

## Surrey Chapel Fellowship Group Notes 14th/ 15th September 2011

### Cross Questions

**Introduction** Read Psalm 22 and/or Isaiah 53.

What should be our thoughts and attitudes when reading and studying a passage which is so familiar yet so central to our faith?

"I fear that the cross, without ever being disowned, is constantly in danger of being dismissed from the central place it must enjoy, by relatively peripheral insights that take on far too much weight. Whenever the periphery is in danger of displacing the center, we are not far removed from idolatry." -D.A. Carson

**Lament for Jerusalem** v.27-31

On his way to Golgotha Jesus quotes from Zechariah 12: 10-14. He looks ahead to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70, -the real tragedy belongs to the nation of Israel, not Jesus. This is another in a long line of warnings of judgement in Luke's gospel. Is there a bigger picture here? - A warning to anyone who rejects Jesus?

**The Crucifixion** v.33-34

The crucifixion account merely says "there they crucified him" - Why the lack of detail?

"Father forgive them" - See Luke 6:35.

They divided his clothes - Psalm 22:18.

**Mocking** v.35-39. Psalm 22:7.

The people stood by whilst the rulers sneered. - Why the contrast?

Note the irony in the taunts.

v.35 If he is the Christ?, v.36 If you are the king of the Jews? v.39 Aren't you the Christ? - Compare this with Christ's temptation in the wilderness, especially Luke 4: 3 & 9.

Matthew (27:44) and Mark (15:32) only mention the other criminals insulting Jesus. It looks like one of them had a change of heart as he witnesses Jesus interceding for others. This thief first rejects the taunts then in words of faith he turns to Jesus as he anticipates the resurrection and the coming Kingdom. His depth of perception stands in contrast to the rulers who taunt Jesus. Compare this with the centurion in v. 47. Some could see (at least in part) what was really happening.

**The death of Jesus** v. 44-49

At midday darkness descends for 3 hours. See Joel 2:10 & 30-31 and Amos 8:9.

This couldn't have been a solar eclipse as some have suggested as this can only happen during a new moon and the Passover occurred during a full moon, and 3hrs is too long for an eclipse. This was something supernatural - a reaction of the universe itself to the death of its creator and sustainer. Read Colossians 1:15-17. Is it surprising that the sun's light failed at this time?

The curtain in the temple was 18m high and 9m wide and separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. What does its tearing signify? See Hebrews 9:11- 10:22 especially 9:12, 24 & 10: 19-20.

Jesus' last words are a quote from Psalm 31:5.

v.48 & 49 sum up the mood. "Beating their breasts" is symbolic of grief and repentance. - Perhaps events had forced them to pause and consider what had happened?

**Burial** v.50-56

Joseph of Arimathea took the highly unusual step of asking for the body of a condemned man. "His presence is interesting because it reveals a small responding remnant within the Jewish leadership." -IVP Commentary. Like Nicodemus he shows us that the Pharisees weren't all bad. Are there lessons for us here?

"Many, though they do not make any show in outward profession, yet, like Joseph of Arimathea, will be far more ready to do real service, when there is occasion, than others who make a greater noise." -Matthew Henry

**Prayer Points**

Give thanks to God for Christ's saving work on the cross.

The Gathering Weekend

The various youth groups that are starting up again, and the new JAM club.

ADB