



Matthew 27:46

My God! My God! Why?

The gospel writer Matthew tells us that while Jesus Christ was hanging on the cross a mysterious darkness covered the land for three hours (Matthew 27:45). A strange, weird darkness settled down over the world, obscuring the sun until it could be seen no more. A supernatural darkness came over the land from 12 noon until 3 p.m. It was a supernatural manifestation in the natural world. The LORD God caused a darkness to fall over the earth that lasted for three hours. The entire created order was affected by this cosmic event. It was as though all of creation was bowing in sympathy with its Creator.

All the land can refer to the land of Israel or to all the earth. ”

This supernatural darkness intensified the feeling of desolation and despair for everyone who had gathered at the scene of the crucifixion.

Jesus was made to be sin on the sinner's behalf and experienced all of the horror of an eternal separation from God.

Sin caused the Son of God to cry out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? ”

The darkness that covered the land that eventual day cannot be explained as an eclipse because it was Passover time, and an eclipse is not possible with a full moon. Neither was it a sandstorm, nor is there anything to indicate that a local phenomenon in the environment of Jerusalem or Judea caused it. The only conclusion you can come to is God caused it.

The mysterious darkness reminds us of the Day of the Lord in various passages in the Old Testament. Amos declared, If that day, says the sovereign LORD, I will make the sun set at noon, and make the earth dark in the middle of the day (Amos 8:9 NET). Darkness is even associated with judgment in several places in the Hebrew prophets (Isa. 5:30; 13:10-11; Joel 3:14-15).

The darkness over the land points to God's judgment on sin. His own Son was bearing the punishment of every sinner. Jesus Christ the righteous One . . . is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for our sins but also for the whole world (1 John 2:1-2 NET).

Darkness fell over the scene of the crucifixion like a heavy curtain. Every mouth was shut and a deadly silence crept over all. It was like the sovereign God kept every sinful eye from gazing at the infinite suffering of the Lamb of God.

God.

Feelings of awe and horror increased as the agonies of the crucifixion moved to that infamous moment of the death of the Son of God.

Almost at the close of the three hours of darkness, feeling Himself God – forsaken, Jesus cried out words of anguish in the awful stillness of the darkness. His words echoed through eternity and reverberated down the centuries of time: Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani!"

That darkness meant judgment. It was the coming judgment of God against sin. It was the wrath of God burning itself out in the very heart of Jesus as our substitute. In those dark hours, hell came to Calvary that day. Our Savior descended into it and bore its horrors in our stead.

When the three hours of intense darkness came to an end Jesus cried out, My God, My God, why have You forsaken me? Jesus was quoting Psalm 22:1.

How could an infinitely holy God look upon His own Son who had become a representative for sin? The Father had forsaken His own Son! He was being made a sin offering. The wrath of God was upon Him. He was being made a curse for our sin. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us (because it is written, Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree") (Galatians 3:13, NET).

The apostle Paul gave us the answer for what was happening during that supernatural darkness. "He [God] made Him [Jesus Christ] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21, NASB 1995). In that horrible three hours of darkness, Jesus had been made sin for us!

Jesus spoke these words in Hebrew, and the spectators did not understand Him. They thought He was calling for Elijah to help Him (Matt. 27:47ff). Had they listened carefully and consulted Psalm 22 in its entirety, they would have understood the truth of His suffering and the declaration.

Martin Luther sat contemplating these words, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? For a long time, without food or water, he sat in deep meditation reflecting on this saying of Christ. After a long time he rose from his chair and exclaimed in utter amazement, "God forsaken of God! Who can understand that?"

These words of Jesus from the cross must be the most staggering sentence in the Bible.

THESE WORDS REVEAL THE REALITY OF SIN

Every individual comes this day with blood on his hands. The Bible says, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). This verse gathers up the whole race into one statement and tells us we still fall short. "But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe" (Galatians 3:22 NASB).

The reality of sin keeps us from fully comprehending these words.

"The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one" (Psalm 14:2-3 NASB).

No man on earth and no sinner in hell can ever understand the depth of meaning of these words of Jesus. We would have to go to hell as perfectly sinless individuals, indeed, as the sinless Son of God. No one will ever be in hell in that condition. No individual will ever have an experience that will enable him to understand the significance of Jesus' terrible cry because we are all sinners. Without a doubt we do not qualify. The terrible truth is we deserve what Jesus was suffering on the cross.

Jesus said sin is a condition of the heart. That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man (Mark 7:20-23, NASB).

The apostle James wrote in 2:10, "For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offends in one point, he is guilty of all." And the apostle John said, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

We don't fully understand the holiness of God.

We do not fully comprehend these words because we don't fully understand the holiness of God. The Hebrew prophet Habakkuk understood this when he exclaimed, "Your eyes are too pure to behold evil, and you cannot look on wrong doing" (1:13). Finite depraved sinners do not understand how sin appears to an infinite, holy and righteous God. God's attitude toward sin caused Him to turn His back on His Son and forsake Him. Sin is serious business with God.

