

*Alêtheia Christian Fellowship*

*May 16, 2021*

*“Judgment is Coming”*

*Sunday school at 9:30, Service at 10:30 with King’s Kids.*

***NEWS***

Wednesday Night Activities at 6:30 PM  
The New Building is a GO!

330 N. Somers Rd. (Mail: PO Box 10626) Kalispell, MT 59904~ (406) 755-1776

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**MATTHEW 27:27-31 ~**

The Via Dolorosa - Latin for the “Way of Suffering.” It is the basis for the Stations of the Cross.

Praetorium \_\_\_\_\_ . Lithostrotos \_\_\_\_\_ . Ecce Homo \_\_\_\_\_ .

These were the Governor’s personal soldiers who were battle hardened and who were constantly employed carrying out the Governor’s justice.

“It isn’t personal.”

**MATTHEW 27:32-38 ~**

Cyrene is Κυρήνη (Kü-řā-nā), Simon was a \_\_\_\_\_ pilgrim in for Passover.

*Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.*

*God Bless You!*

Cross here is σταυρός (stäu-rōs). It means a \_\_\_\_\_.

Crucifixion was a way to send a message.

Golgotha (Γολγοθᾶ) is a Greek word imitating the Aramaic word for “Skull.”  
In Latin it is translated as calvāria - meaning skull = \_\_\_\_\_.

Wine is οἶνος (ōi-nōs). It was always \_\_\_\_\_.

Casting lots for Jesus’ clothing fulfilled Psalm 22:18.

Since the notice was specifically placed on the vertical post above Jesus’  
head, we know that the cross was \_\_\_\_\_.

The “Robbers,” were \_\_\_\_\_.

### **MATTHEW 27:39-44 ~**

The “Passing by” thing is not that people made a trek out to a hill to \_\_\_\_\_.

### **MATTHEW 27:45-53 ~**

He shouted out a phrase in Aramaic...

“Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” Hebrew אֵלֵי אֵלֵי לָמָּה עֲזַבְתָּנִי (ēl-ē ēl-ē lā-mā  
äzäv-tä-nē). It is a quotation of Psalm 22. The crucifixion of Jesus was a  
fulfillment of that Psalm...

The remainder is a foretaste of the end of the world. Sin was paid for and  
what happens next is the final judgment of all things... Will you be ready?

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Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

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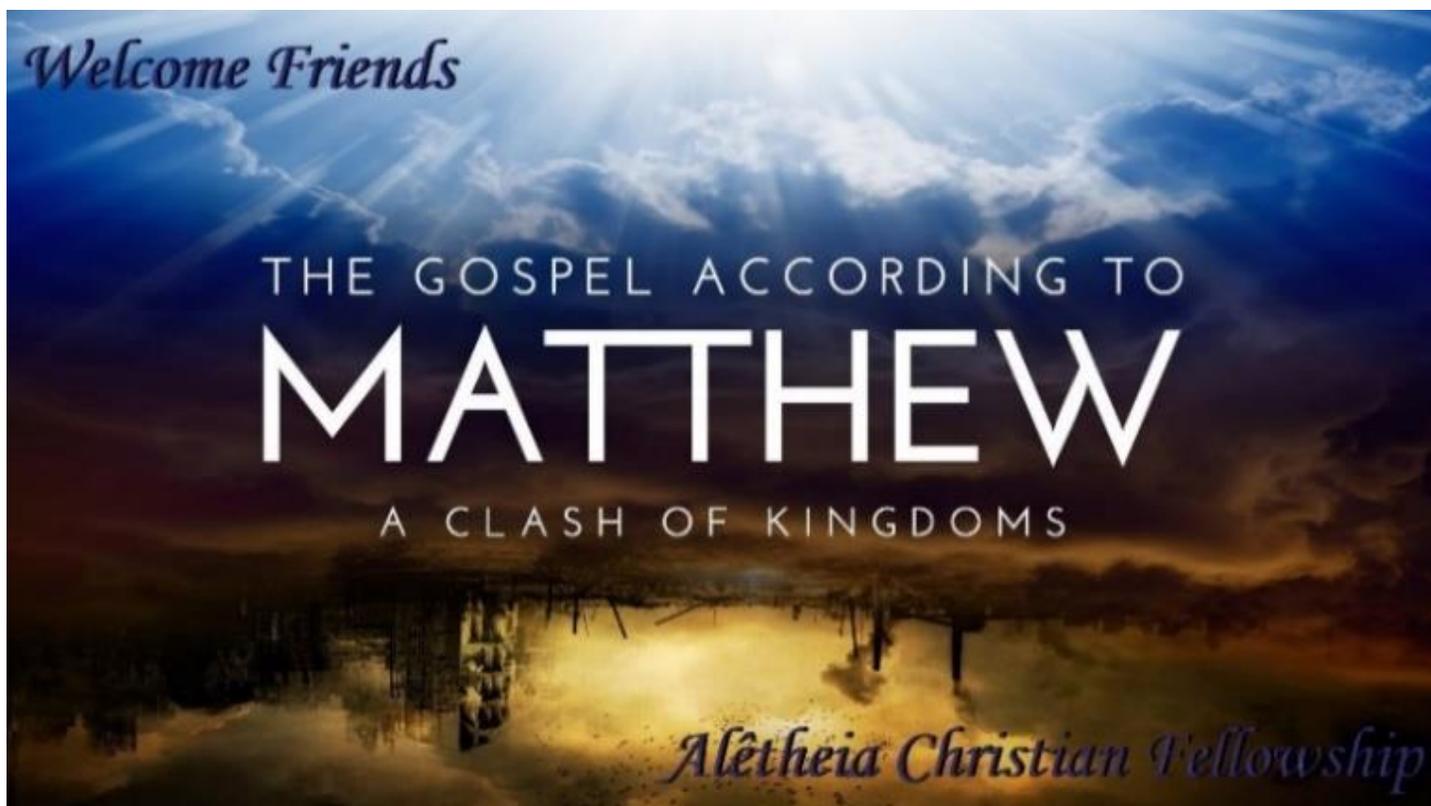
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Today, we're going to cover a lot of ground for two reasons. First, the events here are already fairly

