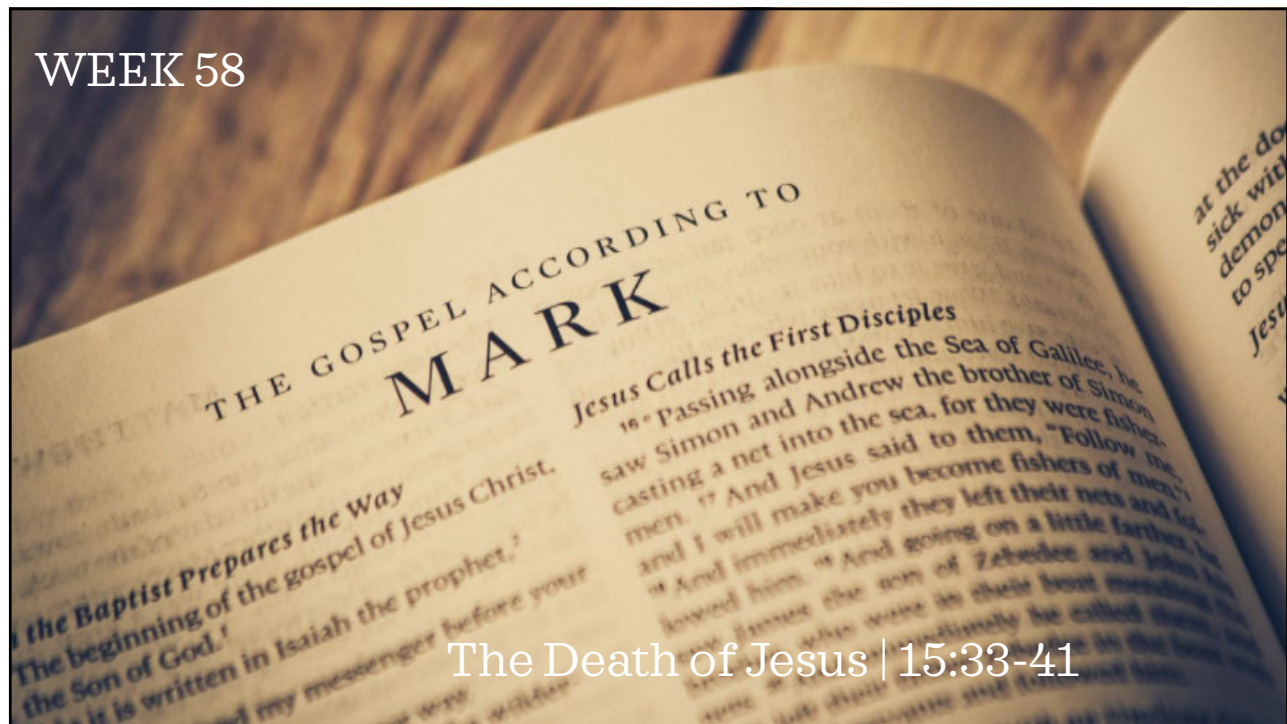


WEEK 58



The Death of Jesus | 15:33-41

The Death of Jesus | 15:33-41

- 33 – *At noon, when the sun was at its height, it went into eclipse and remained dark for three hours (Luke 23:45). This was a supernatural, cosmic event.*
 - *Objection that an eclipse is impossible at Passover fails to appreciate the significance.*
 - *Amos 8:9-12 prophesies darkness at noon in Day of the Lord (“mourning of an only son”).*
 - *This sign marks the cosmic dimensions of Jesus’ suffering upon the cross. It is dark the entire time between Jesus’ crucifixion and the moment of his death.*
 - *But there is a more ominous aspect to the dark. The plague of darkness which preceded the first Passover marked the curse of God upon Egypt (Exodus 10:21-23). That plague lasted 3 days only on Egyptians while God’s people had light.*
 - *Note number & magnitude of elements Mark captures to denote depth of Christ’s sufferings and humiliations (Galatians 3:13-14).*
- 34 – *Crucifixions were marked by screams of rage and pain, wild curses and shouts of indescribable despair by the victims.*
 - *The demeanor of Jesus on the cross is not described by Mark.*
 - *Mark only records a single saying of Christ on the cross.*

