

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

JOHN 19.1-42



T. M. Moore

A Scriptorium Study

And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets,

He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24.27

The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Gospel of John: John 19.1-42
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Introduction to *John 19.1-42*

Nothing about the trial of Jesus was just. But He rested in the power and providence of God as He accepted the wicked judgment of wicked men, and looked ahead to the joy that was set before Him.

The way Jesus overcame in His trial can help us in dealing with our own trials, so that we can be at peace and gain the benefit God intends. As we trust in the Word of God and act in obedience to Him, God works on our behalf for His glory and our good.

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1 The Faultless Condemned

Read and meditate on John 19.1-7.

Pilate is trying to make everybody happy, but he's only making matters worse. His violence against Jesus spoke louder than his words of acquittal, and moved Jesus' enemies to demand the ultimate penalty. Just as Jesus' planned.

¹And so then Pilate ordered Jesus scourged, and blow on blow tore at His body. ²Soldiers made and twisted out of thorns a crown, and laid it on His head, and wrapped Him in a shawl of purple fabric. ³As they did, they all began to mock Him, saying, "Hail, O King of all the Jews!" And they began sting and slap Him with their hands. ⁴Then Pilate went before the Jews again and said to them, "Behold, I bring Him out to you; and know that I have found no fault in Him." ⁵And so then Jesus came out, in the purple robe and crown of thorns. And Pilate said, "Behold the Man!" ⁶And when the chief priest saw Him, and the officers, they cried, "Now let that Man be crucified!" But Pilate said to them, "You crucify Him, for I find in Him no fault." ⁷The Jews replied, "We have a law, and it is written in our holy law that this Man ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God."

- John 19.1-7

Reflect

1. Pilate insists he finds no fault in Jesus, but he beats Him anyway. Why? What was he hoping to accomplish? What does this suggest about Pilate's view of "truth"? Complete this prayer: *Lord, You suffered the foolishness of men, to drive foolishness out of my soul, so...*

2. Next, Pilate turned Jesus over to a mob of soldiers, who mocked and beat Him further. Why did they do this? Is there something in sinful people that just wants to be done with God? Explain. *Father, if in any way I show myself to be hostile to You or Your Word, please...*

3. Then Pilate made a public spectacle of Jesus. In your mind, imagine what Jesus looked like as Pilate presented Him in verses 4 and 5. Describe Jesus' appearance. Pilate did this so that the Jews

would “know” that he found “no fault in Him.” How was this spectacle supposed to communicate that? What was Pilate’s *real* motive here? *Lord, I get angry thinking about how You were treated, and yet I realize...*

4. Like sharks smelling blood in the water, the sight of Jesus only spurred on the religious leaders to clamor for what they’ve been seeking for a long time: “Crucify Him!” Is there a sense here of evil being in the air, and evil people piling on? Does that happen yet today? Are we ever in danger of being sucked into that vortex? Explain. *I know, Father, that evil is all around me in the world, but I want to be a faithful witness to Jesus, so help me to...*

5. Look at the buck-passing here: Pilate washes his hands of the deed by turning Jesus over to the Jewish leaders. The Jewish leaders defer to the Law of God as their ground for wanting Jesus dead (though we know this is not their true motivation, cf. Jn. 11.47-53). Don’t blame us, they say; blame God – it’s His Law. Does remind you of Genesis 3? Do you ever see any of this buck-passing in your own life? Explain. Bring together into one the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

Summary

“Jesus was scourged unjustly so that he might deliver us from the punishment we deserved. He was beaten and struck so that we might beat Satan, who had beaten us, and that we might escape from the sin that cleaves to us through the original transgression. For if we think correctly, we shall believe that all of Christ’s sufferings were for us and on our behalf and that they have power to release and deliver us from all those calamities we have deserved because of our rebellion against God.” *Cyril of Alexandria (375-444 AD)*

Before we judge the enemies of Christ to severely, let’s be honest about this much: We would have been in that crowd screaming for His crucifixion as well. Our sins caused His suffering, and He suffered to cancel our sins. Give thanks to Jesus for His mercy and grace, and tell someone today how much you love Him.

