

DEVOTIONS FOR EASTER WEEK

THE DAY THE GOD-MAN DIED

Thursday, March 29

Reading: John 19

John 19:26 When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," **27** and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. **28** Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." **29** A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. **30** When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

The gospel of John is the most theological of the four gospels. John's stated purpose is "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31). John relates many details of Jesus' passion that the other gospels do not. Like Luke's gospel, the three statements from the cross he records are found nowhere else. These three statements reveal the deity and humanity of Christ.

First, John records Jesus' love for His mother. At the dedication of her baby in the Temple years before, she had been told by godly Simeon that "a sword will pierce your own soul" (Luke 2:35). Now that time had come. Jesus had a deep concern for His mother and placed her in the care of His beloved disciple (the apostle John).

The next statement gives us a taste of the physical suffering involved in crucifixion. This agonizing thirst is prophesied in Psalm 22:15: "My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death." John also proclaims that this statement fulfilled Scripture (Psalm 22:15 is fulfilled by Jesus' physical suffering and the soldiers' actions fulfill Psalm 69:21).¹ Only a man could suffer, bleed, and die as Jesus did.

Jesus' final cry from the cross was "It is Finished!" This is probably the same as the "loud cry" reported but not described by the other gospels. This was a shout of victory! It is one word in Greek (*tetelestai*) and meant paid in full. The work of salvation was finished and the way to the Father was assured. The justice of God had been satisfied and the power of Satan, sin, and death had been defeated. Only God the Son could accomplish this victory.

If Jesus were not fully human He could not represent humanity and be our substitute for sins. If Jesus were not fully God His sacrifice would not be sufficient to satisfy the justice of God the Father and pay the full penalty for sinful humanity. But Jesus was both – He was the God-man!

The work of salvation is complete! There is nothing we can add to it. We must accept Christ by faith. Jesus Himself said hours before His arrest, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

¹ As you prepare for Good Friday, I would encourage you to read Psalm 23, Isaiah 53, and Psalm 69 – particularly verses 3-4, 8-21. These give us a prophetic picture of the suffering of the Savior and what it means for us.

THRU THE BIBLE Reading: Joshua 10-12; Luke 20