

God With Us
“The Death of Jesus”
Matthew 27:45-56

“When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!” (Matthew 27:54)

I. My God, My God

- a. In giving His life as a ransom for many for the forgiveness of sins Jesus must, for the moment, be separated from His Father. This shout “My God”, expressed not a loss of faith, but a (temporary) loss of contact. (Psalm 22; Luke 23:46)
 1. All kinds of theological questions are raised, particularly regarding the relation of Christ’s divine and human natures, the text does not answer.
 2. We must understand this very point, Jesus was made sin and a curse in the hour of His sacrifice.
 3. Body, soul, and spirit constitute the human nature of Jesus just as they do ours.
- b. This death affected only His human nature, for it alone is able to die. Jesus died according to his human nature, and according to that alone.
- c. Nature testifies to the significance of Jesus’ death. There were four remarkable events in “nature” that reflected the cosmic significance of His death.
- d. **1) Jesus** was apparently put on the cross sometime midmorning on Friday. From midday to midafternoon, an unusual darkness appears.
- e. **2) An earthquake leads to the temple curtain being split** “from top to bottom.” (v.51) The curtain was separated made of thick material, 59’ high, and it symbolized, “no access.”
- f. *From top to bottom*, suggests that it is God’s work: human beings would have torn it from the bottom upwards. The perfect high priest has entered the Holy of Holies in God’s presence.
- g. God was now approachable by anyone who trusted in Jesus. (Eph 2:14) (Heb 4:16)
- h. **3) Stones were rolled away and the dead lived.** Not bones, but risen bodies emerge! Not everybody, but “many saints” were resurrected. (v.52-53) (1 Cor 15:20-22)
- i. The resurrections illustrate the teaching of Christ as the *firstfruits* of the new age, guaranteeing the bodily resurrection of all His people.
- j. “Holy people” (often translated saints) refers to selected Old Testament believers.
- k. This event foreshadows 1 Cor 15:20-23. The saints precede Christ out of the tomb.
- l. **4) The centurion bears testimony** to the deity of Jesus with his confession, that this is truly the Son of God (v. 54). A Gentile expressed great faith when the disciples have fled the scene.
- m. *Many women* remained more loyal. (Matthew 20:20) The names of those who are last at the cross and will also be first at the grave: Mary Magdalene, Jesus’ own mother, and the wife of Zebedee.

II. Thoughts to be Considered

- a. The death of Jesus is the foundational and essential act to secure the resurrection of our bodies. (1 Thessalonians 5:10).
- b. The sovereign purpose of God is not just to turn bad circumstances for your good, but to be in them for the start for your good.
- c. The blood-bought diversity of the global church and demonstrated God’s greatness.
- d. Jesus did not just offer you love. He pursued you with love. He conquered you with love. He will awaken you with love.