

Good Friday: There was Darkness and the Earth Shook

Matthew 27:45-54

Day of the Lord was a time and process by which God would bring about terrible judgment and then great blessing. Two of the prominent symbols of this coming era were darkness and an earthquake.

Jesus had overcome two obstacles to God's kingdom:

1. The Temple System

Jesus brought a new way of relating to God and others by transforming how his followers would think of:

- A) Place: Sacred places would be replaced by sacred people.
- B) Priests: continual sacrifices would be replaced by the completed sacrifice.
- C) Purpose: 'You come to us' would be replaced by 'we will go to you.'

2. The Tomb.

This is why the Apostle Paul can proclaim:

***Death is swallowed up in victory! O Death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.***

Paul can conclude by saying: ***Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.***

## *Life Group Questions*

### ***This week, before you go to your Life Group:***

Think about your experience of Easter weekend. What were your thoughts and emotions as you remembered and celebrated Easter? Did God teach or remind you of anything significant during this time?

### ***Life Group Discussion Questions:***

How did the people that you invited to church on Easter respond? How did their response make you feel? Share your experiences with the group. Did you have a chance to follow up with any of your friends who came?

Read Matthew 27:45-54. What does the darkness symbolize? Why is this significant to the events that are happening? In verse 46 Jesus quotes Psalm 22. Read the Psalm together. How would you summarize the psalm? After reading the whole psalm why do you think Jesus quotes it?

What do you think the significance is of the curtain in the temple splitting in two? What do the following verses tell us about how Jesus' death and resurrection effected temple worship? Hebrews 10:1-18. What does the writers say (quoting from Jeremiah 31) is the covenant relationship between God and his people?

Read Hebrews 10:19-25. What do verses 19-21 say about Jesus and the privileges he has given us? Verses 22, 23, and 24 all start with "let us." Talk about what each of these 'let us' statements means. These are the intended responses to what Jesus has done for us. What are some ways that we can apply each of these encouragements to our own lives?

Prayer: Pray for those who came out to our Easter service and ask God to continue to draw them to himself as we follow up and invite people to come back!