Or *with hyssop*
- i. [John 19:31](#) Lit *great*
- j. [John 19:36](#) [Ex 12:46](#); [Nm 9:12](#); [Ps 34:20](#)
- k. [John 19:37](#) [Zch 12:10](#)
- l. [John 19:39](#) Lit *100 litrai*; a Roman *litrai* = 12 ounces

Holman Christian Standard Bible - *Study Bible*¹

John 19

19:1 After the Jewish phase of the trial and Jesus' interrogation by Pilate, the sentencing stage of His trial began. On **Pilate**, see note at [18:29](#). The flogging weakened Jesus so much that He could not carry His crossbeam very far.

19:2 The **crown of thorns** represented a mock crown ridiculing Jesus' messiahship. The thorns would sink into His skull, bloodying and distorting His face. The **purple robe** (cp. [Mt 27:28](#); [Mk 15:17](#)) represented a mock royal robe. Purple was the imperial color ([1Macc 8:14](#)).

19:3 **Hail, King of the Jews** mimicked the "Ave Caesar" ("Hail, Caesar!") extended to the Roman emperor. Roman soldiers customarily played "mock king" games during the Saturnalia festival.

19:5 **Here is the man** (Lat *ecce homo*) conveys a sense of, "Look at the poor fellow!" In His mock regal clothes, Jesus made a heartrending sight. In the context of John's Gospel, the statement may also highlight Jesus' humanity and invoke messianic passages such as [Zech 6:12](#).

19:6 Pilate used sarcasm, being fully aware that the Jews did not have the authority to impose the death penalty (see note at [18:31](#)).

19:7 The Jews' comment may refer to [Lv 24:16](#): "Whoever blasphemes the name of Yahweh is to be put to death" (see note at [Jn 5:18](#); cp. [8:59](#); [10:31,33](#)).

19:8 Pilate was **more afraid than ever**. Earlier that morning his wife's dream had disturbed him ([Mt 27:19](#)).

19:9 Jesus' origin was frequently an issue with His opponents ([7:27-28](#); [8:14](#); [9:29-30](#)). For John, there were clear spiritual overtones to Pilate's question, **Where are You from?** (cp. [18:36-37](#)). Jesus' silence before Pilate is reminiscent of [Isa 53:7](#); cp. [Mk 14:61](#); [15:5](#); [1Pe 2:22-23](#)).

19:10-11 In typical Jewish fashion, Jesus used **from above** to refer to God.

19:12 Unconvinced of Jesus' guilt, Pilate sentenced Him to die only after intense Jewish pressure ([vv. 13-16](#)). **Caesar**, originally the surname of Gaius Julius Caesar (d. 44 B.C.), became the title of subsequent Roman emperors (cp. [v. 15](#); [Mt 22:17,21](#)). **Caesar's friend** was a semiformal status indicating a person favored by the emperor. Pilate feared losing this status.

19:13 The **judge's bench** served as the platform for the judge's formal verdict ([Ac 25:6,17](#)). The kind of **Stone Pavement** mentioned here has been excavated on the lower level of the Fortress of Antonia, one of the two possible sites for the governor's residence (see note at [18:28](#)).

19:14 The **preparation day for the Passover** may refer to the day before the Sabbath of Passover week ([Mt 27:62](#); [Mk 15:42](#); [Lk 23:54](#); see note at [Jn 18:28](#)). If so, all four Gospels concur that Jesus' Last Supper was a Passover meal eaten on Thursday evening (which, by Jewish reckoning, was the beginning of Friday).

¹ Jeremy Royal Howard, ed., *HCSB Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2010), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "John 19".

[19:15](#) By professing to acknowledge Caesar alone as their king, the Jewish leaders betrayed their national heritage and denied their own messianic expectations based on the promises of Scripture.

The Cross and the Gospel

Bruce A. Ware

The cross of Christ and the gospel of Christ are inextricably linked. Indeed, the gospel is the good news of what took place when Christ died on the cross. To understand what Jesus accomplished on the cross, then, is to understand the gospel. To believe personally that what Christ did on the cross He did for you, is to believe the gospel of Jesus Christ.