Christ revealed the horror of sin when we died on the cross. We treat sin lightly. God takes it seriously. God cannot and will not tolerate sin in His presence because He is a holy God. The Bible says: "The soul that sins will surely die." "The wages of sin is death." God's attitude toward sin caused Him to pour out His wrath on His own Son. What a startling contrast these words are to those occasions when God the Father broke through glory and said, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Sin is so serious that there is only one way God can deal with it. The writer of Hebrews said, "All things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (9:22).

These words from the cross reveal the reality of sin and holiness. They also reveal the reason for the sacrifice.

THESE WORDS REVEAL THE REASON FOR THE SACRIFICE

Jesus was fulfilling the great messianic Psalm 22. This great Psalm runs through out the whole crucifixion narrative. It is interwoven through out the crucifixion story because it foretells the crucial events in the crucifixion of Jesus. Jesus was not a Jewish martyr. He was the Suffering Servant of Yahweh who laid down His life freely.

Prayer from Jesus' childhood

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This was a prayer from Jesus' childhood that He learned from His mother's lap (Psalm 22:1).

Eli, Eli represents Hebrew version of Psalm 22:1; Eloi, Eloi (Mk. 15:34) is Aramaic.

When the human Jesus cried out, My God, my God, He gave full expression to the feelings of abandonment. But they also express His continuing relationship of confidence, patience, self-resignation and trust in the sovereignty of God the Father. Jesus is crying out after the Father as well as crying to Him for help. In anguish of godforsakenness, Jesus continued to trust His Father.

The Son of God entered into godforsakenness. The word "forsaken" is made up of three words: "to leave" meaning to abandon; "down" suggesting defeat and helplessness; and "in" referring to the place of the circumstances. The word pictures the forsaking of someone in a state of defeat or helplessness in the midst of a hostile situation.

My God, my God, why did you abandon –leave behind, forsake, abandon, desert –Me? ”

For the first time in the eternal life of Jesus, God the Father turns from Him! The Father denies Jesus His presence! Forsaken of God! For the first time that eternal fellowship between the Father and the Son of God was mysteriously broken! In the anguish of godforsakenness, Jesus still cries out in trust. He trusts even in His cry of dereliction.

In the vicarious, substitutionary atoning sacrifice for our sins, the unbroken communion between the Father and the son was mysteriously broken.

Up until now God the Father said, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased! It is a unique communion between the Father and the Son. Now God the Father abandons His own Son. This is the only explanation of His death. It is the only way we can understand His words from the cross. It is impossible otherwise for radically depraved sinners to understand this cry of our Savior. We would have to go to hell and suffer eternally as the holy Son of God on behalf of sinners.

Let me also make it very clear: this is the eternal destiny of every soul without Christ. All of the wrath of God falls upon us or upon our divine substitute.

God our savior has made it forever unnecessary for us to experience or understand the depths of these words from the cross. The reality of sin and holiness reveals the reason for the sacrifice. These words reveal the terrible cost of the putting away of our sin.

On Christ representatively fell the collective consequence of sin.

This truth becomes clear when we consider the Levitical ceremony of laying hands on head of the innocent scapegoat and confessing the sins of the people. Jesus is our scapegoat, dying in our place, taking the punishment for our sins upon Himself (2 Cor. 5:21). Galatians 3:13 tells us Christ became a curse for us, "for it is written, Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree." "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). A. T. Robertson observes the seriousness of our sins in God's sight; "Sin pays its wages in full with no cut. But eternal life is God's gift, not wages. Both death and life are "eternal."

Jesus was made the representative of sin. On Jesus Christ, representatively, fell the collective consequences

Jesus was made the representative of sin. On Jesus Christ, representatively, fell the collective consequences of sin. He bore the penalty of our sins for us. He suffered on our behalf.

Name off your sins one by one: God made Jesus representative of that sin and crushed it! Take that list of sins we read earlier that comes from the heart and bring them to the cross. Jesus was made representative of that sin and died for it. "Evil thoughts" –God made Jesus representative of that sin and crushed it! "Fornications" –God made Jesus representative of that sin and crushed it! "Thefts" –God made Jesus representative of that sin and crushed it! "Murders" –God made Jesus representative of that sin and crushed it! "Adulteries" –God made Jesus representative of that sin and crushed it! "Deeds of coveting and wickedness" –God made Jesus representative of those sins and crushed them! Name them off one by one — "deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness" –God made Jesus representative of those sins and crushed them at Calvary! Unbelief –God made Jesus representative of your cultured, refined, indifferent unbelief and He died to crush it!

God laid the penalty of your sinful heart on Jesus. God made Him representative of all your sins and mine and He paid the penalty. Christ became a "curse for us . . . Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree" (Gal. 3:13). This is a revelation of what hell is like. It is a revelation of the penalty of human sin. The whole weight of every sin ever committed and that ever would be committed fell on Jesus. The penalty He bore for us was the inevitable separation from God which sin brings and belongs to us.

