

## **[And the Sun Was Darkened] / Gospel of Luke 23:44 – 24:7**

~ One final report after this one and our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God returns to the Old Testament Pentateuch where Moses, Aaron and the children of Israel are wandering on in the wilderness march. Specifically, we'll return to the Book of Numbers. This safari invites you to make a sincere, educated and complete study of the Word of God with us, friends. This is a proven Bible study. We have already examined the entirety of Holy Writ the first time in a six-year program. Christ is glorified when you comment, but, most importantly, please just pray that the Word of God will continue to be taught properly, correctly and completely in the sound doctrine of the apostles to the entire reading and thinking world. God has promised me that His Word does not return to Him void.

This report resumes with Jesus where our previous report broke off, hanging – literally - beside two thieves on their own crosses. All three are fastened down and set - and there's nothing left for them to do except die! Do you think you would feel good about yourself hanging there naked staring out at the crowd? Our study in Matthew and Mark revealed that both thieves ridiculed Jesus; but the repentant thief came to the realization that Jesus was none other than Who He claimed to be - the Son of God – and that He was dying for him. Jesus died, the just for the unjust, on the altar of the cross. Everyone in the crowd knew that cross belonged to Barabbas.

In order for the thief to come all the way to the place where he had the faith to understand that Jesus was coming into His Kingdom, but that it would not occur until after His death, means the thief came a very long ways theologically in just a few short minutes hanging on a cross! One received Christ - one did not. Many people say they are carrying their crosses - I wonder how many ever reach Golgotha? I wonder how many of those who reach Golgotha receive Jesus as their Savior. Neither thief was saved physically from the cross. See, the thief realizes that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. That's what is important.

The remark Jesus makes to the thief about entering paradise is so lovely that words fail to adequately describe the reality. The two thieves are identical in all respects criminally; they have no difference between them whatsoever. Thieves don't come in two classes – only one: bad. I think most people believe there is a difference amongst who's who in the criminal world. There isn't. The thief on the cross didn't run any errands of mercy and he didn't get the chance to perform any acts of kindness. The thief on the cross never had an opportunity to come to the tabernacle. By the time the thief is saved, his hands and feet are not coming down from that cross alive! The Lord said the thief would be with Him in paradise and that's exactly what happened....

### **XXIII**

***44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.***

***45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.***

***46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.***

~ As a physician, Luke was well acquainted with the presence of death and he knew the long-term physical realities that occur when death takes place in a man or woman. Jesus died differently by commending His Spirit back to the Father. A man struggles for that last breath every time. Jesus didn't do that, and He didn't just expire as you and I will – Jesus spoke His Holy Spirit back to the Father. This is, of course, what was required so that the Holy Spirit could be sent back on the Day of Pentecost to indwell all who will believe during this Age of Grace ....

***47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.***

~ We met this centurion who had charge of the crucifixion detail before in other Gospel accounts, and I believe he was saved right here at the foot of

the cross. The centurion looked upon Christ and said, "... this is a righteous man." That came from the heart. The other Gospels also record him as saying, "... surely this is the Son of God." Either way, he believed! Now, I understand that the centurion and the thief would not have had enough recognized faith between them to join the average church today - but neither of them had ever held a Bible in their hands, either. If that's the only testimony a man has, then that is a rather flimsy testimony, to be sure; but let's understand some background. They certainly have no idea about the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Neither of them had read Hodge: On Theology. They weren't well acquainted with Calvin's Institute and since they never had an opportunity to review one of my reports, these men were really unenlightened when these statements were made. Well, the centurion knew enough to take his place at the foot of the cross of Christ; and that's all God has ever asked any sinner to do....

