

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 70 – March 11th – Mark 15:1-47

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Mark

Cranfield, CEB	<i>The Gospel According to Mark</i> (Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary), CUP, Cambridge, 4 th ed. 1972
France, RT	<i>The Gospel of Mark</i> (The New International Greek Testament Commentary), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2002
Guelich, Robert A	<i>Mark 1-8:26</i> (The Word Biblical Commentary, vol 34A), Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1989
Lane, William L	<i>The Gospel of Mark</i> , Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1974
Taylor, Vincent	<i>The Gospel According to St Mark</i> , Macmillan NT Commentaries, London, 1952

Verses 1-15

Cf. Mt 27:1f., 11-26; Lk 23:1-5, 17-25. The Jewish hearing was not a formal trial but a search for a plausible charge to bring against Jesus. Now a political charge is presented to Pilate.

Verse 1

Καὶ εὐθὺς πρωὶ συμβούλιον ποιήσαντες οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς μετὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ὅλον τὸ συνέδριον δῆσαντες τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπήνεγκαν καὶ παρέδωκαν Πιλάτῳ.

εὐθὺς see 14:72

πρωὶ adv early morning, in the early morning, morning

At, or even before, daybreak.

συμβούλιον, οὐ n council

The reading ποιήσαντες is better attested than ἐτοίμασαντες. Cranfield comments: "While συμβούλιον ἐτοίμασαντες would mean 'having prepared (reached) a decision', συμβούλιον ποιήσαντες must mean 'having held a council (consultation)'. The reading ἐτοίμασαντες gets rid of the reference to a second meeting and so brings Mk in line with Mt." The reading ἐποίησαν (D Θ and many versions) improves the syntax.

ὅλος, ἡ, οὐ whole, all, entire
συνέδριον, οὐ n Sanhedrin

"Since the three groups just mentioned make up the membership of the Sanhedrin, this phrase cannot designate an additional group. It serves rather to emphasise (more strongly than πάντες of 14:53) that this is now a full gathering of the Sanhedrin, competent to draw up a case to present to Pilate. It is likely that members have been arriving through the night hearing, so that by now they are a sufficient quorum (and Mark's phrase suggests more than a mere quorum) to ratify formally the results of the night's proceedings." France.

δεω bind, tie

ἀπήνεγκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἀποφερω take (away), carry (away)

παραδίδωμι hand, deliver up

"The verb παραδίδωμι is used in its natural sense without any special theological nuance, but the alert reader may remember Jesus' words in 10:33, παραδώσουσιν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. The verb παραδίδωμι which came to our attention in the passion predictions of 9:31 and 10:33-34 recurs several times in Mark's narrative, not only for Judas's action (14:10, 11, 18, 21, 41, 42, 44) but also for the subsequent stages of Jesus' progress towards the cross here and in vv. 10 and 15 which mark the progressive fulfilment of those predictions." France.

"Mark ... assumes his readers will know that he [Pilate] was the Procurator... Pilate would probably be resident in the fortress of Antonia (which overlooked the Temple area) during the Passover. Another view is that he would reside in Herod's palace." Cranfield.

Verse 2

καὶ ἐπρωτότησεν αὐτὸν ὁ Πιλάτος· Σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς αὐτῷ λέγει· Σὺ λέγεις.

ἐπερωταω ask, interrogate, question

"Pilate perhaps has the charge in writing before him; at any rate he is using the terms of the Sanhedrin's accusation, and asking Jesus whether he admits its truth. The verse makes clear what the charge was (cf. v.32)." Cranfield. France comments on the phrase ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, "It was an appropriate 'translation' of Jesus' messianic claim into language which a Roman governor would understand and which he would immediately recognise as potentially treasonable."

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
ἀποκρίνομαι answer, reply, say

Jesus' reply is not a denial but a guarded affirmation – 'yes, but not in the way you think.'

Verse 3

καὶ κατηγοροῦν αὐτοῦ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς πολλά.

κατηγορεῶ accuse, bring charges against

"πολλά is here more probably the direct object of κατηγοροῦν ... than used adverbially." Cranfield.

Verse 4

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος πάλιν ἐπήρωτα αὐτὸν λέγων·
Οὐκ ἀποκρίνη οὐδέν; ἴδε πόσα σου
κατηγοροῦσιν.

πάλιν again, once more

οὐδέν Adjective, n nom & acc s οὐδεὶς,
οὐδεμία, οὐδέν no one, nothing; οὐδέν
adv not at all

ποσος, η, ον how much(?), how many(?)

Verse 5

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς οὐκέτι οὐδὲν ἀπεκρίθη, ὥστε
θαυμάζειν τὸν Πιλάτον.

οὐκέτι adv no longer, no more

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
ἀποκρίνομαι

"Cf. 14:61. It is not impossible that Jesus himself may have had Isa 53:7 in mind." Cranfield.

ὥστε so that, with the result that
θαυμάζω wonder, be amazed

Cf. Is 52:15 (LXX). "θαυμάζω often carries a note of admiration, and Pilate's subsequent attempts to secure Jesus' release suggest that he was impressed by the contrast between the priest's vehemence and Jesus' silence." France.

Verse 6

Κατὰ δὲ ἑορτὴν ἀπέλυσεν αὐτοῖς ἓνα δέσμιον
ὃν παρητούντο.

ἑορτή, ης f festival, feast

ἀπολῶ release, set free

δέσμιος, ου m prisoner

παραίτημα ask for, request

While there is no independent evidence for this specific custom there are several recorded incidents of Roman officials releasing prisoners at the request of and to placate the Jews. France comments, "It is not improbable that Pilate found a similar concession politically expedient; the annual release of a single prisoner is a very modest concession compared with many political amnesties. If there was no such custom, it is not easy to see where such a well-established part of the Christian passion tradition might have been derived from. For the people's right to choose, cf. the custom at gladiatorial contests of asking the people whether a given contestant should live or die."

