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Mark 15:33 - 15:47



Gospel of Mark - Steve Gregg

In this discussion of Mark 15:33-47, Steve Gregg explores the significance of Jesus' crucifixion and death. He notes that the event was the centrality of Christian faith, and that Jesus endured six hours on the cross, crying out in a loud voice several times. Gregg also examines the seven sayings of Jesus on the cross and the involvement of both the Romans and the Jews in the crucifixion. Additionally, he explains the symbolism behind the tearing of the temple veil and the role of Joseph of Arimathea and the women in the burial of Jesus.

Transcript

We're very near our studies, near the end of our studies in the book of Mark. I would say perhaps tonight and one other lecture might finish it. If not, then we have at least one other lecture scheduled that we can use.

But we are now in the latter part of Mark chapter 15 and the crucifixion of Christ. We come to that portion, which in the later writings of the New Testament, and I don't mean they were written later, but they are arranged later in our New Testament, the epistles. The most frequently mentioned event in the life of Christ is his crucifixion.

And the second most common thing mentioned would be his resurrection. And those are the things that remain ahead of us. Now, the whole life of Christ was essential for us to understand.

And Mark began his gospel with the words, the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And then he began to tell the story which we've been studying. However, the height or the pinnacle of the gospel in the mind of the apostles was the death and resurrection of Jesus, because as wonderful as his life was in terms of setting a great example and teaching wonderful lessons, the things that almost all people appreciate about Jesus, even non-Christians.

The most important thing he did was die and rise again. And that is something that really only Christians can fully appreciate, because belief in the death and resurrection of Christ as the atoning death and resurrection of Christ is the distinctive thing that makes

people Christian. Paul said, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved.

And Paul said when he summarized the gospel message. In first Corinthians 15, three, he said the gospel that he had preached included. That Jesus died for our sins, according to the scripture, that he was buried and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures, so we're at that point in the gospel now, though it only takes a chapter and a half to get through the rest of the gospel.

It is the point that is the climax, according to the at least the retrospect of the apostles at the time that Jesus died. Of course, the apostles did not see any significance in it, except it was a tragedy. They hoped that he would establish the kingdom then and there and sit and reign on earth over that kingdom.

But he had a different kind of kingdom in mind, and he even told Pilate on trial that he had a different kind of kingdom, and it appears that Pilate understood that better than the disciples did, because when Pilate said, Are you a king then Jesus said, My kingdom is not of this world. If it was of this world, my servants would have thought that I would not be taken by the Jews. And Pilate then realized that Jesus was not a threat to the power of Rome or to the claims of Rome, that Jesus, though he was calling himself the king of the Jews.

Or at least was being called that by his followers was not the kind of king that would threaten Rome, the disciples, however, didn't understand that they actually, like most of the Jews, thought that the Messiah would be just the kind of king that would threaten Rome. So it seems like they were the slowest to catch on, but after his death and resurrection, they were the ones who, through Christ's explanation, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit given to them, they were the ones who came to understand the significance of that part, which seemed to make the least sense to them at the time. Now, when we left off last time, we were in Mark, chapter 15, and we got through verse 32, which mentioned that while Jesus was on the cross, there were two robbers crucified, one at either side of him and that those at the foot of the cross, for the most part, were mocking him, hurling insults at him, challenging him if he really is the king of the Jews, if he really is the Messiah to come down from the cross and save himself.

And it's interesting that they mocked him in verse 31, saying he saved others himself. He cannot say, well, that's just the point, isn't it? He he can save others only by not saving himself. That is an actual that's a pretty good summary of what was going on.

They didn't understand it. They were mocking him. He claimed to save others.

He's the savior of others. But look, he is at the mercy of the Romans. He's not able to rescue himself.

Well, that's true. He wasn't able to rescue himself and save others, too. He could have rescued himself.

He could have called 12 legions of angels and saved himself. He made that very clear to his disciples. But he couldn't do that and be the savior as well.

It says in the book of Hebrews that Jesus was made perfect through the things which he suffered. And of course, Jesus was morally perfect prior to suffering in this way. But it was through this kind of suffering that he became perfected as in the role of the savior.

He was perfected as a redeemer. His complete mission was perfected through atoning for the sins of the world on the cross. And so he could not save himself if he was going to save others.

And we read at the end of verse 32 that even those who were crucified with him. Insulted him and reviled him, though. Happily, we read in Luke's gospel that one of them had a change of heart before the day was over and became a believer himself.

Verse 33, now, when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. The first mention of any particular hour of the day we saw was back in verse 25, and that was when he was crucified in verse 25. It said it was the third hour and they crucified him.

Now we read that at the sixth hour, it becomes dark and it remains dark until the ninth hour. And it is at the ninth hour that Jesus actually expires. And these hours, of course, are measured as the Jews reckon them from the beginning of the Jewish day at six in the morning.

It's unreasonable to assume that he is crucified at three in the morning, especially if he's strange since it was it went dark at six on the sixth hour. If that was six in the morning, that's just about sunrise for to go dark at that time would be just a strange thing. We have to assume that Mark is using the Jewish reckoning.

The day begins at six in the morning. Therefore, the third hour in verse 25, when Jesus was crucified, was nine o'clock in the morning. When it went dark, it was noon.

Six hour is the sixth hour from six o'clock, so it was noon. And then the ninth hour, when Jesus actually died, was three in the afternoon. So Jesus was alive on the cross for six hours.

That's an excruciatingly long time to be on a cross, but actually a relatively short time for a man to be alive on a cross, because typically people could hang on crosses and live for days. In fact, we will find in a few verses, hence, that when Pilate was informed that Jesus was dead at three o'clock in the afternoon, he was he marveled. He was amazed that Jesus had died so quickly.

