

WHAT A SONG OF DELIGHT...

by Carl McMurray

Mark 15:34 records some of the last words of Jesus before he died on the cross, "My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?" These words have led many in their imaginations to any number of false conclusions such as that Jesus was actually abandoned by his Father, this being due to the fact that he literally carried our sin and the Father could not have anything to do with a sinful man. That Jesus could ever be referred to as sinful is nonsense. One might as well say that the sacrificial sheep of Old Testament worship literally became sinners. What then do these words mean?

It is a matter of record that our Lord was quoting the 22nd Psalm here. But, again we must ask why? The answer is to be found in understanding the Psalms. They were the hymnbook of Israel. The Psalms were written over several decades and used over several centuries as the songs of worship, praise, and thanksgiving for the Jews. The Levite singers sang them at the temple worship and the groups of Jews would sing them as they traveled to and from Jerusalem on their trips to the temple. No doubt some Israelite mothers sang their little ones to sleep by them as surely as we sing JESUS LOVES ME to our little ones. Where we today have compiled a thousand songs together in books for our song worship and actually sing less than half of them, the Jews had but 150 songs in their book and used them for centuries.

What thoughts go through your mind when you hear phrases like, AMAZING GRACE HOW SWEET THE SOUND, or, WHEN THE ROLL IS CALLED UP YONDER... Likewise the Jews had been singing the 22nd Psalm all of their lives. They had it memorized from their youth up. What would have immediately gone through their minds and hearts when Jesus quoted the first line of that song?

They would have connected Jesus with the suffering one who cried out to God for succor. One under reproach, surrounded by mockers and evil doers while his body feels like it is coming apart and life flows out of him like water. He is pierced and his garments are divided for lots. And while all of this is going on the servant cries for deliverance with faith that he will be saved. God has been his God since birth and not only will he praise Him, he will tell others to do the same. He know for a fact that satisfaction and prosperity is yet before him and coming generations will be told of the Creator. They too will join him in declaring his righteousness.

With his dying breath Jesus glorifies and praises the God of heaven and earth and holds out the promise of hope and salvation for generations to follow. What a song is the death song of our Lord.