



28. The Crucifixion and Burial

Mark 15:20b–47; Matthew 27:31b–66;
Luke 23:26–56; John 19:17b–42

“And this is the gospel, the glad tidings, which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us—That he came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness; That through him all might be saved whom the Father had put into his power and made by him.” (D&C 76:40-42)

On the Way to Calvary

Mark 15:20b–21; Matt 27:31b–32; Luke 23:26–32; John 19:16b–17a

- Simon of Cyrene bears the Cross (Mark 15:21; Matt 27:32; Luke 23:26)
 - *father of Alexander and Rufus* in Mark
 - These may have been people familiar to Mark’s Rome congregation
- **Jesus Bears His Own Cross (John 19:17a)**
 - *Typical of the Johannine Jesus*
- The Lamenting Daughters of Jerusalem (Luke 23:27–31)
 - Follows with a prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem
- Two Criminals Led Out with Christ (Luke 23:32)
 - In Luke they are simply “malefactors” (*kakourgoi* or “evildoers”)
 - In Matt and Mark they are later identified specifically as “bandits” or “insurrectionists” (*lēstas*), suggesting political revolutionaries in contrast to Christ, whose kingdom is not of this world

At Calvary

Mark 15:22–28; Matt 27:33–38; Luke 23:33–34, 38; John 19:17b–24

- **Golgotha, “The Place of the Skull,” or Calvary** (Mark 15:22; Matt 27:33; Luke 23:33a; John 19:17b)
- **Jesus Refuses Wine and Myrrh** – cf. Prov.31:6 (Mark 15:23; Matt 27:34)
- **Jesus’ Clothing divided** – cf. Ps. 22:18 (Mark 15:24; Matt 27:35b–36; Luke 23: 23:34b; John 19:23–24)
 - **Jesus’ tunic/undergarment not rent** (John 19:23b–24)
- **Jesus Crucified** – **Mark’s Third Hour, 9:00 a.m.** (Mark 15:25; Matt 27:35a; Luke 23:33b); **John’s Sixth Hour, 12:00 noon** (John 19:18a)
 - **Mark’s use of hours – third, sixth, ninth – may represent liturgical prayer times in the early church**
 - Matt and Luke follow somewhat, but **John does not, perhaps imagining a correlation with the slaughtering of the paschal lambs at noon**
- **Jesus Prays for Forgiveness for Those Crucifying Him** (Luke 23:34a)
 - **Typical of Luke’s “benevolent theology”**
- **The Superscription “King of the Jews”** [trilingual in Luke] (Mark 15:26; Matt 27:37; Luke 23:38; John 19:19–20)
 - **Chief Priests Fail to Have Pilate Change the Title** (John 19:21–22)
- **Crucified Between Two Bandits** (Mark 15:27–28; Matt 27:38; John 19:18b [two “others”])

12/1/2008

28. Crucifixion and Burial

3

Activities at the Cross

Mark 15:29–32; Matt 27:39–44; Luke 23:35–43; John 19:25–27

- **First Mockery** – **those passing by tell** Jesus to “save yourself” (Mark 15:29–30; Matt 27:39–40; Luke 23:35)
- **Second Mockery** – **chief priests and scribes**, “he saved others, come down and we will believe (Mark 15:31–32; Matt 27:41–43)
 - **Soldiers mock Jesus**, “If you are the King of the Jews,” and offer him sour wine (Luke 23:36–37)
- **Third Mockery** – **Bandit(s)** deride him the same way (Matt 27:44; Luke 23:39)
 - **“Salvation” of the Believing Bandit** (Luke 23:40–43): paradise = JST “world of spirits”
- **Women at the Foot of the Cross** (John 19:25)
 - **How many?** Probably four: two named (**Mary the wife of Cleophas and Mary Magdalene**) and two unnamed (**mother of Jesus and her sister [Salome, mother of James and John]**)
- **Jesus’ Mother Commended to the Beloved Disciple** (John 19:26–27)
 - **These were kept anonymous for literary and perhaps theological reason**
 - **If the disciples becomes Mary’s son then he is in Jesus’ family – we can all be the disciples at the foot of the cross!**



12/1/2008

28. Crucifixion and Burial

4

Last Moments

Mark 15:33–37; Matt 27:45–50; Luke 23:44–46; John 19:28–30

- Darkness from the Sixth to the Ninth Hour, approximately 12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m. (Mark 15:33; Matt 27:45; Luke 23:44–45a)
 - “Then the heavens grew black. Darkness covered the land for the space of three hours, as it did among the Nephites. There was a mighty storm, as though the very God of Nature was in agony. And truly he was, for while he was hanging on the cross for another three hours, from noon to 3:00 p.m., **all the infinite agonies and merciless pains of Gethsemane recurred.**” (McConkie, May 1985)
- Jesus’ Cry, “**My God, why hast thou forsaken me?**” (Mark 15:34–35; Matt 27:46–47)
 - Aramaic: *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachtani* (Eloi confused with Elijah)
 - “I am a father, inadequate to be sure, but I cannot comprehend the burden it must have been for God in His heaven to witness the deep suffering and Crucifixion of His Beloved Son in such a manner. His every impulse and instinct *must* have been to stop it, to send angels to intervene—but He did not intervene.” (Holland, *Ensign*, May 1999, 14)
 - The terrible **spiritual death** of Gethsemane, **the necessary separation of a perfect God from the one bearing the sins of the world**, returned

12/1/2008

28. Crucifixion and Burial

5

Last Moments (cont.)