Verse 7

ἦν δὲ ὁ λεγόμενος Βαραββᾶς μετὰ τῶν
στασιαστῶν δεδεμένος οἵτινες ἐν τῇ στάσει
φόνον πεποιήκεισαν.

ὁ λεγόμενος Βαραββᾶς "The only other place in the N.T. where ὁ λεγόμενος is used in an exactly analagous way seems to be Lk 22:47. Elsewhere it is used to attach a title or alternative name to a personal name already mentioned (e.g. Mt 27:22) or to attach a name to a common noun or equivalent (e.g. Mt 26:3; Jn 9:11). So, while (in view of Lk. 22:47) this expression cannot be called impossible it is certainly unusual. Moreover, in Mt. 27:16f. Θ f1, sy^{s, pal} attest the addition of Ἰησοῦν, a reading which Origen mentions but rejects on theological grounds. It seems extremely probable that the addition should be read in Mt. 27:16f., and, as this passage in Mt. is dependent on Mk, it is probable that Mk originally had Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγ. Β., and that Ἰησοῦς was omitted for the sake of reverence." Cranfield.

στασιαστής, ου m rebel, insurrectionist

"The other two λησταί who were subsequently crucified with Jesus (v. 27) probably belonged to the same group, left behind when Barabbas alone was released. Thus Jesus found himself in compromising company; the occurrence of a στάσις recently enough for its perpetrators to be still in prison awaiting execution means that this was a dangerous time for anyone to be charged in Jerusalem with claiming to be ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; no doubt the priests had reckoned with that." France.

δέω bind, tie

οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἥτις, ὁ τι
who, which

στασις, εως f riot, revolt, rebellion

φονος, ου m murder, killing
πεποιήκεισαν Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 pl
ποιεω

Verse 8

καὶ ἀναβὰς ὁ ὄχλος ἤρξατο αἰτεῖσθαι καθὼς
ἐποίει αὐτοῖς.

ἀναβαινω go up, come up, ascend

"The sudden arrival (ἀναβάς) of the crowd is surprising, and the verb ἀναβαίνω less natural than Matthew's συναγόμαι. ἀναβοήσας (a verb Mark does not use elsewhere) therefore looks like an 'improved' reading, substituting the crowd's vocal activity, which is the subject of the rest of the sentence, for its physical movement." France.

To the fortress of Antonia?

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

"Probably supporters of Barabbas who had come to ask for his release." Cranfield.

ἀρχω midd begin
αἰτεῖσθαι Verb, pres midd infin αἰτεω ask;
midd ask for oneself, request

"After αἰτεῖσθαι there is an ellipse: the meaning is 'asked (him to do) as ...!'" Cranfield.

Verse 9

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς λέγων· Θέλετε
ἀπολύσω ὑμῖν τὸν βασιλέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων;

ἀπεκρίθη see v.5.

θελω wish, will

ἀπολυω see v.6.

"Perhaps Pilate was misled by the charge against Jesus into imagining that he was a more popular and significant figure in Jerusalem than was really the case. In terms of popular support in relation to Barabbas there was no contest. Thus the only time Pilate takes the initiative in this scene, he is unsuccessful. It is others who are calling the tune." France.

Verse 10

ἐγίνωσκεν γὰρ ὅτι διὰ φθόνον
παραδεδώκεισαν αὐτὸν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς.

ἐπιγινωσκω know, perceive
φθονος, ου m envy, jealousy, spite
παραδεδωκεισαν Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 pl
παραδιδωμι

On the presumption that the two shared the name 'Jesus', Cranfield comments that this "May then be understood as explaining why it was that Pilate thought the crowd was asking for the release of Jesus of Nazareth – it was natural for him to think this, since he knew that Jesus was popular and that it was on account of their jealousy of his popularity and influence that the chief priests had delivered him up."

Verse 11

οἱ δὲ ἀρχιερεῖς ἀνέσεισαν τὸν ὄχλον ἵνα
μᾶλλον τὸν Βαραββᾶν ἀπολύσῃ αὐτοῖς.

ἀνασειω incite, stir up

Cranfield thinks that the crowd was composed of Barabbas' supporters who had come to lobby for his release. The members of the High Priest's party were simply agitating and encouraging the crowd to call for the release of the one for whom they had already come. France comments, "The only other NT occurrence of ἀνασειώ in the sense of to 'stir up' or 'incite' is, significantly, in the parallel passage in Lk 23:5, as the priests' version of what *Jesus* has been doing with the people."

μᾶλλον adv more; rather

Verse 12

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος πάλιν ἀποκριθεὶς ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς·
Τί οὖν θέλετε ποιήσω ὃν λέγετε τὸν βασιλέα
τῶν Ἰουδαίων;

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
ἀποκρινομαι

On the textual variants in this verse Cranfield comments: "The great majority of MSS. and versions read θελετε before ποιησω, but it is omitted by x B C W Δ Ψ 1 13 *al* *co* *geo*, and should probably not be read. With regard to ὃν λεγετε, though there is strong support for its omission, the balance is perhaps in favour of retaining it."

On Pilate's question Cranfield says, "Did he hope that the crowd would beg for the release of Jesus of Nazareth as well? Did he intend in that case to make a show of generosity by releasing two prisoners instead of one? Or did he hope to persuade them to alter their request?" France comments, "In offering an amnesty for ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων in v. 9 Pilate must have thought that some at least of the crowd would welcome Jesus under that title. Now that his offer has been rejected he reminds the crowd that it was their priests who had introduced the title; so if they do not want their 'king' released, what do they want?"

