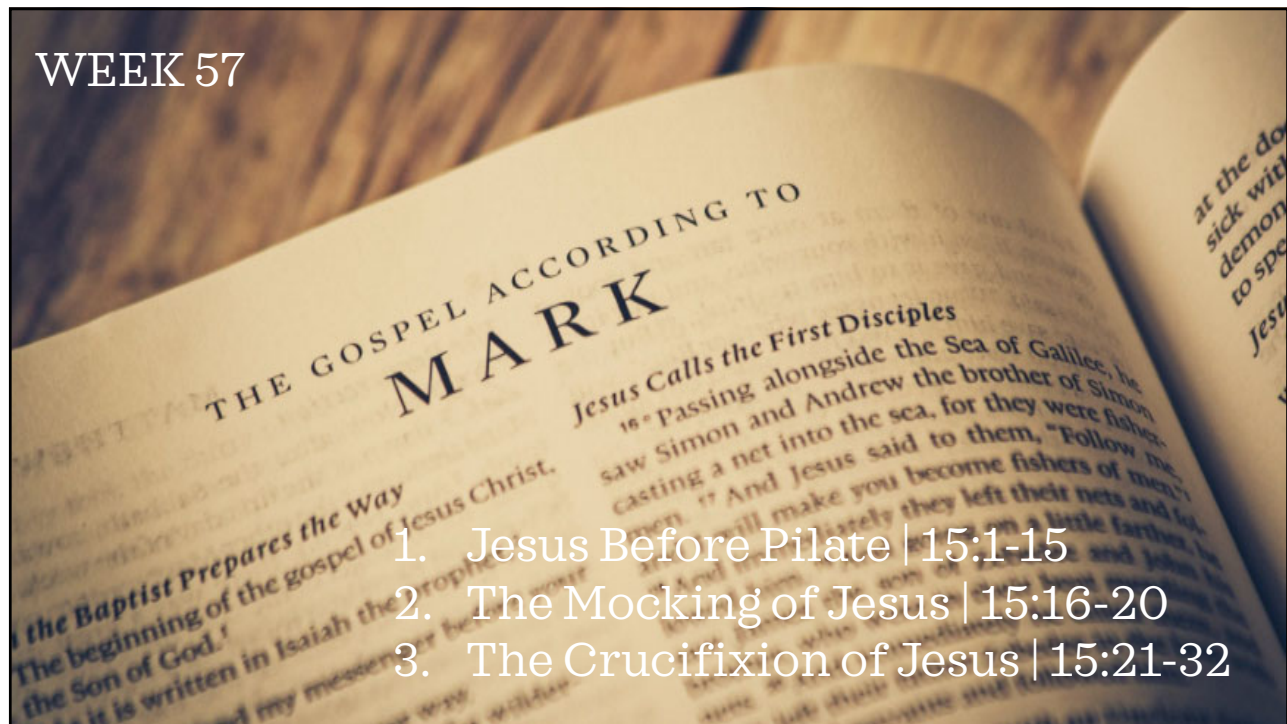
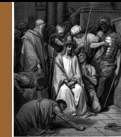


WEEK 57

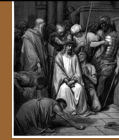


The Mocking of Jesus | 15:16-20



- *Josephus notes that “When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing among us, had condemned him to be crucified.” Mark’s account is historical.*
- *16-19 – The scourging of the Galilean who claimed to be king created a sensation among the soldiers (non-Jewish troops assigned to the governor and recruited to assist in maintaining public order).*
 - *The soldiers knew from the trial of Jesus’ admission as king. So they proceeded to make a kind of grotesque masquerade of his claim to be a king.*
 - *Jesus, bruised and bleeding from the scourging, is passed among the soldier who gathered in the expectation of a few moments of entertainment. Jerusalem was always tense during Feast holidays and here was a welcome diversion.*

