

John 19

John 19:1 Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him

"Flogging was a preliminary to every Roman execution, and only women and Roman senators or soldiers (except in cases of desertion) were exempt. The usual instrument was a short whip (flagrum or flagellum) with several single or braided leather thongs of variable lengths, in which small iron balls or sharp pieces of sheep bones were tied at intervals. Occasionally, staves also were used. For scourging, the man was stripped of his clothing, and his hands were tied to an upright post...As the Roman soldiers repeatedly struck the victim's back with full force, the iron balls would cause deep contusions, and the leather thongs and sheep bones would cut into the skin and subcutaneous tissues. Then as the flogging continued, the lacerations would tear into the underlying skeletal muscles and produce quivering ribbons of bleeding flesh. Pain and blood loss generally set the stage for circulatory shock. The extent of blood loss may well have determined how long the victim would survive on the cross.

"At the Praetorium, Jesus was severely whipped...The Roman soldiers, amused that this weakened man had claimed to be a king, began to mock him by placing a robe on his shoulders, a crown of thorns on his head, and a wooden staff as a scepter in his right hand. Next, they spat on Jesus and struck him on the head with a wooden staff. Moreover, when the soldiers tore the robe from Jesus back, they probably reopened the scourging wounds.

"The severe scourging, with its intense pain and appreciable blood loss, most probably left Jesus in a preshock state. Moreover, hematidrosis (bleeding from the pores of the skin) had rendered his skin particularly tender. The physical and mental abuse meted out by the Jews and the Romans, as well as the lack of food, water, and sleep, also contributed to his generally weakened state. Therefore, even before the actual crucifixion, Jesus' physical condition was at least serious and possibly critical." (Edwards, et al, "On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Mar. 21, 1986, Vol. 255, No. 11, pp. 1457-58)

John 19:5 Behold the man!

The words of Pilate were 'Behold the man!' and 'Behold your King!' The words of Jesus were 'behold thy son!' and 'Behold thy mother!' Both were calls for

compassion. Pilate hoped that by looking upon the bloodied and beaten Jesus the Jews would have compassion and act accordingly. Jesus knew when he spoke to Mary and John that they would have compassion on each other and act accordingly. But for a believer to imagine the scene of Jesus and Pilate before the Jews is almost overwhelming. When Pilate said, 'Behold your King!' we can imagine the hosts of heaven looking on in horror-weeping incessantly-and shedding 'forth their tears as the rain upon the mountains' (Moses 7:28). Can the mortal mind comprehend what emotions were wrought in the heart of God the Eternal Father? Nephi saw this time in vision and could hardly believe what he saw, 'I looked and beheld the Lamb of God, that he was taken by the people; yea, the Son of the everlasting God was judged of the world; and I saw and bear record' (1 Ne. 11:32). What happened was unbelievable! The Great Jehovah, the author of compassion and mercy, would be shown none on this fateful day.

James E. Talmage

"Pilate had probably been a silent observer of this barbarous scene (the scourging). He stopped it, and determined to make another attempt to touch the springs of Jewish pity, if such existed. He went outside, and to the multitude said: 'Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.' This was the governor's third definite proclamation of the Prisoner's innocence. 'Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!' Pilate seems to have counted on the pitiful sight of the scourged and bleeding Christ to soften the hearts of the maddened Jews. But the effect failed. Think of the awful fact-a heathen, a pagan, who knew not God, pleading with the priests and people of Israel for the life of their Lord and King! When, unmoved by the sight, the chief priests and officers cried with increasing vindictiveness, 'crucify him, crucify him,' Pilate pronounced the fatal sentence, 'Take ye him and crucify him,' but added with bitter emphasis: 'I find no fault in him.'" (*Jesus the Christ* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983], 592.)

D. Todd Christofferson

When Pilate brought Jesus forth wearing a crown of thorns, he declared, "Behold the man!" (see John 19:4-5). Pilate may not have fully understood the significance of his own words, but the Lord indeed stood before the people then as He stands today-the highest ideal of manhood. Behold the man!

The Lord asked His disciples what manner of men they should be and then answered, "Verily I say unto you, even as I am" (3 Nephi 27:27; see also 3 Nephi 18:24). That is our ultimate quest... Brethren, let us be men, even as he is. (Let Us Be Men," *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 48)

John 19:9 Pilate...saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer

Neal A. Maxwell

"...an anxious Pilate 'saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.' (John 19:9.)

