

Title: **Our Savior's Death**

Text: Luke 23:44-49

Date: Sunday Evening — October 1, 2006

Tape # Z-12a

Readings: *Ron Wood and Merle Hart*

Introduction:

We have come together once more to celebrate our redemption by the precious blood of Christ, to eat the bread that symbolizes his body broken for us, and to drink the wine of the cup that represents his blood, the blood of the covenant ordered in all things and sure. We have come here tonight specifically to remember him who loved us and gave himself for us. And I can think of no better way to prepare our hearts for this blessed ordinance of the Lord's Supper than by meditating upon our Savior's death. So, let's turn to Luke 23, and ask God the Holy Spirit to set our hearts upon our dear Savior and his sin-atonement death as our Substitute at Calvary.

(Luke 23:44-49) "And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. (45) And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. (46) And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. (47) Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. (48) And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. (49) And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things."

What great wonders attended the death of God's darling Son upon the cursed tree!

Two Great Miracles

In the passage before us, we are told that two great miracles attended the sacrifice of our Savior at Calvary. **First, God the Holy Spirit here calls our attention to the fact that there was "a darkness over all the earth" for three hours.** — "*The sun was darkened and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.*" Our Savior, the true Passover, is here delivering his true Israel out of great darkness. Therefore, as the sun was darkened in Egypt for three days, it was darkened for three hours when the Lamb of God was sacrificed for us.

Nothing could be more proper and fitting. When the great sacrifice for sin was offered, when the Son of God was dying, darkness covered the earth! This was done by the hand of God once before in the sight of all Israel. When the Lord God came to redeem Israel out of Egypt, he sent darkness upon that curse land for three days. And when the law by which we are condemned was given on Mt. Sinai, God sent darkness upon the mountain of terror. Now, as the One who gave

the law suffers all the penalty of the law for us, being made a curse for us, on Mt. Calvary the sun was darkened for three hours. Such a miracle, complete darkness at mid-day was a miracle that should arrest our attention. It should compel us to stop and think.

During those three hours of darkness our Redeemer was assaulted by all the powers of darkness with utmost might and malice. But he foiled them all and spoiled them all. He made an open show of them (as Roman conquerors used to do), triumphing over them on his cross, as on his chariot of state (Col. 2:13-16) dragging his vanquished enemies and ours bound behind him (Eph. 4:8; Ps. 68:17-20).

(Colossians 2:13-16) “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; (14) Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; (15) And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. (16) Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*.”

(Ephesians 4:8) “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”

(Psalms 68:17-20) “The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, *even* thousands of angels: the Lord *is* among them, *as in* Sinai, in the holy *place*. (18) Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, *for* the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell *among them*. (19) Blessed *be* the Lord, *who* daily loadeth us *with benefits*, *even* the God of our salvation. Selah. (20) *He that is* our God *is* the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord *belong* the issues from death.”

Next we read that “*the veil of the temple was rent in the midst*.” That huge, thick curtain that hung between the holy place and the holy of holies, was ripped from top to bottom. This was a miracle that must have shook the priests in the temple in their very souls. What an instructive miracle it is!

1. The law that once separated man and God has been completely fulfilled by the death of our Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:14-15; 7:4; 8:1-4; 10:4; Gal. 3:13, 24-26; 5:1)

(Romans 6:14-15) “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. (15) What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.”

(Romans 7:4) “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”

(Romans 8:1-4) “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (3) For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for

sin, condemned sin in the flesh: (4) That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

(Romans 10:4) “For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

(Galatians 3:13) “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree.”

(Galatians 3:24-26) “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (25) But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (26) For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”

(Galatians 5:1) “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

“Free from the law, oh, happy condition!

Christ has redeemed us from every transgression.”

- Christ is the fulfillment of the law.
- Christ is the satisfaction of the law.
- Christ is the end, the finish, the termination of the law!
- We have no covenant with the law. We live under a covenant of grace.
- We have no commitment to the law. Our commitment is to Christ, who obeyed the law for us.
- We do nothing by constraint of the law. — “*The love of Christ constraineth us.*”
- We fear no curse from the law. “*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. For it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.*”

2. By the rending of that veil, God and men are reconciled; and by the rending of that veil **everything that separates men from one another is destroyed** (Eph. 2:11-22).

