

STUDIES IN MARK--LESSON FORTY-FIVE

Jesus Crucified

Mark 15:20-41; Matt.27:32-56; Luke 23:26-49; John 19:16-37

INTRODUCTION -

I. LESSON LINKS AND CONTEXT.

- A. The shameful betrayal and agony in Gethsemane was followed by the Lord's mock trials before Jewish and Roman authorities.
- B. The miscarriage of justice continued with scourging and multiple abuse.
- C. During this period, Peter denied the Lord, and Judas repented and hanged himself.

II. NATURE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE LESSON.

- A. Sin caused the death of Jesus that dark day, just outside Jerusalem: The sins of the Jews, of Pilate, of Judas, and all of us.
- B. "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures," and according to God's purpose and foreknowledge (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Acts 2:23), that we might be reconciled to God (Eph. 2:16; Rom. 5:10), and have life abundant and everlasting (John 6:51; 10:17,18).
- C. "Christ and him crucified" is the very heart and the grand central fact and theme of Christianity.
- D. The greatest drama and tragedy of history, the climax of the purpose of his coming from heaven to earth (Luke 19:10; John 1:29; Romans 5:8), his death was voluntary, violent, vicarious and victorious: Out of its sad and cruel scenes come our supreme victory and hope: "The power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16).

DISCUSSION -

I. THE WAY OF SORROW (Mark 15:20-22).

- A. The painful journey begins: "And they lead him out to crucify him" (20b).
 - 1. It was early Friday morning when Jesus, clothed again in his own robe, was delivered up of Pilate, and the sad, painful procession began to move from the Praetorium, around the foot of mount Moriah, toward Golgatha, the place of crucifixion.
 - 2. The procession was led by a centurion and his guard, followed by a soldier bearing a board on which was inscribed the crime of the prisoner to

be executed.

3. Next came "the guard of four soldiers with mallet and spikes," and Jesus, bearing the burden of his own cross (John 19:17), through a mob of jeering, laughing and sometimes weeping, confused people.
 4. A multitude followed, bewailing and lamenting Jesus (Luke 23:27-32).
- B. To bear his cross: "And they compel one passing by, Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to go with them, that he might bear his cross" (41).
1. Jesus, already badly wounded, evidently soon staggered or fell under the weight of his own cross, as he was led to Calvary the longest possible route.
 2. Cyrene was a city of north Africa with a large Jewish population (Cf. Acts 2:10; 6:9; 11:20; 13:1).
 3. This Rufus could be the one mentioned in Romans 16:13.
- C. The place of a skull: "And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull" (22).
1. "Golgotha" is the Aramaic or Hebrew; "Calvary" is the Latin form of "the skull" (Cf. Luke 23:33, AV).
 2. Why it is called "the place of the skull" is not revealed.
 3. Its exact location unknown today, the place was near Jerusalem (John 19:20), but outside the gate (Heb. 13:12,13).
- II. JESUS CRUCIFIED BETWEEN TWO ROBBERS (Mark 15:23-27; Matthew 27:33-38; Luke 23:33,34; John 19:16b-24).
- A. Wine refused: "And they offered him wine mingled with myrrh (gall): but he received it not" (23).
1. This was a drink intended to dull, reduce, or deaden pain.
 2. Jesus tasted it but would not drink (Matt. 27:34), evidently because, in bearing "our sins in his body upon the tree" (1 Peter 2:24), he wanted to be conscious of their full weight. It was his Father's will that he suffer (John 6:38-40; Luke 24:46; Acts 3:18; 17:3; 1 Peter 3:18).
- B. They crucify him: "And they crucify him, and part his garments among them, casting lots upon them what each should take" (24).
1. Crucifixion was the most painful means of execution then known.

3. Such is the conclusion of everyone who gives full and honest consideration to the testimony concerning Jesus. .

- C. Many women beholding: "And there were also women beholding from afar: among whom were both Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; who, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him; and many other women that came up with him unto Jerusalem" (40,41).
1. Compare Matthew 27:55,56, and John 19:25.
 2. The devout women were still loyal and devout.

"It is finished" (John 19:30).

3. This vinegar was not the wine, mingled with gall, as a pain killer, refused earlier (Cf. Psalm 69:21).
- E. Gave up the ghost: "And Jesus uttered a loud voice, and gave up the ghost" (37).
 1. According to Matthew 27:50, he "yielded up his spirit."
 - a. No one took his life from him: He gave it voluntarily (John 10:18).
 - b. In "giving up" his spirit, his victory over the power of sin was finished or complete: Satan was defeated; God's purpose in the mission of Jesus was "finished."
 2. "It is finished" (John 19:30), was the sixth saying on the cross.
 3. Luke 23:46 contains the last words Jesus uttered on the cross, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Cf. John 19:30b).
- V. THE EARTHQUAKE AND RELATED EVENTS (15:38-41; Matt. 27:51-56; Luke 23:47-49).
 - A. Veil rent in two: "And the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom" (38).
 1. All of nature seemed to sympathize or rebel at the death of her Maker.
 2. The veil was between the holy place and most holy place, and its rent signified the end of the law of Moses, Jewish age and system.
 3. Little did the Jews or the disciples realize the full meaning .
 4. The earth quaked, rocks were rent, tombs were opened, from which, "after the resurrection," "many dead saints arose, and appeared to many in the city" (Cf. Matt. 27:51-53).
 - B. The centurion's cry: "And when the centurion, who stood by over against him, saw that he so gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God" (39).
 1. The centurion joined the company of (a) angels (Luke 2:11), (b) demons (Matt. 8:29), (c) Almighty God (three times), (d) men (Matt. 16:16), (e) Women (Luke 2:36) who confessed Jesus.
 2. Christ made this good confession and died for it (John 19:7; 1 Timothy 6:13).

