

*SATURDAY, APRIL 4*

## Jesus Was Victorious on the Cross

Q. Did Jesus say God's promise was fulfilled when he was crucified? A. [Jesus] said, "It is finished." (John 19:30)

Do you know what a mystery is? A mystery is something that can't be understood, unless someone explains it to you. Remember when we wondered how God could allow Jesus to die on the cross if he had never committed any sins? This week we will unravel that mystery. Jesus wasn't dying for sins that he had committed; rather, he was dying for our sins. His death was fulfilling God's rescue plan. And so, when Jesus had done everything God had asked him to do on the earth, he called out in a loud voice, "It is finished!" Jesus said these words like someone who just finished doing something great. He accomplished his goal. He finished his task. He was the perfect sacrifice for sins. If you want to know if your sins are forgiven, look back to the death of Jesus. He is the only perfect sacrifice for our sin. And his death is the answer to the mystery of how God would rescue us from sin. God sent his only Son to pay the penalty for our disobedience.

### Reflection and Interaction:

- How do you think Jesus felt about finishing the work of paying for our sin?
- What does Jesus's death on the cross teach you about God's love for you?
- Memorize this week's big picture verse: John 19:30.

READING: John 19:16–18; John 19:28–30

NOTES:

*SUNDAY, APRIL 5*

## • God Banished Jesus from His Presence for Us

Q. Did Jesus say God's promise was fulfilled when he was crucified? A. [Jesus] said, "It is finished." (John 19:30)

We read five different verses from the Bible today—and they were all memory verses from earlier times in our devotional. Each one points us to being able to understand what was happening when Jesus died on the cross. Jesus was banished for our sins. Jesus perished. Jesus was the sacrificial Lamb. Jesus represents God's people who go into exile. Jesus's death is the destruction of the Temple. The Bible has been showing us all along the penalty for sin. It requires separation from God. He banished Adam and Eve from the garden; he caused everything to perish in the flood; he killed all the firstborn Egyptians at the time of the Exodus; he sent Israel into exile; and he had Solomon's temple destroyed to show that he was separated from his people because of their sin. Now, Jesus's death shows us what all those events meant. Jesus takes on the punishment for the sin of his people. He was abandoned by God when he died on the cross (Mark 15:33–34). In his death you see the extent of God's love for you!

### Reflection and Interaction:

- Do you see how the New Testament helps us understand the Old Testament?
- Thank God for giving us all the clues we need to understand the mystery of his great love.

READING: Genesis 3:23; Genesis 6:17; Exodus 12:21; Isaiah 5:13; John 2:19

NOTES:

*MONDAY, APRIL 6*

## • Jesus's Death Is the Good News of God's Rescue

Q. Did Jesus say God's promise was fulfilled when he was crucified? A. [Jesus] said, "It is finished." (John 19:30)

Let's do a quick review of the Gospel of John. First, we heard things said about Jesus. Do you remember the words of the angels and John the Baptist? Then we listened to the many things Jesus said and did. Remember his words about the temple, the kingdom, the resurrection, and the Way? We even learned that Jesus raised someone from the dead. Next we saw what others did to Jesus. They crucified him on the cross. And this week we are learning about what Jesus said about what they did: "It is finished!" The Gospel of John gives us the words and actions of others and the words and actions of Jesus to help us see that Jesus's death is God's plan to rescue us from sin.

### Reflection and Interaction:

- Do you believe that Jesus died on the cross to rescue you from your sin?
- If actions speak louder than words, what does Jesus's death on the cross mean to you?

READINGS: John 19:30

NOTES:

*TUESDAY, APRIL 7*

## • The Surprise of Easter

Q. How did Thomas respond to Jesus after the resurrection? A. Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28)

Have you ever been so surprised by seeing someone that the shock made you gasp for air? Just such a surprise happened to the followers of Jesus, especially Thomas. The two days after Jesus's crucifixion had been the most difficult days his friends could remember. Jesus, the one they had hoped was the Messiah, had been crucified, was dead, and buried. His followers were all very sad. They never imagined that this was how it would all end. But the third day had now come, and they were beginning to deal with the reality that Jesus was no longer with them. On that morning some of Jesus's friends went to the tomb. When they got there, the tomb was open and Jesus's body was not there. They wondered what was going on. Had someone taken the body away? Their sadness turned to confusion, but later, they saw him alive and were shocked! He had risen from the dead! Finally Thomas saw him too. What an exciting day that first Easter must have been.

### Reflection and Interaction:

- How surprised do you think the disciples were to learn that Jesus was alive?
- Sing the song "My Lord, My God."
- Begin to memorize this week's verse: John 20:28.

READINGS: John 20:1–8; John 20:19–20; John 20:24–29

NOTES:

*WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8*

## • The Necessity of Easter

Q. How did Thomas respond to Jesus after the resurrection? A. Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28)

Today there are two questions to answer. First, do you have any idea how Jesus could rise from the dead? The answer is something we learned earlier. Jesus is the resurrection and the life—the way, the truth, and the life. Since Jesus is life itself, Jesus could not stay dead. And since Jesus had never sinned, he did not deserve the punishment for sin—and death could not rightly hold him. His resurrection was bound to happen. Second, what do Thomas’s words, “My Lord and my God,” teach you about Jesus? Part of the answer is simple; they teach us that Jesus is, in fact, the Son of God. He is God in the flesh. But the words of Thomas also teach us that Jesus is Lord. And the word Lord means master, one who has human authority. The resurrection of Jesus doesn’t prove to us only that he is God, but it teaches us that he is the perfect man too! It tells us that Jesus never did anything wrong. Since death is the penalty for every man or woman who sins, then Jesus’s resurrection from the dead must be the reward for living perfectly. No wonder Thomas put it like he did: “My Lord and my God!” In all his humanity, Jesus is the one and only person who can rightfully stand, on his own merit, in the presence of God. That gives us great hope of standing there too!

### Reflection and Interaction:

- Can you say in your own words why the resurrection of Jesus is so important?
- What does the resurrection of Jesus prove to you about Jesus?

READINGS: John 20:24–30

NOTES:

*THURSDAY, APRIL 9*

## • The Triumph of Easter

Q. How did Thomas respond to Jesus after the resurrection? A. Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28)

What are some things that might help you on a treasure hunt? You certainly would need a map or clues along the way, wouldn't you? Our devotionals have been leading us on a treasure hunt. Our Bible readings for today were past clues that help us know that we have found our greatest treasure in Jesus. In fact, his resurrection from the dead explains all the clues we have been picking up. His resurrection is the temple rebuilt—the Old Testament time of rebuilding the temple was the clue. He is the returning person from exile—the Old Testament returning people were the clues. His resurrection is proof that he is the King of kings who will reign forever—King David is the clue. And his resurrection is the fulfillment of God's promise to bless all the families of the earth—the promise to Abraham was the clue. In Jesus's resurrection we find God's greatest treasure!

### Reflection and Interaction:

- How does the resurrection help you to praise God?
- Praise God for his surprising, necessary, and triumphant plan for salvation in song and in prayer.

READINGS: Genesis 12:1–3; 2 Samuel 7:12; 2 Chronicles 6:2; Jeremiah 29:14; John 2:19

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