

The Life and Ministry of Christ, Part 51

Passion Week - Friday

Jesus had been presented to Pilate, then to Herod, and then He was delivered back to Pilate where He was condemned to be crucified. Pilate's palace is believed to be the Antonia Fortress which was northwest of the Temple. Pilate questioned Jesus there in the place called the Pavement, or Gabbatha. It was a public place where the governor interrogated the accused and had public meetings. The Praetorium was the military courtyard that was adjacent to Pilate's Palace. It was where the garrison met and where soldiers mocked, scourged and delivered Jesus to be crucified, (Matthew 27:26-28; Mark 15:15-17; Luke 23:24-25; John 19:16).

Isaiah 53 clearly prophesied these events.

Isaiah 53:4–5 NKJV Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

Mark 15:17–18 NKJV And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head, and began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

When we studied the Tabernacle, we learned that the walls of tabernacle in the wilderness were made with wood from the Acacia tree. The branches of the Acacia tree is covered with thorns. They mocked Jesus with a crown of thorns.

Mark 15:19–20 NKJV Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.

They placed a reed in His right hand and bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "*Hail, King of the Jews!*" (Matthew 27:29-31). After spitting on Him, they took the reed and hit Him on the head. They put His own clothes on Him and led Him out to be crucified.

Isaiah 50:6 NKJV I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.

The purple robe may have been the one Herod arrayed Jesus with in his palace before Jesus was sent back to Pilate, Luke 23:11.

Jesus was led down the Via Dolorosa or Way of Sorrows.

It was a winding street in the Old City of Jerusalem that led from the Antonia Fortress about 2,000 feet to Golgotha. People visiting Jerusalem to see the Via Dolorosa are shown nine stations along the route. Medieval Roman Catholic legend introduced these nine stations. The New Testament makes no mention of most of these stations. At station one, Simon a Cyrenian, was compelled to bear His cross. Station two through seven are not mentioned in the Bible. Scripture gives no account of Mary the mother of Jesus, or Veronica having an encounter with Jesus on the way to the cross. At station eight, Luke shows a large crowd following Jesus, including women who mourned and lamented Him.

Luke 23:28–29 NKJV But Jesus, turning to them, said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!’

Luke 23:30–31 NKJV Then they will begin ‘to say to the mountains, “Fall on us!” and to the hills, “Cover us!” ’ For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?”

Luke 23:32–33 NKJV There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left.

The Gospel accounts all mention His crucifixion, but none describe the nailing of Christ to the cross. It was a known fact however that crucifixion involved nailing criminals to the cross. Psalms 22:16 prophesied that *“they pierced My hands and My feet.”* Colossians 2:14 says, *“He erased all our sins and the handwriting that was against us, having nailed it to the cross and they cannot be retrieved.”* After His resurrection, Jesus showed His disciples His hands, feet, and His side, (John 20:19-20; Luke 24:39-40). Thomas said he would not believe until he saw and touched the “print of the nails” in Jesus’ hands, (John 20:25). When Thomas saw, he said, “My Lord and my God!”

Mount Calvary was also known as place of the skull or Golgotha.

It is located on the northwest side of the old city. Golgotha is the ninth station on the Via Dolorosa.

While on the cross Jesus said seven things.

1. **Luke 23:34 NKJV** Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” And they divided His garments and cast lots.
 - Forgiveness
2. **Luke 23:43 NKJV** And Jesus said to the thief on the cross, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”
 - Salvation
3. **John 19:26–27 NKJV** When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!” Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.
 - Relationship
4. **Mark 15:34; Matthew 27:46 NKJV** And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”
 - Abandonment

One of several supernatural events occurred at this time, proving that Jesus was indeed the Son of God.

Matthew, Mark and Luke record what happened between the sixth and ninth hour, Matthew 27:45-46; Mark 15:33-34; Luke 23:44:45).

Luke 23:44–45 NKJV Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two.

In all three Gospel accounts, darkness covered the whole land for a period of three hours. The Passover was a time of the full moon and it was impossible for a natural lunar eclipse to occur. The darkening of the sun occurred in some other way. The average solar eclipse is between 3 ½ to 4 minutes, with the longest recorded around 7 ½ minutes.

