

JOHN

Chapter 19

Jesus Delivered to be Crucified

Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. 2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. 3 They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands. 4 Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him." 5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" 6 When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." 7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God." 8 When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. 9 He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered him, **"You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."** 12 From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." 13 So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" 15 They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." 16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

19:1 Pilate hoped a flogging would satisfy the Jews and enable him to release Jesus. (CSB)

Beating was severe. (TLSB)

In the Roman Empire, flagellation was often used as a prelude to crucifixion, and in this context is sometimes referred to as **scourging**. Whips with small pieces of metal or bone at the tips were commonly used. Such a device could easily cause disfigurement and serious trauma, such as ripping pieces of flesh from the body or loss of an eye. In addition to causing severe pain, the victim would approach a state of hypovolemic shock due to loss of blood. (Wikipedia)

The Romans reserved this treatment for non-citizens, as stated in the *lex Porcia* and *lex Sempronia*, dating from 195 and 123 BCE. The poet Horace refers to the *horribile flagellum* (horrible whip) in his *Satires*. Typically, the one to be punished was stripped naked and bound to a low pillar so that he could bend over it, or chained to an upright pillar so as to be stretched out. Two lictors (some reports indicate scourgings with four or six lictors) alternated blows from the bare shoulders down the body to the soles of the feet. There was no limit to the number of blows inflicted - this was left to the lictors to decide, though they were normally not supposed to kill the victim. Nonetheless, Livy, Suetonius and Josephus report cases of flagellation where victims died while still bound to the post. (Wikipedia)

Flogging was a legal preliminary to every Roman execution, and only women and Roman senators or soldiers (except in cases of desertion) were exempt. The usual instrument was a short whip with several single or braided leather thongs of variable lengths, in which small iron balls or sharp pieces of sheep bones were tied at intervals. For scourging, the man was stripped of his clothing, and his hands were tied

to an upright post. The back, buttocks, and legs were flogged either by two soldiers (lictors) or by one who alternated positions. The severity of the scourging depended on the disposition of the lictors and was intended to weaken the victim to a state just short of collapse or death. As the Roman soldiers repeatedly struck the victim's back with full force, the iron balls would cause deep contusions, and the leather thongs and sheep bones would cut into the skin and subcutaneous tissues. Then, as the flogging continued, the lacerations would tear into the underlying skeletal muscles and produce quivering ribbons of bleeding flesh. Pain and blood loss generally set the stage for circulatory shock. The extent of blood loss may well have determined how long the victim would survive on the cross. After the scourging, the soldiers often taunted their victim. (*William D. Edwards, MD, Department of Pathology, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN; Wesley J. Gabel, MDiv, West Bethel United Methodist Church, Bethel, MN.; Floyd E Hosmer, MS, AMI, Dept of Medical Graphics, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN; Homestead United Methodist Church, Rochester, MN; review of article and excerpts from **On The Physical Death of Jesus Christ**, JAMA, March 21, 1986 – Vol 255, No. 11). (The medical terms in this article have been edited into layman's terminology by: Carol R. Ritchie; TNCC, MSN, RN, CNOR.)*

Cf. 2 Corinthians 11:24 and Deut. 25:1-3. (CSB)

19:2 *thorns*. A general term relating to any thorny plant. (CSB)

Thorns, if from the date palm, could have been as much as 12 inches long. (TLSB)

purple. A color used by royalty. (CSB)

A cloak made of relatively expensive purple cloth, worn by the Roman military and signifying royalty or governmental authority. (TLSB)

19:3 *hail* - Cruel game of mockery played by the soldiers. (TLSB)

struck - Slapped in the face with an open hand. (TLSB)

19:5 *behold the man* – Mockery emphasizing Christ's weakness and vulnerability; meaning something like "poor fellow." Ironically, this was indeed the man who is King of kings and Lord of lords. (TLSB)

19:6 *take him... crucify him*. The petulant utterance of an exasperated man, for the Jews could not carry out this form of execution. (CSB)

I find no guilt. For the third time Pilate proclaimed Jesus' innocence (see 18:38; 19:4). Luke also records this threefold proclamation (Lk 23:4, 14, 22). (CSB)

