

Darkness over the land (Slide 1)
Matthew 27:45

Reading: Amos 8

Matthew 27:45 (Slide 2)

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land.

Prior to Matthew writing concerning this ***darkness over all the land***, we know that in the broad daylight, Jesus was crucified.

The daylight provided everyone who was there as a witness, with their own eyes, having full view, that it was this Jesus who hung on the cross.

There could exist no doubt! No one could deny that it was Jesus of Nazareth by claiming it was too dark to see.

This fact is important when the *Apostle Peter* called out the Jews who were guilty of having Jesus killed:

Acts 2:36 (Slide 3)

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

When this evil deed was done, then came the darkness.

We often associate darkness with evil. Probably the most well known 2 verses that bear out that sentiment are found in the Gospel of John.

John 3:19-20 (Slide 4)

¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

There are some places, where people who are innocent of the ways of the world and the wiles of the Devil should not go at night. The darkness covers up evil deeds that the dark heart lusts after to commit.

Apostle Paul says that those things that are opposite of good are darkness and encourages believers to get rid of them.

Romans 13:12 (Slide 5)

The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

He says we have to act as if we are walking in the daylight. In other words, always with a moral code.

Romans 13:13-14 (Slide 6)

¹³ Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

This passage of scripture reminds me so much of the counsel Brother Don Shasteen gave to a young person many years ago when the young man asked him; *"Should a Christian go to see such and such movie?" (I don't remember the movie in question).*

His simple answer was also partially in question form; *"Would you take your children to watch it? If not, you shouldn't go either."* (That used to be a good gauge of what one should do, but I question what many parents might do today).

Satan's domain is darkness!

As Jesus is about to be arrested, He makes sure the religious leaders of the Jews know full well by whose authority they are acting.

Luke 22:52-53 (Slide 7)

⁵² Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? ⁵³ When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Darkness is used to describe people who are without moral navigation in their lives. As if they are blind and cannot see where they are going.

Apostle Paul spoke before **King Agrippa** concerning his conversion and then spoke of his commission after becoming an Apostle stating in:

Acts 26:15-18 (Slide 8)

¹⁵ So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶ But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. (Slide 9) ¹⁷ I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

Who was he sent too? To those who were blind by ignorance to **turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God!**

Over and over again we find darkness as compared to evil or to *morally bankrupt hearts* that may or may not realize they are following the darkness of Satan.

But darkness has no power over light. The "*tiniest*" flashlight can shine bright in complete and utter darkness.

God is master of both, light and darkness. Because He is light He chases away darkness and exposes its deeds.

Hebrews 4:13 (Slide 10)

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

From the very beginning God has had power and control over the darkness.

Genesis 1:1-5 (Slide 11)

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

(Slide 12) ***³ Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴ And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.***

When God said, "***Let there be light***" there was light instantly. I believe in the 6th hour, when Jesus hung on the cross, God caused darkness instantly.

It wasn't as if you could see a storm approaching and the darkness crept over the land.

God did not make the sun for light for the day and the moon and stars and all the lights in the heavens for light for the night until the fourth day. So what was the light when He said "***let there be light?***"

I believe the light was God's presence and vocal command that sustained the light, the "***Spirit of God hovering over the face of the waters.***" *Our natural light is from God!*

Because God has power over darkness, His handiwork can be seen in the night sky. It has been so hot lately that it is just such a pleasant experience to go outside as the daylight fades and feel the cooling of darkness as it creeps over the landscape of the sky.

One can gaze at the stars and sometimes the full moon, which provides a great deal of light even in the waning hours of nighttime.

There are times when we can witness a falling or shooting star over the night sky. Often the moon will change in color and we have given those changes descriptive identities.

(Slide 13) *A “*full moon*” occurs when the side of the moon that faces earth is fully lit by the sun.

(Slide 14) *A “*Blood-Moon*” occurs from a lunar eclipse. The earth lines up between the moon and the sun, though not as bright, it appears red.

(Slide 15) *A “*Super-Moon*” makes the moon appear larger in size simply because it is much closer to earth than usual.

(Slide 16) *Have you ever heard the expression, “*Once in a Blue-Moon?*” The phrase is from the concept of something that rarely happens. A “*Blue Moon*” isn’t “*blue*” but actually refers to an “*extra full moon*” in the seasons of full moons. It happens roughly every two and half years.

(Slide 17) *A “*Harvest-Moon*” refers to the “*Full-Moon*” which occurs closest to the start of our Autumn season.

(Above info is from NASA’s website).

What each one of these moons have in common is that their origin is from the handiwork of God’s creation. God rules over both light and darkness.

