

16 THE KING'S
SACRIFICE

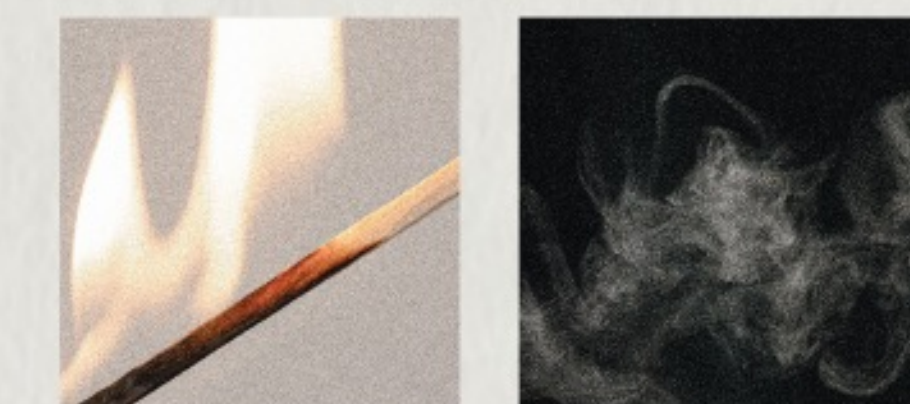
A STUDY OF
Mark



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If words are to enter men's hearts and bear fruit, they must be the right words shaped cunningly to pass men's defences [sic] and explode silently and effectually within their minds.

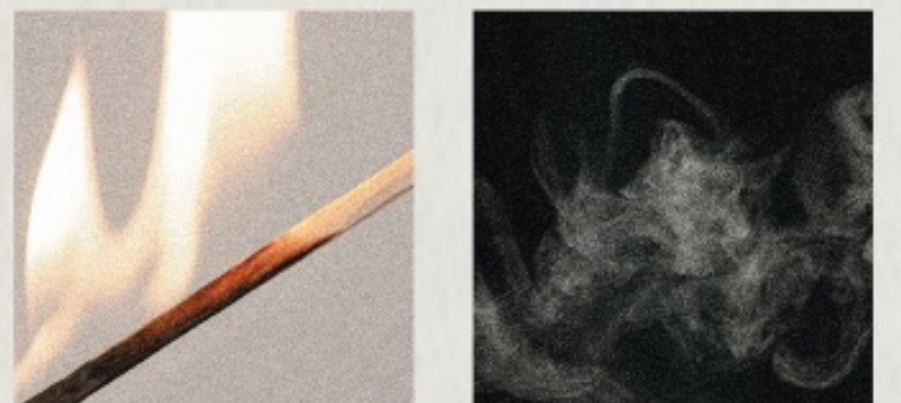
- J.B. Phillips



Matt Noetzel

479-871-8331

manoetzel@fellowshipnwa.org



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For me, to preach the gospel to the Russians is heaven on earth. I have preached the gospel to men of many nations, but I have never seen a people drink in the gospel like the Russians. They have such thirsty souls.

An Orthodox priest, a friend of mine, telephoned me and told me that a Russian officer had come to him to confess. My friend did not know Russian. However, knowing that I speak Russian, he had given him my address. The next day this man came to see me. He longed for God, but he had never seen a Bible. He had no religious education and never attended religious services (churches in Russia then were very scarce). He loved God without the slightest knowledge of Him.

I read to him the Sermon on the Mount and the parables of Jesus. After hearing them, he danced around the room in rapturous joy proclaiming, "What a wonderful beauty! How could I live without knowing this Christ!" It was the first time that I saw someone so joyful in Christ.

Then I made a mistake. I read to him the passion and crucifixion of Christ, without having prepared him for this. He had not expected it and, when he heard how Christ was beaten, how He was crucified and that in the end He died, he fell into an armchair and began to weep bitterly. He had believed in a Savior and now his Savior was dead!

I looked at him and was ashamed. I had called myself a Christian, a pastor, and a teacher of others, but I had never shared the sufferings of Christ as this Russian officer now shared them. Looking at him, it was like seeing Mary Magdalene weeping at the foot of the cross, faithfully weeping when Jesus was a corpse in the tomb.

Then I read to him the story of the resurrection and watched his expression change. He had not known that his Savior arose from the tomb. When he heard this wonderful news, he beat his knees and swore-using very dirty, but very "holy" profanity. This was his crude manner of speech. Again he rejoiced, shouting for joy, "He is alive! He is alive!" He danced around the room once more, overwhelmed with happiness!

