

Surrey Chapel Fellowship Group Notes 23rd/ 24th March 2016

Matthew 27:32-56 What happened on the Cross

Fulfilment of Scripture

Matthew's account, perhaps more than any other demonstrates that these events were the fulfilment of Old Testament prophesy. The following are some examples from tonight's text. There are many others.

- v.35 Garments Divided. Psalm 22:18
- v. 38 Alongside criminals. Isaiah 53:12
- v.39/40 Mocked. Psalm 22:7
- v.43 "Let God deliver him" Psalm 22:8
- v.46 God forsaken Psalm 22:1
- v.48 Sour wine Psalm 69:21

Abandonment

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" - Some of the most profound words in all of Scripture. Reflect on their meaning.

"My God" - Shows that Jesus still had faith in his Father. In quoting Psalm 22:1 he may also have had in mind the victorious verses 21-31 that end the Psalm.

Jesus was cut off from the fellowship and love of his father, whilst bearing his wrath.

How great the pain of searing loss -
the Father turns His face away,
as wounds which mar the chosen one
bring many sons to glory. - Stuart Townend

Shame

Crucifixion tortures its victims to death. It was a punishment that was reserved for the worst criminals and the lowest classes. It was forbidden for Roman citizens without a direct order from Caesar. Being hung up, arms outstretched and probably naked was the ultimate in shame and degrading. To the Jews it was a sign of being under God's curse. (Deuteronomy 21:23)

Mocking

There are many references to people mocking Jesus, the soldiers in the preceding paragraph, the chief priests, teachers of the law the elders and the crowds.

Reflect on what these different groups of people were saying and why? Thinking also of the context of previous events and the changes in words and attitudes of these people.

Had you been there, what would you have said?

Supernatural

Matthew's account of the crucifixion tells of the sky going dark in the middle of the day, an earthquake and the tearing of the temple curtain. These were not natural events. The death of the Son of God was enough to shake the earth that he created.

The darkness was not a natural event like an eclipse as some of suggested. A solar eclipse can only happen during a new moon whereas Passover occurred during a full moon. "Rather it is a supernatural act of God, displaying his displeasure and judgement upon humanity for crucifying his Son." - ESV Study Bible
This darkness ended at the time of Christ's death, around 1500. This was the time that the Jews offered the daily evening sacrifice.

The temple curtain was an enormous piece of elaborately woven fabric 18m high and 9m wide which separated the Holy Place from the most Holy Place (or Holy of Holies). Only the High Priest was allowed behind the curtain and then only once a year on the day of atonement. Its tearing signifies the removal of the separation between God and his people. The fact that it was torn from the top down shows that it was not torn by human hands.

Hebrews 9:11 - 10:22 expounds this subject and is worth looking at in detail.

Prayer Points

Easter Service at Surrey Chapel and elsewhere.

That we would understand the full meaning of the cross and would be able to communicate it to others.

ADB