19:7 *according to that law* - The real issue now came out - blasphemy, which from Pilate's point of view was no crime. (TLSB)

he ought to die. Apparently referring to the penalty for blasphemy (Lev 24:16). (CSB)

19:8 *even more afraid*. Pilate was evidently superstitious, and this charge frightened him. (CSB)

Perhaps caused by Pilate's difficult political situation or by a superstitious reaction to the news that Jesus claimed divine status. (TLSB)

19:9 *where are you from* – Pilate realized. He was likely weighing the political implications of crucifying Jesus or trying to satisfy superstitious curiosity. (TLSB)

Jesus gave him no answer. The reason is not clear, but Jesus had answered other questions readily. Perhaps Pilate would not have understood the answer or would not have believed it. (CSB)

Jesus did not bother to explain. Pilate could not comprehend what was happening anyway. Cf. Is. 53:7. (TLSB)

19:10 *I have authority.* Pilate was incredulous and very conscious of his authority. His second question indicates his personal responsibility for crucifying Jesus. (CSB)

19:11 Jesus' last words to Pilate. (CSB)

from above. All earthly authority comes ultimately from God. (CSB)

Cf. Romans 13:1-4. Luther: "With these words He Himself confirms this power. Yet He submits to it because this was pleasing to His Father" (AE 30:78). (TLSB)

a greater sin. † That of Judas or Caiaphas. But "greater" implies that there was a lesser sin, so Pilate's sin was also real. (CSB)

Caiaphas was responsible for handing over a man he knew to be innocent. In human affairs, that is the greater crime. Luther: "Pilate and the Jews had the sword and rule in the land. And yet they could not do anything until God had decreed it, as Christ also declared before Pilate: 'You would have no power over Me' (19:11). Thus He herewith gives to the sword leave and power over Christ and also offers us the comfort that no harm can come to us except insofar as He allows and permits it" (AE 20:335). (TLSB)

19:12 *no friend of Caesar.* Some people had official status as "Friends of Caesar," but the term seems to be used here in the general sense. There was an implied threat that if he released Jesus, Pilate would be accused before Caesar. His record was such that he could not face such a prospect without concern. (CSB)

Title of honor given to the emperor's closest and most faithful supporters. The title could be revoked, but only with the most frightful political and personal ramifications. Given Pilate's difficult political situation, the Jews' threat was a serious one. (TLSB)

makes himself a king. Jewish leaders sought to buttress the case that Jesus, by making Himself a king, was guilty of insurrection against the emperor (cf v 3). (TLSB)

19:13 *the Stone Pavement.* Not a translation of *Gabbatha*, which seems to mean "the hill of the house," but a different name for the same place. (CSB)

Probably in the courtyard of the Herodian Palace. Exceptional detail to describe the place for Jewish and Gentile readers. (TLSB)

19:14 *day of Preparation.* Normally Friday was the day people prepared for the Sabbath. Here the meaning is Friday of Passover week. (CSB)

Friday, the day of preparing for the Sabbath or the Friday coinciding with the Passover. (TLSB)

about the sixth hour. About noon. Mk 15:25 says that Jesus was crucified at "the third hour." It is possible that Mark's Gospel contains a copyist's error, for the Greek numerals for three and six could be

confused. Or it may be that John was using Roman time, in which case the appearance before Pilate would have been at 6:00 A.M. and the crucifixion at 9:00 A.M. (the third hour according to Jewish reckoning; see Mk 15:33). For other time references see Mt 27:45–46; Mk 15:33–34; Lk 23:44. (CSB)

behold your king. John does not let us forget the sovereignty of Jesus. Pilate did not mean the expression seriously, but John did. (CSB)

19:15 *We have no king but Caesar.* More irony. They rejected any suggestion that they were rebels against Rome, but expressed the truth of their spiritual condition. (CSB)

Hypocritical claim that denied the kingship of God and the Messiah. (TLSB)

19:16 *over to them* – Roman crucifixion detachment that was ordered to put Jesus to death, to the satisfaction of the Jewish leaders. At this point, a second and more severe beating might have been administered to Jesus (cf. Mt. 27:27-31) as part of the torture leading to crucifixion. (TLSB)