What Happened on the Cross?

What took place in Christ's death on the cross? The short answer is this: "Christ died for our sins" ([1Co 15:3](#)). Christ's death for our sin must be understood in two broad ways: First, when Jesus was nailed to the cross, the Father charged to Him all of our sin ([2Co 5:21](#)) and judged the full penalty of our sin in Jesus as He died ([Col 2:14](#)). Second, Jesus conquered the power of Satan, darkness, and death as He died for our sin ([Col 2:15](#); [Heb 2:14](#)), thus establishing His supreme authority and power over everything in creation ([Eph 1:20-23](#)). To summarize, in His death on the cross Jesus fully paid the penalty for our sin, and He totally defeated the power of sin.

Jesus' subsequent resurrection from the dead was not just a nice ending to the story but rather necessary evidence that His death for sin really worked ([1Co 15:17](#)). The penalty of sin is death, and the greatest power that sin has over us is death. But since the penalty of sin is death, and since Christ paid the penalty of sin fully by His death on the cross, His resurrection from the dead demonstrated that the penalty had been paid in full. And since the greatest power of sin is death, and since Christ conquered all of sin's power in His death on the cross, His resurrection also demonstrated that the complete power of sin had been defeated as He arose victorious from the grave.

Erasing the Certificate of Debt

It is only because Christ paid sin's penalty that He was able also to liberate us from sin's power. That is, His payment of sin's penalty (sometimes called "penal substitution") is the basis for His conquering of sin's power (sometimes called "Christus Victor").

Consider one sample passage that shows this to be true. [Colossians 2:13-14](#) teaches that believers are forgiven of all their trespasses through the death of Christ on the cross. The thrust here is on expiation: the liability we owed before a holy God to suffer the penalty for our violation of His law is removed because Christ took upon Himself our record of debt. Jesus "erased the certificate of debt, with its obligations, that was against us and opposed to us, and has taken it out of the way by nailing it to the cross" ([v. 14](#)).

The substitutionary death Christ died, in which He cancelled out the debt of sinners, then, is the backdrop for the next glorious truth found in [Colossians 2:15](#). Here it is said that Jesus "disarmed the rulers and authorities and disgraced them publicly," putting them to shame and triumphing over them. The death by which Satan is disarmed and put to shame, then, is a death that cancels our sin. The

disarming of Satan and the death that cancels our sin are theologically linked in this way: the basis of Satan's power over sinners is sin itself; the only way to overthrow this power was for sin to be paid for and forgiven. Christ's forgiveness through penal substitution, therefore, is the means by which we are freed from Satan's power.

An Analogy of Our Freedom

An analogy may assist in clarifying Scripture's teaching about the pardon Christ earned for believers on the cross. Under a just system of laws, a prisoner is jailed because he has been convicted of some crime whose penalty involves his incarceration. Notice, then, that his guilt forms the basis for his bondage. Only because he has been proven guilty of breaking the law does the state have the right to imprison him. Furthermore, if a prisoner can prove his actual innocence, such that the charge of guilt can be removed—e.g., if some forensic or DNA evidence available after his incarceration demonstrates his innocence—then the state is obligated to release him from prison. It is clear, then, that the power of the state to put criminals in bondage comes from the guilt they have incurred and the accompanying penalty directed at them as a result. Remove the guilt and its penalty, and you remove the just basis for the state's power to enforce bondage.

Similarly, Satan's power over sinners is tied specifically and exclusively to the sinner's guilt through sin. His hold on them is owing to their sinful rebellion against God. But remove the guilt through Christ's payment for their sin and you remove the basis for Satan's hold on them! So by His death Christ took upon Himself the sin of others and paid the full penalty for their sin. As a consequence, the hold that Satan had upon sinners is necessarily broken since the basis for this bondage is removed. Remove the guilt and you remove the bondage; accomplish penal substitution and you accomplish Christus Victor.

