

Luke 23:26-49
Jesus Ministers on the Cross

Introduction: This takes place on Friday, April 3, 33 AD.

1) Jesus ministers on His way to The Skull—23:26-33a

- a) The procession travels toward the Skull—23:26-31
 - i) The weakened Jesus, followed by Simon—23:26 ²⁶ *And as they led Him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene (Libya of north Africa, near Tripoli), who was coming in from the country, and they placed on him the cross (the horizontal member weighed @ 40 pounds) to carry behind Jesus.*
 - (1) After Jesus could no longer do so (John 19:17)
 - (2) Jay Adams reminds us: it is not unusual for totally disinterested individuals to be caught up in the nefarious activities of others.
 - ii) A large crowd of the curious but also the weeping—23:27 ²⁷ *And a large crowd of the people was following, and women who also were mourning and lamenting for Him.*
 - iii) Jesus ministers to the weeping women—23:28-31 ²⁸ *But Jesus, having turned to them, said, “Daughters of Jerusalem,*
 - (1) The corrective commands—23:28 *do not weep for Me, but (rather) weep for yourselves and for your^{pl} children.*
 - (2) The reason for the commands—23:29-31 (fulfilled in 70 AD)
 - (a) Reason # 1:
 - (i) When things will be reversed—²⁹ *For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, and wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed!’*
 - (ii) When people choose death over life—³⁰ *Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’*
 - (b) Reason # 2:
 - (i) When people openly reject Christ—³¹ *For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”*
 - (ii) This seems to say: if the Innocent suffers at the hands of the Romans, what will happen to the unrepentant guilty?
 - iv) As He approaches His own death He thinks of the suffering of others.
- b) The procession arrives at the Skull—23:32-33
 - i) ³² *Now there were also two others, criminals, who were being led with Him to be put to death.*
 - ii) ³³ *And when they had come to the place called “The Skull,”*
 - (1) **Golgotha** in Aramaic, **Cranion** in Greek, **Calvaria** in Latin

2) Jesus ministers on the Cross—23:33b-43 (the first 3 hours)

- a) The actions of the Romans—23:33b-34
 - i) They obediently crucified—(And) *they crucified Him there, along with the criminals (cf. Is. 53:12), one on His right and one on the left.*

- (1) Compassion for His enemies—23:34 ³⁴ *But Jesus was saying, “Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing.”*
 - (a) This is the first of the seven sayings of Christ on the cross
 - (b) A prayer answered in part in Acts 2 on Pentecost.
- ii) They callously placed games of chance—*And they cast lots, dividing His garments.* (cf. Ps. 22:18)
- iii) Jesus refuses to make use of the mild painkiller offered Him (Mk. 15:23)
- b) Others who observed the crucifixion—23:35-37
 - i) Observation—³⁵ *And **the people** stood by, observing,*
 - ii) Contempt—*but even **the rulers** with them were ridiculing, saying, “He rescued others, let Him rescue Himself if (1st class condition) *this One is the Christ of God, His Chosen One.*”*
 - iii) Mocking—³⁶ ***The soldiers** also were mocking Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, ³⁷ and saying, “If (1st class condition) **You** (emphatic) are the King of the Jews, rescue yourself!”*
- c) The legal reason for His crucifixion—23:38 ³⁸ *Now there was an inscription also written above Him in letters of Greek, Latin (Roman), and Hebrew: “This is the King of the Jews.”*
 - i) Some of you may have seen crucifixes or pictures of the crucifixion with the letters INRI (Latin, *Rex*) or INBI (Greek, *Basileus*)
- d) Jesus ministers compassion while on the cross—23:39-43
 - i) The unrepentant criminal—23:39 ³⁹ *Then one of the criminals who were hanged was yelling insults at Him, saying, “If (1st class condition) **You** (emphatic) are the Christ, rescue Yourself and us!”*
 - ii) The repentant criminal—23:40-43 ⁴⁰ *But the other, having responded, was rebuking him, saying,*
 - (1) A rebuke concerning awe—*“Do **you** (emphatic) not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?”*
 - (2) A recognition of his sin and Jesus’ innocence—⁴¹ *And **we** (emphatic), on the one hand, justly, because we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but on the other hand, this man has done nothing wrong [atopos].”*
 - (3) A statement of faith concerning the future—⁴² *Then he was saying to Jesus, “Remember me, Lord, when You come in Your kingdom.”*
 - (a) Compassion for the repentant—⁴³ *And Jesus said to him, “Truly I say to you, **today** (emphatic, no purgatory) you will be with Me in Paradise.”*
 - (i) This is the second of seven sayings of Christ on the cross
 - (b) Even with His arms outstretched and His hands nailed to the cross, Jesus throws open the gate to Paradise for a repentant sinner!
 - iii) Jesus gave him more than he asked for. He requested favorable treatment in the distant or undefined future; he was promised personal companionship in the immediate future. (Harris, 169)

3) The Death of Jesus—23:44-49 (the last 3 hours)

- a) The details of Jesus' death—23:44-47
- i) Noontime darkness—23:44-45a ⁴⁴ *It was now about the sixth hour (noon), and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour (3 PM), ⁴⁵ and the sun was darkened, (not an eclipse because of the full moon)*
 - ii) New access—23:45b *and the veil of the inner sanctuary [naos] was torn in the middle.*
 - iii) A cry of faith—⁴⁶ *And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." (cf. Ps. 31:5) And having said this, He breathed His last.*
 - (1) This is the last of the seven sayings of Jesus on the cross.
 - (2) Pentecost reminds us: Christ did not die because life slowly ebbed from His veins. His life was not taken from Him. Christ died because by an act of His will He dismissed His soul from His body. Christ was sovereign over His death as He was sovereign over His resurrection.
 - (a) Jesus does so by the enabling of the Holy Spirit—Heb. 7:27, 9:14
 - (3) Then an earthquake, and the resurrection of some OT saints (Mt. 27)
- b) Three reactions to His death—23:47-49
- i) The reaction of recognition by one responsible for crucifying Jesus—23:47 ⁴⁷ *Now when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Unquestionably (emphatic) this Man was righteous!" (the fourth person in this chapter to declare His innocence)*
 - ii) The reaction of regret by those unfamiliar with Jesus—23:48 ⁴⁸ *And the whole crowd who had come together for this spectacle, when they observed what had been happened, began to return, beating their breasts.*
 - iii) The reaction of sorrow by those who personally knew Jesus—23:49 ⁴⁹ *But all His acquaintances, and the women who accompanied Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.*
 - iv) How you react to sin reveals a great deal about you.

4) Things we need to remember:

- How to receive the greatest promise ever, just like the thief on the cross
 - a) Confess the justness of the punishment you deserve—23:40-41a
 - b) Acknowledge the innocence and purity of Jesus—23:41b
 - c) Turn to Jesus as Savior and King—23:42
 - d) Receive the gracious promise of Jesus' eternal presence in paradise—23:43