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The Twenty-One Events Preceding, During, and Following the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ

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THE TWENTY-ONE EVENTS PRECEDING, DURING, AND FOLLOWING THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS CHRIST

- **Events Preceding**

1. His journey to Golgotha (Mt. 27:31, 32; Mk. 15:20, 21; Lk. 23:26)

“And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him. Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross” (Mk. 15:20, 21).

2. He is followed by a large company of women who were weeping over His impending death. Jesus responds by asking them not to sorrow over him, but rather to save their tears to lament over the future destruction of the city of Jerusalem (Lk. 23:27-31).

- **Events During**

3. Jesus is placed on the cross at 9:00 a.m. between two thieves.

“Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him” (Mk. 15:25). *“Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left”* (Mt. 27:38). *“There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left”* (Lk. 23:32, 33). *“Where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center”* (Jn. 19:18).

4. Pilate prepared a sign and had it placed atop the cross which read: “THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.” Immediately the Jewish leaders protested and demanded he change the sign to read, “HE CLAIMED TO BE THE KING OF THE JEWS.” But Pilate refused, answering, “What I have written, I have written.” (Mt. 27:37; Mk. 15:26; Lk. 23:38; Jn. 19:19-22)
5. His garments and a special seamless robe are gambled for by the soldiers (Mt. 27:35; Mk. 15:24; Jn. 19:23, 24).
6. He is reviled, ridiculed, and scorned (1) by the motley mob at the foot of the cross, (2) by the Jewish leaders, (3) by the soldiers, and at first, by both thieves (Mt. 27:39-44; Mk. 15:29-32; Lk. 23:35-37).
7. He is offered vinegar, mingled with gall, meant to help ease the terrible agony which awaited Him, but refused to drink it (Mt. 27:34; Mk. 15:23).
8. The soldiers also offered Him vinegar, but this was to mock him (Lk. 23:36). This, too, is rejected.
9. His first three statements, spoken from 9:00 a.m. to noon:

Statement one: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34).

Statement two: "Verily, I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk. 23:43).

This was directed to one of the thieves who asked Jesus to save him.

Statement three: "Woman, behold thy son! Behold Thy mother." The first of these words were directed to Mary, while the second, to the Apostle John (Jn. 19:26, 27).

10. A strange darkness now settled down upon the area.

11. Out of this darkness Jesus spoke His final four statements:

Statement four: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34)

Statement five: "I thirst" (Jn. 19:28).

Statement six: "It is finished" (Jn. 19:30b)

Statement seven: "Father into thy hands, I commend my spirit" (Lk. 23:46).

12. Jesus finally receives the drugged vinegar and dies (Mk. 15:36, 37; Jn. 19:29, 30a).

- **Events Following**

13. The testimony of the centurion

"Certainly this was a righteous man" (Lk. 23:47). "Truly, this was the Son of God" (Mt. 27:54).

14. A confused and possibly guilt-stricken crowd leave the scene (Lk. 23:48).

15. The tearing of the veil in the temple (Mt. 27:51a).

16. A great earthquake shook the area (Mt. 27:51b).

17. The resurrection of many dead individuals –

"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many" (Mt. 27:52, 53).

18. Pilate sends soldiers to the cross to make sure of the three men on the cross –

"Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out" (Jn. 19:31-34).

19. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus ask for and receive permission to remove the body from the cross. Joseph then places Jesus' body in his own new tomb. (Mt. 27:57-60; Mk. 15:42-46; Lk. 23:50-56)

20. The vigil of the women who remain near the tomb (Mt. 27:55, 56, 61; Mk. 15:40, 41, 47; Lk. 23:55).

21. The sealing of the tomb

“On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, ‘Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, After three days I will rise. Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, He has risen from the dead. So the last deception will be worse than the first. Pilate said to them, ‘You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.’ So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard” (Mt. 27:62-66).