The darkness that came over all the land was controlled by God and I believe it was immediate, it did not turn dark gradually and I also believe it was a warning sign for those people who committed such a vile sin as to crucify Christ and it is a warning sign for us as Christians today.

Some believe that the words of **Amos 8**, particularly his words in verses **9** and **10** refer to what we are witnessing in **Matthew 27**.

I believe they do have a relationship to the darkness described but I don’t believe **Amos** is necessarily prophesying regarding this darkness and Jesus’ death.

In fact, Amos' prophecy was reserved for the Jews and he actually prophesied during a time of plenty. Business was booming so to speak.

Amos 8:1 (Slide 18)

A **"basket of fruit,"** indicates fruit that is ripe and ready to eat. But if it isn't consumed soon it will wither and rot. **Amos'** prophecy is about judgement.

"The end has come upon My people Israel;

I will not pass by them anymore."

Amos prophesies that God is fed up with their treatment of the poor and He has had enough. They are about to experience a famine like they have never seen before.

For now they move in their blindness, their darkness, but soon God will shed light on their deeds and dry up their prosperity.

They are living with a great sense of superiority over others. A great sense of entitlement.

They are living like people will be living when the Lord comes again, eating and drinking, living in revelry, living for self.....then sudden and swift judgement.

(Slide 19) ***"And it shall come to pass in that day," says the Lord God,***

"That I will make the sun go down at noon,

And I will darken the earth in broad daylight.

Though all the moons and even an eclipse of the sun can be predicted to occur by science, in other words, they are expected to happen, the darkness that came on the **6th hour** and lasted until the **9th hour** was an unexpected, unpredictable phenomenon.

It should have served as an *"eerie sign of judgement!"*

When you consider that these people were crucifying the Son of God at a place called the **skull**, a place some say looks like the skull of a human, the combination of darkness and location should have been terrifying.

I personally don't believe the earth was still when the darkness came but the people were stunned into silence.

This darkness is a warning for any who would reject the Son of God.
Thanks be to God that we are as *Apostle Peter* says;

1 Peter 2:9 (Slide 20)

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light

Invitation

So the call today is "*send the light.*" The Gospel call. For those of us in Christ, Jesus says;

Matthew 5:14-16 (Slide 21)

¹⁴ ***"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.***

¹⁵ ***Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.*** (Slide 22) ¹⁶ ***Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.***

If you have heard the Gospel call but have yet to exit the darkness and enter the light, what are you waiting for? Become a child of God today by being baptized into His death to rise again a new creation.

If you are a child of God but need the prayers of your Brethren, please let us know and we will pray for you.

Whatever we can do to assist you please let us know.....

Reading

Amos 8

¹ Thus the Lord GOD showed me: Behold, a basket of summer fruit. ² And He said, "Amos, what do you see?"

So I said, "A basket of summer fruit."

Then the LORD said to me:

**"The end has come upon My people Israel;
I will not pass by them anymore.**

**³ And the songs of the temple
Shall be wailing in that day,"
Says the Lord GOD—
"Many dead bodies everywhere,
They shall be thrown out in silence."**

**⁴ Hear this, you who swallow up the needy,
And make the poor of the land fail,**

⁵ Saying:

**"When will the New Moon be past,
That we may sell grain?
And the Sabbath,
That we may trade wheat?
Making the ephah small and the shekel large,
Falsifying the scales by deceit,**

**⁶ That we may buy the poor for silver,
And the needy for a pair of sandals—
Even sell the bad wheat?"**

**⁷ The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
"Surely I will never forget any of their works.**

**⁸ Shall the land not tremble for this,
And everyone mourn who dwells in it?
All of it shall swell like the River,**

***Heave and subside
Like the River of Egypt.***

***⁹ "And it shall come to pass in that day," says the Lord God,
"That I will make the sun go down at noon,
And I will darken the earth in broad daylight;***

***¹⁰ I will turn your feasts into mourning,
And all your songs into lamentation;
I will bring sackcloth on every waist,
And baldness on every head;
I will make it like mourning for an only son,
And its end like a bitter day.***

***¹¹ "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord God,
"That I will send a famine on the land,
Not a famine of bread,
Nor a thirst for water,
But of hearing the words of the LORD.***

***¹² They shall wander from sea to sea,
And from north to east;
They shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the LORD,
But shall not find it.***

***¹³ "In that day the fair virgins
And strong young men
Shall faint from thirst.***

***¹⁴ Those who swear by the sin of Samaria,
Who say,
'As your god lives, O Dan!'
And, 'As the way of Beersheba lives!'
They shall fall and never rise again."***

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