detailed and easy to follow. Second, it's not really where I want to dwell for weeks more. Just realize that we could spend months examining all the details of the four Gospel accounts, but that's better left to a study, rather than a series of sermons.



Matthew 27:27-31, 27Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him. 28They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. 29And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they knelt down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 30They

spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head. 31After they had mocked Him, they took the scarlet robe off Him and put His own garments back on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.

Early Christians were not that interested in where Jesus stood before the Governor, where He was tried and condemned, where he was beaten and brutalized by the Roman authorities. There are a lot of reasons for that - I had a whole long section about it - but suffice it to say, no one really cared where the Praetorium was until about a thousand years after the fact.



The only reason it became important then was to establish the footsteps of Jesus that day for the Via Dolorosa - Latin for the "Way of Suffering." It is the basis for the Stations of the Cross in every Catholic church and in many old mainline Protestant churches. This is the first station in Jerusalem - it's in the wrong spot.

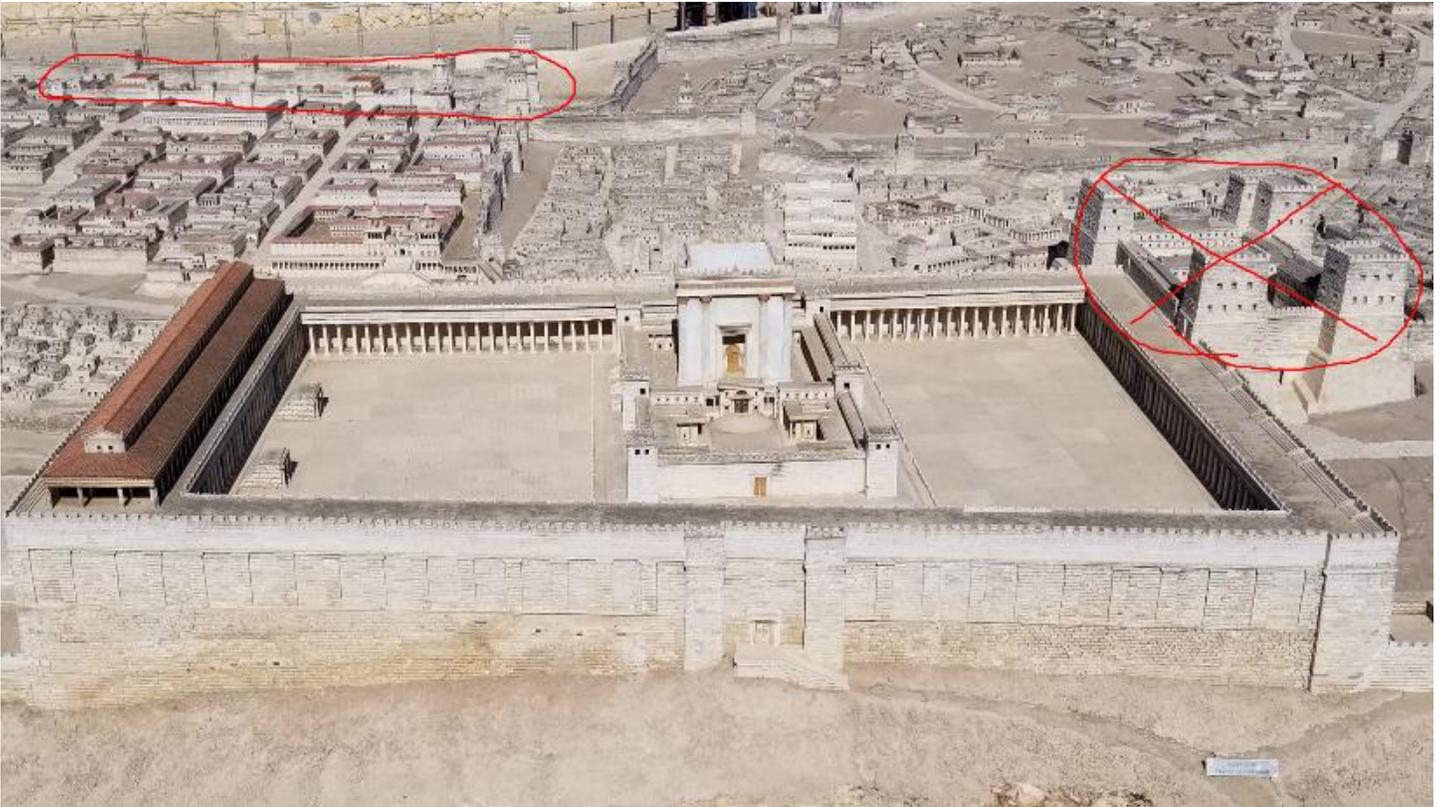
In 1209 Francis of Assisi founded an order known as the Franciscans. Part of their deal was to safeguard and promote holy sites in Jerusalem. His followers started identifying and popularizing new holy sites that previously held little, or no, significance. More and more points of interest for the Christian pilgrims who flocked to Jerusalem. More to show them, more for them to experience in "Walking where Jesus walked." The original trek of Jesus was modified and stops for further reflection were added. The current route with 14 stations was agreed upon less than 200 years ago.

