

¹⁵ Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

² ‘Are you the king of the Jews?’ asked Pilate.

‘You have said so,’ Jesus replied.

³ The chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴ So again Pilate asked him, ‘Aren’t you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of.’

⁵ But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

⁶ Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested. ⁷ A man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder in the uprising. ⁸ The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

⁹ ‘Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?’ asked Pilate, ¹⁰ knowing it was out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. ¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to get Pilate to release Barabbas instead.

¹² ‘What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?’ Pilate asked them.

¹³ ‘Crucify him!’ they shouted.

¹⁴ ‘Why? What crime has he committed?’ asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, ‘Crucify him!’

¹⁵ Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

¹⁶ The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. ¹⁷ They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. ¹⁸ And they began to call out to him, ‘Hail, king of the Jews!’ ¹⁹ Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spat on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

²¹ A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the

15:1-39

The OT-King did suffer horrendously

(mashing of these two themes together)

15:1-5 Three claims to authority, but one silent King

Isaiah 53:7

He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

15:6-15 The Jews choose a criminal over their King

15:16-20 The King of the Jews mocked by the Romans

15:21-32 The saving King mocked as unable to save

cross. ²² They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means ‘the place of the skull’). ²³ Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴ And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

²⁵ It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The written notice of the charge against him read: the king of the jews.

²⁷ They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left.^a

²⁹ Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, ‘So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save yourself!’ ³¹ In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. ‘He saved others,’ they said, ‘but he can’t save himself! ³² Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.’ Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

³³ At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, ‘*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*’ (which means ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’).^b

³⁵ When some of those standing near heard this, they said, ‘Listen, he’s calling Elijah.’

³⁶ Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. ‘Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down,’ he said.

³⁷ With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

³⁸ The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died,^c he said, ‘Surely this man was the Son of God!’

⁴⁰ Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph,^d and Salome.

⁴¹ In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.

⁴² It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. ⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. ⁴⁵ When he learned from

15:33-37 God’s chosen King
abandoned by God

Darkness?
Signals God’s judgement:

- Exodus 10:21-23
One of God’s 10 plagues of judgement, before the firstborn die and Passover brings deliverance
- Amos 8:9-10
God brings darkness at noon, turning joy into mourning like that for an only son

15:38-39 As Jesus dies, a Gentile
recognises the Jewish King

15:40-16:8 The definitely-dead-king
definitely rose!

15:40-47 Definitely dead

^a Some manuscripts include here words similar to Luke 22:37.
^b Psalm 22:1
^c Some manuscripts saw that he died with such a cry
^d Greek *Joses*, a variant of *Joseph*; also in verse 47

the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.

⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

16 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb ³ and they asked each other, 'Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?' [16:1-8 Definitely rose](#)

⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

⁶ 'Don't be alarmed,' he said. 'You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, "He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you."' "

⁸ Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

Diagnostic questions

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| 15:1-39 | 1. <u>Mashing Kingship and suffering</u>
What's your initial reaction to the way Mark mashes the themes of (a) Jesus as Messianic King, and (b) his awful suffering before and during his death on the cross?
What makes it such a clash of ideas? |
| 15:40-16:8 | 2. <u>Grounded in fact and history</u>
To what extent do you consider Jesus' <i>resurrection</i> when you have doubts/struggle to think about Jesus as <i>the mighty Messianic-King</i> ? How does it help? |

Getting back into the text

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| 15:1-5 | 1. Notice what the chief priests, Pilate and Jesus each say and do. What makes Jesus seem powerless? What makes you wonder whether he really is? |
| 15:6-15 | 2. What is painful about Jesus being treated as less worthy of freedom than a murderer?
3. Pilate recognises the chief priests' motives and questions the crowd's demands. What would it feel like for Jesus that Pilate both recognises the injustice, yet hands him over to the death penalty anyway? |
| 15:16-20 | 4. Which details of the soldiers' cruelty imitate the treatment of a king? How does the reader knowing who Jesus really is make this scene more painful to read?
5. What does it mean for us that our King has experienced deliberate humiliation, as well as physical pain? |
| 15:21-32 | 6. What does it reveal about Jesus that he stays on the cross while people mock him for staying there?
7. What would Jesus have to do to satisfy the mockers? Remembering that he came to give his life as a ransom for many (10:45), what would happen if he did?
8. The readers know that Jesus really is the promised OT-King. How does this make the mockery both ironic and painful to read?
9. The mockers think Jesus' suffering <i>disproves</i> his kingship. How does the very thing they ridicule give us reason to love and trust him? |
| 15:33-37 | 10. Read Psalm 22:1-2. What do these words help us notice about Jesus' suffering that we might miss if we thought only about crucifixion's physical pain?
11. The reader knows that Jesus is God's chosen King. Why should that make his cry <i>more</i> shocking to us, rather than <i>less</i> ?
12. Compare what Jesus actually says with what the bystanders think he says. What do they completely miss about his suffering?
13. Read Psalm 22:27-28. The psalm moves from one man's suffering to the nations worshipping God. How does that widen our view of what Jesus' death will accomplish? |
| 15:38-39 | 14. The chief priests demand that Jesus come down so that they may 'see and believe' (Mark 15:32). How does the centurion's response expose the irony of their demand? |
| 15:40-47 | 15. Trace what the women see and where they are. Why might Mark tell us their names and mention them at both the cross and the burial?
16. Notice Pilate's question, the centurion's confirmation and Joseph's actions. How do these details rule out the suggestion that Jesus merely appeared to die? |
| 16:1-8 | 17. Why is 'and Peter' a striking detail, remembering Mark 14:66-72? Notice also 'just as he told you'. What do these words show about Jesus
18. Compare what the women expected with what they discover. Why is trembling and bewilderment an understandable response? Has familiarity with the resurrection story made us less astonished by it than we should be?
19. A sceptical friend says, 'Jesus' followers wanted him back so badly that they persuaded themselves he had risen.' How do the women's preparations, conversation and reaction challenge the idea that they imagined the resurrection? |