Verse 13

οἱ δὲ πάλιν ἔκραξαν· Σταύρωσον αὐτόν.

παλιν again, once more

Cranfield considers that παλιν here means 'thereupon'.

κραζω cry out, call out
σταυρωω crucify

"Crucifixion was the normal Roman penalty for provincial political rebels (otherwise it was normally reserved for slaves except in very extreme cases), and so the form of execution demanded is consistent with the accusation that Jesus was claiming to be a βασιλεὺς, and indeed was the only realistic option if Pilate were to declare him guilty of the charge... The direct singular imperative σταύρωσον, twice repeated (contrast Matthew's third-person imperative σταυρωθήτω), emphasises that this can only be by Pilate's personal decision." France.

Verse 14

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· Τί γὰρ ἐποίησεν κακόν; οἱ δὲ περισσῶς ἔκραξαν· Σταύρωσον αὐτόν.

κακος, η, ον evil, wrong, harm

"The question serves here primarily to provide the reader with further confirmation that Jesus' execution was a miscarriage of justice, in that even the 'impartial' Roman governor by whose verdict he was condemned to death was not persuaded that he was really guilty." France.

περισσως all the more, even more; even louder

Verse 15

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος βουλόμενος τῷ ὄγλῳ τὸ ἱκανὸν ποιῆσαι ἀπέλυσεν αὐτοῖς τὸν Βαραββᾶν, καὶ παρέδωκεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν φραγελλώσας ἵνα σταυρωθῆ.

βουλομαι want, desire, wish, intend, plan

Stronger than θελων.

ἱκανος, η, ον worthy, sufficient, much
ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιεω

"τῷ ὄγλῳ τὸ ἱκανὸν ποιῆσαι ... is a Latinism (= *satis facere*). It is used in the LXX in Jer 31:30 in a similar sense." Cranfield.

φραγελλωω beat with a whip

"A Latin loanword. Φραγελλωω is a transliteration of *flagello*. The fearful scourging it denotes was the normal prelude to crucifixion (cf. Josephus, *B.J.* ii:306, 308; v:449; Livy, 33:36)." Cranfield. France comments, "This too, like the 'handing over' to Gentiles, has been part of Jesus' prediction in 10:34."

σταυρωθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s σταυρωω

Verses 16-20

"After the flogging mentioned in v. 15 Jesus must already have been a pitiable sight, probably barely able to stand or walk and certainly incapable of resistance even if he had wished. In any case, he is on his way to execution, so there is nothing to curb their enjoyment of this opportunity to humiliate the 'king of the Jews', and the contempt for Jews in general which is amply illustrated in literature of the Roman empire is eagerly focused on this one ludicrous example of a Jew who had dared to challenge the imperial power. It is not an attractive scene." France.

Verse 16

Οἱ δὲ στρατιῶται ἀπήγαγον αὐτὸν ἔσω τῆς αὐλῆς, ὃ ἔστιν πραιτώριον, καὶ συγκαλοῦσιν ὄλην τὴν σπεῖραν.

στρατιωτης, ου m soldier

ἀπαγω lead away by force, lead

ἔσω i) adv & prep with gen inside, within

Cranfield thinks αὐλη here means 'Palace'.

πραιτώριον, ου n headquarters or

residence (of an army or governor)

συγκαλεω call together

ὄλος, η, ον whole, all, entire

σπειρα, ης f cohort (tenth part of a Roman legion having about 600 men)

"If σπεῖρα is used here in its technical military sense for a cohort (as in Acts 10:1; 27:1), there could have been six hundred men involved, though the size of a cohort varied; but the Greek word is not necessarily so specific (we need not believe that it took six hundred men to arrest Jesus, Jn 18:3, 12), and could mean simply that all the soldiers there on duty gathered round." France.

Verse 17

καὶ ἐνδιδύσκουσιν αὐτὸν πορφύραν καὶ περιτιθέασιν αὐτῷ πλέξαντες ἀκάνθινον στέφανον·

ἐνδιδύσκω dress or clothe in

πορφυρα, ας f purple cloth

"The Mt. parallel probably interprets correctly by χαλαμυδα κοκκινην, i.e. 'a scarlet military cloak'. For *purpura* as the characteristic of kings cf., e.g., Virgil, *Georg.* 2:495 (*purpura regum*); of the Emperor, cf., e.g., Ammianus Marcellinus, 21:9.8. The soldier's cloak was perhaps used as the nearest substitute for the *purpura* available." Cranfield.

περιτιθημι put around, put on

πλεκω weave, twist together

ἀκανθινος, η, ον of thorns

στεφανος, ου m wreath, crown

"They probably had in mind the royal διαδημα." Cranfield.

Verse 18

καὶ ἤρξαντο ἀσπάζεσθαι αὐτόν· Χαῖρε, βασιλεῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων·

ἀσπάζομαι greet

χαίρω rejoice; imperat used as a greeting

βασιλεῦ Noun, voc s βασιλευς, εως m king

"Cf. the Latin greeting *Ave, Caesar.*" Cranfield.

Verse 19

καὶ ἔτυπον αὐτοῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν καλάμῳ καὶ ἐνέπτυν αὐτῷ, καὶ τιθέντες τὰ γόνατα προσεκύνουν αὐτῷ.

τυπῶ beat, strike

κεφαλῆ, ης f head

καλαμος, ου m reed, rod, cane

ἐμπτυῶ spit on

τιθῆμι place, set

γόνυ, γονατος n knee

προσκυνεῶ worship, fall at another's feet

Cranfield suggests, "Perhaps 'did homage to him'; but perhaps more than ordinary homage is meant, 'a mockery in terms of Caesar worship, or Oriental ideas of kingship' (Taylor)."

