


LAST WORDS OF THE MASTER

ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION STUDY

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Introduction

There are seven significant statements that our Lord made whilst anguishing on the accursed tree. It seems to me only scant understanding of them has been demonstrated. Their original Aramaic makes them a fit subject for this site dedicated as it is to covering the New Testament themes in the Master's voice. One entire page of the ABC website is dedicated to "Bitesize Studies"(or short commentaries) on NT books and subjects and something of the early history of the Aramaic New Testament and saints that kept faithful to the old Syriac of the "simple gospel" or Peshitta.

The Reality of Truth bathed in tears of love

There is a whole body of doctrine in the seven words of our Lord. There is also much more to come forth from the word as one of the Pilgrim Fathers urged. I make the endeavour to elucidate what I have found and set it out for others to build on.

This study is not by design a devotional treatment but the result must be a much deeper devotion to the One who "was wounded for me"; to "Jesus who paid it all (for) all to Him I owe"; to the One who "loved me ere I knew Him."

I heard an old, old story,
How a Saviour came from glory
How He gave His life on Calvary
To save a wretch like me;
I heard about His groaning
Of His precious blood's atoning,
that I repented of my sins and won the victory.

They killed the prince of Life who brought life and immortality to light in the gospel

There are layers of meaning and relevance in each of the seven sayings from the cross. I will deal with them in the following order though I am not dogmatic that this order is absolute but it is how I perceive the development of events. Happily each saying sets its own context or *sitz im leben* and this life situation leads into fascinating layers of truth much of which is unexplored and the entirety of which is vital to our

understanding of just how historic and eternally precious is this extraordinary man who embodies deity and trails an adoring stricken tear drenched humanity to the door of heaven as He dies. Never shall we get truth so refined-such vassitudes of suffering blended with sheer splendour of heart and indomitable will to give all to redeem. This is the man from Glory-the one we long to meet-the one we want to honour-to serve-to talk about-to travel lifelong to behold-to hear say “welcome home”. A paraplegic preacher whom I admired loved and can never forget once asked me “What are the five things that were made on earth and will be seen in heaven. The answer of course is “The marks of the crucifixion”. O wondrous cross said one-but rather the wonder be the one who there was put to death for me.

The seven sayings

- 1.”Father forgive them for they know not what they do”
2. “Mother behold thy son, son behold thy mother”
3. “Today you will be with me in Paradise”
4. “I thirst”
- 5 “My God my God why do I remain (here)”[No’s 4-5 are inextricable time-wise comparing the gospels of Matthew & John
- 6 “It is finished”
- 7 “Into your hands I commit my spirit”

1 Father forgive them Luke 23.34

It may surprise many but this well-known and authentic word of our Lord is omitted by great Greek uncials-principal documents as Bodmer(3rd c) Vaticanus(4th c), Bezae(6th c), Washington (5th c) Koridethi(11th c) along with the Old Syriac(Curetonian) but not by the Gwilliams Peshitta Palestinian Syriac Gwynn’s Philoxenian or the Harclean Syriac which have it with * as the original reading.

We would be churlish indeed if we not at the outset acknowledge a very substantial debt to the Aramaic editions of the text of the Gospels.

(a) **Father.** Our Lord is not responding to those who drove nails into his arms and feet on the human level. He is pleading for them. His example influenced Stephen. Now crucified our precious Lord speaks in love and unchanged assurance with the Father. He once said “Thou hearest me always”. Even so.

(b)**Forgive them.** Who are the subjects of the prayer? When Stephen was stoned the context with regard to accessories to the act was those immediately present. Taken at this level we have a quaternion of Roman soldiers in an inner circle. But margining them we have priests and

rulers and persons who cried “Crucify”. Are they indemnified by the prayer? Then at some distance we have that major participant in the Act of Crucifixion-Pontius Pilate-who secures mention in the Creed “Crucified under Pontius Pilate”. There are wicked hands who have slunk away or were not permitted to attend-those who shipped our Lord and those who played in “the game of King” -are they indemnified? Our Lord used the word SEBAQ for “forgive”. It is the precise word in another of the seven “words from the cross” and has been taken quite wrongly to mean “forsake!” It can mean “remain” “let alone”(as when the centurion said “Let alone –see it Elias will come” or even “pass by” as in Passover. This final connotation is apt-because Christ’s remaining on the cross until death was a Passover and the application of Passover benefits to the wicked and their thought and works by parallel answers to the freedom of Israel under Pharaoh who by the “blood of the lamb” were rendered “recipients of redemption”. So understood our Lord’s heart if it were sought would extend to all in concert with the decision of the Jewish leaders-and taken in a universal historical and New Testament context if would, I have no doubt, afford equal amnesty to all in every age since who refuse his majestic interposition and later lament their attitude. Part of the answer was that big number later left the scene beating their breasts and also big number repented on the day of Pentecost. The prayer of Christ is doubtless mediatorial and capable of touching the lives of all sinners whose sin demanded the Lamb be slain.