2. It is one of the most cruel modes of punishment ever devised by man. Not merely murder, but much worse, it was brutal in the worse sense: A lingering (the victim sometimes lingered for days before death), shameful (Rome crucified only her slaves and most notorious criminals), and hateful (nothing more clearly revealed the hostility of the Jews than their repeated and loud insistence that he be crucified) form of death. See Farrar's Life of Christ quote.
3. His seamless coat or robe was not divided, but the casting of lots for his garments fulfilled prophecy, even though the ignorant soldiers knew not the part they played in God's wise foresight (Psalms 22:18; John 19:23,24).
- C. The hour: "And it was the third hour, and they crucified him" (25).
 1. Matthew, Mark and Luke specify "the sixth hour," or 12 o'clock noon, as the beginning of the three hours of darkness (27:45; 15:33; 23:44), implying "that Mark's statement the crucifixion began the 3rd hour is correct."
 2. John implies the crucifixion was earlier (19:14), yet he wrote later than the others and most likely used "Roman time." If not, "some copyist later accidentally wrote 'sixth' instead of 'third.' He might have had in mind the hour of the darkness when he wrote 'sixth' in this verse."-- John T. Hinds, A. L. Commentary, 6-11-33.
- D. The superscription: "And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS." (26).
 1. Mentioned by all four gospel writers: In Hebrew, Latin, Greek (John 19:19-22; Matt. 27:37; Luke 23:38; Mark 15:26).
 2. By custom, the "crime" for which each criminal was crucified was placed at the top of the cross for those passing by to read.
- E. With two robbers: "And with him they crucify two robbers; one on his right hand, and one on his left" (27).
 1. They were "led with him to be put to death" (Luke 23:32).

2. Whether this incident was merely a convenience to the Romans, or to add greater ignominy upon Jesus, its effect was to increase the shame heaped upon the Lord (Matt. 27:38; John 19:18; cf. Isaiah 53:12).

III. JESUS SHAMEFULLY REVILED AND MOCKED ON THE CROSS. (Mark 15:29-32; Matt. 27:39-43; Luke 23:35-38).

- A. Railed on him: "And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ha! thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself and come down from the cross" (29,30).
 1. The taunting accusation of Pilate, written in three languages, was in part the cause of this ridicule and mockery.
 2. The most tragic example of "man's inhumanity to man:" Its high water mark.
- B. Partly true: "In like manner also the chief priests mocking him among themselves with the scribes said, He saved others; himself he cannot save" (31).
 1. Their derisive scoffing, meant to imply his weakness, was partly true: He could not save himself from the cross and still save the world.
 2. "It was because he was the Christ, the sacrificial lamb of God, that he did not save himself from the cross"--Cox, Highlights In the Life of Our Lord, p. 150.
- C. A false promise: "Let the Christ, the king of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe" (32a).
 1. "He is the King of Israel; let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe on him" (Matt. 27:42).
 2. They were making a false promise (a) because they had expected a descendent of David to come and sit on an earthly throne in Jerusalem, and (b) they had already denied his divine power as manifest through his signs which they had seen. Actually, his being lifted up on the cross was the most likely act which would have convinced them (John 8:28).
- D. The robbers' reproach: "And they that were crucified with him reproached him" (32b).
 1. Matthew also says that both robbers reproached him (27:44).

2. Luke says the soldiers joined in the mocking (23:36,37).

3. Luke also relates the later attitude of one of the thieves toward Jesus in asking that he be remembered when Jesus came in his kingdom (23:39-43).

IV. THE LAST SCENES (Mark 15:33-37; Matt. 27:45-50; Luke 23:44-46; John 19:28-30).

- A. Supernatural darkness: "And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour (33).
 1. From midnight until midday savage cruelty had seemed to reign.
 2. God seemed to express his horror at the enormity of the crime by sending a darkness which could silence the raging passions.
- B. A cry of agony: "And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sa-bach-tha-ni? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" (34)?
 1. This has been called "the saddest question ever uttered." We may never understand the depths of this anguished cry (Cf. Psalm 22:1).
 2. Jesus had then been on the cross six hours, three of which had been during the darkness, which could not have been an eclipse of the sun during the full moon of passover week (Cf. Luke 23:45: "The sun's light failing").
 3. This seemed to be the part that hurt Jesus most: He was lonely. "Alone" (Isa. 63:3).
- C. They misunderstood: "And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elijah" (35).
 1. Six hours of pain, strain, loss of blood, and fever would make his articulation difficult and less distinct. See Matthew 27:46.
 2. With such parched lips as he then had he could easily be misunderstood.
- D. Vinegar to drink: "And one ran, and filling a sponge full of vinegar, put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let be; let us see whether Elijah cometh to take him down" (36).
 1. According to John 19:28, he said, "I thirst," before vinegar was given.
 2. The vinegar was received just before he said,