



Jesus' Death & Burial

Matthew 27:45-61; Mark 15:33-47; Luke 23:44-56; John 19:28-42



Jesus took the place of the guilty on the cross. When all of the prophecies had been fulfilled, Jesus willingly gave up His spirit. Jesus died to take away the sin of the world, but three days later, Jesus would prove His victory over death!

Day #1: Separation

The Gospel book of John tells us that Jesus was the light of the world (John 1:4, 9:5). That Light was about to leave the world. God gave witnesses a dramatic picture when He brought darkness in the middle of the day. As Jesus was dying, darkness covered the entire land.

+ *From noon until three o'clock, the whole land was covered with darkness. About three o'clock, Jesus cried out in a loud voice. He said, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" This means, "My God, My God, why have You deserted Me?" - Matthew 27:45-46*

With this question, Jesus was quoting Psalm 22. Read the lines that follow in Psalm 22:1:

*My God, my God, why have You deserted me? Why do You seem to be so far away when I need You to save me? Why do You seem to be so far away that **You can't hear my groans?** - Psalm 22:1*

We can't imagine that God would ever leave Jesus. Why would Jesus have felt that God had left Him or was far from Him? It was at this point, mere moments from death, that Jesus willingly took on the sins of the entire world (2 Corinthians 5:21).

And the Lord has placed on His servant the sins of all of us. - Isaiah 53:6b

Sin separates us from God:

*It's your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, He has turned away and **will not listen anymore.** - Isaiah 59:1-2 (NLT)*

Up until this point, there had never been anything between God and Jesus. Jesus never sinned (2 Corinthians 5:21). And God was greatly pleased with His Son (Mark 1:11). Jesus had never known separation from God (John 10:30) - until that very moment.

Day #1 continued:



What a Savior we have! He came to experience everything that we have experienced. This includes temptation, pain, loss, loneliness, and now, even separation from God the Father. When you suffer in any way, take your problem to Jesus. He understands and He wants to help you (Hebrews 2:16-18).

Day #2: It is Finished!

Many of Jesus' followers had run away, but Jesus' mother, Mary, was at the foot of the cross. This was certainly the most unbearable moment she would ever face. In loving compassion, Jesus asked His disciple, John, to care for her. From that point on, John took Mary into his own home (John 19:25-27).

From the beginning of time, Jesus knew His death was God's plan to save the world. Everything had happened in God's perfect timing. With one more sentence, all the prophecies concerning His death would be complete. Jesus said, "I am thirsty." The soldiers offered Him wine vinegar, which was foretold in Psalm 69:21.

+ *Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "**It is finished!**" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit. - John 19:30 (NASB)*

Jesus proclaimed, "**It is finished!**" The Greek word for *finished* is **teleo**. It means *to complete, or to pay in full*. The job that God had given to Jesus was completed. The prophecies were fulfilled. The final Lamb had been sacrificed. The sins of mankind had been paid for - in full. Jesus took our sins upon Himself. He paid the penalty for our sin, which is death (Romans 5:12). He poured out His blood, which was His life (Leviticus 17:11). The life of Jesus' blood took away the death of our sin.

The life of each creature is in its blood... Blood is life. That is why blood pays for your sin. - Leviticus 17:11

Notice that **Jesus gave up His spirit**. Almost a week earlier, Jesus had told the disciples, "No one can take My life from Me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what My Father has commanded." (John 10:18) At just the right time, Jesus *chose* to give up His life (Luke 23:46).



What three words did Jesus speak with His last breath? (It is finished!) Finished means finished. There is NO work you can do to add to what Jesus did that day. Nothing else is needed. Period. Our salvation was completed when Jesus gave up His life. We simply put our trust in **what Jesus did** for us. Then our sins are forgiven and we are welcomed into the Kingdom of God.

Day #3: The Curtain Splits

Think of the President of our country. What would happen if you wanted to meet with him? What if you had a problem you wanted to talk over with him? Do you think you could get past all of his security guards in order to talk with him? Do you think you could even talk to him on the telephone? More than likely, it would be impossible to get in touch with the President.