19:1–16a Pilate succumbs to political pressure exerted by Jewish leaders and delivers Jesus over to death by crucifixion. All human beings, by virtue of their participation in Adam’s sin (Rm 5:12), bear responsibility for Christ’s death. Yet, take comfort in this truth: “He was wounded for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; ... with His stripes we are healed” (Is 53:5). • “O sacred Head, now wounded, ... I joy to call Thee mine.” Amen. (LSB 449:1) (TLSB)

The Crucifixion

So they took Jesus, 17 and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. 18 There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. 19 Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” 20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. 21 So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” 22 Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.” 23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, 24 so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, “They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.” So the soldiers did these things, 25 but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” 27 Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

19:17 *bearing his own cross.* A cross might be shaped like a T, an X, a Y, or an I, as well as like the traditional form. A condemned man would normally carry a beam of it to the place of execution. Somewhere along the way Simon of Cyrene took Jesus’ cross (Mk 15:21), probably because Jesus was weakened by the flogging. (CSB)

Jesus would have carried the horizontal crossbeam (*patibulum*) to the place of execution. The vertical beam was likely already erected at the site. (TLSB)

Golgotha. Aramaic for “the skull.” The name of the site is given in both Greek and Aramaic (“Calvary” is from the Latin with the same meaning). See note on Mk 15:22. (CSB)

Aram “skull” (Lat *calvaria*). Perhaps a hill that had a skull-like appearance. John Chrysostom: “Some say that Adam died there, and there lies; and that Jesus in this place where death had reigned, there also set up the trophy. For He went forth bearing the Cross as a trophy over the tyranny of death: and as conquerors do, so He bore upon His shoulders the symbol of victory” (*NPNF* 1 14:317). (TLSB)

19:18 *they crucified him*. See note on Mk 15:24. As with the scourging, John describes this horror with one Greek word. None of the Gospel writers dwells on the physical sufferings of Jesus. (CSB)

one on either side. Perhaps meant as a final insult, but it brings out the important truth that in his death Jesus was identified with sinners. (CSB)

19:19 *an inscription*. A placard stating the crime for which a man was executed was often fastened to his cross. (CSB)

Stated reason for crucifixion, intended to deter other would be criminals. (TLSB)

THE KING OF THE JEWS. Again the royalty theme. (CSB)

Taunt and expression of revenge aimed at Jewish leaders. Ironically, Pilate’s mockery served as a statement of fact (cf. v. 3). (TLSB)

19:20 *Aramaic*. One of the languages of the Jewish people at that time (along with Hebrew). (CSBB)

Aram, local language; Lat, official language; Gk, common language of business in the Roman Empire. Thus, everyone would know the crime of the crucified one. (TLSB)

Latin. The official language of Rome. (CSB)

Greek. The common language of communication throughout the empire. The threefold inscription may account for the slight differences in wording in the four Gospels. (CSB)

19:21 *this man said* - Suggests that Jesus “claimed” to be a king. But He was indeed the Messiah, the true King of Israel. (TLSB)

19:22 Pilate must have a sufficient reason for the execution, and he was not above mocking the Jews, but for John his insistence may also have served to underscore that Jesus’ kingship is final and unalterable. (CSB)

Pilate was in no mood to be conciliatory. (TLSB)

19:23–25 Both Jews and Gentiles attended Jesus’ crucifixion. (TLSB)

19:23 *garments* - Normally the victim would be led naked to the place of crucifixion. The fact that Jesus’ clothes were not taken from him until the point of crucifixion may suggest that he was allowed to retain some form of covering while on the cross itself (Brown 1994:2:953), perhaps out of deference to Jewish objections to nudity. Since, however, the normal undergarment was either a tunic or a loincloth, and Jesus’ tunic was taken from him (v. 23; Brown 1970:902), it is perhaps more likely he was naked. Early Christian tradition is divided on the subject (cf. Brown 1994:2:953). (Google - Bible Gateway)

divided them into four parts. Likely divided into belt, head covering, sandals, and outer garment. (TLSB)

one part for each. Suggests the execution squad consisted of four soldiers. (TLSB)

seamless. It could not be divided. (TLSB)

