

WHEN DARKNESS HAD IT'S HOUR | LUKE 23:44-56 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL | 9/27/26

I. Darkness Descended (44-45) | II. Death Declared (46) | III. Deity Discerned (47-49) | IV. Devotion Demonstrated (50-53) | V. Death Documented (54-56).

INTRO: In our text today, we come to the **DARKEST MOMENT** in the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ—and it did not begin at Midnight; **it began at Noon**. Hours earlier, **Jesus told His rivals, “This is your hour, and the power of darkness” (Luke 22:53).** / **NOW** that hour had arrived! Daylight vanished, heaven seemed silent, and death drew near. **What was God accomplishing behind the darkness?** Today, we examine **WHEN DARKNESS HAD ITS HOUR.**

I. DARKNESS DESCENDED (44-45) – **READ:** *This darkness was not metaphorical, but literal!*

A. THE TIME WAS DEFINED (44a): *“Now it was about the sixth hour...”* – The Jewish day was generally reckoned from 6 a.m. So, the **Sixth hour = 12:00 noon.** / **Ninth hour = about 3:00 p.m.** –

B. THE DARKNESS WAS DISPLAYED (44b-45a): *Darkness Covered “...all the earth until the ninth hour.” (44b)* – Then Luke adds: *“Then the SUN was darkened,”* to display a supernatural cause!

1. **For approximately Three Hours,** darkness covered the land. – What makes this striking is the timing. **This should have been the brightest part of the day—but instead, the heavens went dark.**

- **The Creation itself** responds to the death of its Creator as Darkness Hovers in the Heavens / At **Bethlehem,** heavens **announced His BIRTH with light** > At **Calvary,** heavens **mark His DEATH with darkness.** – **This was the hour Jesus** had been moving toward from the beginning.

2. **The Darkness** emphasizes the solemnity of what is taking place: **Jesus is bearing the judgment our sin deserved.** – Paul tells us **WHY** Jesus did this: *“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us.” (Gal 3:13)*

P/A: Calvary reminds us that **SIN is never a light matter.** If we want to understand the seriousness of sin, **look at the price Jesus willingly paid to redeem us from it.**

C. THE DIVIDER WAS DESTROYED (45b): *The VEIL Was Torn in Two.* – **The Veil** separated the **Holy Place** from the **Most Holy Place,** symbolizing restricted access into the immediate presence of God.

1. Matthew tells us it was **TORN “from top to bottom” (Matt 27:51).** – Not from **man < upward...** but from **God > downward!** – God was declaring that **through the Sacrifice of Jesus,** the barrier had been removed, allowing every believer in Jesus Christ, **DIRECT ACCESS** to the **FATHER!**

- **(Heb 10:19)** says that we now have *“boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus...”* and **(v.20) specifically identifies the Veil was Christ’s flesh;** which is the *“...new and living way which He consecrated for us...”*

2. **The TORN VEIL** was God’s declaration: **“The Way is Open!”** Christ’s body was offered, His blood was shed, and the barrier was removed. – Jesus didn’t merely open the way to God; **Jesus is the Way!**

P/A: We cannot approach God through religious performance. **We come only through Jesus Christ!**

SEGUE: **Darkness had covered the land.** The veil has been torn. And now, after **six agonizing hours upon the Cross,** Jesus speaks one final time...

II. DEATH DECLARED (46): – **READ:** *Luke gives Jesus’ death Only One Verse,* yet its truth is profound: **The Death of Jesus Christ did not merely happen to Him—it was why He came!**

A. **HIS CRY WAS CLEAR (46a)**: After scourging, blood loss, and hanging on the cross, Jesus *“cried out with a loud voice.”* – **Not the Fading Cry of a helpless victim**, but the **deliberate declaration** of a willing Savior! – But notice **WHO** He cries to...

B. **HIS CRY WAS TO HIS FATHER (46b)**: **A Cry of Confidence!** *“Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.”* – These words come from (Psalm 31:5). / The Greek word translated **COMMIT**, *paratithēmi* — means to entrust, deposit, or place something into another's care. (Even in death, Jesus Trusts His Father).