Closing Prayer

But in my adversity they rejoiced
And gathered together;
Attackers gathered against me,
And I did not know *it*;
They tore *at me* and did not cease;
With ungodly mockers at feasts
They gnashed at me with their teeth.
Lord, how long will You look on?
Rescue me from their destructions,
My precious *life* from the lions.
I will give You thanks in the great assembly;
I will praise You among many people.
Let them not rejoice over me who are wrongfully my enemies;
Nor let them wink with the eye who hate me without a cause.
For they do not speak peace,
But they devise deceitful matters
Against *the* quiet ones in the land.
They also opened their mouth wide against me,

And said, "Aha, aha!
Our eyes have seen *it*."
This You have seen, O LORD;
Do not keep silence.
O Lord, do not be far from me.
Stir up Yourself, and awake to my vindication,
To my cause, my God and my Lord.
Vindicate me, O LORD my God, according to Your righteousness;
And let them not rejoice over me.

Psalm 35.15-24

Psalm 35.17-26 (*Creation: Exalt the Lord, His Praise Proclaim*)

How long, O Lord, will You sit by?
O rescue my soul, or I shall die!
Thus praise and thanks I'll give to You
With all who hold You dear and true.
The wicked would rejoice with glee,
And gloat in triumph over me.
They speak no peace, their words are lies;
They seek our destruction before their eyes.

Stir up, O God, and wake to my right;
Defend my cause with all Your might!
And judge me in Your righteousness;
Let not my foes bring me to distress.
Let shame, dishonor be their gown
Who would Your holy ones bring down.
Let all who would themselves exalt
Be humbled, shamed, and brought to naught.

2 Delivered to Die

Read and meditate on John 19.8-16.

Pilate finally acquiesces in the demand of the Jewish leaders, and turns Jesus over to them for crucifixion. He spares himself having to make that decision, but he does not avoid responsibility for the injustice done.

⁸Now more afraid than ever, ⁹Pilate went again into the court, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" Jesus answered not a word. ¹⁰And so then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not know that I have power to crucify or to release You? Yet You are not speaking to me?" ¹¹Jesus answered, "You could wield no power against me, had it not been in this hour bestowed on you from above. And therefore he who has delivered Me to you will be more harshly judged." ¹²From then on, Pilate sought to let Him go. The Jews said though, "You ought to know that if You let this Man go, you are not a friend of Caesar. This Man Who declares Himself our king, defies the king." ¹³Then Pilate, hearing this, said they should bring Jesus to the judgment seat – the place they call The Pavement, but the Hebrew race calls Gabbatha. ¹⁴It was the sixth hour then, the day before the Feast. He said to them, "Behold your King!" ¹⁵But they cried out, "Away with Him!" and "Crucify Him!" "Do you say," he asked, "that I should crucify your King?" The chief priests answered then, "We have no king but Caesar!" ¹⁶Therefore he delivered Him for crucifixion, and the Jews took Him and led Him from that place.

- John 19.8-16

Reflect

1. John mentions that Pilate was becoming increasingly afraid. Afraid of what? Should we allow such fear to affect our relationship with Jesus? Explain. Complete this prayer: *Father, I would fear only You, and no man, so...*

2. Pilate prolonged his interrogation of Jesus by trying to discover where He was from, which part of the country was His place of origin or residence. He may have been hoping to pass Him off to

some other civil authority. We know from Luke 24:6ff that he sent Jesus to Herod, who was ruler over Galilee, only to have Jesus returned to him. Pilate was torn because he could not find a way to condemn Jesus under Roman law, but he couldn't afford to let Him go. He appears to have been getting a little agitated. How can you see this in verses 9 and 10? What can happen when we allow irritation with someone to get the best of us? *Lord, give me grace and patience with those who deny or oppose You, and keep me...*

3. How should we understand Jesus' response to Pilate in verse 11? What was He saying about civil authority? Why did the religious leaders of Israel bear greater responsibility and sin than Pilate? *Father, thank You that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus, and that the powers and authorities who rule and govern on earth are...*

4. The religious leaders were shrewd. They knew what he was struggling with, and so they shifted the focus of their clamoring from Jesus' claim to be a king according to *their* law, to the implications of that claim according to *Roman* law. They surfaced Pilate's great fear in verse 12, and from that point, the trial was over. Why? Was Pilate seeking to preserve the integrity and authority of Rome? Or something else? Explain. *The fear of man can throttle my witness, Lord, so please...*

5. Now Pilate saw His out. He deftly changed the charges, which had begun as *religious* charges, but which the Jews were trying to make *civil* charges, back to the original *religious* charges: Note how he says, "Behold *your* King" (v. 14). He flatly asked the Jews if he should crucify *their* King (v. 15), but then handed Jesus over to them to carry out their *own* law and judgment (v. 16). It was a Roman governor's prerogative to determine how far local religious laws should be allowed to function within Roman law, and Pilate was walking the thin line as adroitly as he could. Did his turning Jesus over to them free him from responsibility? Explain. Can you see how people today try to keep Jesus a *spiritual* issue, rather than one that has implications for our mundane existence? Are they only doing a version of what Pilate did? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote from questions 1-4.