People didn't die that quickly. The thieves on either side of him weren't even close to dying. In fact, in order to hasten their death, they broke their legs so that they would die because they were not even close to it.

The reason Jesus died quickly is because he gave up his ghost. He chose to die. He was not he didn't die a victim of the Romans.

He died. One who laid down his life as a sacrifice, and he decided at what point to expire, which means that even though six hours is a short time for a man to survive on a cross before dying, it's a long time to stay alive in agony when you have the power to give up the ghost any time you want to. He endured six hours voluntarily, and, you know, when you've got nails in your head and your feet and you've got a crown of thorns and and you've been beaten, your back is laid open and you're up against a rough, hewn piece of wood.

And by the way, rubbing against it. Because, you know, that the way a person dies of crucifixion, it's not from bleeding. Actually, the blood, the holes in the wrists are generally not sufficient to bleed a man to death because the blood tends to coagulate before he bleeds to death.

It's not the same as if you slit your wrists with a razor blade because you drive a nail in there and the nail fills up the hole for the most part. And so the blood clots around the peg and typically men did not die of bleeding to death from crucifixion. They died from asphyxiation.

Because hanging as they were. With their bodies, weight hanging from their shoulders as they were. Required that they alleviate the weight in order to breathe, to inhale.

And the pressure on their lungs and their heart is what usually caused them to die. They were given a little pedestal that their feet were nailed to, which took out somewhat from the cross so they could push up with their legs. This would relieve the tension on their arms and let them take a breath and then they'd go down again.

They'd have to hold their breath. So they took another breath. They have to use their legs to breathe.

That's why breaking the legs of the two thieves was the way to guarantee they would die quickly. They could no longer breathe if they couldn't push with their legs. You'd think if you wanted to hasten their death, you just do what this centurion did to Jesus, run a spear into his side.

Why break a person's legs to make them die? Well, because he needed his legs to breathe. And therefore, a person usually died of asphyxiation. But Jesus did not have to have his legs broken, as we will see.

But his death and the things he did and said on the cross are passed over rather quickly in the Gospel of Mark, with not very much detail compared to some of the other Gospels. It says in verse 34, and at the ninth hour, which we were just told it was dark for those three hours from the sixth hour to the ninth hour. It does not say, by the way, how it was made dark, whether it was cloud cover, whether it was supernatural.

This darkness, by the way, was seen elsewhere than in Palestine. And one of the Roman, one of the Christian historians is refutes in his writing a Roman writer who tried to explain this darkness away as a solar eclipse. It's interesting that a pagan writer felt necessary to explain this darkness away.

That gives us a pagan testimony that the darkness really did occur in the middle of the day. But the Christian writer pointed out that it could not be a solar eclipse because it's Passover and Passover. It was the full moon in the middle of the Jewish month was the full moon.

And that's when when Jesus was crucified, you cannot have a solar eclipse during a full moon. And so it may have been supernatural. Certainly, I think we are given reason to believe that this was a supernatural darkness.

What it signified would probably simply be gloominess or perhaps the wrath of God. But anyway, it's explanation is not given, it is only described. But verse 34 says, 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? Now, Matthew gives the same statement, only it's Eloi, Eloi, or that's not how they pronounce it.

I'm reading it. I'm anglicizing it. It'd be something like Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani.

But Eli means my God in Aramaic. I'm sorry, in Hebrew, in Hebrew, Eli means my God. And Jesus said, Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani, which means my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And interestingly, the Lama Sabachthani is in Aramaic.

And for reasons unknown to anybody today, the first two words are given in Matthew as Eli, which is Hebrew, and in Mark as Eloi. And that's closer to the Aramaic. Actually, Eloi, it's not exactly Aramaic or Hebrew, and it's strange that it's rendered that way in Mark, and scholars have puzzled over that.

But the meaning of the phrase is easy enough, and the translation is given to us even. It's my God, my God, why have you forsaken me, which is the first verse of Psalm 22. This is one of those rare cases where the gospel writers depart from their normal procedure of simply giving us the words of Jesus in Greek.

When Jesus, in fact, spoke in Aramaic on a regular basis, yet the gospel writers almost always, when they're telling the story, they're telling the story in the Greek language. And they are giving us the words of Jesus almost always in the Greek language. They

almost never give us the Aramaic, but in a few places they give us the Aramaic and then translate it into Greek, too, when they could have just translated it into Greek without giving the Aramaic first.

As when Jesus said to the dead girl, Jairus' daughter, Talitha koumi, little girl, I say to you, arise. That's in Aramaic, and then the Greek is given in the gospel as a translation of it. And there are a few other cases like that.

This is one of them. So for whatever reason, certain sayings of Jesus perhaps were just considered so memorable to the disciples in their original language, maybe so sacred even that they wanted to remember them in the actual words that Jesus used rather than just translate them into another language. They do translate it for the sake of the readers who are not expected to know Aramaic.

Another evidence that Mark is writing to Gentiles would seem to be that he translates the Aramaic for them into Greek. But that may not be proof, because I think Matthew might do it, too. But it seems like it would have to be done because a Roman audience would not know Aramaic.

Perhaps some Jews in some parts of the Roman Empire wouldn't either. Now, why did Jesus say this? Mark twice has Jesus from the cross crying out with a loud voice. People on crosses usually didn't cry out with loud voices.

They may have groaned, but they didn't have much breath or much strength. Their voices were not usually very strong by the time they were hanging on a cross. And crying out with a loud voice was an unusual show of strength.

But twice Mark has Jesus crying out with a loud voice. In this case, in verse 34, then we'll find again just before he died in verse 37. It says Jesus cried out with a loud voice and breathed his last.