The Cross Is Good News

The gospel is the good news that in the cross of Christ, the penalty of our sin was paid fully by Christ. By this, sin's powerful hold on our lives, which leads ultimately to death, has been completely defeated. If we will trust fully Christ's accomplishment for us—that He paid sin's penalty and conquered sin's power—and not look to our own works or accomplishments as if they could commend us to God, we will be saved ([Eph 2:8-9](#)).

[19:16](#) Upon pronouncement of the sentence, the person was scourged and then executed.

[19:16b-42](#) The final unit in John's passion narrative describes Jesus' crucifixion and burial.

[19:17](#) Jesus set out **carrying His own cross** until He collapsed. Simon of Cyrene was then pressed into service, and he carried it to the execution site ([Mt 27:32](#)). **He went out** means "out of the city," where Jewish custom prescribed that executions should take place ([Lv 24:14,23](#); [Num 15:35-36](#); [Dt 17:5](#); [21:19-21](#); [22:24](#); cp. [Heb 13:12](#)). **Skull Place** translates Hebrew *Golgotha*; the Latin equivalent used in the Vulgate is "Calvary" (see note at [1:38](#)).

[19:18](#) On crucifixion, see note at [18:32](#). Jesus' crucifixion between two criminals is reminiscent of [Ps 22:16](#): "A gang of evildoers has closed in on me." The passage also echoes [Isa 53:12](#): "counted among the rebels."

[19:19](#) The **inscription** on Jesus' cross specified the crime for which He was executed, probably to discourage others from committing similar acts.

19:20 On the **place... was near the city**, see note at [verse 17](#). **Hebrew** or Aramaic was the language most widely understood by the Jewish population of Palestine; **Latin** was the official language of the Roman occupying force; and **Greek** was the "international language" of the empire, understood by most Diaspora Jews as well as Gentiles. The trilingual inscription ensured that virtually anyone could read the crimes with which Jesus was charged.

19:22 Pilate was unwilling to give in to further Jewish pressures. For John, the inscription unintentionally confirmed Jesus' true kingship.

19:23 The **seamless** tunic may recall Joseph's robe ([Gen 37:3,23](#)). Similar to several later events at the crucifixion ([Jn 19:28-37](#)), the soldiers' division of Jesus' clothes and their casting of lots fulfilled Scripture ([Ps 22:18](#)). On other fulfillment quotations, see note at [Jn 12:38-40](#).

19:24 [Psalm 22](#), a lament psalm ascribed to David, is the most frequently quoted psalm in the NT. This is the first of several references to Jesus as the righteous sufferer in keeping with the experience of the psalmist ([Jn 19:28,36-37](#)). The soldiers did not want to tear Jesus' tunic because it was woven of one cloth ([vv. 23-24](#)). John may have purposefully shaped his account of Jesus' crucifixion in a way that highlighted the parallels and fulfillments between the experiences of David and Jesus. For instance, [Ps 22:15-18](#) mentions the sufferer's thirst ([v. 15](#)), his pierced hands and feet ([v. 16](#)), and the preservation of all his bones ([v. 17](#)).

19:25 On Jesus' **mother**, see [2:1-5](#) and note at [19:26-27](#). **His mother's sister** may be Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee mentioned in Matthew and Mark. On **Mary the wife of Clopas**, cp. [Lk 24:18](#). On **Mary Magdalene**, see [20:1-18](#) (cp. [Lk 8:2-3](#)).

19:26-27 In keeping with biblical injunctions to honor one's parents ([Ex 20:12](#); [Dt 5:16](#)), Jesus made provision for His mother, who was almost certainly widowed and probably in her early fifties, with little or no personal income. On the word **woman**, see note at [2:4](#).

