

Is The Prophet Coming?

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[0 : 00] Seeking the Lord's blessing, let's turn back together to the passage that we just read in Mark's Gospel, Mark and chapter 15. And maybe we can read again from verse 33.

And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lemma sabachthani, which means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And some of the bystanders hearing it said, Behold, he is calling Elijah. And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come.

To take him down. And Jesus uttered a loud cry. And breathed his last. We're especially considering verses 35 and 36 of Mark chapter 15, where there is reference made to Elijah.

Bystander said, Behold, he is calling Elijah. Then it was also said in verse 36, Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.

[1 : 33] Amen. Now, over this weekend and forthcoming days, God willing, you will come together to remember the Lord's death. And we're brought here together under the sound of God's word here in chapter 15.

We're recorded for us as the events of his death and his crucifixion. And brought to our attention and what is engaged in remembrance of is the most important event in all of history.

The most important event that has ever occurred in the history of the entire world. We are taken to Calvary and taken to Golgotha and to think and to consider of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the most important event in all of time and all of history and all of the world. And it is the most important event in your soul, believer.

That there is nothing like this. That if the professing Christian is unmoved by this event, then there is something significantly wrong with our heart, with our mind and with our soul.

[2 : 55] Because we come to this day where the Lord was crucified for our sins. Where inflicted upon him was the just penalty of what we did wrong.

Where his suffering was great and dark. And where he willingly went to the cross for the sins of his people. When we come to these passages, when we come to these events, when we come to these moments of remembrance, we reflect and meditate deep within ourselves.

And we find ourselves in this tremendous tension. And a kind of spiritual paradox. Where we're holding together two very different things.

In one respect, there is this wonderful hope. There is this overwhelming joy. At what has been done and what has been achieved for us.

There is the reality that here we find peace. Here is our reconciliation. The reconciliation between God and man. Here is this tremendous love.

[4 : 13] That we experience. But on the other hand, we find ourselves. Considering and reflecting. Upon this deep darkness.

And what our Savior suffered. And what our redemption has cost. The depths. The trauma. The reality.

Of his grief. And his agony. And we see in one respect. How he endured this from the Father. And how he cries in this way.

Even in the words we've read together. But I want us also to reflect in this manner. In how his own agony is aggravated.

By the insults of those around him. The prophet told us long ago. That he was one who would be despised and rejected of men.

[5 : 14] And this is the picture we find of him here. Even at Calvary. Where we consider here. His agony. And we see that part of that agony.

And part of his trial. Is the cruel derision. And mocking. The vicious taunts. That are adding to his trauma.

And the reality that this derision is demonic. In nature. And part. Of the reality of his suffering. Behold.

He is calling Elijah. Wait. Let us see whether Elijah will come. To take him down. I want us just to pause here this evening.

With three headings. And first of all. There is misrepresentation. As we come here. We have read together. This solemn. Section.

[6 : 15] Of the gospels. That remind us. Of this great event. And in verse 34. We have what is referred to as. The fourth saying. Of the cross. Eli.

Eli. Lema sabachthani. This is in fact. The pivotal cry. Of the cross. This is the moment. Where. Everything. Changes. Where he is in this moment.

In the depths. Of this. Darkness. And in the cry. That he has. Here for us. Where he is able. To communicate. Two things. To us. Or where the darkness.

In fact. Is communicating. These two things. One is. The sheer. Extremity. Of his agony. Why have you forsaken me?

The pain. The isolation. His vulnerability. His vulnerability. My God.

[7 : 15] My God. But also engaged in this darkness. Is the reality. Of what this darkness represents. It's judgment.

It is God. Pouring. Out. His wrath. And into this darkness.

It occurs in verse 33. The sixth hour. Till the ninth hour. Then at the end. The silence is broken. By this cry.

My God. My God. Why have you forsaken me? The solemnity. Of the moment. Comes to.

Its climax. In the cry. Of dereliction. And then. Not long after that. In verse 37. He breathed.

[8 : 13] His last. Here is. The final moments. Here is the Lord. Drawing. To his death. And there are so many things.

Here. That hold our attention. And so much. That is significant. In terms of our faith. And the reality. Of what the gospel. Speaks to us of.

But tonight. We are. Considering. And reflecting. Upon the manner. In which this is. Responded to. In his cry. In verse 34. In the manner. Of those. Around him.

The people. Who came. To watch. The people. Who came. For the spectacle. And the entertainment. Of a crucifixion.

Some of them. Had come. From Jerusalem. Some of them. Are here. For this moment. And this time. They came. To watch. This.

[9 : 12] Others. Had come. Because. The Romans. Of course. As a deterrent. Would crucify. People. Alongside. The public. Highway. And so. Some are. Passing by.

And they stop. And they watch. And the people. Around. Are seeing. Him. Die. And take.

