



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

The Suffering Savior, John 19:28-30

"The Last Words - III: The Glory of the Cross"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we're grateful to Thee that we have the Scriptures to study. We thank Thee that the Lord Jesus has authenticated them as Scriptures which testify of him. We thank Thee that he has reminded us of the fact that, if we should believe Moses' writings, we should believe his word. But, if we believe not Moses' writings, how can we believe his words? For Moses wrote of him. And we realize, Lord, that Moses not only wrote of him in the sense that he prophesied of the coming of the Messiah, but he also, through the revelation of the law, taught that through the law comes the knowledge of sin. And we thank Thee that he wrote of Jesus Christ in the sense that he wrote words that should prepare us for the acceptance of Jesus Christ; the sense of our sin through the breaking of the law; the sense of the need of grace and forgiveness of sins.

And so, Lord, we thank Thee that we are able to turn to Scriptures, which are a divine revelation, which come to us with the authentication of heaven, and which tell us how we may come into relationship with the God of heaven, and how we may enjoy fellowship with him both now and forever. We pray tonight, as we study again, that we may sense something of the greatness of the Son of God and the greatness of his sacrifice, the depths of his suffering, and the heights of the blessing to which Thou art calling true

believers. We commit the hour to Thee with thanksgiving and praise. In Jesus' name.  
Amen.

[Message] We are resuming tonight our series of studies on the Old Testament "The Suffering Servant of Jehovah and the Doctrine of the Atonement" and I think that we have probably six or seven lessons, perhaps eight left in our series, which I began, I believe in January. There are, Mr. Nixon tells me, probably a few more copies of the series of studies and the titles that I proposed for them last January and he says that he will have them out for you next week. But I am going to spend tonight on one of the sayings of our Lord when he was on the cross and then probably, or perhaps the next two times, on the remaining sayings of our Lord. Then we turn to the perfection of the atonement or its uniqueness, efficacy, and finality, and the design of the atonement. We'll spend two or three times on the design of the atonement, asking and trying to answer the question, "For whom did Christ die?" Then with two or three more studies, we will conclude the series on the atonement. So if you're interested in the series of titles, which I will be trying to follow, there may be some modification, but that's the schedule, see Mr. Nixon next week. That's Mr. Robert Nixon, not Mr. Richard Nixon. [Laughter]

Now tonight, we're turning to John chapter 19, and we're going to read verses 28 through 30, and our subject is the fifth of the sayings of our Lord upon the cross. Due to the fact that I wanted to spend about thirty-five or forty minutes on this particular saying and the next saying requires a great deal more than twenty minutes, the chances are that I'm going to let you out a little early tonight. I know you shall be happy over that, but don't be surprised if I stop early. It's not because I'm sick. Verse 28 through verse 30 of John chapter 19,

"After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, 'I thirst'. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a

spunge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, 'It is finished!': and he bowed his head, and gave up the spirit."

Like Jacob the patriarch who sat upon his bed, blessed Joseph's sons and then his own sons, and then gathered his feet into the bed and died. So our Lord arranges his affairs while upon the cross, greets the world with a triumphant cry, gathers up his feet into his bed, and then greets his God. It is evident that as you read these passages, which describe our Lord's last hours upon the cross that he is in complete control of everything that is happening there.

Now I know that in the midst of the sayings of our Lord upon the cross, he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" That in a sense was the depths of his suffering. When, as we pointed out in our last study, he the sinless Son of God was separated from God in his human nature as he bore the judicial penalty of the broken law. By means of that sacrifice, he offered an atoning sacrifice, which was a penal satisfaction of God's justice and upon the basis of it, you and I, if we are saved, are saved.

Now we turn in our studies to the remaining cries or sayings of our Lord upon the cross and the fifth one that we are going to look at, a simple statement, actually just one word in the Greek text, "I thirst" is one that is not often considered, but which I think is an extremely interesting one. I wouldn't be so bold as to exaggerate and say it is one of the most important of the sayings, I doubt that. But it surely is one of the most interesting. W. Graham Scroggie, who is one of the better Bible teachers, has said, "He who began his ministry by hungering, ended it by thirsting".

Now you'll remember the order of the sayings, and if you have a Scofield Edition of the New Testament, they are given for you, and you don't have to remember them if you turn to page one thousand and forty-three. Remember the first cry that the Lord Jesus uttered on the cross was, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do". The second cry was, "Today, shalt thou be with me in paradise." The third cry, "Woman,

behold thy son. (And then the word to John) Behold thy mother". The fourth cry, the central cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And this is the fifth, "I thirst". The sixth is, "It is finished" and the seventh, "Father, into thy hands, I commit my spirit".

