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August 24th: Amos 5 & John 19:1-37

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Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Jesus on the cross.

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Transcript

Amos chapter 5. Hear this word that I take up over you in lamentation, O house of Israel. Fallen, no more to rise, is the virgin Israel, Forsaken on her land, with none to raise her up. For thus says the Lord God, The city that went out a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which went out a hundred shall have ten left to the house of Israel.

For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel, Seek me and live, but do not seek Bethel, and do not enter into Gilgal, or cross over to Beersheba. For Gilgal shall surely go into exile, and Bethel shall come to nothing. Seek the Lord and live, lest ye break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and it devour, with none to quench it for Bethel.

O you who turn justice to wormwood, and cast down righteousness to the earth! He who made the Pleiades and Orion, and turns deep darkness into the morning, and darkens the day into night, who calls for the waters of the sea, and pours them out on the surface of the earth, the Lord is his name. Who makes destruction flash forth against the strong, so that destruction comes upon the fortress. They hate him who reproves in the gate, and they abhor him who speaks the truth.

Therefore because you trample on the poor, and you exact taxes of grain from him, you have built houses of hewn stone, but you shall not dwell in them. You have planted pleasant vineyards, but you shall not drink their wine. For I know how many are your transgressions, and how great are your sins, you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe, and turn aside the needy in the gate.

Therefore he who is prudent will keep silent in such a time, for it is an evil time. Seek good, and not evil, that you may live, and so the Lord the God of hosts will be with you, as you have said. Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate.

It may be that the Lord the God of hosts will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph. Therefore thus says the Lord the God of hosts, the Lord. In all the squares there shall be wailing, and in all the streets they shall say, Alas, alas! They shall call the farmers to mourning, and to wailing those who are skilled in lamentation.

And in all vineyards there shall be wailing, for I will pass through your midst, says the Lord. Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord! Why would you have the day of the Lord? It is darkness and not light, as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him. Is not the day of the Lord darkness and not light, and gloom with no brightness in it? I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. And the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them. Take away from me the noise of your songs, to the melody of your harps I will not listen.

But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Did you bring to me sacrifices and offerings during the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? You shall take up Sychoth your king, and Chiun your star-guard, your images that you made for yourselves. And I will send you into exile beyond Damascus, says the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.

In chapter 4 the Lord had declared disaster upon Israel. He had given warning upon warning, so Israel would repent before it was too late. However, they had persisted in their iniquity, and so they had to face the Lord's judgment.

Chapter 5 opens with a lament for the doomed people, anticipating the terrible fate about to befall them. The speaker of the lament might be Amos, but it might also be the Lord himself, it isn't entirely clear. Likewise, we might wonder about the tone of the lament.

Is it sarcastic, or is it sorrowful? Is the one voicing the lament mocking the stubborn people for the consequences of their iniquity, or is it a genuine expression of distress and mourning? It seems more likely that it is the latter. The real tragedy, of course, is that

the disaster that awaits Israel was never inevitable or unavoidable. They were given ample opportunity to arrest their course.

Israel is here likened to a young woman, the epitome of life, beauty and fruitfulness, struck down and forsaken, a horrible and arresting sight. She is abandoned and will not be raised up. Its cities send out the flower of their young men to war, and only a tenth of them returned.

Like the Virgin Israel, Israel's men were cut down in the prime of their strength, leaving only a small remnant behind. Verses 4-6 have a chiasmic structure, as Daniel Carroll observes, moving from seeking the Lord in order to live, to a reference to Bethel, a reference to Gilgal, a reference to Beersheba, and then back again through that sequence. Israel's fate was sealed, yet a small number would survive the destruction.

The places of refuge and sources of support that Israel had formerly trusted in would all come to nothing or fail her in the hour of her need. The people of Israel might have considered going to Bethel, to the cultic centre of the land, in the time of their calamity, but there was no aid to be found there. They might have gone to Gilgal, another cultic centre, mentioned alongside Bethel earlier in chapter 4 verses 4 and 5. Come to Bethel and transgress, to Gilgal, and multiply transgression.

Bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three days. Offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, of that which is leavened, and proclaim free will offerings. Publish them, for so you love to do, O people of Israel, declares the Lord God.

Another possibility open to Israel was crossing over to Beersheba. Beersheba was a site in southern Judah, a prominent location in the narratives of the patriarchs. Beersheba also was a cultic site at this time.

Perhaps people in Israel thought that if they went further afield to a cultic site in the southern sister kingdom of Judah, they might find help there. Beersheba is also mentioned in chapter 8 verse 14. These cultic sites afford no assistance as they are themselves doomed.