Summary

"Pilate ought therefore to have accurately inquired whether Jesus had aimed at sovereignty and set his hand to expel Caesar from the kingdom. But he makes no such exact inquiry, and therefore Christ answered him nothing, because he knew that he asked all the questions idly. Besides, since his works bore witness to him, he would not prevail by word or compose any defense, showing that he came voluntarily to this condition.... Pilate, thinking that he might now incur some danger if he were to overlook these words, comes forth as though to inquire into the matter (for the 'sitting down' showed this), but without making any inquiry, he gave Jesus up to them, thinking to shame them." *John Chrysostom (344-407 AD)*

Whether by equivocation, avoidance, or outright hostility, some people will always want to be done with Jesus, to wash their hands of Him, as it were. How should we relate to such people, when we encounter them in our Personal Mission Field?

Closing Prayer

Gracious *is* the LORD, and righteous;
Yes, our God *is* merciful.
The Lord preserves the simple;

I was brought low, and He saved me.
Return to your rest, O my soul,
For the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.
For You have delivered my soul from death,
My eyes from tears,
And my feet from falling.
I will walk before the LORD
In the land of the living.
I believed, therefore I spoke,
“I am greatly afflicted.”
I said in my haste,
“All men *are* liars.”
What shall I render to the LORD
For all His benefits toward me?
I will take up the cup of salvation,
And call upon the name of the LORD.
I will pay my vows to the LORD
Now in the presence of all His people.

Psalm 116.5-14

Psalm 116.4-14 (*Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God Who Reigns Above*)

I called to God, “O Lord, I pray, my soul redeem with favor!”
The Lord is gracious in His way, and righteous is our Savior.
His mercy to the simple flies; He lifted me up to the skies –
I rest in Him forever!

Full well the Lord has dealt with me; my soul from death He delivered.
My weeping eyes, my stumbling feet, He has redeemed forever.
Forever I before His face shall walk with those who know His grace,
And dwell with them forever.

Afflicted, I believe His Word, though lying men would undo me.
What shall I render to the Lord for all His blessings to me?
Salvation’s cup I lift above and call upon the God of love
And pay my vows most truly.

3 Crucified

Read and meditate on John 19.17-24.

Jesus is led away outside the city of Jerusalem, bearing His own cross. When they reached the hill called Golgotha, the crucified Him.

¹⁷And so, His own cross bearing, He went out, outside the town to Golgotha, ¹⁸and there they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on each side, and Him between them. ¹⁹Pilate wrote a sign, and put it on the cross, a single line that said: Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. ²⁰And many read this title, being in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin written clear, and where they crucified Him being near the city. ²¹Then the chief priests argued, "Do not let the title read, 'King of the Jews,' but that 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews.'"" ²²But Pilate said, "What I have written, I have written." ²³Those, therefore, who crucified Him took His garments, and divided them in four parts, and His tunic, which no seam contained, but had been woven from the top in one piece. ²⁴So they said, "Now let us not destroy this tunic; let us cast lots for it." Thus the Scripture was fulfilled once more which says, "My garments they divided; for My clothing they cast lots." The men therefore did all these things.

- John 19.17-24

Reflect

1. The title Pilate had fixed to the cross may at first seem like some kind of confession of faith on his part. Really, it's just the political justification for his allowing this act. Explain. Why would giving this reason for Jesus' death be a further humiliation to the Jews? Complete this prayer: *Like Pilate, Lord, many people believe they can just dismiss You and be done with You. However...*
2. The chief priests were outraged. They hadn't insisted on His being crucified because He *was* their king, but because He *claimed* to be their king. What's the difference? How would they have read Pilate's plaque? Why would that have piqued them so? *Even among unbelievers themselves, Lord, confusion exists about You – Who You are, why You matter, and what You claim. I need to be faithful at...*
3. Jesus was crucified by a squad of four Roman soldiers, between two other malefactors, under a

plaque stating His crime, and on a hill known as “The Place of the Skull.” What would all this imagery have communicated to the people watching this spectacle? Take a few minutes to review Psalm 22.1-18. Who’s in charge here? *Lord Jesus, even in the midst of Your suffering, You rested in the sovereignty of the Father. Help me also to...*

4. Meditate on Isaiah 53.4-12, especially verses 10 and 11. Jesus surely must have been clinging to the promises of these two verses – what His sacrifice would accomplish, that His days would be prolonged, that He would see the good seed of His suffering, and the pleasure of the Lord – as He underwent the suffering of crucifixion (cf. Heb. 12.1, 2). What can we learn from Jesus about how to endure suffering and hardship? *Thank You, Lord Jesus, that You have showed me how to bear up when trials come. Help me to...*

5. The soldiers who crucified Jesus were not concerned about fulfilling some ancient prophecy, which they knew nothing of anyway. They were simply trying to get the most for themselves of Jesus’ only belonging. What is symbolic about this stripping Jesus of His earthly possessions, and the dividing of them? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote for questions 1-4.

