

**v.15:1.** *And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried [him] away, and delivered [him] to Pilate.*

*The first thing in the morning the entire Sanhedrin convenes. This was probably four or five hours after Jesus' trial before Caiaphas. Jesus, who was probably imprisoned someplace in the palace of the high priest, is brought before them.*

- a) *In this particular instance it is Luke who gives the detailed account of this morning session. (Luke 22:66-71) The reasons for this meeting are numerous. First, it was probably to give some semblance of legality to what they were doing. According to Jewish law no conviction was allowed at night. Also, according to Jewish law, a sentence could not be pronounced until the day after an individual was convicted in cases involving capital punishment. The morning meeting would at least allow them to argue that the law had not been violated.*
- b) *Second, since the trial had been conducted in the middle of the night, it is possible that some key members were not present, and so, Jesus is again interrogated for their benefit. Third, they had to present a unified front before Pilate, and so, this interrogation would unify them and get the momentum going by whipping them up into a frenzy.*
- c) *As seen in Luke's account their goal was once again to get Jesus to say He was the Christ in front of all. Knowing He had already admitted it the question is put to Him boldly and repeatedly. For the first time Jesus objects to their prejudice and their treatment of Him. He tells them that if He answers they will not believe Him. If in His defense He questions them they will not answer and even if proven innocent they will not let Him go.*
- d) *As He did in the trial, Jesus quotes the prophet Daniel, the implication being that it was written about Him. Their response, "Does this mean that you are the Son of God?" Jesus' answer, "I am, just as you say."*
- e) *They once again believed they had won. Jesus once again spoke the supposed blasphemy before the high council of the Jewish leadership. In their eyes the case was closed. Jesus Christ was a chronic blasphemer worthy of death.*

**v.15:2-5** *And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest [it]. And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing. And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.*

*The next step was to take Jesus before the Roman authorities, for although the Jews had the right to decree death, the sentence had to be confirmed and carried out by the Romans. So, they bound*

*Jesus and took Him to the residence of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. They turned Jesus over to the Roman guards for they would not enter the judgment hall as not to defile themselves during the holy days. (John 18:28)*

*Author's Note:*

*The hypocrisy and blindness of the Jewish leadership is evident in this act. They had plotted the death of Jesus and finally resorted to bribery in order to take Him secretly. They held a sham trial employing false witnesses and finally convicted Him solely on His own testimony. They illegally beat and mocked Him and one of the holiest nights of their year! After all of this they were now concerned about defiling themselves! As Jesus told them earlier, they would strain out a gnat, but swallow a camel.*

- a) *As seen in John's account Pilate accommodates the Jews and comes out to meet them in order to find out firsthand what this morning intrusion is all about. He probably came out on a balcony overlooking the place where they stood.*
- b) *According to John's account, Pilate's initial question as to what Jesus was being charged with was met with a sarcastic reply. (John 18:29-31) History tells us there was no love lost between the Jewish leadership and Pilate, who sought to annoy them any way he could with every given opportunity. He knew the only reason they would bring someone before him was because they were seeking the death penalty, and yet, he tells them to take care of it themselves, and so, forces them to respond and to ask him for what they wanted.*
- c) *Pilate, being the governor in one of the most volatile areas of the Roman empire had to know of Jesus and had to believe that He was not a threat to the peace. Furthermore, he had to know of Jesus' popularity with the people, and so, the hate and animosity of the Jewish leadership toward Him. He is going to give the Jewish leadership a hard time with this one and they must sense it.*
- d) *Luke's account tells us that the Jews ingeniously attempt to make this a civil matter painting Jesus as someone who is bad for the empire and as one who is against Caesar. (Luke 23:1-2)*
- e) *One has to believe that this is not what Pilate expected. The charge is that Jesus was a revolutionary and a seditionist, that He is an enemy of Caesar. Taken by surprise Pilate heads back to the judgment hall and calls Jesus before him.*
- f) *In both Mark's and Luke's account the conversation between Jesus and Pilate is rendered to a simple question followed with a simple answer. "Are you the King of the Jews?" "You have said it." However, in John's account, we find that the two men spoke at length. (John 18:33-38)*