Although in that case, the verse 38 Mark doesn't tell us what he said. From Mark, we get the impression that Jesus spoke twice and loudly from the cross. But actually, when you compare all four of the Gospels, there are other things Jesus said from the cross.

Also, altogether, there are seven, often called the seven words from the cross. I suppose it's the Roman Catholics who first gathered them together and made them almost, you know, sort of like the our father or something to be memorized. The seven words from the cross, although it doesn't take a Roman Catholic to find them.

They're in all the Gospels. And Protestants would have to see that if there are two, since there are no one of the Gospels gives all of the things from the cross. It's not always obvious in what order they occur, although there is a probable order that is usually given.

We have three of these things are recorded in Luke and three of them are recorded only in John. And the remaining one is that when we find here, which is found both in Mark and Matthew, but not in the others. It's interesting.

There's really not any overlapping, except in this case. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Both Matthew and Mark recorded. The other Gospels don't.

And then Luke records three other things of Jesus that are not recorded anywhere else. And John records an additional three things of Jesus that are not recorded elsewhere. Altogether, we have seven.

But again, because they are scattered through different Gospels and it's not always clear how they're harmonized, their exact order is there's some speculation about it. Let me tell you what is the probable order that most have assumed. I'm not sure that I would agree with it, but it seems reasonable.

The first thing Jesus said from the cross, I think by all accounts, his father forgive them, they do not know what they do. That is recorded only in Luke 23, 34. And he seemed to be saying that as they were nailing him to the cross.

Or as they were raising the cross up right at the very beginning of his crucifixion, he prayed that God would forgive those people who were crucified, probably a reference to the Romans, because they certainly did not know what they did. And the Jews had much more savvy and much more culpability than the Romans did. Those Romans that nailed the nails into Jesus hands were just grunts.

They were just, you know, military guys who were handed a criminal, a condemned criminal over to execute. They did this all the time. They were pros at executing guys and they didn't know who he was.

All they knew is here's another guy who deserves to die. So they did it. And Jesus actually prayed for them that God would forgive them because they were ignorant of what they were doing.

The next saying of Jesus may have been also the next one recorded in Luke, which is in Luke 23, verse 43. And that's when he spoke to the thief, the repentant thief on the cross and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, today you will be with me in paradise, assuring the man that he was saved because the man had in his dying breath, almost called upon the name of the Lord. And it is thought that the next saying of Jesus was spoken to his mother.

That's recorded only in John, John, chapter 19, verses 26 and 27. Jesus seen his mother at the foot of the cross and John standing with him with her. Jesus said, Woman, behold your son, which if that was all he said, you'd think he was saying, Mom, look at me.

I'm look at your son in this condition, but rather it says then he said to John, Behold, your mother. So John tells us in his gospel that Jesus was committing the care of his mother to John. To care for her.

So like he's introducing his mother to her new son, John, who would take over the responsibilities of care for her. No doubt she was a widow at this time. Joseph seemingly died before Jesus began his ministry.

Well, obviously, by now he had because Jesus wouldn't have to commit the care of his mother to John if Joseph was still around to take care of her. Why he didn't commit the care of her to his brothers, her other sons can only be deduced. There's a good chance they weren't there at the foot of the cross, maybe not even in Jerusalem on that occasion.

Hard to say they could have been. But more than that, they weren't believers in him. They didn't share her sympathies and her Christian convictions, although they came to before the day of Pentecost.

But the point is that John was a loyal disciple and one that Jesus knew he could trust to be responsible to take care of his mom for him. Now, I've just given you the traditional order of the first three. But my own intuitions would suggest that the second one and third one are probably in reverse order.

The reason for that is I would expect him to speak to his mother early on before he gives assurances to a thief. I would expect him to speak something to his mother, who is there at the foot of the cross and is crucified. I would expect that to be one of the earliest things he would say.

And the thief, he wouldn't have spoken to until after the thief had had a change of heart because we're told that both of the thieves actually mocked Jesus initially. How long they did so, I don't know. But but it would have taken at least some period of time for that thief to have his heart changed and for Jesus to make his comment to him.

Although I don't have any assurance about this, if I were to put these together in my own arrangement, I would probably put his comment to his mother prior to his comment to the thief. Because, as I said, some things had to transpire before he'd speak to the thief. A period of the thief mocking and then repenting and speaking to Jesus.

Whereas I would expect that if his mother was at the foot of the cross, Jesus would have probably spoken to her right away. I could be wrong. But anyway, that's that traditional order.

I would question a little bit. The rest of them probably are correct. The fourth saying is the one that we read up here.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Now, these last things were all uttered shortly before he died. And probably right around three in the afternoon. The first things were probably uttered shortly after he was crucified earlier in the day, probably at nine in the morning, these earlier things.

But now at this point, we're reading. Sometime he says, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Which is something we have to consider separately as to what that means. Why he said that particular thing.

But we'll come back to that. Almost at the end of his life, just before giving up the ghost, there are three things that he said. One of them was, I thirst.

John records that in John 19:28. And as a result of him saying that they raised a sponge of vinegar to him. Vinegar is sour wine.

And you might wonder why they do that. Well, one of the gospels says there was vinegar mixed with myrrh or gall. And this was actually something that was commonly given to criminals.

The Romans allowed merciful women who wished to do this on their own. To offer to crucified men this sour wine mixed with myrrh or gall, which had an anesthetic effect, slight, a slight anesthetic effect. Remember, it says in the 31st chapter of Proverbs, give wine to him who is perishing that I might forget his misery.

And so this was probably a merciful act. When Jesus said, I thirst, they gave him something to drink, which in John's gospel, he actually tasted. And then he said, it is finished.

And that was the sixth saying, it is finished. That's also in John, just two verses later, John 19, verse 30. Now, you might think that it is finished would have been his final words.