Summary

“To the wicked, the sight of the Lord carrying his own cross was indeed an object of derision. But to the faithful a great mystery was revealed, for the cross was destined to become the scepter of his power. Here was the majestic spectacle of a glorious conqueror mightily overthrowing the hostile forces of the devil and nobly bearing the trophy of his victory. On the shoulders of his invincible patience he carried the sign of salvation for all the kingdoms of the earth to worship, as if on that day he would strengthen all his future disciples by the symbol of his work and say to them, ‘Anyone who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.’” *Leo the Great (fl. 440-461 AD)*

God made Him Who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. What did Jesus accomplish in His crucifixion? What was it absolutely necessary?

Closing Prayer

But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me;
O My Strength, hasten to help Me!
Deliver Me from the sword,
My precious *life* from the power of the dog.
Save Me from the lion’s mouth
And from the horns of the wild oxen!
You have answered Me.
I will declare Your name to My brethren;
In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.
You who fear the LORD, praise Him!
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,
And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!

Psalm 22.19-23

Psalm 22.23 (*Darwall: Rejoice, the Lord is King*)

All you who fear the Lord, now praise His holy Name!

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You children of His glorious Word, declare His fame!
We stand in awe of our eternal God, and on His mercy call.

4 Glory in Death

Read and meditate on John 19.25-30.

Jesus' died loving His mother and fulfilling Scripture. He glorified God to the end, even in the midst of His own great suffering.

²⁵And standing there close by the cross were Jesus' mother and the wife of Clopas (who was Mary's kindred), and the Magdalene, named Mary. ²⁶Jesus, when He saw His mother, standing by the one He loved, said to her, "Woman, see your son." ²⁷And then, to His disciple, standing there, He said, "Behold your mother!" So to care for her, he took her from that hour into his home.

²⁸And after this, when Jesus knew that all was now accomplished, so that all God's Word might be fulfilled, then did He call, "I thirst." ²⁹Nearby a vessel that was full of sour wine sat; they fixed onto a pole a sponge filled with that wine, and held it to His mouth. ³⁰And when He took the wine into His mouth, He said, "Now it is finished." Then He bowed His head, and speaking not again, gave up His Spirit.

- John 19.25-30

Reflect

1. Jesus cared for His mother even in the midst of His great pain and suffering. How is the glory of God evident in this? What does Jesus teach us here about the lifestyle of serving that He demonstrated in John 13? Complete the following prayer: *Lord, too often I'm waiting for someone to do for me. Instead, help me to...*

2. Three people named Mary are present here, and each represents an important part of Jesus' life and work. What does His mother Mary represent (recall Luke 1 and 2)? How about Mary Magdalene (whom we'll see again)? And Mary's kindred – probably a cousin, though John refers to her as Mary's "sister" – who is specifically mentioned as Clopas' *wife*. What does she represent (cf. Eph. 5.23-27)? Each of these women also embodies aspects of God's glory. Explain. *Lord Jesus, help me to see how You can glorify the Father in my life as...*

3. Mary is more than Jesus' mother. Meditate on Revelation 12.1-6, 13-17. What does Mary represent? What was Jesus signaling by entrusting her to the disciple He loved (John)? How can we

see God's glory in this? *Lord, as You entrusted Your mother to the apostle, so You have entrusted to me...*

4. Meditate on Psalm 69.19-21. This Word of God had to be fulfilled, and it was a word from Jesus – “I thirst” – that put in action the movement required to fulfill the ancient prophesy. Dying on the cross, weak from pain and thirst, the Word of Christ still commanded the lives of sinful men. Is this still true (Heb. 1.3; Eph. 1.11)? How can you see God's glory in this? *Lord, Your slightest Word bears more power than all the evil intentions and actions of a sinful world. So as I go out into that world today...*

5. The Greek uses one word to express the sentence, “It is finished.” That word is *tetelestai*. It is a form of the verb *teleo*, and relates to the idea of completion or bringing something to an end. It was, among other usages, a word common in the world of commerce in Jesus' day. This word has been founded on ancient parchments, written across bills of sale, meaning something like, “Paid in full.” What was being “paid in full” by Jesus dying? How is the glory of God seen in this? Do you thank Him for this as often as you should? Bring together your prayers from questions 1-4 into one prayer.