The Mocking of Jesus | 15:16-20



- *They went to great lengths in their mockery.*
 - *“They called together the whole band” = they recruited all available soldiers to join in.*
 - *To imitate the purple royalty, they threw around Jesus’ naked body a faded cloak or rug.*
 - *To imitate the gilded wreath of Hellenistic kings, they used quickly-woven branches.*
“Crown of thorns” was likely more mockery than torture imitating crowns on coins.
 - *They pretended to recognize his royal claim with “Hail, King of the Jews!” = “Hail, Caesar!”*
 - *Bending of the knee parodied the requirement of Hellenistic homage to the ruler.*
 - *Spitting on him may have been a parody of the kiss of worship afforded eastern kings.*
- *But buffeting and striking the exhausted prisoner was pure brutality. The soldiers regarded Christ only as an object of ridicule since he dared to rival the divine emperor.*
- *20 – The vaudeville show over, the soldiers give Christ back his own clothes.*
 - *Normally condemned were scourged all the way to the place of crucifixion. But Jesus had already been scourged. And he would likely die if a second scourging were attempted.*
 - *Jesus was remitted to the custody of a centurion and four soldiers, the execution squad.*

The Crucifixion of Jesus | 15:21-32

- *Crucifixion is one of the cruelest and degrading forms of punishment ever conceived, even in the eyes of the pagan world. Josephus “the most wretched of all ways of dying.”*
 - *Our English word excruciating comes from the shudder of this form of execution.*
 - *They were common in Rome however to preserve public order.*
 - *Jewish law did not provide for it, though they sometimes publicly exposed the bodies of those stoned as further humiliation as a sign they were cursed by God (Duet 21:23).*
 - *When the Jewish people spurred on by the Sanhedrin demanded crucifixion for Jesus, they asserted he must take his last breath “accursed of God” (Gal 3:10-14).*
- *The cross of Christ is the focal point of the gospel. Here God dealt definitively with the problem of rebellion and made provision for the salvation of men.*
 - *The obedience of Jesus in submitting to the will of God reversed a pattern of disobedience dating to Adam and demonstrated by every generation since. (See Romans 5:12-21)*
 - *Like nowhere else, in the cross God identifies himself with man the transgressor and takes upon himself the death and wrath my human rebellion deserves.*

The Crucifixion of Jesus | 15:21-32

— *The cross is the definition of power in the Scripture.*

- Acts 4:8-12
- Romans 1:3-4, 16-17
- 1 Corinthians 1:18-24
- 2 Corinthians 2:1-5, 13:3-5
- Ephesians 1:17-21
- Philippians 3:10
- 2 Timothy 1:7-10
- Hebrews 2:14-18
- Revelation 12:9-11

— *21 – Jesus was led with two other men through Jerusalem. The route led through the busy streets to intimidate the people.*

- *It was customary for men condemned to die to carry the transverse beam of the cross. Jesus had been so weak from the scourging that he carried the beam only a short distance.*
- *As they neared the city gate, the soldiers pressed a man returning from the country to take the beam from Jesus and carry it for him to the site of execution.*
- *Simon from Cyrene's full name distinguishes him. Mark alone mentions his two sons who were likely well known to Mark's readers. There were a number of Cyrene Jews in Jerusalem.*

The Crucifixion of Jesus | 15:21-32

— *22 – Both Jews and Romans performed executions away from towns. The location of Jesus' execution was outside, but near, the city wall.*

- *Most likely site is near the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, outside the northern second wall.*
- *Recall Jesus's eviscerating Jewish leaders in Mark 12:1-12. They should have recognized & received the son of the vineyard owner, killed him and threw his body over the wall (12:8).*

— *23 – According to tradition, respected women of Jerusalem provided a narcotic drink to those condemned to lessen the pain following Proverbs 31:6-7.*

- *Myrrh was well known at the time for its narcotic properties.*
- *But Jesus refused it, choosing to endure with full consciousness the sufferings appointed for him (14:36).*