Gilgal going into exile involves a clever play upon the sounds of the word Gilgal. Bethel coming to nothing associates it once again with the word Avan, meaning wickedness or vanity, as in Hosea chapter 4 verse 15, 5 verse 8, and 10 verse 5. The one possible source of help is the Lord himself. They must turn to him as soon as they can.

If they do not, he will be the one bringing about their destruction. The house of Joseph here refers to the northern kingdom as the leading tribe of Ephraim was the primary son of Joseph. Manasseh, his brother, was also a prominent tribe of the northern kingdom.

Justice was supposed to be the defining feature of the life of the nation. The responsibility of enacting justice lay upon the entire nation, but especially upon its

leaders and authorities. However, the nation had perverted justice.

That which was to give life and wholeness had been made bitter in its perversion and denial. The preceding chapter ended with a great doxology, praising the Lord as the omnipotent creator, chapter 4 verse 13, Here in verses 8 and 9 we have another doxology. The Lord is the master of the heavens and the one who rules over the seas.

He controls the most elevated celestial powers and holds in place the threatening and untamable powers of the waves. Here he pours out the waters of the sea upon the surface of the earth and darkens the day into night. He is able to overturn the order of the cosmos as he is its creator.

Verse 9 is exceptionally difficult to translate in its current form. However, the basic point of it might be that no creature is immune to or independent of his power. Even the strong who might fancy themselves protected in a fortress are subject to his might and judgment.

These verses remind Israel of the one with whom they have to do. They must reckon with the creator of the universe. The gate was the site of judgment and rule.

It was the site of the elders and of legal proceedings. Characteristic of the fool is resistance to counsel, correction and judgment. Here the few faithful leaders in Israel who are reproving wickedness in the gate or speaking the unpleasant truth are loathed for their candor and correction.

The wealthy are economically oppressing the poor, exacting excessive rent from them to enrich themselves and live in luxury. However, they would not enjoy the use of their ill-gotten wealth. They had multiplied their forms of injustice.

They afflicted the righteous, perverted justice for bribes and denied justice to the poor and needy. Their society was corrupt through and through, founded upon oppression, lies and injustice. Verse 13 could be read in different ways.

Our interpretation will depend upon a number of considerations. For instance, how do we understand the evil time? Is this the current time or is it the time of judgment that is coming? Is the word translated as the prudent here better read as the wealthy? Is the silence, the silence of the righteous when the Lord's judgment falls because they are sent to it or cannot question it? Is their silence the silence of grief or of assurance in the Lord's work? Alternatively, is their silence the silence of wise persons who know that it is not prudent for them to speak out in a society so committed to folly and wickedness? Holding their counsel, such people might survive. However, the society has silenced those whose counsel might have saved them.

They've done this because they hate reproof and the truth. Earlier in verses 4-6, the people were encouraged to seek the Lord. In verses 14 and 15, they are once again

called to do this as their one hope of life.

Addressing the injustice that pervades Israel's society, beginning with a fundamental shift in their moral posture, learning to hate evil and love good, some glimmer of hope of restoration or at least preservation through judgment might remain. This hatred of evil and love of good must be manifest in the gate. Justice must be desired and pursued in their life as a society.

Verses 16 and 17 return us to the theme of lamentation with which the chapter began. Verses 1-17 of this chapter seem to follow a chiasmic or book-ended structure. Carroll, who draws the structure from others, summarises it.

Lament for Israel in verses 1-3 corresponds with Lament for Israel in verses 16-17. The charge to seek the Lord and live is found in verses 4-6 and then again in verses 14-15. There is a warning to Israel in verse 7 and then a warning to the powerful in verses 10-13.

The power of the Lord to create in verse 8 is counterbalanced with the power of the Lord to destroy in verse 9. And at the very heart of the chiasm is the statement, the Lord is his name. The general lamentation described occurs as the Lord passes through their midst. We should probably recall the Passover and the mourning of all Israel at the death of the firstborn.

A similar general judgement is going to strike Israel in the day of its calamity. Israel has already been compared to Egypt in the book of Amos. In chapter 4 verses 9-10 for instance.

I struck you with blight and milled you, your many gardens and your vineyards, your fig trees and your olive trees the locusts devoured, yet you did not return to me declares the Lord. I sent among you a pestilence after the manna of Egypt. I killed your young men with the sword and carried away your horses and I made the stench of your camp go up into your nostrils, yet you did not return to me declares the Lord.

Once again as Israel had become like Egypt it would now suffer the fate of Egypt. The day of the Lord is perhaps the greatest of the unifying themes of the book of the For many the day of the Lord was synonymous with deliverance and salvation. The Lord would come in righteousness and deliver his people, overcoming their enemies.

