

**JOHN**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to John chapter 19 as we continue our study through the Word of God.

Now let me give you a little background information before we get to our text this evening.

If you remember from our last study Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane and faced three religious trials.

The first was before Annas the previous High Priest but still the power behind the scene, the people still looked to him for direction.

Then Jesus went to Caiaphas who was the acting High Priest and the son-in-law of Annas.

And finally, Jesus went before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin who found Him guilty of blasphemy, of claiming to be God, and they sent Him to Pilate so He could be put to death!

Now starts the three civil trials that Jesus faced. These trials were before Rome or Rome's representatives. And we need to understand that Rome ruled with an iron fist!

So, the first civil trial was before Pilate. It was during this first civil trial that Pilate found out Jesus was from Galilee, so he sent Him to Herod who oversaw that region. Herod was in town for the Feast of Passover.

That is the second civil trial, before Herod. And Herod wanted to be entertained by Jesus, to put on a show for Him and when Herod didn't get anywhere he sent Jesus back to Pilate for the third and final trial where this case will be decided.

That is where we will pick up our study this evening, at this third and final civil trial.

Now, one more point before we move on. To know the flavor of a tea bag you have to pour hot water upon it.

How true that is with people. You tend to find out what they are like when hot water, in a sense, is poured out upon them. You find out their flavor.

And that is what we will see with Pilate, with the Jewish religious leaders. As hot water is poured out upon them, their true flavor will come out.

In saying that, when hot water is placed upon our lives what flavor comes out? May it be the fragrance of Jesus instead of anger, hate, retribution, and, as we see with Pilate, buckling under the pressure of the crowd!

With that as our background, let's begin reading in John chapter 19 beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

## **JOHN 19**

### **VERSE 1**

Pilate already decided that Jesus was not guilty, so why have Him scourged, and why not just release Him?

Because the Jewish religious leaders and the Jewish people wanted Jesus crucified so to appease them, and to stay out of trouble with Rome, he thought a good scourging would satisfy their wanting Jesus dead!

The boiling water is being poured out upon the life of Pilate and the flavor that is coming out in his life is one of buckling under the pressure of the crowd. Instead of doing what was right, Jesus was innocent, he subjects Jesus to this third-degree punishment, this scourging with the hope that the people will look at the broken, the beaten body of Jesus and tell Pilate to let Him go.

Never buckle to the pressure of the people, fear the Lord and obey Him!

Now we might not understand that brutality of scourging because it is not done today, which is good. But with this scourging the prisoner was tied by his wrist to a post with his feet just dangling off the ground, exposing his back.

The whip or flagellum was made-up of 12 or 13 thongs with a lead ball attached to each one. Also attached to these were pieces of bone, glass and-so-on, things that would rip the flesh open when it was struck down upon the back.

The blows would start out light and they would come down harder and harder each time unless you confessed your crime or crimes. Then they would lighten up and it was the ultimate third degree to get a person to confess their crime.

This was so brutal of a punishment that 60% of those that were scourged, had those 39 lashes come down upon them, died!

Barclay makes this point, "It literally tore a man's back into strips. Few remained conscious throughout the ordeal; some died; and many went raving mad."

And Eusebius tells of martyrs who "were torn by scourges down to deep-seated veins and arteries, so that the hidden contents of the recesses of their bodies, their entrails and organs were exposed to sight."

Interestingly enough, all we are told of this brutal punishment is that they **“took Jesus and scourged Him.”**

Now think about that for a minute. I have heard Christians say, and maybe you have too, that, ***“I alone am doing this for the Lord, no one else helps me!”***

Do you know what that is? It is complaining. You should be saying, ***“What a joy it is to serve the Lord with many or with few, it is an honor and a privilege, and I will rejoice in that!”*** You just do the work, no big fanfare! That is what we see here with Jesus.