His last breaths. And also. Part of the scene. Around here. Are the soldiers. Who are involved. And in fact.

They are there. Guarding. Those who are being crucified. Keeping people away. And ensuring.

That the crucifixion. Is completed. And they are there. In verse 36. Those who are close enough.

To bring a sponge. With our wine. They are the ones. Close enough. To do this. They're involved.

They've led him here. They are here. Under the orders.

[10 : 06] Of Pilate. The governor. The crowd. And the scene. That is here. Represents to us. The world. Watching.

Taunting. Mocking. The Lord. Jesus Christ. In his loneliest.

And darkest. Moment. They are there. Mocking. Our saviour. The man of sorrows. Acquainted.

With grief. And their taunt here. Is brought to us. In verses 35. And 36. As to try and. Impose upon.

Jesus. That he is not saying. Eloi. But Elias. That he is not saying. My God. But that he is calling. For the prophet.

[11 : 06] And here. In the great depths. Of his sorrow. And his anguish. In this deep darkness.

They try. To misrepresent. Jesus.

And they try. Here. In this manner. To reshape. In the hearing. Of the crowd. What they understand. Jesus. Is crying.

For us. It is quite clear. Here. And it would have been. Quite obvious too. There are two entirely. Different words. Here. But they haven't come.

To listen. To Jesus. They've come. To watch him die. They've come. To continue. In their insulting. And criticizing. And mocking.

Of him. They are here. In their wickedness. And their language. Is a language. Of sarcasm. And rejection.

[12:03] You'll see. Even as we've read. Together. Through this passage. How all of these. Different elements. Connect. In verse 29. He's led. To be crucified. And those.

Who passed by. Derided him. And wagging their heads. And saying. Aha. You who would destroy. The temple. And read it. Rebuild it. In three days. Again. In verse 32.

Let the Christ. Come down. Now. From the cross. And those. Who were crucified. With him. Also. Reviled him. All around him. Is the scene. Of mocking.

Rejection. And the desire. Here. That none. In the crowd. Would take seriously. His messianic. Claims. That they are going to continue.

Exerting their influence. Their bad influence. On this crowd. By compounding. The suffering. And the pain. Of the Lord. And the rejection.

[12:59] And their insult. Of him. That even there. As he is put to death. On the cross. They won't leave him alone. Lest anybody.

Listen to him. Lest anybody. Take him seriously. This is the way. Of the world. This remains. The way.

Of the world. Still. Today. They sadly. Mock. And deride. And challenge. Any spiritual interest. You have.

But it also. Of course. Brings us. To this whole concept. Of. Messianic. Prophecy. And there is. Of course. To us.

A very clear. Reference here. To the prophecy. Of Malachi. In chapter 4. And in verse 5. Behold. I will send. Elijah. The prophet.

[13:53] Before the great. And awesome. Day of the Lord. Comes. And so. There is a sense. Here. In which. The mocking. Is a mocking. That is assaulting. Any.

Messianic. Claim. And it contains. That sense. Of rejection. And they are here. Before the Lord. Before his cross.

After this darkness. Has been interrupted. By his cry. And as he is breathing. His last breaths here. They are there. Just before he dies.

And saying to him. If you will. Where is the forerunner? Where is the prophet? Where is the one. Who was supposed to set. Everything in order for you. Before the day. Of the Lord. Where is the one. Who was the restorer. And preparer.

[14:49] Of Israel. And so. They are saying to him. As he is there. Drawing his dying breaths. That he is at the end. And that they are claiming.

That his mission. Has been a failure. And they mock him. And they deride him. And they misrepresent him. Secondly.

Is this not merciless? Is it not? The aggravated assault. Of this moment.

How in verse 36 here. They were going to give him a drink. And then they stopped for a moment. And they paused. They put the whole thing. For a pause. John tells us in chapter 19.

In verses 28 to 30. That Jesus cried. I thirst. And then they gave him. The sour wine. They put it. In a hyssop branch. And held it to his mouth.

[15:48] And after he received the sour wine. He said it is finished. John tells us. That he says. That he is thirsting. And so then. Marcus said. Someone runs. To get the sponge. With sour wine.

Putting it on a reed. And so they are going to put it up. To the cross. Put it up to his mouth. To give it to him. To drink. But before they do this. Somebody says. Hold on. Wait.

And there is this cry. Of dehydration. This cry of longing. For a little relief. But the people are saying. Let's see whether Elijah will come. And. This would have been the soldiers. That would have been involved. In giving the wine. They are involved. They are close.

And the crowd are mocking. The people are mocking Jesus. And they are saying to the soldiers. Wait. Keep clear. Make room for Elijah. Make room for Elijah.

[16:49] And it is a clear mocking. And derision. Of the Lord. Misrepresenting him. And seeking to. Portray in him. That he is cut off.

