

MARK

“Isaiah the prophet stated ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’” (from Isaiah 40:3) (Mark 1:2-3)

“John, the Baptist, proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins stating ‘after me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’ ... Jesus came to be baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. A voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son.” (Mark 1:4; 7-11)

Miracles Prove Jesus was the Son of God

“Jesus went into the synagogue in Capernaum on the Sabbath and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, ‘What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are — the Holy One of God!’ ‘Be quiet!’ said Jesus sternly. ‘Come out of him!’ The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, ‘What is this? A new teaching — and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him.’ News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.” (Mark 1:21-28)

Comment: Spirit beings, though evil, knew Him. The people were amazed at His teachings but religious leaders refused to acknowledge Him.

“Simon's (Peter) mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. So, he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.” (Mark 1:30-31)

“People brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.” (Mark 1:32-34)

“A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, ‘If you are willing, you can make me clean.’ Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be clean!’ Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.” (Mark 1:40-42)

“Jesus again entered Capernaum; So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, ‘Son, your sins are forgiven.’ Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ‘Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?’ Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, ‘Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has

authority on earth to forgive sins.’ ... He said to the paralytic, ‘I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.’ He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!" (Mark 2:1-12)

Comment: The word Jesus taught was the Good News – Forgiveness of sin is near. Therefore, repent and get prepared for the Messiah.

“A ruler of the synagogue named Jairus pleaded earnestly with Jesus to heal his dying daughter. When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. He went in and said to them, ‘Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep.’ But they laughed at him. He took the little girl by the hand and said to her ‘Little girl, I say to you, get up!’ Immediately the girl stood up and walked around. (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished” (Mark 5:22-23; 38-43)

“A large crowd followed Him where ever He went, so he began teaching them many things. Time passed and it grew late in a remote place without any food. Therefore, Jesus told His disciples ‘You give them something to eat.’ The disciples were out of time, little money and did not see that Jesus could take five loaves of bread and two fish and feed five thousand – but He did.” (Mark 6:34-38)

“Again, another large crowd gathered. Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, ‘I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance.’ His disciples answered, ‘But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?’ They had a few small fish as well; he gave thanks for them also and told the disciples to distribute them. The people ate and were satisfied.” (Mark 8:1-8)

“They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. Jesus did and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.” (Mark 8:22-26)

Point of the Miracles

Jesus healed many but not all. His healing occurred with many witnesses who were amazed at His power and authority. His feeding the crowd involved thousand not just the few who were healed. They attributed these miracles to God, but their leaders, the Pharisees, scribes and teachers did not. These leaders desired to retain power and control even to the point attributing God’s power to Satan. To the populous it was becoming clear that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. The leaders were comfortable in their traditions and to these elite rabbis, the Messiah could not have come from such a lowly status in life if he was to be their king.

Kingdom of Heaven

“He taught by parables saying ‘A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times.’” (Mark 4:2-8)

Explanation - The farmer sows the word. Some people hear it but Satan comes and quickly takes it away Others at first receive it with joy, but since they have no root, they last only a short time. Still others, hear the word but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things

come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. While others hear the word, accept it, and produce—thirty, sixty or even a hundred times more. (from Mark 4:14-20)

“A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain — first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come. It is also like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade.” (Mark 4:26-32)

Comment: The seed is the good news that Jesus’ atoning sacrifice and resurrection will provide - the forgiveness of sins to those who are willing to listen to His message and put their trust in Him by obeying His teachings of being buried into Christ’s death (blood).

“A man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. He had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. When he saw Jesus He shouted at the top of his voice, ‘What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most-High God? Swear to God that you won’t torture me!’ For Jesus had said to him, ‘Come out of this man, you evil spirit!’ ‘What is your name?’ Legion he replied. they begged Jesus to send them among the herd of pigs. As a result, the pigs rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. The people went out to see what had happened. When they saw the demon possessed man sitting, dressed and in his right mind; they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man — and told about the pigs as well. As Jesus was getting into the boat, the demon-possessed man begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, ‘Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.’ So, the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.” (Mark 5:2-20)

Point of the Parables about the Kingdom

God taught His people through the Mosaic Covenant, that He would bring complete forgiveness through a New Covenant. This New Covenant would come through His Son, Jesus of Nazareth. It would include the promise of Eternal Life to everyone, including Gentiles, in any nation who put their trust in Him through obedience.

Convincing and Preparing His Disciples

“Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits. They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.” (Mark 6:7; 12-13)

Comment: Not only did Jesus have the power to heal, He had the power to give others the power to heal when He was not nearby.

“Jesus told His disciples ‘the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.’” (Mark 8:31)

“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for

his soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.” (Mark 8:34-38)

Comment: One must cease focusing on the pleasures of life and concentrate on the spiritual.

“I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.” (Mark 9:1)

“After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. A cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!" Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.” (Mark 9:2-8)

To settle an argument among His disciples about rank and position Jesus said “If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.” (Mark 9:35)

Comment: All those in Christ, His Church, are servants.

“Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, ‘Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?’ ‘What did Moses command you?’ he replied. They said, ‘Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.’ ‘It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law,’ Jesus replied. ‘But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female. For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. So, they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate.’ When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. He answered, ‘Anyone who divorces (the Greek word *apoluo*) his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery.’” (Mark 10:2-12)

Comment: A wife is still married when she is sent or put away without a certificate of divorcement – this is the meaning of the Greek word *apoluo*. If she marries without a certificate, she breaks her marriage covenant with the husband who sent her away as she is sent away not divorced. Therefore, she is an adulteress. With a certificate, the wife is no longer married and thus free to remarry therefore, not an adulteress as there is no marriage covenant to break. The Pharisees were very familiar with this as recorded in Deuteronomy 24. thebiblewayonline.com/html/MarriageDivorce.html

“A man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. ‘Good teacher,’ he asked, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ I have kept The Law since I was a boy.’ One thing you lack,’ he said. ‘Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.’ At this, the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.” (Mark 10:17-22)

Comment: He relied on his own wealth thus not willing to forgo the pleasures of life rather than God's wealth.

“James and John sons of Zebedee thinking that Jesus would establish an earthly kingdom asked ‘Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.’ Jesus replied that it was not up to Him but if they wanted to be great in the kingdom he said ‘You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’” (Mark 10:37-45)

“As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, ‘Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. Then Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted Hosanna!’ ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ‘Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!’ ‘Hosanna in the highest!’” (Mark 11:1-10)

“As he was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!’ ‘Do you see all these great buildings?’ replied Jesus. ‘Not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down.’ As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, ‘Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?’ ‘Watch out that no one deceives you. Many will come in my name, claiming, I am he, and will deceive many. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them.’” (Mark 13:1-9) “But when will they happen? ‘When you see ‘the abomination that causes desolation’ standing where it does not belong — let the reader understand — then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.’” (Mark 13:14-15)

Comment: There is much speculation on what the abomination was. But whatever it was the Jews knew that it was not supposed to be there, it was offensive to them and against their worship. Then the disciples would know that it was time to depart from Jerusalem as the Temple was about to be destroyed. (See Daniel 9:27)

“But in those days, following that distress, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens. Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. “Therefore, keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back — whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If

he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'" (Mark 13:24-37)

Comment: Those present were told that some would see the destruction of their revered Temple but the news Jesus brought was the promised Good News, the forgiveness of sin and salvation by His atoning sacrifice. It would stand forever. But the time is coming when the Son of Man will return and gather those who chose salvation by trust and obedience to His Word.

Comment: Jesus had selected men to proclaim the Good News that salvation and forgiveness of sin not available under the Old Covenant but would be made available in the New Covenant following His atoning sacrifice. They believed that Jesus was the Messiah who was to establish an earthly kingdom as their beloved King David had done. Following Christ's resurrection, appearances and His ascension back to Heaven, which they personally witnessed, they were finally willing to give their lives for Him when and if it became necessary. Their testimony and righteous lives make it possible for all who were not witnesses to believe, trust and obey.

The Plotting Pharisees

"Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. The Pharisees asked of themselves will He heal on the Sabbath? So, Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, 'Stand up in front of everyone.' Then Jesus asked them, 'Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?' But they remained silent. He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus." (Mark 3:1-6)

"Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered to hear him teach or perform a miracle. The teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, 'He is possessed by Beelzebub! By the prince of demons, he is driving out demons.' Jesus asked 'How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house. I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin.'" (Mark 3:20-29)

Comment: Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit appears to be attributing the Holy Spirit's work and power to Satan.

"The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were 'unclean,' that is, unwashed. (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. They asked 'Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with 'unclean' hands?' He replied, 'Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men. You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.' And he said to them: 'You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!' Jesus explains 'Listen to me, everyone, and

understand this. Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him unclean.'" (Mark 7:1-14)

"Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven. He sighed deeply and said, 'Why does this generation ask for a miraculous sign? I tell you the truth, no sign will be given to it.'" (Mark 8:11-12)

Comment: The Pharisees came because they were aware of His many miracles. Raising the dead, feeding thousands with so little food and healing hundreds in many areas of Judea was not enough. They wanted a miracle from God in Heaven not from someone on earth since they did not recognize Jesus as God.

"On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple area and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. And as he taught them, he said, 'Is it not written: My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.' The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.'" (Mark 11:15-18)

"They arrived again in Jerusalem, and while Jesus was walking in the temple courts, the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders came to him. 'By what authority are you doing these things?' they asked. 'And who gave you authority to do this?' Jesus replied, 'I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John's baptism — was it from heaven, or from men? Tell me!' They discussed it among themselves and said, 'If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' But if we say, 'From men' ... '(They feared the people, for everyone held that John really was a prophet.) So, they answered Jesus, 'We don't know.' Jesus said, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.'" (Mark 11:27-33)

"A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed. 'He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But the tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' So, they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.' 'What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. Haven't you read this scripture: The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes?' Then they looked for a way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them.'" (Mark 12:1-12)

"Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. They came to him and said, 'Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn't we?' But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. 'Why are you trying to trap me?' he asked. 'Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.' They brought the coin, and he asked them,

‘Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?’ ‘Caesar’s,’ they replied. Then Jesus said to them, ‘Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.’” (Mark 12:13-17)

“Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. ‘Teacher,’ they said, ‘Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children. The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third. In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too. At the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?’ Jesus replied, ‘Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God? When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. Now about the dead rising — have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!’” (Mark 12:18-27)

Comment: Marriage is an earthly union, a covenant, between man and woman which ends at death.