I mean, look at the example of Jesus. They **“took Jesus and scourged Him.”**

And here is the problem for Jesus. As each blow was coming down harder and harder upon Him, all He had to do was confess His crime. But for Jesus, He had nothing to confess, He was innocent. And Isaiah tells us **“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.”** Isaiah 53:7.

He was silent because He was innocent and thus, He took the full blow of those 39 lashes! And in saying that, I think you can understand why He had a hard time carrying the cross beam of the cross to Calvary! He was so weak.

Also, we are told in Isaiah 50:6, **“I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.”**

And in Isaiah 53:5 we are told, **“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.”**

That is what our Lord has done for us, at least part of it. There is still Calvary to go.

And, like I have said, those 39 lashes that came down upon Jesus were the full blow, as hard as they could go, they didn't lighten up because Jesus had nothing to confess. He was innocent, and Pilate even said that!

And it doesn't end with this! Let's read on and see what happens next.

### VERSES 2-3

In Matthew 27:27 we are told that a "**cohort**" or "**garrison**" of Roman soldiers, 600 men, mocked Him, spit upon Him, placed a crown of thorns upon His head, a symbol of sin, and placed a purple robe on Him as well as beat Him up.

Now let's think about this for a minute. Who wears crowns? Kings wear crowns. But this crown is much different, it is a crown of torture! These thorn-bushes in the region have long, hard, sharp thorns, some 12 inches long. Thus, as it was placed on the head of Jesus, it cut into His flesh!

Not only that, but they put a purple robe on Him. That is what a King would wear and yet, it was a way to mock Jesus who was supposed to be a King!

And a common practice with these Roman soldiers with their prisoners is that they would show the prisoner their fists. Then they would blindfold the prisoner and all the soldiers would hit him with their fist but one. Then they would remove the blindfold and if the prisoner was still conscious, they would have him guess which soldier did not hit him. And they could never guess the right one and this continued on until the prisoner was beaten to a pulp!

Also, the verb tenses in the Greek text in John 19:3 indicates that the soldiers repeatedly came to Him, mocked Him, and beat Him with their hands. The forces of hell were having a heyday in Pilate's hall.

Remember what we read in Isaiah 50:6, **“I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.”**

And in Isaiah 52:14 we are told, **“Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men.”**

He was so beaten and bloodied that Isaiah tells us that He no longer looked like a man! Can you imagine the creator of heaven and earth mocked and beaten like that for us! And, in knowing that, knowing how beaten and bloodied Jesus was at this point, I think you will understand what Pilate says next and why he said it.

#### VERSES 4-5

So, Pilate goes before the Jews religious leaders and the crowds of Jewish people and tells them that he is going to bring Jesus out to them.

And Pilate wants them to know that He is innocent, He did not confess to any crimes even though He was beaten so badly. And Pilate is trying to instill in their minds that they should release Jesus, He is innocent!

Then Pilate comes back to them with Jesus, who was beaten and bloodied, disfigured from all of this. Think about it, He did not look like a King but the walking dead, a defeated man with a crown of thorns on His head!

And I believe Pilate thought the people would have compassion on Jesus now and let Him go.

And when Pilate displays Jesus before them he tells them, **“Behold the man!”** Now what did Pilate mean by that?

“Literally, from the precedence of Greek classical examples, this can be translated “the poor man” or “the poor creature.” Pilate was saying, “Look at this poor, bruised, bleeding creature. Haven’t you hounded him enough?” (R. Kent Hughes, John, p.432)

“*The man* is contemptuous. Pilate is saying in effect ‘Here he is – the poor fellow. Can you really think that such a caricature of a king is really a danger either to Israel or Rome?’”  
(Tasker)

And again, I think Pilate wanted the people to look at Jesus and say to Pilate, “Okay, He has had enough. Let Him go!”

But look at how the crowds responded as we read on. The hot water is being poured out upon their lives and the flavor of their life is being seen in their words and actions!

#### VERSES 6-7

This is nothing more than mob mentality here. As I have said, hot water has been poured out upon their lives and the flavor that is coming forth is anger, hatred, bitterness and it is not good!