- g) *In the question the emphasis is placed on the pronoun "Thou." In other words are you the King of the Jews? The concept is almost laughable to Pilate. This bound and beaten up commoner, turned over by His own people: this man is a threat to Caesar?*
- h) *In His dialog with Pilate, Jesus tells him that His kingdom is a spiritual kingdom and that He has come to witness to the truth. Pilate is convinced that the only thing Jesus may be guilty of is being a philosopher and a dreamer. With the words "What is truth?" Pilate dismisses the matter.*
- i) *Pilate goes back out telling the Jews he has examined Jesus and can find nothing against Him that warrants the death penalty. At this point Pilate has no intention of giving them what they want. Jesus is their problem and they are trying to use Pilate to solve it.*
- j) *At this point the Jewish leadership becomes more boisterous in their accusations against Jesus. They have no intention of giving up. The power struggle between Pilate and the Jewish leadership is on.*
- k) *Pilate marvels, as did Caiaphas earlier, that Jesus said nothing in response to His accusers. They proclaimed all sorts of falsehoods against Him concerning seditious teachings and actions, but He remained silent. It is when Pilate hears that Jesus is from Galilee that he believes he may have a way to escape this volatile situation. (Luke 23:4-12)*

*Herod was at first pleased that Jesus was sent to him. His total lack of understanding is seen in the fact that he hoped Jesus would perform a miracle for him. Jesus was looked at by Herod as entertainment, a magician, so it was no wonder Jesus remained silent and did nothing. Herod and his men ridiculed Jesus, but the Jews who must have followed Him to Herod's residence took Jesus seriously, continuing their accusations. The Jewish leaders also seemed to amuse Herod with their behavior. Putting Jesus in a royal robe before sending Him back to Pilate may have been directed more toward the Jews than to Jesus. Herod must have appreciated Pilate's attempt to pawn off his problem on him. Pilate must have appreciated Herod's little joke in dressing Jesus as a king, for as a result of this incident, the enemies became friends.*

***v.15:6-11 Now at [that] feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. And there was [one] named Barabbas, [which lay] bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection. And the multitude crying aloud began to desire [him to do] as he had ever done unto them. But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy. But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.***

*The first Passover was a feast of deliverance. The Roman authorities, according to custom,*

released a prisoner of the people's choice during this feast. In response to Pilate's call, a crowd gathered at Pilate's residence seeking the continuance of this custom. They were crying out for Pilate to make his appearance and deliver a prisoner to them.

- a) Barabbas was an insurrectionist who led uprisings in the city and also a murderer. He was considered a revolutionary, ironically the same charge that they had brought against Jesus. Pilate did not want this man to go free, while on the other hand he desired to let Jesus go. Luke records how he first attempted to sway both the leadership and the people to his desire. (Luke 23:13-17)
- b) As Pilate is about to sit on the judgment seat to present the choice to the people and to officially rule upon that choice, he receives a message from his wife, which interrupts the proceedings. She tells her husband she had troubling dreams of Jesus calling Him a just man with whom he should have no dealing.
- c) Possibly during this interruption the leadership persuades the people that Barabbas should be their choice. Whether by intimidation, threats or clever reasoning, we do not know how they were able to accomplish this. (Matt. 27:15-21)
- d) Pilate knew of the power struggle between Jesus and the leadership. He knew they delivered Jesus up out of envy and jealousy over His relationship with the people. He also knew of their hope of a coming Messiah and the people's wholehearted acceptance of Him as their Messiah a few days earlier when He entered the city. He believed the people would surely side with Jesus.
- e) Pilate's best laid plans fell apart. His proclamation of Jesus' innocence and his presenting Him to them as their Messiah makes no impression as the crowd calls out for Barabbas.

**v.15:12-15** *And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do [unto him] whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, Crucify him. Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.. And [so] Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged [him], to be crucified.*

Pilate yells out to the people again asking them that if he does indeed give in to their wishes and releases Barabbas then what is to be the fate of the one called the King of the Jews? Their reply, "Crucify Him."

- a) It is certain that Pilate never had a problem sentencing a man to death. As he had asked Jesus earlier, "Am I a Jew?" He personally had no use for these people, their strange ways, or their

petty politics. Now however, the man is going to great lengths attempting to reason with his rivals to release Jesus. Luke tells us that Pilate tried three times to talk them into taking Jesus over Barabbas. (Luke 23:20-23)

- b) The people continued to shout that Jesus should be crucified. The leadership had somehow succeeded in whipping the crowd into a frenzy. Pilate realized a riot was imminent, and so, gives in to the people's wishes.
- c) It is Matthew who tells us before Pilate rendered his judgment he washed his hands in front of all while proclaiming his innocence concerning the blood of Jesus. In doing so, Pilate also proclaims Jesus to be a just man. The crowd defiantly accepts full responsibility proclaiming that the blood of Jesus will be upon them and upon their children. (Matt. 27:23-26)

**v.15:16-20** *And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band. And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his [head], And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing [their] knees worshipped him. And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.*

Pilate gives Jesus over to the soldiers to be scourged which was done prior to crucifixion. Why Pilate did not control the situation believing Jesus to be innocent is not known. Did he simply retreat to his quarters in despair being deeply troubled, and so, failing to think of what the torturers would do to Him?

