



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC Why Me?

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THEME Focus on the Spiritual

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

THE DIVINE ENCOUNTER

Mark 15:20 tells of the divine encounter between Jesus and Simon the Cyrene on the day of Jesus' crucifixion. Simon came from a faraway land, and it would have taken him two months to reach Jerusalem – only to be met with the Roman soldiers on the day he arrived, and forced into a task he had not signed up for. Whenever we meet with a challenging situation in our lives, we, too, ask ourselves, "Why me?" Yet we often fail to realise that nothing is coincidental in God's plan. Only when we choose to trust Him in obedience and carry the cross will we be able to see and understand His perfect plans for us.

CHOSEN TO CARRY THE CROSS

The divine encounter between Jesus and Simon began the night before Jesus' crucifixion. In Mark 14:32, we read of Jesus alone and praying in the garden of Gethsemane, crying out to His Father. But while Jesus knew he would be betrayed by Judas, He chose to remain obedient and faithful to the Father. Jesus was persecuted, beaten and flogged. He was made to wear the crown of thorns, and was unrecognisable by the end of the tortuous process.

As He came out of the city with the cross, Jesus met Simon – a man who had travelled two months from Cyrene to Jerusalem, in preparation for the Passover. While this encounter might have appeared coincidental, God had it planned out. There was a divine purpose in the meeting, as with His plans for us in our lives. Maybe the soldiers chose Simon because he was obviously a foreigner, but what is certain is that God appointed him for the mission of carrying that cross.

In our lives, we always have the choice to persist in our own selfish desires, or trust in Him and His divine plans. Carrying the cross goes beyond the negative circumstances we face; it is the posture of our hearts that we choose to adopt. **When we stop asking "Why me?" and start dying to ourselves, God's plans come to fruition.** As Simon shouldered the cross, unwillingly at first, he came to experience the true Passover, when the blood of the Lamb spilled onto his garments.

Simon had a special privilege. While all the angels of the heavens were unable to help Jesus in His situation, Simon was the chosen one to carry the cross for Him. Similarly, we are the only ones who can carry the cross to overcome our own negative situations. To allow God to do something in our lives, we must first learn to surrender, so He may do His work. To be able to experience this divine encounter, we must be ready to die to ourselves.

THE OUTCOME OF OUR OBEDIENCE

As we learn to die to our desire and ourselves, we will learn that God's plans are always perfect. When we choose to be obedient, we find His goodness and lovingkindness will follow us all the days of our lives. He watches over our families, like He did for Simon and his household as a result, where His blessings overflow to the godly upbringing of his sons, and crossing generations, as seen in Romans 16:13, where Paul greets Simon's wife and his son Rufus.

Therefore, instead of asking, "Why me?", choose to surrender our desires and preferences. Trust Him, and we will begin to uncover God's divine encounter and plans for us.

QUESTIONS

When Simon began his walk from Cyrene two months before the Passover, could he have known what awaited him in Jerusalem? Why was his encounter with Jesus divine?

Was there a situation in your life when you asked yourself the same question, "Why me?" How did you eventually reconcile those feelings, and see the divine hand of God moving?

In the days leading up to the Good Friday drama Danny, is there anyone whom you would like to invite to have a divine encounter with God? In groups of 2-3s, pray for your oikos by name.