Summary

“Having now tasted the vinegar, the produce of that vineyard that had degenerated in spite of its divine planter and had turned to the sourness of a foreign vine, the Lord says, ‘It is finished,’ that is, the Scriptures are fulfilled. There is nothing more to endure from these raging people. I have endured all that I foretold I should suffer. The mysteries of weakness are completed. Let the proofs of power be produced. And so he bowed the head and yielded up his spirit and gave that body that would be raised again on the third day the rest of peaceful slumber.” *Leo the Great (fl. 440-461 AD)*

We see the glory of God in the death of our Lord Jesus, but most of the people present at His crucifixion did not see God's glory. Why not? Should their inability or unwillingness to see the glory of God prohibit us from living for His glory? Explain.

Closing Prayer

Show me Your ways, O LORD;
Teach me Your paths.
Lead me in Your truth and teach me,
For You are the God of my salvation;
On You I wait all the day.
Remember, O LORD, Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses,
For they are from of old.
Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions;
According to Your mercy remember me,
For Your goodness' sake, O LORD.
Good and upright is the LORD;
Therefore He teaches sinners in the way.
The humble He guides in justice,
And the humble He teaches His way.
All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth,
To such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.

Psalm 25.4-10

Psalm 25.4-10 (*Festal Song: Revive Thy Work, O Lord*)

Make me to know Your ways, teach me Your paths, O Lord!
My Savior, all day long I wait and seek You in Your Word.

Remember mercy, Lord, and steadfast love to me!
And all my sins before You let them not remembered be!

My sins have been of old, Your love is new each day;
According to Your goodness, Lord, regard my sinful way.

Upright and good are You, You lead us in Your way;
The humble You instruct in truth and guide him day by day.

The paths of God are all of love and faithfulness;
All they who keep His covenant the Lord will surely bless.

5 Fulfilling Scripture in His Death

Read and meditate on John 19.31-37.

The glory of God can be seen in His sovereign management of Jesus' death. Nothing would be done that was contrary to what was prophesied, and everything the Scriptures taught would be fulfilled.

³¹Since, therefore, it was the Preparation, and upon a cross no bodies should remain (that Sabbath being a high and holy day), the Jews came seeing if Pilate would not break their legs, that they might die, and then be taken all away.

³²They broke the legs of those on either side of Jesus, those who had been crucified with Him, but when they came to Jesus, He was dead already, so they let Him be.

³⁴One soldier took a spear and pierced His side, and blood and water flowed. ³⁵He testified of this who saw it, and his word is true, and he is telling you the truth, that you might come to faith in Him. ³⁶For this was done that Scripture should be proved, which says, "Not one of any of His bones should broken be."

³⁷Another says, "And they shall look and see Him they have pierced."

- John 19.31-37

Reflect

1. According to the Law, no one hanged on a tree should be left there for the Sabbath (Deut. 21.22, 23). Jesus had said that Moses wrote about Him (Jn. 5.46) and that all Scripture was about Him (Jn. 5.39). How could the religious leaders be so scrupulous about the details of the Law, and miss its main point completely? Do we sometimes do the same? Explain. Complete this prayer: Lord Jesus, You are the focal point and theme of all Scripture, so that as I read it, I...

2. Meditate on Psalm 34.19-32. John applied this psalm to Jesus. In what way? Does John's understanding of this psalm provide guidance for us in how we should read the Bible? Explain. All Scripture is inspired by You, Lord Jesus, and about You, so that...

3. Meditate on Psalm 22.16, 17 and Zechariah 12.10. Zechariah associated this situation with the grace of God. Explain. Thank You, Lord Jesus, that in Your death, the grace of the Father...

4. John jumps in editorially in verse 35. Why did he do this? What did he not want us to miss? What does this suggest about the place of these events in our presentation of the Gospel? Lord, when I share the Gospel, help me to remember...