Now we are told that these are the religious leaders, and this was the flavor that came from their lives. And I have to believe that some of the Jews in the crowd, as they saw this beaten and broken man, just wanted to let Him go! But the Jewish religious leaders were too powerful, and you did not want to cross them!

One commentator said, “Some pity may have stirred in the crowd, but the priests and their immediate dependents silenced it by their yell of fresh hate at the sight of the prisoner.”

(Maclaren)

And keep in mind that Pilate has said that Jesus is innocent of any crime and yet, in their minds, they still want Him dead. In fact, they could care less if Jesus is King or not, the bigger issue to them was that Jesus, being a man, made Himself equal with God. And because of that, they wanted Him dead!

It is as Leviticus 24:16 tells us, “**And whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the LORD, he shall be put to death.**”

The only problem was that Jesus just didn't claim it, He is God!

It is as He said in John 8:24, “**Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am [He], you will die in your sins.**”

If you do not believe that Jesus is God, you will die in your sins! You see, He did claim to be God and He is! So, He is innocent!

And here is something strange. Pilate tells these Jews, “**You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him.**” John 19:6.

But the Jews did not have the right to put anyone to death, capital punishment was taken away from them by Rome. So why did he say that to them? Probably, “Pilate must have realized that the Sanhedrin could not execute the sentence. His apparent relegation of Jesus to them was an act of sarcasm.” (Tenney)

And now the Jews throw it back into Pilate's hands, which is interesting because it looks like they are driving Pilate to do these things, and they truly were! Listen to what Pilate says.



VERSES 8-10

First of all, we see how the Jews responded to his request of letting Jesus go. They wanted nothing to do with letting Jesus go and thus, they put Pilate down, and it was a big time put down. And out of that we see that Pilate is fearful.

Again, he has all the power of Rome behind him and now this leader is afraid. And, he was not only just afraid but “*exceedingly afraid*” it is saying here. Why is that? Because he is not sentencing a man to death who claims to be King, but God! And he might not fully understand the totality of what he is doing, but he knows he is wrong if he puts this man to death!

Not only that, but in Matthew 27:19 we are told, “**While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, ‘Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him.’**”

Now his wife is saying you need to let this Man go, He is innocent!

All this information that Jesus should not be put to death because He was innocent and yet, the crowds of people drove Pilate instead of God leading him!

And so, Pilate confronts Jesus once again, trying to intimidate Jesus, to get Him to speak, claiming that he has the power to destroy life or to spare it.

And Jesus does not answer Pilate here. Why is that? Why did Jesus not answer Pilate's question? Because He had already answered it in John 18:36-37 where we are told, "**Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.' Pilate therefore said to Him, 'Are You a king then?' Jesus answered, 'You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.'**"

Pilate refused the truth that Jesus spoke to him and thus, Jesus was not going to give him more truth or speak this again. He already heard it and rejected it!

Keep in mind that this is a basic spiritual principle. God does not reveal new truth to us if we fail to act on the truth we already know.

Notice how Jesus corrects his perspective of this situation, as Pilate thinks that he is in charge of this situation.

#### VERSE 11

This is not only true of Pilate, but all of us. God is the One who enables us to do things and He will even allow us to do our will, but there are always consequences to our actions.

With the tragic shooting at the Baptist church in Texas several weeks ago, many were wondering why God did not stop it. I can't answer that, I am not God. What I can say is that God did allow it for His plans and His purposes and God will use it for good somehow, someday. I know this because that is what the Scriptures are saying! Yes, God will use even evil to fulfill His plans and purposes. Look at King Nebuchadnezzar and how God used this wicked King!

Also, remember when Daniel rebuked the King of Babylon, Belshazzar in Daniel 5:22-23, **“But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified.”**

And in Acts 17:25 Paul tells us **“Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.”**

I don’t care how big or small you are, how powerful or insignificant you are, God holds our life in His hand and without Him we can do nothing!

