



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

LESSON 19 - STUDY QUESTIONS

LUKE 22:63-74, 23:1-56

DAY ONE

1. From last week's lesson (Lesson 18, Chapter 22:1-62) what particular verse or verses remained with you? Share your selection with your small group and the reason it is special.

Read Luke 22:63-71

2a. As today's lesson begins, Jesus was the prisoner of the Jewish leadership who had plotted His capture. According to verse 63 what did the men who were holding him captive begin to do?

b. Jesus' captors knew that He had performed miracles and uttered prophecies, and yet they taunt and mock Him in a manner that would have been terrifying as well as painful. How did Luke describe this first mockery in verse 64?

3a. Jesus should have been under the protection of His captors, yet verse 65 states that they "kept heaping many other insults on Him." He has been abandoned by the crowds, by His friends, and His apostles, even Peter. What occurred when day came (verse 66)?

NOTE: The Sanhedrin included 70 members of scribes, rabbis, Pharisees, priests and Sadducees, headed by the chief priest. This religious body dated to the time of Moses (Numbers 11:16). The Jerusalem Sanhedrin met in the Temple and dealt with spiritual matters and the internal affairs of the Jewish people. During Jesus' time, political and criminal matters were handled by the Romans.

b. The council began to question Jesus, first asking Him to tell them if He was the Messiah (verse 67). Jesus answered by rephrasing the words of the prophet Jeremiah to King Zedekiah (who had arrested him for prophesying the conquest of Jerusalem). Compare Jesus' response in verses 67 and 68 with that of Jeremiah:

Jesus said:

Jeremiah said (Jeremiah 38:15):

4. Jesus then quoted the Book of Daniel which prophesied the Messiah. Record His answer in verse 69.

5a. The Council then asked Jesus if He was the Son of God and Jesus answered them indirectly (verse 70). Record His words.

b. Even though Jesus did not answer "Yes" to their question, He used the Jewish word for God, "I AM." What did the Sanhedrin say according to verse 71?

6. CONNECTION: Jesus' trial by the Sanhedrin was cruel and unfair. It is obvious that they had decided the results in advance, portraying Him as a blasphemer and false prophet. In spite of being wrongly arrested, mocked, taunted, and beaten, Jesus remained calm and quiet, answering the questions of this religious council by quoting verses from the Hebrew Testament with which they would be familiar. When they asked if He is the Son of God, He responded, "YOU say that I am." Consider how you would answer if asked to explain your faith to non-believers, whether hostile or not. Try completing one of these sentences: "I am a Christian because ..." or "I believe Jesus is the Son of God because ..." and share your answer with your small group.

Read and record Ephesians 6:19 and begin your prayer today asking Our Lord to help you be a better witness for Him.

DAY TWO

Read Luke 23:1-12

7a. The assembly (the Sanhedrin) "rose as a body" and brought Jesus before Pilate, the local Roman prefect (verse 1) making three accusations. Briefly list them here and whether you think each is true or false:

b. Note what religious reason was left out of their accusations and one or two reasons why their accusations, though false, would get the attention of the Romans.

8a. Pilate began to question Jesus. What memorable question did Pilate ask Jesus (verse 3) and what was Jesus' answer?

b. What did Pilate say to the chief priests and the crowds according to verse 4?

9a. The Jewish leaders were not ready to give up! What other complaint did they then make against Jesus according to verse 5.

b. When Pilate heard them say that Jesus stirred up people, he asked whether Jesus was a Galilean (verse 6). What did Pilate do to try to pass the buck when he learned that Jesus was, indeed, a Galilean (verse 7)?

10a. Herod Antipas was ruler as tetrarch over the northern regions of Galilee and Perea. Since Jesus was a Galilean, a charge against Jesus could be tried under Herod's jurisdiction. Summarize how Herod reacted to seeing Jesus, and why (verse 8).

NOTE: The Gospel of Luke is the only Gospel which records the transfer of Jesus from Pilate to Herod and the interrogation of Jesus by Herod.

b. Herod, who proclaimed himself a Jew, was very interested in Jesus and questioned Jesus at some length. Jesus gave Herod no answer (verse 9) fulfilling the prophecy of the Messiah in Isaiah 53:7. Record this verse from Isaiah.

11a. While Herod questioned Jesus, the chief priests and the scribes stood by vehemently accusing him. According to verse 11, how did Herod and his soldiers treat Jesus and what did Herod do?

b. What was the unusual result of the exchange of the prisoner, Jesus, between Pilate and Herod and what might this indicate about them (verse 12)?

