

Sunday, July 8, 2012—Mark Dispensationally Considered—Mark 15:16-25: “Father Forgive Them for They Know Not What They Do”

Mark 15:16-25

- **16) And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band.**
- **17) And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his [head],**
- **18) And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!**
- **19) And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing [their] knees worshipped him.**
- **20) And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.**
- **21) And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.**
- **22) And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.**
- **23) And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received [it] not.**
- **24) And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.**
- **25) And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.**
- Mark 15:15—last week we studied the trial of Jesus before Pilate. Pilate was willing to let Jesus go because he could find no fault in him. In the end, however, Pilate succumbed to the pressure of the people, released Barabbas and turned Jesus over to be crucified.
- Mark 15:16—having received sanction from Pilate to execute Jesus, he is now led by Roman soldiers into what was called the “Praetorium.” According to *Strong’s Concordance* the word “Praetorium” carries the following meanings:
 - "head-quarters" in a Roman camp, the tent of the commander-in-chief
 - the palace in which the governor or procurator of a province resided, to which use the Romans were accustomed to appropriate the palaces already existing, and formerly dwelt in by kings or princes; at Jerusalem it was a magnificent palace which Herod the Great had built for himself, and which the Roman procurators seemed to have occupied whenever they came from Caesarea to Jerusalem to transact public business
 - Matthew 27:27—“common hall” come from the same Greek word.
- Notice also that the entire band of soldiers was called together here.

- Mark 15:17-19—these verses record the mockery Jesus suffered at the hand of his Roman executioners. In these verses Jesus is given a crown of thrones, a reed for a scepter and is spit upon before he is falsely worshiped and mocked.
 - Matthew 27:28-30
- Mark 15:20—after they had mocked him they put his own clothes back on him and “led him out to crucify him.”
 - Matthew 27:31
- Mark 15:21—according to this verses and its pertinent cross references, a man named Simon was plucked from the crowd and compelled to carry Christ’s cross through the streets of Jerusalem.
 - Matthew 27:32
 - Luke 23:26
- Luke 23:27-32—Luke alone records this scene and exchange between Jesus and the morning women as they make their way through the city to the place where Christ will be crucified. Jesus tells them not to weep for him but for themselves and their children.
 - Verse 29—there is going to come a day in Israel when it will be an advantage to have never given birth or nursed a baby (Matt. 24:19).
 - Verse 30—during the tribulation period people will plead with the mountains and hills to fall upon them to hide them from the face of lamb (Hosea 10:8, Rev. 6:16-17).
 - Verse 31—if they are willing to kill their Messiah as he stands before how much worse will things be for the children of Israel when he is not.
 - Verse 32—the two thieves or malefactors were also led through the city with Christ to be put to death.
- Mark 15:22—this death march ends at Golgotha which is a Hebrew word meaning, “the place of a skull.”
 - Matthew 27:33
 - John 19:17-18
 - Luke 23:33—Jesus and the two malefactors were brought to Calvary where they were crucified with him. The word “Calvary” is the Latin equivalent of the Hebrew Golgotha, it means “a skull,” in Latin.

- Mark 15:23—Jesus is offered “wine mingled with myrrh” to drink but refuses to do so. Charles F. Baker and George William suggest in their commentaries that it was customary to offer wine mingled with myrrh to criminals. The elixir was supposed to serve as a type of pain killer.
 - Matthew 27:34
- Mark 15:24—when Jesus was placed upon the cross the soldiers cast lots to see which part of Christ garments each one should take. As we shall see in a few moments when we look at Luke this cast lots upon vesture of Christ did not happen until after the Lord’s first saying from the cross. The division of the Lord’s clothing was predicted by David in the Psalm 22.
 - Psalm 22:18
 - Matthew 27:35
 - John 19:23-24
- Mark 15:25—Mark alone tells us that Jesus was crucified on the third hour of the day. Baker informs his readers that this would have been about 9:00 AM, or three house after sunrise. Virtually all commentators explain the apparent time discrepancy between Mark 15:25 and John 19:14 as the difference between Hebrew and Roman time.
- Luke 23:34—tells us that before the soldiers cast lots for the clothing of Christ, Jesus issued his first of seven sayings from the cross. The first saying form the cross was “Father forgive them; for they know not what they do.” How can this be?
 - The first words from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ while they crucified Him, while He hung on the cross, **"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do,"** demonstrates the attitude of the Lord Jesus Christ as He was beseeching and interceding to the Father for His murderers. Christ was identifying where the cross stands in the program of God. There is a tremendous significance here about what is going on dispensationally.
 - Luke 4:17-19—Isaiah 61:1-2
 - Psalm 69:20-26—God's attitude and response in all of Scripture to the rejection of His Son was to pour out His wrath and vengeance on the Christ-rejecter. Now, when you come to Calvary, the first thing you hear Christ say is, "Father, forgive them." *Don't pour out your wrath upon them* "for they know not what they do."
 - So, as He looks out over them from the cross and says, **"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."** That's an expression of marvelous love. You don't find anything of a positive nature in the people standing at the foot of that cross to suggest that

they would merit mercy of any kind. With wicked hands they were crucifying the Lord of Glory (Acts 2:23). In the face of the evidence, they were crucifying Him. They lied and connived a mock trial with false witnesses to gain their end. They used political chicanery and pressure of the most blatant kind to have the Roman governor crucify Him. They weren't even going to do the deed themselves.