- a) Scourging was torture. The instrument used inflicted major damage actually ripping off chunks of flesh. Many died as a result of the wounds. The punishment was so cruel that Roman citizens were exempt.
- b) The whole band or cohort of soldiers were called to get in on the act. The ongoing joke was that Jesus was the Jewish king and this seemed to fuel the wrath of the Roman soldiers who hated the Jews. The Romans knew that the Jews looked upon them as a defiling presence who they longed to exterminate under their political Messiah. The Roman soldiers now had the opportunity to show the Jews what they thought of their Messiah.
- c) They stripped Jesus and put a scarlet robe on Him. They made a crown of thorns and jammed it on His head. They mocked Him as a king while spitting on Him and striking Him. (Matt. 27:27-30) These soldiers took out every bit of frustration they had with the Jews on Jesus.

d) *The prophet Isaiah gives a picture of the extent of the cruelty directed toward Jesus. It is in Isaiah that we find out that the hair and beard of Jesus was plucked out. Isaiah also gives the end result, namely, that Jesus was disfigured more than any man. Those that looked upon Him were astonished that so much damage could be inflicted. The gospels are relatively silent as to the extent of the beating. (Isaiah. 50:6, 52:14, 53:3-8)*

*Only the gospel of John tells the story of Pilate making one last appeal to the Jews on behalf of Jesus. Pilate must have been reflecting on his decision. He was probably being tortured in his own right. A conscience that probably had long since been dead has been brought back to life by the "Light that lighteth all men." Pilate again goes to see Jesus, tortured beyond recognition and still standing silently. He must try again. (John 19:1-16)*

- a) *Probably an unprecedented act, the governor of a Roman province goes out to his local rivals asking them to have mercy on a prisoner that has already been condemned. He tells them he finds no fault in Him and he is willing to rescind the order. Such was the impact that Jesus had on Pilate!.*
- b) *The minute they see Jesus the chief priests and officers begin to repeatedly shout, "crucify Him." Jesus convicts the heart of a pagan governor and yet hardens the hearts of the so-called religious.*
- c) *The Jews reply that this man indeed had a fault. According to their law He was guilty of blasphemy because He had made himself equal to God. They finally admit that it is a purely religious matter, but strongly implied is that they are a self-governing people and Pilate is bound to respect their law. The law demanded death and Pilate must honor it.*
- d) *The latest saying of the Jews, this new information as to Jesus claiming to be the Son of God, greatly disturbed Pilate. Why was this man different? What about his wife's dream? What about Jesus talking about a kingdom not of this world? Now they tell him He claims to be the son of a god.!*
- e) *Pilate was a pagan. He believed in multiple deities all in competition with one another as well as exacting revenge on each other as well as from man. Was he not only being used by the Jews, but now, also a pawn of the gods? Paganism fostered superstition and paranoia. Pilate was in the middle.*
- f) *He again goes into the judgment hall where Jesus is being kept. He tries to get some answers from Jesus. With his limited understanding he asks Jesus where He is from. It seems like a logical question in view of the fact that Jesus said He was not of the world and the possibility that He might be the son of a god.*

- g) Pilate realized that Jesus was turned over to him strictly out of envy on the part of the Jewish leaders. He knew that they were trying to use and manipulate him, however, what had begun as a simple power struggle between himself and the Jews had now become an intensely personal matter to Pilate, through his dealings with Jesus.
- h) Pilate goes out again and tries to get them to agree to release Jesus. The leaders would have none of it and personally attack Pilate to force him to do their bidding. Again making it a political matter, they accuse Jesus of making himself a king and therefore guilty of sedition against the Roman government. If Pilate should release Jesus he would be condoning such claims and would make himself the enemy of Tiberias Caesar.
- i) Implied is that a complaint would be lodged against Pilate. Pilate would face being called before the jealous and suspicious Tiberias for refusing to execute a man turned over to him by His own people on the charge of sedition. Pilate would have little defense against such a charge.
- j) Pilate, hearing that they would appeal to Caesar, knows he is out of options. He calls Jesus out and sits in the seat of judgment. In one final attempt to shame them he shouts out, "Look, it's your King!"
- k) The total hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders is confirmed as they publicly state that their only allegiance is to Caesar. This was blasphemy on their part for Caesar claimed to be a god. Such was their hate for Jesus that they would pledge their loyalty to a pagan emperor.
- l) In view of John 19:12 it is very possible that implied in their proclamation of loyalty to Caesar is a questioning of Pilate's loyalty. "We have no king but Caesar, What about you, Pilate?" It is ironic that the statement of the Jewish leaders is true. With the rejection of Jesus as their Messiah, Caesar was their only King!