The happenings that transpired under the cross are here recorded by John; first of all what the soldiers did. These men had no personal interest in their victim; their crucifying Him was merely apart of the day's work. And they now proceeded to make use of the privilege accorded them by ancient custom. It seems that the criminals condemned to death by crucifixion were nailed to the cross entirely naked or nearly so, with a loin cloth at the most. So the soldiers took the clothes of Jesus, the upper garment, the girdle, the sandals, perhaps the linen shirt, and divided them into four parts, according to the number of men that had been detailed to tend to this work. (Kretzmann)

tunic. A type of shirt, reaching from the neck to the knees or ankles. (CSB)

It is this *undergarment* (*chiton*, the garment worn next to the skin) that is of most interest to John. It is seamless, and therefore to prevent its being torn the soldiers decide to draw lots for it (v. 24). The fact that it is seamless probably does not indicate that it was unusual or an item of luxury (Brown 1970:903). John's focus on this feature has led many to find symbolism in this garment (cf. Brown 1994:2:955-58). The two main proposals for John's detail have been that it is a symbol either of Jesus as high priest, since the high priest's *chiton* was seamless, according to Josephus (*Antiquities of the Jews* 3.161), or of the unity of the church (for example, Cyprian *On the Unity of the Church* 7), that is, the community as brought together by the death of Christ (Barrett 1978:550, 552). (Google - Bible Gateway)

seamless. Therefore too valuable to be cut up. (CSB)

But the inner garment, the tunic, remained after all the other articles of wearing apparel had been distributed. This they could not cut up without spoiling it, since it was seamless, unsewed, and woven in one piece from top to bottom, probably the work of loving hands. So the soldiers decided to dispose of it by casting lots; it was made the prize in a game of chance. And here again, as in so many items connected with the Passion-story, the game of chance was not the result of chance, but happened in accordance with the prophecy of the Psalmist, Ps. 22, 18. Of this very incident the Messiah, speaking through the mouth of David, a thousand years before, had said: They divided My garments among themselves, and for My tunic did they cast lots. Here it was plainly indicated, as Luther writes, that Christ had paid the penalty to the full. Everything that He had, His body, His life, His very clothes, He gave up for love of the sinners, in order to earn salvation for them. But the soldiers, gambling as they were under the very cross of their Savior, are a fitting picture of the frivolous world, frittering away its chances of salvation almost in the shadow of the cross which points upward. (Kretzmann)

19:24 In this case, the pagan soldiers unknowingly fulfilled the prophecy of Psalm 22, which graphically pictured the Messiah's suffering (v. 18). This amazing detail leaves no doubt about the connection with Jesus' crucifixion. (PBC)

Even the details of the crucifixion occurred according to God's plan foretold in Scripture. (TLSB)

cast lots - Use if dice (made of bone) to determine which member of the execution detail would take the tunic. (TLSB)

19:25 *sister* - Probably Salome.

The punctuation of the text may also be set to mention four women: the mother of Jesus, her sister Salome, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. (Kretzmann)

Salome (Hebrew: שלומית, *Shelomit*), was a follower of Jesus who appears briefly in the canonical gospels and in more detail in apocryphal writings. She is sometimes identified as the wife of Zebedee, the mother of James and John, two of the Apostles of Jesus, and sometimes also as the sister of Mary, mother of Jesus. (Google - Wikipedia)

Clopas. Mentioned only here in the NT.