5. Again, John stresses the reliability of Scripture. Scripture must be fulfilled. It cannot fail, not in a single detail or teaching. How should John's comment affect our attitude toward the Bible? How can we grow in confidence in Scripture? Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

Summary

“Yet the soldiers, in order to gratify the Jews, pierced his side with a spear and now insulted the dead body. O abominable and accursed purpose! Yet, beloved, do not be confused or despondent. What these men did from a wicked will fought on the side of the truth, since there was a prophecy that spoke concerning this very circumstance: ‘They shall look on him whom they pierced.’ And not only this, but this deed would become evidence to confirm the faith of those who should afterward disbelieve, as it was for Thomas and those like him. With this too an ineffable mystery was accomplished. For ‘there came forth water and blood.’ Not without purpose or by chance did those fountains spring forth. Rather, it is because the church consists of these two together. And those who have been initiated know this, being regenerated indeed by water and nourished by the blood and the flesh.” John Chrysostom (344-407 AD)

In His death, Jesus glorified God and completed the work He’d come to do. How can you see the glory of God in the awful, tragic details of Jesus’ death?

Closing Prayer

Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him,
On those who hope in His mercy,
To deliver their soul from death,
And to keep them alive in famine.
Our soul waits for the LORD;
He is our help and our shield.
For our heart shall rejoice in Him,
Because we have trusted in His holy name.

Psalm 33.13-21

Psalm 33.18-22 (*Truro: Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns*)

God watches those who fear His Name, who hope upon His grace and love;
He keeps their souls from death and shame who trust in Him Who reigns above.

God is our Helper and our Shield; upon us let Your grace descend!
We hope in You; to You we yield; we trust in Jesus to the end.

6 Buried

Read and meditate on John 19.38-42.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus prepare Jesus for burial, and lay Him in a garden tomb.

³⁸Now after this, a man named Joseph, a disciple, and a friend of Jesus, came to Pilate secretly, because he feared the Jews, to see if he might take down Jesus' body. Pilate gave him leave to do so, so then Joseph came and took His body. ³⁹Nicodemus, who to Jesus came by night, was with him, too. They brought a hundred pounds of spices to embalm Him. ⁴⁰Now the custom of the Jews for burial was to bind the body in the spices, using linen strips, so then they did. ⁴¹A garden was nearby, and in the garden was a tomb, and no one in that tomb had yet been laid. ⁴²So there they laid Him; it was then the Preparation Day.

- John 19.38-42

Reflect

1. As Mark noted (Mk. 15.43), Joseph's coming to Pilate was a courageous act. Why? How does one muster such courage? Complete this prayer: *I need courage to follow You, Lord, so I pray that...*
2. What are some ways you might expect your courage as a disciple to be tested? How can you prepare for these? *Lord, do not let the fear of men get the best of me. Help me each day to...*
3. Jewish burial involved a ritual that cocooned the body in a firm wrapping of linen. We recall that when Lazarus was raised, others had to loose him so that he could be free of his wrapping. Why did John think it was important for us to know this? *Now power of the grave or grave clothes could hold You Lord, because...*
4. John also wants us to be sure and know that Jesus was laid to rest in a garden tomb. Matthew adds the detail that Roman soldiers were stationed to guard the tomb (Matt. 27.62-66). Why do we need to know these details? That is, why did John make a point of telling us that Jesus was given a traditional Jewish burial and laid in a standard Jewish tomb? *There can be no doubt that You truly died, Lord Jesus, just as there can be no doubt that...*
5. John reminds us again that all this took place on "the Jews' Preparation Day" (cf. vv. 14, 31). What happened on Preparation Day at this particular feast (cf. Ex. 12.1-8)? As it turned out, for what was this day "Preparation"? Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

Summary

“It is providentially ordered that he should be placed in a new tomb where no one had been placed before, so that his resurrection might not be deemed to be that of someone else who was lying there with him. And, because the place was near, the disciples would easily be able to come and be spectators of what happened. And not they alone, but also his enemies, should be witnesses of his burial. For when they placed seals on the tomb and stationed soldiers to watch it, these were the actions of people testifying to the burial. For Christ earnestly desired that this burial should be confessed no less than the resurrection. This is also why the disciples are very earnest about showing that he died. For all succeeding ages would confirm the resurrection. But Jesus’ death, if at that time it had been partially concealed or not made entirely evident, would be likely to harm the account of the resurrection. Nor was it for these reasons only that he was laid nearby, but also that the story about the stealing might be proved false.” *John Chrysostom (344-407 AD)*

The death of Jesus, including His burial, is an important part of the Good News. Why?

Closing Prayer

For the LORD takes pleasure in His people;
He will beautify the humble with salvation.
Let the saints be joyful in glory;
Let them sing aloud on their beds.
Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,
And a two-edged sword in their hand,
To execute vengeance on the nations,
And punishments on the peoples;
To bind their kings with chains,
And their nobles with fetters of iron;
To execute on them the written judgment—
This honor have all His saints.
Praise the LORD!