**v.15:21-23** *And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.. And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received [it] not.*

*According to the law, executions were conducted outside the city. In cases of crucifixion the condemned was made to carry his own cross. It is John who tells us that Jesus began the journey to Calvary carrying his own cross, but a short time later He must have been physically unable to continue for a man named Simon was forced by the soldiers to carry it for Jesus.*

- a) *Simon was from Cyrene which is presently the country of Libya. He was coming out of the country, that is, making his way into the city when he met the procession and was pressed into service.*
- b) *The fact that his children are mentioned indicates that his children were known to the gospel writer as well as to his readers. This would strongly suggest that carrying the cross and witnessing the events of that day had a profound effect upon Simon who became a Christian. It is in all probability the same Rufus mentioned by Paul. (Rom. 16:13)*
- c) *It is Luke who tells us that Jesus addresses a group of women waiting in His behalf. (Luke 23:27-31) Jesus is probably referring to the fall of Jerusalem which would take place in 70 A.D. It would be the most brutal siege in history as Jesus had told the apostles in Mark 13. Those who had children would watch them die being helpless to protect them from the madness that would come upon the city's inhabitants.*
- d) *They arrive at Golgotha which in Hebrew means "the place of the skull." Calvaria or Calvary is 'skull' in Latin. Some believe it was so named because in the rocks which made up the hill one could distinguish the outline of a skull.*
- e) *The soldiers give Jesus wine mixed with myrrh. The mixture would act as a sedative. Jesus did not take it, however, Matthew's gospel has Him first tasting it. Probably tasting the myrrh He realized the wine was drugged and so rejected it, also in fulfillment of scripture. (Matt. 27:34; Ps. 69:21)*

**v.15:24-25** *And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.*

*The soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross and He was lifted up from the earth in fulfillment of the scriptures as well as His own sayings. (John 3:14-15) He was crucified the third hour which equates to our 9:00 A.M.*

- a) *The apathy and coldness of the soldiers is seen as the first order of business is to divide up the spoils. They cast lots or gamble to divide the clothing of Jesus. The customary clothing which would have been worn by Jesus would be a head covering, sandals, belt, an outer garment and a one piece tunic. (John 19:23-24)*
- b) *This happened in fulfillment of the scriptures. (Psalm 22:12-18) Did Jesus hang on the cross naked adding to His shame and humiliation? Hendrikson draws a parallel to the nakedness of Adam and Eve when he writes, "Jesus bore for us the curse of nakedness in order to deliver us from it."*

**v.15:26** *And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

*Posted on the cross above the head of Jesus was the inscription, "The King of the Jews." It was written in three languages, namely, Hebrew, the language of the Jews; Greek, the language of worldly commerce and culture; as well as Latin, the official language of the Roman government.*

- a) *It is John who gives us a look at the power struggle still going on between Pilate and the Jewish leaders which now centered around the wording of the posting. (John 19:19-22)*
- b) *The Jews went to Pilate and strongly objected that the title proclaimed Jesus to be, in fact, the King of the Jews. They insist that Pilate change the title from a fact to a claim. Pilate lost, but would make the Jew's victory as miserable for them as he could. He emphatically refuses their request and states that what had been written would not be changed.*
- c) *Crucified near the city, the title was there for all to see. Being the week of the Passover many people were going in and out of the city. He was easily seen and now identified to all. The posting, as written, made it appear that Pilate determined Jesus to truly be their king, and so, crucified Him.*
- d) *This made the Jewish leaders appear foolish for they had turned Jesus over to the Romans. The One whom they spoke of and waited for, the Hope of Israel was dying on a Roman cross. The irony is that unknown to both Pilate and the Jews this was the truth. Jesus was their King and Messiah and they had indeed handed Him over to their enemies to be crucified.*

**v.15:27-28** *And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.*

*Two thieves were crucified with Jesus, one on each side of Him. This fulfilled the writings of the prophet Isaiah who said He would be counted with or considered a sinner. (Is. 53:9, 12)*

