

SEVEN FINAL WORDS
Cries from the Cross of Christ
Gethsemane to Tomb in the Gospels
Part 4: A Cry of Abandonment (Matt. 27:45-49)

INTRO: We come to the second of three cries, actually prayers addressed to the Father (1, 4, 7). This is His fourth saying. The first four are not surprising: First, was a word on forgiveness. Second was result of forgiveness, salvation. Third was a word of provision. This fourth cry is a bit mysterious. He has been on the cross three hours (9AM-Noon). READ Matt. 27:45-49 (cp. Mk. 15:33-34). The last recorded saying of Jesus by Matthew and Mark.

SETTINGS: Now noon and “there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.” From noon-3 PM unexpected and supernatural darkness (no storm, no eclipse, just God). My guess is that no one moved, no one spoke (even soldiers not swearing). Total chilling blackness for three hours. At 3 PM, just as suddenly had the darkness descended, it disappeared. Eyes adjust. Panic sets in. Everyone wonders, “What in God’s name is happening?” All eyes move to center cross. Clearly, the end is near. Jesus is at death’s door. Suddenly He cries (only four words in Aramaic), “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” Translated . . . Troublesome words of anguish, desertion, abandonment. “Ever felt totally abandoned?” To read these words is to walk on holy ground. Like Moses, we should remove our shoes! **OBSERVATIONS** about the fourth cry:

I. ABOUT THE WORDS

- A. They were screamed (v. 45 “Jesus cried with a loud voice”) This same word is used to describe the roar of a lion.
- B. They fulfilled prophecy — See Ps. 22:1
- C. They are recorded exactly as Jesus said it – He said what He meant and meant what He said.

II. WHAT DO THE WORDS MEAN?

- A. Inadequate Explanations – not necessarily wrong, just fail to tell the whole story. Some suggest they are a cry:
 - 1. Of Physical Suffering – No doubt enormous pain
 - 2. Of Faith – Ps. 22:1 . . . Psalm ends with confident trust in God even in extreme circumstances. Twice uses personal pronoun “My”.
 - 3. Of Disillusionment – Did He fail in His mission? Was all now lost? It ends in defeat. This was not a cry against God but *to* God.
- B. Sufficient Explanation – More to the story. What was happening? What do these words mean? In that dark moment God, God the Father turned

His back on God the Son. It was “God forsaking God” (M. Luther). “Forsaken” is strong word here. Jesus did not simply *feel* forsaken; He *was* forsaken! All alone. Disciples had fled, though John had returned. They forsook Him, but the Father was with Him (Jn. 8:29; 16:32). BUT, at the cross the Father left, too. Sin isolates and separates. Goes against all we believe about a father’s duty to a son. “Why would God do such a thing?” Something happened that caused a fundamental change in the Father’s relationship with the Son. Something happened when Jesus hung on that cross which had never happened before. Jesus calls Him “God” (not father). What was it? God’s holiness hates sin (Psa. 22:1-3). He was bearing the sin of the world (2 Cor. 5:19, 21; Isa. 53:5-6; Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18; 1 Jn. 4:10). Ray Pritchard writes . . .

III. THREE GREAT IMPLICATIONS

- A. *We must never minimize the horror of human sin.* Sometimes we make light of sin, even our own (Rom. 3:23; 6:23).
- B. *We must never minimize the high cost of our salvation.* We do not talk about the cross enough. Without the cross no: forgiveness, salvation... Lost forever! We’d be left to bear our own sins. The price of our forgiveness was His forsakenness, 1 Pet. 1:17-19.
- C. *It’s okay to ask “Why?”* Jesus did! Though impossible to fully understand the full significance of these words, I am grateful that in the hour of deep grief there was a WHY in His heart and on His lips. Love that questions is not necessarily love that doubts.

ILL: When Jeremy died a few bold people asked, “Where was God when he died?” The same place He was when His Son died. This cry from the Cross is for all the lonely and abandoned people of the world (divorce, widow, widower, etc.).

CONC: We’ll never be as alone and abandoned as Jesus was that day on the cross. He was *forsaken* that we might never be forsaken. He was *abandoned* that we might never be abandoned. He was *deserted* that we might never be deserted. He was *forgotten* that we might never be forgotten – and more important He went to *hell* so we wouldn’t have to!! He will never forsake us (Matt. 28:20; Rom. 8:35-39; Heb. 13:5).