Mary Magdalene. Appears in the crucifixion and resurrection story in all four Gospels, but apart from that we read of her only in Lk 8:2–3.(CSB)

19:26–27 *behold, your son! ... Behold, your mother!* Deeply concerned for His mother’s welfare, Jesus entrusted Mary to a disciple’s care. Note: Jesus’ brothers, who did not yet believe (7:5), were noticeably absent. Jesus reorders the household. (TLSB)

19:26 *saw his mother* – Mary, who years earlier pondered in her heart the wonders of Jesus’ birth, stood now with breaking heart, no doubt pondering again what was happening. (PBC)

We may readily imagine what these hours have meant to her, but her emotions may never be adequately described. Here the words of the aged Simeon in the temple have been fulfilled in their fullest sense: “A sword shall pierce through thy own soul also” (Luke 2:35). Johan Gerhard makes the touching comment “She sees Him suspended but cannot touch Him; sees Him nailed and may not loose Him; she sees Him dripping with blood, but cannot binds up His wounds; she hears His plaint: “I thirst,” and may not give Him to drink. As many torments in the body of Christ, so many wounds in the mother’s heart, as many piercing nails and burning stings in the flesh of the Son, so many shafts are forced through her virgin eyes into her very heart. (Ylvisaker)

disciple whom he loved. According to tradition, John the author of the Gospel. Not a boast that the Lord favored him, but a recognition that the Lord chose to love even him. (Note from 13:23 – TLBSB)

Only one of the disciples dared to approach the cross and reveal the ardor of his love and a courage sufficient to brave the scorn and derision which would be heaped upon those who had made common cause with the crucified One. (Ylvisaker)

woman – Jesus addresses her as at the wedding in Cana: “Woman.” Then He stood at the *beginning* of His ministry, now He is about to bring it to a close through His death; then He took the first step to sever the bonds of union with His mother, now they are finally and permanently broken. The material relation must have no voice in the affairs pertaining to His calling. In the case of Mary, this filial word of release was necessary from one point of view, particularly. It was important that she be absolved henceforth from her connection with Him according to the flesh, in order that she might enter fully into the communion which knoweth not Christ after the flesh (2 Cor 5:16) and in which she shall be united with Him forever as her Savior. It is therefore not a feeling of harshness nor yet a lack of filial piety which brings to His divine lips the word “woman,” but His redemptive love. He had not forgotten what she had been, He knew full well the price of her tears. He, the merciful High Priest, who is compassionate with our weakness, could sense the language of the bleeding heart, and He could not leave her unprotected when He is taken away. (Ylvisaker)

behold your son – In the midst of His unimaginable suffering, Jesus did amazing thing. There on the spot He made sure His mother would be taken care of after He had gone. (PBC)

Can anyone read this part of John's account without a sense of emotion, maybe even a tear? It is an incredible episode that touches our hearts. It is much more than that, however. God's own Son, as He was giving up His life to pay for our sins, was also still perfectly fulfilling God's Law in our stead. He honored His mother in full obedience to the fourth Commandment. He lived in perfect righteousness and died as the unblemished sacrifice. Now the Father counts Jesus' righteousness as our own and accepts Jesus' sacrifice as satisfaction for His justice. (PBC)

19:27 *took her into his own home.* And so took responsibility for her. It may be that Jesus' brothers still did not believe in him (see 7:5). (CSB)

It literally means "into his own things." (TLSB)

Jesus' brothers, who did not yet believe (7:5), were noticeably absent. Jesus reorders the household. (TLSB)

Notes from Matthew 12:46-50 – **12:46** *mother and brothers.* See note on Lk 8:19 – (The family, thinking he was "out of his mind," probably wanted to get him away from his heavy schedule. *brothers.* Did not believe in Jesus at this time (Jn 7:5). Various interpretations concerning their relationship to Jesus arose in the early church: They were sons of Joseph by a previous marriage (according to Epiphanius) or were cousins (said Jerome). The most natural conclusion (suggested by Helvidius) is that they were the sons of Joseph and Mary, younger half brothers of Jesus. Four of these brothers are named in Mk 6:3, where sisters are also mentioned. Since Joseph is not mentioned here, it is likely that he had died.) (CC)

Of all human relationships, none can be as important as the family relationship to Jesus that comes through being His disciple. It is not the ambivalent crowds nor relatives according natural relationship to Him – His brothers with whom He was raised in Nazareth and even His own mother, who gave birth to Him – but only and all those who are His disciples who are members of His family. (CC)

12:50 *whoever does the will of my Father.* Membership in God's spiritual family, evidenced by obedience to him, is more important than membership in our human families. (CSB)