But there is one statement that is later still, probably immediately afterwards. Probably as soon as he said it is finished. He also said the thing that is certainly the last and which is recorded only in Luke.

And that's in Luke 23, verse 46, where he said, Father, into your hands, I commit my spirit. A quotation from a psalm, actually, I believe it's Psalm 32, if I'm not mistaken, in the early 30s. And it's a psalm that was a bedtime prayer that Jewish mothers taught their sons, just like some children in this country.

When they're little, they're taught to pray a bedtime prayer. Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray, dear Lord, my soul to keep.

At the time of going to sleep, children are sometimes taught to commit their souls into the hands of God. I pray, dear Lord, my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray,

dear Lord, my soul to take.

And it's essentially the same message as this line from the psalm, which Jewish mothers actually taught their children to pray at bedtime. Father, into your hands, I commit my spirit. And Mary at the cross had probably the memories of having taught Jesus that very prayer when he was a little boy.

And now she hears it as his dying words, as he commits the keeping of his soul to the father and gives up the ghost. Now, when it says in Mark chapter 15, verse 37, Jesus cried out with a loud voice and doesn't say what he cried. It was either it is finished or father into your hands, I commit my spirit.

Or he may have said the two so closely together that it sounded like a single utterance. Now, I would point out to you that before we get back to Eli, Eli, Lamas, the vaccine, this last thing, father, into your hands, I commit my spirit. Is given as sort of a model for our attitudes when we go through trials by Peter in 1st Peter, chapter two, and Peter is writing to Christians who were persecuted, some of whom probably faced martyrdom.

And he said in 1st Peter, chapter two, near the end of verse 20, he said, or in the middle of verse 20, he says, but when you do good and suffer for it, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God for to this, you were called what you were called. You were called to suffer for doing good and to take it patiently. That's what you're called to as Christians.

I thought it was called to go to heaven. Well, that eventually there's other things you've been called to first, including to suffer for righteousness sake and to take it patiently to this. You were called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example.

That you should follow his steps, Jesus suffering was not so that we would avoid suffering. That's what some people think. Jesus took our our sickness and our poverty and all the curses of life upon himself so that he bore the curse of the law.

So we don't have to have any of those problems ourselves. Well, that's not really what Peter said. Peter said Jesus suffered, setting us an example so that we'd follow in his steps.

That is, in the steps of similar suffering and behaving as he behaved in the midst of suffering. And Peter reminds us how Jesus behaved in suffering in verse 22, who committed no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth, who, when he was reviled, he did not revile in return. When he suffered, he did not threaten, but what he committed himself to him who judges righteously.

That is, when you said, Father, into your hand, I commit my spirit, he committed himself to God. Actually, in all likelihood, his committing of himself to God should be seen as taking place earlier, still in the Garden of Gethsemane, when he prayed that if it was

God's will that he could, you know, bypass this suffering and have this cup passed from him. But he said, however, not my will, but yours be done as I'm leaving this matter in your hand.

Father, I'm not telling you what you got to do. And by not calling 12 legions of angels to rescue when he could have, he was putting himself strictly into the care of God. And committing himself into God's hand.

But he uttered that as his final prayer on the cross. And Peter goes on to talk about the significance of Jesus' death in verse 24, who himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree that we, having died to sin, that is, we died in Christ might live for righteousness by whose stripes you were healed. Now, by whose stripes you were healed means your relationship with God was healed, as he explains in the next verse for explaining the statement by whose stripes you were healed, for you were like sheep going astray.

There was an injury in your relationship with God, you're falling away from your strain from him, but you have now returned that that relationship has been healed by his stripes. You've now returned to the shepherd and overseer of your souls. But notice, Peter makes an issue of the fact that Jesus, when suffering, committed himself to God, which is what he says we need to do.

Now, how do we commit ourselves to God in suffering? Peter gives the answer to that, too. If you just turn quickly to first Peter four, first Peter four and verse 19, he says, therefore, let those who suffer according to the will of God. Commit their souls to him.

OK, so we're supposed to Jesus, Jesus said, Father, into your hands, I commit my spirit when we suffer according to the will of God. Yes, it is the will of God for us to suffer. Sometimes those who suffer according to the will of God must commit their souls to him in doing good as to a faithful creator.

Now, when you commit anything into someone else's hands, you trust that they'll be trustworthy when you take your car to the mechanic and you entrust him with it. You commit the repairs to that individual. You do so hoping that you're putting it in the hands of a trustworthy person.

When you go to the doctor with your for your surgery, you're not going to do surgery on yourself. You have to commit that to some other expert. So you commit your case into the surgeon's hands.

You trust he'll be trustworthy. You might commit your finances to an accountant to handle for you. You trust he's honest.

That is, when you commit anything into somebody else's hands, what you are trusting is that person is going to be trustworthy. You committing means entrusting. You don't want to entrust something to someone who's not trustworthy.

And he says that we are to commit our souls to him as to a trustworthy or a faithful creator. We recognize God's faithfulness and therefore, by faith, we trust him with our case, even though we are already saying that we're suffering according to his will. Jesus, when he committed himself in the hands of God, what happened to Jesus? Did God come and rescue him? No, he died.

No sooner had Jesus committed himself into the hands of God, but he found himself in Haiti. It doesn't always get better. God takes you through hell sometimes, but that's just it.

Through hell. A lot of people are going to go to hell, but those who entrust themselves to God may go through hell. But through means you come out on the other side.

And Jesus came out out of Hades in the resurrection because he had committed himself to God and God was on the case. God was on the job. Now, Peter says there in 1 Peter 4, 19, that we should commit our souls to him in doing good.

What does that mean? That's how we commit ourselves to God. You see, the assumption is we're starting to suffer because we're doing the right thing. We're following Jesus and there's some persecution coming.