"Can we remain silent when silence is eloquence-but may be used against us? Or will we murmur, just to let God know we notice the ironies?

"Yet, even with all the ironies, sad ironies, there is the grand and glad irony of Christ's great mission. He Himself noted that precisely because He was 'lifted up upon' the cross, He was able to 'draw all men unto [him],' and being 'lifted up by men,' even so should 'men be lifted up by the Father.' (3 Ne. 27:14.)" ("Irony: The Crust on the Bread of Adversity," *Ensign*, May 1989, 64)

John 19:11 thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above

Boyd K. Packer

"During all of the taunting, the abuse, the scourging, and the final torture of crucifixion, the Lord remained silent and submissive. Except, that is, for one moment of intense drama which reveals the very essence of Christian doctrine. That moment came during the trial. Pilate, now afraid, said to Jesus: 'Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?' (John 19:10).

"One can only imagine the quiet majesty when the Lord spoke. 'Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above' (John 19:11).

"What happened thereafter did not come because Pilate had power to impose it, but because the Lord had the will to accept it.

"I lay down my life,' the Lord said, 'that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again' (John 10:17-18).

"Before the Crucifixion and afterward, many men have willingly given their lives in selfless acts of heroism. But none faced what the Christ endured." ("Atonement, Agency, Accountability," *Ensign*, May 1988, 69)

John 19:14 it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour

John's chronology is different than the synoptic gospels. He wrote that the Last supper was "before the feast of the passover" (John 13:1-2). That means Christ was crucified the day the Jews were preparing the passover feast—that he was crucified at the same time the Jews were slaughtering their unblemished, male lambs. (See commentary for John 13:1-2).

Secondly, the sixth hour is mid-day or noon. The timing here is also different than Matthew, Mark and Luke's. Matthew has Christ on the cross by the sixth hour and dead just after the ninth, "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour" (Matt. 28:45).

"The law of Moses 'was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ' (Gal. 3:24), wrote the Apostle Paul, offering 'a shadow of good things to come' (Heb. 10:1). How? One example is the actual sacrificing of the Passover lamb, which was in similitude of the death of Jesus. (See 1 Cor. 5:7.) It appears that the symbolism also included the timing of the Savior's death: the Passover lamb was killed between 3:00 and 5:00 P.M. on the afternoon of the fourteenth day of the spring month specified in the law of Moses (see Ex. 12:1-6), which was when the Lamb of God actually died as a sacrifice (see John 19:14; Matt. 27:46)." (John P. Pratt, "Passover-Was It Symbolic of His Coming?" *Ensign*, Jan. 1994, 38)

Russell M. Nelson

"Pilate delivered the Lamb of God to be crucified at the same time Paschal lambs nearby were being prepared for sacrifice." ("Why This Holy Land?" *Ensign*, Dec. 1989, 18)

John 19:15 we have no king but Caesar

"With this cry Judaism was, in the person of its representatives, guilty of denial of God, of blasphemy, of apostasy. It committed suicide; and ever

since has its dead body been carried in show from land to land, and from century to century, to be dead and to remain dead, till he come a second time, who is the resurrection and the life." (Edersheim, vol. 2, p. 581, from *Jesus the Christ*, p. 648.)

James E. Talmage

The people who had by covenant accepted Jehovah as their King, now rejected Him in Person, and acknowledged no sovereign but Caesar. Caesar's subjects and serfs have they been through all the centuries since. Pitiably is the state of man or nation who in heart and spirit will have no king but Caesar! (*Jesus the Christ*, 641)

John 19:17 he bearing his cross went forth

Neal A. Maxwell

"...the cross is not something we can shoulder and then stand still. Of the Savior we read the following: 'And he bearing his cross went forth.' ("John 19:17 John 19:17.) The cross is easier to carry if we keep moving. Action and service happily require our attention so that sagging self-pity can be avoided." (*Deposition of a Disciple* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 75.)