(Ephesians 2:11-22) “Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; (12) That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: (13) But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. (14) For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; (15) Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; (16) And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity

thereby: (17) And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. (18) For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. (19) Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; (20) And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; (21) In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: (22) In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

3. **Now, sinners like you and me, have free access to God in all his glorious holiness** (Rom. 4:25-5:11; Heb. 10:19-22).

(Romans 4:25) “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

(Romans 5:1-11) “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (2) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (3) And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (5) And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (6) For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (9) Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. (10) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. (11) And not only *so*, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

(Hebrews 10:19-22) “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (20) By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; (21) And *having* an high priest over the house of God; (22) Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”

Signs like these are a part of the ways God speaks to arouse man’s attention and warn. He often performs miraculous things, forcing eternity bound men to open their eyes whether they want to or not, and to hear his voice though they try to be deaf to it. He has done so many times in the days that are past.

- He did so when he brought Israel out of Egypt.
- He did so when he gave the law at Sinai.
- He did so when by the sacrifice of his Son, he brought in this great day of grace.

He will do so again when Christ comes in his glory (2 Thess. 1:7-10; Rev. 1:7). He says, “*Yet once more, I will shake not the earth only, but also the heavens*” (Heb. 12:26; Isa. 24:23).

(Revelation 1:7) “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.”

(Isaiah 24:23) “Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.”

(2 Thessalonians 1:7-10) “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, (8) In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: (9) Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; (10) When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.”

The Savior’s Cry

In verse 46 we hear our Savior’s cry to his Father and our Father, as he left this world, having finished everything he came into the world to accomplish.

(Luke 23:46) “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”

There was something mysterious about our Lord’s death, which made it unlike the death of any mere man. He who spoke those words is both God and man. His divine and human nature are inseparably united. Our Savior did not die as we shall. He did not die because he was compelled to die, or and could not avoid dying. No! He t voluntarily laid down his life as our Good Shepherd (John 10:15-18).

(John 10:15-18) “As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. (16) And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd. (17) Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. (18) No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

He died as our sin-atonement Substitute; and he set before us in his death the example we ought to follow in life, committing himself entirely to God (1 Pet. 2:19-25; Phil. 3:10).

(1 Peter 2:19-25) “For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. (20) For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God. (21) For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: (22) Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: (23) Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: (24) 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. (25) For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

(Philippians 3:7-10) “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. (8) Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, (9) And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: (10) That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”

The Centurion

(Luke 23:47) “Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.”

I do not doubt at all that this centurion was converted by the his dying Redeemer. His testimony in Matthew and Mark goes further: — “*Truly this was the Son of God.*”

- Consider what he had heard. — From Men — From the Savior.
- Consider what he had witnessed. — The Thief — The Darkness— The Earthquake — The Resurrection — The Son!
- He Glorified God.
- He confessed that Christ was the Righteous Man. — “Truly, this Man was righteous!”
- He worshipped him as the Son of God.

The People

(Luke 23:48) “And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.”

- They were terrified by their crime.
- They were repentant, pricked in their consciences. — “*A repentance to be repented of.*”
- They returned.

The Believers

(Luke 23:49) “And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.”

They stood afar off from danger, because their Surety had died. As they stood, “*beholding these things,*” with wonder, as well as looking upon their dear suffering Lord, with aching hearts, and flowing eyes.

- Remembering Him.
- Remembering all he had taught them.
- Remembering what they beheld on that great day of days. — REDEMPTION ACCOMPLISHED!

“Sons of peace redeem’d by blood,
Raise your songs to Zion’s God;
Made from condemnation free,
Grace triumphant sing with me.
Calvary’s wonders let us trace,
Justice magnified in grace;
Mark the purple streams, and say,
Thus my sins were wash’d away.
Wrath divine no more we dread,
Vengeance smote our Surety’s head;
Legal claims are fully met,
Jesus paid the dreadful debt.
Sin is lost beneath the flood,
Drown’d in the Redeemer’s blood,
Zion, oh! how blest art thou,
Justified from all things now.”

Amen.