

Mark 15

Lesson for Sunday, September 10, 2023

CHAPTER SUMMARY: Jesus is put on trial, sentenced to death, crucified, and buried, taking upon Himself the sins of the world.

1. Events Preceding Crucifixion (vs. 1-21)
 - a. The conspiracy (vs. 1)
 - b. The confusion (vs. 2)
 - c. The charges (vs. 3-5)
 - d. The custom (vs. 6)
 - e. The choice (vs. 7-14)
 - f. The chastening (vs. 15)
 - g. The contempt (vs. 16-20)
 - h. The cross-bearer (vs. 21)
2. Events During the Crucifixion (vs. 22-37)
 - a. The cup for the cross (vs. 22-23)
 - b. The clothing below the cross (vs. 24-25)
 - c. The citation on the cross (vs. 26)
 - d. The criminals alongside the cross (vs. 27-28)
 - e. The contempt toward the cross (vs. 29-32)
 - f. The cloud covering the cross (vs. 33)
 - g. The cry from the cross (vs. 34)
 - h. The confusion around the cross (vs. 35-36)
 - i. The consummation of the cross (vs. 37)
3. Events Following the Crucifixion (vs. 38-47)
 - a. Regarding the tearing of the veil (vs. 38)
 - b. Regarding the tribute of the centurion (vs. 39)
 - c. Regarding the testimony of the women (vs. 40-41)
 - d. Regarding the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea (vs. 42-47)

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ What details do you remember from Jesus's arrest through His burial? *Allow for discussion...*
- ⇒ Most remember details from His trial, His time with Pilate, the mob clamoring for His crucifixion, etc. But have you ever given much thought to the burial of Jesus?
- ⇒ His burial seems simple enough. After all, that is what we do when someone dies.
- ⇒ But there is more for us to consider. The burial of Jesus presents a strong picture of courage, the kind of courage that sets a dynamic example for all to follow.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The need for haste because the Sabbath was approaching (vs. 42).
 - a. Jesus was dead and needed to be buried. But as we read this verse we can sense the urgency to get it done quickly. What was the reason for their hastiness?
 - b. The Sabbath was the day of worship for Jews. The Jewish day began at 6 PM and strict Jewish law said that once the Sabbath began, no work could be done including the burial of the dead.
 - c. Jesus died at 3 PM (see Mk. 15:33-34,37). He died on Friday, the day of preparation for the Sabbath. If anything was to be done with Jesus' body, it had to be done immediately and quickly. Only three hours remained for work.
 - d. The Romans either dumped the bodies of crucified criminals in the trash heaps or left the bodies hanging upon the cross for the vultures and animals to consume. If Jesus' body was not removed quickly within these three hours, the fate of His body was set. The Romans would not care what happened to Him, and no Jew could remove Him until the Sabbath was over.
2. The courage to boldly request the body of Jesus (vs. 43-45).

- a. This was a striking picture. A man, Joseph of Arimathaea, was stirred to step forth for Jesus. Several important facts are given by the gospel writers about him:
 - i. He was from Arimathaea and was now a permanent citizen of Jerusalem.
 - ii. He had bought a tomb in Jerusalem for his own burial.
 - iii. He was a member of the Sanhedrin (Mk. 15:43).
 - iv. He was a good and just man (Lu. 24:50).
 - v. He waited for the Kingdom of God (Mk. 15:43).
 - vi. He was rich (Mt. 27:57).
 - vii. He did not vote for Jesus' death in the Sanhedrin (Lu. 23:51).
 - viii. He was a disciple, but a secret one, fearing his fellow Jews (Jn. 19:38).
 - b. Up until the death of Jesus, he had been a secret disciple. But now, he was no longer willing to remain silent. He became bold in standing forth for Jesus.
 - c. The verse says that Joseph marched in "boldly to Pilate" and requested permission to look after the body of Jesus. This would have required a tremendous act of courage.
 - d. The thing that turned Joseph from being a secret disciple to a bold disciple seems to be the phenomenal events surrounding the cross (for example, the behavior and words of Jesus, the darkness, the earthquake, and the torn veil).
 - e. When Joseph witnessed all this, he stepped forward, braved all risks, and took his stand for Jesus. A remarkable courage! A courage stirred by the death of Jesus.
 - f. Thought: The primary thing that stirs courage in the believer is the cross. Seeing the cross and what the cross really means ought to stir every Christian to courageously step forward for Christ.
 - g. Pilate marveled that Jesus was already dead. Victims usually lingered for days before dying. In fact, the victims' legs were often broken to hasten death (Jn. 19:31).
3. The courage to make an unashamed commitment to Jesus (vs. 46).
- a. Four acts show that Joseph made a courageous commitment to Jesus.
 - b. First, Joseph personally took Jesus down from the cross, wrapped the linen cloth around Him, and laid Jesus in his own tomb.
 - i. Joseph personally took care of Jesus. Remember the disciples had fled and forsaken Jesus.
 - ii. It was doubtful that Joseph understood all that was surrounding the cross and all that was about to take place in the resurrection. No one did. But he apparently believed, and courageously acted on that belief.
 - c. Second, Joseph risked the disfavor and discipline of the Sanhedrin. They were the ruling body who had instigated and condemned Jesus, and Joseph was a member of the council. There was no question, he would face some harsh reaction from some of his fellow Sanhedrin members and from some of his closest friends.
 - d. Third, Joseph demonstrated a care, even an affection for Jesus. He gave by giving his own tomb for the burial of Jesus. This act alone would leave no question about his stand for Jesus.
 - e. Finally, Joseph also eliminated himself from taking part in the great Passover Feast-and this was never done, even for the most serious reasons. Joseph, by handling Jesus' body, was considered defiled for seven days for having come in contact with a corpse. Once defiled, Jewish law forbade a person from taking part in Jewish ceremonies.
 - f. Simply stated, Joseph, who had been a secret disciple, now stepped forward making an unashamed commitment to Jesus. Joseph was risking his position, esteem, wealth, and even his life by making such a pronounced commitment to the affairs of Jesus.
 - g. Thought: The courage demonstrated by Joseph is desperately needed by all. The courage to make an unashamed commitment to Christ. The courage to risk all for Christ, even if it does cost our position, esteem, wealth, and life. The courage to be an unashamed witness for Christ, no matter the cost.
4. The courage to take a public stand by the cross (vs. 47).
- a. The women stood by the cross (Mk. 15:40-41, 47). They loved Jesus and felt deep affection and loyalty for Him. They did not understand, but they did *love and believe*.

- b. The men had forsaken Jesus, but not the women. They stood by the cross from beginning to end despite the danger and possible threat of being arrested as a follower of Jesus.
- c. Apparently, they loved and believed so strongly that nothing could have driven them away. What happened seems to be this:
 - i. Many women followers were present at the cross (Mk. 15:41).
 - ii. After Jesus died, all but two women either returned to their own home or else escorted Mary, the mother of Jesus, to her residence.
 - iii. The two women who remained behind saw Joseph come to bury Jesus. They watched, probably even accompanied him so they would know where their Lord was buried.
- d. The women had courage, the kind of courage that takes a stand by the cross. They were not ashamed to stand by the cross. They did not allow the fear of men to run them away from the cross. And they did not allow their discouragement to defeat them.

APPLICATION/DISCUSSION:

- ⇒ Does it take courage to stand for Jesus today? In what ways?
- ⇒ How do we learn to respond with boldness and not in fear?
- ⇒ Joseph's love for Jesus was evident in his actions – giving of himself for Jesus. What actions from your life reveal that Jesus is your Lord and Savior?