John 19:18 they crucified him

"The major pathophysiologic effect of crucifixion, beyond the excruciating pain, was a marked interference with normal respiration, particularly exhalation. The weight of the body, pulling down on the outstretched arms and shoulders, would tend to fix the intercostals (rib) muscles in an inhalation state and thereby hinder passive exhalation. Accordingly, exhalation was primarily diaphragmatic, and breathing was shallow. It is likely that this form of respiration would not suffice and that hypercarbia (elevated blood levels of carbon dioxide) would soon result. The onset of muscle cramps or tetanic contractions, due to fatigue and hypercarbia, would hinder respiration even further.

"Adequate exhalation required lifting the body by pushing up on the feet and by flexing the elbows and adducting the shoulders. However, this maneuver would place the entire weight of the body on the tarsals (feet) and would produce searing pain. Furthermore, flexion of the elbows would cause rotation of the wrists about the iron nails and cause fiery pain along

the damaged median nerves (in the wrist). Lifting of the body would also painfully scrape the scourged back against the rough wooden stipes. Muscle cramps and paresthesias (numbness) of the outstretched and uplifted arms would add to the discomfort. As a result, each respiratory effort would become agonizing and tiring and lead eventually to asphyxia (suffocation).

"The actual cause of death by crucifixion was multifactorial and varied somewhat with each case, but the two most prominent causes probably were hypovolemic shock and exhaustion asphyxia. Other possible contributing factors included dehydration, stress-induced arrhythmias (abnormal heart rhythms), and congestive heart failure with the rapid accumulation of pericardial and perhaps pleural effusions (fluid buildup around the heart and lungs)...Death by crucifixion was, in every sense of the word excruciating (Latin, *excruciates*, or 'out of the cross')." (Edwards, et al, "On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Mar. 21, 1986, Vol. 255, No. 11, pp. 1461)

S. Dilworth Young

"There are many events in the life of the Lord in which I experience exquisite joy as I read of them, and there are others which bow me down with the tragedy of his suffering and of his sacrifice.

"Many of us know what it is to suffer physically for ourselves, and we suffer mentally and emotionally for our friends and loved ones in their sorrows and afflictions. I am not capable of fully understanding the suffering of this great firstborn Son of God for the sins of the world...I read that he was hung on a cross. I look at my own hands and feet and try to imagine the pain of such torture-to hang there in the heat of the day, the weight of his body on those tearing nails, every muscle and nerve drawn tight in agony. No stopping, no escape until he, having said, 'It is finished' (John 19:30), gave up the ghost. I realize that this was endured for me and for you; I bow my head; it is hard to hold back the tears. Even now, 1900 years later, it is as poignant as though it occurred yesterday." ("When I Read, I Am There," *Ensign*, July 1973, 114)

John 19:24 for my vesture they did cast lots

Dallin H. Oaks

"The Roman soldiers of Pilate provided an unforgettable illustration of the different perspectives of the carnal mind and the spiritual mind. During a tragic but glorious afternoon on Calvary, a handful of soldiers waited at the foot of a cross. One of the supreme events in all eternity was taking place on the cross above their heads. Oblivious to that fact, they occupied themselves by casting lots to deride the earthly property of the dying Son of God (see Matthew 27:35; Luke 23:34; John 19:24). Their example reminds each of us that we should not be casting our lots for the things of the world while the things of eternity, including our families and the work of the Lord, suffer for our lack of attention." (*Pure in Heart* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988], 116.)

John 19:26-27 he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother!

Thomas S. Monson

"From his tortured position on the cruel cross he sees his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing by. He speaks: 'Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother!' (John 19:26-27.)

"From that awful night when time stood still, when the earth did quake and great mountains were brought down-yes, through the annals of history, over the centuries of years and beyond the span of time, there echoes his simple yet divine words, 'Behold thy mother.'

"As we truly listen to that gentle command and with gladness obey its intent, gone forever will be the vast legions of 'mothers forgotten.' Everywhere present will be 'mothers remembered,' 'mothers blessed,' and 'mothers loved'; and, as in the beginning, God will once again survey the workmanship of his own hand and be led to say, 'It is very good.'

"May each of us treasure this truth: 'One cannot forget mother and remember God. One cannot remember mother and forget God.' Why? Because these two sacred persons, God and mother, partners in creation, in love, in sacrifice, in service, are as one." (*Pathways to Perfection* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1973], 230.)

