



March 13, 2013

### Mark 15:1-47 (ESV)

#### Jesus Delivered to Pilate

And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. <sup>2</sup> And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." <sup>3</sup> And the chief priests accused him of many things. <sup>4</sup> And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." <sup>5</sup> But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

#### Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified

<sup>6</sup> Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. <sup>7</sup> And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. <sup>8</sup> And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. <sup>9</sup> And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" <sup>10</sup> For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. <sup>11</sup> But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. <sup>12</sup> And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" <sup>13</sup> And they cried out again, "Crucify him." <sup>14</sup> And Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him." <sup>15</sup> So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

## **Jesus Is Mocked**

<sup>16</sup> And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. <sup>17</sup> And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. <sup>18</sup> And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>19</sup> And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. <sup>20</sup> And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

## **The Crucifixion**

<sup>21</sup> And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. <sup>22</sup> And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). <sup>23</sup> And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. <sup>24</sup> And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. <sup>25</sup> And it was the third hour when they crucified him. <sup>26</sup> And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." <sup>27</sup> And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>29</sup> And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, <sup>30</sup> save yourself, and come down from the cross!" <sup>31</sup> So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. <sup>32</sup> Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

## **The Death of Jesus**

<sup>33</sup> And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. <sup>34</sup> And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” <sup>35</sup> And some of the bystanders hearing it said, “Behold, he is calling Elijah.” <sup>36</sup> And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.” <sup>37</sup> And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. <sup>38</sup> And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. <sup>39</sup> And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

<sup>40</sup> There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. <sup>41</sup> When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered to him, and there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.

## **Jesus Is Buried**

<sup>42</sup> And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, <sup>43</sup> Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. <sup>44</sup> Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. <sup>45</sup> And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. <sup>46</sup> And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and

laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. <sup>47</sup> Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.

**Reflection Questions**  
**Mark 15:1-47**

1. When Jesus is brought before Pilate and accused of many things, He remains oddly silent. His silence isn't that of a guilty man who knows he's caught, however. He likely remains silent because it highlights the injustice being brought against Him. His silence allows the many echoes of their evil to be heard distinctly. Sometimes the best way to combat evil is not by fighting back, but simply by letting it lie exposed. Have you witnessed any evil recently that has not been exposed?
2. Pilate was just a mid-level manager, politically speaking. He was mostly a military figure, but also oversaw the proper collection of taxes for Rome. When pressed by the crowds, Pilate showed little resolve against their bloodlust. He was willing to crucify an innocent man in order to keep the peace. What pressures do you face in your life that tempt you to compromise on what is right? Unlike Pilate, how have you resisted pressure like this in the past?
3. The Roman soldiers who prepare Jesus for crucifixion are brutal. Mark's account (vv.16-20) gives the sense that Jesus is a laughable figure in their eyes, even making Him the target of their ridicule. As you reflect on this passage, what goes on in your heart? How does the abuse of our Lord and Savior cause you to feel?
4. Jesus cries out from the cross with a terribly difficult question, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me" (v.34)? It's curious that one of the last things Jesus ever says before His resurrection is about feeling forsaken. In what ways have you felt forsaken in your life, by either friends or a family member? How can you find comfort in the fact that Jesus, too, experienced a deep and painful forsakenness?
5. A Roman centurion who stood at the foot of the cross of Jesus made an amazing statement, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (v.39)! Never before in Mark's gospel have any of Jesus' followers understood that He is the Son of God. That's the way it is still today: sometimes those who are most familiar with God (like the chief priests) can be oblivious to who God actually is. What are some practical ways we can keep Jesus from becoming overly familiar to us? How can we stay fresh in our faith for the long haul?
6. Notably absent from the crucifixion scene are any of Jesus' disciples. Instead, Mark tells us about many women who were there. Women in Israel were second-class citizens, and yet they remained faithful while the disciples are nowhere to be found. Mark is, once again, reminding us that the Kingdom of God may well be populated by unlikely people: women, Roman centurions, the lame, etc. Who in your life might not win a popularity contest, and yet are deeply faithful to God?