

DEVOTION for PENTECOST 23

PSALM 149:1-5

Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, His praise in the assembly of the godly!

Let Israel be glad in His Maker; let the children of Zion rejoice in their King!

Let them praise His name with dancing, making melody to Him with tambourine and lyre!

For the Lord takes pleasure in His people; He adorns the humble with salvation.

Let the godly exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds.

Let the high praises of God be in their throats and two-edged swords in their hands.

To execute vengeance on the nations and punishments on the peoples.

To bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron.

To execute on them the judgement that is written! This is the honour for all His godly ones. Praise the Lord!

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

DEUTERONOMY 34:1-12

Moses death and burial

Questions for reflection

- 1) Why did Moses in perfect health, die?
- 2) Moses was the giver of the law, what can the law never do?
- 3) Why was it important for Israel to mourn 30 days for Moses?

1 CORINTHIANS 1:19-30

The wisdom and power of God, expressed in Christ

- 1) Why is the word of the cross important to those who are being saved?
- 2) What is foolish about the cross to those who are perishing?
- 3) Why does God chose things that are small in the eyes of the world?

“THE CROSS”

The cross is a symbol of our faith and of the real hope we have for eternal life in Christ. The cross was an instrument of death, but has become the most powerful symbol of life. This is amazing when you stop to think about it. Can you imagine wearing a miniature guillotine around your neck? If your car was broken down and you were stranded on the side of the road, how would you feel if the first person to pull over wore a noose around their neck? We don't think of it the same way about the cross, but the cross was an instrument of death, like the noose and the guillotine. In fact, the cross was a far more gruesome form of capital punishment, meant to torture more than to kill.

Odd as it sounds, the guillotine was invented as a humane form of capital punishment. It brought death quickly and painlessly. At least in theory, because no one who experienced the guillotine has been able to confirm it. Executed properly, the noose brings death almost as swiftly as the guillotine. The cross was torture and death combined! People could live on the cross for days in unspeakable agony, before dying. No human symbol has been so completely transformed in its meaning than the cross. From a symbol of barbaric cruelty, misery, suffering and death, the cross has become the ultimate symbol of mercy, forgiveness and divine love. For on the cross Jesus suffered and died to pardon and sanctify you and me.

The cross shows us two things: Human sin and God's love. The cross shows the wages of sin is death. The cross shows the horrible effect sin has on the human spirit. Such a horrible and tortuous death in the name of justice, could only be inflicted by creatures twisted and distorted by sin. The cross shows how deeply God loves sinful human beings. God loves us so much that Jesus subjected Himself to the most brutal death, so that humans twisted and distorted by sin would be forgiven and healed in relationship with Him. There is no sign more expressive of God's love and forgiveness than the cross. On the cross, Jesus shed His blood for the sin of the world. All who believe in Him, receive forgiveness in time and are promised life in eternity through His resurrection.

“THE OLD RUGGED CROSS” CCLI #453681

**On a hill far away, stood an old rugged cross, The emblem of suffering and shame;
And I love that old cross, where the dearest and best, For a world of lost sinners was slain.**

Chorus

**So I'll cherish the old rugged cross. Till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross, and exchange it some day for a crown.**

**O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world, Has a wondrous attraction for me;
For the dear Lamb of God, left his glory above, to bear it to dark Calvary.**

**In the old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine, A wondrous beauty I see;
for 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died, to pardon and sanctify me.**

**To the old rugged cross, I will ever be true. It's shame and reproach gladly bear;
Then he'll call me some day to my home far away, Where his glory forever I'll share.**

PRAYER

Dearest Jesus, we thank you for the sacrifice of your cross in which you suffered the effects of human cruelty caused by sin and in this bore the penalty for the sin of the world. Bless us to see in your cross, a constant testimony to your love for us and for every human soul. Inspire us through the cross to share the gospel of repentance and forgiveness, so that others might believe and have life in you. Encourage us in our repentance through the cross with the promise of forgiveness and eternal life. In your Name we pray. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen**

THE CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

BENEDICTION

Psalm 64:10

“Let the righteous one rejoice in the Lord and take refuge in Him! Let all the upright in heart exult!”

BIBLE KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

In what city did Lot find refuge at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah? (Hint: mentioned in the Old Testament reading)

In what city did Paul converse with philosophers?

What city did Jesus call home during His ministry?

Answers to last week's quiz

After the flood. Genesis 9:3-4

The Blood of the Lamb. Revelation 7:14

The word of God. Ephesians 6:17