

# The Gospel of *Mark*

## The Servant Leadership of Jesus

### The Servant's Ministry in Jerusalem (cont) (11:1 – 16:20)

**Arrest, Trials and Crucifixion: *The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ*** (15:21-32)

**15:21** Simon and his sons, Alexander and Rufus, were from the North African city of Cyrene (near the present day town of Shahat, Libya). The Roman soldiers forced Simon to carry the cross for Jesus.

The convicted criminal was responsible for carrying his own cross, but Jesus was innocent.

Jesus was exhausted from His sleepless night and scourging, and could not carry the cross.

The Roman soldiers assumed they picked a man at 'random' to help, but God chose a "certain man" named Simon, who, as a fallen/guilty human, carried the cross, representing all humanity.

One "Simon" denied Jesus 3 times <sup>Mark 14:66-72</sup> and another "Simon" carried His cross <sup>Mark 15:21</sup>.

This is the only mention of Alexander, but Paul may have mentioned Rufus later <sup>Romans 16:13</sup>.

**22-25** Jesus was taken to Golgotha, refused to drink a mixture of wine and myrrh, was stripped of His clothes (that were gambled for <sup>Psalms 22:18</sup>) and was then crucified at the third hour of the day (9 A.M.).

For a discussion of the location of Golgotha (Aramaic for 'skull'), see Mark Y 15b Supplement.

When drunk, the mixture of wine and myrrh was intended to temporarily deaden pain <sup>v.36</sup>.

Jewish reckoned the 12 hours of daytime in hours from dawn (usually considered to be 6 A.M.).

John stated that Jesus was condemned by Pilate "about the sixth hour" <sup>John 19:14</sup>, so he was undoubtedly using one of the popular ways Romans reckoned time: hours from midnight.

Crucifixion started with the Persians, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, and passed to the Romans, who perfected the torturous punishment. The slow death usually resulted from suffocation.

The word "excruciating" was coined in an attempt to describe the incredible pain of crucifixion.

**26-30** The charge Jesus was 'convicted' of was written for all to see was "THE KING OF THE JEWS".

Jesus was flanked on each side by "robbers", who were also being crucified. As people walked by, they verbally abused Him <sup>Psalms 22:7, 109:25</sup>, taunting Him to get Himself down from the cross <sup>Psalms 22:8</sup>.

According to John's gospel, Pontius Pilate actually wrote Jesus' charge himself <sup>John 19:22</sup>, and

the entire message on the sign was "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" <sup>John 19:19</sup>. The

NIV1984 states that the message was written in "Aramaic, Latin and Greek" <sup>John 19:20</sup>; however,

the original writings read: "Hebrew, Latin and Greek". This is important, because the first

letters of each word in the phrase Pilate wrote out in Hebrew spell *YHWH* (the tetragrammaton,

normally spelled *Yahweh*, the unpronounceable name of God). The “chief priests” protested by pleading with Pilate to change the wording <sup>John 19:21</sup>, but Pilate refused <sup>John 19:22</sup>.

Being crucified with criminals (“transgressors”) was a fulfillment of prophecy <sup>Isaiah 53:12</sup>.

The mockers repeated some of the false testimony <sup>v.29, Mark 14:58</sup> misquoting Jesus <sup>John 2:19-21</sup>.

**31-32** The Jewish leaders also mocked Jesus, but they only spoke their insults among themselves.

In addition to those passing by and the chief priests & scribes, even the ‘robbers’ mocked Jesus <sup>v.32</sup>.

While the two criminals reviled Jesus, one later repented and was saved by Jesus <sup>Luke 23:40-43</sup>.

The people and Jewish leaders mocked Jesus as a Prophet <sup>v.29</sup>, Savior <sup>v.31-32</sup> and King <sup>v.32</sup>.

**Arrest, Trials and Crucifixion: *The Death of Jesus Christ*** (15:33-41)

**33-36** At the sixth hour, it became dark for 3 hours. Then at the ninth hour, Jesus cried out to God in

Aramaic, asking why He had been abandoned <sup>Psalms 22:1</sup>. Some believed Jesus was calling Elijah.

Believing He needed help, a man offered and Jesus drank from a vinegar-wine sponge <sup>Psalms 69:21</sup>.

The 3-hour miracle of darkness was a sign of divine judgement/prophecy <sup>Isaiah 13:10-11, Amos 8:9</sup>.

