

*"My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?"*

*Matthew 27:33-56*

*The 5 Questions of Christmas*

Perhaps we find it odd that such a topic as this would be addressed on Christmas morning. Yet we readily acknowledge that Jesus was born to die. He came for many reasons, but tantamount in the incarnation is His provision of death. It is because we cannot lay hold of this idea that we must attend to it this morning.

God did and does for us what we could not be able to do for ourselves. God had to do what He did or we would be lost forever. No created being has ever plunged to the depths of Christ's sufferings. It is impossible regardless as to the nature of a so-called stigma, to fathom the true scope of His cross-work in our behalf. All we can hope to do is catch a small glimpse and perhaps see the consequences of this work for sinners.

I. His suffering was physical and emotional (vv. 35-49)

A. He was physically abused

Crucifixion was unspeakably painful and degrading.

B. He was emotionally abused

In ancient sources crucifixion was universally viewed with horror. In Roman law it was reserved only for the worst criminals and lowest classes. No Roman citizen could be crucified without a direct edit from Caesar.

1. The abusing crowds (v. 39).
2. The mocking leaders (v. 41).
3. The insulting robbers (v. 44).

His rejection by the social and religious structure of His day was complete. "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him (John 1:11)." Had Jesus met their requests to appease their doubt, God's program for the securing of His people from their sins would have been fulfilled.

II. His suffering was judicial (vv. 45, 46).

A. God rejected the sin-bearer

It is impossible for us to understand the kind of abandonment or separation that perhaps existed in this statement.

B. God accepted the Sacrifice

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Although our immediate text does not speak of God's acceptance of His Son's sacrificial death, the New Testament revelation speaks of His confirming resurrection from the dead assuring us of its completed action and the Father's approval (Rom. 1:4).

### III. His suffering was willful (v. 50)

In order for sinners to escape the wrath of God, in order for sinners to enter into the presence of a holy God, in order for sinners to be redeemed from the slave market of sin, in order for the alienated to be reconciled, in order for guilt to be removed, in order for sin to be forgiven, God the Father must send His Son to be a substitutionary sacrifice in behalf of those who hate Him.

#### A. His suffering was penal ("It paid sin's penalty" [redemption])

Because of who God is in His nature the rebellion of mankind had to be met with sacrifice if reconciliation between the two parties was to be made. The wages against sin have been met (Rom. 6:23). At the cross death lost its sting (1 Cor. 15:54-57). No more would death hold men in bondage.

There was something intrinsic in Christ whereby the Father could forgive the sins of His people. God's redemptive plan necessitated that He make the provision Himself. Nothing less than full deity would be able to appease full deity.

#### B. His suffering was substitutionary ("He died in behalf of another" [imputation])

His very mockers were the object of His redemptive work. Without the shedding of blood there can be no remission for sin (Heb. 9:22, Lev. 19:11). I deserved to face the full judgment against sin, but Jesus Christ took my place.

#### C. His suffering was efficacious ("It accomplished its goal" [propitiation])

What Jesus did was real and not imaginary. God will win and the exact number as to what that victory will look like sits in the hands of God.

#### D. His suffering was final ("Nothing more needs to be done to secure for His people a perfect redemption")

The rent veil tells us that the way to God has been forever opened before man. Although the words are only recorded for us by John (19:30), it still stands in Matthew, "It is finished."