

• *The cross of Christ – six details recorded by Luke*

Jesus is mocked by the soldiers<sup>□1</sup> and then is led away to Golgotha<sup>□2</sup>, where He is crucified<sup>□3</sup>. Jesus is ridiculed on the cross<sup>□4</sup>. Others who are being crucified are near Him<sup>□5</sup>. Jesus dies<sup>□6</sup>; His death is witnessed by some of the women who have been loyal to Him<sup>□7</sup>. After His death Jesus' side is pierced with a spear<sup>□8</sup> to ensure that He is truly dead. He is buried in a rich man's tomb<sup>□9</sup>. Let us ponder the six matters that Luke records.

Mocked by the soldiers	□1	Matthew 27:27-31a; Mark 15:16-20a
1. Led away to Golgotha	□2	Matthew 27:31b-32; Mark 15:20b-21; Luke 23:26-32; John 19:17a
2. Crucified	□3	Matthew 27:33-37; Mark 15:22-26; Luke 23:33-34; John 19:17b-27
3. Ridiculed	□4	Matthew 27:38-43; Mark 15:27-32a; Luke 23:35-38
4. Others crucified nearby	□5	Matthew 27:44; Mark 15:32b; Luke 23:39-43
5. Dies	□6	Matthew 27:45-54; Mark 15:33-39; Luke 23:44-48; John 19:28-30
Death witnessed	□7	Matthew 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41; Luke 23:49
Side pierced	□8	John 19:31-37
6. Buried in a rich man's tomb	□9	Matthew 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42

1. Jesus is led away to Golgotha

• *Simon of Cyrene*

• *The women weep for Jesus*

• *Jesus tells them to weep for the coming tragic destruction of Jerusalem*

1. **Jesus is led away to Golgotha<sup>□1</sup>**. A Cyrenian Jew was made to carry Jesus' cross<sup>□2</sup>. What an experience! It led to Simon's conversion and decades later one of his children was a Christian living in Rome (for Mark 15:21 was written for Christians in Rome; compare Romans 16:13). Simon found that the day he came to Jerusalem from North Africa would be the day when his entire life was changed for him and his family.

There are women who are moved at Jesus' sufferings<sup>□1</sup> but within fifty years the people of Jerusalem will themselves suffer terribly as Jerusalem is destroyed and removed from having any special significance in the purposes of God. God delights in mercy, but the city of Jerusalem would suffer judgement for its rejection of Jesus. Jesus tells the women to weep for themselves<sup>□2</sup>. *'If men do these things when the tree is green [and does not burn easily] what will happen when it is dry [and therefore is easily able to be burned]'* <sup>□3</sup>. It means: If this is what happens to innocent Jesus, what kind of calamity will come upon wicked Jerusalem?

2. Jesus is crucified

• *He was numbered with the transgressors*

2. **Jesus is crucified<sup>□1</sup>**. There were probably many men who were crucified at the same time as Jesus. Two of them are of special interest<sup>□2</sup>. It was prophesied about Jesus that He would be a Saviour who was *'numbered with the transgressors'*<sup>□3</sup>. Jesus prays for those who are treating Him with such amazing cruelty and injustice<sup>□4</sup> (on the Day of Pentecost the prayer was answered for in the crowds of that day were many of the same people who had not long before been in Jerusalem for Passover).

3. Terrible shame on the cross

• *Jesus saves people by not saving Himself*

3. **Jesus experiences terrible shame on the cross<sup>□1</sup>**. The people admit that He saved others! They also see that He does not save Himself. Exactly. He saves people by not saving Himself from the cross. They were right at every point, but could not believe what they were witnessing. The

people, the rulers, the soldiers, even the criminals, all ridicule Jesus. Jesus hangs naked in unimaginably ghastly shame. He could not explain to anyone what was happening. Nothing but *'the joy set before him'*

□1 23:26-32  
□2 23:26

□1 23:27

□2 23:28-30

□3 23:31

□1 23:33-34

□2 23:33

□3 Isaiah

53:12

□4 23:34

□1 23:35-38

□2 Hebrews

enabled him to 'endure the cross, despising the shame'<sup>12:2</sup>.

12:2

#### 4. Others who are being crucified are near Him

- The thief on the cross is given assurances of salvation

4. **Others who are being crucified are near Him**<sup>23:39-43</sup>. In the midst of everything, Jesus is still saving sinners. One of the thieves realises his sin, recognises a Saviour in the crucified Jesus (having faith despite all the squalor and disgrace of the cross) and prays in faith to Jesus! Jesus gives him an assurance of heaven that very day. The thief had not had much time to be very religious or do many good deeds. He had not been baptised. He had not done much reading of the Bible lately. I can't imagine when he last went to the synagogue. But a few seconds of faith gave him salvation! One writer I know does not like us getting our theology from 'the thief on the cross'. I am not surprised. Not everyone likes the gospel, and the 'thief on the cross' is such a clear presentation of the gospel message.

23:39-43

#### 5. Jesus dies

- Darkness over the whole land
- Abandoned
- Temple curtain torn
- Jesus' work is done

5. **Jesus dies**<sup>23:44-49</sup>. Two things happen as Jesus dies. Darkness comes over the whole land, for three hours, as the shining of the sun was miraculously obscured<sup>23:44-45a</sup>. The very universe expressed its displeasure as the sins of the world were laid on Jesus. God abandoned Him. Human beings abandoned Him. Even the sun abandoned Him. The sins of the world were laid on Jesus and He was plunged into the deepest experience of the anger of God against sin. Yet at the same time the curtain of the temple is torn into two. It expresses the fact that the atoning death of Jesus has opened a way into closer fellowship with God than has ever been possible before! Jesus' work is done! Jesus hands over His life to the powers of death. Immediately there is the feeling among the witnesses that something immense has happened. A soldier is instantly convinced of Jesus' genuineness<sup>23:47</sup>. The crowds are instantly convinced that they have assisted in something that was deeply wicked and yet deeply meaningful<sup>23:48</sup>. The women who have been loyal to Jesus witness His death and stay there for a long time, so great is the feeling that something immense has just happened<sup>23:49</sup>.

23:44-49

23:44-45a

23:47

23:48

23:49

#### 6. Jesus buried in a rich man's tomb

- The fact of Jesus' death could hardly be more certain

6. **After His death Jesus is buried in a rich man's tomb**<sup>23:50-56a</sup>. Everything happens in such a way that there can be not the slightest doubt that Jesus was dead and buried. When He is raised less than forty-eight hours later, it will be difficult to deny that He was genuinely dead and buried. The fact of Jesus' death could hardly be more certain – but that in itself will mean that the fact of Jesus' resurrection will be certain for those who are not so prejudiced that it blinds their eyes to the truth. The Saviour has died for the sins of the world. But the resurrection is not far away!

23:50-56a



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