

Luke 23:44

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

Analysis

Supernatural darkness: 'And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.' The timing: 'the sixth hour' (ἕκτη ὥρα, hektē hōra) was noon; 'the ninth hour' (ἐνάτης ὥρας, enatēs hōras) was 3 PM. For three hours, 'darkness over all the earth' (σκότος ἐγένετο ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν γῆν, skotos egeneto eph' holēn tēn gēn) covered the land. This wasn't natural eclipse—Passover occurred at full moon when eclipses are impossible. The darkness was supernatural, signifying divine judgment. When Jesus bore sin, the Father turned away, and darkness covered the earth. This fulfills Amos 8:9: 'I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.' Creation itself mourned as the Creator died.

Historical Context

Darkness in Scripture symbolizes judgment, God's presence, and separation from Him (Genesis 15:12, Exodus 10:21-23, Matthew 8:12). During Jesus' crucifixion, all three meanings applied. He experienced judgment for human sin (Isaiah 53:4-6, 2 Corinthians 5:21), the Father's wrathful presence (Habakkuk 3:3-4), and separation from the Father (Matthew 27:46). The three-hour darkness during midday was impossible to miss or misinterpret—supernatural intervention was occurring. Some early Christian writers report pagan historians noting this event. Whether the darkness was localized to Judea ('all the land') or worldwide ('all the earth'), it signaled that the universe's most significant event was transpiring: the Son of God was dying for sinners.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What does the supernatural darkness during Jesus' crucifixion signify theologically?
2. How does this darkness relate to other instances of darkness in Scripture (Exodus, prophets)?
3. Why did the Father turn away from the Son during these three hours?

Interlinear Text

ἦν	δὲ	ὥσει	ώρας	ἕκτη,	Καὶ	σκότος	ἐγένετο	ἐφ'
it was	And	about	hour	the sixth	and	a darkness	there was	over
G2258	G1161	G5616	G5610	G1623	G2532	G4655	G1096	G1909
ὅλην	τὴν	γῆν	ἕως	ώρας	ἐννάτης			
all		the earth	until	hour	the ninth			
G3650	G3588	G1093	G2193	G5610	G1766			

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 27:45 (Darkness): Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

Amos 8:9 (Darkness): And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day:

Acts 2:20 (Darkness): The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

Matthew 27:52 (Parallel theme): And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

John 19:14 (Parallel theme): And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

Mark 15:39 (Parallel theme): And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

Amos 5:18 (Darkness): Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light.

Psalms 105:28 (Darkness): He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word.

Joel 2:31 (Darkness): The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.