Now, what does Jesus mean when He says, **“Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”**?

He could be speaking of the High Priest, Caiaphas, who turned Jesus over to Pilate.

He could be speaking of Judas who turned Jesus over to the Roman soldiers and the Jewish religious leaders.

Or, He could be speaking of the Jewish people in general because they should have known better. They had the Scriptures that spoke of the coming Messiah. Thus, they should have recognized when He came. But they rejected Him and now they were calling for Jesus to be crucified.

We don’t know for sure, and maybe all apply here. We are all accountable to God and by rejecting Him, we are guilty before Him!

VERSES 12-16

Pilate was trying to let Jesus go, he was afraid not to, but now he is even more afraid to because of the people. Notice what they are saying to Pilate, **“If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar’s friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.”** John 19:12.

You see, he was going to be in trouble with Rome. In fact, Pilate was already in trouble with Rome and had two strikes against him. He knew that three strikes and you are out!

When Pilate first came to the area he came into town with his men carrying flags with Caesar’s face on it. To the Jews, this was idolatry and they would not stand for it. So, they rioted, they revolted, they came to Pilate’s house in Caesarea and he threatened them. He told them that he was going to cut off their heads if they did not leave. So, what did they do? They exposed their necks in rebellion and many lost their lives. They sent a letter to Rome complaining about Pilate. *Strike one!*

Later on, he tried to build a better water system but didn’t have enough funds to finish the project. So he took the money from the Jewish treasury. And that resulted in more riots, more trouble and more deaths. And there was another letter to Rome complaining about Pilate. That makes it, *Strike two!*

Therefore, Pilate is trying to be very careful not to get three strikes against him because he knows, strike three and you are out!

Thus, the Jews play their trump card and they know they have Pilate where they want him and there really isn’t anything he can do.

You see, if he lets Jesus go, they will send a letter to Rome saying Pilate let this King who mocks the Romans go!

And again, as you look at this you can clearly see that Pilate is being influenced by these Jewish religious leaders, he is letting them tell him what to do or influence his decision by force. He doesn't really seem to have a say in the matter anymore! But he did and he chose wrong!

Now, as we look at this we may look at Pilate and think that he was not a very strong leader. But what if we applied this to our own lives, how would we look. Or, to put it another way, as the hot water of life is poured upon us, what flavor are we giving off?

Erdman put it this way as he said, "You may do today exactly what Pilate did. He is simply an example of a man who lacks decision of character, who does not possess the courage of his convictions, who tries to compromise with wrong, who disobeys conscience through fear of personal loss."

May we learn the lesson and do what is right, what is good even though it may not be popular, it may even cause us trouble, but it is what is right, it is what God wants us to do! Again, don't let the fear of man drive you, let the Spirit of God lead you!

What a sad picture we see being painted here. The Caesar's were deified, thought of as gods and once a year you would have to bow the knee and say, "Caesar is lord."

Because of that many Christians were put to death because they refused to bow the knee to anyone but Jesus!

Now for the Jews, their hatred for Jesus was so intense that they were willing to make this statement which was in defiance against God! They cried out, "**We have no king but Caesar!**" Isn't that interesting.

And folk's that is what hatred can cause you to do. You can end up doing and saying all kinds of things and some of them may be pretty ugly. Thus, be careful, walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh!

And we are told in John 19:16, **“So he [Pilate] delivered Him to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and led Him away.”**

Four Roman soldiers were in charge of a prisoner and one would walk in front carrying a sign with the prisoners’ charges.

The prisoner himself would carry the 100-pound cross beam through the streets, taking the longest route to Golgotha so others could see what happens to those who defy the power of Rome. It was an incentive so others would not travel down that same path.

And they are heading to Calvary, the place of the skull, as we shall see as we read on.

