

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Third Quarter 2024: *The Book of Mark*

Lesson 12 “Tried *and* Crucified”

Read for this week’s study

Mark 15; Luke 13:1; Psalm 22:18; John 20:24–29; John 1:1–3; Daniel 9:24–27.

Memory Text

“And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?’ which is translated, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’ ” (Mark 15:34, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. “Are You the King of the Jews?”
- III. Hail, King of the Jews!
- IV. The Crucifixion
- V. Forsaken by God
- VI. Laid to Rest
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “Mark [chapter] 15 is the heart of the Passion Narrative. It presents the trial of Jesus, His condemnation, the mockery by the soldiers, His crucifixion, and then His death and burial. . . . This week’s chapter is filled with painful ironies that nevertheless reveal powerful truths about the death of Jesus and what it means.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Sunday’s lesson concentrates on Mark 15:1-15 and the irony is that Jesus is both the Messiah and the King of the Jews. What can we learn from the fact that the pagan governor wanted to release the Messiah, while the religious leaders wanted Jesus crucified?
3. The Roman soldiers do to Jesus what they always wanted to do to a King of the Jews and now they have a chance to do it (without worrying about press reports or an international court of justice). The result is the humiliation and degradation of Jesus (15:15-20). How is the irony played out in this scene? (Monday’s lesson)

4. Mark builds up the story of Jesus' crucifixion through one detail after another, moving from scene to scene that together tells the story. (Tuesday's lesson) Why is Simon, from Cyrene in North Africa mentioned (and his two sons)? (15:21 cf. Romans 16:13) How does the mocking statement of the crowd, "He saved others; he cannot save himself" (15:31) reveal the irony of the whole situation?
5. What are Jesus' only words on the cross in Mark (15:33–41)? (Wednesday's lesson) Why does Mark mention the darkness, calling Elijah, the temple veil, and the extraordinary remark of the centurion? How do they contribute to the irony?
6. What is the significance of Joseph of Arimathea's intervention (15:42–47)? (Thursday's lesson) Why are the disciples not burying Jesus? Why are the three women mentioned? This brings us to the last Markan sandwich:
A1: Women 15:40-41
B: Burial of Jesus 15:42-46
A2: Women 15:47-16:1
7. Joseph was treating Jesus as if He was a close member of his own family. This, of course, would make him ritually unclean and unable to engage in the Passover Sabbath activities. Joseph appears here for the first time in Mark and is never mentioned as a disciple. The fact that he is prepared to face uncleanness, and possible charges of association with Jesus, makes his change very remarkable.
8. Those, who were closest to Jesus, who heard him teach with authority and serve with power, betrayed him. Those who shared his authority and power proved unwilling to share his suffering, to drink from his cup. Those he most deeply served refused to become servants of others. What lessons can we take from all this?
9. Mark wants to be sure that we think of Jesus' death in terms of his messiahship, confronting the power of Rome which was built on the power of violence and death. But within this *political* meaning, Mark wants us to also discover the *theological* meaning: What was happening to God's kingdom, God's rescue operation, to the work Jesus had begun in Galilee? But the story of Barabbas (15:6-9) also brings a deeply personal meaning: Barabbas deserves to die. Instead, Jesus dies, and Barabbas goes free. How does reading the story of a guilty man freed and an innocent man crucified lead us to say, "There, but for the grace of God go I?"
10. How can we learn to read the story of Jesus and see it as the story of God's love doing for us what we could not do for ourselves?

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Lou: It's part of our problem, then, that we are taking models from our legal system here and trying to apply them to God.

Graham: That's a very good point, very much so.

Lou: The "substitutionary," that comes in, say more about that. The "vicarious."

Graham: Ah. He died in our stead. He died as the substitution. In a way, it's very true. I mean, either He dies or we die. However, that's where the comparison ends, because if God has let you and me and all other sinners die, all it would have done is prove the truthfulness of His warning, "If you sin, you will die." And God could say to the universe, "Was I right? I said sinners would die, and look, they're dead." But the universe would not have had answers to questions two and three that I just mentioned. When Jesus died, there was no doubt in the minds of the universe that God was not killing His Son. They were clear about that. And the death of Christ answers all those three questions. So it's not either us or Him. His death was infinitely more significant than ours. But had He not died, then what else could God do but leave us to reap the consequences and we all would have died. So in a sense, yes. He died in our stead, but beyond that there's no comparison.

Lou: But not as a payoff. It's not one or the other.

Graham: It's not His death is equal to all of ours. His death is infinitely more significant than the death of every sinful man or angel who has ever lived. The death of angels and men would not have answered the questions.

