

The Fourth Word *Eli Eli lema sabachthani?* "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" ([Matthew 27:46](#) and [Mark 15:34](#)).

Who was it in the crowd who said, "He's calling for Elijah!?"? It was almost three o'clock and it had been dark since noon – so no one could see anyone else. But whoever made the statement about Elijah must have been a Jew – otherwise he would not have known about the teaching that Elijah would come down from heaven to rescue those who were in trouble and called on his name. But whoever it was who said that, surely did not know Jesus – or His relationship to His Father.

*Eli Eli lema sabachthani* – my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? It is clearly a line from the 22<sup>nd</sup> Psalm. This is a Psalm that Jesus would have known well. It is a Psalm of lamentation, but also one that ends in deliverance and gratitude. Perhaps anyone who knows his Bible well might have been reminded of the opening line of the psalm at a time of great suffering such as this. But this was more than a Bible reader crying out in pain with familiar Scriptural words. This was the Son of God being torn away from His Father.

Jesus had lived a life without sin. He had experienced human life in its infinite varieties of joy and sadness, pleasure and pain. But He had never sinned. His life was separate and apart from ours in that way. In all of the great temptations that had faced Him during His life, Jesus had remained steadfastly faithful to God and unstained by sin. But on that day – He had not just committed His first sin (something that might have caused Him some spiritual pain) – no, on that day He had taken ALL of the world's sin onto Himself – INTO Himself. And now, in agony, He understood what sin was all about.

Sin is separation from God. On that day, for the first and only time in His life, Jesus was separated from God. His entire life had been lived in perfect harmony with God. Jesus had never known a time when He was not guided by His Father in Heaven. He had never had to wonder what it was like to be truly alone –because He spent so much time trying to FIND situations in which He and the Father could be alone together. So when He looked up and for the first time, did not see His Father looking back at Him, Jesus was not quoting a Psalm. He was screaming out in unbearable spiritual pain;

***Eli! Eli! Lema sabachthani! My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me!***