

MARK Lesson 15

Chapter 15

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I. The Trial Before Pilate

Mark 15:1 And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.

Mark 15:2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.

Mark 15:3 And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.

Jesus was now sent to Pilate. Pilate lived at Caesarea, but he usually came to Jerusalem for the feast day. Verse 2 shows his question "Art thou the King of the Jews?" Jesus replies "Thou sayest it." Then came the accusations of the chief priests and Christ's silence.

Mark 15:4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

Mark 15:5 But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

The chief priest, elder, and scribes brought Jesus bound to Pilate. Pilate questions the Lord and asks if he is the King of the Jews. Jesus says "Thou sayest it." As the many accusations fly at Christ, he does not answer a word. Pilate is extremely concerned, and it says he marvelled. When we are accused, we normally speak out loudly when we are innocent. Jesus had never sinned, yet he did not respond to these false accusations.

Pilate questions Him concerning His silence.

1 Pet. 2:21-24, For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Pilate repeatedly stated that he found no fault with Jesus.

John 18:38; John 19:4; Luke 23:14, 22.

Matt. 27:24, When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

Matthew Henry said this about Christ being bound.

They bound him. He was to be the great sacrifice, and sacrifices must be bound with cords, Ps. 118:27. Christ was bound, to make bonds easy to us, and enable us, as Paul and Silas, to sing in bonds. It is good for us often to remember the bonds of the Lord Jesus, as bound with him who was bound for us. They led him through the streets of Jerusalem, to expose him to contempt, who, while he taught in the temple, but a day or two before, was had in veneration; and we may well imagine how miserably he looked after such a night's usage as he had had; so buffeted, spit upon, and abused. Their delivering him to the Roman power was a type of ruin of their church, which hereby they merited, and brought upon themselves; it signified that the promise, the covenant, and the oracles, of God, and the visible state church, which were the glory of Israel, and had been so long in their possession, should now be delivered up to the Gentiles. By delivering up the king they do, in effect, deliver up the kingdom of God, which is therefore, as it were, by their own consent, taken from them, and given to another nation. If they had delivered up Christ, to gratify the desires of the Romans, or to satisfy and jealousies of theirs concerning him, it had been another matter; but they voluntarily betrayed him that was Israel's crown, to them that were Israel's yoke.

II. The Choice of Barabbas

Mark 15:6 Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

Mark 15:7 And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

Mark 15:8 And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.

Mark 15:9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

At the passover feast, it had become a custom that Pilate would release to the Jews one prisoner. Barabbas was a notorious prisoner who had organized resistance to the established government of Rome (insurrection). He also was accused of murder while in the revolt. In Pilate's eyes, this man would be considered a dangerous political prisoner. Because of this, Pilate thought this would be an easy way to be rid of Jesus without having to decide the case. Logically, the people would not want to free a murderer. Pilate asks if they wish for him to release the "King of the Jews." Rather, it is Barabbas who is set free. This was done to curry favor with the Jews. Unlike Jesus, Barabbas was a hardened criminal. The crowd demands that a prisoner be released, and at first Pilate offers to release Jesus.

Mark 15:10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

Mark 15:11 But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

Mark 15:12 And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?

The chief priests stirred up the people to demand the release of Barabbas. At this point, Pilate asked what he should do with Jesus.

Mark 15:13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

Mark 15:14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

Mark 15:15 And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

Pilate was confident that it was envy that had caused them to deliver Jesus into his hands. The chief priests moved among the people and told them to ask for the release of Barabbas. Again in verse 12, Pilate asks if they want him to free Christ. They cry out and say to crucify Jesus. Pilate is alarmed at this and asks "What evil hath he done?" The more he asked, the louder they cried out to crucify him. So to make them happy, he releases Barabbas and has him scourged.

The crowd cries out and demands that Jesus be crucified. In verse 14, Pilate poses the question "Why, what evil hath he done?" But the Jews cry out the more "Crucify him." Barabbas the guilty sinner was released. Pilate being the consummate politician, did this to appease the people.