Verse 20

καὶ ὅτε ἐνέπαιξαν αὐτῷ, ἐξέδυσαν αὐτὸν τὴν πορφύραν καὶ ἐνέδυσαν αὐτὸν τὰ ἱμάτια τὰ ἴδια. καὶ ἐξήγαγουν αὐτὸν ἵνα σταυρώσωσιν αὐτόν.

ὅτε conj when

ἐμπαιζῶ ridicule, make fun of

ἐκδύω strip, take

ἐνδύω dress, clothe

ἱματιον, ου n garment, clothing

ἐξάγω lead or bring out

σταυρώσωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl

σταυρῶω crucify

Verses 21-41

Cf. Mt 27:32-56; Lk 23:26-49.

Verse 21

Καὶ ἀγγαρεύουσιν παράγοντά τινα Σίμονα Κυρηναῖον ἐρχόμενον ἀπ' ἀγροῦ, τὸν πατέρα Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ Ρούφου, ἵνα ἄρῃ τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ.

ἀγγαρευῶ force, press into service

παραγῶ pass by

Κυρηναῖος, ου m a Cyrenian

ἀγρος, ου m field, farm, countryside

ἄρῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s αἰρῶ take, take up

σταυρος, ου m cross

"It was normal for the condemned himself to carry the cross-beam of his cross to the place of execution. Presumably Jesus had carried it for a while, but had been physically unable to carry it further. Otherwise the impressing of someone else to carry it for him would be surprising... It is implied that the two names are well known to Mark's readers. Apparently Alexander and Rufus (perhaps Simon too) were Christians. Is this Rufus perhaps the same as the one mentioned in Rom 16:13? The two sons are mentioned only by Mark. The account does not encourage any speculation on the feelings of Simon, but it is natural to wonder whether this experience led to his conversion." Cranfield.

France comments, "It would be inappropriate to the narrative context to suggest that Simon's 'taking up the cross' (the same verb αἰρῶ is used here as in 8:34) in itself symbolises his personally entering a life of discipleship, but Mark's readers may well have found in his action a striking illustration of the costly identification with a suffering Messiah which Jesus' earlier saying called for."

Verse 22

καὶ φέρουσιν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸν Γολγοθᾶν τόπον, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεύμενον Κρανίου Τόπος.

φέρω bring, carry, bear, lead

τοπος, ου m place

μεθερμηνεῶ translate

κρανιον, ου n skull

"The origin of the name is unknown: the nineteenth-century identification of 'Gordon's Calvary' north of the city assumed that it was a hill which was so named because it looked like a skull, but it is at least as likely that the name derived from its use as a place of execution and burial." France.

Verse 23

καὶ ἐδίδουν αὐτῷ ἐσμυρνισμένον οἶνον, ὃς δὲ οὐκ ἔλαβεν.

ἐδίδουν Verb, imperf act indic, 1 s & 3 pl

δίδωμι

ἐσμυρνισμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc &

n nom/acc s σμυρνίζω flavour with

myrrh

οἶνος, ου m wine

ἔλαβεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s λαμβανῶ

"It was a Jewish custom, based on Prov 31:6, to give wine drugged with myrrh to those who were about to be executed, in order to dull their senses. His refusal to drink may be explained as due to his vow recorded in 14:25. Another motive was probably also present – the will to avoid nothing of the cup which his Father had given him." Cranfield. France comments that if this was a drink given to dull pain then, "despite the unmarked change of subject, we are to understand here the action of sympathisers." He suggests it may have been offered by the sympathetic women of Jerusalem mentioned in Lk 23:27-31.

Verse 24

καὶ σταυροῦσιν αὐτὸν καὶ διαμερίζονται τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ, βάλλοντες κληρὸν ἐπ' αὐτὰ τίς τί ἄρη.

σταυροῶ see v.20

διαμερίζω divide, distribute

ἱματιον, ου n see v.20

βάλλω throw, throw down

κληρὸς, ου m lot (of something thrown or drawn to reach a decision)

ἄρη see v.21

"It was customary for the condemned to be crucified naked, and his clothes were a recognised perquisite of his executioners. The words are reminiscent of Ps 22:18." Cranfield.

Verse 25

Ἦν δὲ ὥρα τρίτη καὶ ἐσταύρωσαν αὐτόν.

ὥρα, ας f hour, period of time

τρίτος, η, ου third

I.e. about 9 a.m. France comments, "Mark's abruptly paratactic summary introduces the first of a series of specific time markers into the crucifixion story, which have the effect of dividing it into three three-hour periods."

France comments on the difficulty of harmonising the synoptic chronology with John's assertion that when Pilate passed sentence on Jesus ὥρα ὡς ἕκτη (Jn 19:14). A few MSS read ὥρα ἕκτη in this verse – an obvious attempt at harmonisation.

Verse 26

καὶ ἦν ἡ ἐπιγραφή τῆς αἰτίας αὐτοῦ ἐπιγεγραμμένη· Ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.

ἐπιγραφή, ης f inscription, superscription

αἰτία, ας f reason, accusation

ἐπιγεγραμμένη Verb, perf pass ptc, f nom s

ἐπιγραφῶ write on or in

"It was the custom of the Romans to display a notice indicating the crime for which the person was being executed." Cranfield. Normally, such a notice was "tied round their neck or carried before them on the way to execution, and while there is no evidence outside the NT for this placard being attached to the cross there is nothing implausible in this, since the writing was intended to be seen as widely as possible." France.

Verse 27

καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ σταυροῦσιν δύο ληστὰς, ἓνα ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ ἓνα ἐξ ἐωνύμων αὐτοῦ.

δύο gen & acc δύο dat δυσὶν two
ληστής, ου m robber, insurrectionist

Cf. the note on v. 7.

εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἓνος, μιας, ἓνος one
δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξιά right hand
ἐωνυμός, ον left (hand side)

"ἓνα ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ ἓνα ἐξ ἐωνύμων αὐτοῦ is a cumbersome way to say 'between', and Mark probably expects his reader to remember the request of James and John to sit at Jesus' right and left in his glory (10:37, 40). If so, there is scope for ironical reflection of the sort of δόξα Jesus now enjoys and on the quality of those who share it with him, and also perhaps on the fact that now the time has come James and John are not there to fulfil their boast of 10:39." France.

Verse 28

"καὶ ἐπληρώθη ἡ γραφή ἢ λεγούσα· Καὶ μετὰ ἄνομων ἐλογίσθη is added in many Greek MSS., and in lat syr^p bo (a few MSS.), but it is not in ⲛ A B C D k sy^d sa bo (most MSS.), and should not be read." Cranfield. The words, which occur only in comparatively late witnesses, would seem to be a gloss reflecting Lk 22:37.

Verse 29

Καὶ οἱ παραπορευόμενοι ἐβλασφήμουν αὐτὸν κινῶντες τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν καὶ λέγοντες· Οὐὰ ὁ καταλύων τὸν ναὸν καὶ οἰκοδομῶν ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις,

παραπορευομαι pass by

βλασφημεῶ speak against, slander, insult

In the more general sense of verbal abuse.

κινεῶ move, shake

κεφαλή, ης f head

οὐὰ Aha! Ah!

Cf. Lam 2:15; Jer 18:16; Ps 22:7.

καταλύω destroy, tear down

ναός, ου m temple

οικοδομεῶ build, build up

τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three

Verse 30

σῶσον σεαυτὸν καταβάς ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ.

σῶσον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s σωζω
save, rescue

σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself
καταβαινω come or go down, descend

Verse 31

ὁμοίως καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς ἐμπαίζοντες πρὸς
ἀλλήλους μετὰ τῶν γραμματέων ἔλεγον·
Ἄλλους ἔσωσεν, ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται σῶσαι·

ὁμοίως likewise, in the same way
ἐμπαίζω ridicule, make fun of

The same verb used of the Roman soldiers in
v. 20.

ἀλλήλων, οἰς, οὐς reciprocal pronoun one
another

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/herself, itself
δυναμαι can, be able to

"It is precisely because he does not come down from the cross that the mockery will prove in time to have missed the mark. If he had saved himself, he could not have saved others. Mark's readers may well be reminded of Jesus' own paradoxical words about losing one's ψυχή in order to save (σῶζω) it (8:35)." France. Here also, perhaps even here especially, he is the Lord of Glory. No one took his life from him, he laid it down (John 10:17,18).

Verse 32

ὁ χριστὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ καταβάτω νῦν
ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἵνα ἴδωμεν καὶ πιστεύσωμεν.
καὶ οἱ συνεσταυρωμένοι σὺν αὐτῷ ὠνειδίζουν
αὐτόν.

καταβάτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s
καταβαινω

ἴδωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl ὄραω see
πιστευω believe (in), have faith (in)

"Cf. Jn 6:30; also Mk 8:11f. It was the same demand for a σημειον, a compelling proof, that Jesus had all along had to refuse. It had to be refused now, because the world's salvation depended on his staying on the cross and drinking the cup his Father had given him to the dregs. But, even apart from that reason, to give them in their unbelief the sort of 'seeing' they were demanding would have been to make impossible a real 'believing'. See on 4:11f." Cranfield.

συνεσταυρωμένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom
pl συσταυροομαι be crucified together
(with someone else)

ὠνειδίζω reproach, insult, abuse

"The mockery of all three groups is expressed in the imperfect tense, suggesting that it may have gone on for some time." France.

Verses 33-39

France comments, "In the previous section Jesus has been the passive object of crucifixion and mockery. Now as the passion narrative reaches its climax in his death, while the themes of mockery and perhaps cruelty continue in vv. 35-36, they are overshadowed by the renewed focus on Jesus himself. The unnatural darkness tells us that this is a crucifixion unlike any other, and prepares us to hear Jesus' dreadful last shout from the cross, and then to witness the striking manner in which he died. His death is as extraordinary as his life, and its far-reaching implications are underlined by the physical symbol of the tearing of the temple curtain and by the astonished declaration of the centurion, whose use of the title υἱὸς θεοῦ rounds off the revelation of the true significance of Jesus which began in Mark's introductory statement in 1:1. The title has come to the surface at several points in the narrative, but this is the first time it has been uttered with conviction (as opposed to the High Priest's scepticism, 14:61) by a human witness. The identity of that witness, a pagan soldier without the benefit either of Jewish theological education or of having been a disciple of Jesus, fits well with Mark's persistent theme of the inability of either the Jewish leadership or even Jesus' own disciples to recognise who he is, and prompts Mark's readers to reflect that what has now taken place is to be the basis for good news εἰς πάντα αἰ ἔθνη (13:10), εἰς ὅλον τὸν κόσμον (14:9).

"In v. 39, then, Mark's account of the hapless and humiliating death of Jesus unexpectedly reaches a triumphant christological climax. But this seems the more incongruous in that this final scene is dominated not by a shout of triumph but by what sounds like a cry of despair. Mark has chosen to record as Jesus' last words (though not the last words about Jesus) not a confident address to God as Ἀββᾶ but a tortured cry of abandonment. Perhaps he knew no tradition of other less devastating words from the cross such as Luke and John record. But in recording this last utterance he has set up the supreme paradox of his paradoxical story. The two verses 34 and 39 thus create the two poles of a mind-stretching antinomy, which Mark leaves unresolved for his readers to work at. Nor will he offer much help with its resolution in the rest of the narrative: the message that the crucified Jesus is alive again (16:6-7) will indeed assure us that all is now well, that whatever was the reality underlying Jesus' cry of despair was not the end of the story. But that cry in itself remains unexplained, unless it be by reflection back over a narrative in which Jesus' death has been repeatedly declared to be the goal of his ministry, in which Scripture must be fulfilled, and the purpose of which has been hinted at in tantalisingly brief statements about a ransom for many (10:45) and about the blood of the covenant (14:24). There are raw materials here for constructing a theological understanding of Jesus' death within which the stark words of v. 34 may find a place, but Mark gives us no help in constructing it. His theology of the cross remains expressed in paradox."