19:28-29 The reference to Scripture being fulfilled builds on [verse 24](#) (see note there), most likely in allusion to [Ps 69:21](#): "They gave me vinegar to drink" (cp. [Mt 27:34,48](#); see [Ps 22:15](#)). Soldiers and laborers used **sour wine** to quench their thirst ([Mk 15:36](#)). It is different from the "wine mixed with myrrh" Jesus refused on the way to the cross ([Mk 15:23](#)). **Hyssop** was a plant classified in [1Ki 4:33](#) as a humble shrub. It was used for the sprinkling of blood on the doorpost at the original Passover ([Ex 12:22](#)).

teleo

Greek Pronunciation [tehl EH oh]

HCSB Translation finish

Uses in John's Gospel 2

Uses in the NT 28

Focus Passage [John 19:28-30](#)

Just before His death on the cross, Jesus uttered a single word of victory: *tetelestai* [teh TEHL ehs tigh], "It is finished!" ([Jn 19:30](#)). The verb *teleo* is related to several other Greek words that refer to something being *finished*, accomplished, completed, or coming to an end. (The same verb is translated "accomplished" in [v. 28](#).) The perfect tense of the Greek verb Jesus used indicates that He understood His death at this point in time to have abiding or lasting results. Jesus' death on the cross on our behalf was His purpose for coming

into the world. It is not surprising that Revelation uses the term eight times, more than any other NT book, to describe various events related to Jesus' second coming ([Rev 10:7](#); [11:7](#); [15:1,8](#); [17:17](#); [20:3,5,7](#)).

19:30 Gave up may echo "submitted Himself to death," which was prophesied of the Suffering Servant ([Isa 53:12](#)).

19:31 On **preparation day**, see note at [verse 14](#). That **Sabbath was... special** because it was the Sabbath of Passover week. For the Jews, bodies of hanged criminals were not to defile the land by remaining on a tree overnight ([Dt 21:22-23](#); cp. [Jos 8:29](#)).

19:31-33 The **legs** of crucifixion victims were **broken** to hasten death. This prevented them from pushing themselves up with their legs to open the chest cavity and thus breathe better. Since the victims would now have to pull themselves up by the arms instead, suffocation occurred once their arm strength failed. See note at [verse 36](#).

19:34 The flow of **blood and water** proved that Jesus was dead ([1Jn 5:6-8](#)). The passage may also allude to [Ex 17:6](#): "Hit the rock, water will come out of it and the people will drink" (cp. [Num 20:11](#)). The **spear** was about three and one-half feet long and consisted of an iron spearhead joined to a shaft of wood.

19:35 On John's witness about Jesus, see notes at [5:31-47](#); [13:23](#); and [21:24](#).

19:36 After [verses 24](#) and [28-29](#) (see notes there), this is the third scriptural proof that shows that Jesus' death fulfilled Scripture ([Ex 12:46](#); [Ps 34:20](#)). Jesus escaped having His legs broken since He died so quickly, and the spear did not damage any of His bones.

19:37 The Roman soldiers again fulfilled prophecy without knowing it: "They will look at Me whom they pierced" ([Zech 12:10](#); also cited in [Rev 1:7](#)).

19:38 Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy member of the Jewish ruling council ([Mt 27:57](#)), asked Pilate for Jesus' body. Thus Jesus was killed alongside criminals and was buried in a rich man's tomb. This fulfilled another Scripture: "They made His grave with the wicked and with a rich man at His death" ([Isa 53:9](#)).

19:39-40 The amount of aromatic spices brought by Joseph and Nicodemus—**about 75 pounds of myrrh and aloes**—was considerable ([2Ch 16:14](#)). Myrrh was a fragrant resin used by Egyptians in embalming; aloes were a powder of aromatic sandalwood; the mixture cloaked the smell of decay.

19:41 On **the place where He was crucified**, see notes at [verses 17](#) and [20](#). The **garden** was apparently somewhat elaborate; note the mention of a gardener in [20:15](#). Garden burials are recorded in the OT (Manasseh in [2Ki 21:18](#); Amon in [2Ki 21:26](#)).

19:42 On the **Jewish day of preparation**, see note at [verse 14](#). Sabbath was rapidly approaching, when all work ceased, including that of carrying spices or transporting a corpse. Thus we may see it as an instance of divine providence that the tomb was **nearby** (see note at [20:1](#)).

The Apologetics Study Bible²

John 19

[19:1](#) Was Jesus flogged once or twice? Probably only once; He might not even have survived two such punishments. Mark described the incident later in his narrative ([Mk 15:15](#)). However, he introduced the incident with "After having Jesus flogged...", allowing for it to have occurred earlier in Jesus' trial.