There's some testing. There's some opposition we're receiving. We're suffering according to the will of God.

How do we respond to that? Do we back down? Do we stop doing good? Do we deny Christ under torture? No, we keep doing the right thing. You see, if we back down from doing good to protect ourselves, we're not committing ourselves to God. We're committing ourselves into our own hands.

We're taking our rescue upon ourselves. We're saying, hey, this doing the right thing is hurting me. I'm going to fix that.

I'm going to stop doing the right thing so I don't have to be persecuted. I'll just deny Jesus, then I won't have to be tortured. And we're taking our case into our own hands by doing the wrong thing.

You do the right thing. You just keep doing the right thing, no matter how much suffering is involved. And by doing so, you are leaving yourself in God's hands and your case and your well-being become his assignment from you.

But he says you do so as you would do to a faithful God, a faithful creator. And that means, of course, you have faith, you trust him, and therefore you entrust your case to him. In Second Timothy.

Chapter one and verse 12. Second Timothy 112. Paul says to Timothy, for this reason, I

also suffered these things.

Nevertheless, I'm not ashamed, for I know whom I believe and I am persuaded that he is able to keep what I have committed to him until that day. He says, I know God, he's the one I believe in and I am persuaded now persuaded is another word for faith. Faith is a persuasion, a conviction, a certainty based upon one's assessment that God is just and faithful.

I'm persuaded that he's able to keep what I've committed to him safe until that day. So Peter says you commit your souls to him in doing good as you would to someone who is faithful, someone who's trustworthy, someone that you are persuaded will take the right care of it. Paul says, I'm suffering these things, but I'm not discouraged because I am persuaded that the one to whom I've committed my soul is quite capable of handling it, protecting it, bringing it safely through these sufferings and so forth.

So Jesus becomes our model by committing himself to God in his final thing from the cross, which all of this excursus would have been more justified were we studying Luke, because only Luke records that same. But since I'm trying to point out that there's much more that went on in those six hours, including much more that Jesus said than what is recorded in Mark, I took the time to look at those things. Now let's look at the same that is in Mark.

Only one of the same is given in Mark, and it's the same one that's given in Matthew chapter 27, verse 46, and that saying is, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Now, what is the reason for saying that? What does it mean? Well, everybody knows, and anyone can soon find out if they don't know that he is quoting again the Psalms, just as he did in his final statement. Father, into your hands I commit my spirit, he's quoting from the Psalms. Here too, he's quoting from the Psalms.

By the way, the Psalms are the most frequently, frequently quoted Old Testament book by New Testament writers in Jesus. They quoted the Psalms more often than they quoted any of the prophets or the law. Psalms, the book full of Jesus, it's a book full of Christianity, although it's written a thousand years beforehand.

And Psalm 22 is especially so, as I'm sure most of you know, it should be that certain chapters in the Old Testament, as soon as you hear the number, you say, oh, that's the chapter about blank. I mean, if you hear that about certain New Testament chapter, like First Corinthians 13, what's that about? Everyone knows that First Corinthians 13 is about love. What's Hebrews 11 about? It's the faith chapter, right? What's First Corinthians 15 about? What's the chapter about the resurrection? Well, there's certain Old Testament.

What's Isaiah 53 about? I would hope every Christian could answer immediately. Isaiah 53, the most quoted Old Testament prophet. The most quoted Old Testament prophecy

in the New Testament.

And that is, of course, the vivid description of Jesus' rejection by his people and his serving as a sacrifice lamb for the sins of the wicked, though he has done no sin himself. In fact, the passage we were reading in 1 Peter a moment ago in chapter 2, quoted from and was full of allusions to Isaiah 53. But Psalm 22 should easily be as familiar to every Christian, not because of verse 1 so much, but because of its contents beyond verse 1. And especially Christians cannot fail to see the significance of verses 16 and following.

Actually, we could go earlier than that. We could go as far back as really we could say verse 12. Many bulls have surrounded me.

Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They gape at me with their mouths as a raging and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water.

All my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax. It is melted within me.

My strength is dried up like a putt shirt and my tongue clings to my jaws. You have brought me to the dust of death for dogs. A term for Gentiles have surrounded me.

The assembly of the wicked has enclosed me. They pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones.

They look out and stare at me. They divide my garments among them and they cast lots for my clothing. Wow, especially that last one.

Now, also, of course, they pierced my hands and feet is fairly indicative, although the Hebrews in their Hebrew Bible, they translate that differently enough to not look like crucifixion, but it's a good translation. And it obviously appears to be a prophecy of crucifixion. There's not very many ways that men have been treated throughout history that involve the piercing of their hands and feet.

Certainly nothing quite so well known and common as crucifixion. And therefore, it sounds like it's about crucifixion. But if there is even any question, it says in verse 18, they divide my garments among them and for my clothing, they cast lots.

You know, John's gospel tells us that they there were two garments that Jesus had. One was an ordinary, cheap, heavy throw around the shoulders, kind of a garment that a man would ordinary peasant would sleep in. It wasn't worth much.

It's just a big piece of cloth. They tore that into four pieces. There are four centurions at the foot of the cross, and they tore it into four pieces and each guy got one piece.

The other garment was apparently something some loving admirer had given Jesus. An expensive garment without seams. It was woven from the neck on down without any seams.

A rather expensive way to make a garment. And so they didn't want to tear that into pieces. What would be the sense of that? Instead, it says they cast lots.

They cast dice for it. That is, the soldiers divided one of Jesus' garments into four pieces and they cast lots for the other one. And that's what it says in Psalm 22, 18.

They divide my garments among them. That's the one they tore into parts. And for my clothing, they cast lots.