12. CONNECTION: Pilate obviously had no desire to prosecute an innocent man; he surely knew how enthusiastically the crowds had greeted Jesus, and his job was to keep peace. The Sanhedrin also would have wanted to avoid creating a martyr and thus riling up the pilgrims who had swarmed into Jerusalem for the Passover. What a sticky situation! We, too, sometimes try to "reassign" our problems to someone else rather than dealing with the matter directly. Prayer, either individually or with others, is a great resource when looking for the right words or correct approach to resolving difficulties. How do you incorporate prayer and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit when you are dealing with a sensitive or difficult decision?

Read and record Romans 8:26, and write a short prayer today asking the Holy Spirit to remind you to call on Him!

DAY THREE

Read Luke 23:13- 25

13a. Jesus is once again under Pilate's jurisdiction. Pilate called together all the chief priests, the leaders, and the people (verse 13). What did he say to them (verse 14)?

b. According to Pilate, who else believed Jesus to be not guilty of their charges and why did Pilate reach this conclusion (verse 15)?

14. Even though he did not find Jesus guilty of any of the Sanhedrin's charges, what did Pilate say he was going to do (to appease the Jewish leadership) in verse 16?

15a. The Jewish chief priests, leaders and people reacted by shouting out together, "Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!" (verse 18) Who was Barabbas according to verse 19?

b. Pilate still wanted to release Jesus, so he addressed them again (verse 20); but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" A third time Pilate addressed the crowd. What did he say to them (verse 22)?

16. The crowd kept shouting to crucify Jesus, and finally Pilate capitulated. In verse 24 we read that Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. Who did he then release and what did he do with Jesus according to verse 25?

17. CONNECTION: In today's lesson Pilate tried to keep the peace by offering to have Jesus flogged, a compromise between what he knew to be right and what others demanded of him. Pilate hoped to appease Jesus' accusers but avoid executing an innocent man. He understood the antagonism of his constituents and the potential for rioting among the pilgrims. He may also have feared that the Jewish leaders would report him to his superiors. Finally, Pilate agreed to execute Jesus. We too are tempted to compromise to get the approval of friends or associates, whether it is serving alcohol to teenagers, accepting white lies, or approving of immoral lifestyles, to "keep the peace." Describe a similar situation that you faced. What helped you make your decision and to what do you attribute your spiritual courage?

Read and record 1 Corinthians 15:58.

DAY FOUR

Read Luke 23:26-38

18a. As today's lesson begins, Pilate has handed over Jesus to be crucified. As they led Jesus away, they seized a man coming from the country to help Him. Who did they seize and what did they force him to do (verse 26)?

THINK: Simon carried the cross behind Jesus symbolizing good discipleship. In what ways do you carry the cross for Jesus, walking in his footsteps?

b. A large crowd followed Jesus, among them women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him (verse 27). What did Jesus call them?

19a. Jesus told the women them not to weep for Him. For whom did Jesus tell them to weep (verse 28)?

b. Jesus then prophesied more tragic times to come to Jerusalem. Complete the following verses describing how they will mourn in those tragic times from verses 29-31.

For the days are surely coming when they will say blessed are the barren:

Then they will begin to say to the mountains:

...and to the hills:

For if they do this when the wood is green:

NOTE: Jesus' warning of Jerusalem's fall to come in 70 A.D. calls to mind the prophecies of Hosea and Ezekiel (Hosea 10:8; Ezekiel 15:1-8, 20:47) which liken Jerusalem to wood. Like dry wood, an unrepentant Jerusalem will burn. While the wood is "green" there is still time for Jerusalem to repent and be forgiven.

20a. Two others who were criminals were also led away to be put to death with Jesus (verse 32). Where did they take Jesus and the two criminals and what happened (verse 33)?

b. Luke calls the place of Jesus' crucifixion "The Skull." What name is used in the other gospel accounts of the crucifixion?

NOTE: The word "Calvary" is not found in the gospels. It comes from the Latin word *calvariae*, which means "of a skull."

21a. Record from verse 34 the loving words of forgiveness said by Jesus from the cross:

b. Those who crucified Him cast lots for His clothing (end of verse 34), and the people stood by watching. With what scornful words did the leaders scoff at Him (verse 35)?

22a. The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering Him sour wine. How did they challenge Him (verse 37)?

b. What was the inscription over Jesus (verse 38)?

