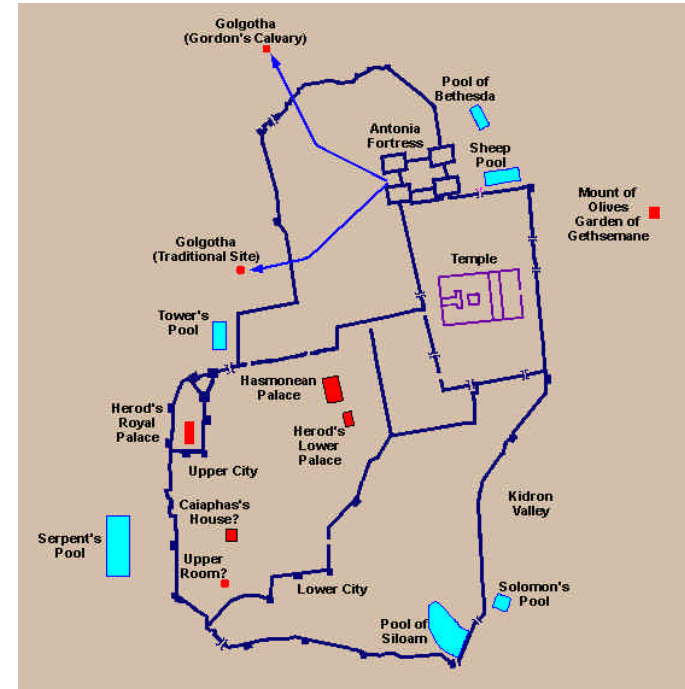


4. What does it mean to be forsaken by God?
Why did Jesus ask God why He had been forsaken (read Psalm 22)?

5. Who was ultimately responsible for Jesus death on the cross?

6. What did the centurion see when he looked at Jesus on the cross? What do you see?

Chapter Fifteen JESUS' DELIBERATE JOURNEY TO THE CROSS



WHERE IS JESUS?

1. The court of Pontius Pilate.
2. The Praetorium of the Roman soldiers.
3. Golgotha, the Place of the Skull.
4. The Garden Tomb.

OVERVIEW : As soon as the Jewish Council finished their early morning trial, they immediately brought Jesus before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, to charge Him with treason—a capital crime in Rome. Since they didn't have the authority under Roman law to put someone to death, the Jewish

leaders had to convince Pilate that Jesus claimed to be a king.

As Pilate questioned Jesus, He remained silent. Mark says that “Pilate was amazed” by this. Pilate had the power to release Jesus, but he instead chose to appease the Jewish crowd and released the murderer, Barabbas, instead. He had Jesus flogged and handed Him over to the soldiers to be crucified. Crucifixion is one of the most horrible forms of execution ever devised by humans. Jesus was forced to carry “His cross,” or at least the 100 pound cross beam, from inside the city out to the crucifixion site: Golgotha.

Because Jesus was so weakened by the flogging and beating He had received at the hands of the soldiers, He collapsed under the weight of the cross. The Roman soldiers then pressed a bystander, Simon of Cyrene, to carry the cross the rest of the way. Simon was most likely a pilgrim from North Africa who had come to celebrate the Passover. Warren Wiersbe observes of him:

In one of his folksy letters to his mother, Harry Truman wrote, “I went to the White House to see the President and discovered I was the President.” Simon had come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover (Acts 2:10; 6:9), and he ended up meeting the Passover Lamb!

We don’t know exactly where Golgotha is, and it doesn’t really matter because it will forever be the spot where God’s plan of redemption found its place in history. The scene Mark describes of Jesus hanging in agony is meant to inspire his

FOR YOUR GROUP STUDY:

1. What observations have you made in your study of Mark this week?

2. Is it important that we are able to prove who Jesus is? What is the relationship between facts and faith about Jesus?

3. What do you think would have happened if Jesus had come down from the cross?

6. Read Mark 1:10-11 and 15:38-39. What are the parallels between Jesus' baptism and His crucifixion?

7. Read 6:29 and 15:42-47. What do you learn about Joseph of Arimathea and his relationship to Jesus?

8. What happened immediately after Jesus died?

readers to be strong no matter what they might face. He painstakingly details the final hours of the Savior and then suddenly Jesus lets out a loud cry and takes His last breath. This is the climax of Mark's gospel, and it is punctuated by the observation of the centurion standing guard at the foot of Jesus' cross: "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

Read Mark 15:5.

? "*Still made no reply.*" The Greek here ***ouketi ouden*** is a double negative used for particular emphasis. It literally means "answered no longer nothing."

Read Mark 15:8-11.

? "*Barabbas.*" The Jewish leaders incited the crowd to ask for Barabbas' release even though he was a notorious insurrectionist, robber and murderer.

Read Mark 15:15.

? "*He had Jesus flogged.*" A Roman flogging was a brutal beating that always preceded the execution of a capital sentence on male offenders, though it could also be a separate punishment (cf. TDNT, s.v. "***mastigoo***," 4:517-9). The prisoner was stripped, often tied to a post, and beaten on the back by several guards using short leather whips studded with sharp pieces of bone or metal. No limit was set on the number of blows. Often this punishment was fatal.

Read Mark 15:21.

? *“Simon, Alexander and Rufus.”* Simon was from the North African coastal city of Cyrene. He may have been a pilgrim in Jerusalem for the Passover. Only Mark mentions his sons, Alexander and Rufus, suggesting they may have been known to his Roman audience.

Read Mark 15:25.

? *“The third hour.”* The third hour would have been 9:00 a.m. *The sixth hour* would be noon, and so on throughout the day until Jesus died.

FOR YOUR PERSONAL STUDY:

1. Why did the Jewish religious leaders send Jesus to Pilate?

2. Read 15:1-5. How did Jesus respond to Pontius Pilate?

3. When the crowd chanted for Barabbas' release, where were all the people who had cheered for Jesus during His triumphal entry?

4. Read 15:26. What was the ultimate charge for which Jesus was crucified?

5. Read 15:32, 39. What titles are mockingly given to Jesus?