

Lectionary Texts for March 30, 2024 • *Holy Saturday* - Year B
Job 14:1-14 or Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24 • Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16 • 1 Peter 4:1-8 • Matthew
27:57-66 or John 19:38-42



John 19:38-42

Deposition from the Cross, 1190-1200

Walrus ivory, 7" tall, Probably carved in York, England

Probably carved in York, England

Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England

Continued

Little is known about the provenance of this exquisite walrus tusk carving. John and Gertrude Hunt, London-based antiquarian collectors and dealers, acquired it at some point in time. It was displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1970, and the Hayward Gallery, London, in 1984. In 1982 Gertrude Hunt offered it on a long-term loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), where it remained until late 2022. In 2023 Sotheby's quietly arranged a private sale to the Met for just over £2m, subject to the work being granted a UK export license.

In November of 2023 the UK arts and heritage minister refused to grant the license, giving the V&A the opportunity to match the price. The reviewing committee stated the Deposition represents "one of the most culturally and aesthetically significant objects" they have considered in the past five years, a very unusual accolade from the committee. The V&A is actively seeking donations, having until June 2, 2024, to match the Met's purchase price.

Carved from an unusually large piece of walrus tusk, it was originally part of an impressive ensemble of the Passion. A smaller fragment, about half the height of the Deposition, depicts Judas at the Last Supper. It was first recorded in 1769 in Wakefield, Yorkshire, England, and was donated to the V&A in 1949. No other fragments from the ensemble have so far been identified.

— Art curated and narrative provided by Norman Mahan
Document edited and produced by Donna V. Adair
Lay members, St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Houston

Job 14:1-14

"A mortal, born of woman, few of days and full of trouble, comes up like a flower and withers, flees like a shadow and does not last.

"Do you fix your eyes on such a one?

"Do you bring me into judgment with you?

"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?

"No one can. Since their days are determined, and the number of their months is known to you, and you have appointed the bounds that they cannot pass, look away from them, and desist, that they may enjoy, like laborers, their days.

"For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease. Though its root grows old in the earth, and its stump dies in the ground, yet at the scent of water it will bud and put forth branches like a young plant.

"But mortals die, and are laid low; humans expire, and where are they?

"As waters fail from a lake, and a river wastes away and dries up, so mortals lie down and do not rise again; until the heavens are no more, they will not awake or be roused out of their sleep.

"Oh that you would hide me in Sheol, that you would conceal me until your wrath is past, that you would appoint me a set time, and remember me! If mortals die, will they live again?"

“All the days of my service I would wait until my release should come.”

or

Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24

I am one who has seen affliction under the rod of God’s wrath; he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light; against me alone he turns his hand, again and again, all day long. He has made my flesh and my skin waste away, and broken my bones; he has besieged and enveloped me with bitterness and tribulation; he has made me sit in darkness like the dead of long ago. He has walled me about so that I cannot escape; he has put heavy chains on me; though I call and cry for help, he shuts out my prayer; he has blocked my ways with hewn stones, he has made my paths crooked. The thought of my affliction and my homelessness is wormwood and gall! My soul continually thinks of it and is bowed down within me.

But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

“The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.”

Psalms 31:1-4, 15-16

In you, O Lord, I seek refuge; do not let me ever be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me.

Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily. Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me.

You are indeed my rock and my fortress; for your name’s sake lead me and guide me, take me out of the net that is hidden for me, for you are my refuge.

My times are in your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.

Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.

1 Peter 4:1-8

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God. You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry.

They are surprised that you no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme. But they will have to give an accounting to him who stands ready to judge the

living and the dead. For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does.

The end of all things is near; therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.

Matthew 27:57-66

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him.

So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalen and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, 'He has been raised from the dead,' and the last deception would be worse than the first."

Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can."

So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

or

John 19:38-42

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.

They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.

Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.