- a) *Mark tells us that both of the criminals crucified with Jesus reviled Him, but it is Luke who tells us that one of them had a change of heart at some point during the ordeal. (v. 32; Luke 23:39-43)*
- b) *What changed this man's heart so quickly and so convincingly? Was it the prayer of Jesus, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they do"? Or was it simply a demonstration of the grace and mercy of God now available through the cross, a demonstration that repentance and belief equaled salvation?*

*“This malefactor, when just ready to fall into the hands of Satan, was snatched as a brand out of the burning, and made a monument of divine mercy and grace, and Satan was left to roar as a lion disappointed of his prey. This gives no encouragement to any to put off their repentance to their death bed, or to hope that then they shall find mercy; for, though it is certain that true repentance is never too late, it is a certain that late repentance is seldom true. None can be sure that they shall have time to repent at death, but every man may be sure that he cannot have the advantages that this penitent thief had, whose case was altogether extraordinary.” Matthew Henry*

***v.15:29-32 And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest [it] in three days, Save thyself, and come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.***

*As Jesus hung on the cross He was incessantly mocked by all. Those that passed by mocked Him. The religious who came to gloat over their apparent victory mocked Him and even the criminals that hung beside Him joined in.*

- a) *Some shook their heads making fun of the arrogance they perceived was in Him, picking up on one of the false charges levied against Him which said He claimed He would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days.*
- b) *In reality he said, “You destroy this temple,” meaning His body, “and I will raise it up in three days.” Unknown to His mockers His prediction was coming true as they spoke. (John 2:19-21)*
- c) *The true character of the Jewish leadership is once again revealed as the so-called religious of Israel come to the cross to mock Him. We saw earlier how these same men took part in beating Jesus after His trial. These men constantly looked upon the common people as uneducated and crude, needing their enlightenment and guidance, but now demonstrated they are actually worse than those they led.*
- d) *They do not deny the power He displayed in helping others. They admit the miracles He performed were real (John 11:47) The sign they now sought was, could He come to His own defense? They had ascribed His power to Satan, was God’s judgment now coming upon Him? Is that why He now was powerless?*
- e) *Their logic seems to be that if Jesus truly was the Messiah, the King of Israel, then they would not be able to put Him to death. He would come down off the cross or God would deliver Him so He could rescue the nation and rule with an iron hand. If He rescued himself from this hopeless situation they would believe! Or would they? (Luke 16:27-31)*

*Another event that took place while Jesus hung on the cross which Mark chooses not to include is Jesus' address to Mary and the apostle John, who, with several other women that were close to Jesus, were standing at the foot of the cross. (John 19:25-27)*

- a) *Jesus looks down and sees His mother standing with the disciple John. Even in His suffering He makes certain that He provides for her physical care. He had earlier given His disciples final instructions, comforting them, and committing them to the Father. Now, He would have His final earthly dealings with the woman who bore Him and now stood by as He was about to leave the world.*
- b) *He presents John to Mary as her son, and likewise, presents Mary to John as his mother. John understood this to mean that he was to care for Mary with the death of Jesus, for he says that he took her into his home.*
- c) *It is interesting to note that Jesus uses both the word "mother" and "woman" in reference to Mary. When He addresses her, He uses the more informal word "woman," but in presenting her to John, He uses "mother." Any resemblance to a mother/son relationship that may have existed was now over. Jesus was her Savior, as well as her Lord and God. The relationship existed in the realm of time according to the purpose and plan of God. Earthly relationships do not continue on in the heavenly realm. (Matt. 22:30)*

*Author's Note:*

*Catholic doctrine references these verses in its declaration that Mary is the mother of the church. They emphasize her being given unto John as his mother and expands this to include the church. They even go further saying that Mary, in standing at the foot of the cross, fully participated in the sacrifice of Jesus! "Therefore the Blessed Virgin is involved in the church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix." Catechism of the Catholic Church, pp. 963-970*

***v.15:33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.***

*Jesus was crucified the third hour (9:00AM). With the coming of the sixth hour (12:00 noon) He has been hanging on the cross for three hours. During this time much has been going on around the cross. The soldiers had divided up His clothes and those who passed by mocked Him. Jesus himself, despite His agony, dealt mercifully with the repentant thief and provided for the care of His mother.*

- a) *Now with the coming of the sixth hour the scene changes dramatically. An intense darkness comes over the land from the sixth hour to the ninth hour, that is, from noon to 3:00PM. The fact that it is mentioned shows that it was not within the realm of the ordinary. What caused*