Jesus the sinless one is scourged and delivered to be crucified. Barabbas was a type of the guilty sinner. Like Barabbas we were set free, because Jesus Christ took our place and died for us. The Just, dying for the unjust.

III. Jesus Crowned with Thorns

Mark 15:16 And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band.

Mark 15:17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head,

Mark 15:18 And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!

Mark 15:19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him.

Jesus was mocked by the soldiers as King of the Jews. If only they had known the truth of their statements. His kingdom mocked and He is given a purple, robe and a crown. Again He is smitten and in mockery worshipped.

Isa. 50:6, I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

One day at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is LORD. If you don't bow your knee in this life, be sure you will in the future. All will acknowledge Him in that day. The Jews claimed they had no king, but Caesar and this was not really true for they did not accept Caesar.

John 19:12-15, And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

Mark 15:20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

Mark 15:21 And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

Mark 15:22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

Mark 15:23 And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.

When the soldiers begin to mock Jesus, they clothed him in a purple (a sign of royalty) robe which was the attire of a king. They make a crown of thorns and placed it upon His head. Jesus is effectively led away as a criminal. Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, was led away by the hands of Roman soldiers as a criminal condemned to death. After mocking him, they take off the robe and put his own clothes back on him. Christ is beaten so badly and in such bad shape that he cannot carry his cross to Calvary. They have Simon, a Cyrenian, bear the cross for him. They brought him to the place of a skull called Golgotha. In the side of the mountain, you could see the resemblance of a man's skull. The soldiers offer him wine mingled with myrrh, but he would not accept it. This drink was given to numb the pain of the crucifixion, but Jesus wanted to endure it in His full senses.

Luke 9:23, And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

IV. Jesus Crucified

Mark 15:24 And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

Mark 15:25 And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

Verse 24 is a direct fulfillment of Psalms 22:18.

Psa 22:18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

At 9 am, they crucified Christ. Remember that the Jewish day began at 6pm, so their new day began at 6am. We find here the events of the third hour would have been 9 a.m.

Mark 15:26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Mark 15:27 And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

Mark 15:28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

They placed a title over His head. Some imagine that there is discrepancy in the Bible since each one of the four gospels gives a slightly different title. This is solved by reading the account in Luke. Since it was written in three different languages, it would vary. If you put them altogether you have the total message.

Mark 15:26, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Matt. 27:37, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

John 19:19, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Luke 23:38, And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Being crucified between two thieves also fulfilled prophecy. Two thieves were crucified with Him and this is the fulfillment of the scripture in Isaiah 53.

Isa 53:12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Mark 15:29 And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days,

Mark 15:30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

Mark 15:31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

Mark 15:32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

These religious people came to mock Him.

Psa. 22:6-8, But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

Isa. 53:3, He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Why did Christ suffer like this? Why did he simply come down off the Cross.

Gal. 3:13, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

II Cor. 5:21, For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

I Pet. 2:24, Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Matt. 26:53-54, Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

The people mocked him as he hung on the cross. Even the thieves mock him, but one comes to his senses later and asks Christ to remember him when he come in his kingdom. That man was saved that day, showing how easy it is to be saved if we mean business with God and repent of our sins.

Mark 15:33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

Mark 15:34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Mark 15:35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

When the sixth hour come (12 noon), there was darkness over all the earth. This darkness lasted until 3pm, another 3 hours. Finally at the ninth hour, Jesus cried out "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" At this moment, when the sin of the world was placed on Jesus, God turned his back on His only begotten Son. God can not look upon sin, and Jesus bore the sin alone. How much He loved us. Christ cries out and gives up the ghost.

Mark 15:36 And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

Mark 15:37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

The three hours of darkness mercifully covered the shame of the cross. We can only imagine the events in these three hours. This could not be an eclipse of the sun because the passover was always held at full moon. Then came the events of the Ninth hour which was 3 p.m. There was a reason the Father forsook Christ. At that moment, He was bearing our vile sins in His own body. No wonder the Father could not look on Him.

