



Carl Bloch, "The Crucifixion"

22. 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; At Calvary—Activities at the Cross, Last Moments, Signs and Reactions to Christ's Death; Why the Cross? The Burial of Jesus.

<http://www.lds.org/resources/visual-learning>

"Upon the Cross of Calvary" (hymn no. 183)

1. Upon the cross of Calvary
They crucified our Lord
And sealed with blood the sacrifice
That sanctified his word.

2. Upon the cross he meekly died
For all mankind to see
That death unlocks the passageway
Into eternity.

3. Upon the cross our Savior died,
But, dying, brought new birth
Through resurrection's miracle
To all the sons of earth.

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; par 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

27. The Crucifixion and Burial

3/21/2016

3

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; par Matt 27:33, Luke 23:33a; cf. John 19:17b)
- **Jesus Refuses Wine and Myrrh – cf. Prov.31:6** (Mark 15:23; par Matt 27:34)
- **Jesus' Clothing divided** – cf. Ps. 22:18 (Mark 15:24; par Matt 27:35b-36, Luke 23: 23:34b; cf. John 19:23-24; *see next slide*)
 - Jesus' tunic/undergarment not rent (John 19:23b-24)
- **Jesus Crucified** – Mark's Third Hour, 9:00 a.m. (Mark 15:25; par 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*

While some Protestants and many Latter-day Saints favor "Gordon's Calvary" (upper left) near the so-called Garden Tomb, archaeological and traditional factors favor the Rock of Golgotha (lower left) within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre

3/21/2016

4

Dividing Jesus' Clothing



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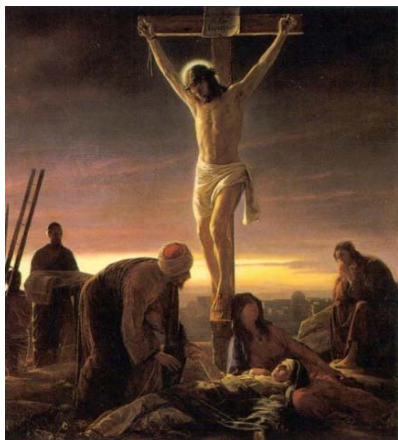
- All four gospels note that prior to nailing Jesus to the cross, the soldiers who were crucifying him **divided his outer garments (ta himatia) into four parts** and distributed them among themselves but that they cast dice for **his inner tunic (ton chitōna, KJV "coat")**
 - fulfilled the prophecy of Psalm 22:18 (Matthew 27:35b-36; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:23:34b; John 19:23-24)
- Only John, however, notes that **his coat "was without seam, woven from the top throughout"**
 - Commentators have observed that this may suggest that **it may have represented the priestly garment, reinforcing the image of Jesus not only as the lamb being offered but as the high priest who made sacrifice for his people**
 - "But **Christ being come an high priest of good things to come**, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but **by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us**" (Hebrews 9:11-14; see also 9:23-28)

3/21/2016

5

At Calvary (cont).

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



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- **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; par Matt 27:37, Luke 23:38; cf. 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; par Matt 27:38, Luke 23:33 [malefactors]; cf. John 19:18b [two "others"])
 - *Lēstai* here can mean "bandits, thieves" —or— "insurrectionists, insurgents, revolutionaries," possibly alluding to the political charge against Jesus

3/21/2016

6

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; par 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; par 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; par 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!*

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3/21/2016

7

- **Darkness from the Sixth to the Ninth Hour, approximately 12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m.** (Mark 15:33; par 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; par 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

Last Moments

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



J. Kirk Richards, “Grey Day at Golgotha”

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3/21/2016

8

“I Thirst”



- Shortly before he expired, Jesus announced that he was thirsty, leading a soldier to offer him cheap wine (KJV “vinegar”) on a sponge (Matthew 27:48–49; Mark 15:36; John 19:28–30a)
- While Matthew and Mark record that this sponge was placed on a reed (*kalamō*), **John portrays it as being put on a hyssop branch (*hyssōpō*)**
 - A short shrub, the hyssop’s branches would probably **not** have been long enough to reach the lips of a man suspended on a cross, even if the cross was relatively short, and its stalk would have been too flimsy to bear the sponge
 - Nevertheless, ***the hyssop was the plant mandated by the law of Moses not only for certain purification rituals but also for spreading the blood on the doorposts at the first Passover*** (Exodus 12:22)