The Death of Jesus | 15:33-41

- *About 3 PM Jesus cries out in a shattering voice the words of Psalm 22:1 “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”*
 - *The cry from Psalm 22 is an urgent appeal for God to intervene on behalf of the righteous sufferer. Jesus on the cross was living out this psalm.*
 - *Christ instinctively expressed his feelings in biblical language. Because Jesus Christ is Scripture and when he speaks it, he speaks his native tongue which is Scripture (Col 3:16).*

- *Here Christ is imploring the help of his Father in a confident prayer. Does God answer? No. Why? Because he is not there, he has turned his back on his Son.*
 - *God answers his Son at his baptism (3:11), at his transfiguration (9:7), countless times before, all the way up to Gethsemane. But why not now in his hour of greatest need?*
 - *For all of human history before Christ and since, God has never failed to answer the cry of humility and faith. Never, not one time.*
 - *Except this one time. This one time, the greatest human being to ever live, with the closest relationship to God, at his greatest hour of real need – this one time God does not respond.*

The Death of Jesus | 15:33-41

- *You have the promise of God that he will always hear you. 7. But Christ had the promise that at this moment God would not hear him.*
 - *Psalm 22:1-24 especially 1, 11, 19-21, but 24?*
 - *Isaiah 53:10 – “Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.”*

- *Christ's cry here should not be blunted. Though Psalm 22 ends in triumph, Christ is on the cross experiencing the horrific sequel to the Garden of Gethsemane.*
 - *The holy wrath of God faced with the character of sin, cuts the sinner off from God.*
 - *Isaiah 59:1-2 – “Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. 2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.”*

The Death of Jesus | 15:33-41

- *In responding to his call to the wilderness and identifying himself completely with sinners, Jesus offered himself to bear the judgment of God upon human rebellion (10:45 “and to give his life as a ransom for many”).*
 - *Christ from birth had lived wholly for the Father now experiences full alienation from him.*
 - *His cry expresses the profound horror and unfathomable pain of separation from God and abandonment by his Father. This is the ultimate expression of “Cursed is everyone who hangs upon a cross” (Deut 21:23, Gal 3:13, 2 Cor 5:21).*
 - *The darkness declared the same truth.*
 - *This cry was an authentic confirmation of the rejection by the Father.*
 - *Even in the inferno of his abandonment, he did not renounce God nor surrender his faith in God.*

The Death of Jesus | 15:33-41

- *Christ’s cry was rejected, so your cry, my cry could be heard.*
 - *Christ went naked so I could be clothed (Isaiah 61:10, Philip 3:9, 1 Cor 15:4, Rev 19:7-8).*
 - *Christ went thirsty so my thirst could be satisfied (Rev 22:17, the same water which flowed from his side).*
 - *Rev 22:17 – “The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!” Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.”*
 - *Christ was wounded so I could be healed (1 Pet 2:24).*
 - *Christ mourned so I could be glad (Isaiah 61:1-11).*
 - *Christ was condemned so I could be acquitted (Rom 8:1).*
 - *Christ was rejected so I could be accepted (Eph 1:6).*
 - *How can you and I not love this man?*

The Death of Jesus | 15:33-41

- 35-36 – *“Eli, Eli” was knowingly or unknowingly misconstrued as a cry for help to Elijah.*
 - *Probably from Jews familiar with folk piety.*
 - *Later Jewish sources noted the belief that Elijah would come in times of trouble to protect the innocent and rescue the righteous.*
 - *Remember that some Jews had already concluded that Jesus was Elijah.*
 - *Mar 8:28-29 – They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.”*
 - *And the Jewish rabbis had concluded that “the messenger of the covenant” was Elijah (Mal 4:5).*
 - *Remember the religious leaders had claimed the mantle of Elijah for themselves by the “Beelzebub” accusation (8:28), and they now recall this claim as they (imitating Elijah) mock the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary, waiting “to see whether Elijah would come to take Him down from the cross”*