It seems to me that while it's not absolutely certain that this is the fifth because if you compare Mark chapter 15, verse 34 with verse 36, it would seem that we must put this one at the fifth position. In verse 34, the Lord Jesus, in Mark 15 cries out, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? That is, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' And then some of them that stood by when they heard it said, 'Behold he calleth Elijah.'" And that is, of course, because the term "Eli", which is probably what our Lord uttered, Mark has transferred it all into Aramaic because he writes for a certain group of people. He probably said, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani" and when they heard "Eli", since Elijah's name was Eliyahu, some by the side of the cross said, "He's calling for Elijah". They heard "Eli". So we read in verse 36, "One ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, 'Let be; let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down'". So since in John chapter 19 and verse 29, we read about the vinegar in the very next verse, I think we can safely conclude that the fifth saying of our Lord from the cross was, "I thirst".

We have a little bit of a problem of translation. I'll give you the outline as we look at the fifth saying. We have a little problem with translation in the 28th verse because we read, "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, 'I thirst'". And the question is, "Does 'that the scripture might be fulfilled' go with the preceding or the following?" In other words, does "knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled," are we then to think by that statement that he refers to what has taken place or is he now saying, "That the scripture might be fulfilled, I now say, 'I thirst'"? In that case, our Lord would be referring the fulfillment of the Scripture to what follows, in the statement he

makes on the cross, rather than to what has preceded in the preceding events of his ministry.

I am inclined to think, and I only think because I don't think we can be certain about this, absolutely, that our Lord is referring to the fulfillment of Scripture when he says, "I thirst". And so I would be inclined to read verse 28, "And after this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, (In other words the atoning work has been accomplished. Now says,) that the scripture might be fulfilled, (In Psalm 69) 'I thirst'".

Now, of course, the reference to all things being fulfilled is a reference to the fact that he has now born the judgment of God. Let's look now at the circumstances of the saying and there are two things that we need to keep in mind. First of all, if this is true, if it is true "that now all things have been accomplished", then our Lord has behind him the eternal death that he must die for sinners.

Now it is difficult for us to separate eternal death from physical death because, after all, physical death is the natural issue of eternal death. Let's go back to the Garden of Eden for a moment. Remember that God placed Adam and Eve there and he gave them a simple little command. He said that they might eat of all of the trees of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "Thou shalt not eat of it for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die". Now the Bible makes plain, of course, that they did eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but the Bible does not say anything specifically about Adam and Eve dying at that moment. As a matter of fact, God came to them in judgment and he gave them a judgment in which he said that they would die. For we read in chapter 3, verse 19, "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return". In other words, physical death is set forth before Adam and Eve as something in the future.

Now it is evident from the statement in Genesis 2 that they really died for the statement says, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die". So we are to gather from this then that the penalty for human sin is spiritual death and Adam and Even died spiritually. They were separated from God in their spirits from the moment that they partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But physical death is the issue of spiritual death. It is the result of spiritual death. As a matter of fact, the penalty is one; the penalty is death, but it's death in two stages: spiritually and then physically.

And, of course, if one does not believe between the time of one's spiritual death and his physical death, the spiritual death is prolonged throughout eternity and called, in the Bible, eternal death. We should not speak of three penalties or two penalties for sin such as: spiritual death, physical death, eternal death. They're all related. They are part of the same thing. We die spiritually. But our death spiritually demands our physical death, which in turn, if there is no response in faith to the gospel message, issues in the eternal death, which an individual is already experiencing.

Now when we come to our Lord Jesus on the cross, he must die, in order to die completely for men, he must die spiritually, but he also must take the issue or the results of spiritual death, as well, to himself. So he must not only die spiritually, he must also die physically. Now in the case of our Lord, if he were to die physically before he should die spiritually, we would have no real assurance that he had died spiritually. So in our Lord's case this is reversed. I'll say more about that in a moment. In our Lord's case this is reversed and in his case, he dies first spiritually, and then he dies physically. So behind the Lord is his eternal death, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" That is his spiritual death. That is his eternal death, which he dies for sinners, but before him is physical death.