(c)For they know not what they do Personal awareness and intimate knowledge is not widely disseminated –certainly to the Romans. Paul says “Had they known they would not have killed the Lord of Glory”. Whilst ignorance is no excuse for breaking the Law subverting justice is plainly a crime. Pilate and Herod knew of Christ’s innocence. The High Priests had nothing in their file on Christ that showed sin except their erroneous presumption that he was a blasphemer. Our Lord did not diminish guilt or belittle injustice. He stated “diminished responsibility” on the grounds of not knowing the core provision of the gospel. This goes back to Genesis 18.25 “Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?” The answer in large part to this was the gift of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the apostles. This grand response still appertains under the gospel-the Mediator’s appeal –the Father’s compassion and the Spirit’s call relate to this “Passover style Prayer” which affects in one way or other everyone under heaven.

(d)SEBAQ is a critically important Aramaic term in the New Testament. I have laboured on its root meaning and contextual significance through the 4 gospels and the gospel of Matthew has 41 instances to reference.

One certain meaning is “forgive” or “loose” from sins and SEBAQ is the sole Aramaic term for “forgiveness”. **That must theologically connect with the death of Christ described as the NT “Passover” and significantly SEBAQ also means “Passing over” or “leaving”. Thus the act of atonement on the cross is as Paul says “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us” 1Cor 5.7.**

With our Lord’s use of the word in the 5th saying which is popularly and weekly quoted from thousands of pulpits and platforms we have to come to some view on what relevance for the NT Passover the SEBAQTHANI of our Lord has? The popular view of preachers is that here we have an appeal against “breach of union and or fellowship” with the Father—a questionable theory especially in face of the existence of an Aramaic word to do service for “forsaking”. The passive of the Peal means “(to be) allowed”. Christ could have queried being “allowed” or “left” or “remaining”. Assuming His expression was all heard and is complete **His expression is best understood as a plea for completion of the Passover requirement of death** but God had taken no personal powers to slay His Son nor would our Lord expect such exercise. The idea of the Father forsaking derives best from the Greek εγκαταλειπω but the general Aramaic usage is “remain” as distinct from AZERATHANI “forsake” and would constitute a very fair preparation day notice that as over the land lambs were slain (Josephus “Wars” 6.9.3 states that “they slay their sacrifices from the ninth hour till the eleventh”) the true paschal sacrifice should proceed. Matthew tells us (27.46) that it was about the ninth hour. **The cry is one of heartbreak—the “Why” that broke the heart—the anguished cry of the Lamb-in the throes of death—with the outward testimony of the soldier’s thrust (Jn.19.34) to our Lord’s side and so the 6th and 7th cries follow almost instantaneously. Connected to this Passover death of the Mediator is His intercessory prayer that opens the gospel door of repentance to the whole world.**

Bearing sin and scoffing rude
In my place condemned He stood
Sealed my pardon with His blood
Hallelujah what a Saviour.

2. Woman behold thy son- (John) behold thy mother Jn19.26-7

According to early testimony, Mary, accompanied by Jesus’ aunt Mary Qliope and His unmarried devoted aunt Magdalene, stood near the cross. The testimony concerning the Magdalene relationship to our Lord is an early one. Mary stood [LOTH] close to the cross. Our Lord saw

John who had remained present or stood as a witness [QUM] at the cross. The provision our Lord made for Mary can be understood as witnessed by other family members though not a matter recorded by the other narratives and one to which the disciples were privy.

John describes himself as “deep in the affections” or “bowels of affection” of our Lord. Jesus’ look locked on to [HAZEH] His mother and disciple looking at the “belonging” of each to Him and the equal sensitivity and relationship of caring of either[L’] as He spoke. Their common care as a “sword pierced their hearts also” was painfully evident. At that moment the deep emotions of Christ could be seen in His eyes as he looked at His dearest mother as a wife who had lost her husband and was imminently to lose her firstborn and then at the disciple who drew the raw and powerful emotions and compassion of his heart and He welded a family bond that was to last years and to take Mary with John on outreach far to the west.