However the prophet tells the people that they have been laboring under a terrible delusion. The day of the Lord is a day not of light but of darkness. It is a terrible day, a day of devastation and destruction.

It is the darkness in which the Lord visits death upon the firstborn of Egypt for instance. This day is dreadful yet inescapable. Amos gives the example of someone fleeing from a lion, thinking that he had made good his escape and then being met by a bear, or going

into his house and being bitten by a venomous serpent just when he thought he was safe.

The day of the Lord is deadly and cannot be abated. The lights are going to be turned out over Israel and there is nothing that they can do to avoid it. One of the purposes of cultic worship was to seek the favour of the Lord.

Sacrifices would be offered, songs and psalms sung, solemn assemblies convened. Yet all of these activities were a stench in the Lord's nostrils, an abomination to him, something that he despised. While Israel might have fancied that it would escape judgement for its many sacrifices and great assemblies, these actually served to compound its iniquity.

Every time they came before the Lord in their injustice, offering to him as if that secured his favour, they were rubbing their wickedness in his face. The Lord's abhorrence of sacrifice and cultic practice divorced from righteousness is a common theme in the prophets especially. True worship must be confirmed in faithful practice and where worship is a mask for injustice, the Lord's anger is aroused.

What the Lord really desires from his people is justice and righteousness. Justice and righteousness are here compared to an ever-flowing stream that never ceases to irrigate and give life and fruitfulness to its land. Righteousness and justice are not a dry and dead legalism but living and life-giving waters that make the land and its people fruitful, reliably and continually afforded to all.

Water was that which sustained the land and the people. They depended upon it for their survival. In this image of continual and bountiful irrigation, the Lord was showing his people that, if only they would pursue them, justice and righteousness would be like rains and rivers upon their parched and arid land, restoring all to life.

Verse 25 is challenging to understand. Is it suggesting that Israel didn't offer any sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness? This seems to be at odds with various passages in the Pentateuch. Perhaps the claim is a slightly narrower one.

Perhaps Israel offered sacrifices at the establishment of the priesthood, for instance, and was given instructions for sacrifice but largely did not offer during the years of wandering, only offering when they entered the land. We might consider that the wilderness generation was not circumcised until they entered the land, which would have limited their potential for cultic practice. The 40 years, then, would be a reference to the 38 years of wandering more particularly.

At various points in the prophets, the wilderness experience is depicted in more positive terms Israel going out after the Lord, like a bride after her bridegroom. Is Amos' point here working with a broadly positive portrayal of the 40 years, a reading that several

commentators follow? This would seem to cause some problems as the lack of sacrifices was likely a consequence of Israel's rebellion, not a positive thing. Other commentators suggest that Israel lacked the material to perform such sacrifices.

The point for such a reading would be that even without sacrifices Israel was able to have a relationship with the Lord. Perhaps some form of this position still makes sense. Without idealising the wilderness, the point is that during the 40 years, which was far from wholly characterised by unfaithfulness, Israel's relationship with God, whether due to their lack of materials for sacrifice or the non-practice of sacrifice in judgement upon their sin, was sustained without the performance of sacrifice.

The Israel of Amos' day, however, has a multitude of sacrifices but does not exhibit the faithfulness and obedience that the Lord truly desires and requires, which is what the children of Israel exhibited after the 40 years of their wandering. After those 40 years they were prepared to enter the land, but not because they had performed some great quantity of sacrifices. The consequence for Israel and its sin would be exile.

They had wedded themselves to their false gods and their false gods would be sent into exile with them. The meaning of the words *sycoth* and *kyun* here have been discussed quite a lot by scholars, but they most likely refer to Assyrian astral deities. As they committed themselves to these false gods, perhaps in part as an expression of their vassal status under Assyria, they would be expelled from the land and sent into exile beyond Damascus.

This would all come upon Israel in 722 BC as the northern kingdom fell to Assyria. A question to consider, how might the scriptural vision of justice in society, described in places like verse 24 of this chapter, speak to modern debates about justice in society? John chapter 19 verses 1 to 37. Limp-Hollet took Jesus and flogged him, and the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and arrayed him in a purple robe.

They came up to him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews, and struck him with their hands. Pilate went out again and said to them, See, I am bringing him out to you, that you may know that I find no guilt in him. So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe.

Pilate said to them, Behold the man! When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, Crucify him! Crucify him! Pilate said to them, Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die, because he has made himself the Son of God. When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid.

He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, Where are you from? But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate said to him, You will not speak to me? Do you not know

that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you? Jesus answered him, You would have no authority over me at all, unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.