Lou: What you're saying then, is that just a simple satisfaction idea doesn't encompass what's involved at all, does it?

Graham: Oh, it makes it much too small. I think it puts God in a very bad light, and it doesn't answer the questions of the Great Controversy. Many folk who prefer those understandings of the plan of salvation do not understand there has been a universe-wide great controversy over the character and government of God. And do you remember at our first meeting, I brought along the evidence that even Luther, hero of the Christian world that he is, could not conceive of these larger issues because he couldn't include the book of Revelation—let alone Hebrews, James and Jude. And this has been the pattern through the years. Not many have seen the sixty-sixth book picture of a universe-wide controversy over the character and government of God. And so they have seen the death of Christ as primarily a plan just to save you and me, for which we are very grateful. It's just that the larger view makes the cross much more significant.

{Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #8 with Lou Venden, "The Most Costly and Convincing Evidence" recorded March 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*
<http://pkp.cc/8MMCAG>

Is there a verse in the Bible that says that when Jesus died, He was given up? Romans 4:25 says Christ was given up for our transgressions. And many versions, with their reformation influence, translate this “Christ was put to death.” There is nothing in there about being put to death. It says He was given up. To tie that in with the issue in the Great Controversy, God gave up His Son as if He were a sinner. Just as He will give us up, if we are real sinners at the end. Because you can’t force people to trust you, in a free universe, what can you do but give people up? When Jesus was given up, yes, He died.

So I believe there were three questions answered by Gethsemane and the cross. One: who is right, God or the devil? Is God a liar when He says sin results in death? The devil says, “Yes, God has lied to you.” “You will not die” is the teaching of the devil. God says, “You will die. But, it is not torture and execution at My hands.” The devil developed the whole doctrine of hell to turn the universe against God. And God says that is not true. And I say, “Well, how do I know how the wicked are going to die?” He says, “Only one person has ever died the death as a result of sin. It’s only happened once in all eternity. I died that death. I wouldn’t ask any of you to prove the truthfulness of My word. This is the meaning of substitutionary death.” Yes, He died in our place, but not for legal reasons. He died because He wouldn’t think of asking anybody else to go through that painful experience to demonstrate the truth. Besides, our death wouldn’t have answered it anyway. Because if our dying would have answered the question, then He might as well have let Lucifer die in the beginning.

But you remember the explanation. Had He left Lucifer to die, the universe would have misunderstood and assumed God had put him to death. So only by God coming; He said, “No one takes My life from Me. Nobody can kill Me. I’m going through this Myself. I have arranged this with my Father.” And the universe looking on said the Father isn’t killing the Son. God isn’t killing God. And it was clear enough to them that they could say, “Our questions are answered.

One: sin does result in death. Two: it is not torture and execution at the hands of our gracious God. Only one thing left. “God, why were You so concerned that we understand this?” God says, “Because if you serve Me from fear, it will turn you into rebels—holy rebels.” He says, “come to Calvary.” On Calvary, Jesus was tortured to death. By whom? The most devout, blueprinting Adventists the world has ever known. Absolutely dedicated to God, the scriptures, creation, Sabbath, the Ten Commandments, you name it. Jesus said you even strain gnats out of your goat’s milk. Real health reformers. You couldn’t fault them for a thing. You couldn’t have disfellowshipped one of the people who crucified Christ. Their lives were apparently without blemish.

But they hated Him. They hated His picture of God. They killed Him to silence His unbiblical heresy. And the angels looking on said, “We thought, by sending Your Son to Palestine, You did that to get a good running start with people who already agreed with You. We didn’t realize You sent Him there to prove this costly point, that if we obey You for the wrong reason,

because we don't really know You, we could turn into Your worst enemies in the middle of our Sabbath keeping and our tithe-paying and our health-reforming." And that's why I think the biggest mistake the Adventist church could make in these last days is to have one tremendous revival in reformation, get out the blueprint, straighten out our lives, without spending much more time on the picture of God. Because if we do the right things for the wrong reason, we'll do what some of the Jews did, and become His enemies.

So I believe the cross was the only way to answer the questions. Without answers to the questions, there would be no peace, no freedom, no security throughout the universe. So it was for these specific reasons. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio presentation, Questions People are Asking About the Plan of Salvation, recorded April 1983, Redlands, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/1MMQUESTP> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/2MMQUESTP> (Part 2)

Lou: But what about some of these others, though? The "satisfying of justice," and "the demands of the law"?

