

## Descent to Hell

### Scripture Reading — Psalm 22

*Jesus cried out in a loud voice ... "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*  
*Matthew 27:46* —

C. S. Lewis, writing after the death of his wife, speaks frankly of the distance his grief created between him and God. Prior to her death, approaching God was like visiting the home of a good friend who had turned the lights on to offer a warm welcome. But now, approaching God was like approaching a cold, dark, house that appeared abandoned. Was the house ever occupied? Lewis's grief made him wonder.

Lewis's experience is well summed up in the anguished cry of the psalmist: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Some of us have cried those words too. Our pain is gut-wrenching; our despair is intense.

On the cross, Jesus himself experienced the full meaning of the psalmist's words. The Apostles' Creed sums it up this way: "He descended to hell."

In the darkness on Calvary, the Father turned his back on his Son. Not because the Father is callous and uncaring, but so that the hellish punishment we deserve might fully fall on the Savior.

As Lewis worked through his grief, he discovered that his feeling didn't square with fact. God was with him after all. And in moments of anguish, God is there for us too. Why? Because Jesus suffered and cried these words for our sake.

### Prayer

*Lord Jesus, we are stunned by all you have suffered for us. Open us to your continuing presence in all our moments of crisis and pain. In your name we pray. Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#)

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