

Daily Bible Study

“Prelude to Victory”

Mark 15:16-33

March 10 – March 16, 2013

THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY –As we continue along in Mark this week we take for our text **Mark 15:16-33**. The first portion of this text involves the description of the soldiers who gather around Jesus to make sport of Him. We see various forms of mockery toward Jesus before He is finally led away to crucifixion. Scripture then describes for us the details of the scene on Golgotha where we find prophecies fulfilled, physical details of the horrific scene, and most importantly, details of the Spiritual significance of this moment of history. Read our text **Mark 15:16-33**: *“Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head, and began to salute Him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him. Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross. And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it. And when they crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots for them to determine what every man should take. Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him. And the inscription of His accusation was written above: THE KING OF THE JEWS. With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left. So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And He was numbered with the transgressors.” And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, “Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself, and come down from the cross!” Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him. Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.”*

Suggestion for Prayer: *God, teach me and also show me the glory of Jesus from this Scripture.*

TUESDAY – **Mark 15:16-20**: *“Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. And they clothed Him with purple;*

and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head, and began to salute Him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.” In **Isaiah 53:3-7** the prophet details the horror of this scene of the mockery and submission of Jesus Christ ultimately not to mankind but to the will of The Father and yet **Isaiah** and **Mark** are both difficult passages to read. It embarrasses, angers, humbles and convicts us. Jesus should be worshipped and adored and here we find Him mistreated and mocked. The embarrassing and Lord willing convicting part is that Jesus endured this Beloved to *bear our griefs and sorrows*. It is a very familiar and interesting phrase that begins our text; *Then the soldiers led Him away...* Between Matthew, Mark, Luke and John we find in the story of Jesus passion that 21 times He was “led” somewhere. Again, **Isaiah** reminds us *He was led as a lamb to the slaughter...* We see various forms of the mockery of the soldiers as they among other things, strip him of his clothes and put on Him a “royal” purple robe, press down on his head a crown of thorns, kneel down in front of Him in mock adoration. They also spit on Him, hit him on the head with his own “scepter.” Finally, they remove the purple robe, put his own clothes on Him again, and lead him away for crucifixion. This truly was a horrible scene of insult and blasphemy. Remember Beloved, that as a follower of Jesus, the true Christian is always liable to be regarded as a joke and receive mocking and cruel jesting. Scribbled on the walls of Pompeii, whose walls are still chalked with coarse jests today, there is a picture of a Christian kneeling before a donkey and below it scrawled the words, ‘Anaximenes worships his God.’ If people ever make a joke of our Christianity, remember they did it to Jesus in a way far worse.

Suggestion for Prayer: *God, help me to see the humility and love in Jesus toward me a sinner. Thank You Jesus for enduring such mockery and scornful shame in my place. Give me power Holy Spirit to act like Jesus when I am mocked for righteousness and His name sake.*

WEDNESDAY – **Mark 15:21**: *“Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.”* We have studied this man Simon before in a Wednesday night Bible Study but I believe a recap of his part in the story will be profitable for us. I will draw from Barclay for this probable recap. “Simon was from Cyrene in Africa. No doubt he had come from that far-off land for the Passover. No doubt he had scraped and saved for many years in order to come. No doubt he was gratifying the ambition of a lifetime to eat one Passover in Jerusalem. Then this happened to him. At the moment Simon must have bitterly resented it. He must have hated the Romans, and hated this criminal whose cross he was being forced to carry. But we may legitimately speculate what happened to Simon. It may be that it was his intention when he got to Golgotha to fling the cross down on the ground and hasten as quickly as he could from the scene. But perhaps it did not turn out that way. Perhaps he lingered on because