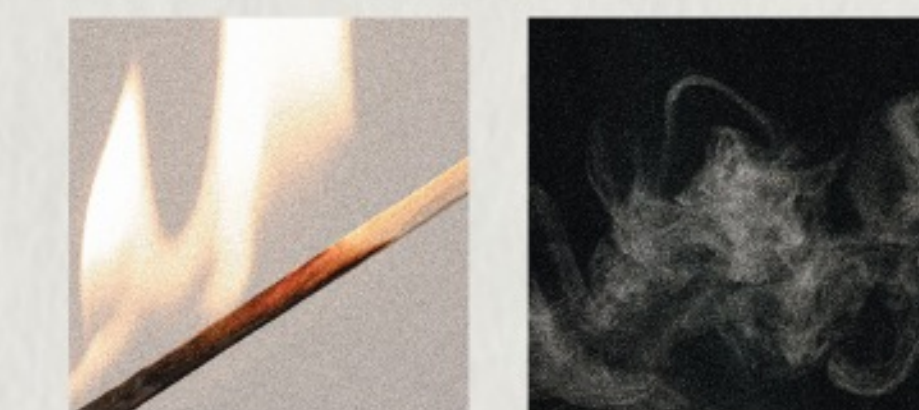
I said to him, "Let us pray!" He did not know how to pray. He did not know our "holy" phrases. He fell on his knees together with me and his words of prayer were: "Oh God, what a fine chap you are! If I were You and You were me, I would never have forgiven You of Your sins. But You are really a very nice chap! I love You with all of my heart."

I think that all the angels in heaven stopped what they were doing to listen to this sublime prayer from a Russian officer. The man had been won for Christ!

- Richard Wurmbrand *Tortured for Christ*

Isaiah 53:4-7 *niv*

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.



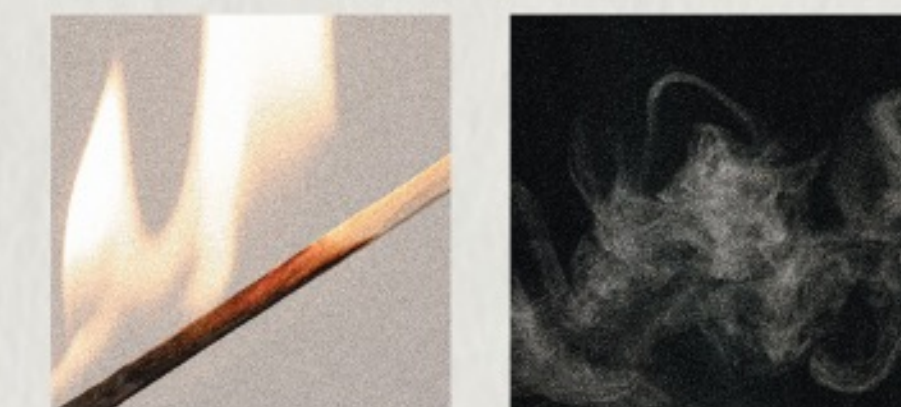
Mark 15:21-24 *niv*

A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. ²² They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”). ²³ Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴ And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.



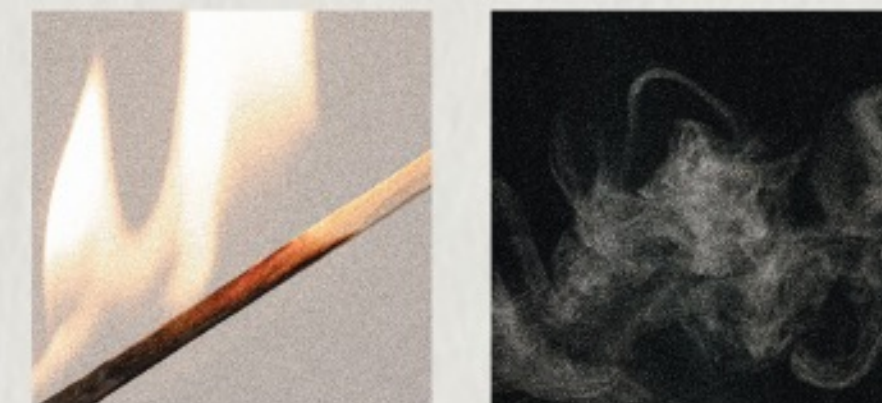
Mark 15:25-26 *niv*

It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS.



