

The Gospel of John

Chapter 19:31-42

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- **The Gospel of John Outline:**

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 - Chapter 5 Paralytic man healed on the Sabbath, Unity of The Father and Son
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 - Chapter 18 The Arrest of Jesus and the Denial of Peter
 - Chapter 19 The Trial Before Pilate; Crucifixion and Burial of Our Lord

- **Review and Introduction**

In the previous section of this chapter, we concluded Jesus' trial before Pilate and read of His crucifixion. In this section, John records the burial of Christ, including the preparation of His body and placing Him in the tomb. All of these events are very important to the Gospel because central to it is the resurrection of Christ. Jesus could not have risen from the dead (for our justification) had He not first died for our sins. Therefore, these burial procedures performed by the women, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus are central to confirming that Christ actually died. After we study His burial, we will consider what it is that Jesus did during His period of death while He was in the tomb.

Exposition of John 19:31-42

- ● *³¹ Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.*

- - The most common way of understanding the timing here is that this was Friday, the day preceding the Sabbath. Every Friday was a day of preparation but this particular Friday was significant because it was the Friday during the week of Passover and this Sabbath was the conclusion of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. On this Friday the lambs were prepared and offered on the altar on behalf of the nation.
 - We see here again how these hypocrites can be committing the most heinous of sins yet striving to maintain ritual purity. This is a common sin but this instance is superlatively grievous. This command regarding the hanging of executed criminals came from Deut. 21:23.
 - Some historians note that there were two methods of crucifixion—a slow method and a fast method. The slow method involved nailing the hands and feet to the cross and was an agonizingly slow death (sometimes up to 5 or 6 days) while being exposed to the cold nights and public abuse. The second method did not involve nailing but rather leather straps were used to hold the arms to the cross and a small platform was provided to stand on until the legs were broken which would actually bring about a suffocation/drowning death in a matter of hours. It appears that the original method here selected was the slow crucifixion but the Jews asked Pilate to speed up the process by breaking the legs as well.

● ● ³² *Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him.³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

- By the time the soldiers came to break the legs of Jesus He had already died and they did not need to do so. Instead they confirmed His death by piercing Him with a spear. Much has been speculated about John's detail of both water and blood coming from the wound. We have no divine commentary on its significance but nevertheless, we can be certain that Jesus was truly dead.

● ● ³⁵ *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.³⁶ For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken."³⁷ And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."*

- John does however, give the reason why he includes these specific details—to demonstrate that every detail of Jesus' death was in accordance with the Scriptures. It is a glorious thing to see the application of the verse in Exodus 12:46 (which required that no bones be broken of the lamb sacrificed for Passover) to Jesus our true Paschal lamb. 1 Cor. 5:7
- Next John quotes Zechariah 12:10 where it is prophesied that the Lord would pour out the Spirit of grace and families in Jerusalem would mourn. John applies this prophecy explicitly to the crucifixion of Christ.

● ● ³⁸ *After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus.*

- Luke records that this Joseph, who came from the city of Arimathea, was a member of the Sanhedrin yet he did not agree with their decision to seek execution. (Luke 23:50) Luke also records that Joseph was "waiting for the Kingdom of God" and perhaps was a faithful follower of Jesus but apparently kept his loyalty a secret for fear of retribution from the Jews.

● ● ³⁹ *And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.⁴⁰ 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.⁴¹ 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.⁴² So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby. NKJV*

- We also see the outcome of Nicodemus with whom Jesus had had a number of discussions and apparently had granted him faith. Together with Joseph the two men hastily place Him in a rich man's tomb to avoid defilement on the Sabbath.

● Jesus Descends Into Hades

1. Sheol was a Hebrew word for grave or hell and both the unrighteous and righteous expected to go there.
- 2.

Prov 15:24 Down	Psalms 9:17
Ezek 26:20-21 Deep below earth	Psalms 31:17
Job 10:20-22 Darkness	Psalms 55:15
Gen 37:35 Inhabited by righteous (Jacob)	Prov 5:5 Steps of adulteress
1Sam 28:13-15 Probably Samuel. See also, Isa 26:19, Dan 12:2,3	Prov 7:27 House of seductress
Eccl. 9:10 No work or wisdom	Isaiah 14:11-15 Ungodly Kings
Ezek 32:17-32 Inhabited by unrighteous	Hosea 13:14 God would ransom them from Sheol

3. Hades is the Greek equivalent of Sheol—Matt. 11:23, Acts 2:25-28, Acts 13:35

- 4. Jesus descends into Hades—Acts 2:25-28, Acts 13:35, 1 Peter 3:19, 2 Peter 2:4 (Tartarus - deepest of pits).
- 5. Gehenna refers to the final place of punishment for the wicked. Matt 8:12, Mark 9:43, Jude 13, Rev 19:20

DESCRIPTIONS OF GEHENNA	INHABITANTS OF GEHENNA
Matt 8:12 Weeping and gnashing of teeth	Matt 5:22 Call brother fool
Mark 9:43 Unquenchable fire & immortal worm	Matt 5:29,30 Don't take sin seriously
Jude 13 Blackest Darkness	Matt 23:15 Those who listen to false teachers
Rev 19:20 Fiery lake of burning sulfur	Rev 20:10 Devil, beast and false prophet
	Rev 20:13 Death and inhabitants of Hades

5) Perhaps the righteous in Hades/Paradise ascended with Christ to dwell with Him in heaven. Ephesians 4:8