

**DARKNESS COVERED THE WHOLE EARTH**

It only happened once in all of history. Only once since the creation of Earth was our planet totally covered in darkness. Imagine: Moscow, Paris, London, New York, Baltimore, St. Louis, Dallas, L.A., Honolulu, Hanoi, New Delhi, Baghdad, and Jerusalem, at the exact same moment, all were covered in darkness. **“Darkness came over the whole earth”**: the seven continents, the five oceans, not just the seven seas but all 119 seas, every island and all 24 time zones: the entire planet was covered in darkness.

It did not happen for just a split second, or even a minute or two, but for three hours **“Darkness came over all the earth.”** For three hours the sun’s rays did not penetrate through the clouds and brightened the sky. Nope: for three hours **“Darkness came over all the earth.”**

The boisterous crowd had grown silent, staring at three men hanging on wooden crosses. Rusty, jagged spikes pierced their hands and feet, holding them secure against the cross as **“Darkness came over all the earth.”**

Isaiah had spoken of **“the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations.”** He wrote of the effects of sin, the sins of the world, the sins of mankind, our sins, yours and mine. We commit sins of commission: each time we do the wrong things like when we tell a lie, cheat, steal, gossip, or choose a lifestyle contrary to God’s Word. We commit sins of omission when we ignore the plight of the poor, the sick, or homeless; when we fail to speak up against evil, and refuse to do the right, God pleasing thing. **“Darkness came over all the earth.”**

What could you offer to pay for your sins? How much money do you have, how many good deeds have you done? What payment would be acceptable to God for all your transgressions? Nothing! Absolutely nothing! We would be doomed to eternal death and damnation had God not **“so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life.”** God loves us; God chose to act for us.

Blood dripped, sweat poured, muscles strained.  
Their lower bodies pushed as their upper bodies pulled.  
Their legs and arms stressed.

Torturous cramps knifed painfully in their calves and petal muscles.

The attention of all focused on the one in the center, the one closest to death; the one who claimed to be the Messiah!

Isaiah had foretold that the Messiah would be a guilt offering for sin.

He was sacrificed that His life would be a ransom for many.

He was sacrificed for our sins that we could be made clean forever.

He was sacrificed that His blood would wash away our sins forever.

He was sacrificed that the darkness of sin would no longer cover our souls.

For the debt of sin to be paid a lamb must sacrifice his blood.

**“Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”**

**“Darkness came over all the earth.”**

The forces of wind blew dust and sand painfully against his naked body as death raced against time.

**Hypovolemic shock** from his beatings began to take its toll.

His heart raced, his blood pressure dropped, his kidneys failed.

He thirst for missing liquids.

Suddenly His heart rate began to decline; heart failure was closing in.

**Pericardial** and **pleural effusion** were taking its toll; water from His inner body surrounded his heart and filled his lungs.

His throat was dry and sore as he breathed through his mouth.

He mumbled, **“I thirst.”**

His breathing, once forceful and dangerously rapid now decreased slowly...slower...and slower as **“Darkness came over all the earth.”**

Moses had written **“He will crush the head of satan.”**

Isaiah foretold the Messiah would **“destroy”** the darkness of sin.

But God’s Son looked like anything but a victor as He hung on the cross when **“Darkness came over all the earth.”**

Guards stood nearby. Swords, spears, and clubs in their hands,

They waited for the command to break the legs at the knee caps of the men causing them to asphyxiate.

It would be a painful act of mercy to hasten death and end the agony.

Strange to some that Jesus would **“consider it a joy to go to the Cross.”**

Joy not in His suffering but joy in what His suffering would bring for us.

Joy knowing that we will not have to suffer in hell, and that we would never, ever be separated from God.

Joy knowing that we will never have to be in the darkness of sin again.

The other two were a bit stronger.

Jesus lowered His head, closed his eyes.

The pain was excruciating.

Slowly his eyes opened for one last time, one last glimpse of the Earth He had created, one last look at the sinful world for which he is so willing to suffer for, shed His blood over, and give up His life.

**“Darkness came over all the earth.”**

Before death could claim Him He uttered the words, **“IT IS FINISHED!”** He breathed His last.

“O Sorrow dread, God’s Son is dead!”

**“Darkness came over all the earth.”** But soon, in three days, a light will shine forth and the darkness of sin will never reign again. Soon, in three days, the victory will be proclaimed. **“Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?”** Soon, in three days, the world will know that Jesus has conquered sin, death, and satan. **“Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through Jesus Christ His son.”** In Jesus, the light of life shines. Because of God’s love for you darkness will never come over all the earth again!

Does this sacrifice of love mean anything to you? Do you understand what Jesus saved you from and what price He paid? Can you grasp the meaning of Jesus’ blood sacrifice? If you do in any way, how will you show your appreciation? How will you, in your life, say, “Thank you, Jesus!”? How can you not tell others with words and deeds what it means for you and for them when **Darkness came over the whole earth?** ” Amen.