

The Evening Sacrifice

1. In his journey to the cross, Jesus Christ was *led as a lamb to the slaughter*. **ISA 53:7 c/w ACT 8:32 c/w MAT 26:57; 27:2, 31.**
2. There was a particular *hour* to which He was appointed. **JOH 12:27; 13:1.**
3. Jesus died shortly after the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.). **MAT 27:45-50.**
 - A. This was the time of the appointed daily evening sacrifice in Moses' Law. **EXO 29:38-39.**
 - B. It was at the time of the evening sacrifice when the prophecy of Messiah's coming to be *cut off* was given to Daniel. **DAN 9:21-27 c/w ISA 53:8.**
 - C. Evening was also the time of the annual slaying of the passover lamb (**EXO 12:6**) which spoke of "...Christ our passover..." (**1CO 5:7**).
 - D. The crucifixion began at the third hour (9:00 a.m.). **MAR 15:25.**
 - E. Christ's cross-work thus fulfilled the type of both the morning and evening sacrifices that the Law required. **EXO 29:38-39.**
 - (1) In the *morning* of the world, Christ was a slain lamb in covenant. **REV 13:8; 1PE 1:18-20.**
 - (2) In the *evening* of the world, Christ was slain indeed. **HEB 9:26.**
4. The horrid darkness between noon and 3:00 p.m. (**MAT 27:45**) was part of the horror of hell that Jesus' soul was appointed to suffer before His death. **2PE 2:4 c/w MAT 26:38; ACT 2:27.**
 - A. God the Father was once said to "...dwell in the thick darkness..." (**1KI 8:12**).
 - (1) When God came down on Mt. Sinai to give the Law to Moses, there was a thick cloud of darkness. **EXO 19:16 c/w HEB 12:18-21.**
 - (2) The Law was the ministration of death and condemnation. **2CO 3:7-9.**
 - (3) The Law carried a curse of death. **GAL 3:10.**
 - (4) For all of its goodness and hints of grace and hope, the Law shouted death and hell.
 - (5) It may be concluded that during that time of darkness, the full weight of the Law's curse was laid by the Father upon Christ. Every vile thought, word or deed that condemned sinners was put upon Him to bear *alone*. **ISA 53:6.**
 - (6) The darkness ended, indicating the maximum measure of condemnation had been filled and the Father had withdrawn Himself.
 - B. The darkness being ended provided for other things.
 - (1) All of Christ's works had been done openly. **JOH 18:20.**
 - (2) This was Christ's greatest work (**JOH 6:30-33, 51**) and it would not be done in hiding, "...not done in a corner" (**ACT 26:22-26**).
 - (3) God took away the darkness that men might be able to "...look on him whom they pierced" (**JOH 19:37**) and see the terrible price of sin.
 - (4) None could claim that something "fishy" happened in the darkness, as if His crucifixion and death were not real.
5. It was at about the *ninth hour* when Jesus cried out to God. **MAT 27:46.**
 - A. The ninth hour happened to be one of the Jews' hours of prayer. **ACT 3:1.**
 - B. The gospels show that the Father did not answer Christ.
 - C. This was the nadir of the agonies of His soul which had begun earlier. The Father had left Him and was now not even hearing His prayer.
 - (1) Prior to this, the Father *always heard the Son*. **JOH 11:41-42.**
 - (2) If God hears prayer, there is a certain answer. **1JO 5:14-15.**
 - D. Christ was here reduced to the level of the vain prophets of Baal for whom there was *no voice or answer at the time of the evening sacrifice*. **1KI 18:29.**
 - E. This silence from the Father was the culminating proof that Christ had been fully made sin and wicked for us. **PRO 15:29; ISA 59:2.**

6. Hanging on the cross, Christ's hands were forced heavenward in praying posture. **1TI 2:8.**
- A. David once said to God, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as **the evening sacrifice**" (**PSA 141:2**).
- (1) David was desiring that his *spiritual sacrifice* of prayer would suffice for the carnal bloody evening sacrifices under the Law which were accompanied by the burning of sweet incense. **EXO 30:8; NUM 4:16.**
 - (2) David knew that spiritual sacrifices "...please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns or hoofs" (**PSA 69:30-31**).
 - (3) But a spiritual sacrifice of prayer could not replace Christ's mortal sacrifice on the cross. He had even earlier withheld prayer that could have halted the whole march to Calvary. **MAT 26:53.**
 - (4) Christ had to be both the bloody evening sacrifice and the evening incense.
 - (5) Everything about His sacrifice smelled right to the Father; He "...hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (**EPH 5:2**).
- B. Sinners may be thankful that the incense of Christ's earlier prayer on the cross was accepted. **LUK 23:34 c/w ISA 53:12.**