

Lesson 24

The Death and Burial of Jesus

Luke 23

Jesus' First Trial before Pilate (23:1-5)

After the Jewish leaders concluded their early morning confirmation of Jesus' death sentence, they took Him to Pilate early that Friday morning. They accused Jesus of (1) subverting the nation, (2) refus-

Hence, he reached the verdict, "I find no fault in this man" (23:4). The Jewish leaders were unwilling to accept this verdict. From their reply, Pilate learned that Jesus was from Galilee and under Herod's jurisdiction. Consequently, he sent Jesus to Herod.



Located near the grounds of Gordon's Calvary, this rock escarpment looks like a skull. Though not generally thought to be the location where Jesus was crucified, this gives one some idea of what existed in the place where He was crucified—a rock ledge resembling a human skull.

ing to pay tribute to Caesar, and (3) treason because He claimed to be a king (23:2). When Pilate interrogated Jesus on these charges, He learned that Jesus' kingdom was no rival to that of Caesar (cf. John 18:33-38).

Jesus' Trial before Herod (23:6-12)

Herod Antipas was in Jerusalem to participate in the celebration of the Passover. He was the Herod who slew John the Baptist after John rebuked

him for taking his brother's wife. His father was Herod the Great who tried to slay the infant Jesus at Bethlehem. Jesus' name had been a household word to Herod; consequently, he was delighted to see Jesus, hoping to witness some miracle from Him. When Herod interrogated Jesus, the Lord did not answer him at all (23:9). The chief priests and scribes accused Jesus of crimes worthy of death. Although Herod found Him guilty of nothing worthy of death (23:15), he and his soldiers treated Jesus with contempt and mocked Him. Then he returned Jesus to Pilate.

Jesus' Second Trial before Pilate (23:13-25)

When Jesus was returned to Pilate, the governor again declared Him innocent of any crimes and attempted to release Him after having Him scourged (23:13-16). Pilate had a custom of releasing one prisoner to the Jews during the feast (cf. John 18:39). Perceiving that the Jewish leaders had delivered Jesus to him because of envy (Mark 15:10), he gave the multitude a choice between Pilate and Barabbas, a prisoner who was guilty of insurrection, murder (Mark 15:7), and theft (Matt. 27:38). The Jewish leaders stirred the multitude to request the release of Barabbas (Matt. 27:20) and to demand that Jesus be crucified. When the crowd asked for the crucifixion of Jesus, Pilate asked, "Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise Him, and let Him go" (23:22). The Jews protested so much that Pilate washed his hands with water and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous Man: see ye to it" (Matt. 27:24). Then he released Jesus to the Jews in order that they might crucify Him.

Prior to crucifying Jesus, the soldiers scourged Him (John 19:1). They

stripped off His garments, put a scarlet robe on Him, placed a crown of thorns on His head, put a reed in His right hand, and mocked Jesus saying, "Hail, king of the Jews." They spat on Him and smote Him on the head with the reed (cf. Matt. 27:27-30). This second trial was nearing its end at 6:00 a.m. (John 19:14).

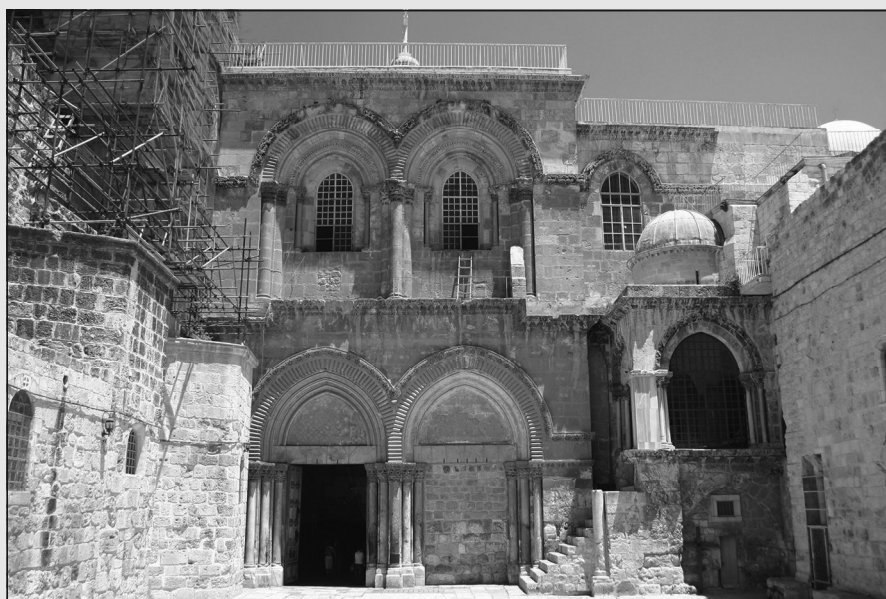
The Crucifixion (23:26-43)

After Pilate released Jesus, the Jewish authorities and the Roman soldiers took Jesus outside the city to a place called Calvary to crucify Him. As they led Him out, He stumbled beneath the weight of the cross and Simon of Cyrene was compelled to carry His cross for Him (Luke 23:26).

