

Good Friday

Intro

Good Friday is a solemn day for Christians around the world, as it marks the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The events leading up to his death are recorded in the Bible, and they reveal a disturbing display of cruelty and mockery towards Jesus. In this lesson, we will examine one of the darkest moments in human history, as we look at passages in John 19 and Matthew 27 that describes the brutal flogging of Jesus, the mocking of the soldiers, and his journey to the cross. We will also explore the significance of Jesus' crucifixion and reflect on what it means for us today.

Jesus is Mocked

John 19 pg. 528

1 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."

- Flogging in the first century was brutal and excruciatingly painful
- The soldier struck Jesus with the crown of thorns on his head
- They also mock him but putting a purple robe on him
- Pilate doesn't find Jesus is deserving of death but relents to the crowds demand

Matthew 27 pg. 487

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. 28 And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, 29 and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 30 And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. 31 And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.

- Putting this part of the story with the account from John we see more detail in the way they mocked Jesus
- They also struck Jesus on the head with a stick after the crown of thorns was placed there
- Additionally they would have taken off his shirt to flog him, then they put the purple robe and crown on him, then they took the purple robe off, tearing any dried blood from the flogging, put his clothes back on him and laid the cross beam on his torn back.

Carries His Cross

Matthew 27

32 As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross.

- Apparently, the weight of the cross and the injuries Jesus sustained were too much for Jesus to physically be able to carry the cross so Simon was compelled by law to carry it for him.

The Crucifixion

John 19

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.

- They would have stripped Jesus of his cloak, again aggravating the injuries on his back
- They then drove nails through his hands and feet to secure him to the cross
- The mockery continued through the inscription and gambling for his clothes
- All of this happened with His mother, His aunt, Mary Magdalene, and at least one of his disciples

Luke 23

32 Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. 33 And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. 34 And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. 35 And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" 36 The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine 37 and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" 38 There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

- Jesus was mocked continually while on the cross, the irony is that he could have saved himself, yet He chose to allow this to continue
- More than that, his response is asking God to forgive them for what they were doing to Him

Jesus Dies

Matthew 27

45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” 47 And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, “This man is calling Elijah.” 48 And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. 49 But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.” 50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. 51 And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. 52 The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, 53 and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. 54 When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

- When it gets dark, Jesus responds by asking God why he has forsaken Him. Many point to this being the point that Jesus had fully taken on the sin of the world, literally and figuratively.
 - At this, though he was God’s son, it seems that for the first and only time in eternity, Jesus was out of fellowship with God.
- When Jesus dies, some crazy stuff happened, the curtain in the temple was torn, there was an earthquake, and dead people walked into the city.
 - The curtain is particularly important because it symbolized that God’s spirit had left their midst. The Holy Spirit would return at Pentecost, but from this point until Jesus came back to life, there was no physical or spiritual presence of God on the Earth.

John 19

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.

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.”

- Jesus’ last words were really a single word, “tetelestai”. This Greek word is very interesting because it is a perfect tense verb, meaning the action, the finished work on the cross, is done in the past, present, and future.
- After saying this he “gave up his spirit” further showing He was willingly enduring the cross and His death.
- After all of the crazy things, they make sure Jesus is dead by piercing him with a spear. The detail of blood and water indicate the wound was deep and likely pierced His heart and or lungs.
- The other two criminals who were clearly still alive had their legs broken to speed up the process

Jesus is Buried

Matthew 27

57 When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. 58 He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. 59 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud 60 and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. 61 Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

- Jesus had died and was placed into a borrowed tomb.
- The Mary's who had near the whole time he was on the cross followed His body to know where the tomb was so they could finish the burial preparations.

Conclusion

Jesus died one of the most brutal deaths imaginable. This Jesus, who had healed the sick, deaf, and blind, who had raised Lazarus from the dead, who had taught powerfully about God and loving your neighbor was brutally mocked, tortured, and killed. For His mother, the 11 remaining disciples (Judas had hung himself at this point), and those who had faithfully followed Him, this was a gut wrenching and hopeless experience. They had seen Him heal that lame and the sick with a word or a touch, some had even seen Him raise the dead simply by calling them to wake up. However, who would touch Him to heal his wounds? Who would call His name to wake Him from grave. Their teacher, their savior, their friend, their son, was dead and there was nothing anyone could do to change that.

Though we know the rest of the story its important to reflect on the hopelessness of the situation and the timing of that reality. Just as with Lazarus it was a moment that people must have been thinking, "God, if you had been here..." It is equally important to see this an accurate picture of the spiritual consequences of sin and the real lack of hope apart from God. We know Sunday is coming, but let us not forget Friday, it was a brutal and bloody Friday, yet because we know and have seen how God can breath life into hopeless situations we call it a Good Friday.

Small Group Questions

- How does the account of Jesus being mocked and tortured make you feel?
- Why do you think the soldiers' mocked Jesus?
- Why do you think Pilate found no guilt in Jesus but still allowed him to be crucified?
- What does Jesus' willingness to suffer say about His mission and purpose?
- Why do you think the soldiers gambled for Jesus' clothes? What significance does this have?
- How does Jesus' forgiveness of his torturers and executioners challenge us to forgive those who wrong us?
- Why do you think the people watching the crucifixion were mocking Jesus?
- How would you have reacted if you were in Mary's position, watching your son being crucified?
- What can we learn about God from Jesus' willingness to endure such suffering and humiliation for our sake?
- What do the events of Good Friday teach us about the cost of sin and reality of hopelessness apart from God?