

Good Friday Scripture Reading - John 19:16-42

Pilate handed Jesus over to his soldiers, knowing that He would be crucified. They sent Jesus out carrying His own instrument of execution, the cross, to a hill known as the Place of the Skull, or Golgotha in Hebrew. In that place, they crucified Him along with two others. One was on His right and the other on His left. Pilate ordered that a plaque be placed above Jesus' head. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Because the site was near an urban region, it was written in three languages- Greek, Latin, and Hebrew -so that all could understand.

The chief priests said to Pilate: Don't write, "The King of the Jews." Write, "He said, 'I am King of the Jews'!" Pilate replied: I have written what I have written.

As Jesus was being crucified, the soldiers tore His outer garments into four pieces, one for each of them. They wanted to do the same with His tunic, but it was seamless—one piece of fabric woven from the top down.

So, the soldiers said to one another: Don't tear it. Let's cast lots, and the winner will take the whole thing. This happened in keeping with the Hebrew Scriptures, which said, "They divided My outer garments and cast lots for My clothes." These soldiers did exactly what was foretold in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Jesus' mother was standing next to His cross along with her sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. Jesus looked to see His mother and the disciple He loved standing nearby. Jesus said to Mary, his mother: Dear woman, this is your son and then he said to John, his disciple, this is now your mother. From that moment, the disciple treated her like his own mother and welcomed her into his house. Jesus knew that His work had been accomplished, and the Hebrew Scriptures were being fulfilled.

Jesus said: "I am thirsty". A jar of sour wine had been left there, so they took a hyssop branch with a sponge soaked in the vinegar and put it to His mouth. When Jesus drank, Jesus said: "It is finished!" In that moment, His head fell; and He gave up the spirit.

The Jews asked Pilate to have their legs broken so the bodies would not remain on the crosses on the Sabbath. It was the day of preparation for the Passover, and that year the Passover fell on the Sabbath. The soldiers came and broke the legs of both the men crucified next to Jesus. When they came up to Jesus' cross, they could see that He was dead; so they did not break His legs. Instead, one soldier took his spear and pierced His abdomen, which brought a gush of blood and water.

This testimony is true. In fact, it is an eyewitness account; and he has reported what he saw so that you also may believe. It happened this way to fulfill the Hebrew Scriptures that "not one

of His bones shall be broken”; and the Hebrew Scriptures also say, “They will look upon Him whom they pierced.”

After all this, Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple who kept his faith a secret for fear of the Jewish officials, made a request to Pilate for the body of Jesus. Pilate granted his request, and Joseph retrieved the body. Nicodemus, who first came to Jesus under the cloak of darkness, brought over 100 pounds of myrrh and ointments for His burial. Together, they took Jesus’ body and wrapped Him in linens soaked in essential oils and spices, according to Jewish burial customs.

Near the place He was crucified, there was a garden with a newly prepared tomb. Because it was the day of preparation, they arranged to lay Jesus in this tomb so they could rest on the Sabbath.