#### VERSES 17-18

First of all, Calvary was located outside the city, just as the Scriptures tell us. We are told in Hebrews 13:11-13, **“For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.”**

Also, the idea here is this. Paul is telling us that they need to make a clean break from Judaism and for us today; we must make a break from whatever is holding us back from Jesus and meet Him where He is at!

In Galatians 3:13-14 we are told, **“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”** How did He do this?

Paul tells us in II Corinthians 5:21, **“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”**

You see, He became sin for us, paid in full the penalty for our sins so we can have the righteousness of Christ imputed into our lives!

Now, because crucifixions occurred long ago, I think we miss the brutality of this form of capital punishment. In fact, crucifixion was so awful and degrading that polite Romans wouldn't talk about it in public.

The Roman statesman Cicero said of crucifixion, “It is a crime to bind a Roman citizen; to scourge him is an act of wickedness; to execute him is almost murder: What shall I say of crucifying him? An act so abominable it is impossible to find any word adequately to express.”

The Roman historian Tacitus called crucifixion “A torture fit only for slaves.”

Also, one commentator made this statement regarding crucifixion. He wrote,

Archaeologists discovered in 1968 the remains of a man crucified in Jesus' era. The study of the remains revealed that the victim was nailed to the cross in a sitting position, both legs over sideways, with the nail penetrating the sides of both feet just below the heel. The arms were stretched out, each stabbed by a nail in the forearm. Dr. Nico Hass, Hebrew University anatomy professor described it as “a compulsive position, a difficult and unnatural posture,” meant to increase the agony of the sufferer. (Tenney and others)

- David Guzik

Also, keep in mind that Jesus was centered between a believing criminal and an unbelieving criminal. Thus, I think the idea here is that each person has a choice to make, to receive Jesus or reject Him but that gift is open to all! They both had a choice to make and only one received Jesus and entered into Paradise with Him!

#### VERSES 19-22

So, Pilate places this sign over the head of Jesus that read, “**JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.**” And this upset the Jewish religious leaders, they wanted Pilate to change it.

But Pilate stands up for this sign he has placed over Jesus, but He couldn’t stand up and free this innocent man!

Interestingly enough, in the Greek it suggests that the Jews kept asking Pilate, they repeatedly asked Pilate to change this sign to read, “*This man claimed to be the king of the Jews.*”

And Pilate refused to change this sign and he literally said, “What I have written, I have written, and it will always remain written.” I guess he dug his heels in on this.

Clarke may give us some insight to why he refused to bend on this one. He wrote, “That is, I will not alter what I have written. The Roman laws forbade the sentence to be altered when once pronounced; and as this inscription was considered as the *sentence* pronounced against our Lord, therefore, it could not be changed.”

Now why the three languages? Think of it like this. Hebrew is the language of religion. Greek was the language of philosophy. And Latin was the language of law. They all were involved in the crucifying of Jesus just as we are!



You see, whatever walk of life you came from, whatever your background is, you know that Jesus is King! And you can either accept that or reject it, but it doesn't change the fact that He is King!

#### VERSES 23-24

Here we see Jesus hanging on the cross either naked or with just a loin cloth on. Think about that. Our Lord, our Creator, did that for us, suffered the shame, the pain, because He loves us that much!

Lane sheds some light on this as he wrote, "Men were ordinarily crucified naked (Artemidorus II. 61). Jewish sensitivities, however, dictated that men ought not to be publicly executed completely naked, and men condemned to stoning were permitted a loin-cloth (M. *Sanhedrin* VI. 3). Whether the Romans were considerate of Jewish feelings in this matter is unknown." (Lane, commentary on Luke)

We also see here the fulfilling of prophecy, one that was given some 1000 years before this event happened. Here it is the dividing of His garments and it comes out of Psalm 22, a picture of the cross given to us, as I have said, some 1000 years before this happened!

Also keep in mind that there were 33 prophecies fulfilled in all on this one day alone! Things were not out of control, but they were being fulfilled just as God had spoken!

