

Monday, January 18, 2016 - "My God, My God, Why has Thou Forsaken Me?"

The Lord's statement is a quotation from Psalm 22:1. As with all things the Lord did, it is obvious that he was conscious of the fact that he was fulfilling Old Testament prophecy. This psalm harmonizes with what happened to Jesus on the cross. Consider another of the Lord's sayings while on the cross: "After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the scriptures might be accomplished, said, I thirst" (John 19:28).

What is the meaning of this cry? Was it the natural cry of one who was suffering upon the cross? Was Christ surprised that he was to be nailed upon the cross and die? It was Christ himself who said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). We often forget that Christ knew what was to become of His time on this earth since before the beginning of time. He was the HOPE and SACRIFICE for all mankind.

Was it the cry of the Son of God who at this time was paying the penalty for sin which is separation from God. We are told, He was "made sin" for us (2 Corinthians 5:21); He was being "wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." Jesus "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Pet. 2:22) was made to be a sin-offering for us! He was treated as a sinner, called a sinner by His enemies, and was executed as a sinner on Calvary's tree, but He was not a sinner in any of these areas nor any other. He bore not His own sins, but took our place so that we, by coming to Him in obedience, will not suffer the horrors of Hell eternally. Peter affirmed this by writing, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pet. 2:24). Paul stated, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). His suffering was as one who stands in the place of another who is truly guilty and deserves punishment. We speak of this type of suffering as "vicarious," and this indeed was the case with our Lord. Though Christ was holy and undefiled by sin, He accepted the suffering we would have endured for eternity and was "made a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13; Deut. 21:23). There would have been no benefits in His death if He had deserved to die, and no atonement would have been made; but He endured the punishment that was deserved by each sinner (Rom. 3:23).

Why did Jesus die only to be raised? Why was his blood shed? Such was done to provide us with: (a) "propitiation" [i.e., atonement] (Rom. 3:25), (b) "justification" (Rom. 5:9), (c) "redemption" (Eph. 1:7), (d) "reconciliation" (Eph. 2:11-13), (e) "remission" (Heb. 9:22), (f) "sanctification" (Heb. 10:29) and "purification" (1 John 1:7). In short, he suffered to become our SAVIOR (Heb. 5:8-9).

All who read this now know: Our Lord died for you so that you might never have to die Spiritually.