Now I say he suffered eternal death before physical death because the moment our Lord Jesus died, he would be eligible for a glorified body. He had never sinned. If

men should have taken him and should have crucified him violently as they did, since he had never sinned himself, he would be eligible immediately for a glorified body. But he must suffer the curse in an unglorified body. And further, he must show us his finished work. And so in our Lord's case these things are reversed. He dies spiritually and then he dies physically. These are the circumstances of the saying.

Now I want to turn to the saying itself, the content of the saying. The Lord Jesus had refused the drugged wine, which had been offered him earlier as he hung upon the cross. He refused the wine that was drugged because he wanted to have his senses perfectly clear for the suffering of the cross. He would not accept any drink that might dull his senses because he, as the Lamb of God, and as the substitute for sinners, must enter completely into the judgment for sin. So he refused the wine mingled with myrrh, which was a form of drugged wine, doped wine that would dull his senses.

On the contrary, now we read, "But he was offered vinegar and Jesus therefore received the vinegar", we read. And, again, I would presume that for the same reason, which caused our Lord to refuse the drugged wine, he now accepts the common sweet wine, which was the drink of an every day worker in the land of Palestine. He takes it because now at the depths of his suffering, he wants to have his senses clear so he can suffer the remainder of his sufferings in perfect control of all of his senses. And so the one he refuses, the other he accepts, but they both are for the same reason.

Now let's look at, "I thirst" itself. First, I suggest it is a word of submission. There is a triumphant irony in our Lord's statement, "I thirst", for after all, our Lord was the eternal Son of God. This afternoon, two Jehovah's witnesses, youngsters, came to my door and we had quite a theological argument as you might guess. They weren't prepared to listen to me and I was totally unprepared to listen to them [laughter]. Their minds were completely closed and mine were shut tight [laughter] and we were debating over the significance of the Son of God. They were insisting that they believed that he was the Son of God. I was insisting that they did not believe that he was the Son of God.

I knew more, I thought, about their beliefs than they themselves knew because I knew that they did not mean what I mean by "Son of God". They said, "Yes, we believe Jesus was the Son of God". But, I said, "You don't believe he was God". And at that they admitted they did not believe that he was God. I said, "Further, you do not believe in the Trinity so, therefore, you're not Christians" and we had this going back and forth about the Son of God.

Now our Lord Jesus is the Son of God, but the term "Son of God" means that he possesses the nature of God and, therefore, he is God. He is very God, a very God not in spite of the fact that the Bible calls him Son of God, but because he is the Son of God. Being the Son of God, he possesses his nature. I am the son of S. Lewis Johnson and I possess his nature. And I'm not called junior because I possess my father's nature, but I possess his nature. And so our Lord Jesus possesses the nature of God. He essentially is one of the triune God. He is one of the divine persons.

Now if that is true, being a divine person, he could supply liquid if he wished. As a matter of fact, he is the one who supplied liquid for Israel when they thirsted. He is the one who supplied them the rock, the rock of which Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 4, "That Rock was Christ". And when Moses struck the rock with the rod and there forthwith came out that water that was just an indication of the mighty power that resides in the Son of God. And yet, hanging upon the cross, in this most significant irony, the Son of God cries out, "I thirst". So I think it's a word of submission. It represents the fact that the Son of God, who has all power in heaven and in earth, by virtue of his position in the Trinity, has renounced his power, has become a man, has not only become humiliated by becoming a man, but has actually now become a worm, and hangs upon the cross in total submission to the will of God.

We often sing in our gospel services, in our Bible class, in our Sunday morning services, about total surrender to God. There is only one man who has ever been totally surrendered to God and, as far as I know, there is only one man who will ever be totally

surrendered to God and that is our Lord Jesus Christ. And most of our singing in the hymns is just nonsense because there is no man who has ever totally surrendered to God. Now if you can come up and show me a man totally surrendered to God, I'll change my theology. But, I do not believe a man is ever totally surrendered to God as long as he's in the flesh. And so when you sing about total surrender, please sing it only as an aspiration which shall be yours when you get to heaven. Don't think that it's going to be fulfilled down here on earth because you'll be greatly disappointed if you expect that here. Only one person was ever totally surrendered, the Lord Jesus, and here we find, I think, an evidence of that total submission in that he has, by virtue of the incarnation, he has surrendered the voluntary use of his divine attributes and has hung upon the cross crying out, "I thirst. I'd like a drink of water".