[19:12](#), [15](#) Jewish authorities were hardly friends of Caesar ([v. 12](#)); could they really have affirmed their allegiance to him ([v. 15](#))? Probably only in the sense that they would have said just about anything to get Pilate to crucify Jesus. Pilate would have cared deeply about how the emperor viewed him, so these statements were ploys to get him to look favorably on their request.

[19:14](#), [31](#), [42](#) The Greek of [verse 14](#) reads literally, "Now it was the preparation of the Passover." But in light of [verse 31](#), this must have meant the day of preparation for the Sabbath (i.e., Friday before Saturday) of Passover week. John spoke of the sixth hour, but [Mk 15:25](#) has Jesus on the cross already by the third hour. Some think John was following Roman reckoning of hours, beginning at midnight, and referring to 6:00 A.M., while Mark was following Jewish reckoning, beginning at dawn and thus referring to 9:00 A.M. Others believe both writers were using round numbers, following Jewish reckoning, in a world where the days and nights were often divided into fourths. A midmorning time of roughly [10:30](#) could then get rounded either down or up to the nearest three-hour marker.

[19:17](#) John said Jesus carried His own cross (as crucified people usually did), but [Mk 15:21](#) describes the authorities conscripting Simon of Cyrene for that task. Presumably, Jesus started out carrying it, but the weight of the wood could have made it difficult for Jesus, weakened by the flogging, to walk far with it.

[19:24](#), [36](#) This is another passage that is typological in the OT ([Ps 22:18](#)). [Psalm 22](#) contains numerous details strikingly paralleled in Jesus' life, even though it was originally describing the afflictions of the psalmist. To the believing Jew, this was no coincidence but a sign of God's hand at work.

[19:25-27](#) Why would Jesus entrust His mother to "the disciple He loved"—the Apostle John—rather than to her husband, Joseph, or to one of Jesus' half brothers? Presumably because Joseph had died by this time and Jesus' brothers had not yet become His followers. It is possible that John was Jesus' cousin, so they had a biological as well as spiritual relationship. In John's account, Mary and her sister are named as witnesses at the crucifixion. John didn't name Mary's sister, but Mark says that Salome was among the women present. Salome was the mother of Zebedee's sons, James and John ([Mk 15:40](#)).

[19:39](#) This is the amount of anointing material that was used at the funeral for a king. Would Joseph and Nicodemus really have brought so much? If they had come to believe Jesus was a true king, then why not?

² Ted Cabal, ed., *The Apologetics Study Bible: Understanding Why You Believe*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2007), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 1611-1613.

NLT Life Application Study Bible³

John 19

19:1ff 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.

19:1-3 Flogging could have killed Jesus. The usual procedure was to bare the upper half of the victim's body and tie his hands to a pillar before whipping him with a three-pronged whip, with 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](#)). After being flogged, Jesus also endured other agonies recorded here and in the other Gospels.

19:2-5 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.

19:7 The truth finally came out—the religious leaders had not brought Jesus to Pilate 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.

19:10 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. It was really Pilate and the religious leaders who were on trial, not Jesus. When you are questioned or ridiculed because of your faith, remember that while you may be on trial before your accusers, they are on trial before God.

19:11 When Jesus said the man who delivered him to Pilate was guiltier than Pilate, he was not excusing Pilate for reacting to the political pressure placed on him. Pilate was responsible for his decision about Jesus. Caiaphas and the other religious leaders were guilty of a greater sin because they premeditated Jesus' murder.

19:12, 13 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 Pilate 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](#)).

19:13 The Stone Pavement was part of the Tower of Antonia bordering the northwest corner of the Temple complex.

³, *Life Application Study Bible*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1988), *WORDsearch CROSS e-book*, 1795-1798.

19:15 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 in order to kill their Messiah.

19:17 The Place of the Skull was probably a hill outside Jerusalem along a main road. Many executions took place here so the Romans could use them as an example to the people.