Sometime in the 1100's A.D. the "Praetorium" and the "Pavement" (where Jesus was standing as He was condemned to death) were identified in association with the Fortress Antonia on the northwestern corner of the Temple Complex. It is an understandable mistake. Naturally, without knowing a lot about ancient Roman

practice and the history of Jerusalem, most people would assume the trial took place in the Fortress. The famous Via Dolorosa starts at the Church of Condemnation next to the Ecce Homo Convent, and the “Lithostrotos.”



Lithostrotos means pavement in Latin and from a couple of weeks ago you'll remember that Ecce Homo means “Behold the man.”

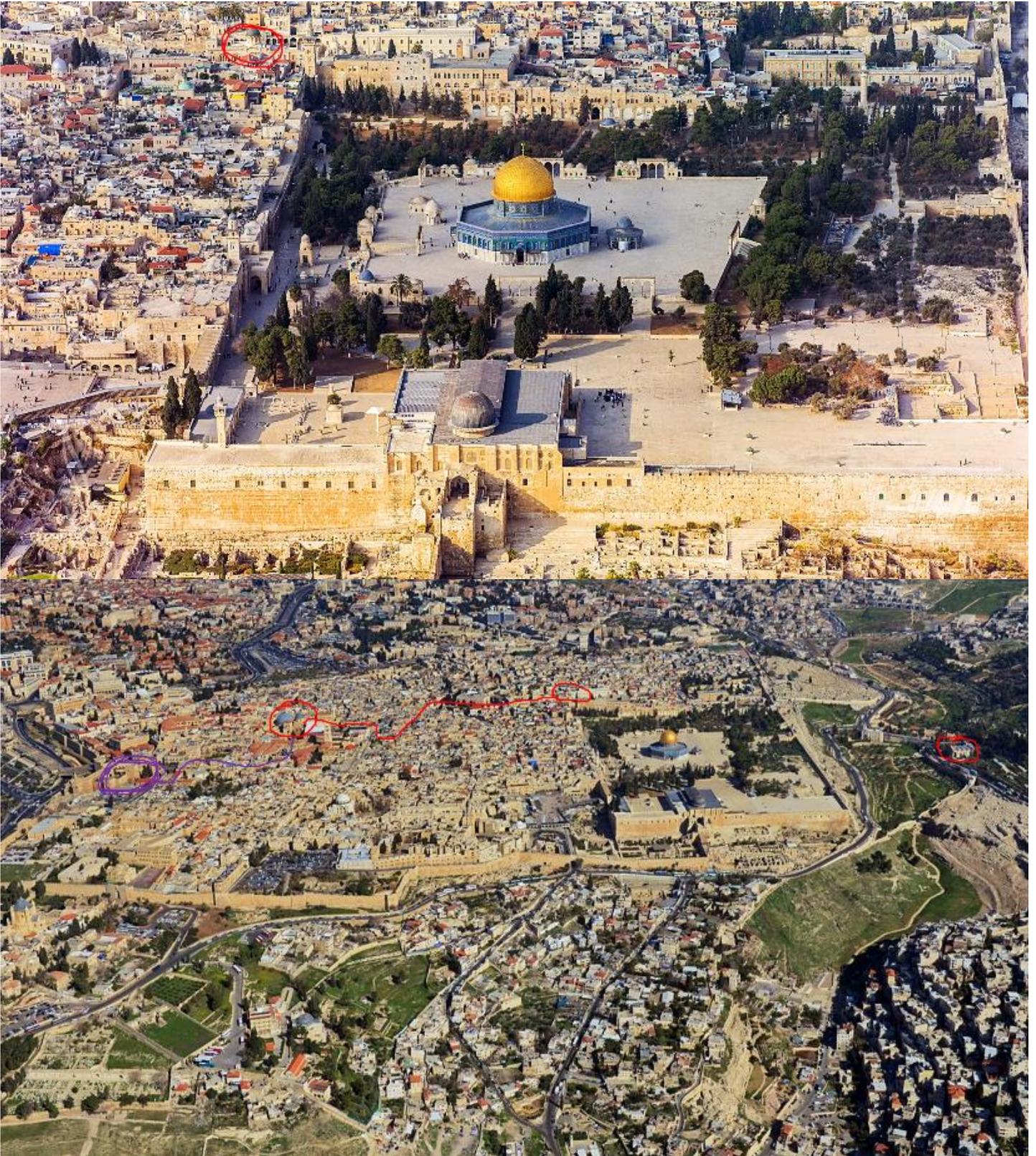


The location is, as I said, associated with the Fortress Antonia that overlooked the Temple Courts. It allowed Roman soldiers to monitor things going on there.

