



a study of
The Gospel According to John

Summer/Fall/Winter 2025-2026

Lesson 22

John 19:17-42

"Slaughter of the Lambs"

Footnotes

[1] THE LAST WEEK: *What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Final Days in Jerusalem*, © 2006, HarperCollins, Chapter 6

REVIEW:

What do you recall from our study of Jesus' arrest and trial, and what stands out to you about John's "scenes" and "players?"

Vocabulary Definitions:

Has done it (עָשָׂה, asah): Accomplish, do, make - Psalm 22:31

Finished (τέλειω, teleó): Accomplish, complete- John 19:30

Brief Historical and/or Cultural Context:

Roman crucifixion was an horrific, torturous method of killing. It was meant to be a deterrent against insurrection. Common criminals were not crucified, only those who were terrorists, or freedom fighters (depending on your point of view).

Crucifixions weren't carried out "on a hill far away," but on the main thoroughfare leading into town. Posts were erected and remained in the ground, where the condemned, carrying the cross bar, were hoisted atop the post. On any given day, there may be some poor soul dying upon a post.

It was not the intention for Roman officials to remove the bodies once dead, but allowed the carrion to be eaten by dogs and birds. It was unheard of for one crucified to be given a burial. It was also normal for a crucifixion to take longer than 24 hours for dehydration and asphyxiation to occur.

A word about Hebrew's Day of Atonement as substitution for sin: Atonement was made once each year in Autumn by the High Priest entering the Holy of Holies, (behind the temple curtain that was torn from top to bottom on Good Friday), sacrificing a bull and a goat, and symbolically transferring the sins of the entire nation onto the head of another goat, which was then set out into the wilderness. Jesus, in the Spring during Passover fulfilled the Passover rituals, but the Passover rituals and Passover Lamb was a picture of rescue from the Angel of Death and from bondage, not an atonement for sin.

The fact(s) remain. Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection was a means of freedom from bondage of sin and death for those who follow him. His death was far more than a Roman crucifixion, and we won't know the depth of his suffering and gift of life until we are united with him in glory.

Synoptic Gospels and John

Have you ever experienced Good Friday worship using Jesus' "Seven Last Words" in sermon and song? The service includes pieces of the four gospel accounts of the crucifixion. It is a melding of four different authors, much like the birth narratives in Matthew and Luke are combined into one Christmas story.

In today's lesson we will review the similarities and differences, and try to set aside those pieces of the story that are found in the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Remember that Mark was written first. Matthew and Luke used Mark's gospel as a reference and added to it as they saw fit to tell the story from each of their perspectives. As we have learned from John, written decades later, his gospel is less a narrative and more of a revelation of Jesus' very nature, as a man, and as God. We will try to glean what John wants us to know about Jesus by what he omits of the synoptic gospels and what is unique to his book.

Read and discuss the insert

Read John 19:17-42

1. Using the insert and John's narrative, discuss the what might be John's reasons for the details he finds important for you to know.

Read Psalm 22

2. What are some phrases that show up in all four gospel accounts of the crucifixion?

