

Lesson Notes:

The Passion of Jesus Christ

During three agonizing hours on the cross Jesus endured terrible misery and pain but through all of his suffering he was able to maintain presence of mind to demonstrate his love and compassion for all of humanity. Following is a discussion of the 7 sentences Jesus spoke on the cross.

Scriptural Principles

- 1) **"Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" which means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46).** – Jesus cried out to his father in Heaven when he felt the rejection of his father in heaven. God was not rejecting his son but the burden of the sins of humanity. Through all of the pain he endured it was the rejection of his father that was the most painful of all. Some of the spectators thought he was calling out to Elijah to save him. During the Passover feasts Jewish people throughout the world set a place for Elijah at their table in hopes of his return. But in reality he was crying out to his father in heaven.
- 2) **"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).** – After being stripped, beaten and humiliated the natural thing would be to curse his captives. But Jesus' enduring love overcame "natural man" to demonstrate uncompromising unconditional love for all of us regardless of our sinful state.
- 3) **"Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).** – Jesus tells the thief that acknowledged his deity that he would join him in paradise. This shows us that it is never too late nor no sin too great not to be accepted as a follower of Christ.
- 4) **"Woman, behold your son!" and "Behold your mother!" (John 19:26-27).** – Through all of the physical pain Jesus was enduring he had the presence of mind to assure that his mother would be taken care of by John. By acknowledging John as his brother his intent was that John would not only meet her needs for clothing, food and shelter but he intended John to provide her with Spiritual encouragement during this time of great loss. This is an example for us to follow should we experience a lingering death rather than a sudden passing.
- 5) **"I thirst" (John 19:28).** – This shows that Jesus felt the same pain and anguish as a normal man and that he was God in human form.
- 6) **"Father, into Your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46).** – As Jesus was about to die he gave up the ghost (his spirit) to his father in heaven. This shows Jesus' willingness to die for us on the cross. He came in fulfillment of John 3:16-17 and did not compromise his love for us on the cross but endured a death he freely accepted to pay for our sins.

- 7) **"It is finished!" (John 19:30).** – When Jesus had paid for our sins through his atoning sacrifice and fulfilled the old testament prophecies (Psalm 22 as an example) he uttered the words “It is finished” and gave up his spirit to our heavenly father.