Graham: Ah, he died to satisfy the demands of the law. Now, what does the law demand? Well, the law seems to demand our love, which can't be demanded anyway. There's no way you can command love. And yet as Paul says, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Jesus said the same. Moses said the same. So does the law say, "You either love God, and love each other, or you will be executed in the most painful way known to our heavenly Father"?

Some of our good Christian friends live under the awful weight of believing that God has said, "You either love and obey Me, or you will be tortured in sulfurous flames for eternity." That such good folk can still love God is a real tribute to them, not to God. I mean this is an awesome burden to live under! And yet because they love Jesus, they still love and are still faithful. And they will be in the Kingdom. And I think Jesus will love to introduce such people to the Father. He'll say, "Would you like to meet the Father?" And they'll say, "Well, if You will go with us." He says, "There's no need, but I'll go with you." And what a marvelous surprise to millions of these people, to meet the Father in the Kingdom, and discover that He is just as loving and gracious as the Son. This is what we want to deal with next week, "There Is No Need to Be Afraid of God."

But "under the demands of law," that belongs to a very legal conception of what has gone wrong in the universe, which we discussed in our second conversation. That what has gone wrong is that we have "broken the rules," and the law demands that God execute us for breaking the rules. And Jesus died so that somehow God could justly forgive us even though we have broken the rules. I don't think we have been able to make too much sense out of that. But it goes along with the other one, "satisfying justice." Whose justice? I have friends who say, "If

God does not give Idi Amin several days in the fire, I will not regard Him as a just God.” They have that feeling about the satisfaction of justice. And I think they really mean it, and I would respect them for that. I would love to relieve them of that burden. If I want to know why Jesus died, I should go right to the cross and watch Him die and hear His cry, and see how the Father is involved, and then fit that back into Scripture. I don’t see Him fulfilling the requirements of a legal model.

Lou: It’s part of our problem, then, that we are taking models from our legal system here and trying to apply them to God.

Graham: That’s a very good point, very much so. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #8 with Lou Venden, “The Most Costly and Convincing Evidence” recorded March 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/8MMCAG>*

Further Study with Ellen White

Our Redeemer met insult and mockery with uncomplaining silence. All the cruel taunts of the murderous throng who exulted in His humiliation and trial in the judgment hall could not bring from Him one look or word of resentment or impatience. He was the Majesty of heaven, and in His pure breast there dwelt no room for the spirit of retaliation, but only for pity and love. {TMK 139.2}

With sorrow and indignation the angels heard the choice made by the people and the sentence passed upon Christ. But they could not interfere; for in the great controversy between good and evil, Satan must be given every opportunity to develop his true character, that the heavenly universe and the race for whom Christ was giving His life might see the righteousness of God’s purposes. Those under the control of the enemy must be allowed to reveal the principles of his government (MS 136, 1899). {5BC 1107.5}

The Saviour trod the winepress alone, and of all the people there was none with him. And yet he was not alone. He had said, “I and my Father are one.” God suffered with his Son. Man cannot comprehend the sacrifice made by the infinite God in giving up his Son to reproach, agony, and death. This is the evidence of the Father’s boundless love to man. {5Red 20.1}

But the work of human redemption is not all that is accomplished by the cross. The love of God is manifested to the universe. The prince of this world is cast out. The accusations which Satan has brought against God are refuted. The reproach which he has cast upon heaven is forever removed. Angels as well as men are drawn to the Redeemer. “I, if I be lifted up from the earth,” He said, “will draw all unto Me.” {DA 626.1}

Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. Then the prevarications and accusations of him who had once been an exalted angel were seen in their true light. It was seen that his professedly spotless character was deceptive. His deeply laid scheme to exalt himself to supremacy was fully discerned. His falsehoods were apparent to all. God's authority was forever established. Truth triumphed over falsehood. {RC 60.3}

Not merely in the minds of a few finite creatures in this world, but in the minds of all the inhabitants of the heavenly universe, has the immutability of God's law been established. Satan's course against Christ was heralded to every world. When the issue was finally determined, every unfallen being expressed indignation at the rebellion. With one voice they extolled God as righteous, merciful, self-denying, just. . . . {RC 60.4}

The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God. That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. {TA 205.2}

God's dealings with rebellion will result in fully unmasking the work that has so long been carried on under cover. The results of Satan's rule, the fruits of setting aside the divine statutes, will be laid open to the view of all created intelligences. The law of God will stand fully vindicated. It will be seen that all the dealings of God have been conducted with reference to the eternal good of His people, and the good of all the worlds that He has created. Satan himself, in the presence of the witnessing universe, will confess the justice of God's government and the righteousness of His law. {PP 338.4}