Now the second word, a word of sympathy. The emphasis, as you can see then, rests upon the humanity of our Lord Jesus, that which makes him eligible for becoming our high priest. Now I think then as we look then at the statement, "I thirst" upon the cross, we should notice that this is part of our Lord's preparation for his high priestly ministry. We've talked about that before, but the Epistle to the Hebrews is the epistle of the New Testament that speaks specifically of this. Because our Lord entered into these experiences, because he said, "I thirst" on the cross, because he entered into all of that, he's able to be the kind of high priest who sympathizes with us. The writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews states in verse 18 of chapter 2,

"For in that he himself hath suffered being tested, he is able to help them that are tested" (And then in the 4th chapter and verse 14) Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tested like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

So here, our Lord in the perfection of his humanity, you will notice the text says, "Jesus said, 'I thirst'". Even the term that is used of our Lord is the term of his humanity. "Jesus said". And the fact that the Son of God says, "I thirst", for God does not thirst, emphasizes the fact that it is out of his perfect humanity, out of the self emptying referred to in Philippians chapter 2, that our Lord makes the request. It's part of the preparation for a high priest who's able to sympathize with our infirmities. So now one of the greatest blessings that we have as a Christian is that we have someone who is seated at the right hand of the throne of God, who is able to enter into all of our experiences. He has been tested just as we are tested.

Christians find difficulty at times really catching or getting hold of this because they are inclined to think, "Well, our Lord Jesus cannot really sympathize with me. He is the divine Son of God." Well now we remember, don't we that he is also a very man; truly man in every way, perfect in his human nature. He has entered into the experiences of humanity and we should remember that our Lord has sympathy with us. Not because he has sinned as we have sinned, but because he has been tested as we are tested. Sympathy arises out of testing, not out of sinning. I do not want anyone to sympathize with me who is a sinner because being a sinner, his heart has been hardened just that much. I want someone sympathizing with me whose heart is not hardened in any way.

Now I know that these things seem to go contrary to what we as human beings think. We think that those who have sinned like we have will be more sympathetic with us than someone who has never sinned. That is not true. That is not true at all. Because sin has a hardening effect upon humanity and the person who has sinned is least likely to sympathize with a sinner. It is the person who has not sinned who knows the strength of temptation, for he did not fall. Our Lord Jesus, because he has not fallen when the tests have come, knows not only the test that you are experiencing now and the degree of it, but he knows the intensity of suffering even beyond that. So he has perfect sympathy with our testings, for he was just there. And, in addition, he not only has sympathy

because he has been exactly where we are, but contrary to our failure, he did not fail. So he knows the way of deliverance. Therefore, in time of testing, go to him, for he sympathizes and he has power to deliver.

Now, some will say, "Oh, but he did not have a sin nature like I have". That is true. Our Lord did not have a sin nature like you have. It's amazing how many excuses sinful men can think up to avoid going to the great high priest to be delivered and have sympathy. And so we say, "Well, the Lord Jesus didn't have a sin nature so he cannot really know the kinds of testing that I have". Now I remind you that the Lord Jesus was tested by Satan and his tests came from the world. It's true. Our tests come from Satan, our tests come from the world, and our tests come from our nature, which is contrary to his will. But all testing has one character; it is testing to turn aside from the will of God. So all testing is exactly alike. It does not make any difference that the sources are different. The testing is the same. It is to turn aside from the will of God. So though our Lord has never possessed a sin nature, he knows exactly the kind of testing that you have because he has been tested to turn away from the will of God. So let us not use excuses, but when we come into testing, let's remember we have a great high priest who has entered into experiences such as we have, knows precisely the intensity of our suffering and our testing and, furthermore, has the strength and power to deliver us. Therefore, let us go boldly to the throne of grace to receive mercy and strength for well timed help.

Now a word of sovereignty: the last great priest does not accept his death as his fate, but he performs it as a deed. You see, the Lord Jesus, as he dies upon the cross, dies as the great high priest who offers the once and for all sacrifice. He is there a priest offering the sacrifice and in offering the sacrifice, he must offer it with a clear head. He takes the vinegar and in the sovereignty of complete control of the circumstances, he offers himself as the sacrifice for those who are the sheep of the Father. This is one of the great evidences of our Lord's concern with the people of God, for he prays not for the world, but he prays for those whom the Father has given him. And here he is offering the

sacrifice for those who have been given to him by the Father and he offers it as the last great priest.