19:18 Crucifixion was a Roman form of execution. The condemned man was forced to carry his cross along a main road to the 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 with ropes. Death came by suffocation because the weight of the body made breathing difficult as the victim lost strength. Crucifixion was a hideously slow and painful death.

19:19 This sign was meant to be ironic. 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 deathblow 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—and of the Gentiles, and of the whole universe.

19:20 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. In a double irony, the multi-lingual sign declared that Jesus was Lord of all.

19:23, 24 Roman soldiers in charge of crucifixions customarily took for themselves the clothes of the condemned men. They divided Jesus' clothing, throwing dice to determine who would get his seamless garment, the most valuable piece of clothing. This fulfilled the prophecy in [Psalm 22:18](#).

19:25-27 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?

19:27 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.

19:29 This sour wine was a cheap wine that the Roman soldiers drank while waiting for those crucified to die.

The absence of women among the 12 disciples has bothered a few people. But it is clear that there were many women among Jesus' followers. It is also clear that Jesus did not treat women as others in his culture did; he treated them with dignity, as people with worth.

Mary of Magdala was an early follower of Jesus who certainly deserves to be called a disciple. An energetic, impulsive, caring woman, she not only traveled with Jesus, but also contributed to the needs of the group. She was present at the Crucifixion and was on her way to anoint Jesus' body on Sunday morning when she discovered the empty tomb. Mary was the first to see Jesus after his resurrection.

Mary Magdalene is a heartwarming example of thankful living. Her life was miraculously freed by Jesus when he drove seven demons out of her. In every glimpse we have of her, she was acting out her appreciation for the freedom Christ had given her. That freedom allowed her to stand under Christ's cross when all the disciples except John were hiding in fear. After Jesus' death, she intended to give his body every respect. Like the rest of Jesus' followers, she never expected his bodily resurrection—but she was overjoyed to discover it.

Mary's faith was not complicated, but it was direct and genuine. She was more eager to believe and obey than to understand everything. Jesus honored her childlike faith by appearing to her first and by entrusting her with the first message of his resurrection.

Strengths and accomplishments

- Contributed to the needs of Jesus and his disciples
- One of the few faithful followers present at Jesus' death on the cross
- First to see the risen Christ

Weakness and mistake

- Jesus had to drive seven demons out of her

Lessons from her life

- Those who are obedient grow in understanding
- Women are vital to Jesus' ministry
- Jesus relates to women as he created them—as equal reflectors of God's image

Vital statistics

- Where: Magdala, Jerusalem
- Occupation: We are not told, but she seems to have been wealthy
- Contemporaries: Jesus, the 12 disciples, Mary, Martha, Lazarus, Jesus' mother Mary

Key verse

"After Jesus rose from the dead early on Sunday morning, the first person who saw him was Mary Magdalene, the woman from whom he had cast out seven demons" ([Mark 16:9](#)).

Mary Magdalene's story is told in [Matthew 27-28](#); [Mark 15-16](#); [Luke 23-24](#); and [John 19-20](#). She is also mentioned in [Luke 8:2](#).

19:30 Until this time, a complicated system of sacrifices had atoned for sins. Sin separates people from God, and only through the sacrifice 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 *finished* is the same as "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.

19:31 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.

19:31-35 These Romans were experienced soldiers. They knew from many previous crucifixions 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 Jesus didn't really die, that he only passed out—and that's how he came back to life. But we have the witness of an impartial party, the Roman soldiers, that Jesus died on the cross (see [Mark 15:44, 45](#)).

19:32 The Roman soldiers would break victims' legs to hasten the death process. When a person hung on a cross, death came by suffocation, but the victim could push against the cross with his legs to hold up his body and keep breathing. With broken legs, he would suffocate almost immediately.

19:34, 35 The graphic details of Jesus' death are especially important in John's record because he was an eyewitness.

19:36, 37 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](#)).

19:38, 39 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, members of the Jewish high council and secret followers of Jesus ([7:50-52](#)), 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.

19:38-42 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. Nicodemus, also a member of the high council, had come to Jesus by night ([3:1](#)) and later 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.

19:42 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.