#### VERSES 25-27

Here we see four women at the foot of the cross and there will also be one man, John, as we will see. The others were all hiding, they were fearful, but these women were there with Jesus.

First of all, we see Mary the mother of Jesus. Can you imagine the pain she was going through as she watched her Son go through all of this?

Remember in Luke 2:34-35 as Simeon prophesied over Jesus and then he said this about what Mary would go through, **“Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, ‘Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.’”**

And that is exactly what we see here, a sword piercing her heart as she watches her Son being crucified for the sins of the world! He was born to die!

We also see Mary’s sister, Salome, the mother of James and John which would make them cousins to Jesus!

There was Mary, the wife of Clopas, who could have been one of the men Jesus appeared to on the road to Emmaus.

And Mary Magdalene who had seven demons cast from her by Jesus.

They all stood there in horror, in pain seeing their Lord, their Son, their relative, their friend crucified!

What a lesson for us that no matter the pain, no matter the cost, are we ready to serve Jesus at the foot of the cross? These women were!

Now as Jesus is hanging on the cross, bearing all that pain, He sees His mother, Mary. He also saw one of His disciples. Who is this disciple that Jesus loved? I believe it is John.

Now in saying that, I am sure all His disciples felt that way. Why? Because Jesus loves all of us the best, we are special to Him, don’t forget that fact. Don’t let Satan mess your mind up so that you think God doesn’t love you, He does!

The big question here is why did Jesus entrust John with the care of His mother instead of having her own children take care of her? Did you ever wonder about that? I did!

I think the reason is simple. At this point His brothers and sisters were not believers yet, and thus, the bond between believers can be closer than the bond between our own families if they don't believe.

Why is that? Because of Jesus, we have Him in common, we are part of the same family, the body of Christ, and thus, our love for Him and His Word is the same.

That is why I believe John is told to watch over Mary by Jesus, as Jesus was the oldest and cared for His mother after His step father Joseph died, and now He entrusts John to take over that task.

One more point here. Why does Jesus call His mother "**Woman**" instead of "***Mom***" or "***Mother***"? My pastor put it like this as he wrote,

In calling His mother "**Woman,**" the Lord did not show any lack of respect. But it is noticeable that He did not call her "Mother." Does this have any lesson for those who might be tempted to exalt Mary to the place where she is adored? Jesus here instructed John to care for Mary as if she were his own **mother**. John obeyed and took Mary **to his own home**.

- Pastor Phil Ballmaier

### VERSES 28-30

John skips over those three hours of darkness that covered the earth, from noon till 3 pm. This is when the sins of the world were placed upon Jesus and the Father turned His face from the Son! John focuses on the short time before Jesus gave up His spirit!

We are told that the soldiers gave Him sour wine to drink. He was thirsty, dehydrated. They probably tied a sponge to the end of a rod with hyssop and pressed it to His lips. (Hyssop is a plant, also used at the Passover - Ex. 12:22.)

This is not to be confused with the vinegar mixed with gall, which had been offered to Him earlier (Matt. 27:34). He did not drink that because it would have acted as a pain reliever. He must bear our sins in full consciousness.

It was then, after He paid in full the penalty for our sins that He cried out *TETELESTAI* in the Greek, or **“It is finished.”** The work of redemption was completed, the price had been paid!

Many miss the point of this word, tetelestai. Tenney tells us, “The verb teleo (*teleo*, ‘to finish’) was used in first and second centuries in the sense of ‘fulfilling’ or ‘paying’ a debt and often appeared in receipts. Jesus’ statement ‘It is finished’ (tetelestai, *tetelestai*) could be interpreted as ‘Paid in full.’”

Exactly, our debt for our sin was paid in full by Jesus. There is nothing we can do to add to that, it is a completed work.