- **Earlier** Jesus prayed: *“Father, forgive them.”* **Now** His final words are commitment to the plan!
- Jesus **DECLARED** His own **DEATH!**

P/A: What a way to Live... What a way to Suffer... And what a way to Die. *“Father, my life is in Your hands.”* – **We may not understand everything God permits**, but we can still entrust ourselves to the One who holds us. – In (Isa 41:10b) God says... *“I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”*

C. **HIS COURSE WAS COMPLETED (46c)**: **Jesus Breathed His Last!** – The Greek verb is related to *ekpneō*—literally, to breathe out. – **Luke purposefully recorded the moment of actual physical death.** – **Jesus Truly Died**... Not merely appeared to die... Not fainted... Not entered into a coma > **HE DIED!** This matters **Theologically**, because there can be **No Genuine Resurrection** without a Genuine Death!

***WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO DIE?**

1. Because **ALL SIN** is against God and it demanded judgment: *“The wages of sin is death”* (Rom 6:23)
2. Because **WE** could not save ourselves – (Titus 3:5) *“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.”* – *So then...*
 - His death was **SUBSTITUTIONARY** (2 Cor 5:21): He took our sin **so we could receive His righteousness**
 - His death was **SACRIFICIAL** (Heb 9:26): Jesus did not bring a sacrifice—**He was The Sacrifice!**
 - His death was **SUFFICIENT** (Heb 10:12): His one sacrifice paid for sin forever.
3. Because **SIN needed to be Conquered**: **DEATH** was the weapon the enemy thought would destroy Christ. **But it became the very instrument** through which Christ accomplished redemption.
 - Calvary looked like Satan's victory... **but it became Satan's defeat!** (tt. Heb 2:14-15)

P/A: That is **WHY** Jesus had to die! – **JESUS' DEATH** was **Tragic** in its suffering and **Terrible** in its injustice, but **Triumphant** in its purpose. (Jesus tasted death so that those who trust Him could receive life!)

SEGUE: Luke now records how **those who witnessed His death** responded differently to God's work...

III. DEITY DISCERNED (47-49) – **READ**: *Their testimony* at the cross is important to the Gospel.

A. **THE CENTURION CONFESSED (47)**: This Roman officer had likely witnessed many executions. **THIS crucifixion was different!** – Something about the darkness, the manner in which Jesus died, and everything surrounding Calvary **CAUSED this hardened soldier to respond...**

1. *“He glorified God,”* with a Confession – He **Confessed Christ's Righteousness**: *“Certainly this was a righteous Man!”* – The Greek word *dikaios* means *righteous, just, or innocent*. – Luke uniquely records this wording, while (Matt 27:54; Mark 15:39) records: *“Truly this was the Son of God!”*

- Together, the Gospel accounts give us a remarkable confession: **This Righteous Man was Truly the Son of God.**

2. The centurion came to oversee Jesus' death, but what he witnessed at the cross **transformed his perspective** and moved him to glorify God.

B. THE CROWD WAS CONFRONTED (48): *They came to see what would happen.* But what they saw affected them: *They Beat Their Breasts.* – This was an **outward expression** of grief, anguish, or remorse. **Something had shaken them!**

- Luke says, *"They Returned."* – **Returned where?** Back home? Back to normal life? – Were they merely **emotionally affected**—or even possibly **spiritually convicted**? Luke does not tell us...

P/A: **It is POSSIBLE to be moved by what happened on the Cross and still walk away unchanged!** – People can **hear about Jesus...** feel conviction... experience emotion... And **Simply Return to Life as Usual.** – The Cross demands more than emotion... **the Cross calls for Repentance and Faith!**

C. THE COMPANIONS CONTINUED WATCHING (49): Luke says: *"But His Acquaintances...stood at a distance, watching..."* People who had known Jesus personally just witnessed His death!

1. Luke Specifically Mentions: *"the WOMEN who followed Him from Galilee."* – (Mark 15:40-41) identifies them: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses, and Salome, who was the mother of James and John (*cf.* Matt 27:5).

- Their importance in Luke's narrative does not end here...
- **These women witnessed three crucial Gospel realities:**
 - They were Present at His **DEATH** (23:49).
 - They Observed His **BURIAL** (23:55; Matt. 27:61; Mark 15:47).
 - And they Returned for His **RESURRECTION** (Luke 24:1; Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1).

