

74. Jesus Cared for His Mother in Death

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others that Jesus is the Christ and also the Eternal King. In this topic, we are going to see how to help our children learn to explain some of the other things that happened that day as Jesus was crucified on the cross.

Once the soldiers had placed Jesus on the cross, they then decided what to do with His clothes. They did not realize that the choice they made actually fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. John 19:23-24 says, “Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. They said therefore among themselves, ‘Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be,’ that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: ‘They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.’ Therefore the soldiers did these things.” Once the soldiers had Jesus and the other two men on the crosses, their job was to keep watch until the three were dead.

It was the custom of the Romans to give the clothes of those who were put to death to the soldiers who put them to death. We see that the soldiers took the clothes of Jesus and divided them into four parts. This would indicate that there were four soldiers who carried out their assigned responsibility to crucify Jesus. The tunic had been woven from the top to the bottom without any seams so that it was one piece of material. As a result, the soldiers decided to cast lots to see which of them would get the tunic. Psalm 22 makes several prophecies about the death of Jesus. Psalm 22:18 says, “They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.” Here, we see that the soldiers fulfilled a prophecy that had been written by David about one thousand years earlier. The soldiers had no idea that they were fulfilling Biblical prophecy.

There are many prophecies that were given by God to the various writers of the Old Testament. Some of those prophecies were written hundreds of years apart. Jesus fulfilled various ones of these prophecies throughout the time that He was here on this earth. However, on the day that Jesus was crucified, more than 30 Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in one day. More than thirty years after the resurrection, Peter wrote about the way that the Holy Spirit had guided these writers. 2 Peter 1:19-21 says, “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.” These Old Testament writers had been guided by the Holy Spirit to write each of the prophecies that Jesus fulfilled.

Other things also happened while Jesus was on the cross. As the oldest son of Mary, Jesus made provision for the care of his mother in her older years. John 19:25-27 says, “Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the *wife* of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold your son!’ Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold your

mother!’ And from that hour that disciple took her to his own *home*.” Mary and several of the other women who had ministered to Jesus were standing near the cross watching as Jesus was being crucified. This must have been a very difficult day for all of those women but especially for Mary.

In Matthew 27:55-56, we read, “And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.” In these verses, we see that one of the women there that day was the mother of James and John. We also see that Mary the mother of James and Joses was there. This James is the disciple that is known as James the Less according to Mark 15:40-41 where we read, “There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome, who also followed Him and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.” The woman named Salome may be the one that John called the sister of Mary. These women had a close relationship with each other as well as with Jesus.

We see that John called himself the disciple that Jesus loved. He knew that Jesus loved him and so that is how he chose to describe himself. Jesus also loves each of us with the same love that He loved John. Both John and the mother of Jesus were standing close enough to the cross so that Jesus could speak to them. Jesus first spoke to Mary and said, “Woman, behold your son!” Jesus had used this same title for Mary in John 2:4 where we read, “Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.’” Jesus had a very great love and respect for His mother. However, once He began His public ministry, He made it clear that He came to minister to all people and so He put distance between Himself and His family. We see that Jesus also did this in Matthew 12:48-50 where we read, “But He answered and said to the one who told Him, ‘Who is My mother and who are My brothers?’ And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, ‘Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.’”

However, Jesus did not forget His responsibility to care for His mother as her oldest son. Jesus then spoke to John and said, “Behold your mother!” We read that from that hour that disciple took Mary to his own home. This would indicate that John probably had a home in Jerusalem as well as in Galilee. This would soon become very important for John since once Jesus returned to heaven the church would begin in Jerusalem and not in Galilee. The important lesson that we see in this verse is the love that Jesus showed to His mother by providing the care that she would need in her older years. Jesus gave us a great example for our own lives.

We go on to read that Jesus completed the payment of the penalty for our sins. John 19:28-30 says, “After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, ‘I thirst!’ Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.” We see again that Jesus fulfilled every prophecy that had been written about His sufferings and death. Psalm 69:21 says, “They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.”

In order for this passage to be fulfilled, we see that one of the things that Jesus said on the cross was, “I thirst!”

Near the cross was a container that was filled with sour wine (vinegar). Mark 15:36 tells us, “Then someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine, put *it* on a reed, and offered *it* to Him to drink, saying, ‘Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to take Him down.’” This container of sour wine was set there to make it possible to prolong the lives of the men on the crosses as they suffered. The Romans enjoyed making their prisoners suffer as long as possible. We see that the person who got the sour wine filled a sponge with the wine and put the sponge on a stick from a hyssop bush so that it would reach the mouth of Jesus. Instead of the sour wine prolonging the life of Jesus, we see that something else happened.

We see that Jesus then said, “It is finished!” Matthew 27:50 says, “And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.” Here, we see a very key lesson about the death of Jesus. We see that He cried with a loud voice. This meant that Jesus did not die from weakness and lack of strength. His voice was still loud and strong. Jesus also did not say, “I am finished!” Instead, Jesus said, “It is finished!” Jesus had come to this earth to pay the penalty for our sins and die in our place. He had now finished that payment for our sins. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Jesus had our sins and the sins of every person that ever lived or will live placed on Him as He hung on that cross. Jesus became sin for us and died for us. That payment was now paid in full.

John 1:12 says, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.” This verse says we become the children of God at the moment that we believe. However, 2 Corinthians 5:21 also says that we become the righteousness of God in Christ at that moment. From that moment on, as the Father looks at us, He sees us through the blood of Jesus. Instead of seeing our sin, He sees the righteousness of Jesus. As a result, no true believer in Christ ever needs to fear losing his or her salvation because that would require the Father to reject the blood of Jesus. 1 John 2:2 says, “And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.” The word “propitiation” means *that which satisfies*, so the Father is satisfied with the payment that Jesus made.

Once Jesus had finished paying the penalty for our sins, there was no need to suffer any longer. That is why we are told that Jesus gave up His spirit. Jesus voluntarily gave up His life and no one took His life from Him. In this way, Jesus fulfilled the words He had spoken in John 10:18 which says, “No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.” We want to help our children be able to explain why Jesus died. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain this.