

The Death and Burial of our Lord.

Mark 15:33-47.

Sunday morning, April 5, 2009.

I. Calvary from 12.00 noon - 3.00 pm.

A. During this three hour period there was darkness over all the land. Luke's account reads literally that the sun was obscured or eclipsed during this time. Luke 23:45.

1. The cause of this darkness is unknown.
2. It was not an eclipse of the sun by the moon, for it was the time of Passover which is at the time of the full moon when an eclipse is impossible.
Also a solar eclipse does not last three hours.
3. It is best to think of this as a super-natural event.

B. Rich is the significance of this three hour period of darkness and silence.

1. Darkness is often associated with the judgments of God in the Scriptures. Isaiah 60:2; Joel 2:30,31; Zephaniah 1:14-18.
Here the judgment of God on sin is being poured out on the Son of God.
2. Here also the true light, sent by God into the world, John 1:5,7-9, is being snuffed out by wicked men, leaving them with eternal darkness. Remember what happened with Judas once he left the presence of Christ. John 13:30.
3. Hell, the place of outer darkness, came to Calvary during this time, and our

Lord

descended into it. The whole ordeal of the Lord's suffering was a descending into hell by degrees; Here it all comes to a climax.

4. Rich is also the significance of the silence of Scripture about this three hour period. We can not follow the Lord into the depths of this darkness and all the horrors that carrying away the sins of the world entailed. The narrative continues when the light breaks and the Lord puts the final touches on the earthly work that the Father had given Him to do.

C. The final moments...

1. Three times the Lord had spoken from the cross prior to the noon hour:
 - "Father forgive them; they know not what they do"
 - "Today you shall be with Me in paradise."
 - "Woman, behold your son," and "behold your mother" (to His mother and the disciple John)
2. The last four sayings of the Lord from the cross come all in the final moments.
 - As the darkness breaks and sin's awful burden has been carried away, the Lord is able to address His God and Father once more; "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?"
With these words the Lord gives us insight into the horrors of the God forsaken darkness of the past three hours.
 - Then, that He might fulfill all Scripture, (Psalm 22:15), He said "I thirst."
Matthew records how the crowd protested the soldier giving Him sour wine, a cheap soldier's wine, but the Father in heaven overruled and provided for His Son, thus strengthening His voice loudly to speak His final two sayings:
 - "It is finished," and,
 - "Father into Your hands I commit My spirit."

D. Supernatural events...

1. The way the Lord Jesus died.

The cross kills by asphyxiation brought on by exhaustion. Victims do not speak in the final hours. Yet the Lord spoke with a loud voice in His final minute. The cross did not kill Him; He laid down His life of His own.

2. There was an earthquake.

3. Graves were opened and the dead arose.

4. The veil in the temple was rent from top to bottom.

E. Reaction from the bystanders...

1. The centurion seeing these things said: "Truly, this man was the Son of God." This had been the very point Pilate had examined Christ on. Was this centurion present for that?

2. Matthew records that the other soldiers concurred, being similarly affected.

3. Luke records that the bystanders were similarly impressed and returned to Jerusalem "smiting their breasts." Luke 23:48.

Applications:

1. Grasp the uniqueness of Christ's crucifixion; it can never be duplicated on canvas or on the screen. Nor should we attempt to do so. The Word is worth a thousand pictures!

2. Grasp the importance of the dark and silent three hours. We can not follow the Lord there. He went there so we wouldn't have to. Who could portray the reality of those three hours on canvas or screen?

3. Grasp the importance of the final minutes on the cross. The darkness gives way; Father and son meet once more in spirit, embracing each other, and the Son commits Himself in the Father's hands; together they walk away as it were from the cross to paradise, before the cross can rob Him of His life. Here is dignity, glory and triumph!

II. The burial of the Lord.

A. Who would take care of that?

1. The disciples were no where to be found. John being the exception, and he was taking care of the Lord's mother.

2. The women were standing by, and they were sympathetic, but they were unable to undertake this task.

3. Help arises from an unlikely source. Two members of the Sanhedrin, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus rise to the occasion. One securing the body from Pilate; the other securing 100 lbs. of spices. (72 lbs. our weight).

4. They prepare the body of Jesus, wrapping each limb in linen and spices, and laying it in Joseph's unused tomb while the women looked on.

B. What moved Joseph and Nicodemus?

1. Joseph was a secret believer for fear of the Jews. John 19:38. He waited for the kingdom of God, and had not consented to Jesus' death. Luke 23:50,51.

2. Nicodemus was probably of a similar mind. John 12:42 and John 9:22.

Application:

1. We should not be quick to write people off. Grace can have obscure beginnings.

2. The road to glory continues; also for Christ's body; implications for Christian burial.

3. Notice the quick reversal from humiliation to exaltation the Father secures for Christ.