***48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.***

~ The typical Roman crucifixion had an ominous and fearful atmosphere naturally - but this one absolutely breaks the scales of supernatural demonism. Our Spiritual Safari has been very careful to point out that none of the Gospel writers detail the crucifixion like the movies and books about the Bible do. The Spirit of God pulled down the black curtain in front of the horror of this event and said to us, "this is too much for you to see!" Nothing in these accounts satisfies the curiosity of the morbid unbeliever. The unbeliever is shut out altogether; so, they make plays and write fiction about it. Just as in the Garden of Gethsemane, we can only stand on the fringe of what we have at the cross, friends. We can only enter this understanding by faith as we look up at the One Who has died for us. The crowd of onlookers were greatly affected by the tremendous things that were happening at this time....

***49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.***

***50 And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just:***

**51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.**

**52 This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.**

~ Joseph was a prominent man of means and influence, apparently; and he was a member of the Sanhedrin. He seems to have made a stand for Christ, but that stand was made very much alone. There was an evident split of agreement between Joseph and the Sanhedrin, and I doubt a majority was ever reached when the edict was laid down to crucify Jesus. I am sure this man disagreed because it says he consented not to their council. Joseph was what we would call a pious, religious man; but he has now come face to face with Christ. There were many believers who would not come out in the open, but Joseph makes this stand for the body. Even the apostles are scattered and underground at this time, remember. The only ones that aren't hiding are Joseph and Nicodemus who become the undertakers – as we shall see in John's account of the Gospel.

The death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ all belong together. Paul said, "... the Gospel is that Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures; that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, also according to Scripture." We have the facts of the Gospel and then we have the relationship that you and I have to those facts of the Gospel! It's not that difficult, really. What it means to you and me is that we died when Jesus died and when Jesus rose from the dead we rose from the dead. We are now in Christ and we are recognized by God in the Lord Jesus. The righteousness of Christ has been made over to us as His standards become our standards. That's about all we have to boast of today....

**53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.**

~ Having previously examined the possible whereabouts of this tomb, let's just say this: the Roman Catholic Cult has built a building over one of them and the other is outside the city wall. I highly doubt Jesus was buried in

either one because there were several groups of people who so hated Christ and Christianity that an attempt to remove every vestige or relic that would remind them of Jesus would have been imminent! There was Titus, Justin the apostate – and others – so, throughout the centuries, all of that simply disappeared and I am also sure God made it happen this way for a specific purpose, too; and He did it so we don't worship there! We don't know the exact location, but we can say with certainty that the garden tomb is in the immediate area of Golgotha. If you go to a particular tomb, they say it is the tomb that Jesus was buried in, and people kiss the ground and weep and howl as if there's some value in that. Even if they got into the right tomb where He was buried – He isn't there anymore! The Lord Jesus Christ is at God's right hand today as our living Savior....

***54 And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.***

***55 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.***

***56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.***

**XXIV**

***1 Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.***

***2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.***

***3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.***

***4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:***

***5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?***

~ I wonder what happened to the spices. The women probably just left them there when they saw the stone had been rolled away. Of course, the stone was not rolled away to let Jesus out - the stone was rolled away to let the women in. Verse five presents an excellent question. Jesus was gone! Our safari sequence seems to lay out a contradictory account of events in the Gospel regarding the women and what happened at this particular time. Well, there is no conflict, I can assure you. We worked out the order of events on the resurrection morning in the book of Mark. It's a logical progression as we are studying each Gospel separately and we dwell only on each one as we take them up. We don't attempt to lay one down over the other. Even when we do, we can see there is no contradiction. Each Gospel writer presents different facets of the history....

***6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,***

***7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.***

~ Sometimes we can hear something taught from the Bible, but not fully or properly process it; and then, other times, we hear something, and we think we know it, but we don't really believe it. That unbelief translates directly into disobedience - every time. That's where most people go horribly wrong with God, my friends. That is how many people read and listen to the Word of God being taught today, too, by the way. Sloppy, reckless, grammatically incorrect and incomplete Bible teaching abounds. To many people, these reports seem like an utter waste of time - and they don't believe one word of what I say. Well, that's because this Bible teaching is unleavened bread, friends. People like buttermilk biscuits - not the sound doctrine of the apostles ~

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