This phrase should be understood holistically, in reference to the life of discipleship. In the first place, Jesus' disciples do the will of the Father when they acknowledge who Jesus is: the Lord of the Sabbath, the one who is greater than the temple, and the one in whom God's Spirit works now and on the Last Day. In the second place and consequently, Jesus' disciples do the will of the Father by following this one into a life of light shining and salt-spreading (5:29, 40). (CC)

Christ does not intend His disciples to reject their natural family relations or neglect the duties * thereof, but to place them (and all things) in their proper perspective. (CC)

Galatians 6:10 – Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

19:16b–27 As He is crucified on the Place of a Skull near Jerusalem, Jesus entrusts His mother to John's care. Though this is a special example of Jesus' love, God calls all believers together in an everlasting bond of mutual responsibility and love—including care for parents. Like Mary and John, we also become members of Jesus' family by faith. From the cross, Jesus reigned with love for the world; now He reigns in the hearts of those who love Him. • Dear Lord, let Your cross bring comfort and peace to me and my family. Amen. (TLSB)

The Death of Jesus

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.” 29 A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

19:28 after – Providing for Mary was not the last work Jesus had to do to fulfill the Scriptures. More than three hours had passed since the word to Mary and to John had been spoken, during which time the hardest part of Jesus’ task was accomplished. (Lenski)

to fulfill Scripture – This phrase used only here and means something far grander, namely that the entire Scriptures in all that they present concerning the earthly work of Jesus have now been turned into actuality, the work mapped out by Scripture is now a work actually accomplished. (Lenski)

I thirst. May refer to Ps 69:21 (cf. Ps 22:15). (CSB)

Thirst was one of the excruciating agonies of the crucified. Jesus must have thirsted long before Golgotha was reached, and this cry of His body for moisture to slake its burning must have become terribly intensified after He hung upon the cross. (Lenski)

Beyond the physical thirst caused by dehydration, Jesus sought to fulfill His Father’s plan foretold in Scripture. (TLSB)

CSB Note on Psalm 69:21 – *gall in my food ... vinegar for my thirst.* Vivid metaphors for the bitter scorn they made him eat and drink when his whole being craved for the nourishment and refreshment of comfort. The authors of the Gospels, especially Matthew, suggest that the suffering expressed in this verse foreshadowed Christ’s suffering on the cross (see Mt 27:34, 48; Mk 15:23, 36; Lk 23:36; Jn 19:29).

When Jesus says on the cross that He thirsts, this word is primarily an expression of bodily or physical thirst, but it is no less indicative of His spiritual thirst, the thirst for communion with His God, for a return to the glory which was His in the presence of God before the foundation of the world was laid. As Gerhard says, He thirsts after our salvation, after our conversion, after our love, or as it is expressed by Gregory of Nazianzus: He thirsts to awaken and to find in us a holy spiritual, heavenly thirst. In the most profound sense, then, this word also points upward to the Father. (Ylvisaker)

Luke 16:19-31 (24) – “So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue because I am in agony in this fire.’” Jesus had accomplished everything God sent Him to do, including caring for His mother. He knew the moment had arrived for Him to die. He spoke once more, a single word in the Greek: “I am thirsty.” (PBC)

We can be sure He was thirsty, thirstier than any of us have ever experienced or could imagine. Unquenchable thirst was one of the agonies that accompanied crucifixion. Still, it wasn’t the thirst itself that led Him to speak. He did nothing that would have made His sacrifice less than voluntary, less than complete. He spoke in order, again to fulfill the Scriptures (Psalm 69:21; 22:15). (PBC)

19:29 *sour wine.* Equivalent to cheap wine, the drink of ordinary people. (CSB)

a sponge. A useful way of giving drink to one on a cross, and may indicate forethought and compassion on someone’s part. (CSB)

hyssop. The name given to a number of plants. (CSB)

Common bushy plant, used to sprinkle blood at the Passover (Ex. 12:22). Here its stalk was used to lift a small a sponge soaked with sour wine. (TLSB)

19:30 *It is finished*. Apparently the loud cry of Mt 27:50; Mk 15:37. Jesus died as a victor and had completed what he came to do. (CSB)