In Acts chapter 21 we see the Apostle Paul accosted in the Temple area and dragged out where the mob intended to beat him to death. Verse 31 says that “A report came up to the commander” and he intervened. What had happened, was some of his soldiers on guard duty overlooking the Temple grounds, reported the clash down below and the commander took immediate action to quell the unrest.

Again, he didn't care about Paul, he cared about peace. Just like parents... When it comes to your kids fighting with each other, you don't want justice, you just want peace. So, it was with the Romans. In Paul's case it was the Commander of the Fortress, not the Governor in the Praetorium.

Praetorium in Latin refers to the home of the leader, whether permanent or temporary. It can refer to the tent of the highest ranking general of an army in the field. You've seen shows where all of the advisors gather in the General's tent and they plan their battle strategy - that's a praetorium. For the Commander of Roman forces in Jerusalem when the Governor was away, his residence in the Fortress Antonia could be legitimately called a praetorium.



Here though, it is the residence of the Governor that we're talking about. That was the former residence of

Herod the Great and then of his son Herod Archelaus before he was deposed and replaced by Roman prefects. The same can be said about Pilate's actual headquarters on the Mediterranean coast. Both praetoria were magnificent palaces, one on the shores of the Roman capitol city of Judea in Caesarea and the other along the western city wall of Jerusalem - the Jewish capitol city... Not the Fortress Antonia.



These were soldiers who regularly accompanied the Governor wherever he went. They were battle hardened men who were constantly employed carrying out the Governor's justice. They were experts in inflicting pain and prolonging death.

They took Jesus and readied Him for crucifixion, but not before mocking Him and physically brutalizing Him. You've heard gangsters in the movies say, "It isn't personal." Well, it's very personal to the other person! In that same vein, this wasn't personal to the soldiers - it was their job. People condemned to crucifixion were not simply condemned to death, they were condemned to suffer in every way possible for as long as possible before death could release them from the pain and humiliation. I'm not saying that the soldiers didn't enjoy their work, I'm just saying the mocking, beating, and abusing was part of the design.

Normally, the Romans would strip the condemned person completely naked and then tie the wooden beam that was to become the horizontal part of the cross, behind their head, resting on their shoulders, and make them carry it, much like an ox with a yoke, to the place of execution. It was kind of like the making a person dig their own grave before shooting them. It was a later misunderstanding that led to all the images of Jesus dragging the full cross behind Him.

The vertical part of the cross would have already been semi-permanently installed just outside the main gate

of the city. In every city, Romans had several vertical posts for crucifixions located to provide maximum exposure to the public as a reminder to behave. Normally, the crucified would be left to decay and be eaten by birds and bugs. Typically, as you would enter a Roman town, you would see bodies of criminals in various states of decay on crosses next to the gate, as well as a few empty vertical posts waiting for a new victim... It was both a degradation and humiliation of the condemned in order to provide a strong deterrent to others.

Probably due to the Passover Festival and all the throngs of people in the city, the Romans made two concessions to accommodate Jewish sensibilities. First, they allowed Jesus to be clothed for His march to the gate and second, they allowed the dead bodies to be removed from the crosses.



Matthew 27:32-38, 32As they were coming out, they found a man of Cyrene named Simon, whom they pressed into service to bear His cross. 33And when they came to a place called Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull, 34they gave Him wine to drink mixed with gall; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink. 35And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves by casting lots. 36And sitting down, they began to keep watch over Him there. 37And above His head they put up the charge against Him which read, “THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.” 38At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.



Cyrene was an important Greek city established in modern-day Libya on the North African coast, not too far from the infamous Benghazi. In Greek, it is Κυρήνη (Kü-řā-nā), the capital city of the Roman province by roughly the same name. It had a large Jewish population at the time - a synagogue from the first century has been found.

Simon was no doubt one of the many Jewish pilgrims in Jerusalem for the Passover. He's usually portrayed as a very dark complected guy, but he was Jewish, not sub-Saharan African. Tradition holds that Simon's two sons became prominent first century Christians. He was pressed into service by the Centurion to carry

Jesus' crossbeam. Whatever Simon thought about Jesus, or about the task at hand, you didn't refuse a Centurion's orders.



Cross here is σταυρός (stäü-röös). It means a vertical post - any vertical post. In this context it refers to the instrument of crucifixion which was sometimes only a vertical post, sometimes a traditional cross either upright, or upside down, and sometimes in the shape of either a capital "T," with the crossbar on top, or an actual "X" arrangement.

