

MARCH 17, 2024

"The Wilderness of Grief"

Scripture: Mark 15:33-41



The Wilderness of
GRIEF

5th Sunday in Lent

AUTHOR

John Mark is the author. He accompanied his cousin, Barnabas, and the apostle Paul on their 1st missionary journey but left at the second stop, returning to Jerusalem. Two years later Barnabas suggested Mark as a traveling companion for their 2nd missionary journey but Paul refused. Barnabas took Mark with him and Paul chose Silas. Paul and Mark reconciled later and became close friends. Mark is also thought to have been a friend of Peter, one of Jesus' twelve disciples. Mark probably wrote this gospel, which is the shortest gospel, between AD 55 and 65. Mark wrote to encourage the Christians in Rome as they experienced oppression and persecution. He also wrote to prove beyond a doubt that Jesus is the Messiah.

CONTEXT

After an agonizing time spent in prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus is betrayed by Judas, one of the 12 disciples. Jesus is arrested, his disciples desert him and run away. Jesus is tried, sentenced to death, and is now crucified. Crucifixion was the cruelest form of death. It was the Roman penalty for rebellion. The person had to carry their cross along the longest possible route to the crucifixion site as a warning to those who watched. The person was nailed to the cross and death came by suffocation as they lost strength and the weight of the body made breathing increasingly more difficult.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What happened at noon? (See Mark 15:33)
2. What happened at 3:00 pm? (Read Psalm 22:1 to see what Jesus quoted)
3. Why did Jesus have to be temporarily separated from God?
4. What were the actions of the bystanders?
5. What was the significance of the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple being torn in two, from top to bottom? (Read Hebrews 9 for an explanation of the Most Holy Place.)
6. What did the Roman Officer say when Jesus died? Why would this be significant, considering who he is?
7. Who were the women watching in the distance? What was their connection to Jesus?

ENCOURAGEMENT

For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

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