Psa. 22:1, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?

Back in Exodus, it was midnight when the firstborn died in Egypt.

Ex. 12:29, And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.

God made the sixth to the ninth hours seem as midnight when God's firstborn died for our sins, that we might be delivered.

J. Vernon McGee said this about Christ's death:

notice here that Mark gives us the Crucifixion by the clock. On the third hour He was put on the Cross, and at the sixth hour (which would be twelve noon) darkness came down. The high noon sun was covered, and darkness came down over the Cross. From the sixth hour to the ninth hour, that would be until three o'clock in the afternoon, there was darkness.

Now will you notice this: the first three hours were from 9:00 A.M. until 12 noon; the second three hours were from 12 noon to 3:00 P.M. Jesus hung on the Cross for six hours. In the first three hours there was physical light; in the second three hours there was physical darkness. But in the first three hours there was spiritual darkness; in the second three hours there was spiritual light. Why? Because in those first three hours man did his worst. They crucified Him and they reviled Him. Even those who were hanging with Him on the Cross reviled Him. At least at the first, both thieves did. At that time His enemies, marching around down beneath the Cross, were wagging their heads and ridiculing Him. In the first three hours man was working, doing his very worst; in the second three hours God was working.

He was suffering at the hands of man in the first three hours; He was suffering for man in the last three hours. In the first three hours He was dying because of sin, in the second three hours He was dying for the sin of the world. So during the time of the physical darkness, there was actually spiritual light and God was working. In those first three hours sin was doing all it could to destroy Him; in the second three hours He is making His soul an offering for sin. In those last three hours He is paying for the sins of the world. It was during this period that He was made sin for us; He became sin for us. He was forsaken of God and yet, even at that time, God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself (see 2 Cor. 5:19). What a paradox we find here.

Mark 15:38 And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

Mark 15:39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

Mark 15:40 There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome;

Mark 15:41 (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

The veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom. This veil separated the inner chamber from the room called the holiest of holies. It could only be entered once per year by the high priest where he brought an offering for his own sins and one for the people. This tearing apart of the veil was God showing that the way into the presence of God was opened to every man. No priest or mediator is needed for us to come to God. Jesus Christ is our way, our only way, to God. The centurion said, "Truly this man was the Son of God." Others looked on while Jesus was crucified.

Heb. 10:19-22, Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

In verse 39, we have the testimony of the centurion.

Luke 23:47, Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

Verses 40-41 record the faithful women. They were the last at the cross and first at the tomb. Heaven will reveal all that Godly women have done for Christ.

V. The Burial of Jesus

Mark 15:42 And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,

Mark 15:43 Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

The day of Christ's burial comes. He died in the afternoon on Wednesday and was buried just before sundown, and was resurrected three days and three nights later. Joseph of Arimathaea comes to Pilate and asks that he might have the body of Jesus to bury in his tomb.

Pilate marvels that he is dead so quickly. Many times it took up to six days for a man to die on the cross. Crucifixion was the most horrible death a person can suffer.

This was not the regular seventh day sabbath, but a special sabbath. Jesus did not die on Friday as so many religious leaders teach. If he was in the ground 3 days and 3 nights (and we know the bible teaches this), how can you get 3 days and 3 nights starting on Friday. You can't, because Jesus died on Wednesday, the special High Sabbath Day followed which was Thursday.

John 19:31, 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, and that they might be taken away.

Joseph was a rich man and a secret disciple of Jesus.

John 19:38-39, And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

Notice Joseph's faith, character, and courage - It says he "went in boldly" It seems likely that he and Nicodemus had been preparing for the burial.

Mark 15:44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

Mark 15:45 And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

Mark 15:46 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

Mark 15:47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid.

Joseph is given the body of Jesus and places him in a tomb hewn out of a rock. The body is wrapped and laid in a new tomb. He who could not see corruption, could not lie in a tomb which corruption had defiled.

Luke 23:53, And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

The faithful women watched where He was buried. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary beheld where the body was laid. These women were held to this spot by bonds of love.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.