The Crucifixion of Jesus | 15:21-32

- 24 – *Jesus' crucifixion recorded with utmost restraint. The Roman world knew the details.*
 - *Condemned was stripped, scourged, outstretched arms nailed or tied to the cross beam, lifted up with the body and fastened to an upright stake in the ground, feet nailed to it.*
 - *Feet were fixed parallel, then nailed through the heels so the knees remained crossed contorting the torso. This means of death is confirmed by archaeology.*
 - *Normally the cross was only as high as necessary so the feet nearly touched the ground.*
 - *A taller cross was used if the desire was to make a public spectacle, as likely the case with Jesus (1) the need necessary for the soldier to reach the mouth of Christ (36), (2) scornful challenge of chief priests and teachers of the law to "Come down!" (32).*
- *Crucifixion was essentially death by exhaustion.*
 - *Time depended on physical condition of the victim (from hours to days if victim was tied).*
 - *Nails increased the torment but usually shortened the time because of the loss of blood.*
 - *To hasten death, soldiers would beat the limbs with an iron club (John 19:31-33).*
 - *That Jesus' limbs were not broken fulfills Exodus 12:46, Numbers 9:12, Psalm 34:19-20).*
 - *Jewish custom was not to execute naked but Rome had no such custom.*

The Crucifixion of Jesus | 15:21-32

- *It was the accepted right of the executioners to claim minor possessions of the executed.*
 - *With Jesus, likely an outer & under garment, belt & sandals (4 shares of John 19:23-24).*
 - *They were fulfilling Psalm 22:18 (note wider prophecy 22:6-24). OT reference is poetic expression of defeat and impotence. Mark includes as token of Jesus' powerlessness.*
- 25 – *The assertion that Jesus was crucified "at the third hour" (9 AM) is problematic.*
 - *Does not reconcile with John 19:14 where Pilate renders his verdict "about the sixth hour."*
 - *Appears out of sequence in Mark as he states Jesus' crucifixion in 24a, then division of Jesus' clothing following the execution. To reference again in 25 appears unnecessary.*
 - *Note Matthew & Luke parallel all of Mark's account of the crucifixion but omit this verse.*
 - *The conclusion is that verse 25 here was a revision inserted later by someone who noted Mark failed to insert the time.*
 - *My personal conclusion is that this reference to "the third hour" indicates a time of the larger event, not the specific time of crucifixion.*

The Crucifixion of Jesus | 15:21-32

- 26 – *On the way to execution, the victim wore the charges against him. After the execution, these charges were fastened to the cross above the head of the crucified.*
 - *In Jesus' case, was likely a white background written in black/red letters "King of the Jews"*
 - *Thus, Jesus was condemned by Rome for political subversion with a subtle mockery to the Jews whom Pilate hated.*
 - *In fact, it declared that Jesus went to his death condemned as the Messiah.*
- 27 – *The cross of Jesus was situated between two other convicts.*
 - *Mark describes "robbers" but likely men guilty of insurrection like Jesus (as in John 18:40).*
 - *Josephus constantly records convictions and crucifixion of the Zealots who committed themselves to armed conflict against the Romans on the principle that God alone was sovereign in Israel. Note Barabbas was an insurrectionist who committed murder in 15:7.*
- 28 – *Where is it? Verse is not included as apparently from later manuscripts. It states "and the scripture was fulfilled which says "He was counted with the lawless ones" (Is 53:12).*

The Crucifixion of Jesus | 15:21-32

- 29-30 – *Crucifixion attracted a large crowd some of whom mocked the crucified Messiah.*
 - *Allusion to words of Jesus on the destruction of the Temple (brought by witnesses before Caiaphas 14:58) identifies the first group of mockers as the Sanhedrin or court attendants.*
 - *"Shaking their heads" = derision & insults on poor but righteous sufferer in Ps 22:7, 109:25.*
 - *The insults recall Psalm 11 "Flee as a bird to the mountain?"*
- 31-32 – *By bringing their conviction to Pilate, the chief priests and scribes successfully prosecuted their complaint against Jesus and their long-nurtured desire to destroy him.*
 - *Now they take the opportunity to congratulate themselves on their success.*
 - *Mocking directed less at Jesus (they imagine powerless), towards those whom Jesus healed.*
 - *If Jesus were to save eternally those who come to him, he could not save himself (8:31).*
 - *Note change to Pilate's inscription "King of the Jews" to "King of Israel" as the correct claim of Jesus – to be the true Messiah.*
 - *"Come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe" = mockery in garb of piety.*
 - *This mocking may have caused soldiers & other two criminals to join in (Luke 23:36-43).*
 - *Note Mark 11:29-33 where Jesus questions these same mockers on the source of John's baptism. Here they double down on the baptism of Jesus as being of men.*