

Session III: The Passion of Jesus Christ Through the Eyes of Mark

Summary: In this session particular attention is paid to the “dark” dimensions of Mark’s Passion, reflected both in the physical darkness at the time of the crucifixion & in the abandonment of Jesus by his own disciples. We consider how OT texts have helped shape the language of the story Mark tells, in order to find meaning in the expected idea of a suffering Messiah. Finally, the question of God’s silence & God’s absence is explored in the climactic scene of Jesus’ death. The focus is on Mark 14:53-15:47.

I. Hand Over to Death (To God’s Power)

A. Two Trials: Compare Four Gospels

1. History
2. Pilate ordered execution
3. Agreement: tactics

II. Trial Before the Sanhedrin (14:53-72)

A. Mark’s Theology

1. Jesus (Temple) vs Jerusalem Temple
2. False witness: content is true
3. New Temple: new Community
4. Messianic prerogative: Temple builder

B. Identity of Jesus

1. Reflect back to introduction (1:1)
2. I Am (Moses revelation)
3. Full humanity of Jesus

C. False Prophet (Denial of Peter 14:79 ff.)

1. As foretold
2. Reconciliation of sinners (weeping)
3. Model of repentance
4. Forgiveness of Christians

III. Second Trial (Roman) (15:1-20)

A. Meaning

1. Handing over complete
2. Final day (3 hour intervals)
3. Silent, suffering Jesus

B. Process

1. Accusation
2. Interrogation
3. Choice of Barabbas

C. Contrast

1. Innocence: guilt
2. Civil: priestly aristocracy
3. Barabbas (Son of the Father): Jesus

IV. Crucifixion, Death and Burial of Jesus: Theological Meaning

A. Mocking

1. Outside of the city
2. Bystanders
3. Bandits

- B. Crucified God
 - 1. False belief
 - 2. Lose life in order to live
 - 3. Save self & others by remaining on the cross
- C. Split Veil of Temple: God's Presence to all people
 - 1. Centurion: non-Jew
 - 2. Future believers
 - 3. Women: nucleus of new community
 - 4. Gentiles
- D. Burial
 - 1. Anti-aristocrat: not anti-Jewish (Joseph)
 - 2. Jesus really died
 - 3. Prepare for resurrection
 - 4. Faithful presence of women

Brian Purfield
London Jesuit Centre
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