Literary and theological climax of Jn. Jesus' work of atonement was finished, or accomplished. (TLSB)

Tetelestai is the perfect of a completed state and denotes an action brought to its termination, it is like a line that ends in a period. Jesus speaks this word to His Father. He makes His report to the Father who sent Him. Uttered in a loud voice, it is also intended for all men to hear. Recorded now in Scripture, it stills rings out to all the world. (Lenski)

It sounds almost like a word of resignation, of relief, perhaps, that the suffering was coming to an end. But it had to be more than that. Remember how John had reminded us that this was Jesus' hour, that Jesus went to the cross voluntarily, that Jesus was there to complete God's plan of salvation. Jesus was not saying that the wicked plot against Him was finished. He was declaring that His task as the one and only Son of the Heavenly Father was finished. (PBC)

This word does not imply that His physical pain is now at an end, but it is the almighty voice of victory which He now causes to reverberate into the very depths of hell and into heaven itself, to wit, that the task given Him by the Father is now accomplished. The battle has been waged for all time, and the serpent's head had been crushed. The prince of hell who caused His agony and His death had been deprived of his power and his dominion through this darkest of all dark deeds. Redemption has been effected, the gates of paradise are opened wide, the wall of separation between God and us has been removed, righteousness has been prepared, all is in readiness. Besser's comment is to the point: The Savior turned His gaze from the first sinner to the last, and behold, He saw no one for whose guilt He had not atoned, no one for whom He had not won forgiveness and peace. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Heb 10:14) The entire Gospel in the OT and NT is a further development and exposition of this word, "finished," It is the fundamental concept of every Christian dogma and shall voice their truths in the ages to come. It is a word which fills the devil with dismay and which attunes the harps and the hearts of the heaven-dwellers in their glorious song of praise (Lohe). (Ylvisaker)

gave up his spirit. An unusual way of describing death, perhaps suggesting an act of will. (CSB)

Literally, "gave up the spirit." No one could take His life from Him (10:18). To this end, Jesus was in control and was decisively giving Himself up for us sinners. "Although the work is done and the forgiveness of sins is secured by the cross, it cannot come to us in any other way than through Word. How would we know about it otherwise, that such a thing was accomplished or was to be given to us, unless it were presented by preaching or the oral Word?" (LC V 31) (TLSB)

The spirit of Jesus did not enter Sheol or hades, an intermediate place between heaven and hell, the fabled place of the dead, and remain there until the resurrection. Jesus Himself tells us that His spirit went into His Father's hands, and this is heaven. John 17:5 calls it the glory which the Son had from eternity. (Lenski)

This expression seems to put the exclamation point on the purposefulness of Jesus' death. (PBC)

19:28–30 Jesus the Christ dies, finishing the work of salvation that His Father sent Him to accomplish. Death is not merely a natural process but is God’s just punishment for sin (Rm 6:23). However, Jesus died not because He sinned but because He came to bear sin’s punishment for us. • Jesus, priceless treasure and trusted friend, thank You for bearing my cross and preparing for me a new home. Amen. (TLSB)

Jesus' Side Is Pierced

31 Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. **32** So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. **33** But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. **34** But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. **35** He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. **36** For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken.” **37** And again another Scripture says, “They will look on him whom they have pierced.”

19:31 *Sabbath was a high day*. The Sabbath that fell at Passover time. The Passover meal had been eaten on Thursday evening, the day of Preparation was Friday, and the Sabbath came on Saturday. (CSB)

legs might be broken. To hasten death, because the victim then could not put any weight on his legs and breathing would be difficult. (CSB)

Breaking the shinbones would hasten death, since the victim could no longer hold himself up to avoid fatigue and eventual asphyxiation. (TLSB)

19:34 *lance* - Part of a Roman soldier’s weaponry. (TLSB)

pierced Jesus’ side. Probably to make doubly sure that Jesus was dead, but perhaps simply an act of brutality (see v. 37; Isa 53:5; Zec 12:10; cf. Ps 22:16). (CSB)