From then on Pilate sought to release him. But the Jews cried out, If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.

So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Stone Pavement and in Aramaic, Gabbatha. Now it was the day of preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour.

He said to the Jews, Behold your king! They cried out, Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him! Pilate said to them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus.

And he went out bearing his own cross to the place called the Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross.

It read, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, Do not write, The King of the Jews, but rather, This man said, I am the King of the Jews.

Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written. When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier, also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

So they said to one another, Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to see whose it shall be. This was to fulfil the scripture which says, They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots. So the soldiers did these things.

But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, Woman, behold your son. Then he said to the disciple, Behold your mother.

And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. After this Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said, To fulfil the scripture, I thirst. A jar full of sour wine stood there.

So they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch, and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, It is finished. And he bowed his head

and gave up his spirit.

Since it was the day of preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, for that Sabbath was a high day, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.

But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness. His testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth, that you also may believe.

For these things took place that the scripture might be fulfilled. Not one of his bones will be broken. And again another scripture says, They will look on him whom they have pierced.

John chapter 19 begins with a sort of mock coronation. Jesus is dressed up with a crown of thorns and a purple robe, and the soldiers greet him saying Hail, King of the Jews. The purpose of this was probably more to bring about a public shaming than to cause the most extreme pain.

Pilate seems to have hoped that a public humiliation of Jesus before the crowd would satisfy their murderous desire and give them some sort of catharsis. This would have saved Pilate from actually having to go through with an execution. Once again John probably wants us to see the irony of the situation.

Although the soldiers are performing a mock coronation, Jesus really is being prepared for glorification at the cross. The crown of thorns that he wears is reminiscent of the thorns of the curse of Genesis chapter 3. Fittingly the crown is borne upon his brow, another place connected with the curse. Pilate's ploy fails.

The people insist upon crucifixion. He presents Jesus again using the words Behold the man. Again this is presumably a mock royal acclamation.

This is the man that you want to lead you. Once again John however wants us to see the irony that this is the man being prepared for the coronation of the cross. Initially refusing to go along with them, Pilate tells the Jews to crucify Jesus themselves.

He sees no fault in Jesus. But the Jews insist that they have no authority to crucify Jesus themselves. But Jesus' claim to be the son of God means that he must be put to death according to their law.

They challenge Pilate again and Pilate returns to speak to Jesus. He points out to him, perhaps rather frustratedly or angrily, that he has the authority to put him to death. Jesus should speak up for himself.

However Jesus claims that Pilate's authority comes from God alone. Pilate would have no authority to do anything were it not for the fact that God had given him that authority. Once again we're reminded that this is the day of preparation.

Jesus is the Passover lamb. In Isaiah chapter 53 we were told that the servant would be like a sheep, silent before its shearers. That Jesus does not present a case for himself again would remind us that Jesus is the Passover lamb.

He's the one who is the servant of God, the one who fulfils and brings together these roles. The Jews manipulated Pilate, claiming that he was no friend of Caesar if he allowed Jesus to live. And so in the end Pilate hands Jesus over to them.

Who is the them here? It would seem to be the Jews on the surface of it grammatically. But yet when we look at the crucifixion it's supervised by the Roman soldiers. So it seems as if part of the ambiguity is the point that the Jews actually have their way with Jesus.

It's not primarily Roman instigation of the crucifixion. Rather the crucifixion is instigated by the Jewish authorities and Pilate and his men go along with it. Once again we should recognize the irony of their claim that they have no king but Caesar.

They disavow the Messiah and they present themselves as the servants of Caesar. However they had already just asked for an insurrectionist to be released to them. Throughout this passage Jesus is presented as being in control.

He's not just a victim. No one does anything to him that he has not submitted to himself. He bears his own cross and he brings it to the place of crucifixion.

The title above the cross is written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin suggesting the worldwide significance of Christ's work and rule. We might notice that two other words are translated in this passage suggesting again that there is an audience beyond the immediate Jewish audience. Here the title was presumably the charge that led to Jesus' crucifixion, King of the Jews.

However as in many places in John and particularly in this passage there is a rich irony here. For Jesus is indeed the King of the Jews and though the chief priests object at the title put over Jesus, Pilate's word is treated as final. Once again people are saying and doing more than they understand.

They are fulfilling the scripture in their actions. Pilate who had been humbled in part by the crowd and the Jewish leaders who had forced him to go along with them went with this superscription presumably in order to spite them. The Jewish leaders want to reject and kill this man but Pilate is connecting this man to them claiming that he is their king.

