

The Burial of Jesus John 19:31-42

Two Sundays Ago: Christ loved them to the end.

- Is. 53:10, “Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief.”

Today: The Burial of Jesus—His burial showcases the full humiliation of Jesus.

Josephus: “A blasphemer should be buried in an ignominious and obscure manner...”

- Is. 53:9, “They made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death.”

Before Jesus is buried, other events transpire:

- Lk. 23:46, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.”
- Mt. 27:51-53, “Behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many.”

19:32 – “So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him.”

“It is noteworthy that the penitent thief, even after his conversion, had more suffering to go through before he entered into paradise. The grace of God and the pardon of sin did not deliver him from the agony of having his legs broken. When Christ undertakes to save our souls, he does not undertake to deliver from bodily pains and conflict with the last enemy ... Yet is it blessed to know that these Roman soldiers were also the *unwitting agents* for fulfilling Christ’s promise, ‘Today shalt thou be with me in paradise!’” - A. W. Pink

19:35 – “He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe.”

Why were John’s words about the soldier piercing Christ’s side so important?

- Physiologically: The separation of fluids proves that death had already occurred.
- Symbolically: Blood points to the atonement—the innocent dying for the guilty (Heb. 9:12-14); water points to cleansing and the gift of the Spirit (Jn. 7:37-39; 1 Jn. 5:6-8).

19:38 – “A disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews...”

The Risks of Joseph of Arimathea:

1. The risk of incurring Pilate’s wrath
2. The risk of losing his position once the Sanhedrin knew
3. The risk of being called a traitor by all the people who opposed Jesus

19:40 – “So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.”

The Jewish procedure for preparing a body for burial in the first century:

1. Wash the body (including pulling out thorns, splinters, etc.)
2. Bind the body with linen strips (around the stomach and limbs) or cover the body with a sheet of fine linen, perhaps both?
3. Apply spices (to cover the odor of death):
 - a. Myrrh – costly perfume from a tree or shrub in Arabia and Ethiopia
 - b. Aloes – probably refers to an aromatic substance derived from the eaglewood tree