

Be Careful Not to Forget These 6 Vital Truths About Jesus' Death

Heartbroken. This one word seemed to sum up the feelings of the group of people who had gathered together to say a last goodbye to a husband, father, brother and friend.

People stood close to each other to support one another, while at the same time, their shoulders drooped in a sad display of weakness. In a real sense, looks of defeat and loss were on each face.

Deep within the eyes of each person you could almost see a longing for answers for the loss they were feeling. Why? Why him? Why now? This desire for answers was so thick that everyone sensed it was tangible.

One person said, "It was so sudden." Another said, "He was so young." A third said, "He had so much more life to live." Each statement only added to the loss felt by those who were present.

This is a scene that, as a rabbi, I have watched play out dozens of times as a family experienced the sudden loss of a loved one. The one thing that is absolutely consistent in each case, no matter the age of the loved one or the reason for their death, is that no one is ever prepared for their loved one to die.

Above, I said no one, but this is not quite accurate because there is one who we know knew exactly when His loved one would die and was completely prepared for His death. That one was G-D and His loved one was Yeshua, His Son. This was the one and only death in which the loved ones of the deceased were not only totally prepared for the death, but knew exactly when and

where and how it would take place.

This is a very important thing to remember for a number of reasons, some of which I will list and discuss below.

1. We have to understand that, unlike humans who cannot be prepared for the death of a loved one, G-D was prepared because this death was planned from the very foundations of the world.
2. Because G-D was prepared, He did not experience the emotional feelings of anger, remorse, failure or disappointments that we feel as humans.
3. Because Yeshua's death was part of the plan from the outset, we need to understand that His death was not because of sin; it was because of love.
4. Because His death was part of G-D's plan, we must look at Yeshua's death not as the result of or response to evil, but rather as the result of G-D's goodness.
5. We must always remember that the death, burial and resurrection were set in motion before the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden.
6. We must remember that Yeshua never became a sinner. No, not ever! On the cross, Yeshua was still perfectly righteous and perfectly in G-D's will.

As believers in Yeshua, we need to come to terms with the truths of the Bible concerning Yeshua's sacrificial death and atonement. Too many people have twisted the truth of the absolute love that G-D has for His Son and, by extension, the body of Messiah. Like the disciples who stood there looking at the Messiah on the cross, we seem unable to resolve our feelings concerning Yeshua's suffering on the cross and G-D's love for His Son.

It was because of G-D's understanding that humanity would have a problem rationalizing this seeming inconsistency that Yeshua

cried out from the cross the words from Psalm 22:2 (TLV):

“My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Distant from my salvation are the words of my groaning.”

By quoting the first line of this Psalm, Yeshua was, in effect, saying, “Pay attention to Psalm 22 and read it.” The Psalm does begin with the words “My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?” And we tend to focus on those few words, but we rarely look at the rest of the Psalm, which describes in fine detail what Yeshua was physically going through and, just as importantly, what Yeshua’s followers were experiencing. Just look at these verses.

“Am I a worm, and not a man? Am I a scorn of men, despised by people? All who see me mock me. They curl their lips, shaking their heads: “Rely on Adonai! Let Him deliver him! Let Him rescue him—since he delights in Him!” (Ps. 22:7-9).

“Many bulls have surrounded me. Strong bulls of Bashan encircled me. They open wide their mouths against me, like a tearing, roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are disjointed. My heart is like wax—melting within my innards. My strength is dried up like a clay pot, my tongue clings to my jaws. You lay me in the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded me. A band of evildoers has closed in on me. They pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. They stare, they gape at me. They divide my clothes among them, and cast lots for my garment” (Ps. 22:13-19).

This depiction of the horrors of the crucifixion of Yeshua is so powerfully accurate and if we stopped right after these verses, we could conclude that G-D, in fact, had forsaken Yeshua.

But that would require us to believe that Yeshua had walked perfectly according to not only the Torah, lived a sinless life in every way and also fulfilled over 300 prophecies from the Tanakh concerning the Messiah, only to have His Father

forsake Him at the culmination of His life and the totality of biblical prophecy.

We would have to believe that the perfect example of a loving Father would design a plan before He spoke the words “let there be light” for His Son Yeshua to be perfect in word and deed so that at the climax of Yeshua perfectly completing His Father’s plan, Yeshua’s Father would choose to forsake His Son for doing exactly what He was born to do.

This would also require us to ignore Psalm 22:25, which explicitly told those disciples watching the crucifixion and everyone who has read these words today that the Father did not forsake Yeshua on the cross, nor did He turn His face from Him.

“For He has not despised or disdained the suffering of the lowly one. Nor has He hidden His face from Him, but when He cried to Him, He heard” (Ps. 22:25).

The message of the cross is not that G-D had to forsake Yeshua so that He could save us. No!

The message of the cross is that a loving G-D sent His loved Son to save His loved people. The message of the cross is that even while Yeshua was on the cross, He was still the Father’s beloved Son in whom He was well pleased. {eo}

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