Psalm 149.4-9

Psalm 149 (*Toulon: I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art*)

Sing to the Lord a glorious song and new!
Praise Him you people, to Whom praise is due!
Let us rejoice, let us be glad in Him
Who has created us and cleansed our sin.

Praise Him with dance, with tambourine and lyre!
To be so praised is God’s one great desire.
Lord, beautify Your holy ones with grace;
Show us the mercy of Your saving face.

Sing to the Lord, exult with great delight!
Sing on your beds with joy to God by night!
Sing praise and take His Word into your hand;
Publish His grace and wrath in every land!

7 Tried and Condemned

Read and meditate on John 19.1-42.

Everything about this trial was unjust. The outcome was determined before Jesus was arrested, and, for the religious leaders of the day, it was just a matter of how much conniving and equivocation they would have to undertake to get what they wanted. As it turned out, just enough.

¹And so then Pilate ordered Jesus scourged, and blow on blow tore at His body. ²Soldiers made and twisted out of thorns a crown, and laid it on His head, and wrapped Him in a shawl of purple fabric. ³As they did, they all began to mock Him, saying, "Hail, O King of all the Jews!" And they began sting and slap Him with their hands. ⁴Then Pilate went before the Jews again and said to them, "Behold, I bring Him out to you; and know that I have found no fault in Him." ⁵And so then Jesus came out, in the purple robe and crown of thorns. And Pilate said, "Behold the Man!" ⁶And when the chief priest saw Him, and the officers, they cried, "Now let that Man be crucified!" But Pilate said to them, "You crucify Him, for I find in Him no fault." ⁷The Jews replied, "We have a law, and it is written in our holy law that this Man ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." ⁸Now more afraid than ever, ⁹Pilate went again into the court, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" Jesus answered not a word. ¹⁰And so then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not know that I have power to crucify or to release You? Yet You are not speaking to me?" ¹¹Jesus answered, "You could wield no power against me, had it not been in this hour bestowed on you from above. And therefore he who has delivered Me to you will be more harshly judged." ¹²From then on, Pilate sought to let Him go. The Jews said though, "You ought to know that if You let this Man go, you are not a friend of Caesar. This Man Who declares Himself our king, defies the king." ¹³Then Pilate, hearing this, said they should bring Jesus to the judgment seat – the place they call The Pavement, but the Hebrew race calls Gabbatha. ¹⁴It was the sixth hour then, the day before the Feast. He said to them,

“Behold your King!”¹⁵ But they cried out, “Away with Him!” and “Crucify Him!” “Do you say,” he asked, “that I should crucify your King?” The chief priests answered then, “We have no king but Caesar!”¹⁶ Therefore he delivered Him for crucifixion, and the Jews took Him and led Him from that place.

¹⁷ And so, His own cross bearing, He went out, outside the town to Golgotha,¹⁸ and there they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on each side, and Him between them.¹⁹ Pilate wrote a sign, and put it on the cross, a single line that said: Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.²⁰ And many read this title, being in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin written clear, and where they crucified Him being near the city.²¹ Then the chief priests argued, “Do not let the title read, ‘King of the Jews,’ but that He said, ‘I am the King of the Jews.’”²² But Pilate said, “What I have written, I have written.”²³ Those, therefore, who crucified Him took His garments, and divided them in four parts, and His tunic, which no seam contained, but had been woven from the top in one piece.²⁴ So they said, “Now let us not destroy this tunic; let us cast lots for it.” Thus the Scripture was fulfilled once more which says, “My garments they divided; for My clothing they cast lots.” The men therefore did all these things.

²⁵ And standing there close by the cross were Jesus’ mother and the wife of Clopas (who was Mary’s kindred), and the Magdalene, named Mary.²⁶ Jesus, when He saw His mother, standing by the one He loved, said to her, “Woman, see your son.”²⁷ And then, to His disciple, standing there, He said, “Behold your mother!” So to care for her, he took her from that hour into his home.

²⁸ And after this, when Jesus knew that all was now accomplished, so that all God’s Word might be fulfilled, then did He call, “I thirst.”²⁹ Nearby a vessel that was full of sour wine sat; they fixed onto a pole a sponge filled with that wine, and held it to His mouth.³⁰ And when He took the wine into

His mouth, He said, "Now it is finished." Then He bowed His head, and speaking not again, gave up His Spirit.