- Deuteronomy 21:22-23—They weren't satisfied just to kill Him. They wanted Him held up as rejected and cursed of God. And it was those people whom Christ asked, "**Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.**" You and I look at that and think that they do know what they are doing. But Christ says: *No, they really don't know. They sit in the blindness of unbelief.*
- John 12:35-40—They couldn't believe. They had the evidence and **chose not to believe.** They heard the Word and rejected it ; they heard the Word and rejected it, over and over. Finally, there came a point where God said: *Okay, you don't want it? I'll fix it so you can't have it. I'll give you your will.* Then He blinded their minds so they would not, could not see. He just gave them their wish, so there's no way they could complain about not being able to see. The worst judgment that God could give you, in your life in human time, is to leave you to yourself, to be abandoned by God to your own devices.
- The judgment of God that is prophesied to fall upon Israel because of their rejection of Christ is postponed, and an extension of mercy is given to Israel. There is something wonderful going on here, for while there is nothing in them of a positive nature that would call forth or require, or even suggest, the extension of mercy, the Lord Jesus Christ uses a loophole in the Law which is for sins of ignorance. A sin of ignorance is no excuse, but it does make a difference in the penalty under the Law. Christ is claiming it for them. They were not seeking it. He claimed it for them.
- Acts 3:6-8—This is a perfect example of what Christ sent the apostles to do for Israel. Here, Israel is lame and unable to walk; he can't go in and worship God. Through what Christ has provided, the apostle restores and heals him, and he goes with them into the temple, praising God.
- Acts 3:12-17—God Himself, through Peter (filled with the Spirit, speaking as the Spirit gives him utterance), claims the loophole in the Law. Ignorance does not excuse the crime. What it did do under the Law, was to make a difference in the sentence.
- Numbers 35:6, 11-12, 15-27—In Numbers 35, under the Law, when someone caused the death of another through ignorance, the avenger of blood (the nearest of kin to the slain) would come to get vengeance on the killer. But because it was done in ignorance, there were cities of refuge where that man could go. He would go to the judge or the council of that city and say, "I killed someone, but it wasn't murder; it was manslaughter." He could stay in that city until the high priest died, and the avenger of blood couldn't get to him. He was safe as long as he stayed in that city.

- Acts 3:18-26—That's what is going on here for Israel: an opportunity for repentance and for Israel to respond to God's pleading and God's changing the verdict from murder to manslaughter. He offered Israel a place of refuge from the wrath that is going to come. He was giving Israel a renewed opportunity for salvation. He invited them to that place of refuge in Christ, their Messiah. He lifts the blindness that had been placed upon them because of their unbelief.
- When you start listening to Christ from the cross, it is critical for you to understand that the first thing He said is: *I'm not setting Israel aside because of this.*
- Luke 13:6-9—The Father sends Christ, and He seeks fruit from Israel. They don't bring forth any fruit in the three years of His earthly ministry. The Father says: *All right, let's cut them down, and let's do something else.* Jesus says: *Wait. Let's give them one more year. I'll dig about it and fertilize it. I'll put some extra effort into it.* He sends the Holy Spirit upon them, and now there is not just one man in their midst doing miracles, there are a whole host of people going out doing these wonderful signs, confirming the Word, between Acts 2 and Acts 7. Do you know how long that is? One year. The nature of the early part of the book of Acts is defined for you by the very first word that Christ speaks from the cross. That may not sound too exciting to you right now. If you don't grasp this, the significance of Calvary will never sink into your soul the way God intends it to.
- The great blunder that the Church, the Body of Christ, has made for almost the last two thousand years, has been to think that God set Israel aside at the cross, and that on the day of Pentecost something brand new started; that is, the Body of Christ.
- Acts 7:51-60—do you notice that Stephen does not say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do?" Stephen could not plead ignorance for them any longer. He could not plead ignorance for his murderers. Rather, his prayer exposes their guilt. It was sin they were committing, and they knew it.
- At Calvary, Christ secured for Israel an extension of mercy. That mercy extended into the early part of the book of Acts. The first saying of Christ from the cross defines the nature of the ministry that is being carried on in early Acts. That which is going on has nothing to do with God setting Israel aside and forming the Church, the Body of Christ. That first word from the cross tells us that Israel was not yet fallen, that there was this renewed opportunity for her repentance. The wrath of God toward Israel was delayed while God extends mercy.