Mark 15:33–37; Matt 27:45–50; Luke 23:44–46; John 19:28–30

- Jesus Given Sour Wine – cf. Ps. 69:21 (Mark 15:36; Matt 27:48–49; John 19:28–30a)
 - on a *hyssop* branch in John
 - Hyssop would not be long enough to reach, but it was **used in purification rites and was connected with Passover** (Ex 12:22)
- Jesus Cries Out and Dies (Mark 15:37; Matt 27:50; Luke 23:46)
 - **Luke records that Jesus first commended his spirit to his Father**
 - Jesus Announced “It is finished,” and **gives up his spirit** (John 19:30b)
 - **Johannine Jesus “lays down his life,” no one takes it from him**

12/1/2008

28. Crucifixion and Burial

6

Signs and Reactions to Christ's Death

Mark 15:38–41; Matt 27:51–56; Luke 23:45b, 47–49; John 19:31–37

- **Rending of the Temple Veil** – cf. Hebrews 9:11–12, 24–26 (Mark 15:38; Matt 27:51; Luke 23:45b)
 - The veil had separated all but the high priest from the presence of God (and he entered only once a year on the Day of Atonement)
 - **Now all, through Christ, have access to God**
- Tombs Open and Dead Saints Arise *after* His Resurrection (Matt 27:52–53)
- The Centurion's Testimony (Mark 15:39; Matt 27:54; Luke 23:47)
- The People Mourn and Return (Luke 23:48)
- **The Witness of the Women Standing Afar Off** (Mark 15:40–41; Matt 27: 55–56; Luke 23:49)
 - They are **witnesses of his actual death, later of his burial and resurrection** (they can attest that it was actually him who died and was raised to life)
- Jewish Authorities Request that the Victims' Legs Be Broken (John 19:31–33)
 - Jesus' legs not broken – cf. Ex 12:46; Num 9:12 (John 19:33, 36)
- **Christ's side Pierced: the Sign of Blood and Water (John 19:34–35)**
 - Fulfilled: "They shall look upon him whom they pierced" (John 19:37)

12/1/2008

28. Crucifixion and Burial

7

Why the Cross?

- **Johannine "must be lifted up"** (see John 3:14, 8:28; 12:32; 19:18)
- Echoed in the Book of Mormon: ". . . my Father sent me **that I might be lifted up upon the cross**; and after that I had been lifted up upon the cross, that I might draw all men unto me, that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil—And **for this cause have I been lifted up; therefore, according to the power of the Father I will draw all men unto me, that they may be judged according to their works.**" (3 Nephi 27:14-15)
 - **OT sacrificial imagery**: **guilt was placed on the head of the sacrificial victim (Gethsemane), then the victim was sacrificed (Calvary)**

12/1/2008

28. Crucifixion and Burial

8

President Hinckley on the Cross

- “. . . well might many ask, as my minister friend in Arizona asked, if you profess a belief in Jesus Christ, why do you not use the symbol of his death, the cross of Calvary? To which I must first reply, that **no member of this Church must ever forget the terrible price paid by our Redeemer who gave his life that all men might live**—the agony of Gethsemane, the bitter mockery of his trial, the vicious crown of thorns tearing at his flesh, the blood cry of the mob before Pilate, the lonely burden of his heavy walk along the way to Calvary, the terrifying pain as great nails pierced his hands and feet, the fevered torture of his body as he hung that tragic day . . . This was the cross, the instrument of his torture, the terrible device designed to destroy the Man of Peace, the evil recompense for his miraculous work of healing the sick, of causing the blind to see, of raising the dead. **This was the cross on which he hung and died on Golgotha's lonely summit. We cannot forget that. We must never forget it, for here our Savior, our Redeemer, the Son of God, gave himself a vicarious sacrifice for each of us.**” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Symbol of Christ,” *Ensign*, May 1975, 92)

12/1/2008

28. Crucifixion and Burial

9

The Burial of Jesus

Mark 15:42–47; Matt 27:57–66; Luke 23:50–56; John 19:38–42

- Joseph of Arimathaea Requests Jesus' Body (Mark 15:42–45; Matt 27:57–58; Luke 23:50–52; John 19:38)
 - Joseph's righteousness and messianic expectation attested in Luke
 - Joseph a secret disciple in John
- Nicodemus Brings a Kingly Amount of Burial Spices *in Daylight* (John 19:39–40; cf. 3:2a, 14)
- Placing the Body in the New Tomb (Mark 15:46a; Matt 27:58–60a; Luke 23:53–54; John 19:41–42)
- Sealing the Tomb (Mark 15:46b; Matt 27:60b;
- *The Women Witness Where the Body Was Laid* (Mark 15:47; Matt 27:61; Luke 23:55–56)
- The Pharisees Request and Obtain a Guard from Pilate (Matt 27:62–66)



12/1/2008

28. Crucifixion and Burial

10

Possible Sites of the Crucifixion and Burial



There are two possible sites identified where the events of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus occurred. The traditional site (the culmination of the Via Dolorosa) is **the Church of the Holy Sepulchre** (popular with Catholic/Orthodox Christians). An alternative site (popular with Protestants and Latter-day Saints) is known as **Gordon's Calvary and the Garden Tomb**.

The Sites Today . . .

President Gordon B. Hinckley, "Just outside the walls of Jerusalem, in this place or somewhere nearby, was the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea where the body of the Lord was interred."



Above: **The traditional site of Golgotha and the tomb** (originally they were outside the city walls); *right*: the apparent skull-like face of **Gordon's Calvary** and the nearby **Garden Tomb** (the latter preserves more of what the original site may have been like, but the tomb itself dates to a much earlier period)