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The Jesus Identity

Studies in Mark's Gospel

Introduction: Mark 15:1 – 16:8

Jesus has foretold his death and resurrection three times already (Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34). How do the events of Mk 15-16 fit with Jesus' words?

We have now come to the climax of Mark's gospel. Jesus had revealed himself publicly as 'the King of the Jews' for the first time when he entered into Jerusalem riding on the colt of donkey (Mk 11:10-11, cf Zech 9:9). But, ironically, it is in his crucifixion on a false charge of blasphemy and treason that Jesus ultimately reveals himself to be 'the King of the Jews'.

Read Mark 15

- 1. What do you think of the accusation that Jesus was “the King of the Jews”?

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- 2. What “kingship” incidents are highlighted in this chapter?

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- 3. Who does Mark blame for the death of Jesus?

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- 4. Why does Jesus endure the abuse he suffered?

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Look up Jesus' words in Mk 10:45; 14:36. How might these verses fill out your answer to Q4.

- 5. How was Jesus different to the other two men who were crucified – v.27?

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Note: the curtain of the temple separated 'The Most Holy Place' from the rest of the temple area. See Exodus 26:33-34 and 2 Chr 5:7

6. List the four signs that accompany the death of Jesus – v. 33-40. What do you understand each to mean?

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7. Why does Mark show so much interest in the burial of Jesus – v.42-47?

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Read Mark 16:1-8

8. What does this passage say about Jesus’ relationship with His disciples?

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9. What do you think is the significance of the women’s terror?

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Modern scholars are agreed that Mark 16:9-20 are not original, but a 2nd Century addition to the text, using some other source material. The original ending may have been lost, or more likely, Mark intended his gospel to end abruptly for dramatic effect.

10. If Mark's gospel abruptly finishes at Mark 16:8, as the reader, what are you thinking at the end of verse 8? How does this sudden conclusion impact you?

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11. What is the significance of Jesus’ death and resurrection for you? (You might like to also consider 1 Cor 15:3-8, 20-28)

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The longer ending is usually included in modern translations out of respect for the KJV and usually with some note qualifying its merit.