

Rev. Lex DeLong / General Adult

True Equity and the Greatest Love / Crucifixion / John 19:1–42

Our task is to accept Jesus Christ (cf. 1 John 1:2–3; 2:23; 4:2, 14–15) and follow his model.... (John 13:34–35; 15:12; 1 John 3:11; 4:7–9, 16–21).

Notes

04/13 John 19:1–42, "The Crown, the Crucifixion, the Care," Subtitle: Christ's Finished Work, Scripture: Luke 23:26–32 (Scripture reader alone)

Whose Crown Should You Seek? (John 19:1–15)

The Romans devised three forms or patterns of bodily whipping or scourging in their repertoire of corporal punishments. The least severe was **fustiagatio**, which was a lashing for less serious offenses. This lashing was usually accompanied by a stern warning against any repetition of such an offense.

A more serious stage was **flagellatio**, which was a flogging or beating that was severe and was intended to be sufficiently punitive to bring the victim into a state of full submission without execution, something like the so-called thirty-nine stripes.

The third and most severe form of this type of punishment was **verberatio**, which was extremely brutal. In this form of punishment the victim was forcefully brutalized with rods or whips that frequently contained leather thongs fitted with spikes, bones, or scraps of metal. When used, these whips tore pieces of flesh from the victim's body. Sometimes a recipient of such cruel punishment actually died while tied to the flogging block, and then the corpse was simply hung on the cross. The severity of such a beating depended on the ruthlessness or blood thirstiness of the officer in charge. Whether such a victim lived or died at the block mattered little since death was usually the expected end of this type of punishment process.

Generally, Roman citizens were not subject to whippings without a formal trial according to strict judicial rules of order (cf. Acts 16:37–39), and in capital cases citizens were executed by beheading and not by crucifixion.[1]

75 For a fuller description of such corporal punishments based on Justinian's code see Sherwin-White, Roman Society, 26–28. For the code of Justinian see T. Mommsen, ed., The Digest of Justinian (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1985), at 40.19.7.

[1]Gerald L. Borchert, John 12–21, vol. 25B, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman

Whose Cross is Worth Accepting? (John 19:16-30)

The designation the “sixth” hour was absolutely crucial for John because this was the time on the Day of Preparation when the Jews began their preparations for Passover in earnest. Any leaven in the house had to be collected and burned; labor stopped at this time, and the major task of slaughtering the lambs in preparation for the Passover meal began.¹¹⁰ This would be an appropriate general time designation for the sentencing of the Passover Lamb in keeping with the way John has presented his major theme of the Lamb of God and Passover throughout his Gospel (cf. 1:29; etc.). The new Exodus, God’s deliverance, was about to begin. The sacrificial lamb was being sentenced.[1]

¹¹⁰ See, for example, the details concerning those matters in J. Bonsirven, “*Hora Talmudica: La notion chronologique de Jean 19, 14 aurait-elle un sens symbolique?*” *Bib* 33 (1952): 511–15; cf. the *Mishnah, Peshah*, 1.4; 4.1–5.

[1] Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12–21*, vol. 25B, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002), 258.

What Care Should You Take? (John 19:31-42)

According to the comments of Ulpian and the code of Justinian, the bodies of those executed by the state were to be released to relatives or others who were willing to provide them with burial. ¹⁸⁰ Brown indicates that such leniency can be traced back via Ulpian to Augustus, but the major exception was in the case of *maiestas* or treason. ¹⁸¹ The reason for that rule was obviously because treason was regarded as a supremely odious crime against the state by the Roman curia. The probability is that Jesus was crucified for *maiestas*, but, since it was a trumped-up charge, Pilate apparently did not think that rule would apply.[1]

¹⁸⁰ For the applicable legal prescriptions see *The Digest of Justinian*, ed. T. Mommsen (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1985), 48.24. See also T. Mommsen, *Römisches Strafrecht* (Leipzig: Duncker, 1899), 986–90 for his

comments on these prescriptions.

181 R. Brown sees the literal view going back through Ulpian to Augustus in *Vita Sua*, Book 10 (*The Death of the Messiah*, 2.1207).

[1]Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12–21*, vol. 25B, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002), 280.

Mark refers to the tomb as one that was “cut out of rock” (Mark 15:46). Matthew (27:60) and John (19:41) indicate that it was a new tomb, and Luke (23:53) states that no one had been buried in it. Matthew (27:60) adds that it was Joseph’s own tomb. To understand these statements, particularly that of Luke, one must realize that tombs were valuable pieces of property and were used repeatedly by families. A person was placed on a burial slab in the tomb until the flesh decomposed, then the bones were collected and put in an ossuary (a small box), which was kept in another part of the tomb. Then the burial slab could be reused. According to Matthew’s account the tomb was apparently a new tomb for Joseph and his family.[1]

[1]Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12–21*, vol. 25B, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002), 282–283.

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[1]Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12–21*, vol. 25B, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2002), 285.

Join us in person this Sunday at 10:30 as we follow the steps of Jesus through the streets, the torture, the crucifixion, and the end that was truly just the beginning, or follow along online Live.