A great company of people followed Jesus to the place of crucifixion. They "bewailed and lamented Him." Jesus told these women not to weep for Him but for themselves. He then foretold the time, during the destruction of Jerusalem, when they would consider one blessed who had no children. They would pray for the mountains to cover him. He closed this by saying, "For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" (23:31). The Romans took the innocent Jesus and crucified Him; how much more suffering would they inflict on the guilty Jewish nation which rebelled against the Romans!

Two thieves were taken with Jesus to be crucified with Him. Jesus was crucified between the two thieves at Calvary. The crucifixion began at 9:00 a.m. (Mark 15:25). While they were crucifying Him, Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). The soldiers cast lots for His garments.

The crowd which gathered to watch Jesus die mocked and derided Jesus (Luke 23:35). They offered



This is the main entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem which was built over the place where Jesus was crucified. Since the third century, men have thought that this is the location where the crucifixion and subsequent burial of Jesus occurred. There are no geographical or historical reasons to doubt this claim.

Him vinegar to drink. A superscription was placed over His head which read, "This is the King of the Jews."

The two thieves joined in mocking Jesus (Matt. 27:44). Later, one of them felt remorse for his mockery and rebuked the other for mocking and deriding Jesus (Luke 23:40-41). Then, he turned to Jesus saying, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" (23:42). Jesus replied, "Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise."

Jesus' Death (23:44-49)

While Jesus was hanging on the cross, darkness came over the land from noon until 3:00 p.m. (23:44). When Jesus died, the veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom (23:45). At His death, Jesus cried to the Father, "Father, into thy hands I commend My spirit" (23:46).

The centurion in charge of the soldiers who crucified Jesus was moved by the events he witnessed to say, "Certainly this was a righteous Man" (23:47).

The people who witnessed Jesus' crucifixion mourned His death. The women who had followed Jesus from Galilee stood afar off and watched what happened.

Jesus' Burial (23:50-56)

Joseph of Arimathea, one of the members of the Jewish Sanhedrin, went to Pilate to request Jesus' body so he could bury it. Joseph had not consented to the Sanhedrin's decision to put Jesus to death. He was a good and righteous man who lived in expectation of the coming of the promised kingdom. Having received permission to bury Jesus' body, Joseph took the body from the cross, wrapped it in linen and placed it in his newly hewn sepulchre. The women followed to watch where Jesus' body was laid and then returned to their home to prepare spices for His body.

Friday evening drew to a close. Jesus' body lay dead. The women were making preparations to anoint His body with spices after the Sabbath was ended.

Questions

1. List the charges made against Jesus before Pilate (23:2). _____

2. From John 18:33-36, explain why Pilate knew Jesus was not guilty of treason and insurrection. _____

3. List the verses in which the civil authorities declared Jesus innocent. _____

4. Why would Herod have been glad to see Jesus (23:8)? _____

5. List the abusive treatment suffered by Jesus prior to His crucifixion. _____

6. List Pilate's efforts to release Jesus. _____

7. Of what crimes was Barabbas guilty (23:25)? _____
8. Why did Pilate allow Jesus to be crucified? _____

9. Why did Jesus tell the Jewish women not to weep for Him (23:28)? _____

10. In what sense did the Jews not know what they were doing when they crucified Jesus (23:34)? _____

11. When and how did God answer Jesus' prayer to forgive these men (23:34)? _____

12. What superscription was written over Jesus' head (23:38)? _____

13. What evidences exist to show that the thief on the cross had:
 - a. Faith? _____
 - b. Repentance? _____
14. What miracles accompanied the death of Jesus (23:44-45)? _____

15. What significance is attached to the tearing of the veil of the temple (cf. Heb. 9:8)? _____

16. What impact did Jesus' death have on the Roman centurion (22:47)? _____

17. Who was Joseph of Arimathaea? _____
18. Who helped Joseph bury Jesus (John 19:39)? _____
19. Prepare a chronology of the events beginning at Jesus' arrest on Thursday night and ending with His death on Friday afternoon. _____

Answering Denominational Error

1. Some who teach that one can be saved without water baptism use the thief on the cross as proof. Please answer these questions about Him.
- a. Why was Abraham saved without baptism? _____
- b. Why could the thief be saved without believing Jesus was raised from the dead? _____

- c. Do we know that the thief was *not* baptized? _____
2. Some denominational folks deny that man lives beyond the death of the body. Where did the thief go at His death? _____
