

Sermon
Good Friday
April 15, 2022

Title: A Revealing Cry

Subject: Jesus, Crucifixion, God, Sin, Atonement, Wrath, Death, Curse,

Theme Text: Matthew 27:46 (ESV) ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Theme Illustration: As great is the mystery of the union of the second person of the Trinity is to us, exceedingly mysterious and sacred is the cry of Jesus on the cross prophetically announced in Psalm 22:1. In this psalm, Christ is speaking through David. And in this psalm, we see fulfilled the horror of sin and the terrible characteristic of God’s unfathomable holiness and justice in the suffering of Christ on the cross.

The Second London Confession of Faith of 1689 describes the hypostatic union of the Divine Son of God and His fully human nature this way: *... the two whole, perfect, and distinct natures were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion, which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.*

It was the nature of the fully human Jesus Christ that must bear the weight of God’s wrath which was decreed before time, **Acts 2:23-24 (ESV) ²³ this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. ²⁴ God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.** If it was our sin being atoned, then the man, Christ Jesus must bear the weight of God’s imputation of this sin as our substitute.

In His humanity, the Man Christ Jesus felt the full weight of all that it means

to be forsaken of God. That being said, His faith and trust in God never wavered. He never accused God of injustice, like so many saints of the past have done, like Job.

Read: Matthew 27:45-50 (ESV) ⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” ⁴⁷ And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, “This man is calling Elijah.” ⁴⁸ And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.” ⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

Introduction: This cry of Jesus in His crucifixion is one of if not the most incomprehensible cry for man to comprehend. This cry is the cry of an innocent person who is experiencing the weight of the wrath that comes with God’s condemnation of sin. We know of no such innocence as His so cruelly subjected to death. From the murder of righteous Abel forward, there is a long list of the martyred. That the righteous should be persecuted and even killed our ever the handiwork of the devil. But this was no fallen man. He was the Son of Man, the perfect one. His character is illustrated in the seamless robe He wore. This is the One of whom God said, **Matthew 3:17 (ESV)** ¹⁷ and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” The person who uttered this cry is the son of God, the incarnate One, the Christ.

It should not be strange to us that man would wish to kill God. Man has been trying to kill God since the flood. In fact, atheists and many unbelievers attempt to kill God in their lives by simply refusing to believe. This is the definition of a fool. Since we can’t reach God to kill him or punish him or harm him, the fool simply refuses or wishes that there is no God, **Psalm 14:1 (ESV)** ¹ The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good.

Transition: The death of Christ will remain strange to man. Considering the favor Jesus had with God, to whom the world refuses to bow. This cry of our Lord is revealing if one would pay attention. Yes, this cry of Christ is mournful but is also a revealing cry. The first thing this cry reveals is:

1. The Consequences of Sin, Matthew 27:46 (ESV) ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

This cry of Jesus is and will be the cry of every unbelieving soul at the judgment. This cry of Jesus reflects the horror and despair of a real human being experiencing the full weight of the wrath of God on sin. We see the awful character of sin and sends consequences, **Romans 6:23 (ESV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

We know of sends first manifestation in the garden. Where Adam committed his own spiritual suicide. We see it next in the fratricide of Cain in killing his brother. The climax of sin is reflected in deicide, man’s killing God, here, the son of God.

We must consider the meaning of death, except the physical definition of death. The wage of sin is spiritual death. Spiritual death is the renting of the creator creature communion, it is hiding from God, and the immersion of the soul in the darkness. Spiritual death is a penal sentence. It is the separation of the soul and the spirit from God. It is being dead while we live, **1 Timothy 5:6 (ESV) ⁶ but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives.** It is the condition of being lost.

Christ, in bearing our sins at the cross, suffered the penal nature of death in His human nature. His divine nature was untouched. In His humanity, Jesus felt the weight of this awful condition. Thus, His cry was a real cry of anguish. This cry will be the eternal cry of the impenitent. Again, we are dealing with a ministry of which on this side of the grave, we have no frame of reference.