23. CONNECTION: What a terrible thing, to be mocked, naked, in indescribable pain, to know you are dying, and surrounded only by criminals or those who do not love you! And what does it take to become so cold, pitiless, unforgiving, and unfeeling so as to scoff or simply turn away from one in the helpless agony of death. And yet every day in the United States and around the world innocent people die undeserved deaths. Extreme poverty, murder, war ... these are still part of the power of darkness that we as Christians must continue to fight. Think of a "fighter", either a person or organization, that you know (or know of) who makes a special effort to console, protect, or care for innocents at risk, and briefly share a bit about them with your small group.

Read and record Isaiah 1:17 and pray today for the protection of all those who are in harm's way, asking God to help you be a warrior for the weak.

DAY FIVE

Read Luke 23:39-47

24a. In yesterday's lesson we read that two criminals were crucified with Jesus, fulfilling another of the prophecies in Isaiah (53:12). As today's lesson begins, one of the criminals who was crucified with Jesus kept deriding Him. What did he say (verse 39)?

b. But the other criminal rebuked the one who had scoffed at Jesus, asking him, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?" How did he explain what was wrong with that from verse 41?

25a. What beautiful request did the believing criminal make (verse 42)? (Good memory verse).

b. With what reassuring words did Jesus reply to this man (verse 43)?

26a. According to verse 44, about what time was it and what happened from then until three in the afternoon?

b. At three o'clock, the sun's light failed, and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. What do you think the tearing of the curtain could represent?

NOTE: "The veil in the temple was symbolic of the flesh of Christ Himself which according to Hebrews (Book of Hebrews) was open to us in a new and living way." (David E. Utxler, Catholics United for the Faith)

27. Read and record verse 46, and then pause a moment to meditate on the death of Our Lord.

28a. When the centurion saw what had taken place, what did he say (verse 47)?

b. What do you think is remarkable about this man's comment?

29. CONNECTION: In today's lesson we read of the promise of Paradise to the believing criminal and the terrible crucifixion of Our Lord, followed by Nature going dark in mourning as Our Lord died with a prayer to His Father. The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ is reflected beautifully in the poetry of Psalm 22. Psalm 22 was written by King David around 1000 B.C., long before the invention of crucifixion. Read Psalm 22 and record one or two verses which most speak to you of Our Lord's Passion. Share with your small group the reason you chose those particular verses.

Let these thoughts lead you into prayer.

DAY SIX
Read Luke 23:48-56

30a. Jesus has drawn His last breath. According to verse 48, what did those who were gathered there for the spectacle do and what do you think this meant?

b. Though the spectators left, others remained. Who was still there and what did they do (verse 49)?

31. Verse 50 describes a "good and righteous man" named Joseph, who was a member of the council, also called the Sanhedrin. According to verse 51, what made him different from the rest of those on the council who had called for Jesus' death?

32a. Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus (verse 52). What did he then do according to verse 53?

b. Jewish law had specific rules regarding handling of the dead body of a criminal. Read Deuteronomy 21:22-23 and briefly note the requirements for the timing of the burial and the reason.

33a. Luke states in verse 54 that "It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning." No work or activity (other than prayer) was allowed on the Sabbath. Who followed Joseph to the tomb and what did they do (verse 55-beginning of 56)?

b. Read John 19:25, Matthew 27:56 and Mark 15:40-41 and list the women named in these passages as witnesses of Jesus' crucifixion.

34. Jesus' mortal life was finished. He made the ultimate sacrifice. His body was taken down and moved to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. The women of Galilee prepared spices and ointments to anoint the body after the Sabbath. What did they do on the Sabbath (end of verse 56)?

35. CONNECTION: We read in today's lesson that the "women who had come with Him from Galilee" stayed through the Crucifixion, followed Joseph of Arimathea to the tomb of Jesus, and then prepared spices to honor Him. The strength and loyalty of these women is a model for all Christians. Coming from different backgrounds, they are united in their love and loyalty to Christ. As humble servants of the Lord they carried out His will without

fanfare or drama. Now they are preparing what they must think is a final service to their Lord; they have not left Him; they will not leave Him, other than to worship His Father on the Sabbath, as He would have wished. In what ways does their faithfulness inspire you?

Read and record Matthew 23:11 and pray for the humility to serve others selflessly.

After completing this lesson, read pages 144-153 in the *The Gospel According to Luke* by Michael F. Patella, O.S.B. The Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study acknowledges that scripture quotations in this study are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

©Copyright 2015. The Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study

thecornerstonescripturestudy.org