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3/21/2016

9

The Last Words of Jesus

- “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34)
- “Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43)
- “Woman, behold thy son!” . . . Behold thy mother!” (John 19:26–27)
- “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Mark 15:34; Matthew 27:46)
- “I thirst.” (John 19:28)
- “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” (Luke 23:46)
- **“It is finished.”** (John 19:30)



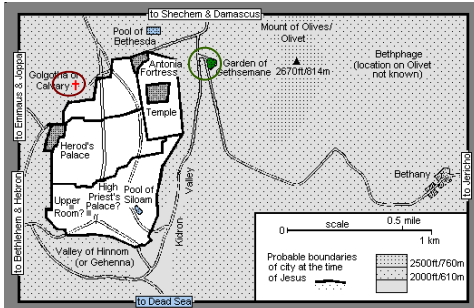
Liz Lemon Swindle, “It Is Finished”

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3/21/2016

10

The Death of the Lamb of God



- **Death at the Ninth Hour** (Mark 15:33; Matt 27:45; Luke 23:44-45a)
 - **One of the times given for the slaughter of the paschal lambs in the temple!** (see Josephus, *Wars of the Jews* 6.9.3, §422-27)
- **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
- The rocky outcropping of Golgotha is an extension of the same geographic feature as the Temple Mount
 - **The sacrifice was to be killed "on the side of the altar northward"** (see Lev. 1:11)

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3/21/2016

11

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)

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3/21/2016

12

Why the Cross?

- Obviously one of the most terrible ways of execution in the ancient world
 - Part of descending below all things
- “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Deut. 21:23; Gal 3:13)
 - Way of Jewish leadership to prove Jesus was not “the son of the Blessed?”
- Repeated prophecy that Jesus “must be lifted up” (John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32; see also 3 Nephi 27:14–15)
 - Like the brazen serpent in the wilderness, the sacrifice of Jesus must be where all can see it!
 - OT sacrificial imagery: *guilt was placed on the head of the sacrificial victim (Gethsemane), then the victim was sacrificed (Calvary)*



Harry Anderson, “The Crucifixion”

- Echoed in the Book of Mormon
 - “My Father sent me *that I might be lifted up upon the cross* . . . 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)

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)



Francisco de Zurbarán, "Agnus Dei"

“A bone of him shall not be broken . . .”

- When the Jewish leadership asked the Roman authorities to break the legs of those being crucified so that their bodies would not desecrate the Sabbath—and in John, the Passover itself—the soldiers first broke the legs of the two insurgents or revolutionaries (*lēstai*, KJV “thieves”) who had been crucified with him
- When they came to Jesus, however, and found that he was already dead, **they did not break Jesus’ legs** “that the scripture should be fulfilled, **A bone of him shall not be broken**” (John 19:31–33, 36)
- While this was a fulfillment of the prophecy of Psalm 34:21, **not breaking any bones was a particular requirement of the paschal lamb, one that was as significant as the prerequisite that it, like Jesus, be “without blemish”** (Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12).

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3/21/2016

15

Blood and Water

- “But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and **forthwith came there out blood and water**” (John 19:33–34, emphasis added)
 - **Blood on the cross = blood of paschal lambs on doorframes!**
- The flowing of water from Jesus side is reminiscent of the streams of water that Jesus proclaimed would flow from his belly (John 7:37–39)
 - **the blood atoning for sins** while **the water purifies or cleanses the sinner**
 - Elsewhere in John **water represents life, and not just mortal life but everlasting life** (see John 4:14 and 7:37–38)



Ron Richmond, "Triplus No. 3"

- Due to his mortal inheritance from his mother, Mary, represented by the flowing blood, Jesus was able to **lay down his life as a sacrifice for sin**
- Because of his **divine, immortal inheritance** from God his Father, represented by the stream of water, he was **able to take his life up again and become a source of eternal life**

27. The Crucifixion and Burial

3/21/2016

16

From Tree of Cursing to Tree of Life



Hendrick Goltzius, *Christ on the Tree of Life*

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- Again, “**Cursed is he who is everyone that is hanged upon the tree**” (Deut. 21:23; Gal 3:13)
- **But the flowing water on the cross makes a Tree of Death a Tree of Life!**
 - Medieval tradition of **the Verdant Cross!**



Pacino di Bonaguida: *Tree of Life*

3/21/2016

17

The Burial of Jesus

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



Carl Bloch, *Burial of Jesus*

27. The Crucifixion and Burial

- **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)

3/21/2016

18

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)