The Israelites had an even greater problem. They could not meet with God. The President is just a man, but God is FAR above men. Remember, in the Old Testament, the temple was where God came to be near His people. However, God placed a barrier between Himself and man. A very thick curtain hung between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. This curtain protected sinful men from entering into the presence of the holy God, because God is too pure to look at evil (Habakkuk 1:13). When Jesus gave up His spirit, something amazing happened:



At that moment the temple curtain was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook. The rocks split. - Matthew 27:51

When Jesus gave His life to take away our sin, the curtain split in two. It tore from the top to the bottom - this showed that it was God who did the tearing. Jesus took away the sin of all who believe in Him. Those who put their trust in Him are no longer sinful. We are free to enter into the presence of the holy God.



Rejoice! If you are a believer in Christ, Jesus has made the way for you to enter into God's presence. Don't ever feel that you are "bothering" God by coming to Him in prayer. You are welcome to draw near to God anytime!

And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. - Hebrews 10:19-20 (NLT)

Day #4: Soldiers' Confession

At the cross of Jesus, several guards and one centurion, or commander, watched over His death.



The Roman commander and those guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened. They were terrified. They exclaimed, "He was surely the Son of God!" - Matthew 27:54

Why were these men terrified? With their own hands, they had nailed the Son of God to a cross. They mocked Him, spit on Him, beat Him, and watched Him die. We can only imagine the look of shock on their faces when they realized that Jesus truly was the Son of God. The centurion praised God out loud (Luke 23:47).

Jesus died on the day before the Sabbath. The Jewish people did not want any bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath (John 19:31). Isn't it amazing that after having an innocent man tortured and put to death, they were still trying to "obey God's rules"? Truly, their hearts were far from God (Matthew 15:8).

Day #4 continued:

The soldiers went to examine Jesus and the criminals before they took their bodies down. To be sure that Jesus was dead, they pierced His side with a spear. Blood and water flowed out (John 19:33-34). This was a sign that He was dead. Though His flesh was torn, none of His bones were broken. These things fulfilled the promises of the prophets in the Old Testament (Psalm 22:12-18, Zechariah 12:10)



Think about the soldiers who crucified Jesus. They had no idea who was in their care. But when He breathed His last, suddenly they realized that Jesus was the King of kings, the Son of God. The Bible promises that one day, every single knee will bow, and just like the stunned soldiers, every person will admit that Jesus is the Lord (Romans 14:11). We want our friends to know who Jesus is long before that day. We don't want them to waste one more minute not knowing that Jesus is the Savior who died to take away their sins.

Ask God to show you someone that you can share the Good News of Jesus with. Pray for that person and pray for the right words to speak.

Day #5: Victory is Coming

That evening, after the soldiers took Jesus off the cross, a wealthy man named Joseph of Arimathea, went to speak to Pilate. Joseph had become a follower of Jesus. He asked Pilate if he could take Jesus' body for burial (Matthew 27:57-58). Joseph and another Jewish leader, Nicodemus, wrapped Jesus' body in strips of linen cloth and spices according to the Jewish custom (John 19:39-40). The two men placed Jesus' body in a new tomb that was cut out of rock (Isaiah 53:9). Then they rolled a large stone in front of the tomb. Several women who loved Jesus watched all of this from a short distance (Mark 15:46-47). The women went home to prepare spices and perfumes. On the next day, they rested because it was the Sabbath (Luke 23:56).

On the Sabbath, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to speak to Pilate. They told Pilate that Jesus had predicted that on the third day, He would come back to life. The leaders said they thought Jesus' disciples would steal Jesus' body and then tell everyone that He had been raised from the dead. Pilate ordered them to secure the tomb. The Jewish leaders put a seal on the tomb and posted guards there so no one could disturb the tomb (Matthew 27:62-66).

Jesus' disciples had scattered. These men were crushed because their Leader, and dear Friend, had been put to death. They had given up everything to follow Jesus. They did not understand that this was why Jesus had come. They would soon learn that God does not allow death to have the last word.



He will swallow up death forever. The Lord and King will wipe away the tears from everyone's face. He will remove the shame of his people from the whole earth. The Lord has spoken. - Isaiah 25:8



Like the disciples, each of us might feel hopeless at some point. Keep your eyes fixed on God. He is in control, and the victory will be His. Make a poster for your room with God's promise from Isaiah 25:8 to help you remember that God is in control, and He has victory over death and suffering!