*such an intense darkness during the brightest part of the day?*

- b) *Much is written about this darkness and many attempts have been made to explain its cause in natural terms. Luke states, "And the sun was darkened," the word meaning "eclipsed." However, if the sun was indeed eclipsed it was not by the moon for the phenomena is impossible during the Passover in which the moon is full and a solar eclipse would not produce darkness for three hours.*
- c) *Most likely it was produced by supernatural means or some extraordinary event orchestrated by God in the cosmos. God commanded Moses to stretch forth his hand and darkness enveloped the land of Egypt for three days. (Ex. 10:22-23)*
- d) *The scriptures are silent as to what went on during this three hour period of darkness. Perhaps the scriptures are silent for in the physical realm it was a time of darkness and relative quiet, but in the spiritual realm a time of unprecedented intensity. We cannot comprehend what was going on within the Godhead at this time or among both angels and demons as they intently observed.*
- e) *We do know that He was being made a curse for us. (Gal. 3:13) We know that Jesus was being made sin on our account. (2 Cor. 5:21) The iniquity of us all was being placed upon Him. (Is. 53:4-6) The Lamb of God was now taking away the sin of the world.*

*Author's Note:*

*Jesus, as a perfect man, was in communion with the Father who revealed to Him the will of the Godhead. (John 5:19-20, 26; 8:28-29) I believe that during this time, for the first time, communication between Jesus and the Godhead was broken. The Father's voice was silent. For three hours He hung there seemingly abandoned and lost. He knew He must die. He had the power to give up his life and to take it up again, but, He always subjected His power to the will of the Father. The Father being silent meant He had no direction. How long would this suffering go on? When would He receive direction to let His spirit go? I believe this is what, after three hours, prompted His cry.*

***v.34-35 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard [it], said, Behold, he calleth Elias.***

*Jesus cries out to the Father calling Him his God. A term that shows His total and complete subjection, and at the same time a plea for direction. It is probably the only words Jesus uttered on His own as a man, and so, the title, "My God." Many have said that this cry echoed across a universe and was unanswered, but in reality it was heard by God who again communed with Him immediately, as we will see.*

- a) *The cry of Jesus prompts a response from those who were still standing there. Their knowledge of the scriptures would seem to indicate that they were of the leaders. Some suppose it is more mocking on their part, but I believe the three hours of darkness put a damper on their mocking spirit.*
- b) *The word Jesus shouted is pronounced "Eliya." Because of the similarity in sound to the prophet Elijah, and the fact that it was Jewish belief that Elijah would return and introduce the messiah, these individuals believe it is Elijah whom He was calling out to.*

**v.15:36** *And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put [it] on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.*

*We must go to John's gospel to see that this cry of Jesus was immediately answered.*

*(John 19:28-29) He once again had direction. He is again in control, fulfilling the scriptures and orchestrating the final moments of His life.*

- a) *He asked for a drink and in fulfillment of scripture. (Ps. 22:15; 69:21; 22:1) An individual in response to His request soaked a sponge in wine and raised it to Him on a reed.*
- b) *Some chastised the individual for they wanted to deny Him aid of any kind to see if Elijah would indeed come to His rescue. If this was legitimate or if it was mockery we do not know.*

**v.15:37** *And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.*

*It is John who tells us that after taking the wine Jesus uttered the words, "It is finished." All that was to be accomplished by Him in the flesh had been completed. Every shadow in the Old Testament in Him had been illuminated and every pre-figuring in Him fulfilled. God's plan had been accomplished.*

- a) *Mark simply tells us that Jesus then cried out in a loud voice and died. It's Luke who tells us the words He cried. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." With that, Jesus bows His head and dies. The precise moment for Him to give His life had arrived. He voluntarily surrendered His spirit in accordance with the divine will and plan.*

**v.15:38** *And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.*

*With the death of Jesus, God continued to bear witness of His Son by supernatural means. The gospel of Matthew provides a full account of these events while Mark chooses to speak only of the veil in the temple. (Matt. 27:50-54)*

- a) *The veil spoken of was the “inner veil” that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. Only the High Priest was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies, and only once a year, bearing the blood of the sacrifice. A description of this veil is given in several places in the Old Testament. (Ex. 26:31-33)*
- b) *The veil being torn in half in such dramatic fashion showed that the presence of God no longer dwelt in the Holy of Holies. All men now had direct access to God. There was no more need for the priesthood or the ceremonial law that governed it. Through the “veil” of Christ’s flesh all men could enter boldly into the spiritual tabernacle not made with hands. (Heb. 10:19-22; John 4:19-24)*