One of the Dutch theologians has said, "He holds his sacrifice in his hand for he is his own priest and must, therefore, be alert when the time for the last act of sacrifice comes. Exhaustion is not to put him to death". Now there is a text over in Hebrews chapter 9 and verse 14, which I think also expresses this idea. The writer of the epistle, again, speaking of the priestly ministry of the Lord Jesus and how he offers the sacrifice of the priest for those who are to be saved, the writer says in chapter 9 and verse 13 of his epistle, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: (He refers to animal sacrifices and if they sanctify to the purifying of the flesh) How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit".

I must stop here for just a moment. The word "spirit" in the Authorized Version is capitalized. Now if you have another version, you may find that it is not capitalized. Let me explain. As you know, the New Testament was written in the Greek language. Now the Greeks and people who lived at the time the New Testament was written, when they wrote Greek in manuscripts such as contained our New Testament, they did not usually make distinctions between capital letters and lower case letters. In other words, they were all the same size. Some of the manuscripts were all written in what scholars call "uncial letters; a word that may be related to inch high. They were not inch high, but they were bigger letters. Still other letters are written in minuscule script, but again, no distinction is ordinarily made between the capital and lower case letters. So how do we know what letters to capitalize and letters not to capitalize? Well, we only know from a study of the context and the sense of the passage.

When we see from the context that a sentence has come to an end because also, remember, they did not use any punctuation marks as a rule, they didn't put periods and commas. The words were all run together. So the only way in which we can tell the

beginning of a sentence from the end of a sentence and a capital from a non-capitalized letter, is by the interpretation of the text. We are dependent upon the interpretations of the translators.

Now it is evident that the Authorized Version translators felt that our Lord Jesus offered himself through the Holy Spirit. And so they capitalized the word "pneuma", which means spirit, because they thought it referred to the Holy Spirit. And so we have in our text "spirit" in capital letters. But remember, the Lord Jesus was the second person of the Trinity, he was the divine Son, he possessed a human body, a human soul, and a human spirit. So you see, we have to ask ourselves the question, "Is it really so that this text is a reference to the human spirit of our Lord or is it a reference to the Holy Spirit?"

Now I submit to you that the emphasis of the passage is on the voluntary suffering of our Lord Jesus. Furthermore, nowhere else in the New Testament, I don't deny this truth, but nowhere else in the New Testament is it said that Jesus offered himself up through the spirit. I feel certain in my mind that the great contrast here between the animals who were involuntary sufferers and our Lord's sacrifice is designed to stress the fact that contrary to animals, who were dragged howling to their deaths by sacrifice, our Lord Jesus offered himself through his own undying human spirit voluntarily, and how much more shall that kind of offering, as he says, "Purge our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" So the text then tells us that our Lord Jesus is a completely voluntary high priest who offers up himself.

The stress rests then upon the sovereign activity of the Son who controls his own destiny, but who offers himself up as a sacrifice in his own human spirit. So if I had the power to do it, I would take your Bible and just mark through the capital "S" and put a little "s". But don't do that unless you're convinced that I'm right. Just remember when you read it, ask yourself, "Is the stress of this verse on the voluntary character of our Lord's offering as over against the animals or is it on the Holy Spirit?" I think that the answer will come to you.

Now finally, we have a word of suffering. Our Lord has said, "I thirst". This word is offered in close proximity to the fourth word. Now what was the fourth word? The fourth word was, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Then our Lord says, "I thirst." I'm going to suggest to you, again I am not sure that I could prove this. I'll give you some evidence. I am going to suggest that this word that our Lord uttered, "I thirst", which is derived from Old Testament prophecy, is a word that speaks not only of his external bodily need of liquid, but is a word that reflects what has been going on in his inmost being as he has been hanging upon the cross. I'm going to ask you turn with me to two or three passages in the word of God; the first, to Psalm 22 and verse 15; Psalm 22 and verse 15.

Now this is the Psalm of the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus and in Psalm 22 and verse 15, David writes, "My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death". Again, you notice the connection. There is the death of our Lord mentioned and then the reference made to his strength being dried up like a potsherd. There is a sense of lack of moisture in our Lord. Now turn to chapter 32 and verse 4. This is the Psalm in which David describes his experience of forgiveness after his great sin. It's his Psalm of confession after he had committed his great sin and after he had confessed his sin and been forgiven. He wrote this Psalm to extol the blessings of the forgiven man. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered". He has mental health after his spiritual healing. "Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile".