Mark 15:27-32 *niv*

They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹ Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, “So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save yourself!” ³¹ In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! ³² Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

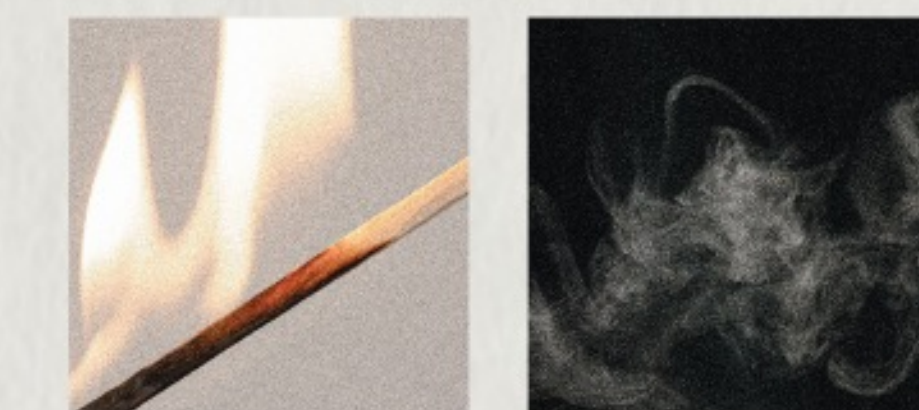


Mark 15:33-36 *niv*

At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).

³⁵ When some of those standing near heard this, they said, “Listen, he’s calling Elijah.”

³⁶ Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down,” he said.



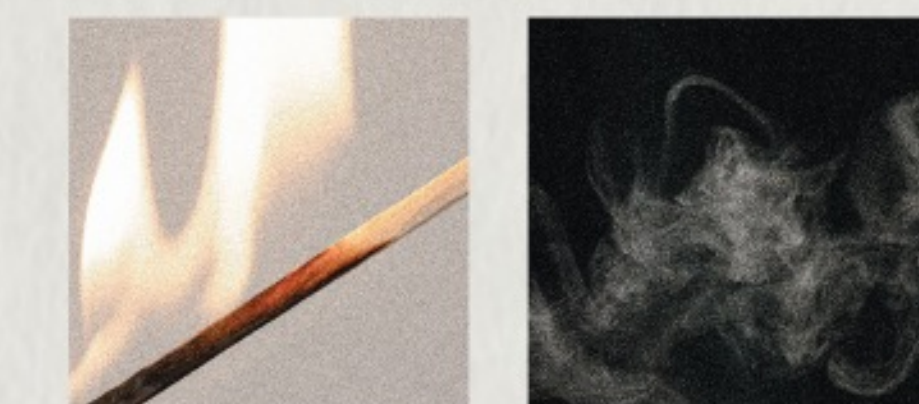
Psalm 22:1, 7-8 *niv*

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me,
so far from my cries of anguish?

⁷ All who see me mock me;
they hurl insults, shaking their heads.

⁸ “He trusts in the LORD,” they say,
“let the LORD rescue him.

Let him deliver him,
since he delights in him.”



Psalm 22:15-19 *niv*

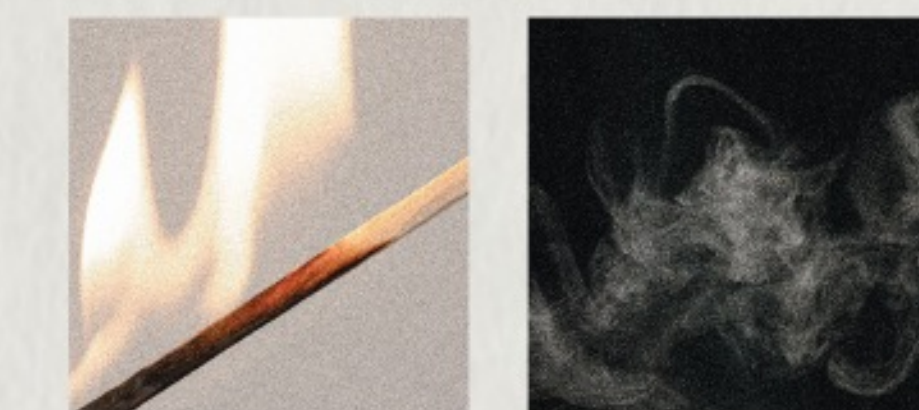
My mouth is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;
you lay me in the dust of death.

¹⁶ Dogs surround me,
a pack of villains encircles me;
they pierce my hands and my feet.

¹⁷ All my bones are on display;
people stare and gloat over me.

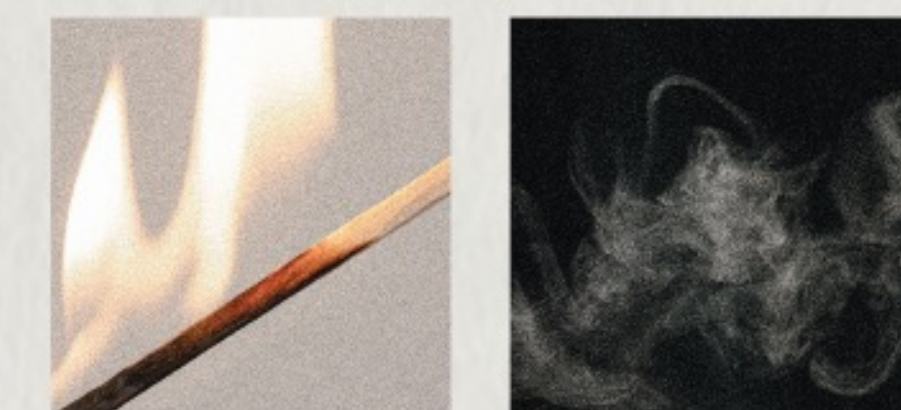
¹⁸ They divide my clothes among them
and cast lots for my garment.