Transition: The imputation of our sin was no pretending affair. The innocent and pure incarnate son of God felt in His humanity. The full weight of wrath. Therefore, God's dealing with Jesus this way also reveals:

2. The Holiness and absolute Justice of God, Matthew 27:46 (ESV) ⁴⁶

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

We need to view the cross from four different vantage points. One, at the cross, man displayed his depraved work by killing the perfect one and nailing Him to the cross.

Two, at the cross. Satan did a work. He manifested his insatiable hatred and enmity against the seed of the woman by bruising His heel.

At the cross, the Lord Jesus did a work. He died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.

At the cross, God did a work. He exhibited His holiness and satisfied His justice by pouring out His wrath on the one who was made sin for us.

So holy is God, that even the seraphim veil their faces before Him. So holy is God that even the heavens are not clean in His sight. So holy is God, that when Job came into His presence. He cried, **Job 42:6 (ESV) ⁶ therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.** So holy is God, that when Isaiah had a vision of His glory, he exclaimed, "woe is me", Isaiah 6:5. There, at Calvary, God displayed His justice in that the iniquities of us all, were placed upon Christ, our substitute, He poured out His wrath, meant for us, which was spent upon our sin offering.

Transition: As to the why of Jesus's cry, Jesus answered Himself. This cry reveals:

3. The Savior's Faith and Loyalty, Matthew 27:46 (ESV) ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

As I previously stated, we see the innermost response of Jesus to the cross. In Psalm 22, a prophetic view of His sufferings. Nowhere in that Psalm is Jesus utter any complaints against God. In fact, he acknowledges God's righteousness. In Psalm 22, three, Jesus declares God's holiness. He complains of not one bit of injustice. Now, knowing Himself to be God's designated sin-bearer, He knows and accepts what He deserves as our sin-bearer. Note the cry of the Lord in **Psalm 22:30-31 (ESV) ³⁰ Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation; ³¹ they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.**

Does this sound like a complaint? This is what Christ agreed to before the beginning of the world. None of this has taken him by surprise. Despite the emotional toll of God's wrath, Jesus's faith in God never wavered. He urges all of God's people to praise Him, **Psalm 22:22 (ESV) ²² I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:** the faith of Jesus in the foreordained plan of God to deliver him his stated clearly in **Psalm 22:24 (ESV) ²⁴ For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him.**

Do not make the mistake of thinking that since all of this was foreknown and fore anticipated, the agony of Christ was not real. Jesus states his absolute confidence that the Lord will answer His cry. Not incidentally, the Scriptures record that he did answer his cry in the resurrection from the dead.

Conclusion: For what reason did Christ agree to all of this? The simplest answer is for the love of the Father and His love for all of those whom the Father has given him. The place in history that the cross occupies past, present, and future is remarkably illustrated in **Psalm 22:27-28 (ESV) ²⁷ All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the**

families of the nations shall worship before you. ²⁸ For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations. In other words, for the glory of God.

God's holy character could do nothing less, than judge sin. Even though it was found on Christ Himself. We are reminded of Jesus's apprehension of this approaching horror when in the garden. He implored that this cup be taken from him. All these things were known, anticipated, and abhorred from a distance, but Christ went anyway. All of this was decreed before the foundation of the earth, **Revelation 13:8 (ESV) ⁸ and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.**

What was it that strengthened Jesus on the cross? The only thing he had to rely on was his faith in the father's faithfulness and then the original covenant of redemption. Yes, Jesus's cry was one of distress but was not one of distrust. Despite all, Jesus stood still cleaning to God. Jesus called out to God to save him, **Psalm 22:21 (ESV) ²¹ Save me from the mouth of the lion! You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!**

I would be remiss if I did not point out another great revelation. That cry defines our salvation, **2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV) ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.** In a statement that I could not find attribution for, someone said, "because God judged sin on the Son, He now accepts the believing sinner in the Son.