

mark 15. ²²⁻³⁸

²²And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

²³And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not. ²⁴And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

²⁵And it was the third hour, and they crucified him. ²⁶And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS. ²⁷And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. ²⁸And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, "And he was numbered with the transgressors."

²⁹And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, ³⁰Save thyself, and come down from the cross."

³¹Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, "He saved others; himself he cannot save. ³²Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe."

And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

³³And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is, being interpreted, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

³⁵And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, "Behold, he calleth Elias."

³⁶And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, "Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down."

³⁷And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. ³⁸And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

This is our 43rd reading for Lent 2025. According to the traditional chronology of Jesus' final week, the events recorded in today's reading took place on Friday afternoon. It is also a reading in a series on Atonement that we entitle, "Sacrifice: What Jesus Suffered for Us." *

1. In a reading from Jacob 1.⁸, we reviewed part of Jacob's admonition to his people that they "view his [Jesus'] death," and suggested that you do so at each stage of Jesus passion. After reading this passage, close your eyes and attempt to "view his death" in your mind. You might consider doing so while in prayer.
 - ? What do you see?
 - ? How do you feel about what you see?
 - ? What would you have wanted to say to him if you had been there? Say it now.
2. "The scripture was fulfilled," writes Mark, "which saith, 'and he was numbered with the transgressors.'" Of course, "transgressors" refers to the two thieves with whom Jesus was crucified. However, it has larger application. It has reference to all of us.
 - ? What do you think and how do you feel when you consider Jesus' willingness to be "numbered" with you, a transgressor, especially as such cost to himself?
 - ? Many have and do find the idea of God being willing to be "numbered," or be willing to associate with sinners scandalous. Do you find the idea scandalous in that you have difficulty believing Jesus is willing and anxious to associate with you even in your sin?
3. Jesus began his ministry, remember, by spending 40 days in the wilderness and being tempted of the devil. Jesus' temptations never ceased. Even on the cross, Jesus had temptations hurled at him.

- ? What temptation or temptations do you see Jesus facing from the cross according to Mark's account?
 - ? How great a temptation, do you think, was it for Jesus to use his power to deliver himself from the pain and suffering of the cross? Why do you answer as you do?
 - ? How great a temptation, do you think, was it for Jesus to use his power to deaden his pain and suffering even as he resisted the temptation to deliver himself from the cross? Why do you answer as you do?
 - ? How "skilled" are you at resisting the temptation to preserve yourself, your feelings, your reputation, etc. at the cost of others?
 - ? What other temptations can you imagine Jesus facing on the cross?
4. According to tradition, Jesus spoke seven times from the cross. Luke, we have seen in previous readings of his crucifixion narrative, recorded three of them. Mark records just one: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
- ? How do you feel and what do you think when you consider this complaint/plea?
 - ? This utterance is actually a quote from Psalm 22.¹. Why, do you think, did Jesus utilize a prayer from the Psalms to express his agony in his darkest hour?
 - ? What experiences have you had with the Psalms in which you found expressions that matched your own feelings and thoughts?
 - ? If you can find time, read the entire 22nd Psalm and consider the ways in which it can be applied to Jesus' experiences?
5. Consider the sentiment expressed in Hebrews 2.^{10-11, 17}.

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

- ? How does this passage relate to the idea of Jesus being "numbered with the transgressors"?
 - ? What does it mean to you when you read that Jesus was "*in all things*... like unto his brethren"?
- * The following ten titles are part of our atonement series:
- "Fall: Our Need of Atonement"
 - "Grace: The Savior's Generous and Earnest Invitation"
 - "At-one-ment: The Savior's unity and connectedness with us"
 - "Sacrifice: What Jesus Suffered for Us"
 - "Glorification: The Savior's Resurrection, Ascension, and Enthronement"
 - "Justification: How We Repent and Change"
 - "Renewal: The Hope, Joy, Peace, and Power of Atonement"
 - "Sanctification: Imitating and living a life of Atonement"
 - "Thanksgiving: In Praise of Atonement"
 - "Song of the Righteous: A Song unto Me"