something about Jesus fascinated him. He is described as *the father of Alexander and Rufus*. The people for whom the gospel was written must have been meant to recognize him by this description. It is most likely that Mark's gospel was first written for the church at Rome. Now let us turn to Paul's letter to Rome and read **Romans 16:13**. 'Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; and greet his mother—a mother to me also.' Rufus was so eminent a Christian that he was *chosen in the Lord*. The mother of Rufus was so dear to Paul that he could call her his own mother. Things must have happened to Simon on Golgotha. Now turn to **Acts 13:1**. There is a list of the men of Antioch who sent Paul and Barnabas out on that epoch-making first mission to the Gentiles. The name of one is *Simeon who was called Niger*. *Simeon* is another form of *Simon*. *Niger* was the regular name for a man of dark skin who came from Africa, and Cyrene is in Africa. Here it may well be that we are meeting Simon again. Maybe Simon's experience on the way to Golgotha bound his heart forever to Jesus. Maybe it made him a Christian. Maybe in the after days he was a leader in Antioch and instrumental in the first mission to the Gentiles. Maybe it was because Simon was compelled to carry the cross of Jesus that the first mission to the Gentiles took place. That would mean that *we* are Christians because one day a Passover pilgrim from Cyrene, to his bitter resentment at the time, was pressed by a nameless Roman officer to carry his cross for Jesus."

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, You had Luke record for us that Simon followed after Jesus with the cross. Help me to like Simon, follow after Jesus and worship and learn from Him.

THURSDAY – Mark 15:22-27: "And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it. And when they crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots for them to determine what every man should take. Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him. And the inscription of His accusation was written above: **THE KING OF THE JEWS**. With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left. So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with the transgressors"". We see that they arrived at Golgotha, and here Jesus is offered wine mingled with myrrh, which he refuses to drink. Jesus refused to drink and He could not be persuaded to drink it. He intended to go through the final ordeal with a mind that was perfectly clear; He also intended to endure everything without avoiding a single agony. The wine mentioned was a very powerful and strong drink to render a crucifixion victim easy to handle for the soldiers as well as to stupefy them. Even a moderate drink of this wine would have made Jesus unable to speak as clearly as He did on the cross. The soldiers now *divide His garments, casting lots for them* to determine who should take what. This event was prophesied in specific in **Psalms 22:18**. At, *the third hour*, nine o'clock A.M., on "Good Friday," they crucified Jesus. How much is said with so few words here by Mark. He merely says, *they crucified Him* to capture an event with epic and monumental significance. This is often the language of Sacred Scripture such as the phrase of **Genesis 1:16** where for

example, after speaking of the creation of the sun and moon Scripture records, "*He made the stars also*". Really? The billions of stars being created is summed up with 5 words...incredible. This is exactly what Mark does here as He describes "the incredible" in such a fashion. Above Jesus was the superscription stating the charge and it read, **THE KING OF THE JEWS**. Lenski comments, "From the start Pilate selected this charge as being the central one made by the Jews and examined Jesus regarding it and found him innocent of any nationalistic pretensions. Throughout the trial before Pilate, Jesus figures as "the king of the Jews" whom the Jews disown most violently and finally declare that they have no king but Cæsar. They thus forced Pilate to condemn Jesus as "the king of the Jews." To the very last they had hurled the charge at Pilate: "King! King!" which he knew was false, and which he knew they knew was false. So Pilate now has his revenge on these Jews. They shall have Jesus on the cross, but only as a king, only as *their* king. Let all the world read: "The King of the Jews." By adding nothing further Pilate really proclaims the innocence of Jesus right here on the cross. Pilate sets it down as a simple fact that Jesus is, indeed, the king of the Jews, and Jesus had fully explained what kind of a king he is. So this accusation was at the same time a vindication. The superscription was written in three languages, which explains the slight variations in the wording. When the Jews demanded that Pilate change the words to make them read that Jesus *said* that he was the king of the Jews, Pilate, exasperated enough as he was, flatly refused. Since he was crucified between robbers Jesus was certainly numbered with the transgressors, **Isaiah 53:12**. This is Pilate's estimate of this king of the Jews. We are not told how he came to order these robbers to be crucified together with Jesus, yet we see that it was done in order to insult the Jews and to degrade their king even in his very crucifixion."

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, what can I say but wow! The intricate details, the prophecies fulfilled, and the incredible love, grace, and fortitude of Jesus...Wow! Hallelujah! Praise You!

FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Mark 15:28-33: "And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself, and come down from the cross!" Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him. Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour." We see those who passed by blasphemed Jesus; they shook their heads and mocked. The religious leaders also mocked but they do not address Jesus; they speak to each other about Him. These people had seen sign after sign and miracle yet they mocked to see another and tragically they did not believe. In love, Jesus hung there to the end not saving Himself but in fact, saving those who would believe (**John 17:20**).

Suggestion for Prayer: Praise You Jesus for loving me an unworthy, mocking sinner.