That's the other garment. So this was literally fulfilled at the cross. And therefore, there's hardly an Old Testament passage that could more literally be said to be fulfilled in detail in the crucifixion than this particular passage.

And this is the psalm that Jesus quotes from in the opening line of Psalm 22. It's, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Now, the most common answer that Christians give to the question, why did Jesus say this, was and is that Jesus at that moment came to realize the crushing consequences of having the sins of the world laid upon him. And as a result, having to receive the judgment that sinners deserve.

Jesus had never committed a sin in his life. And because the wages of sin is death or separation from God, he had never known any such separation from God. He'd never had anything to interrupt his fellowship with God, not only in his lifetime, but for all eternity.

But when the sins of the world came upon him and he became the sin bearer, like the lambs in the Old Testament who had the sins of the people confessed over them and they were slain in their place. The idea was the lamb became sin. The lamb became the guilty party figuratively.

And whenever that happened in the Old Testament, whenever a lamb ritually became guilty and then was killed, it was a foreshadowing of Jesus, I say, becoming actually guilty. That God really did make Jesus guilty. He made him the guilty, the guilt bearer.

And as such, the penalty for guilt had to be given to him, which was something entirely unknown to Jesus in experience previously. And that was the sudden abandonment of his father so that he didn't have the fellowship that he was used to. There's a little mosquito right there and he's very wise, not wise anymore, though.

Just all his intelligence just drained out of him. Very cruel of me, I know. I once was at a Calvary Chapel on a Sunday morning and Chuck Smith was preaching.

And he noticed a lot of the audience, a lot of the congregation were distracted over to one side of the stage. He went over and looked and there was a lizard on the wall. So he went and he smashed it.

And he says, that was where it oughtn't to be. That smashing it distracted me more than

the lizard did. I thought, oh, gross.

Well, anyway, not many people are going to be sent thanks for a mosquito, I don't suppose. So I was just reminded of that. So if, in fact, Jesus was abandoned by his father on this occasion, this was the heaviest part of what Jesus suffered in dying.

And that would be his way of announcing it. He's not asking for information. He says, why have you forsaken me? It's not necessary just because that's a question to assume that he doesn't understand and he's looking for an answer.

It's just a cry rung out of a tormented soul, which is a rhetorical way of announcing that he senses God's distance from him. Now, it should be understood, though, that Jesus knew this song. Obviously, he knew it well enough to quote it.

Not just the first verse. He certainly knew the whole song. Therefore, Jesus would not be confused.

You see, some people who read what Jesus said, why have you forsaken me? They say, oh, Jesus lost faith at that moment. I've actually heard a lot of unbelievers who've heard it from other unbelievers. Apparently, it must be a rumor that's going around by people who don't know very much about the Gospels.

They remember that Jesus said this. And I have people call me and they're saying, well, Jesus, didn't he lose kind of his faith in God when he saw the cross, when he said, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? It's like Jesus suddenly realized that, you know, all of his faith that he'd had in God during his lifetime was in vain. And there was no God there after all.

I mean, that's actually how people sometimes interpret this. That's because people aren't thinkers. If Jesus quoted this song, he knew this song.

And therefore, knowing that the song described the very things happening to him, he would know that this is not something that is confusing or needs an explanation. It's something that this song predicted a thousand years earlier. In fact, Jesus himself had predicted it several times in the previous several months to his disciples, that the death on the cross did not take him by surprise.

It didn't suddenly create a crisis of faith for him. Sure, it was a crisis, but not a crisis in his faith. He knew what the psalm said.

And by the way, what the psalm did say after that part about the crucifixion in verse 18, it says in verse 19, but you, oh, Yahweh, do not be far from me. Oh, my strength, hasten to help me, deliver me from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog, save me from the lion's mouth and from the horns of the wild oxen. So he's describing the people who are his enemies.

Then he says, you have answered me. I will declare your name to my brethren in the midst of the congregation. I will praise you.

This song goes on to a victorious conclusion. In fact, that verse 22 that we just read, that's quoted in Hebrews chapter two. That's quoted where it is put in the mouth of Jesus.

The writer of Hebrews recognized these words as the words of Jesus since his ascension. Of course, he's now our brother. He's now in the midst of the congregation singing praises with us when we praise God.

He is in the midst of us praising God, too. Jesus says, I will declare your name to my brother. And in the midst of the congregation, I will praise you.

And so as you read the rest of the song, it's very uplifting. The song begins with David's cry of despair on some occasions, and there were many in the life of David where he felt like God had forsaken him. And David is a type of Christ and Christ himself experiences that same sense genuinely of God having forsaken him.

But that song goes on, as Jesus surely knew, to describe the nature of the agony of the sufferer who was himself in terms of crucifixion, in terms of rejection, in terms of all of that, and then to go on to say, and it's all going to turn out OK. God is not forsaking me. Ultimately, God will hasten to be my strength, and I will again praise him in the congregation.

There is in this this song is a song of faith, not despair. Like so many of the songs, they begin. David begins praying because he's in trouble.

But after he's done praying, he's not in trouble anymore. In his mind, he's not because he's reminded himself of God. So that's what so many of the songs are, and it's not a bad model for prayer in general.

We pray part many times we pray most desperately because we're in desperate circumstances. We're discouraged. We're frightened.

We're in danger. But having prayed and having made contact with God at the end, we say it's going to be all right. God will be the victor.

God will vindicate me. God will crush his enemies. God is going to show me his salvation.

And this is one of those songs. And so Jesus, in quoting the beginning, is certainly not doing so to the exclusion of its whole course that it runs, especially he's not going to stop before verse 18, which is in his mind that he's thinking certainly of the whole song because he is the sufferer in the song. And so I believe that when Jesus quoted this, it was there's several functions to it.

