

Erlo Stegen:

Matthew 27:45-53

Let us consider five miracles that took place when Jesus died.

The sun was darkened. At midday, when the sun should have shined in its strength, it became dark (see Amos 8:9). A number of historians recorded this event, e.g. a Greek astronomer, Phlegon, a Samaritan historian, Thallus, and a secular historian, Tertullian. Some of these historians try to give a natural explanation, but it does not fit the facts. God intervened supernaturally. Nature itself "hid its face", so to speak, when the Creator died.

Christ was prepared to go through that shame for you on the cross, so you can be delivered from your sins. Do not slight His grace by continuing in sin, but turn from your sin. Leave behind the world and its lusts and live for Him who died for you.

The veil in the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. This veil was at the entrance to the holy of holies. Inside the High Priest could go once a year with sacrificial blood to atone for the sins of the people. However, he did this year after year, because the blood of animals could never take away sin. When Jesus died, the veil was torn, and the way was opened to God Himself, once and for all.

There was an earthquake. It was powerful and broke the rocks and opened the graves. Dead saints arose from the dead and appeared to many people. In Revelation we also read of an earthquake when Jesus returns to judge. It will be terrible when that day comes and you are not prepared. Do not fool with God, but repent before it is too late.

Many of the saints arose from the dead. They did not appear to anyone until Jesus had shown himself after his resurrection. This too fulfils prophecy.

The church of Christ is a live, growing organism. When Jesus is there, people must be brought to new life in Christ. A church that does not grow is a dead church.

Lastly there was the centurion who came to faith in Christ. He and his soldiers were laughing and mocking. But when he saw how Jesus was different to other criminals, he repented and confessed Jesus openly. A great fear came over him when he realized that they had killed the Son of God. He knew it to be true.

Consider your life today in the light of what Jesus had done for you. Are you still pursuing your own business and pleasure? You may disregard Jesus today, but He will then also disregard you on that Great Day when He will judge everyone.