**v.15:39** *And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.*

*For a hardened Roman soldier, a centurion and pagan, to make the proclamation that this man was of a truth the Son of God, something dramatic had to have taken place. Did the darkness lift suddenly as if someone turned on a light? A simultaneous earthquake both happening immediately after the cry and following the expiration of Jesus would have no doubt produced this conclusion.*

- a) *These soldiers along with this centurion had witnessed everything that had happened for the last six hours. This beaten mass of flesh who shouldn’t have even been alive endured the taunts of all. He dealt kindly with the thief as well as with His mother and John. These soldiers heard Him pray a prayer of forgiveness, cry out to His God, proclaim His mission finished and finally dying on command. How could this not have had an effect on those who stood by.*

**v.15:40-41** *There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.*

*A group of acquaintances of which was a large contingent of women from Galilee watched the happenings of this day from some far off location. How far? Where were they? How many? We do not know, but now that the darkness had lifted they could see the cross of Christ.*

- a) *Most of Jesus’ ministry took place in Galilee. It was His “home base” so to speak and when He was in the region these women followed and ministered to Him. There had to be many from Galilee in the city for it was the Passover.*
- b) *The women mentioned are the same in the three gospels that name them, although described*

*differently. Salome was the mother of James and John. In John's gospel these women, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, are earlier together at the foot of the cross. (John 19:25) It would seem that the three women left the scene of some reason while Mary and John stayed at the cross.*

***v.15:42-45 And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling [unto him] the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew [it] of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.***

*It was the day before the Sabbath and evening was quickly approaching. The Sabbath began with the evening and so in accordance with several Jewish laws the bodies must be taken down and buried.*

- a) *It was the Jewish leaders who first approached Pilate concerning the three men crucified and the approaching Sabbath. Once again their hypocrisy is demonstrated, for guilty of various crimes and in justices in the death of Jesus, they are now concerned with their land being defiled. It is John, an eyewitness to these events, who records the things that took place shortly before the body of Jesus was removed. (John 19:31-37)*
- b) *It is Joseph of Arimethia who goes back to Pilate requesting the body of Jesus after the events described above. Luke tells us Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrin, that he was a just man, and that he did not consent or agree to have Jesus put to death. (Luke 23:50-52)*
- c) *He was determined to give Jesus a proper burial under Jewish law and was joined in the task by Nicodemus. (John 19:38-39) He was a disciple or follower of Jesus, but secretly, which would indicate that now with the death of Jesus he openly stepped forward.*
- d) *In Pilate's mind he did not think that enough time had elapsed since he gave the order to break the legs of those who had been crucified. Not taking the word of Joseph he called for the Centurion to verify that Jesus was indeed dead. Upon verification the body was released to Joseph.*

***v.15:46-47 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. And Mary Magdalene and Mary [the mother] of Josès beheld where he was laid.***

*The body of Jesus is taken down by Joseph and Nicodemus. If others were involved they are not mentioned. They wrap the body in linen, putting spices in the wrappings. They place the body in a sepulcher.*

- a) *Near the place of the crucifixion there was a garden. Joseph had had a tomb carved out of solid rock in which one day he was to be buried. Because it was close and the Sabbath was quickly approaching they laid Jesus in this tomb and rolled a stone to seal the entrance. In fulfillment of Isaiah 53:9 Jesus was buried with the rich.*
  
- b) *Luke tells us the women from Galilee who came with Jesus to Jerusalem followed and watched the preparation and burial. The two men were Jewish leaders, and so, the women were probably hiding and watching from a distance. Mark mentions two of the women, that being Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph. The other women who were with them we do not know*

*v.1-2 And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the [mother] of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first [day] of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.*

*The Sabbath ended Saturday evening, so the marketplace was again open for business. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and John, as well as Salome bought spices in order to anoint the body of Jesus.*

- a) *Joseph and Nicodemus had already prepared the body wrapping it with strips of linen while including spices in the wrappings, but the women were concerned with properly anointing the body since it had been put in the tomb quickly because of the approaching Sabbath.*
- b) *Very early on Sunday morning they arrived at the sepulcher as the sun rose. John tells us that they had left to go to the tomb when it was still dark. The gospels name four women, but there could have been others.*

*v.3-4 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.*

*The main worry of these women and the topic of conversation as they made their way to the sepulcher was how they were going to move the stone to get access to the body of Jesus. Arriving at the site they observe that the large stone had already been moved away from the opening of the tomb.*