Matthew Cowley

"You see, John knew what the Master wanted. 'Behold your son; son, behold your mother.' I don't think we're doing much of that in our Church.

Mothers are not beholding their sons. They're beholding some agency or government organization which has nothing to do with their sons. And the sons are not beholding their mothers. And so, as a result we break down the integrity of the family.

"I was in Canada one day about five years ago. And I went to a home of a bishop for dinner. He wanted me to stay at his home, but he didn't have room. Well, I went to dinner. When the dinner was all set he went into a little room and carried out a little woman: a lovely little soul, with white hair, and he took her over and placed her down gently in a chair at the table. Then he took a serviette and put it around her neck, pushed the chair up close, and then he went back to the room and came out with his arms around an elderly man: a little whitehaired man, and then he took him over and gently placed him at the side of the woman. Then he took a serviette and put it around his neck. And then we all sat down. And then he said, 'Brother Cowley, this is the reason we don't have room for you. These are the parents of my wife, and we're trying to get even with them, while they're so helpless, for what they did for my wife when she was a helpless child.' And before that man and his wife took a spoonful of food, they fed the lovely parents, who couldn't feed themselves. 'Woman, behold thy son; son, behold thy mother.' Did you ever hear anything more beautiful than that?"

"In contrast, I went to a home in Salt Lake City to see a relative of mine. It was a home for aged women. When I called on her, she broke down and wept, pleading with me to call on her children to see if one of them wouldn't take her to his home. She died in that home for aged women. She had been a woman of considerable wealth but had given most of what she had acquired to her children.

"Is there any way we can live better as sons than by accepting the vocation, the call, the summons that John did-to bless those who are near to us, to whom we owe so much?" (*Matthew Cowley Speaks* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954], 306-307.)

Henry D. Moyle

"We cannot as children ignore our obligations to our parents by passing responsibility for their care to others. Inherent in the welfare program of the Church is this fundamental teaching. And through its facilities provision is made so that no child need ignore his or her sacred obligation, and no aged parent need be shunted or put on public assistance.

"We seek to avoid the need for public charity for those whom we love, and to whom we are deeply obligated. We endeavor to refrain from indebtedness and obligations we cannot meet. We aim to meet fully every commitment made. Through consecration of our labors, through individual initiative and effort, through mutual consideration and helpfulness, motivated by the spirit of the Christ, we have sought to assist one another. The fruits have been faith, independence, self-reliance, pride in self-accomplishment, family solidarity, love, and appreciation one for another." (*Conference Report, April 1948, 7.*)

John 19:28 I thirst

Christ's mortal ministry began with hunger, ended with thirst, and spanned every physical malady in between.

'I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.' (Ps. 22:14-15)

Russell M. Nelson noted, "To a doctor of medicine, this is a very meaningful expression. Doctors know that when a patient goes into shock because of blood loss, invariably that patient-if still conscious-with parched and shriveled lips cries for water." ("The Atonement," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 35) While the Master suffered with his tongue cleaving to his jaws and with his lips dried and cracked, he was offered vinegar, an acid, which further burned his open wounds. **Elder Maxwell** notes the irony, "Jesus gave mankind living water so that we shall never thirst again. In return, on the cross He was given vinegar." (*Meek and Lowly* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 11.)

John 19:30 It is finished

"A few professed ministers of religion have greatly misunderstood some of these scriptures. The expression 'It is finished' was not one of despair and discouragement; it was a triumphant exclamation of accomplishment: 'It is finished! I have completed the work thou sent me forth to do! I have overcome the devil and the world! I have finished my preparations unto the children of men!'" (Daniel H. Ludlow, *Selected Writings of Daniel H. Ludlow: Gospel Scholars Series* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2000], 255.)

Bruce C. Hafen

"When Jesus completed his atoning act, he uttered these words from the cross: 'It is finished.' ("John 19:30John 19:30.) When the meaning and purpose of his Atonement are first realized in our lives, we may say, 'It has begun.' What has begun? The process of becoming forever 'at one' with him-belonging to him." (Bruce C. Hafen and Marie K. Hafen, *The Belonging: The Atonement and Relationships with God and Family Heart* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994], 142.)