Now notice how he describes his experience when he had unconfessed sin upon his heart, "When I kept silence, my bones became old through my roaring all the day long". The poor man had a guilt complex and he had a guilt complex because he was guilty. A guilt complex, it's not a bad thing. A guilt complex is a good thing. A guilt complex let's us know that we are not in proper relationship to God. It's his way of say,

"You ought to get right". It'd be a terrible thing if we had no feeling in our hands and we were playing around a fire because we might discover that our hand fell into the fire and then discover that we had no hand, never having felt. But we have feeling and, thus, we have pain when our hands come into contact with fire and we are grateful for the fact that we do have the ability to feel pain.

Now the guilt complex is the way we feel spiritual pain. David had that, "For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: (Now's he talking about the time when he was out of fellowship with God) my moisture is turned into the drought of summer". One of the characteristic things of the man out of fellowship with God, David says, is that he's just like a man who is in terrible need of liquid. In other words, he's thirsty. The reason for this is that the fires of divine judgment upon sin are active in the heart of the man who is out of fellowship with God.

Now the extreme instance of this, of course, is our Lord Jesus who hung upon the cross as the offering for sin and God meted out upon him the penalty for the sin of sinners. And the extreme of the suffering of sin brought the extreme of the sense of lack of moisture and the drought of summer. And, therefore, it seems to me, there are other texts I could turn to like Proverbs chapter 17 and verse 22, "A broken spirit drieth the bones". It seems to me that this text then has reference to an internal suffering that was going on in the heart of our Lord as well as an external one and that when Jesus cried, "I thirst" upon the cross, it was not simply that he wanted water to drink, but it was an expression of the fact that he had felt the fires of divine judgment upon sin in the way that no other person had ever felt them. He had felt the fires of judgment because of my sin. And so this then is a statement not only of the reality of the suffering of our Lord, but of the severity of his suffering under the judgment of God. "From above (Lamentations says) he has sent fire into my bones". Therefore, when I read, "I thirst", I think not only of our Lord wanting a glass of vinegar, I think of the fact that this is the result of having the experience which was epitomized in "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Well, the consequences of the saying described in chapter Matthew 27 and verse 49 are simply "mockery". It is an echo of the hardness of humanity. That humanity gathered around the cross of our Lord Jesus was totally unable to enter into any sympathy whatsoever with what was going on. The world is blind just as those two young men who stood on my door and accused me of being blind. They were totally blind; totally blind. There was no possible way for me to get through to them. The only possible way for them to understand was for God the Holy Spirit to remove the veil upon their eyes. The world is totally blind and does not understand.

The fifth saying then is a revelation of the sovereign, sober heart of Jesus Christ. He prepares himself for death. He, the well of water, thirsts. And the fifth saying, finally, is also a revelation of the state of the unsaved because, you see, what our Lord suffered for sinners describes the judgment of the sinners who refuse the salvation of Christ. The present state of men outside of Christ is reflected by the fact that they thirst. As a matter of fact, this very figure, as you know, is used in the New Testament of the man outside of Jesus Christ. It is the same gospel writer, the Apostle John, who lays stress upon that. He says, for example, in the fourth chapter giving the account of the interview of our Lord with the Samaritan woman, "The woman saith unto him, 'Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw'". Now our Lord, of course, has something beyond what she has in mind, evidently, but the idea of thirsting is a figure of the man who is outside of Christ. In the sixth chapter, he states it more plainly. He says in the 35th verse, these are the words of our Lord as reported by John, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst". Men outside of Jesus Christ thirst because judgment is already at work. It is not that they shall be judged, but as John says, "The wrath of God abides now upon all who have not received our Lord Jesus".

The future state is also reflected by this term "thirst." Remember our Lord's parable of the rich man? "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he

may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame"; the thirst of everlasting judgment. But the thirsting that begins in this life and continues more intensely throughout all eternity does not have to be ours. The Scriptures invite those who are thirsting to come and receive forgiveness, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price". And then I think one of the most beautiful passages of the Bible, in Revelation chapter 7, describing the destiny of those who have come out of great tribulation it says, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes".

For the simple reason that Jesus Christ cried out, "I thirst" bearing the judgment of God. Let's bow together in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the privilege of the study of the Scriptures and we thank Thee for this most intense utterance of our Lord. Most of all, we thank Thee for him who suffered all of this fire of divine judgment in his inmost being that we might have life. We commit ourselves to Thee. We pray that throughout this week we may...

**[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]**