

Luke 23:26-49 — The Crucifixion

²⁶ As they led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

²⁷ A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. ²⁸ Jesus turned and said to them, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹ For the time will come when you will say, ‘Blessed are the barren women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’ ³⁰ Then

“ ‘they will say to the mountains, “Fall on us!”
and to the hills, “Cover us!” ’

³¹ For if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

³² Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed.

³³ When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. ³⁴ Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

³⁵ The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.”

³⁶ The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar ³⁷ and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.”

³⁸ There was a written notice above him, which read: **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

³⁹ One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Christ? Save yourself and us!”

⁴⁰ But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? ⁴¹ We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

⁴² Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

⁴³ Jesus answered him, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”

⁴⁴ It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵ for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last.

⁴⁷ The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, “Surely this was a righteous man.” ⁴⁸ When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. ⁴⁹ But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

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1. Why did the soldiers seize Simon of Cyrene? What do their actions reveal about Jesus' condition?
2. Why did such a large crowd gather?
3. Why did Jesus tell the women who mourned him to “weep for yourselves and for your children” and also say, “Blessed are the barren women...?”
4. What is the meaning of the proverb in Verse 31? (For if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?)
5. What did the first criminal demand of Jesus? What was the request of the other one? How did Jesus respond to him? What do Jesus' words reveal about faith, deeds and conversion?
6. In what ways are we all like the criminals on the cross?
7. Luke records three of the last utterances of Christ on the cross (verses 23:34, 43, and 46). How many times did Christ speak on the cross? What did he say? (John 19:26-27, 28, 30, Matthew 27:46, 50, Mark 15:34, 37)
8. Which of these things did NOT happen when Jesus died? (Matthew 27:51-53)
A. the veil of the temple was torn in two B. an earthquake
C. many saints were raised from the dead D. the moon turned blood red
E. the sun stopped shining
9. What is the significance of the veil or curtain of the temple being torn in half? (This is incredibly important. If you remember only one thing from these verses, this should be it!)
10. What does it mean to approach God? How are we able to approach God?
11. What do Jesus' actions teach us about submitting to God's will?
12. What does this passage teach us about how we should respond to death?

3. Matthew Henry says, “The death of Christ was his victory and triumph over his enemies: it was our deliverance, the purchase of eternal life for us. Therefore weep not for him, but let us weep for our own sins, and the sins of our children, which caused his death; and weep for fear of the miseries we shall bring upon ourselves, if we slight his love, and reject his grace.”

These verses also foresee the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans just 40 years later. No history can furnish us with a parallel to the calamities and miseries of the Jews; rapine and murder, famine and pestilence, within; fire and sword, and all the terrors of war, without.

4. What is the meaning of the proverb in Verse 31? According to Wesley, “Our Lord makes use of a proverbial expression, frequent among the Jews, who compare a good man to a green tree, and a bad man to a dead one: as if he had said, If an innocent person suffer thus, what will become of the wicked? Of those who are as ready for destruction as dry wood for the fire?”

People’s New Testament: A proverb, meaning, If the rulers and the Romans crucify the Messiah of the nation, the Hope of Israel, what shall they do to the nation itself? What they would do was seen in less than forty years.

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary says it is a green tree that naturally resists the fire while the dry attracts the fire, being its proper fuel. The proverb here plainly means: “If such sufferings alight upon the innocent One, the very Lamb of God, what must be in store for those who are provoking the flames?”

6. How many times did Christ speak on the cross? What did he say? The traditional number is seven (which counts John 19:26 and 19:27 as one utterance and does not count the shout just before he died).

(1) “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34-35)

(2a) (To his mother, looking at John) “This man is now your son.” (John 19:26)

(2b) (To John, standing with his mother) “She is now your mother.” (John 19:27)

(3) (To the one criminal who repented) “I promise that today you will be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43)

(4) “My God, my God, why have you deserted me?” (Matt 27:46, Mark 15:34)

(5) "I am thirsty." (John 19:28)

(Just before he died)

Once again Jesus shouted and then He died. (Matt 27:50, Mark 15:37)

(6) Luke reports the words, "Father, I put myself in Your hands." (Luke 23:46)

(7) John reports the words, "Everything is done." (John 19:30)

8. What did not happen when Jesus died? D. (The moon turned blood red)

Matthew 27:51-53. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

Extra Credit: When did or will the moon turn red and where is this recorded?

On the second coming of the Lord as recorded in Joel 2:30-31. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

Acts 2:20. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

Revelation 6:12-13. I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red

9. This significant event symbolized Christ's work on the cross. The temple had three parts: the courts for all the people, the Holy Place where only the priests could enter, and the Most Holy Place, where only the high priest could enter once a year to atone for the sins of the people. It was the Most Holy Place where the ark of the covenant, and God's presence with it, rested. The curtain that was torn was the one that closed off the Most Holy Place from view. At Christ's death, the barrier between God and man was split in two. Now all people can approach God through Christ.