Jesus Must Die

20Pilate wanted to let Jesus go free. So he told this to the crowd. 21But they shouted again, "Kill him! Kill him on a cross!"

22A third time Pilate said to them, "Why? What wrong has he done? I can find no reason to kill him. So I will have him punished and set him free."

23But they continued to shout. They demanded that Jesus be killed on the cross. Their yelling became so loud that 24Pilate decided to give them what they wanted. 25They wanted Barabbas to go free, the man who was in jail . Pilate let Barabbas go free and gave Jesus to them to be killed.

32There were also two criminals led out with Jesus to be killed. 33Jesus and the two criminals were taken to a place called the Skull. There the soldiers nailed Jesus to his cross. They also nailed the criminals to their crosses, one beside Jesus on the right and the other beside Jesus on the left. 34Jesus said, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing."

35The people stood there watching. The leaders made fun of Jesus. They said, "If he is God's Chosen One, the Christ, then let him save himself. He saved other people, didn't he?"

36Even the soldiers made fun of him. They came to Jesus and offered him some vinegar. 37They said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!" 38(At the top of the cross these words were written: "THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.")

39One of the criminals began to shout insults at Jesus: "Aren't you the Christ? Then save yourself! And save us too!"

40But the other criminal stopped him. He said, "You should fear God! You are getting the same punishment as he is. 41We are punished justly; we should die. But this man has done nothing wrong!" 42Then this criminal said to Jesus, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom!"

43Then Jesus said to him, "Listen! What I say is true: Today you will be with me in paradise!"

Jesus Dies

44It was about noon, and the whole land became dark until three o'clock in the afternoon. 45There was no sun! The curtain in the Temple was torn into two pieces. 46Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, I give you my life." After Jesus said this, he died.

47The army officer there saw what happened. He praised God, saying, "I know this was a good man!"

48Many people had gathered there to watch this thing. When they saw what happened, they returned home. They beat their chests because they were so sad.