2. **Their Continuity Matters!** They were **eyewitnesses surrounding the events** Paul later summarized: (1 Cor 15:3-4) *"Christ died for our sins...He was buried, and...He rose again the third day."*

SEGUE: These witnesses have watched Jesus die. Now the question becomes: **What will happen to His body?** – At the moment **when the disciples seem absent** and **hope appears buried**, an unexpected man steps forward...

IV. DEVOTION DEMONSTRATED (50-53) – **READ:** Luke introduces: *"a man named Joseph..."*

A. JOSEPH'S CHARACTER (50-51): Luke tells us that *"Joseph, was a good and just man."* – He was also part of the **Jewish council**—but Luke makes known that: *"He had not consented to their decision and deed."* – He was also a man *"waiting for the kingdom of God."* – **While others rejected Jesus,** Joseph had apparently been watching, waiting, and considering... **Now his FAITH becomes visible...**

B. JOSEPH'S COURAGE (52): **He Went to Pilate.** – Luke says: *"This man...asked for the body of Jesus."* (Mark 15:43) tells us Joseph **"took courage"** and went to Pilate. – **Until this moment,** Joseph's discipleship had been largely concealed (*cf.* John 19:38). **But Jesus' Death forced him to step forward.**

- In his commentary, **C. Smith** said: *"I always like it when the disciples come out of the closet."*

P/A: When Darkness had its hour, Joseph's faith could no longer remain concealed! — **Jesus' Crucifixion** moved him from Secret Belief to a Courageous Identification with Christ.

C. JOSEPH'S CARE (53): Joseph then took Jesus' body down wrapped Jesus' Body it in linen. And he placed it: *"in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before."*

- Luke is establishing something essential: **Jesus was unmistakably dead—and His body was placed in an identifiable tomb.** (Acts 13:29) summarizes this fact.
- The burial was not an insignificant detail, it **Confirmed the Reality of His Death and prepared the evidence for the Reality of His Resurrection.**

SEGUE: Joseph placed Jesus into the tomb. But Luke saw it extremely important to include other witnesses; **People who SAW where Jesus was buried.** **The burial becomes part of the DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE of the Gospel...**

V. DEATH DOCUMENTED (54-56) – READ: *The sabbath approached (54):* Luke notes: *"That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near."* – **Jesus' body** needed to be placed into the tomb before Sabbath restrictions began; *this explains the urgency surrounding the burial.*

A. THE WOMEN OBSERVED (55) *"And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after..."* – Notice what Luke emphasizes: **They followed. They saw the tomb. They saw "how His body was laid."** – They did not merely *"hear later"* where Jesus had been buried... **they PERSONALLY OBSERVED IT!** – *This becomes extremely important in Luke 24.*

- **When they return Sunday morning,** they are not searching Jerusalem for an unknown tomb. They know exactly where Jesus was laid! – **They had watched the burial.** Their Testimony **provides the Connection between:** The Cross → The Burial → The Empty Tomb.
- **Why does all of this matter?** Because **Christianity is not built upon a legend.** – **The Gospel rests upon historical realities.**

B. THE WOMEN OBEYED (56): THE SABBATH! – *There is something beautifully solemn about this verse.* – Jesus' body **RESTS** in the tomb. > His followers return home > The spices are prepared > **The Sabbath begins...** and **Everything seems silent!** – **WHEN DARKNESS HAD ITS HOUR, ALL of Jesus' followers** thought their hope had ended—but God was not finished!

P/A: When YOUR Circumstances seem dark and God appears silent, **do not abandon your faith—keep praying, obeying, and trusting, because God is not finished!** – *And so...*

FINAL THOUGHTS: For a few hours that Friday, **DARKNESS HAS ITS HOUR:** The sun stopped shining, the Savior stopped breathing, His followers stood grieving, and His body was placed in a tomb...

- To human eyes, **all hope seemed lost**—but heaven knew redemption had been accomplished!
- **DARKNESS** would not have the final word, because the Savior who entered the tomb on Friday would walk out victorious on Sunday!
- The **LIGHT of resurrection morning** was about to break through! (Luke 24:1-12; 1 Cor 15:3-4)