

53- The Death of the Servant Mark 15:33-41

Mark 15:33-41 *And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. 36 And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. 37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. 38 And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. 39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God. 40 There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; 41 (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.*

The purpose of the Lord Jesus stepping out of eternity into time on earth was that He would die for the sins of the world. In our text today we will see this very thing come to pass. We will in addition see some events that transpired before and after the death of Jesus that are strong indicators of His messiahship.

I- Darkness from Noon till Three:

Darkness in the Bible is used to symbolize sin. Notice **Proverbs 4:19** *The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.* We also know the opposite of darkness is light. Jesus made the statement in **John 3:19** *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.* Jesus told us also that He is the light of the world. **John 12:46** *I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.*

So it seems ironic that the light of the world would hang in darkness in the middle of the day. That is what we find in **Mark 15:33** *And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.* The HCSB says, *When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.*

Some try to say this was an eclipse or some other natural thing but I submit to you it was the world of Almighty God. The darkness of sin was weighting heavy on the Light of the world.

II- The Cry of Loneliness:

Perhaps one of the curliest things that can happen to a human is rejection and isolation. Loneliness is a mentally crushing event. Jesus after all the physical abuse He had to endure is now faced with separation from God the Father. **Mark 15:34** *And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

You may recall that in the garden Jesus prayed for the cup to pass from Him. The cup may be the suffering of the physical but it also very well could be this separation. The Father and Son had never been separated from all of eternity until now.

The crowd mistakenly thought He was calling for Elijah to deliver Him. **Mark 15:35** *And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. 36 And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.*

Again we see that salvation is certainly available only in Christ because He was the only one and the one alone by Himself who hung on the cross to pay the price of salvation. Dying for the sins of mankind was possible for only one man to accomplish and that was a very lonely trail.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

III- Gave up the Ghost:

Another thing we need not miss is that Jesus voluntarily gave His life. **Mark 15:37** *And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.* He gave up His life. Listen to the words of Jesus in **John 10:17-18** *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*

He told us that He alone was in control of His death. Remember again what He said to Peter on the night of the arrest. **Matthew 26:52-53** *Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. 53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?*

Yes Jesus gave His life, no one took it.

IV- Ripping of the Veil of Temple:

One of the greatest symbols of separation of God and man was the veil of the temple that separated the holy of holies from the rest of the temple. Only one time a year did the High Priest enter to make a sacrifice on the day of atonement. This veil represented separation and denial of free access of man to God. This veil was a very heavy and strong curtain, not some flimsy see through sheer. This veil also represented the division between the old covenant and the new covenant. Notice what happened to the veil the moment of Jesus death. **Mark 15:38** *And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.*

This tells us that we now have access to God through Christ sacrifice. We have access to salvation and help in time of need. Notice what the author of Hebrews said in **Hebrews 4:14-16** *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

We have access in prayer into the very presence of God. Through the sacrifice the barrier to the presence is now open and available. I also suggest that this was a symbolic moving from the Old Testament or the Law to the New Testament of Grace. When Jesus shed His blood and gave His life He brought in the New Covenant.

V- Witness of Centurion:

The Romans have certainly taken a lot of criticism over the years; most of it rightfully due. However we also are aware that many of the Romans also believed in Jesus as the Messiah. Notice the witness of the Roman centurion at the cross when Jesus died. **Mark 15:39** *And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.*

Alford says, "There was something in the manner of this last cry so unusual and superhuman, that the Centurion was convinced that He must have been that Person, whom He was accused as having declared Himself to be."

Matthew tells us in **Matthew 27:45** that they feared greatly as the events of Jesus death took place. Matthew also adds an earthquake to the events. The whole world was crying out as its Creator hung dying.

VI- Women of Faith:

The women were very attentive to Jesus and helped Him during His ministry. We see these women of faith standing and witnessing the death of Jesus while many of the men had fled. What a testimony of faith.

Mark 15:40 *There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; 41 (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.*

Barclay says, "They were bewildered, heart-broken, drenched in sorrow--but they were there. They loved so much that they could not leave him. Love clings to Christ even when the intellect cannot understand. It is only love which can give us a hold on Christ that even the most bewildering experiences can not break."

They witnessed the death of the Servant...He came to die...and to give His life a ransom for many.