What about Nazareth? What about James, Joseph, Simon and Judas our Lord’s brothers and His sisters? We know that within a few weeks James whom Jesus met after the resurrection was a leading figure in the church in Jerusalem. The others may well have continued with the carpentry and building business in Nazareth to secure their livelihood.

When John’s ministry expanded to Ephesus in the latter half of the first century following the work of Paul and Timothy Mary traditionally continued to be his responsibility. On visiting Ephesus one has evidence that Mary resided at some height overlooking the city from the south. Whilst John’s grave is to the East of the city there is no sign that the virgin was buried in Asia and a tradition that she was taken for burial to Jerusalem.

The Aramaic of John tells us He took her to himself. The English translation puts it “to his home” and the AV “to his things”. That originally was in the most pleasant area of Bethsaida-where she would have been domiciled with Salome-her sister (Mt.27.56 & Mk15.40) who was also present at the cross. Thus Mary in being taken to John’s residence found immediate family comfort in her generation with whom she may well have shared much of the early history as well as the ministry of Jesus’ life. By this time both she and Salome appear to have lost their husbands.

The wonderful care and provision Jesus made for His mother stands out for all time as a jewel of honour to parenting. This blessed woman Mary or Miriam when her heart was riven and her eyes flooded with tears had

the immediate support she needed and she stood with Jesus and the disciples-**she was embedded amongst them-she whilst she lived could testify to the incarnation**- the October story -of our Lord's birth.

Joy to the world the Lord has come
Let earth receive her king
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
Let heaven and nature sing (Isaac Watts)

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
while shepherds watch are keeping

Haste, haste to bring Him laud
The babe the Son of Mary.(W C.Dix)

3 And he(the dying thief) said, "Let me have been remembered when you come in your kingdom!" Jesus said to him "Truly I say to you that today you will be with me in paradise!" Luke 23.43

First let us not miss the very personal Aramaic "My Lord"ܡܝܠܪܕ which alters the request one based on a very considered personal relationship that runs deeper than common suffering to kingdom commitment.

It is significant that ܡܠܪܝ(my Lord) or ܡܠܪܢ(our Lord) in the Peshitta Aramaic occurs 299 times whereas in the Greek NT the personal is lost 231 times leaving only 68 intimate expressions-a 77% drop-precisely the same as the drop from Hebrew ADONAI in the OT. For those who value intimacy with the Lord Aramaic Peshitta text is the text of choice.

You will notice that the thief imagined the Kingdom of our Lord was long removed in time from their impending death. A re-assessment of the Kingdom of the heavens occurs because of this interchange. Paradise is just "over the hilltop"-co-existent and imminent.

"Let me have been remembered" in the long future beginnings of kingdom life says the thief. Today in the glorious life of the kingdom you will be remembered.

The Aramaic has "Truly I tell you" –one of 51 such MT expressions and of 135 "I say unto you" saying. Logos bible college has rightly critiqued

Bullinger's insistence that "I say to you" is a common OT expression. It is used only in Deuteronomy for emphasis on the law but has no routine common replication elsewhere in the OT. Our Lord coined the phrase and it is connected to His "I am status" and so marks divine authority.

Our Lord made an express promise which shows that He expected immediate entrance to the presence of the Father as to His Spirit and though His bodily ascension must wait his "intimacy" with the Father of Spirits was to be immediate in heavenly realms. The day had but 3 hours left but those three hours would be joyfully spent without pain and with untarnished joy in heaven.

This word of Luke cuts clean across the idea that souls sleep between death and the trumpet call. The fact is the dead receive their temples when their tents fall down as Paul taught. The invention of "the intermediate state" is swept away by genuine NT doctrine. **This simple prayer of the dying thief unveils the real facts of how resurrection affects our future.** The souls who rose after Christ and entered Jerusalem and then paradise and the visit of Paul to Paradise or the 3rd heaven and the experience of the dying thief all cohere as one to assure us that to "be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land(earth?) until three in the afternoon,

The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day
And there may I though vile as he wash all my sins away.
Dear dying Lamb thy precious blood shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed church of God be saved to sin no more.
When this poor lisping stammering tongue
lies silent in the grave
Then in a nobler sweeter song
I'll sing thy power to save

4 I thirst John19.28

The double reference to SHALAM in v.28 and v.30 connect the 4th and 5th Words from the Cross to our Lord's statement "I thirst" in such a fashion to establish their companioning immediacy.