³¹Since, therefore, it was the Preparation, and upon a cross no bodies should remain (that Sabbath being a high and holy day), the Jews came seeing if Pilate would not break their legs, that they might die, and then be taken all away. ³²They broke the legs of those on either side of Jesus, those who had been crucified with Him, but when they came to Jesus, He was dead already, so they let Him be. ³⁴One soldier took a spear and pierced His side, and blood and water flowed. ³⁵He testified of this who saw it, and his word is true, and he is telling you the truth, that you might come to faith in Him. ³⁶For this was done that Scripture should be proved, which says, "Not one of any of His bones should broken be." ³⁷Another says, "And they shall look and see Him they have pierced."

³⁸Now after this, a man named Joseph, a disciple, and a friend of Jesus, came to Pilate secretly, because he feared the Jews, to see if he might take down Jesus' body. Pilate gave him leave to do so, so then Joseph came and took His body. ³⁹Nicodemus, who to Jesus came by night, was with him, too. They brought a hundred pounds of spices to embalm Him. ⁴⁰Now the custom of the Jews for burial was to bind the body in the spices, using linen strips, so then they did. ⁴¹A garden was nearby, and in the garden was a tomb, and no one in that tomb had yet been laid. ⁴²So there they laid Him; it was then the Preparation Day.

- John 19.1-42

Reflect

1. Caiaphas, the high priest, had said that it was expedient (literally, *advantageous*) for one man to die (Jn. 11.50). He was determined to make that stick, as we saw in chapter 18. But Rome's complicity was essential. How did the religious leaders manage to get Pilate on board with their plan? Complete this prayer: *Father, Your Word is truth. Help me always to stand on Your Word, and to resist...*
2. How can you see that, throughout His trial, Jesus was resting in the sovereignty of God, the reliability of His Word, and the power of His will? How did that affect Jesus? What can we learn

from Jesus about how to deal with the various trials that come upon us? *Thank You, Father, that...*

3. John pointed out the various ways Scripture was fulfilled in Jesus' trial and crucifixion. Why was this important? How should this affect our attitude toward the Bible and our use of it? Explain.

Father, Your Word is reliable and sure, and I want always to...

4. Pilate didn't allow the Jewish leaders to have the last word. What do you make of his reply to their objection in verses 19-22? *You are Lord and Savior and King, Lord Jesus. Help me in my witness to You that...*

5. Even this final event in Jesus' life has a forward-looking aspect, which we see in verses 25-27, and John's reminding us that this all happened on Preparation Day. The Christian life is a forward-looking life. Explain. Bring together into one prayer the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

Summary

"Who can sleep like this when he pleases, as Jesus died when he pleased? Who is there that puts off his garment like this when he pleases, as he put off his flesh at his pleasure? Who is there who leaves like this when he pleases, as he left this life at his pleasure? How great the power, to be hoped for or dreaded, that must be his as judge, if such was the power he exhibited as a dying man!" *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

In Jesus, no trial is too unjust or too great for us to bear. As He kept looking to the Father, and focusing on the joy that was set before Him, we can overcome the tribulations of the world in Him. How can Christians encourage one another in this?

Closing Prayer

You who fear the LORD, praise Him!
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,
And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!
For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;
Nor has He hidden His face from Him;
But when He cried to Him, He heard.
My praise shall be of You in the great assembly;
I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.
The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
Those who seek Him will praise the LORD.
Let your heart live forever!
All the ends of the world
Shall remember and turn to the LORD,
And all the families of the nations
Shall worship before You.
For the kingdom is the LORD's,
And He rules over the nations.
All the prosperous of the earth
Shall eat and worship;
All those who go down to the dust
Shall bow before Him,

Even he who cannot keep himself alive.
A posterity shall serve Him.
It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation,
They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born,
That He has done this.

Psalm 22.23-31

Psalm 22.29-31 (*Dix: For the Beauty of the Earth*)

All the prosp'rous of the earth shall before His mercy fall;
Bending low before His worth, hear them humbly on Him call.
Even those low in the grave He will by His mercy save.

Let the generations all witness to His saving grace;
Let them to all nations call, "Bow before His holy face!"
Let the children of the earth hear of Jesus' saving worth!

Questions for reflection or discussion

1. In what ways was Jesus' trial unjust? Why was it essential that His trial *be* unjust?
2. Unlike the Jews and Pilate, who were resting in human and political power, Jesus rested in the power of God. How can we do this when trials come?
3. How should the betrayal, arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus strengthen our confidence in Scripture?
4. How can we nurture a more forward-looking faith?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from John 19.1-42? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

Items for prayer:

The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Thank you.