

Interpretative issues in Luke 23.31

**"For if they do this when the wood is green,
what will happen when it is dry?"**

1. **Who is the "they"** and how are "they" related to the "they" in 23.29 and 23.30?
2. **Is there one "wood"** (Greek, *xulon*) that starts "green" (Greek, *hugrō*, "moist") and turns "dry" or two different "woods"?
3. **How does the immediate narrative context** help us to interpret (e.g., 23.28-30 and earlier echoes of those verses, such as 21.23)?
4. **Some interpretative options:**
 - A. The "moist" is Jesus' crucifixion; the "dry" is the destruction of "the Jews" or "the Jerusalem Jews"
 - B. The "moist" is Jesus' crucifixion; the "dry" is the Roman destruction of Jerusalem
 - C. The "moist" is "living" Jerusalem "now" (i.e., in Jesus' time within the story) and the "dry" is after Jerusalem is destroyed and Roman control is total
 - D. The "moist" is Jerusalem with Jesus in it; the "dry" is Jerusalem after Jesus' death