

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Mark: Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God

Part III: The Perfect Sacrifice Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 11:1-15:47

W. Christ's Example Of Staying God's Ministry Course Even Amid Great Suffering (Mark 15:33-41)

I. Introduction

- A. Mark's Gospel was written by a man who was rebounding from having abandoned Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:13) due to some unspecified difficulty.
- B. Jesus Christ faced His greatest suffering in being alienated from God the Father on the cross, yet He faithfully and triumphantly stayed His ministry course assigned by the Father regardless of that suffering, and His example gave John Mark and the rest of us believers a pattern for staying the ministry course amid suffering.

II. Christ's Example Of Staying God's Ministry Course Even Amid Great Suffering, Mark 15:33-41.

- A. Jesus suffered enormous pain in being separated from God the Father on the cross, Mark 15:33-34:
 - 1. He was crucified at the third hour according to Jewish time, at 9 a. m., but at the sixth hour, noon, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, 3 p. m., Mark 15:33. This period of darkness could not have been caused by a lunar eclipse, for Jesus died at Passover (Mark 14:12; 15:5-6), the fifteenth day of the lunar month at a full moon (Harold W. Hoehner, Chron. Aspects of the Life of Christ, 1979, p. 89; Z. P. E. B., v. One, p. 688-689) when the earth was between the sun and moon so that the moon could not possibly have blocked the sun's light from reaching the earth.
 - 2. Thus, this darkness was supernaturally caused, exhibiting God the Father's break in fellowship with His Son on the cross when Jesus was made to be sin for the world of sinful men, 2 Corinthians 5:21.
 - 3. Fittingly, Jesus then cried out in His native Aramaic, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" with the Aramaic "Eli" being changed to the Hebrew "Eloi," Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Matt. 27:46. The phrase means, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34), citing Psalm 22:1a that predicted Christ's sufferings on the cross. "The darkness visualized what Jesus' cry (Mark 15:34) expressed," God's "judgment on human sin . . . which was placed on Jesus," Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 189.
 - 4. Jesus' separation from the Father was enormous in force: all through eternity past, Jesus had known only intimate fellowship with the Father (John 17:5), but now that fellowship was broken in great suffering.
- B. The ignorant reaction of sinful men standing by the cross is seen in sharp contrast to Jesus' suffering, Mark 15:35-36: some near the cross said Jesus was calling on Elijah, mistaking His call for "Eli" to be for "Elijah" (Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to Matt. 27:47), so one man ran to fill a sponge full of vinegar that was "diluted with a mixture of eggs and water," and put it on a reed and lifted it up to Jesus "so He could extract some refreshment from it," Ibid. They wanted to prolong Jesus' life "to see if Elijah would take Him down" from the cross, Ibid.
- C. However, instead of being delivered from the cross, Jesus uttered a loud cry before breathing His last (Mark 15:37), meaning He did not die an ordinary death by crucifixion that involved physical exhaustion followed by a lapse into a comma before death (Ibid., p. 190), but He was fully conscious at the end, and His death came suddenly upon His shout of a victory cry in gaining triumph over Satan at the cross, Colossians 2:14-15.
- D. Evidences of this victory were given by events that occurred immediately after Jesus died, Mark 15:37-39:
 - 1. The temple veil separating the Holiest of Holies from the Holy Place was torn in two from top to bottom, and "(t)he passive verb and the direction of the tear indicate that this was God's action. It was no doubt observed and reported by the priests (cf. Acts 6:7) who at that moment were conducting the . . . evening sacrifice . . . it was a sign that Jesus' death ended the need for repeated sacrifices for sins, and opened a new and living way of free and direct access to God (Heb. 6:19-20; 9:6-14; 10:19-22)," Ibid.; Mark 15:38.
 - 2. The centurion who oversaw the crucifixion, a man experienced in handling such executions, upon seeing Jesus unnaturally cry out with a loud voice before suddenly dying on the cross, said, "Truly this man was the Son of God," a powerful claim to the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, Mark 15:39.

Lesson: *Though suffering greatly on the cross in being separated from the Father's fellowship as He was made to be sin for us, Jesus nevertheless stayed the ministry course assigned to Him by the Father, refusing to come down from the cross like onlookers tried to anticipate He would do. Instead, He gained a great victory over Satan by supernaturally dying for sin and opening the door for man to be saved, as seen by events that followed His death.*

Application: *May we follow Jesus in sticking to God's ministry assignment even amid great suffering, 1 Peter 2:21.*