Think of gathering all the sin of humanity into one pile. What a seething mountain of wickedness! Jesus came down to represent that sin so that God might blot it out in one sufficient comprehensive condemnation! And let it never be forgotten that it was not His, but it was for yours and my wicked depravity that He identified Himself with and suffered. No wonder there was such a cry of God forsakenness from that sacrifice! The wonder of it all is that He did it only because of His love for us!

In becoming sin for us the Father had to turn judicially from His Son. The apostle Paul wrote: "whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:25-26 NASB).

No wonder God pulled the curtain across His holy of holies so no profane eyes could see the terrible spiritual suffering the Lamb of God was enduring as punishment for our sins. God permitted no one to look upon the physical convulsions of the vicarious suffering of God's Servant. This is how far He traveled from heaven's glory to save your soul. It was a place of outer darkness of godforsakenness and God caused a thick darkness to fall upon the land.

God loves you.

These words reveal the extent of God's love for you and me. God continues to demonstrate His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10 NASB).

It was not the nails, but His wondrous love for me that kept Jesus on the cross. Revelation 1:5, "To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood . . ." Ephesians 5:2, "Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma." Christ's death was an offering to God in our behalf. "

These words from the cross reveal to us the reality of sin. They also reveal the reason for the sacrifice of

These words from the cross reveal to us the reality of sin. They also reveal the reason for the sacrifice of Christ and the satisfaction of God.

THESE WORDS REVEAL THE SATISFACTION OF GOD.

It was probably only a few moments later that Jesus declared with a shout, "Finished! God's wrath was spent, and the sacrifice for our sins was finished."

John R. Broadus, "If Himself the Savior was still well pleasing to the Father, in voluntarily laying down His life that He might take it again (Jn. 10:17f); it must have been as our substitute, because He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that He was forsaken. "

Jesus has satisfied the holy just demands of God.

These words reveal to us that the wrath of God toward sin has been completely satisfied. Jesus was paying the price of our sin debt in full as He cried out, "Eloi, Eloi . . . My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Hebrews 10:31 says: "It is a fearful thing to fall in the hands of a living God." Hebrews 2:3 reads, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation." Now is the day of salvation. God pleads with you to come to Him because your salvation was paid in full at Calvary.

First Thessalonians 5:9, "For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him."

Godforsakenness describes the depths of His suffering for us. When He cried, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?" My hell, your hell, and all the hells of every guilty sinner were burning their wrath out on Him! Jesus went to the cross and paid that price for you and me. He did not die for Himself. He died your hell. He died my hell. He bore our punishment for sin. He did it so you and I will never know what hell is like.

However, since Jesus Christ went to the cross and died as my representative, it means that if I refuse to believe on Him as my substitute for my penalty then I must bear my own punishment. If I refuse Him to be my substitute, then I must pay the penalty in full.

These words from the cross are a divine revelation of what hell is like. It reveals to us the wrath of God against all sin. This is the clearest revelation of the wrath of God.

These words reveal the satisfaction of God.

The Hebrew prophet Isaiah said the Suffering Servant would be "wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities." The LORD God was laying on Him "the iniquities of us all." The Suffering Servant of Yahweh was crying out, "My God, My God . . ."

John the Baptist pointed to Jesus and declared, "Behold the Lamb of God who lifts up and takes away the collective sin of a world of sinners" (Jn. 1:29, 36).

Christ gave Himself a "ransom for many." The one who knew no sin God "made sin" for us. On the cross Christ became a "curse for us" and so redeemed us from the curse of the law. We are "redeemed by the

Christ became a "curse for us" and so redeemed us from the curse of the law. We are "redeemed by the precious blood of Christ" shed on Calvary. He gave himself a "ransom for all."

Jesus had to pay the price alone and tasted spiritual death for every man. He felt the way a lost sinner feels, without Himself having sinned. The innocent sufferer was suffering for the guilty.

The invitation is clear: "Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). Come, sinners! Come harlots! Come blasphemers! Come, murders! Come, adulterers! Come sinners all! "And him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out" (Jn. 6:37).

Some Abiding Principles for Today:

In these words we begin to comprehend the love of God.

In these words we understand the depravity of sin and God's holiness.

In these words we understand the vicarious, substitutionary atonement of Jesus' death.

There is the story of a public servant who served both as a trial lawyer and a judge during his illustrious career. On one occasion as judge he was speaking to a man convicted of murder: "At your first trial, I was your lawyer, today I am your judge. The verdict of the jury makes it mandatory for me to sentence you to be hanged by the neck until you are dead."

Today Jesus is your advocate; tomorrow He is your judge. Today He pleads for you to believe in your heart that He died for your sins on the cross. The salvation He offers is complete and all sufficient to save you for all eternity. Believe on Him right now and ask Him to be your Savior.

If you need help in becoming a Christian here is [A Free Gift for You](#).

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