

## **DAY 35.**

*“It is finished.”*

WHEN Christ had tasted the draught of gall, He spoke the sixth word: “It is finished;” signifying that by His Passion had been fulfilled, all the prophecies, figures, mysteries, scriptures, sacrifices, and promises which had been foretold and written concerning Him. This is that true Son of God, for Whom the Father of heaven has made ready a supper in the kingdom of His eternal blessedness; and He sent His servant, that is, the human and servile nature of Christ, to call them that had been invited to the wedding. For Christ, according to the human nature which He had taken on Him, was not only a servant, but a servant of servants, and served all of us for three and thirty years and more in great labor and suffering. This He Himself tells us through Isaiah the prophet: “You have made Me to serve in your sins.” And, indeed, His whole life long He spent in this; namely, in inviting all men to His supper. For this He preached, He worked miracles, He went from place to place, He cried out, and proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and that every man should make ready for it, but they would not come. And when the Father of the household heard this, He said unto His servant: “Compel them to come in, that My house may be filled.” Then that servant thought thus with himself: How shall I be able, by subtlety and without violence, to compel these men to come, that both rebellion may be avoided, and yet the right and faculty of free will may remain to them untouched? For if I compel them to come by chains of iron, and hard blows, and scourges, I shall have asses, not men. He said then within Himself: “I perceive the condition of man, how he is given to love. Therefore I will show him such love as shall pass all his understanding, indeed, than which none can be greater. Now if man will observe this, he will feel himself caught so fast in its meshes, that he will not be able to escape its heat and fire, and will be compelled to turn to God, and love God in return. For wherever he shall turn, he will ever be met by the immense benefits, the infinite

goodness, the marvelous love of God; and, at the same time, the compulsion will grow strong with him to return love for this love, and it will so urge and impel him, that he will not be able to resist it, and he will feel himself gently compelled to follow.” Now when this was done, this faithful and prudent Servant, Jesus Christ, said to His Lord and Father: “It is finished;” I have finished the work which You gave Me to do. What more could I have done, and I have not done it? I have not even one member left which is not weary and troubled by labor and suffering. My veins are dried up, all My Blood is shed; My marrow is spent, My throat is hoarse with crying. I have shown such love to man, that his heart cannot be human, no, not even of stone, nor that of a brute beast, but must be altogether devilish and desperate, if he be not moved at the thought of this.

Moreover, this word of our Lord Jesus is a word of sorrow, not of joy. For our Lord spoke it not as if He had now escaped from all punishment. But “It is finished,” He said—all, that is to say, which had been fore-ordained and decreed by the Eternal Truth, that He should suffer. Besides, all the sufferings which had been inflicted upon Him by degrees, and one by one, He now suffered altogether at once with immense pain. Up to this time, He had been tortured gradually, now in this member, now in that, but now He undergoes intolerable pain in all His members at once. Oh! how those stretched-out arms were racked, although for so long a time they had been enduring pain! How the cruel wounds of His hands and feet cut into the very marrow of His Heart, when the whole weight of His Body hung upon them Who, I ask, will have such a heart of adamant, as not to be moved by agony such as this? Oh! how short were the words which our Lord Jesus uttered on the Cross, yet how weighty with sacramental mysteries! Now, in truth, was fulfilled what we read in the book of Exodus: “And all things were finished which belonged to the sacrifice of the Lord.”

Moreover, by this word, our Lord declared the glorious victory of His Passion, how the old enemy, the envious serpent, was now conquered and beaten down, for it was for this that He had suffered.

For this He had clothed Himself with the garment of man's nature, in order to overcome and confound the enemy by the same arms by which that enemy boasted he had overcome man. This, I say, was the chief intention and scope of His Passion, and now He confessed that it is finished. Oh! how marvelous are the mysteries and the victories comprised in this little but subtle word: "It is finished"! All that the Eternal Wisdom had decreed, all that strict justice had required for all and each, all that love had asked for, all that had been promised to the fathers, all the mysteries, figures, ceremonies foretold in scripture, all that was fitting and necessary for our redemption, all that was required to wipe out our debts, all that contributed to supply for and repair our negligences, all that was glorious and loving for the showing forth of this noble love, all that we could desire for our spiritual instruction and information; in a word, all that was good and fitting for the celebration of the glorious triumph of our marvelous redemption, all this was included in that one word: "It is finished." What, then, remains for Him, save to finish and perfect His life itself in this glorious contest; and because nothing more is left Him to do, to offer His precious soul into His Father's hands, when He had fought the good fight, and perfectly run the course of His life in all holiness? It is just, then, that He should obtain the crown of glory, which His heavenly Father shall give Him on the day of His exaltation.

Lastly, by this word Christ offered all His labor, affliction, and sorrow for all the elect, as the Apostle said: "Who in the days of His Flesh offered up prayer and supplications with a strong cry and tears to Him, Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard for His reverence, for if the blood of bulls and of goats and the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer upon the unclean, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the Blood of Christ, Who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God, that is, in newness and purity of spirit?"