Neal A. Maxwell

"There will be another time when He will once again use those same special three words: 'It is finished; it is finished.' Then in full spiritual celebration of the end of the world, the Lamb of God, who has overcome and who has trodden the winepress alone, will signify the finale of that remarkable achievement-at the center of which achievement is His marvelous love of all and His submissiveness, which brought about the atonement for all." (*Even As I Am* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 20.)

John 19:31 The Jews therefore...besought Pilate that their legs might be broken

In order to breath while on the cross, the victim had to straighten his legs against the nails driven through the feet. While the weight of the body hung from the arms and wrists, the individual could only take the shallowest of breaths. Therefore, fracturing the legs of the crucified would quickly lead to death. Lest the Sabbath be violated, the Jews petitioned the Romans to have the legs broken.

"John gave us another insight into the character of the men who, in their observance of the law, maintained their obsession with the letter of it but totally lost its spirit. After the crucifixion of Jesus and the two thieves was done, 'the Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken.' ("John 19:31.) The Mosaic law said that no dead person could be left on the cross on the Sabbath. (Deut. 21:23.) Spitting in his face during a totally illegal trial was acceptable. Whipping the mob into the frenzied chant of 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' was all right. And once on the cross, looking up into his agonized face and taunting him to come down were nothing. But to leave

the body hanging on a holy day-God would surely be displeased by such irreverence. The body must come down!

"When we understand that kind of hardness in the Jewish leaders, we can better appreciate what Jacob said: 'Wherefore, as I said unto you, it must needs be expedient that Christ . . . should come among the Jews, among those *who are the more wicked part of the world*; and they shall crucify him-. . . and *there is none other nation on earth that would crucify their God*.' (2 Ne. 10:32 italics added.) Had Zeus appeared to the Greeks, had Molech appeared to the Moabites, had Ra or Amun appeared to the Egyptians, the people would have danced in the streets to welcome him and sung hymns of joyous praise. No other people would have crucified their god. And the great irony is that the religious leaders did it, as Jesus had prophesied, thinking they had actually done God a service. (John 16:2.)" (Gerald N. Lund, *Jesus Christ, Key to the Plan of Salvation* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 36 - 37.)

John 19:31 that Sabbath was an high day

See commentary for John 13:1-2 and D&C 138:27.

John 19:34 one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side

"At the last, a spear was thrust into his side. Out of it flowed water and blood...To Mary he had said, 'A spear shall pierce through him to the wounding of thine own soul also; that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.' (JST, Luke 2:35.)" (Truman G. Madsen, "The Olive Press," *Ensign*, Dec. 1982, 61-62)

Bruce R. McConkie

"That the spear wound was of major proportion, one that would have slain him had he not already voluntarily given up his life, is evident from his statement made to the Nephites after his resurrection, 'Thrust your hands into my side.' (3 Ne. 11:14.)" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 1: 834.)

James E. Talmage

"The inconsistent assertion that Christ had not risen but that His body had been stolen from the tomb by the disciples, has been sufficiently treated in the text. The falsehood is its own refutation...the theory based upon the

impossible assumption that Christ was not dead when taken from the cross, but was in a state of coma or swoon, and that He was afterward resuscitated, disproves itself when considered in connection with recorded facts. The spear-thrust of the Roman soldier would have been fatal, even if death had not already occurred." (*Jesus the Christ*, 698)

John 19:34 forthwith came there out blood and water

Bruce R. McConkie

"These three elements-water, blood, and spirit-are associated not only with birth into mortality and with birth into the kingdom of heaven, which second birth comes because of the blood of Christ, but they are also the three elements present in the death of Christ, thus pointing our attention to the fact that it is his atoning sacrifice that makes the blessing of salvation available through baptism.

"Speaking of Jesus as the Son of God, John says: 'This is he that came'- came to make his soul a ransom for sin; came as the Savior and Redeemer-'This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.' (Jn. 5:5-6.) That is to say, water, blood, and spirit were all present and played their part in his atoning sacrifice. As to the presence of blood, the meaning is clear. Our Lord sweat great drops of blood from every pore as he bowed in agony in Gethsemane; then again, on the cross, his blood was shed as Roman steel pierced his flesh. As to the presence of spirit, the meaning also is clear. He voluntarily gave up his mortal life; he chose to let the eternal spirit, the Spirit which was the Great Jehovah, leave the tenement of clay and enter the paradise of peace. But what of the element of water? How was this present in his atoning sacrifice? The answer is given to us in the words of the same John who set forth that water, blood, and spirit were all present on that transcendent occasion. Of the last moments of our Lord's mortal life, the Beloved Apostle wrote: 'One of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.' (John 19:34-35.)