On the one hand, it was to remind those who were listening of that song, hearing the first verse. Many Jews had had to memorize the Psalms in their synagogue school as children, and they would think about that psalm. And they'd realize just from having that psalm brought to their attention and seeing this graphic portrayal of the thing predicted, they say, wow, this is a fulfillment of that.

It's kind of an evangelistic thing he's doing in a way, but I'm not saying that he was not really feeling the agony expressed in those words. He was. He was experiencing that agony, but he also knew that that agony is short lived, that he was going to go through crucifixion as the psalm does and come out on the other side with victory and praise and God delivering him.

So it's kind of crazy and thoughtless for people to think that these words somehow express Jesus losing faith. The psalm is a psalm of faith, and Jesus is expressing those affirmations that the psalm goes on to give, although he doesn't quote the whole psalm. There's no need for him to do that.

Now, when Jesus said that, verse 35, some of those who stood by. When he when they heard it said, look, he's calling for Elijah. Now, why would they say that? If he said, Eli, Eli, Lama sabachani, like it's recorded in Matthew's gospel, Eli, though that's Hebrew, Eli, sounds a lot like the Greek form of the name Elijah, Elia or Elia is the Greek form or Elia, actually the Greek form of Elijah.

And so if they didn't hear him very clearly, he's saying, Eli, Eli, they get the impression maybe he's calling Elijah. It sounds like he's saying Elijah's name. That would probably be the way that outsiders who didn't live in Jerusalem because it was the Passover, people who come from all over the world, people who knew Greek but didn't know Hebrew wouldn't know what Eli means unless they think it sounds awful like the name Elijah.

And it does kind of sound like the Greek form of Elijah. And they thought, well, he must be calling for Elijah. Then someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine.

And the sour wine, as I say, was a common beverage. It was not I mean, in this case, it was at the foot of the cross mixed with some other things that were supposed to help dead in pain. But actually, sour wine was a common beverage of the common people and the soldiers.

It was probably in the soldier's ration kit there because the soldiers drank sour wine. Actually, we're told that they drank it mixed with water and egg. I'm not sure exactly how that tasted, but the Roman soldiers mixed water and egg and sour wine, the sour wine is essentially just what we call vinegar.

It'd be healthy. Vinegar is good for you, but it wouldn't be very tasty. But there was some

there.

And so they offered it to Jesus and someone else kind of discouraged him from doing that, saying, let him alone. Let's see if Elijah will come and take him down, thinking still that he'd called for Elijah, which he had not done. And as I say, this is one of the things that must have made Jesus suffering even worse is being misunderstood.

I mean, being misunderstood is its own form of suffering, in addition to all other kinds of suffering. If you're in agony and you're communicating what's being wrenched out of your tormented heart and people just don't get it, they misunderstand even what you're saying. It just deepens your agony.

I know that there have been a few times that I've been through trials, but none of my friends had ever been through the likes of it. And they would be, in general, the largest trials I've been through in my life. And none of my family or relatives have ever been through anything similar.

And they would try very hard to understand. But it was obvious that they didn't understand. They tried.

They were sympathetic, but they couldn't be empathetic. They couldn't know what it was like. And it always seemed to me a lonely place, more lonely because no one I knew could understand the suffering, not so much that they were misunderstanding like these people were.

It'd be worse if they were misunderstanding. If I tried to express what I was going through and they totally took it wrong and misunderstood it completely, it'd be frustrating. And Jesus often found himself frustrated by his disciples not understanding what he was saying.

But this was his darkest hour, literally, because the sun had gone dark at this time, too. And everybody seemed to misunderstand the things that he was saying that were so meaningful to him at the time. And so, verse 37, then Jesus cried out with a loud voice and breathed his last or gave up his ghost.

Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The meaning of that is clear enough, because the veil is that which be barred the average person from the Holy of Holies. And no one could go in there because the veil blocked it.

God tearing it from top to bottom makes it very clear that it's a divine act. It's not from the bottom of the top. It's from the top to bottom.

This veil was very tall. It rose from the ceiling down to the floor in this big temple. And some of the rabbinic writings seem to indicate it was mighty thick, like a handbreadth thick.

That's a lot of thick cloth. It'd be hard to tear. Not for God, certainly, but it tore right down the middle.

And it opened the way into the holiest of all. And that's something that the writer of Hebrews mentions in Hebrews 10, 20, that Christ has made a new and living way into the Holy of Holies for us. And the tearing of the veil is the emblem of that new access to God that was made through Christ's death.

Interestingly, the tearing of the veil is one of the few details of the death of Jesus that is recorded in all three of the synoptic gospels. And we read in verse 39, now, when the centurion who stood opposite him saw that he cried out like this. And that he breathed his last, he said, truly, this man was the son of God.

Now, the exact meaning of this statement in the mouth of a Roman pagan is not exactly known. Some people think it should be translated, this man was a son of a god or a son of the gods or something like that, because the man was not a believer in a single God necessarily. However, it is possible that the man knew that Jesus had been called the son of God.

And he may have known enough about Hebrew religion since the man was serving his duty as a Roman centurion in Israel. He may have known that this had a special meaning about the one God of the Hebrews. And he may have actually been converted at this point.

Traditionally, the early church usually interpreted this to mean that this man actually became a convert. Now, Matthew says that this utterance was made not just from hearing Jesus cry out with a loud voice and die, although that was part of it. But Matthew says it was also because there was an earthquake at the time and seeing the earthquake and these other things, the man said this truly was the son of God, apparently interpreting the earthquake as God, the father of his son, expressing his disapproval for this unjust death.

And, you know, since God himself rumbled the earth when Jesus died, the centurion came to the conviction. Wow, he really was the son of God after all. Now in Luke's version, it has the man saying this was truly a righteous man.