Verse 33

Καὶ γενομένης ὥρας ἕκτης σκότος ἐγένετο ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν γῆν ἕως ὥρας ἐνάτης.

ὥρα, ας f see v.25

ἕκτος, η, ον sixth

σκοτος, ους n darkness

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all

γῆ, γης f earth, land

ἐνατος, η, ον ninth

I.e. from noon until 3 p.m. France comments, "Darkness during the day is a recognised mark of God's displeasure and judgment (Dt 28:29; Am 8:9; Je 15:9, and cf. on 13:24 above for other such 'cosmic' judgment language in Is 13:10 etc.), and the supreme example of that phenomenon in the OT, the darkness over Egypt which was the penultimate plague at the time of the first Passover (Ex 10:21-23), is echoed in Mark's language (LXX Ex. 10:22: ἐγένετο σκότος ... ἐτι πᾶσαν γῆν Αἰγύπτου). That parallel suggests what is in any case more probable, that γῆ is here to be understood in its more limited sense of the land of Judaea rather than of a worldwide darkness." France.

Verse 34

καὶ τῇ ἐνάτῃ ὥρᾳ ἐβόησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς φωνῇ μεγάλῃ· Ἐλωὶ ἔλωϊ λεμὰ σαβαχθάνι; ὃ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον Ὁ θεός μου ὁ θεός μου, εἰς τί ἐγκατέλιπές με;

βοᾶω call, cry out, shout

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

"In v. 37, even at the moment of Jesus' death, he will again speak of φωνῇ μεγάλῃ. Jesus is not going out with a wimper but in full possession of his faculties. The loudness of the cry also serves to underline the depth of the emotion it expresses." France.

ελωι Aramaic word ελωι My God

λεμα (Aramaic word) why?

σαβαχθανι (Aramaic word) you have forsaken me

μεθερμηνευω translate

ἐγκατέλιπες Verb, aor act indic, 2 s

ἐγκαταλειπω forsake, abandon

France comments, "The variety of readings of the Hebrew/Aramaic text of Ps 22:1 quoted in both Matthew and Mark leaves room for considerable doubt on which form Mark used and what Hebrew/Aramaic words he was transliterating; the κ text printed in UBS⁴/NA²⁷ reflects a general agreement that Mark's quotation is intended to be in Aramaic, and that 'Hebraising' readings are due to assimilation to Matthew (though Matthew's ἡλί, often taken to be Hebrew, is in fact the form found in the extant targum of Ps 22:1)... In the Greek rendering it is more likely that the word order ἐγκατέλιπές με, which conforms to LXX Ps 21[22]:2[1], would be altered to agree with Matthew's order με ἐγκατέλιπες than the other way round. The substitution of ὠνειδισιάς με in some Western texts may be an attempt to avoid the theological embarrassment of Jesus' desertion by God."

Cf. Ps 22:1. "Though repeated naturally in Aramaic in the earliest Church, the cry was probably originally uttered in Hebrew; for the Hebrew *eli eli* would be more easily mistaken for the name of the prophet... The cry is to be understood in the light of 14:36; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13. The burden of the world's sin, his complete self-identification with sinners, involved not merely a felt, but a real, abandonment by his Father. It is in the cry of dereliction that the full horror of man's sin stands revealed. But the cry also marks the lowest depth of the hiddenness of the Son of God – and so the triumphant *τετελεσται* of Jn 19:30 is, paradoxically, its true interpretation. When this depth had been reached, the victory had been won." Cranfield.
France comments, "It is of course true that Ps. 22, having begun on a note of despair, concludes twenty verses later in hope and thanksgiving, but Jesus echoed not the latter part of the psalm but its opening, and to read into these few tortured words an exegesis of the whole psalm is to turn upside down the effect which Mark has created by this powerful and enigmatic cry of agony. Six hours after he was placed on the cross, and after three hours of darkness, Jesus felt abandoned by God."

Verse 35

καί τινες τῶν παρεστηκότων ἀκούσαντες ἔλεγον· Ἴδε Ἡλίαν φωνεῖ.

παρεστηκότων Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s
παριστημι and παριστανω stand
before/by

Ἡλιας, ου m Elijah
φωνεω call, call out

Verse 36

δραμῶν δέ τις καὶ γεμίσας σπόγγον ὄξους περιθεῖς καλάμῳ ἐπότιζεν αὐτόν, λέγων· Ἄφετε ἴδωμεν εἰ ἔρχεται Ἡλίας καθελεῖν αὐτόν.

δραμων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s τρεχω
run

γεμιζω fill

σπογγος, ου m sponge

ὄξος, ους n sour wine

περιθεῖς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

περιτιθημι put on

καλαμος, ου m reed, rod, cane

ποτιζω give to drink

"The word ὄξος here, together with ποτιζω, echoes LXX Ps 68[69]:22[21], which, as we have noted above regarding v. 23, speaks of a hostile act and mentions poison in parallel to the ὄξος. If, as his wording suggests, Mark intended such an allusion here (though not in v. 23), it seems that under the influence of the psalm passage he is putting a more sinister construction on what was in itself a harmless and even kindly act, though done in a context of mockery. He does not tell us at this time whether Jesus accepted the offer, though the imperfect ἐπότιζεν might perhaps be read like the ἐδίδου of v. 23 as conative, implying that the attempt was unsuccessful." France.