The Death of Jesus | 15:33-41

- *Offering sour-wine vinegar was a legitimate offer to relieve thirst. This was the cheap, sour wine of the people. The intent was to keep Jesus conscious for as long as possible.*
- 37 – *Jesus maintained consciousness to his last breath when an inarticulate cry burst from his throat.*
 - *The strength of the cry indicates Jesus did not die the ordinary death of those crucified who lingered on from complete exhaustion. No, Jesus’ death was sudden and violent.*
 - *Without sin, Jesus could not have died an ordinary death. Death had no power over him.*
 - *Jesus’ death was in submission to the will of God in taking our sins, not for any sin of his own. The sinless perfection of Jesus is vindicated by the resurrection.*
 - *Heb 7:16 - One who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life.*

The Death of Jesus | 15:33-41

- 38 – *At that moment, the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.*
 - *There were 2 curtains in the temple – the outer veil separated the sanctuary from the courtyard, and the inner veil separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies which the high priest entered once a year on the Day of Atonement (Exodus 26:31-35).*
 - *Mark does not distinguish which veil. The outer veil would be a public sign. The inner veil would be a private sign visible to only a few priests.*
 - *The detail “from top to bottom” suggests an irreversible rending of that magnificent curtain which hung in Herod’s Temple visible from the courtyard, the outer veil.*
 - *Both Jewish and Christian traditions (different religions, same event) speak of an astonishing event happening at the entrance to the Sanctuary (the outer veil).*
 - *Early Christians took this as a warning sign of impending destruction of the Temple (13:2).*
 - *Recall the intertwining of the death of Jesus and destruction of the Temple (14:58. 15:29).*
 - *The rending of the Temple veil is a public sign that rejection of the Messiah by the Jewish leaders is so serious an offense to the divine purpose that it seals the disaster of AD 70.*
 - *This is consistent with 2 Corinthians 3:13-16 “Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away.”*

The Death of Jesus | 15:33-41

- 39 – *The centurion stood facing Jesus supervised the execution.*
 - *He had followed each stage of the crucifixion & knew Jesus had not died the normal death.*
 - *The strength which Jesus possessed at the moment of death was so unusual that the centurion spontaneously acknowledged Jesus’ transcendent dignity.*
 - *“Son of God” = centurion meant that Jesus was a divine man or deified hero. Words do carry a religious overtone consistent with Hellenism (Greek influence regarding deities).*
 - *Mark expects his readers to recognize that this was a genuine Christian confession in the sense that the centurion spoke truer than he knew.*
 - *Centurion’s confession is an appropriate complement to the affirmation of Peter that Jesus is the Messiah (8:29). And a triumphant climax to the gospel anticipated by 1:1.*
 - *Note parallels to 1:10-11 where sky is rent and Jesus proclaimed the divine Son.*
 - *That the truth of Jesus’ person was publicly declared, whether intentional or not, was doubtless important to the Christians in Rome. Remember Roman usage of “Son of God” was only applied to the Roman emperor who was worshiped in the state cult.*
 - *Here we have the gentile response to Peter’s Jewish confession. The crucified Jesus, not the emperor, is the Son of God.*

The Death of Jesus | 15:33-41

- *40-41 – Historical accounts record that crucified men were often surrounded by relatives and friends.*
 - *Mark mentions women from Galilee who assisted Jesus in ministry. Their active service were marks of true love and devotion.*
 - *Luke 8:1-3 notes that several of these women had been healed by Jesus. Mary Magdalene had been released from severe demonic possession. Magdala was her birthplace on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee.*
 - *Mark's point is that these women were eyewitnesses to the primary events in his gospel – the death (15:40-41), burial (15:47), and resurrection (16:1). They could confirm the testimony of Mark's gospel.*