That there is no interaction. Between Jesus and heaven. No interaction. Between Jesus and the prophet. No interaction. Between Jesus and the father. That they are claiming. He is cut off. They want the world. To see. Just how cut off he is. They hold back. This little bit of mercy. This little drop. Of sour wine. It is an element of truth. He was cut off. For us. He who knew no sin. Was made sin. For us. But they are trying to go further. Than this. They are trying to make a full. Assault. And denial. On his messiahship. On his sonship. On his very identity. And they are trying to say.

[17:53] Of him. He is absolutely. Absolutely. Absolutely. Cursed. And cut off. Forever. And they are asking the crowds.

To watch and see. And to say of Jesus. There is no Elijah. There is no God. And they withhold. A little drink.

From a dying man. And his thirst. How cruel. How merciless. The terrible cry. Of dehydration. And thirst. I thirst. And they say. Wait a little. Let's laugh at him. Some more. Let's aggravate.

What is going on. Some of the Jewish teachers. Believed. And taught. That Elijah. Would come. And rescue. The righteous sufferer. And maybe this is.

[18:52] In their minds too. To display. There is no Elijah. Going to come. There is no rescue. For this man. He is going to suffer here. Is this not a final insult.

To the injury. Withholding this last mercy. And the design. To display. A sense of rejection. But the reality is.

That the rejection. That they are displaying. Is their own. No compassion. No compassion. No care. No mercy.

And ultimately. No faith. And all they want to do. Is. Amplify. The sorrow. Of the Lord.

And for a little moment. Withhold. A last kindness. There is a mercy. This here.

[19:53] Isn't there. But there is also. A blindness. And we see here. How they come. To this moment.

And they come. To this place. And they can't see. What they are doing. And even more than that. They can't see.

Who he is. They can't see. Who he is. Right in front of them.

And they don't know him. They cannot see. That this is Messiah. They cannot see. That Elijah had come. They cannot see.

That. He fulfilled. All righteousness. He fulfilled. All prophecy. Concerning the Messiah. They cannot. And will not. See.

[20:51] They are unwilling. And they are blind. The Lord. Of course. Already described. To us. The coming. Of. Elijah. That this was. Seen as figurative.

And fulfilled. In John the Baptist. John. Mark chapter 9. And there. In verse. 11 to 13. There is this question.

Why did the scribes. Say that Elijah. Must come first. Jesus said to them. Elijah does come first. To restore all things. And so. He speaks. In this way. And says in verse 13.

I tell you that Elijah. Has. Come. And the. The greater explanation. Of course. Is given to us. In Matthew's gospel. And in chapter. 11. And from verse.

9. Onwards. He speaks there. Of John the Baptist. And he says. What did you go out to see? A prophet. I say more than a prophet. Behold. I send my messenger.

[21:47] Before you. Who will prepare. The way before you. And then he goes on. To say. The prophets. And the laws. Prophesied. Until John. And if you are willing. To accept this. He.

Is Elijah. Who is to come. And so Jesus. Displays. How this prophecy. Is fulfilled. In the ministry. And work.

Of John. The Baptist. That it has been fulfilled. In him. But they are unwilling. To accept this. Because they are imposing. Upon God.

How they believe. He should work. And they are unwilling. To listen to the man. In the wilderness. Who said. Behold. The lamb. Of God.

Who takes away. The sin of the world. And here it is. This great activity. This great work.

[22:44] Here he is. And they cannot see. They cannot see. It is a lamb. They cannot see.

It is the Lord. Who is he. On yonder tree. Dies in grief. And agony. It is the Lord.
O wonder story. It is the Lord. The king of glory. They can't see. They are unwilling.
Going to see. Tis the Lord. The lamb. On the altar. On the cross.
The darkness. Speaking of God. Judgment. The forsakenness. As temporary. The reality.
[23 : 45] There in the dark. The darkness. Of unbelief. Unwilling. Unwilling. To grasp. In the midst.
Of the greatest.

Moment. Of all. Of history. Tis the Lord. Tis the Lord. Of glory.
This is his hour. His work. And this is the end. After this. He will cry. It is finished. After this.
He will cry. For his father. To receive. His spirit. His work. Is complete. The redemption. Price.
Has been paid. His work. Is complete. And fulfilled. This is who he is. The lamb.
[24 : 40] The savior. The Messiah. The one. The one. Who ransoms us. Who redeems us. Who
saves us.

Our shepherd. Whose voice. We hear. Tis the Lord. O wondrous story. Tis the Lord.
The king of glory. At his feet. We humbly fall. Crown him. Crown him. Lord of all.
Can you see. It's your Lord. Your savior. Does faith.
Let you lay hold of him. To see who he is. To believe. This is for you. Let the world.
[25 : 41] Mark. Let it deride. All day long. But let us. Crown him. Lord of all.
Tis the Lord. Tis the Lord. Amen. Let's pray.