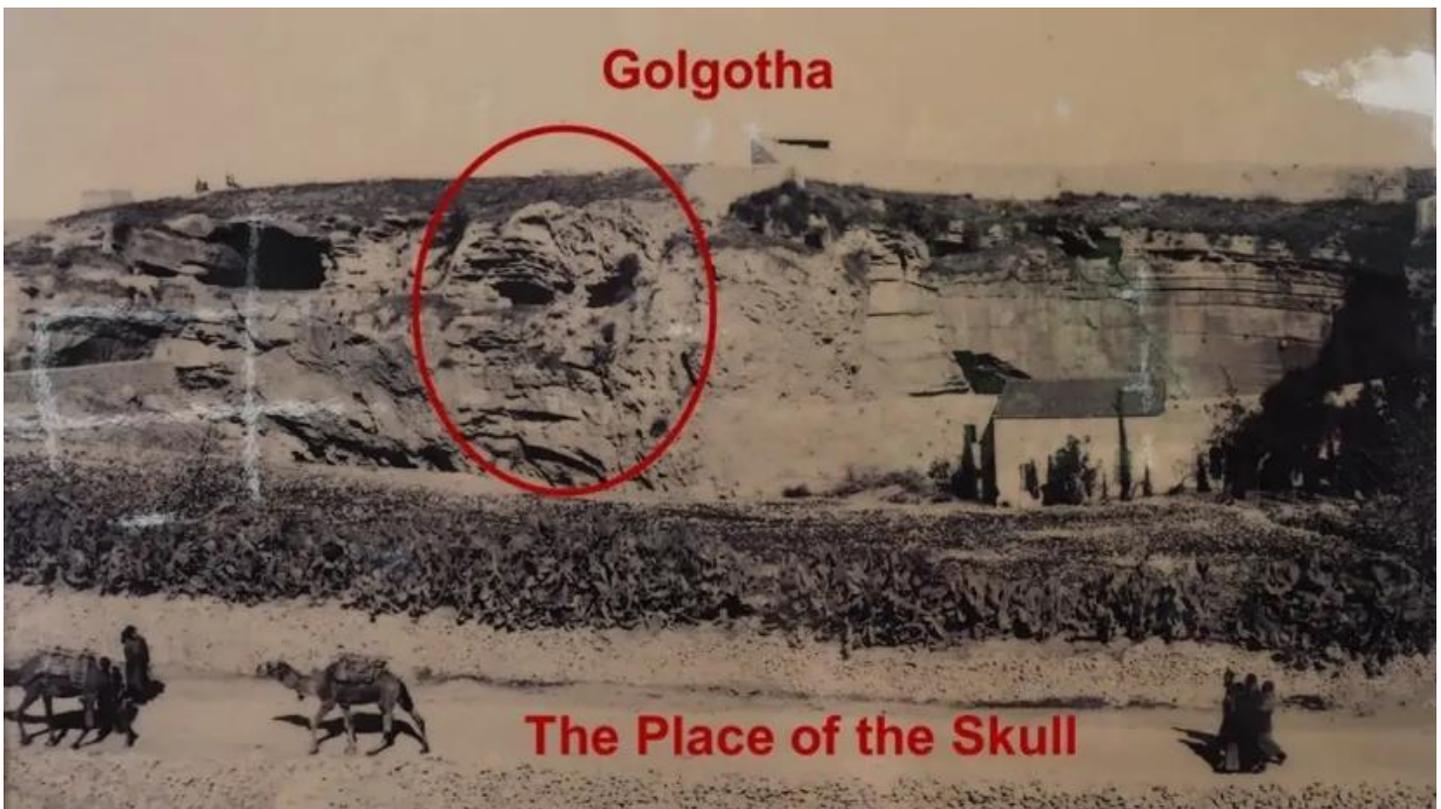
In this formal case, it is a term used as a synecdoche meaning just the horizontal crosspiece that would be

hoisted into position on the semi-permanent vertical post after the person was already attached to it. Pressing Simon into service indicates that the soldiers feared that Jesus was too weakened by His torture thus far, to make it to His crucifixion.

Crucifixion was a way to send a message. It was invented by the Persians - modern-day Iranians, taken over by the Greeks when they defeated Persia and then picked up by the Romans and Carthaginians. It was so brutal; all four empires banned its use on their own citizens. It was reserved for non-citizen enemies of the state and rebellious slaves.



Even so, the idea of public execution and leaving the evidence of that brutality for all to see by leaving the body, or the head to rot was common until very recently. Opening scene in the original Pirates of the Caribbean.



Golgotha (Γολγοθᾶ) is the transliterated Greek word imitating the Aramaic word for "Skull." In Latin it is translated as *calvāria* - Calvary - *calvāria* means skull. This is the basis for the Garden Tomb and is not the correct spot.