Various scriptures are fulfilled in the crucifixion. We find more of the language of

fulfilment in this chapter than almost anywhere else in the Gospel of John. Some of the scriptures that are playing in the background here include things like Isaiah chapter 53, Wosam 69 with the reference to the thirst of Christ, Wosam 22 verses 15 to 18, Exodus chapter 12 verse 46 with the reference to the bones not being broken, Zechariah chapter 12 verse 10.

All of these verses highlight the fact that this is happening according to the scripture. Jesus is playing out many themes of the biblical text and fulfilling its prophecies. This is what ought to have taken place.

Now it may seem that everything has gone wrong but at this time when everything seems to be going wrong we get this litany of fulfilments of scripture. This highlights that this is no accident. Step by step what is happening in this chapter is fulfilling what God has declared in the past.

Jesus is here carrying out the mission that was set for him. He is not rejecting or swerving from it nor has he stumbled and fallen. This is exactly what God had always intended.

The appearance of Jesus' mother again at this point is probably significant. John never speaks about the virgin birth it would seem but birth is a constant theme of his gospel. Chapter 16 verse 21 speaks of the cross and the resurrection as if birth pangs followed by a birth.

A woman with birth pangs at how will come and struggling to give birth to a child and then rejoicing that a child is born into the world. The death of Jesus is like Israel giving birth and it is also accompanied by the giving of a new son to his mother. This son is the beloved disciple, the archetypal disciple.

The womb of Israel is being opened and the first born delivers his brethren into the arms of his mother. Jesus gives the beloved disciple and his mother to each other much as we are given to each other by Christ in his church. When we speak about the motherhood of Mary our focus tends to be upon her physical role in the incarnation, the conception of Jesus and his birth in Bethlehem.

And the physical dimension of this is obviously important. However the scriptural text here particularly seems to focus upon the spiritual and symbolic role that Mary is playing. The mere physical act of bearing and nursing Jesus is not the great thing, rather the spiritual act of hearing God's word and keeping it, bearing Jesus within herself as the archetypal disciple is the most important thing.

Mary's bearing of Christ is presented as a fuller realisation of that great act of faith. Mary is described in Luke chapter 1 verse 45 as she who believed. Her physical bearing of Christ is fundamentally seen as a spiritual act, one in which the spirit comes upon and

empowers her.

Mary's physical bearing of Christ is not highlighted in John's Gospel but in passages such as this one the spiritual and symbolic aspect of it really is. Mary's motherhood here is not according to the flesh but is a stronger form of spiritual kinship formed by the gift of Christ. What we see Christ doing here is forming a new family at the foot of the cross.

At this point Jesus can declare that it is finished. He has completed what he intended to do, an intention seen most clearly in the bringing together of the beloved disciple and his mother. Jesus hands over the spirit in verse 30.

Even his very moment of death seems to occur on his own terms. John chapter 7 verse 39 spoke of the spirit being given over when Jesus was glorified. The lifting up of Jesus on the cross is the first stage of his glorification for John.

So appropriately there is a handing over of the spirit at this point, presumably to the new family that's being formed at the foot of the cross. As Jesus is pierced by the soldiers, blood and water come out from his side. The emphasis upon the truth of this event and the reliability of the witness that was born to it suggests that these details really matter.

They are underlined for a reason. Some have related the piercing of the side to the formation of Eve from the side of Adam. Perhaps we might also see birth imagery here.

Jesus is the belly or the womb from which living waters flow. Blood and water might relate to the blood of the covenant and the water of baptism. Finally Jesus had also spoken of his body as the temple.

As in Ezekiel chapter 47, water would flow out from the side of the temple and heal and give life to the nation. The pierced body of Jesus might be related to the torn temple veil of the other gospel accounts. As we get further on in John's gospel I think we'll see other allusions to these passages from Ezekiel.

So I think it's natural to see it as the waters flowing out from the temple to give life to the world. Jesus has spoken of his gift of living waters in chapter 4 and in chapter 7 and now the waters flow out as a result of his death. In chapter 1 verse 29 Jesus was related to the Passover lamb.

His bones are not broken. In fulfilment of the law concerning the Passover lamb here, Zechariah chapter 12 from which the verse quoted in verse 37 comes, speaks of repentance given to Israel through the gift of the spirit. This also serves as the fulfilment of Jesus being lifted up for all of the nations to look at as a sign.

A question to consider. John emphasises Jesus' fulfilment of scripture throughout the crucifixion account. Can you collect the various references to the scripture that are found in this account, go back to the original context and see how the broader context of those

passages sheds light upon the meaning of the crucifixion and what Jesus is accomplishing here?