The last disposition of family responsibility was complete. The scripture was largely fulfilled. The peace offering which relates to the above references was bound to the cross. An event relating to two written prophecies from Psalm22.18 and 69.21 were to be "filled up" MALA

Our Lord said “I thirst” תַּצְהָא TZAHA and “they filled sponge from vinegar and set it on hyssop and put it near צִבְעוֹ—“joined-or united” חֵלֶל - to His mouth and when He began to receive the vinegar he spoke... This word fades into the next demonstrating how quickly words 4-7 occur.

The hyssop was a sprinkler used often to sprinkle soap. In Psalm 51.7 we read “Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean”. In Exodus 12 Leviticus 14 and Hebrews 9 we have references to a hyssop sprinkler of the sort used by the priests.

What then are we to make of the vinegar contact with our Lord’s lips? In Matthew 26.29 and Mark 14.25 we have our Lord’s historic statement that he would not drink πικρόν (Greek) or תַּצְהָא (Aramaic) “imbibe” or “swallow” fruit of the vine till He drinks afresh in the millennial kingdom.

Let me propose that the answer to this thirst is that very enjoyment of the kingdom which is to come. Our Lord would of course enjoy the company of the saints of God long before this earthly kingdom emerged and in the context of Paradise and heaven where the saints receive their clothing and “a temple not made with hands” there would clearly be neither Passover nor Communion celebration by bread and wine. The Lamb is the light of that place and the presence of the church triumphant is the joy on which during the long interim our Lord has been fully satisfied.

So when we assess the combined gospel witness to the “Thirst” of Christ it was clearly deeply real physically **but behind it lay a reference to the millennium which must not be lost from the theology of the cross.** There will be an earthly kingdom-it will last as John the divine continued to stress in his later revelation for 1000 years and during that time our Lord would be present in a celebratory and joyful sense in realization of the prayer He taught –spoken by millions over 2 interim millennia. Glory to Him who is able to accomplish every word He promises.

*There is a happy land
Far far away
Where saints in glory stand
Bright bright as day
O how they sweetly sing
Worthy our Saviour King!
Loud let His praises ring,
Praise praise for aye.*

5 My God My God why have you left me? Matthew 27.46 Mark 15.34

Matthew like Luke remarks that there was darkness between twelve noon and three in the afternoon (the 6th until the 9th hour). "Earth" ארץ is the Aramaic for the terrestrial world as distinct from the heavens-that is not to say that the sun was bright above the clouds. The phenomenon has no precedent as the death of Christ has no equivalent.

At noon the taunts appear to have tailed off. Then three hours later-before and within sight of 3pm or as the hour was about to strike Jesus cried out with a loud voice.

The expression is of course in Aramaic not Hebrew. The vital thing to observe is that the Greek of Matthew renders the Aramaic just as Mark does translating to Greek and using the LXX word $\epsilon\psi\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\epsilon\iota\pi\omega$ from Psalm 22.1 which in Hebrew is AZABTHANI as distinct from our Lord's SHEBAQTHANI.

Is there any major significant issue with the "switch" of verb from David's Messianic psalm and his personal existential forsakenness and the traumatic cry of our Lord in this fifth word from the cross?

Aramaic speakers tell us that the word SHEBAQ means "left" in the sense of "remain". My own experience of the word in Aramaic NT contexts yields the following meanings:

- (a) Allow (it to be so now) Matthew 3.15-so let things remain as now
- (b) Passed(over)-i.e. The fever left Matthew 8.15
- (c) Forgive "Father forgive them" Lk 23.34 Matthew 6.14 "forgive" Really "Let remain unpunished" 9.15 sins "left" or passed over
- (d) Remain "Let them both (tares and wheat) remain till harvest Matt 13.30
- (e) He **let them remain** and **left** Matt 13.4 SEBAQTHANI & AZABTHANI Jesus uses the two verbs distinctly-also 18.12
- (f) Cancel -Allow unpaid/cancel his debt 19.32
- (g) (g) divorce "A writ of Moses" 19.4
- (h) Let the children remain for of such is the Kingdom 19.14
- (i) "We have left all (let it remain)" Matthew 19.27 & 29
- (j) He left them (let them remain) & went out of the city... and at dawn He returned Matt. 21.17
- (k) The scribes left Him & went away Matt. 22.22
- (l) He would not have left his house to be broken in to Mt 24.43
- (m) The disciples let him remain & fled Mt 26.56

I have had to try to make sense of the sheer flexibility of this word and my best shot is that it has two basic meanings (1) “to pass over” and in that sense to leave something or someone as it or they had been. The second is to “let remain” of leave alone. Thus sins can be “passed over” and by the Lamb forgiven-demanding a moral Passover. Apart from a few moral exceptions the expression “let remain” will cover virtually all the practical cases.