It is as Paul said in Colossians 2:13-15, **“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.”**

Also, notice that life was not taken from Jesus, but He freely gave it up, as He said in John 10:17-18, **“Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”**

#### VERSES 31-33

Keep in mind that it is Thursday and the Preparation Day or the High Holy Day was the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, sometimes also called Passover since these feasts ran side-by-side, and this was to begin at sundown, which would begin a new day for the Jew.

Thus, Friday was a holy day and Saturday was the Sabbath and Jesus rose on Sunday morning, being in the tomb three days, Thursday, Friday and Saturday!

Now why did they break the legs of these men, those hanging on the crosses? To hasten their death. You see, if your legs were broken you could not push up to breath and thus, you would suffocate.

Many times these criminals would hang on these crosses for a few days. But, as we see here, it was a Preparation Day and to hasten their deaths, they broke their legs!

Tenney makes these remarks regarding what was done here. He wrote, “The only way a crucified man would obtain a full breath of air was to raise himself by means of his legs to ease the tension on his arms and chest muscles. If the legs were broken, he could not possibly do so; and death would follow shortly because of lack of oxygen.”

But, when they came to Jesus, He was already dead, and they did not carry out the order they had, to break His legs.

We might not think much of this but by not breaking the legs of Jesus, it was the fulfillment of prophecy, that none of His bones were broken.

In speaking of the Passover lamb, we read in Exodus 12:46, “**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.**”

And in Psalm 34:20 we are also told of this, “**He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken.**”

They did not break the legs of Jesus but look at what they did do.

#### VERSE 34

To make sure Jesus was dead this soldier thrusts this spear in His side and as he did blood and water came out!

This seems to indicate that Jesus died of a broken heart. Let me explain what I mean. There is a sac that goes around your heart called the pericardial sac that has a small amount of fluid in it normally.

But, during times of extreme stress, where the body is going through suffering like what we see happening with Jesus, that sac can fill up with lots of fluid.

Now, as the soldier thrust his spear into the side of Jesus not only did this watery fluid come out, but so did blood, which would occur if the heart ruptured and filled the pericardial sac with blood. It is a possibility.

Here is the bigger issue to me. This shows that Jesus was not some kind of spirit being like the Gnostics were saying, but was flesh and blood, He was real.

John deals with this very thing in I John 1:1-4 where he tells us, **“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life - the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us - that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.”**

You see, John tells us that Jesus was real, they touched Him, spoke with Him, He spoke with them, He was not some spirit being that hovered over the ground! And what we see here in John’s Gospel is that Jesus was flesh and blood!

Also, you may hear some people say that Jesus never died but just passed out – the Swoon theory! Let me say this, the Roman soldiers, in charge of doing these executions, knew when a person died, they were experts.

And if there is still a doubt, a spear being thrust into the side of Jesus should put that thought to rest and if you doubt that, you can do the experiment with yourself and see how you do with the beatings, the scourging, the crucifixion and the spear thrust into your side.

If you only pass out, well, then you have a case, and you can let me know, but you won’t survive, you weren’t meant to! That was the point of ***CRUCIFIXION – DEATH!***

VERSES 35-37

Now this is important for us to understand. John was an eyewitness to what happened not only in the life of Jesus but with His crucifixion. John was there, he was at the foot of the cross, he saw these things come to pass and now he is telling them to us.

Why is he doing that, for what purpose? Very simply, that we would read them and believe that Jesus is God and died on the cross of Calvary for our sins paying that penalty in full, and as we will see next time, on the third day He will rise from the dead!

And John points out that none of His bones were broken and that He would be pierced was prophetic in nature and it came to pass!

Over 300 prophecies were fulfilled in Christ's First Coming, and if you do the math, even 8 of these fulfilled in any one man is beyond any mathematical probability, let alone over 300!

Now some may argue that others have made prophecies before, but listen to this and see what conclusion you come to. We are told,

Contemporary critics of biblical prophecy nominate psychic predictions for equality with Scripture. There is another quantum leap between every psychic and the unerring prophets of Scripture. Indeed, one test of a prophet was whether they ever uttered predictions that did not come to pass (Deut. 18:22). Those whose prophecies failed were stoned (18:20) – a practice that no doubt gave pause to any who were not absolutely sure their messages were from God. Amid hundreds of prophecies, biblical prophets are not known to have made a single error.



