

## MEDITATION ON A SINGLE RAY OF LIGHT

The day dawned bright with promise but not for the man who was to die that day. It was a strange feeling he had that morning. He well knew the cruel torture that awaited him, but there was something in the air; an undercurrent of excitement, a movement of anticipation that he did not understand. Indeed, before daybreak he became aware of a great commotion outside the prison walls, like a crowd was gathering. Roman soldiers hastened to and fro through the corridors with seeming urgency. Dared he hope that something unusual would keep him from being crucified that day?

No, it was not to be. As hope began to rise in his heart, a contingent of soldiers appeared at his cell door and he knew the time had come. They pushed him through the corridors, out the door and into the bright morning light. Knowing what to expect from watching others drag the heavy crosspiece through the streets, he was very surprised to see the soldiers bearing it on their shoulders as he was prodded to move quickly along. What was the hurry?

Arriving at the hill called Golgotha, hastily and mechanically, the soldiers nailed him to the cross and raised him up. Through the fog of pain, he noticed his friend and accomplice already hanging from another cross but his attention was immediately diverted to the prisoner just arriving. An angry crowd had followed this prisoner and it was obvious that his torture had been unbelievably cruel. Who was this man that had inspired such hatred?

Suddenly, in a burst of revelation that overcame the searing pain, he knew. This was the man who some believed to be the long awaited Messiah, the one who would deliver the Jews. In fact, just a few days before there had been a grand procession through the city gates, proclaiming him to be King. But now the religious leaders and the crowd were hurling taunts and angry words at him, daring him to come down from the cross. Even his friend joined in the fray, mocking him, challenging him to save all of them.

But wait, why was it getting so dark? It was not long before the unexpected darkness, falling like a thick veil, began to envelop the crowd, dispersing them. It was now quiet, only tearful murmuring and sobbing coming from the faithful at the foot of the cross.

When the emotional trauma of the day, coupled with the excruciating pain began to subside into a stilling numbness, a peaceful serenity came upon the thief on the cross. And then, the most incredible thing happened. Through the enveloping darkness shone a single ray of light, emanating from the heavens and illuminating the words above the center cross; the words written by Pilate, moved by the Spirit of God. These words of truth, identifying Truth Himself, penetrated into the very heart of the thief and he believed as he read the words: JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

God indeed speaks at sundry times and in divers manners (Heb 1:1) and this day He spoke clearly and surely to a common thief, in words written by an unregenerate soul, placed above the dying Saviour, and illuminated by a single ray of heavenly light.

### **Titus 2:11**

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,