- a) *It is Matthew who tells us that the stone was rolled away by an angel (Matt. 28:2-4) The women were unaware that the tomb had been sealed and guarded. The fact that they were coming to anoint the body on the third day proves they were not anticipating the resurrection.*
- b) *According to John's gospel, Mary Magdalene, seeing that the stone had been rolled away, leaves the group of women and hurries off to tell the apostles that someone had taken the body of Jesus. The Gospel of John tells us the story of Mary while the other three accounts follow the group of women. (John 20:1-2)*

*v.5-8 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any [man]; for they were afraid.*

*With the departure of Mary Magdalene the other women enter the sepulcher. They see a young man dressed in white sitting in the tomb. The other gospels identify this young man as being an angel.*

- a) *The women are obviously startled and afraid. The angel immediately addresses them, assuring them that their fear is unwarranted. The angel proceeds to tell them that he knows why they had come, but that Jesus was not there for He had risen.*
- b) *The angel tells them to examine the tomb. He desires that they settle down from their initial shock and to be sure as to what they were observing and what they had been told. Jesus was crucified, laid in the tomb, but now was risen!*
- c) *The angel then instructs them to be on their way, that is, to go and tell all the disciples of Jesus, and tell Peter, that they will see Him. They are to remind them of the words that Jesus spoke to them on the way to Gethsemane, namely, that He would see them in Galilee after He was risen. (14:27-28)*
- d) *With this they left quickly. They were emotional wrecks. They were still trembling from the experience. They were afraid, and yet, Matthew tells us also joyful. They didn't know what to think, and so, did not immediately carry out the angel's command, but held their peace.*

***v.9-11. Now when [Jesus] was risen early the first [day] of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. [And] she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.***

*Mark provides in these verses a brief summary of Mary Magdalene's story which is provided in detail in the Gospel of John. (John 20:11-16)*

- a) *Mary was the first person to whom Jesus appeared after His resurrection. This woman who was once possessed by seven demons was afforded this privilege. The apostles were still together mourning and weeping three days after Jesus death when Mary arrived. She told them she had seen and spoken to the risen Jesus, but they did not believe her.*

***v12-14 After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told [it] unto the residue: neither believed they them. Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.***

*Mark provides, in these verses a brief summary of the two disciples of Jesus to whom He appeared*

on the road Emmaus. The story is given in detail in the Gospel of Luke.  
(Luke 24:13-31)

- a) In Luke's account it says that when these disciples arrived back in Jerusalem they found the apostles and disciples speaking about how Jesus was risen and that He had appeared to Peter, but here in Mark it says that those they told didn't believe them. In all probability a disagreement existed between those assembled. The information was just coming in and in the process of being sorted out. In fact, as these two disciples were yet speaking Jesus appeared to them all. (Luke 24:33-43)
- b) The fact that they gave Jesus food upon His request confirms that they were eating when He appeared. It is probably at this first appearance to them as a group that He rebuked them for their unbelief. They did not believe their brothers. Their hearts were hardened to the truth even after they saw Him.

**v.15-18** *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

These words were probably spoken by Jesus when He met the apostles in the mountain at Galilee.  
(Matt. 28:16-20) In fact, it is Mark in this instance who presents the most detail.

- a) They are instructed to go into all the world. The good news of the gospel was to be preached to all men in every nation. It is emphasized that salvation is predicated upon belief. Those that believe the gospel message will be saved while those who do not believe will be condemned.
- b) Baptism is an act of obedience that follows belief. It seems to be understood that if one believes they will be baptized. Baptism is an outward sign of what has already taken place spiritually upon belief. Because one is not physically baptized does not mean he is not saved, but why would a believer harden his heart to this first act of obedience.
- c) In the apostolic age signs and wonders followed these apostles and believers bearing witness to their words. Like their Master they would cast out demons and with the coming of Pentecost they would speak in tongues new to them, that is, in other languages as they took the gospel into all the world.

- d) *God would protect them from deadly serpents and poisons, bearing witness to His presence in them as they spoke His word. They, in turn, would lay hands on those who were sick and they would recover. (Heb. 2:3-4)*

***v.19-20 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with [them], and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.***

*Finally, after continuing to appear, instruct and strengthen His apostles and disciples after His resurrection, He ascended into heaven taking His rightful place at the right hand to the Father. His ascension paved the way for the coming of the Holy Ghost and the birth of the church. (Acts 1:3-9)*

- a) *These men did go forth, the gospel in a short period of time was preached everywhere and the success of the message proved that God was indeed working in them as the world was “turned upside down.” The eleven were reluctant to go out, however, God did disperse them and raised up the apostle Paul as the apostle to the gentiles.*

*Amen!*