

Reading: Psalm 22:1-19; Matthew 27:45-49

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Mt 27:46)

This is the central cry from the Cross. Christ was forsaken for a moment that we might never be forsaken!

The knowledge of sin came by the Law, and sin separated us from God. Isaiah cried, “Your iniquities have separated you from your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you” (Isa 59:2). On the Cross when all our sins came on Jesus, the Father, whose eyes are too pure to behold sin, hid His face from His Son.

When the body of Christ was broken, the middle wall of division between God and man was broken down. We as non-Jews were once “without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph 2:11,12). But now through the blood of Jesus we are brought near. “We are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the family of God” (v 19).

The veil at the altar of the Temple was torn. The earth quaked and cracked. Some graves were opened. No more obstacles and hurdles! The way into the Holiest is open and we now have bold access to the Throne “that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:16). All because of the Cross!

We may not “feel” the presence of God alike at all times, but we don’t need to depend on our changing and fluctuating feelings. The fact is “Immanuel” — God with us! John Wesley (1703-1791) said, “The greatest of all is that God is with us!” What a fellowship!

The Epistle of John is a book of fellowship. He begins it saying, “Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1:3). To know that we are not alone in this world but God is *with* us, and Jesus is *for* us, is the greatest of all blessings. Here on earth God is with us, and there in eternity we will be with Him!

Communion with God is the beginning of Heaven. Praise God for the Cross which has thus given us days of Heaven on earth! Martin Luther (1483-1546) quipped, “A dungeon with Christ is a throne, and a throne without Christ a hell!”

*Jesus, Name above all names, beautiful Saviour, glorious Lord,
Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word!*

MARCH 24

PRAYER

Subject: Prayer

Reading: Psa 22:1-19; Mt 27:45-49

Memorising: Mt 27:46

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

O God of Heaven and Earth,

You are holy, holy, holy! No one is like You in holiness. You cannot wink at evil. Though You hate sin, You love us, sinners. Because there's no forgiveness of sin without shedding of blood, You gave up Your Son for cruel death. He took our place on the Cross. When all our sins came upon Him, You even hid Your face from Him because Your eyes are too pure to behold sin. O what love! O what sacrifice!

We thank You, O Father, for Your Son who has brought us near to You through His blood. He was forsaken for a moment on the Cross so we may never be forsaken. Thank You, O God, for the Way into the Holiest that's open now for us. Thank You for Your Throne of Grace which we can approach anytime for any need. Thank You that we can now serve You with a conscience purged by the blood of Christ. Thank You for His robe of righteousness which fully covers us when we come into Your court.

Father God, there are times when we feel that You are absent from us. Help us, O Lord, to remember at such times Your promise that You would never leave us nor forsake us. Forgive us for the words we spoke in times of darkness and despair. Thank You for Jesus who is Emmanuel — “God with us!” You are with us when we pass through the floods or walk through the fire. Your eternal hands are our foundation, and Your wings our fence.

Thank You, Father, for the Holy Spirit who makes Your presence and that of Your Son real to us by abiding in us always. Your Son has not left us alone as orphans when He left the earth. Thank You for the Holy Spirit He got from You for us for abiding companionship. Help us to walk by faith and not by sight or any feeling.

Father God, we join David and confess to You, “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me!” You are anointing us with the oil of gladness and clothing us with garments of praise! You are removing from us the spirit of heaviness and giving us beauty for ashes. You are reviving our sinking spirits and restoring to us the joy of Salvation.

We praise You in Jesus' precious Name! Amen!

(Isa 6:3; Rev 4:8; 2 Cor 5:21; Hab 1:13; Mt 27:46; Heb 4:16; 10:19-22; 13:5; Heb 9:14; Isa 61:10; Mt 1:23; Isa 43:2; Jn 14:16,17,18; 2 Cor 5:7; Psa 23:4)