



Lenten Reflections

Join us through Lent to reflect upon Jesus' words from the Cross.

Each week you will find a new set of reflections here to aid you in your spiritual journey through Lent.

'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'

When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.' At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.'

Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many.

Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!' (Matthew 27:45-54)

Reflection

There is a scene in the film *Hamnet*, based on Maggie O'Farrell's fictional novel about the death of Shakespeare's young son Hamnet, in which the young boy is wandering through a dark wood utterly alone. Frightened, he calls out in anguish for his mother, but there is no reply. Where he longs to hear her loving voice reassuring him, there is just silence.

What he does not know is that he is dreaming while suffering from a fever that will soon prove to be fatal. In reality his mother is right beside him, desperately trying to save him. She never leaves his side.

The scene comes after Hamnet makes an incredible sacrifice for someone he loves – offering to take their place that they might live.

It's hard not to watch these scenes through the lens of Jesus' crucifixion.

The word forsaken comes from the Old English to oppose, refuse, deny; give up, renounce.

When Jesus cries out in pain and despair on the cross, he isn't just feeling abandoned by his father, he is utterly renounced and cast out. The God who said at Jesus' Baptism: 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,' is silent just when Jesus needs him most. The beloved child has become the forsaken one.

We cannot imagine how Jesus felt in that darkest of moments – but we can sit beside him awhile as he wrestles with death face-to-face on the cross. We can choose not to abandon him as he refuses to abandon us, taking our place in the dark wood, so we can walk in the light.

With grateful thanks to Chloe Axford (Licensed Lay Minister), for sharing her reflections with us.



Reflection in Action

- ⇒ *Read through the Bible passage to yourself slowly.*
- ⇒ *Pause after each line.*
- ⇒ *Choose a line that stands out to you.*
- ⇒ *Read it through slowly again.*
- ⇒ *How does it make you feel?*

SCAN ME



“Living Hope” by Phil Wickham

<https://youtu.be/9f2FXxDVO6w?si=-DNy3V-v562qSjmE>

Lenten Prayer

Jesus, I'm forgiven because you were forsaken
I'm accepted, You were condemned
I'm alive and well, Your Spirit is within me
Because You died and rose again.

Amazing love, how can it be
That You, my King, should die for me?
Amazing love, I know it's true
And it's my joy to honour You
In all I do, to honour You. Amen.

(Prayer based on the song “You Are My King (Amazing Love)” by The Newsboys)