"With the vision of that cruel event still shining in his mind, John later wrote, 'There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.' He is speaking of those that bear record that 'Jesus is the Son of God,' and having first identified those who

bear this witness in heaven, he turns to a symbolical witness that is borne on earth. 'And there are three that bear witness in earth," he says, "the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.' That is to say, the presence of these three elements in the death of Christ unite in testifying of his divine Sonship." (*The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978], 387-388.)

John 19:36 that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken

Boyd K. Packer

"Surely, young people, you see the prophetic symbolism in the Passover. Christ was 'the Lamb of God' (John 1:29, 36), the firstborn, male, without blemish. He was slain without breaking his bones, even though the soldiers were sent to do it.

"But it is not from mortal death that we shall be spared in such a passover if we walk in obedience to these commandments, for each of us in time shall die. But there is spiritual death which you need not suffer. If you are obedient, that spiritual death will pass over you, for 'Christ our passover is sacrificed for us,' the revelation teaches (1 Cor. 5:7)." ("The Word of Wisdom: The Principle and the Promises," *Ensign*, May 1996, 19)

John 19:38 Joseph of Arimathea...a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews

Howard W. Hunter

"Now to return to Joseph of Arimathea, the record does not indicate to us that he doubted as did Thomas. We are told he was '... a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear' (John 19:38.) He believed secretly because he was afraid of public opinion. Among our own people, in our communities, in our nation and throughout the world, there are secret followers of Jesus and half-hearted Christians-onlookers who have a noncommittal attitude. Why is it that so many will not commit themselves?

"Joseph of Arimathea was only a secret disciple because of what others would think of him. He would not risk his social position nor the respect of his associates. It is fear that causes men to be noncommittal. They are afraid to declare their loyalty and assume active responsibility. The easy way is to let someone else be the leader and assume the responsibility.

The world needs men who are willing to step forward and declare themselves. The world needs men who will lift the load of responsibility to their shoulders and carry it high under the banner of Jesus Christ—men who are willing to defend the right openly." (*Conference Report, October 1960, Afternoon Meeting 108.*)

John 19:39 there came also Nicodemus...and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes

Spencer J. Condie

"Nicodemus also eventually overcame his trepidation and his fear of not appearing to be respectable. He defended the Savior before the chief priests and Pharisees, saying: 'Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?' This was a very daring course of action on the part of Nicodemus, for it caused his colleagues to ask, 'Art thou also of Galilee?' (John 7:51-52.) The courage of Nicodemus in the face of opposition was confirmed at the crucifixion site when he 'brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes' to assist in the preparation of the crucified body of Jesus (John 19:39).

"And what of the chief priests who believed on Christ, but who feared the sanctions of the Pharisees? We read that after the Savior's crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, 'the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith' (Acts 6:7). Sometimes overcoming the curse of respect-ability just takes a little time." (*Your Agency, Handle with Care* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 47 - 48.)

John 19:41 in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre

Harold B. Lee

"Time was now running out for us on our visit to Jerusalem...There was yet another place we had to visit, the garden tomb. It is owned by the Church of the United Brethren. Here our guide took us as though it were an afterthought, and as the woman guide with her little son led us through the garden, we saw a hill outside the gate of the walled city of Jerusalem, just a short way from where the hall of judgment had been inside the city walls. The garden was right close by, or 'in the hill,' as John had said, and in it

was a sepulchre hewn out of a rock, evidently done by someone who could afford the expense of excellent workmanship.

"Something seemed to impress us as we stood there that this was the holiest place of all, and we fancied we could have witnessed the dramatic scene that took place there. That tomb has a mouth that could be sealed by a rolling stone, and there is a stone track built to guide a stone as it was rolled across the mouth of the tomb. The stone has now been removed, but the stone track is still there." (*Ye Are the Light of the World: Selected Sermons and Writings of Harold B. Lee* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974], .chap. 40)