“One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, ‘Of all the commandments, which is the most important?’ ‘The most important one,’ answered Jesus, ‘is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.’ ‘Well said, teacher,’ the man replied. ‘You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.’ When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, ‘You are not far from the kingdom of God.’ And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.” (Mark 12:28-34)

Comment: The desire for preeminence and power creates an attitude of self-importance and arrogance. This attitude does not produce truth, rather, it prevents one from humbling himself to become an obedient servant. Every evidence presented and rejected hardens one’s heart just as happened with Pharaoh when he faced the plagues.

The Atoning Sacrifice

“On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, ‘Take; this is my body.’ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, ‘This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.’” (Mark 14:12-31)

Comment: “Blessing” is from the Greek word *eulogeías* meaning to praise, and celebrate with praises. “My body” is God in human flesh to be the atoning sacrifice.

“They went out to the Mount of Olives where Jesus said, ‘You will all fall away, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.’ Peter said to him, ‘Even though they all fall away, I will not.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Truly, I

tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.’ But he said emphatically ‘even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.’ (Mark 14:27-31) A short time later one of the servant girls of the high priest came, and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, ‘You also were with the Nazarene, Jesus.’ But he denied it, saying, ‘I neither know nor understand what you mean.’ Again, Peter denied knowing Jesus. The third time he even called down curses on himself and he swore to them, ‘I don’t know this man you’re talking about.’ Immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: ‘Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times.’ And he broke down and wept.” (Mark 14:66-72)

“Then they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, ‘Sit here while I pray.’ He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled saying ‘My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.’ Going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, ‘Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.’ Now the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.” (Mark 14:32-42)

Comment: The cup Jesus desired to be removed was not a vessel or its contents but His pending crucifixion, the cup of suffering, His atoning sacrifice to bring forgiveness of sins, salvation and eternal life to those putting their trust in Him through obedience.

“Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, ‘The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard.’ So, Judas went up to him at once and said, ‘Rabbi!’ And he kissed him. The guards laid hands on him, seized him and led Jesus to the high priest. All the chief priests and the elders and the scribes had come together seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. Therefore, the high priest asked him, ‘Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?’ Jesus said, ‘I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.’ ‘What further witnesses do we need? You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?’ They all condemned him as deserving death.” (Mark 14:44-64)

“As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole Council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. Pilate asked him, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ Jesus answered it is as you say. Pilate not finding Jesus guilty of death and perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up asked. What shall I do with the King of the Jews? They cried out again, ‘Crucify him.’ And Pilate said to them, ‘Why, what evil has he done?’ But they shouted all the more, ‘Crucify him.’ So, Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.” (Mark 15:1-15)

“The soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor’s headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. They clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. And they began to salute him, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ They were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. They led him out to Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull) to crucify him and placed on the cross the charge against Him ‘The King of the Jews.’” (Mark 15:16-26)

“Those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, ‘Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!’ Also, the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, ‘He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe.’” (Mark 15:29-32)

“Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate wondered if He was dead by this time, and summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether He was already dead. Ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. Joseph bought a linen cloth, took Him down, wrapped Him in the linen cloth and laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.” (Mark 15:43-47)

Comment: Before the Sabbath began Joseph of Arimathea requested the dead body of Jesus for burial. Roman Soldiers confirmed to Pilate that Jesus was dead. Joseph buried the body of Jesus and rolled a stone over the entrance of the tomb. Guards were posted the next day.

“When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, ‘Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?’ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. ‘Don't be alarmed,’ he said. ‘You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, ‘He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.’” (Mark 16:1-7)

Point of the Atoning Sacrifice

The Old Covenant God gave through Moses was to prepare the people for forgiveness. Every year the Jews brought to the priest an animal without blemish as their sacrifice for their sins. In the New Covenant Jesus, a sacrifice without the blemishes of sin, provided an opportunity for the forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all who heard Christ teachings, put their trust in Him by obeying His teachings and live righteously. Refer to a Roman Crucifixion, thebiblewayonline.com.

Key Points from Mark

- Jesus's miracles proved that He was Deity, the Son of God as He claimed to be.
- God's message of Salvation is Christ – His death, burial, resurrection and ascension - the atoning sacrifice.
- People so steeped in their tradition find it difficult if not impossible to accept Christ.

Question: What is the purpose of the atoning sacrifice?