

## Easter Teaching No. 13(a)

### Jesus' Statements from the Cross

Jesus made seven statements from the Cross:-

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Statement from the Cross -**

Luke 23:34 - 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing'.

As soon as Jesus was crucified, he prayed aloud and asked the forgiveness of the soldiers who were carrying out their duty. We see in Acts 3:17, Peter speaking to his fellow Jews 'Now fellow Israelites I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer'.

We also see in 1 Corinthians 2:8 'None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory'.

Even in extreme anguish, Jesus held up those who had done him wrong and asked his Father to forgive them. He held no grudge or animosity, he knew they were just playing their role in the fulfilment of scripture.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Statement from the Cross**

Luke 23:43 - 'Today you shall be with me in paradise'.

As we have seen from the previous study, one of the criminals crucified alongside Jesus, asked Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom. The truth would be, that both of them would die that day, but would not be lost. They would both enter the paradise section of Sheol.

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Statement from the Cross**

John 19:25b - 27 'Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her 'Woman, here is your

son', and to the disciple 'Here is your mother'. From that time on this disciple took her into his home". See also Matthew 27:56, Mark 15:40 & John 19:25

Put this altogether and we see who the women were watching from a distance:-

- (1) Mary the mother of Jesus,
- (2) Mary the mother of James and Judas (two of Jesus disciples). The wife of Cleopas - who by tradition was the sister of the step-father of Jesus, which would make James and Judas his step-cousins. Cleopas was the disciple who later met Jesus on the road to Emmaus.
- (3) Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee, James and John, two of the apostolic group. She was the sister of Mary, Jesus' mother making James and John his first cousins. (John 19:25)
- (4) Mary Magdalene

It was the responsibility of the firstborn son to take care of the welfare of his widowed mother. We can assume from this that Joseph his step-father had died. He handed the responsibility of his mother's welfare to John. Although not directly named, this was a common way of referring to yourself in a narrative without actually giving, and this account was written by John.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Statement from the Cross**

Matthew 27:45-46 - 'Eli, Eli lama sabachthani' My God, My God why have you forsaken me?'

Jesus uttered this cry about the ninth hour, he had been on the cross for 6 hours. This would have been about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. This cry is a direct quote from Psalm 22, a psalm of David. Take time to read Psalm 22, and feel the anguish and pain that are in it. The description of the despair and helplessness is so much like that Jesus was experiencing on the cross, it could have been written by Jesus himself. It was like a direct description of crucifixion and yet this Psalm was written at least 420 years before Rome ruled Israel and 500 years before Jesus was crucified.

This is the first cry of anguish that Jesus made. Through his trials, flogging, crucifixion and mockery he remained quiet. Yet it was now dark, though only 3 in the afternoon. It had been dark for 3 hrs. Jesus had the sin of the whole world upon his shoulders and God could not look at Jesus. Jesus had never been out of fellowship with his Heavenly Father but now God had turned his back on him. Jesus cried, not

because of the physical pain, but because he was suffering the wrath of God on our behalf. God had turned the skies dark because he didn't want the world to see the suffering of Jesus when he became sin for us. Remember what we have said about darkness in previous studies?

Jesus had never referred to his Father as 'my God' anywhere written in the scriptures, he always used 'Father' or my 'Father'. Yet now that he was taking the sin of the world upon himself, his relationship with God was judicial, God was judging the sin of the world through Jesus, hence Jesus referred to his Father as 'God'.

The bystanders thought mistakenly that Jesus was calling to Elijah as Eli can be a short-form of Elijah to the Hebrew ear. Someone went forward to give him a drink but others held him back to see if Elijah would come to rescue Jesus.

This teaching is continued in Easter Teaching No. 13 (b)