The spear pierced the pleural cavity near the heart and opened a stream of blood mingled with water. This detail establishes that Jesus’ death was real. Some Church Fathers saw symbolism here pointing to the Sacrament. Augustine: “From (Jesus’ side) have flowed forth the sacraments of the Church, without which there is no entrance to the life which is the true life” (NPNF1 7:434). (TLSB)

blood and water. The result of the spear piercing the pericardium (the sac that surrounds the heart) and the heart itself. (CSB)

19:35 *he who saw it*. Either John himself or someone he regarded as reliable. Obviously he considered the incident important, and comments that it was well attested. (CSB)

testimony – Because he was an eyewitness of the crucifixion. (TLSB)

may also believe - First direct address to the hearers of the Gospel, intended to bring them to faith. (TLSB)

19:36–37 *Scripture*. Again John observes God’s overruling in the fulfillment of Scripture. It was extraordinary that Jesus was the only one of the three whose legs were not broken and that he suffered an unusual spear thrust that did not break a bone. (CSB)

19:36 Likely an illusion to the Passover. The Passover victim's bones were not to be broken. Christ Himself thus became the Passover Lamb. (TLSB)

19:37 The One lifted up and pierced was now looked upon for salvation (3:14; Nu. 21:8-9; Is. 53:5). (TLSB)

19:31–37 John invites us to look on Jesus, the crucified “Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (1:29). Enemies of the cross interpret Jesus' death as disgrace, not glory. Yet, hidden beneath the outward “mask” of Jesus' suffering and death, there stands the work of our redemption, foretold in the OT. • Through the witness of Your blessed apostles, Lord Jesus, draw many to Your saving grace. Amen. (TLSB)

Jesus Is Buried

38 After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. 39 Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. 40 So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. 41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. 42 So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

19:38 *Joseph.* A rich disciple (Mt 27:57), and a member of the Sanhedrin who had not agreed to Jesus' condemnation (Lk 23:51). (CSB)

Wealthy member of the Council. (TLSB)

Arimathea. Possibly Ramah. (TLSB)

secretly. It would have been hard for a member of the Sanhedrin to support Jesus' cause openly. Jesus' closest followers all ran away (Mk 14:50), and it was left to Joseph and Nicodemus to provide for his burial. (CSB)

Joseph honored Jesus in death, though he was afraid to confess Him in life (cf 12:42–43). Since Joseph was not overtly tied to Jesus' circle, he had access to Jesus' body, which Pilate would not likely have released to a known disciple. (TLSB)

asked Pilate's permission. Otherwise people could take away their crucified friends before they died and revive them. (CSB)

19:39 *Nicodemus.* John alone tells us that he joined Joseph in the burial. (CSB)

myrrh and aloes - Myrrh, a fragrant resin turned into a powder by crushing, was added to the aloes, a powder of crushed sandalwood. (TLSB)

seventy-five pounds. A very large amount, such as was used in royal burials (cf. 2Ch 16:14). (CSB)

Large amount, but not uncommon for royal burials. Spices were used not to embalm but to mask the smell of decay - though unnecessary in this case because of God's intervention (cf. Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:31). (TLSB)

19:40 *linen clothes*. Thin strips like bandages. There was also a shroud, a large sheet (Mt 27:59; Mk 15:46; Lk 23:53). (CSB)

spices. Placed in the linen wrapping. (TLSB)

19:41 *garden* - Orchard or cultivated area. (TLSB)

a new tomb. Joseph's own tomb (Mt 27:60). (CSB)

No doubt a sign of special honor, which may also signal a new beginning. (TLSB)

19:42 *close at hand*. Haste was necessary, since it was near sunset, when the Sabbath would start and no work could be done. (CSB)

A speedy burial was necessary since the Sabbath began at sundown. Tomb was located outside the walls of the city in AD 33 (cf Heb 13:12) (TLSB)

19:38–42 Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, secretly Jesus' disciples for fear of the Jews, honor Jesus by attending to His burial. That the Son of God should become a corpse and be entombed appears offensive and even scandalous to human reason. But Jesus' burial proclaims the depth of Christ's utter humiliation for the sake of our salvation. • Dear Lord, You became one with us in death that we may look to You for life. Amen. (TLSB)