ἀφιημι leave

ἴδωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl ὁραω see

'let him alone; let us see ...'

καθελεῖν Verb, aor act infin καθαιρω take
down

Verse 37

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀφείς φωνὴν μεγάλην ἐξέπνευσεν.

ἀφείς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἀφιημι

Here 'let [out]', i.e. 'having uttered'

ἐξέπνευσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἐκπνεω
expire, die

Of the content of the cry, Mark says nothing. France, however, comments, "The recognition in Jesus of a υἱὸς θεοῦ would follow more naturally from a 'noble' or peaceful death than from one in unrelieved depression, which was surely familiar enough to a centurion used to officiating at crucifixions."

Verse 38

καὶ τὸ καταπέτασμα τοῦ ναοῦ ἐσχίσθη εἰς δύο ἀπ' ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω.

καταπετασμα, τος n curtain

ναος, ου m temple, sanctuary, inner part
of Jewish Temple

Cf. Heb 6:19; 9:3; 10:20.

ἐσχίσθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s σχίζω
split, tear, separate

δύο gen & acc δύο dat δυσιν two

ἄνωθεν from above

κάτω down, below

The death of Jesus opened the way into the presence of God. France refers to the tearing of the curtain as a 'divine riposte' to the mockery of the chief priests in vv 31-32, mockery they add to the taunts of the crowd concerning the supposed claim of Jesus that he would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days. The destruction of the temple has begun and the creation of the 'new and living way' will follow.

Verse 39

ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ κεντυρίων ὁ παρεστηκὼς ἐξ ἐναντίας αὐτοῦ ὅτι οὕτως ἐξέπνευσεν εἶπεν· Ἀληθῶς οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος υἱὸς θεοῦ ἦν.

ἰδὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω

κεντυριων, ωνος m centurion

παρεστηκως Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s

παριστημι see v.35

ἐναντιος, α, ον against, contrary to; ἐξ ἐ. opposite

οὕτως and οὕτω οὗτος thus, in this way

Cranfield states that "There is strong textual evidence for the inclusion of κράζας before ἐξέπνευσεν, and it should perhaps be read." κράζας is included in the majority of witnesses but omitted from the Alexandrian. France comments, "It is perhaps marginally more likely that κράζας was added (perhaps under the influence of Mt 27:50) because it was felt that an original οὕτως needed to be clarified, and that οὕτως then dropped out of a few texts (but not the majority) because the phrase had become too cumbersome."

ἐξέπνευσεν see v.37

ἀληθως adv truly, in truth

"What exactly *the centurion* meant by υἱὸς θεοῦ we cannot be sure. Quite possibly he used the term in a Gentile sense – 'demi-god', 'hero'. If so, then this exclamation, like the use of Βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων in vv.9, 12, 18 26, and of ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ Βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ in v.32, and the assertion Ἄλλους ἐσωσεν in v.31, is an unwitting proclamation of the truth. For *Mark* it is clearly important that at this point, whether intentionally or unintentionally, the truth was publicly declared. A theme of the whole gospel (see on 1:1) here comes to its triumphant conclusion." Cranfield.

Verses 40-41

France argues that these verses are better linked with what follows than what precedes – they are integral to the burial narratives and resurrection appearances. On the women France comments, "The appearance at this point in Mark's narrative of a group of women, who will be the narrative focus of the rest of the story, marks a remarkable shift in the gospel's emphasis. The reader of Mark's gospel alone would have concluded up to this point that the movement which Jesus began was an all-male movement. There had been no mention of supporting women as in Lk 8:2-3, nor of specific women associates like Martha and Mary (Lk 10:38-42). Women have appeared in Mark's narrative as the recipients of Jesus' ministry of deliverance, but the nearest we have seen to a woman follower has been the woman who anointed Jesus in 14:3-9, and she was an anonymous figure who featured only in that one incident. It is only at this point, when all Jesus' male followers (except the enigmatic Joseph of Arimathea, if he is to be reckoned as a supporter) have fallen by the wayside, that Mark lets us know that all the time there has been a female element to Jesus' entourage, who are now ready to pick up where the men have left off. The three women named are representative of a wider circle of female followers (γυναῖκες ... ἐν αἰς ...) whose close association with the disciple group is marked by the verbs ἀκολουθεῖω and διακονέω, even though the term μαθητής has been reserved only for the (all-male) Twelve; and in addition there is a wider circle of ἄλλαι πολλαί who have been part of the group coming south to Jerusalem. Only now, when the women come to the centre of the stage for the closing phase of the narrative, does Mark reveal the mixed nature of Jesus' entourage in the Galilean period..

"The important role played by these women in the closing stages of Mark's narrative (and indeed their earlier role in Galilee, now for the first time revealed) is a pointer to something new in the movement Jesus has begun which contrasts strongly with the male domination of the society of his (and Mark's) time. When all the male disciples have deserted, the women are still there faithful to the last. And it will be to them first that the message of the resurrection is entrusted. In a society which gave no legal status to the testimony of women ... everything will nevertheless come to depend on their witness to what they have seen and heard."

Verse 40

Ἦσαν δὲ καὶ γυναῖκες ἀπὸ μακρόθεν θεωροῦσαι, ἐν αἷς καὶ Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ καὶ Μαρία ἡ Ἰακώβου τοῦ μικροῦ καὶ Ἰωσήτος μήτηρ καὶ Σαλώμη,

γυνη, αικος f woman
μακροθεν adv far off, at/from a distance
θεωρω see, watch, observe

Verse 41

αἱ ὅτε ἦν ἐν τῇ Γαλιλαίᾳ ἠκολούθουν αὐτῷ καὶ δηκόνουν αὐτῷ, καὶ ἄλλαι πολλαὶ αἱ συναναβᾶσαι αὐτῷ εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα.