Wine is οἶνος (ōi-nōs). Contrary to popular opinion it was always fermented to one degree or another. Oftentimes wine with a higher alcohol content was cut with water, or other things, like myrrh, or gall. It's likely the soldiers wanted to prolong Jesus' life, and therefore His suffering, by giving Him an analgesic in the form of this wine concoction. There is a reference to Psalm 69 in their offer.

While the Romans gave in to Jewish modesty in allowing Jesus to be clothed to this point, here they execute Him as they would any enemy of the state. There's no need to go into the gory details, but as bad

as you can imagine the seen being, I promise you it was worse.

Casting lots for Jesus' clothing fulfilled Psalm 22:18. We'll come back to that Messianic Psalm in a moment.



It was standard Roman practice to put a notice near the condemned person listing their crime. Sometimes it was a sign hung around their neck, or a placard on a stake near the foot of their cross. Since the notice was specifically placed on the vertical post above Jesus' head, we know that the traditional cross that we're all familiar with, was in fact the type of cross used to crucify our Lord.

The “Robbers,” or worse, the “Thieves” in the KJV, crucified on either side of Jesus were insurrectionists. No doubt Zealots and likely Sicarii terrorists.



Matthew 27:39-44, 39And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads 40and saying, “You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” 41In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him and saying, 42“He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and

we will believe in Him. 43“He trusts in God; let God rescue Him now, if He delights in Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’ ” 44The robbers who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words.

People still scoff at Jesus. Again, the “Passing by” thing is not that people made a trek out to a hill to check out the spectacle - Jesus was crucified right next to a main road leading into the city of Jerusalem when that city was swelling with visitors. The intersection across from the gate was as busy as it ever was... Probably thousands of people passed by.

It is stunning how vicious people can be to those already in such torment. Perhaps in doing so they are psychologically distancing themselves from ever being in a similar fate. It has always been that way in every culture including our own - we are no different even today. A person is brought up on charges and innocent or not, throngs of people begin piling on, sparing no abuse, through their social media rants and memes.

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45Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. 46About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" 47And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, "This man is calling for Elijah." 48Immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink. 49But the rest of them said, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him." 50And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. 51And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. 52The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

54Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!" 55Many women were there looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee while ministering to Him. 56Among them was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. 57When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. 58This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him.

59And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away. 61And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the grave. 62Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, 63and said, "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I am to rise again.' 64"Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His disciples may come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first." 65Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how." 66And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone.

I don't want to spend much time on it, but I'd like to quickly make you aware of the tremendous skill with which Matthew wrote. We are in the sixth and final section of chapters 26 and 27 - the Passion of Jesus Christ. The center passage is the next bit we'll get to after this passage and the center part of that next subsection is verse 50 where Jesus "Yielded up His Spirit." That passage is bracketed on either side by subsections in which we see the response of three groups. Here it is the passersby, the chief priests and company, and the terrorists. Each with a negative response. On the other side of the center passage, we'll see three groups with positive responses. Then on the outside of those two subsections with three

groups each bracketing the central part about Jesus' actual death is verses 32-38 where Jesus is brought out and being put up on the cross and then verses 59-66 where Jesus is taken down from the cross and being put away.



Matthew 27:45-53, 45Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. 46About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” 47And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, “This man is calling for Elijah.” 48Immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge,

he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink. 49But the rest of them said, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him." 50And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. 51And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. 52The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