Moving on to what “Allow to remain” could lead to in a penultimate word from the cross addressed to the Father one has to say that it certainly does not look at all like a gentle rebuke “Why forsake?” or a confirmation of broken fellowship. The hour of the death of the Passover lambs had come. Jesus was still alive and unlike they He was suffering agony. He had in the garden requested that the cup(of suffering) pass expeditely-to that prayer He knew there would be an answer-but almost six hours of suffering had passed.

Those around the cross understanding some of the Aramaic sounds if not a little of the language said “He calls Elias(Elijah)”. They went further-they stood waiting something dramatic. Even they knew this call was not going to be lost on the Almighty. They imagined Jesus would not remain on the cross but be rescued by Elijah and history would somehow proceed from that.

It was not so to be-the Lord was to die as He had purpose to do as a ransom for many. The curtain would be rent-the darkness would lift-history would proceed-but by a far more glorious course – through resurrection and the gospel would go viral worldwide.

This word from the cross makes emphatic the unbroken fellowship between Father and Son and throws into distinct relief the glory of the Resurrection following the redemptive forgiveness purchased by the Lamb of God

And towards nine hours or about the face of nine Yeshua cried with a loud voice and said “**AIL AIL LEMANA SABAQTHANI 43** “O Strong God O strong God why have you let me remain?” *In the light of three phases of taunting involving the challenge of coming down from the cross this call would be understandable-but the reason is to be sought rather in the Gethsemane prayer and the desire that the agony be alleviated by brevity-for over 6 hours it had been extreme. The work of atonement to which Yeshua committed involved death and that was now imminent. The words I have capitalized when transliterated in Greek*

appear to come from *an Aramaic Targum* of the Hebrew of Psalm 22.1 In other words another dialect of Aramaic from the OT. The Greek gives both a transliteration and a Greek translation. George Lamsa insisted and I happily concur that this was not a quote from Psalm 22.1 where the word AZERATHANI not SABACHTHANI is used.

*Dear dying Lamb Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be save to sin no more
Then in a nobler sweeter song
I'll sing thy power to save
When this poor lisping stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.*

6 It is finished John 19.30

It is **John** who records the 6th word most explicitly “Behold it is finished” Jesus said. Matthew Mark and Luke speak of our Lord calling or speaking in a loud voice and expiring. It is Luke who is most specific of the final word “Father, into your hands I commend my Spirit”.

Matthew writes “Jesus cried again (“It is finished”) and SHABAQ(ED) His spirit” and **Mark** (following Peter) refers to our Lord crying aloud and “expiring”-Mark writes “His spirit departed”[SHALAM(ED)].

It seems **Matthew** is referring to two statements but they are as one to him. The “leaving” of his spirit is conjoined with the loud cry in Matthew. There is in the first gospel no specific mention of the ‘paid/finished/peace’ cry but it may be incorporated in the “leave” or SHABAQ cry.

Mark 15.37 quoting Peter speaks specifically of the cry and writes “Jesus cried in a loud voice and expired” (SHALAM). The voice is a RAMA or “high voice” in both Matthew and Mark. Scholars often tell us that Matthew follows Mark and to some extent he does but it is Peter with Mark who emphasizes the ‘paid/finished/peace’ cry.

Returning to **John's** narrative we have the wording **הָאֵלֹהִים** HA MESHALAM “Behold it is finished” or “Behold peace is made” or “Behold the debt is paid”. If any were within earshot they could see accompanying this call an action of Christ. In the Greek and English we have “He bowed his head and gave up the ghost” which suggests the last words were swallowed in a whisper-yet Matthew records them as a clear and substantial message that could be heard.