ὅτε conj when
ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany
διακονεω serve, wait on, care for

Cf. Lk 8:3.

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
συναναβᾶσαι Verb, aor act ptc, f nom pl
συναναβαινω come up together with

"This information enables us to fill in the background to the account of Jesus' arrival at Jerusalem in 11:1-10, particularly the presence of ὄχλος ἰκανός (10:46) of Galileans who came up with Jesus from Jericho and who were προάγοντες καὶ ἀκολουθοῦντες as they approached the city, shouting their support for Jesus as the coming king (11:8-10). Their enthusiasm has survived sufficiently to keep them even at this gruesome scene, standing apart from the mocking citizens of Jerusalem." France.

Verse 42

Cf. Mt 27:57-61; Lk 23:50-56. Those crucified were normally either left to decompose on the cross, taken down and left in a heap for scavengers to dispose of or were buried unceremoniously in a mass grave. France comments, "Honourable burial in a proper rock tomb was highly unlikely, and in this case it depended on the goodwill of a wealthy and influential member of the Sanhedrin, who apparently dissented from his colleagues' verdict on Jesus and used his social position to gain permission for an individual burial. Joseph of Arimathea thus enters the Christian tradition not simply as a well-disposed outsider like Simon of Cyrene or the centurion, but as at least a potential disciple (see below for the significance of the description προσδεχόμενος τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ), and the fact that Mark can introduce him in this commendatory way suggests that he may have remained in good standing with the church within which Mark obtained his information."

Verse 42

Καὶ ἤδη ὀψίας γενομένης, ἐπεὶ ἦν παρασκευή, ὃ ἐστὶν προσάββατον,

ἤδη adv now, already
ὀψια, ας f evening

"For the wide range of times to which ὀψίας γενομένης may apply, see on 6:47; 14:17. If the death of Jesus took place soon after 3 pm (see on v. 37), Joseph's initiative would fit within the period of roughly three hours between that and sunset, since the object of his request is to have the body buried before the sabbath begins." France.

ἐπεὶ since, because
παρασκευη, ης f day of preparation (before a sacred day)
προσαββατον, ου n the day before the Sabbath, Friday

Verse 43

ἐλθὼν Ἰωσήφ ὁ ἀπὸ Ἀριμαθαίας εὐσχήμων βουλευτής, ὃς καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν προσδεχόμενος τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ, τολμήσας εἰσῆλθεν πρὸς τὸν Πιλάτον καὶ ἠτήσατο τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ.

εὐσχημων, ον gen ονος respected, of high standing

βουλευτης, ου m council member (of the Sanhedrin)

προσδεχομαι wait for, expect

Cf. Lk 2:25.

τολμαω dare, be brave

'plucked up courage and ...'

αἰτεω ask; midd ask for oneself, request
σωμα, τος n body

"Whatever the impression we may have gained from the last few chapters, not everyone in Jerusalem, and indeed not everyone in the Sanhedrin, had decided against Jesus." France.

Verse 44

ὁ δὲ Πιλάτος ἐθαύμασεν εἰ ἤδη τέθνηκεν, καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τὸν κεντυρίωνα ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτὸν εἰ πάλαι ἀπέθανεν·

θαυμαζω wonder, be amazed

τέθνηκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s θνησκω die; perf be dead

προσκαλεσάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom s προσκαλεομαι call to oneself, summon

ἐπερωταω ask, interrogate, question

παλαι adv long ago, all this time

Some MSS seek to smooth out Mark's inelegant idiom εἰ πάλαι by substituting εἰ ἤδη – as already used in the previous clause.

ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s ἀποθνησκω die

I.e. he asked how long ago Jesus had died.

Verse 45

καὶ γνοὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ κεντυρίωνος ἐδώρησατο τὸ πτώμα τῷ Ἰωσήφ.

γνοὺς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s γινωσκω
 ἐδώρησατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
 δωρομαι give
 πτώμα, τος n body, corpse

Verse 46

καὶ ἀγοράσας σινδὸνα καθελῶν αὐτὸν ἐνείλησεν τῇ σινδόνι καὶ ἔθηκεν αὐτὸν ἐν μνημείῳ ὃ ἦν λελατομημένον ἐκ πέτρας, καὶ προσεκύλισεν λίθον ἐπὶ τὴν θύραν τοῦ μνημείου.

"Apart from the need to 'take Jesus down' from the cross, this verse describes a normal, respectful if hurried burial." France.

ἀγοράζω buy, redeem
 σινδων, ονος f linen cloth (for clothing or burial)
 καθελων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s
 καθαιρω see v.36
 ἐνείλησεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἐνείλω
 wrap in
 ἔθηκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s τιθημι place
 μνημειον, ου n grave, tomb
 λελατομημένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n nom/acc s λατομεω cut, hew (of rock)
 πετρα, ας f rock, solid rock

I.e. probably a substantial family tomb, with space for several bodies. Matthew says it was Joseph's own.

προσκυλιω roll against or to
 λιθος, ου m stone
 θυρα, ας f door, gate

Verse 47

ἡ δὲ Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ καὶ Μαρία ἡ Ἰωσήτος ἐθεώρουν ποῦ τέθειται.

θεωρεω see, watch, observe, notice
 ποῦ interrogative adverb where

"Two of the women who were introduced as witnesses of Jesus' death are now also witnesses of his burial... They were there not just to watch, however, but so as to know where to return to after the sabbath." France.