

# Explore the Bible: November 19

*Sacrificed • Mark 15:24-39*

*By Rick Henson*



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John 19:18-19 states, "Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS" (KJV). The apostle John also shared it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. The Chief priest complained, wanting Pilate to change it to say, "He Claimed to be the King of the Jews." Pilate refused, saying, "What I have written I have written" (John 19:22 KJV).

On that terrible day, many Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled. Isaiah 53:12b reads, "...because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors." Jesus was crucified between two thieves, fulfilling the Isaiah prophecy.

The Apostle Luke revealed more about the two thieves in Luke 23. Both were tried, found guilty, and were paying the price of their crimes. Both began to mock Jesus, as told in Matthew's and Mark's account. Maybe after listening to the words of Jesus, the Spirit of God convicted one thief. He eventually rebuked the other one. "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss" (Luke 23:40-41 KJV).

The penitent criminal asked Jesus to remember him when Jesus comes into His kingdom. What a change of heart! From mocking Jesus to asking for forgiveness and stating belief that Jesus is indeed a King. He was not baptized, nor did he unite with any church, yet Jesus said to Him, "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43 KJV). Even in dying, Jesus kept His word when He said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10 KJV).

We all are like the two thieves. We are guilty sinners



deserving eternal death. One blamed Jesus, however, and the other called on Jesus. One joined the crowd, and the other joined the Kingdom. One could not say that he was not as corrupt as the other, for they both were condemned to die, just like everyone of us. Yet, when we repent and call on Jesus, we receive grace and forgiveness, just like the one thief. Which thief are you?

John wrote in John 19:30 "So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished!' And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit." What was finished? This one word translated "it is finished" can mean the paying of a debt or fulfilling a task. The word has also been found on first century receipts for taxes expressing, "paid in full."

Colossians 2:13-14 reads, "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (KJV). When one was convicted of a crime at the time of Christ, a parchment listing his crimes and the punishment was posted somewhere, maybe on the door to his cell. When the sentence was completed, "Paid in Full" in Greek was written on it. The Apostle Paul painted a vivid picture of what Jesus did on the cross. This "handwriting of ordinances" was the list of sins. Paul said that for those saved, it was nailed to the cross instead of our jail cell door. When Jesus exclaimed, "It is Finished," He was expressing the payment for all our sins. Hallelujah, what a Savior!

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