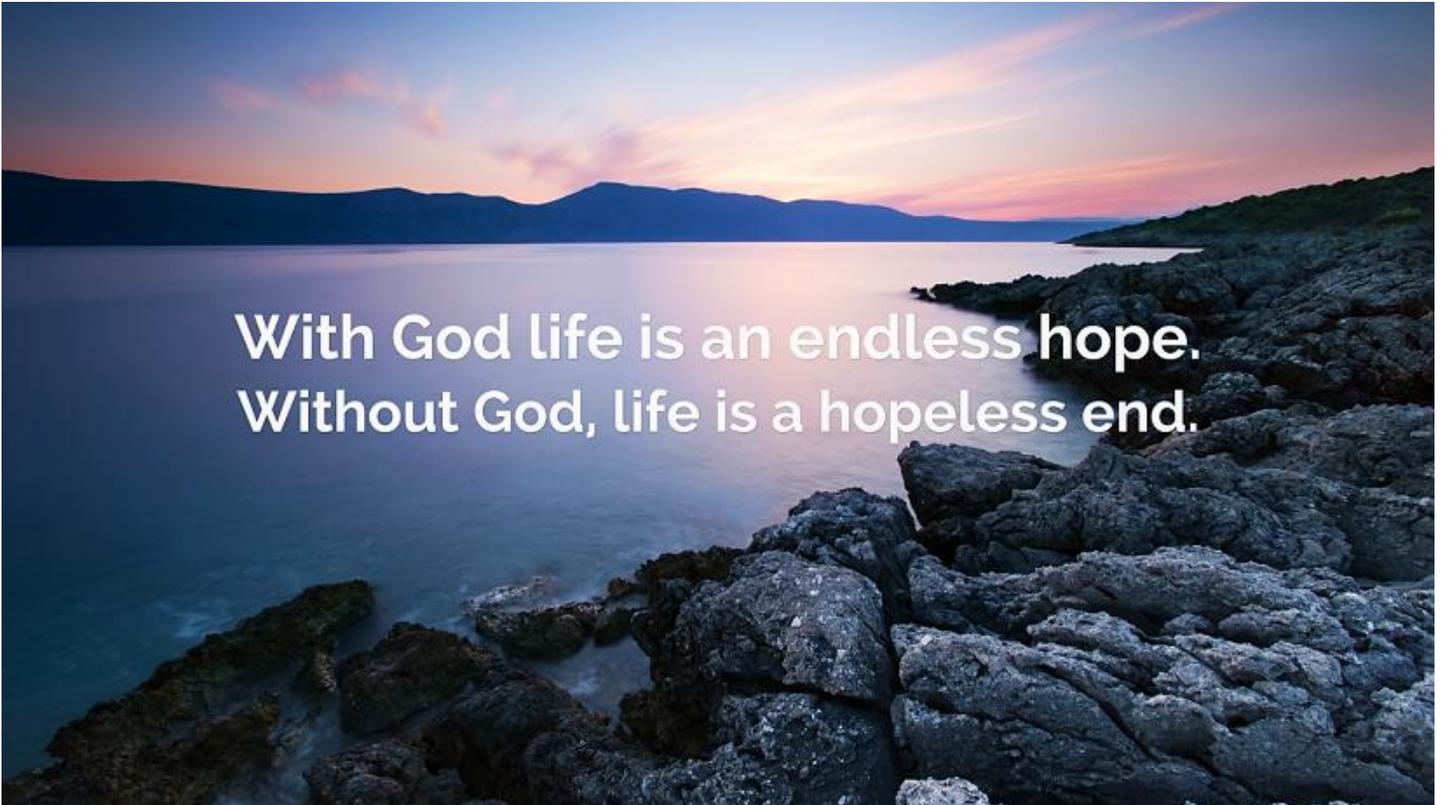
So, Jesus had a very full 24 hours... He ate the Passover with His friends, instituted Holy Communion, prayed, was arrested, endured at least 5 trials, was tortured, crucified, died, and was securely buried with a few minutes to spare.

He was first meeting Pilate at about 6am, He was crucified at about 9am, "Darkness fell" at noon - the sixth hour. Jesus endured another three hours giving up His Spirit at about 3pm. That gave Joseph and his associates three hours to secure Jesus' body in the tomb.

At about 3pm Jesus shouted out a phrase in Aramaic "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?". It is so close to the

Hebrew original אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהֵי לָמָּה עֲזַבְתָּנִי (ěl-ě ěl-ě lä-mä äzäv-tä-nē). It is a quotation of Psalm 22. We just saw Psalm 22.

The crucifixion of Jesus was a fulfillment of that Psalm... I recommend that you read the crucifixion account in all four Gospels and then read Psalm 22 in its entirety and any question you have about why Jesus shouted these words will evaporate. Jesus was not despairing to the point of doubt about the goodness of God! He was proclaiming that He was the Messiah sent to suffer, but that it would not end there. We don't have time to do it now, but let me read some highlights...



Excerpts from the children's Bible - Psalm 22:1-31,  
1My God, my God, why have you (forsaken, deserted,) abandoned me? Why are you so far away when I groan for help? 2Every day I call to you, my God, but you do not answer. Every night I lift my voice, but I find no relief. 3Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. 4Our ancestors trusted in you, and you rescued them. 5They cried out to you and were saved. They trusted in you and were never disgraced. 6But I am a worm and not a man. I am scorned and despised by all! 7Everyone who sees me mocks me. They sneer and shake their heads, saying, 8"Is this the one who relies on the Lord? Then let the Lord save him! If the Lord loves him so much, let the Lord rescue him!"

(Verse 14,) 14My life is poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax, melting within me. 15My strength has dried up like sunbaked clay. My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You have laid me in the dust and left me for dead. 16My enemies surround me like a pack of dogs; an evil gang closes in on me. They have pierced my hands and feet. 17I can count all my bones. My enemies stare at me and gloat. 18They divide my garments among themselves and (cast lots) throw dice for my clothing. 19O Lord, do not stay far away! You are my strength; come quickly to my aid!

(Verse 23) 23Praise the Lord, all you who fear him! Honor him, all you descendants of Jacob! Show him reverence, all you descendants of Israel! 24For he has not ignored or belittled the suffering of the needy. He has not turned his back on them, but has listened to their cries for help.

(Verse 31)31His righteous acts will be told to those not yet born. They will hear about everything he has done.

Jesus never despaired! His cry is an application of this Psalm to Himself. It incorporates the things He was presently suffering, but with a dedication to faithful trust in God and the eventual rescue to come.

Elijah basically means that Yahweh is my God. Evidently, the people passing by thought they heard Jesus call on him. It was an easier mistake than you think. Jews were not to use the name God - so thinking that Jesus was calling Elijah was reasonable. What they didn't get was that Jesus was talking directly to God as He quoted the Psalm about their work together in bringing salvation to mankind.