And it's possible that he said both. He may have said this was really a righteous man. In fact, this was the son of God, you know, and we don't know why it is that Luke gives it differently.

It certainly shows Luke's literary independence from Mark, which many liberal scholars would doubt that he was independent literarily from Mark. They believe that he copied from Mark. But why would he then change this line if that were the case? Now, there were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary, the

mother of James, the less James, the less was the other James among the disciples.

There were two James. There was James, the son of Zebedee, brother of John. And there was another James among the disciples who was called James, the less his mother's name was also Mary.

There's, you know, actually in John's gospel that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was also there. There were three Mary's there. Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, the less and of Joseph.

And then a woman named Salome. Now, Salome is if you compare this passage with Matthew 27, 56, which also gives the list of these women. Matthew 27, 56, tells us that Salome was the mother of Zebedee's children.

And John's gospel tells us that Mary, the mother of Jesus was there, too. By the way, most of these same women were probably at the tomb three days later. Also, we read in chapter 16, verse one.

Now, when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Salome went to the tomb. And actually, the other gospel say and other women, too, one of which is named Joanna, about whom we know really nothing. But we're told here that these women, in verse 41, says these women who were there watching Jesus die also followed him and ministered to him when he was in Galilee.

Now, ministered to him means they paid his bills. And we know this because there's a mention in Luke chapter eight, verses one through three, of certain women whose names are given Mary Magdalene among them and others. Women who were wealthy women, apparently, and who supported Jesus and his disciples ministry.

Jesus had worked, of course, as a carpenter until he was 30 years old. But when he left that carpenter shop, he lived by faith, like all ministers in the early church did. And the support, in this case, came from wealthy women for the most part.

And they are women that he had done things for, like Mary Magdalene, whom he had cast seven demons out of, we're told. So these women who were there were the same women that had been his support financially while he was in Galilee. And they followed him, obviously, to Judea and to the cross.

We're going to see that they also watched and saw where he was buried in verse 47. Verse 47 says Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Joseph, observed where he was laid. That was important because he was hastily buried without proper treatment of his body.

And so they had to come. They wished to come after the Sabbath and to give the body proper care. Now, it says in verse 42, rather quickly here.

Now, when evening had come, because it was the preparation day, that is the day before Sabbath Friday in the Jewish calendar, Friday's technical name. They didn't use the word Friday. The word preparation is the day before Sabbath every week.

It was called Preparation Day. And it says because it was the preparation day, that is the day before the Sabbath. Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, that means a Sanhedrin member who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

Now, usually a man who is condemned to die by the Romans forfeited his right to a burial. But the Romans often would give permission to family members to take the body and, you know, inter it as they wished. Arimathea, Joseph of Arimathea was not a family member of Jesus, but he may have acted on behalf of Mary.

Who was present at the time, and he may have befriended her and in her name gone to Pilate to get permission to take the body and to bury it. The fact that he was a prominent man and a council member means it wouldn't be like any schmuck coming up and asking for the body. It was he was an important man and Pilate would probably give him audience more than the average Jewish citizen because he was a Sanhedrin member.

Now, it says he took courage and went to Pilate. It did take courage because, first of all, to befriend a man that Rome had condemned to death and say, I want to give this guy a decent burial means you're kind of it puts you in, you know, in league with him. When Peter at the high priest's house had been said, oh, you're with him.

Peter was so scared of the ramifications of owning any connection to Jesus that he denied him three times. Here, this man had the courage to actually go and publicly to Pilate, the man who had condemned Christ, say, I'm on his side. I want to take his body and give it a burial and also is a brave thing to do as a member of the Sanhedrin because the Sanhedrin had condemned Jesus.

Now, there were some people in the Sanhedrin who didn't agree with that. In fact, Luke tells us that Joseph of Arimathea was one of those who did not agree with the decision of the council to condemn Jesus. He apparently had been there, but his vote had been shouted down.

Nicodemus also was involved here in burying him. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, according to John's Gospel, Chapter 19. They both were members of the Sanhedrin who were sympathetic toward Jesus.

Here we are told that Joseph was one of those who waited for the kingdom of God. In Matthew's Gospel, in Matthew 27, it says that he had also become a disciple of Jesus. But he was one secretly for fear of the Jews.

He had not been an open disciple prior to this, but he had secretly become a disciple of

Jesus. He looked for the kingdom of God and believed in Jesus. Besides being a prominent, we're told he's rich.

Matthew 27, 57 calls him a rich man. So he had a nice tomb and Jesus made his grave with the rich, according to one of the prophecies in Isaiah 53. And so Pilate marveled that he was already dead and summoning the centurion.

He asked him if he had been dead for some time. He had to confirm that he was dead because obviously, if he took him down the cross and he wasn't dead, Joseph of Arimathea might be someone trying to rescue him. But he found out from the centurion that Jesus was dead and so he granted the body to Joseph.

Then he bought fine linen, took him down and wrapped him in the linen and laid him in the tomb, which had been hewn out of the rock and rolled the stone against the door of the tomb. And Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Joseph, observed where he was laid. And so we have Jesus buried.

And nothing remains now except for him to rise from the dead and come out of the tomb and appear to people, which he will do. But we see that Jesus actually had friends in high places. We don't know if he knew he did.

Because this man was a secret disciple. We don't know if Joseph of Arimathea had ever been in contact with Jesus at all. But he was at least a secret admirer.

And after Jesus rose from the dead, almost certainly Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus would become members of the church. And perhaps would be kicked out of the Sanhedrin. After all, it was the Sanhedrin that authorized Saul of Tarsus to go out and find the Christians.

It seems like if there were Christians right in the court, they would be among the first to be arrested. So they probably had to leave their place in the Sanhedrin in order to associate with Jesus after that. But in all likelihood, that's what they did.