John is the only one who tells us what happened visually when our Lord spoke. He uses the word ARAK which is translated “bowed”. It really means “to stretch out” “to lengthen a discourse” “to prolong”. It is very clear that our Lord lifted his head in one Herculean effort as His strength ebbed-He gathered himself and addressed both his followers and his father. His principles of life were to “Love God and others” and even in death He showed His mighty love for all who stood by him as disciples and to the one who sent him with His final “Abba”. Jesus farewell was the traditional SHALAM but in the context of the cross it spoke a “greater peace” and a “greater payment” and a “greater finish” than was ever invested in the word before.

There can be no doubt that anyone close to the cross would see the uplifted head. John was there at the end-of that there can be absolutely no doubt. He may have brought Mary to the party of relatives at a little distant or shepherded them to an agreeable point where they could listen with other disciples supporting-but John was watching every muscle and movement of his dearest Lord. He did hear the word BEHOLD. He did see the final strenuous deliberate act.

“Lo” in the Aramaic **הָאֵלֹהִים** “Ha” is a very clipped but emphatic expression.

In the context of scripture John's uses are very telling



- (A) Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world
Jn1.29
- (B) Behold thy King cometh meek and riding an ass Jon 12.15
- (C) Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed 1Jn3.1
- (D) Behold I stand at the door and knock Rev.3.20
- (E) Behold I come as a thief Rev16.15
- (F) Behold I come quickly Rev.22 7,12

There is no greater alert-and beside it no greater message than this 6th word from the cross “It is finished” **The majestic doctrine mightily underlined by the last visible encouragement of our Lord in dying is the truth the atonement-redemption accomplished and applied**

*Look ye saints the sight is glorious
See the man of sorrows now
From the fight returned victorious
Every knee to him shall bow.
Crown Him crown Him
Crown Him crown Him
Crowns become the victor's brow*

*Lo He comes with clouds descending
Once for favoured sinners slain
Thousand thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of his train
Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah
God appear on earth to reign*

7 Into your hands I commend my spirit Luke23.46

Where did Luke get the insider information concerning the very last words of our Lord? Did he get them direct from Mary? Did he obtain them from Mary through John the divine? Did he get them from Paul who “historied” Peter and if so why did not Mark the narrator of Peter record them? Luke tells us this word was called out in a high voice  It is part of the 226th  or factual historical reference and there are 236 in all.

Let us set the detail of this important fact-set in relief.

The previous set tells about the dying thief and the following one tells about the conviction of the centurion and the people surveying the scene and reacting to the sign from heaven.

This fact set reads:

- (a) And (as the Lord addressed the thief) it was actually exactly the sixth hour and there was darkness over all the earth **until the ninth hour**
- (b)The sun darkened and **the face of the curtain of the temple ripped apart in the middle.** (Luke might be understood to connect the curtain

factor to 12noon but in fact there is no necessary temporal link affirmed) Matthew observes that **it is exactly at the “moment” of our Lord’s expiring** that the curtain was torn-ie the ninth hour. Matthew 27.51. Mark also writes “Jesus breathed His last –the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom”. John has no reference to the curtain.

(c) Luke further writes **“Jesus called out in a high voice and said “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit. He said this and SALAMED”**-ended-or gave a *peace or payment* greeting. It is possible that Luke intends to conjoin “It is finished” and “Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.”

When Luke finishes with “He said this” the import is “He said this **one thing**” ܐܝܢܐ -so the “expiry” he is reporting is a matter apart and exactly and only that which he is stating.

The “laying down” ܐܝܢܐ of the spirit is the handing over of life itself.

The triune God is one in soul or essence QNUMA but each is a separate spirit. The “spirit of Christ” is a particularly treasured factor in the triune God’s life. The usual link words would be “beside” ܒܥܝܢܐ and ܕܝܢܐ “intimate to” but Jesus uses “hands” and the term means both “hands” and “help” and at its root ܝܕܐ is “love”.

Thus the final expression of our Lord begins with “Abba” an affectionate greeting for Eloha-and the commendation is made with awareness of the preciousness with which this “spirit” was regarded and the “hands” in Aramaic speak of the loving sovereign embrace with which our Lord was received back into Glory. So the earthly life of our precious Lord affirms the doctrine extending from cradle to cross “Thou lovest me always”. **The last word from the cross is a powerful affirmation theologically of the Triune oneness of the Godhead.**

Holy holy holy Lord God Almighty

All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea

Holy holy holy merciful and mighty

God in three persons blessed trinity. (Reginald Heber)

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