

WEEK NINE

Prayer: Lord, open now my heart to hear and through your Word to me draw near. Let me your Word e'er pure retain. Let me your child and heir remain. Amen.

Day 1: Mark 14:53-72

1. Try to recall a recent incident when someone accused you of something you didn't do. What was it? How did you feel? Notice how Jesus reacted when people were accusing Him.
2. In the Jewish court, in order for an accusation to count, two people had to give identical testimony. What was the dilemma for the high priest in this court?
3. Who did Jesus admit to being?
4. What "crime" did the high priest believe this made Jesus guilty of?
5. Do you remember a time you were caught saying/doing something embarrassing? Why was Peter's situation worse?
6. Explain Peter's attitude after the rooster crowed. Is this good or bad?

Day 2: Mark 15:1-15

1. Do you think the chief priests, etc., reached their decision *after* Jesus' testimony, or before?
2. The reason they handed Jesus over to Pontius Pilate was to have Jesus put to death. When the Roman Empire assumed control over Judea, the Jewish ruling authorities lost the right to exercise the death penalty. (See John 18:31)
3. Why was Pilate amazed? Is this how people typically behave when they are being accused? When would Jesus be wrongly accused for the sins of the whole world?
4. Pilate knew the real reason the Jewish leaders handed Jesus over to him. What was it? Why might they have felt this way about Jesus?
5. Thinking of Jesus being sent away to be crucified, can we make a comparison between us and Barabbas?

Day 3: Mark 15:16-32

1. Describe the different ways that the soldiers made fun of Jesus.
2. Other than merely scorning Jesus, what functional (and cruel) purpose was there to making fun of someone already condemned to death?
3. When the chief priests mocked Jesus, is it possible their motive might have been different from the soldiers' motive? What likely was their motive?
4. Notice, Jesus refused to drink the wine mixed with myrrh. This was intended to numb the pain. But Jesus refused it. Why do you think? What does it show about Jesus if they cast lots (rolled dice) for his clothes?

Day 4: Mark 15:33-47

1. What important reality do Jesus' words reveal as He hung on the cross?
2. What mistaken notion did people have about Jesus words?
3. Notice, Jesus doesn't die with a whimper. He charges into death with a shout.
4. The curtain in the temple was a symbol of separation from God. No one except the high priest was allowed to enter this most holy place. But now, with sins atoned for, our sins no longer separate us from God. We have free access to His holy place.
5. List some of the names of the friends of Jesus who were there at His death.
6. Why was it "bold" for Joseph of Arimathea to ask for the body of Jesus?
7. What does this whole process of removing the body, wrapping it, etc. confirm about Jesus?

Day 5: Mark 16:1-20

1. Try to imagine you are with the two Marys and Salome when you looked into the tomb. What are you feeling?
2. Do you think the ladies understood right away what had happened? Why or why not?
3. If your translation of the Bible indicates that verses 9-20 were not included in the earliest manuscripts of the Bible, do not let this trouble you. After Jesus ascended into heaven, the twelve apostles were still around to oversee the accurate and faithful transmission of God's truth to future generations, including the compilation of the Holy Scriptures. (See John 14:25-26; 16:12-15; Ephesians 2:19-20; 1 Peter 1:16; 1 John 1:1-4)
4. Verses 9-20 give us a straightforward record of those to whom Jesus appeared. Who were they?
5. Can you find "the Great Commission" in Mark 16?
6. In the early church miracles often accompanied the proclamation of the gospel. This helped verify their message in people's eyes. Why do you think we don't need to do miracles now?

Blessing: The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. (Ps 121:8)

Final Thoughts: In this week's readings we observe Jesus' willingness to suffer and die for us. As the hymn title says: The Lamb goes uncomplaining forth! We also remember the joy of Jesus' resurrection. He made the declaration: Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved! May Christ keep us always in the faith to our salvation.