A study of prophecies made by psychics in 1975 and observed until 1981 showed that of the seventy-two predictions, only six were fulfilled in any way. Two of these were very vague and two others were hardly surprising – the United States and Russia would remain leading powers and there would be no world wars. The People's Almanac (1976) did a study of the predictions of twenty-five top psychics. . .

. . . The results: Of the total seventy-two predictions, sixty-six (92 percent) were totally wrong. An accuracy rate around 8 percent could easily be explained by chance and general knowledge of circumstances. In 1993 the psychics missed every major unexpected news story, including Michael Jordan's retirement, the Midwest flooding, and the Israel – PLO peace treaty. Among their false prophecies were the prediction that the Queen of England would become a nun, and that Kathy Lee Gifford would replace Jay Leno as the Host of The Tonight Show.

Likewise, the highly reputed "predictions" of Nostradamus were not that amazing at all. Contrary to popular belief, he never predicted either the place or the year of a great California earthquake. Most of his "famous" predictions, such as the rise of Hitler, were vague. As other psychics, he was frequently wrong, a false prophet by biblical standards.

- Josh McDowell, *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, pp. 194-195

I think that is clear, when you look at the Bible you will find that over ¼ or 25% of its content is prophetic in nature. Some have come to pass; others are still waiting for their fulfillment. But God has not been wrong once, and if He was right over 300 times regarding His First Coming, I think the over 500 prophecies of His Second Coming will be right on the money!

VERSES 38-42

Joseph was a rich man, a prominent member of the Jewish council, a good and righteous man who did not want Jesus to be put to death. In fact, he was a secret follower of Jesus and he was from the area of Arimathea, which was about 20 miles northwest of Jerusalem.

Now he and Nicodemus, another secret follower of Jesus, step out in faith and ask to care for the body of Jesus. You see, the Romans didn't care, they would leave these bodies on the crosses for the birds and wild animals and what was left was finally put into a common grave.

But for the Jews, it was important for them to care for the bodies of a dead person, give them a proper burial. Thus, they take the body of Jesus and quickly wrap it in cloth and spices and place it into the garden tomb, one Joseph had made for him and his family but was never used.

It is as Isaiah 53:9 says, "**And they made His grave with the wicked - But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.**"

Now if you ever get to go to Israel or see pictures of this area, outside of the city is Calvary or the place of the skull which looks just like a skull cut into the rock.

And just to the side of Calvary is a garden tomb where they placed the body of Jesus!

It is a very moving place to go, realizing this is where it all took place, the work was completed!

Joseph and Nicodemus put the body of Jesus in this tomb and they roll the stone in front of it, for the Feast of Unleavened Bread is about to begin, it is almost sundown.

Now a typical tomb of this type had a small entrance and perhaps one or more compartments where bodies were laid out after being somewhat mummified with spices, ointments, and linen strips. Customarily, the Jews left these bodies alone for a few years until they decayed down to the bones, then the bones were placed in a small stone box known as an ossuary. The ossuary remained in the tomb with the remains of other family members.

Also, the door to the tomb was typically made of a heavy, circular shaped stone, running in a groove and settled down into a channel, so it could not be moved except by several strong men. This was done to ensure that no one would disturb the remains.

Now we know the end of the story. But imagine His disciples, all those who followed Jesus. It would seem hopeless for them. Everything they were living for was taken away in a day.

And thus, what a dark, painful day this was. But let us not forget that Sunday is coming!

You see, even in our own lives the cross and the power of the resurrection are closely related – we must die to self to see the power of God work and next time we will see Jesus triumph over death, which Paul tells us, **“But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.”** I Corinthians 15:20-22. You see, because He lives so will we!