¹⁹ But you, LORD, do not be far from me.
You are my strength; come quickly to help me.



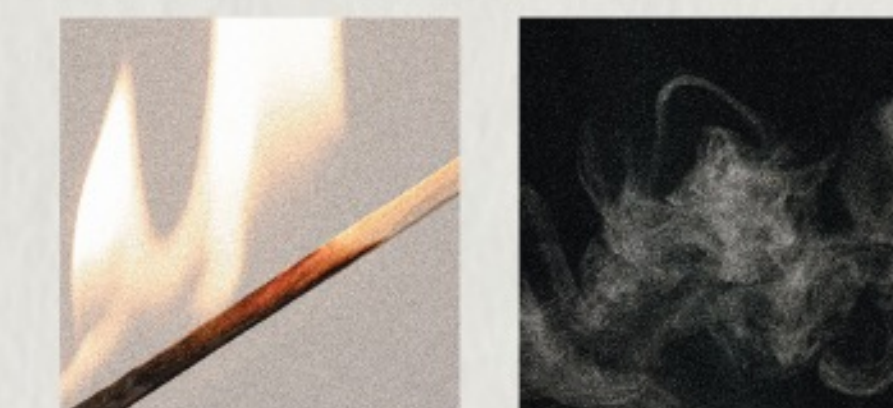
Mark 15:37 *niv*

With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.



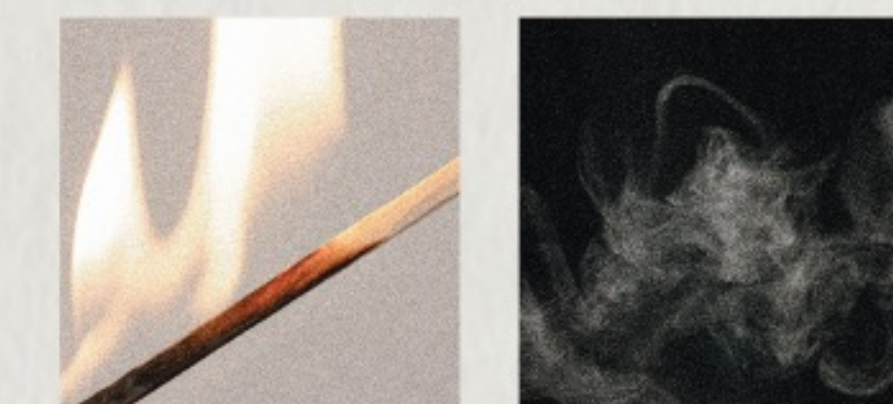
Mark 15:38-39 *niv*

The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”



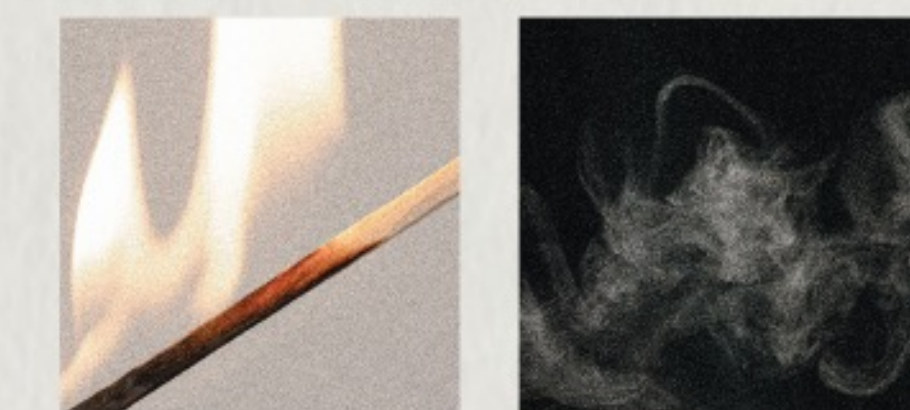
Mark 15:40-41 *niv*

Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph, and Salome. ⁴¹In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.



Mark 15:42-43 *niv*

It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body.



Mark 15:44-47 *niv*

Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. ⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