Jesus cried out, because of the one time in all of eternity He was separated from His Father.

This occurred as God’s wrath for all mankind was being poured out on Jesus <sup>2 Corinthians 5:21</sup>.

Also, it is the only time Jesus did not refer to God as “My Father”, but called Him “My God”.

The people’s reference to Elijah was a further form of sarcastic mockery, since Elijah was prophesied (and expected by the Jews) to precede the Messiah <sup>Malachi 3:5-6, Luke 1:17</sup>.

**37-39** With a final cry, Jesus died, and at that time, the temple curtain was torn from top to bottom.

After listening to and observing Jesus on the cross, and then experiencing the darkness, as well as the earthquake and open tombs, the Centurion proclaimed belief in Jesus as the Christ. <sup>v.39, Luke 9:20</sup>

Jesus was not murdered nor martyred, but willingly laid down His life for mankind <sup>John 10:14-18</sup>.

The curtain dividing the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place represented God’s separation/isolation from the people, but the tearing of the veil (from top to bottom: proof of a miracle) when Jesus died, illustrated the freedom every believer has (from that time on) in approaching God the Father through Jesus <sup>Hebrews 10:19-22</sup>.

Jesus made seven statements from the cross:

1. **“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”** <sup>Luke 23:34</sup>
2. **“I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”** <sup>Luke 23:43</sup>
3. **“Dear woman, here is your son, ... [John,] here is your mother.”** <sup>John 19:26-27</sup>

4. **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”** Matthew 27:46 (Psalm 22:1)
5. **“I am thirsty.”** John 19:28
6. **“It is finished.”** John 19:30
7. **“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.”** Luke 23:46

Including the 6<sup>th</sup> statement by Jesus (above), there are a total of three Biblical announcements proclaiming the ends of specific judgements:

- † “It is finished.”: judgement on sin <sup>John 19:30</sup>
- † “It is done.”: judgement of the earth and redemption of the Jews <sup>Revelation 16:17</sup>
- † “It is done.”: judgement of the rebellious angels and humans <sup>Revelation 21:6</sup>

**40-41** Many women had attended to the needs of Jesus throughout His ministry <sup>Matthew 27:55</sup> and were present during the crucifixion. Among the women were Mary Magdalene <sup>Luke 8:1-2</sup>, Mary (the Mother of James son of Alphaeus <sup>Matthew 10:3</sup>) and Salome (Zebedee’s wife and the Mother of James and John <sup>Matthew 27:56</sup>, as well as an Aunt to Jesus <sup>John 19:25</sup>). The reason the women were “watching from a distance” may have been a result of their struggle to watch the suffering of Jesus.

Mary was at the cross <sup>John 19:25</sup>, but is gone at the end <sup>v.40</sup> (taken to John’s home? <sup>John 19:26-27</sup>).

#### **Arrest, Trials and Crucifixion: *The Burial of Jesus Christ* (15:42-47)**

**42-45** Jesus died the day before the Sabbath (the Preparation Day). Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Sanhedrin who opposed Jesus’ condemnation <sup>Luke 23:50-51</sup>, approached Pontius Pilate for the body of Jesus. After making sure Jesus was actually dead, Pilate released Jesus’ body to Joseph.

It is readily apparent that Joseph of Arimathea was saved, because the gospels state he was “waiting for the kingdom of God” <sup>v.43, Luke 23:51</sup> and he was a “disciple” <sup>Matthew 27:57, John 19:38</sup>. Arimathea (OT: Ramah <sup>1 Samuel 1:19-20</sup>) was a town about twenty miles north of Jerusalem.

By tradition, Jesus died on Friday, but many facts seem to point to an earlier crucifixion. Included in the controversy are Jesus’ statement about His spending “three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” <sup>Matthew 12:40</sup> and the Sabbath referred to here <sup>v.42</sup> is called a “special Sabbath” by John <sup>John 19:31</sup>, indicating it was not a normal Saturday Sabbath.

**46-47** Joseph took Jesus’ body down from the cross, wrapped it in linen, placed it in a tomb, and rolled a stone in front of the entrance. At that time, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were watching.

Joseph & Nicodemus wrapped Jesus’ body in linen with a 75-lb myrrh/aloe mixture <sup>John 19:39-40</sup>. They laid Jesus in Joseph’s <sup>Matthew 27:60</sup> new tomb <sup>Luke 23:53</sup> located near Golgotha <sup>John 19:42</sup>.