Phlegon of Tralles, a Greek historian, wrote extensively about events in chronological order.

In his Chronicles, he recorded that during the fourth year of the 202nd Olympiad (which corresponds to 33 AD) there was ‘the greatest eclipse of the sun.’ About the sixth hour of the day [noon] it became as dark as night, causing stars to appear in the heavens. This event was accompanied by a massive earthquake in Bithynia, and many things were destroyed in Nicaea.’ Matthew, Mark and Luke, said the whole earth became dark for three hours.

Matthew 27:51 NKJV Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split.

There is sediment evidence in the En Gedi along the Dead Sea delta giving evidence of a major seismic event around April 3, 33 A.D. The epicenter of the earthquake was near Jerusalem, but Nicaea in Bithynia in Asia Minor was destroyed. Matthew records two earthquakes in 33 AD in Jerusalem. The first earthquake occurred at the death of Christ on April 3, (Matthew 27:51). The second occurred April 5th at the resurrection of Christ, (Matthew 28:2).

At the same time, the veil of the temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom.

The veil was approximately four inches thick and was woven with seventy-two cords, and each cord consisted of twenty-four strands. It was forty cubits long and twenty wide, (60 feet by 30 feet). It was suspended on golden hooks from four acacia-wood pillars, which were overlaid with gold. The veil of the Temple was supernaturally torn from top to bottom when Jesus opened the way for man to enter into God's presence.

Matthew 27:52–53 NKJV and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

When the earth quaked, graves and tombs were opened and many bodies of the saints who had died were raised and were seen in the city.

Matthew 27:54 NKJV So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

Matthew 27:55–56 NKJV And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

Here is a quick review of what happened around noon while Jesus was on the cross.

For three hours, from noon to three in the afternoon, the sun stopped shining. The veil in the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom. A large earthquake around Golgotha shook the entire region. Rocks were split from the earthquake. Graves were opened. Dead saints were

raised.

5. **John 19:28 NKJV** After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!”
 - Distress
6. **John 19:3 NKJV** So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.
 - Triumph
7. **Luke 23:46 NKJV** And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’ ” Having said this, He breathed His last.
 - Reunion

It was the day of preparation for the Sabbath.

It was the time Jews purified themselves, prepared food, and completed chores in preparation for the Sabbath. Anyone hanged on a tree was under God’s curse and if their body was left exposed it would defile the land, (Deuteronomy 21:22-23; Galatians 3:13). So, the Law required the body to be removed from the tree before 6:00 pm.

To expedite the death of one that was crucified, executioners would break their legs. This increased blood loss and made the full weight of a person’s body put pressure on a person’s chest and lungs. Soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves, but when the came to Jesus, He was already dead.

John 19:34–35 NKJV But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.

John 19:36–37 NKJV For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, “Not one of His bones shall be broken. And again another Scripture says, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced.”

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were secret followers of Jesus Christ, keeping their faith hidden to protect themselves from the Jewish leaders. Joseph approached Pilate, requesting permission to remove the body of Jesus from the cross. Pilate granted his request, allowing him to take His body away. Nicodemus and Joseph brought around 100 pounds of myrrh and aloes to the cross.

John 19:40–42 NKJV Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a

new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.

The day after the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate and said: *"While He was still alive, that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.'"* In order to prevent His disciples from stealing His body and pretending that He arose from the dead, they asked that the tomb be made secure by sealing it and setting a guard.

After three days, Jesus was resurrected from the dead, (Matthew 28:1-8; Mark 16:1-8; John 20:1-10).

Matthew 28:1–2 NKJV Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.

On Sunday morning, April 5th, 33 A.D. a second earthquake happened about dawn. This earthquake occurred when an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and rolled the stone from the door of the tomb and sat upon it. Christ's resurrection did not depend on the rolling away of the stone. This was done as a sign to all who would see.

Matthew 28:3–4 NKJV His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

Matthew 28:5–6 NKJV But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

Matthew 28:7–8 NKJV And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you." So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.