Seeing that Jesus was about to expire they tried to prolong His life by again giving Him something to drink - wanting to see if Elijah would show.



As I said, verse 50 is the pivot point of the whole 6th section. Jesus had to actually hand over His spirit to death - death couldn't take it from Him - in fact, God couldn't take it from Him - Jesus had to choose to die for the agreed upon cause.

What is that cause? Providing a way for you to live forever in pure love.

The remainder of this middle subsection is a foretaste of the end of the world. People speculate about what each element means, what it portends, why it happened and get caught up in the details, missing the point.

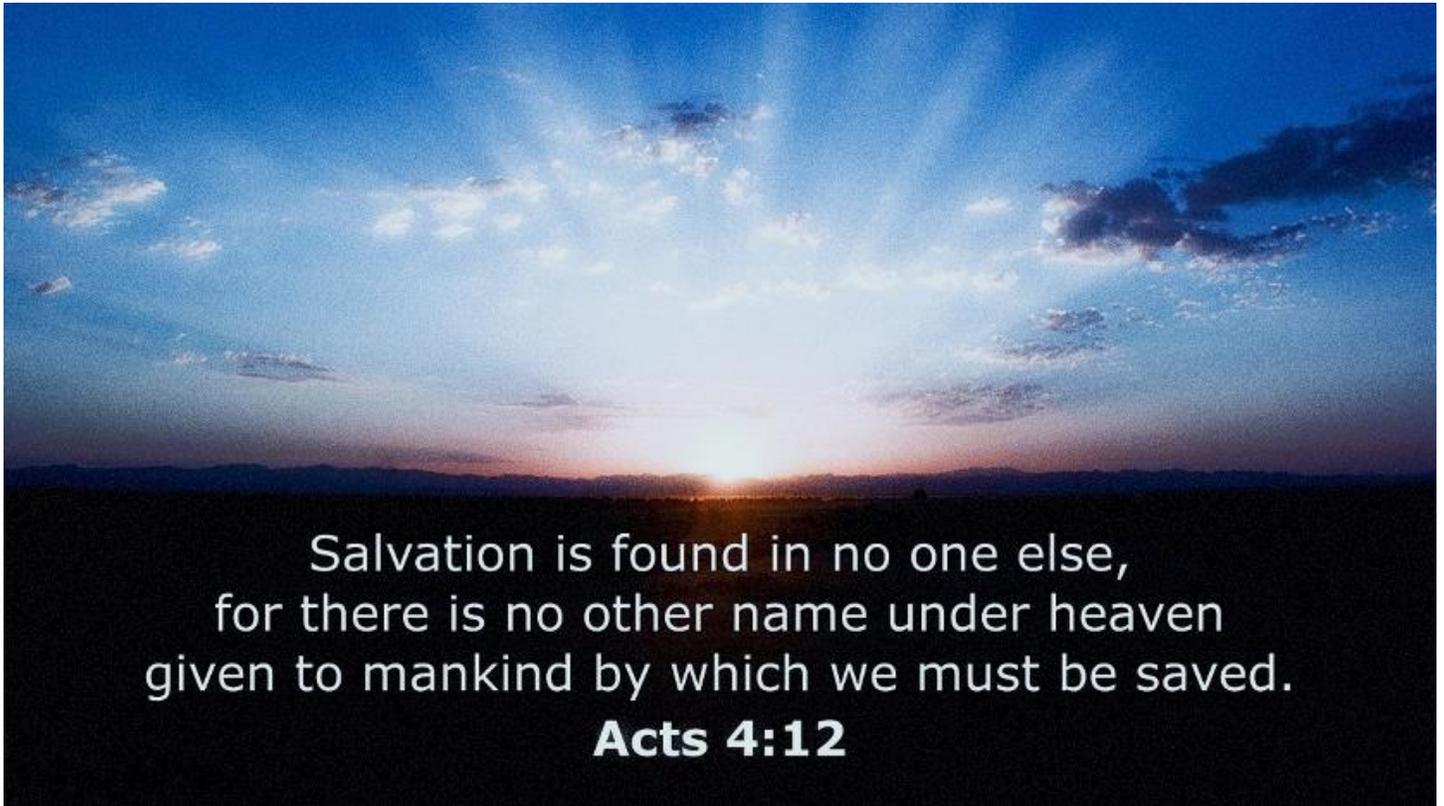
Jesus, the Word of God made flesh, died, and descended into Sheol...



Sin was paid for and what happens next is the final judgment of all things with each person having one of only two eternal destinations because of it. There is nothing to hold back the end and that's what all the elements point to... The end.

It is a real-world graphic answer to Jesus' appellation of the Psalm: "My God, My God." Here God shows what will be and the only reason it didn't progress beyond a foretaste was because God is merciful... "He is unwilling that any should perish" God is "Patient" (II Peter 3:9). So, the world keeps spinning, but trust me, one day, the sky will grow dark again, the earth will

shake, rocks will split, tombs will open... And on that day, it will be too late to change your allegiance.



Salvation is found in no one else,  
for there is no other name under heaven  
given to mankind by which we must be saved.

**Acts 4:12**

Will you be ready?