

SOLDIER SURPRISE

Imagine watching someone being killed. How would you feel?

Shocked? Scared? Angry?

The Roman soldiers who nailed Jesus to a cross were used to watching people die. It was their job. Even so, some of the unusual things that happened this time came as a real surprise and probably scared them too.

Read what happened. Look out for three surprises...

³³ At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").

³⁵ When some of those standing near heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah."

³⁶ Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down," he said.

³⁷ With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

³⁸ The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

The Bible: Mark chapter 15, verses 33 to 39

THREE SURPRISES – AND WHY THEY HAPPENED

Fill in the gaps...

1 Look at verse 33. Even though it was the middle of the day, the country was in d _____.

WHY?

In the Bible, darkness was a picture of God's anger because of sin.

What is sin? Well, we all like to be in charge of our own lives. We do what we want, instead of what God wants. This is what the Bible calls sin.

Sin separates us from God. It stops us from knowing him and stops us being his friends and living with him for ever. It means we face his punishment.

2 Jesus is God's Son. He lived a perfect life. He never sinned. But look at verse 34. Jesus c _____ out that God had abandoned him.

WHY?

When Jesus died on the cross, he was being punished—not for his own sin, but for the sin of the whole world. Jesus died in our place, taking the punishment we deserve, so that we can be forgiven and be friends with God.



Read verse 38. This was a huge, thick curtain that separated the rest of the temple from the bit in the middle—where God dwelled. Only the high priest could go in, just once a year! No-one else was allowed. But...

3 When Jesus died, the curtain was t _____ in two.

WHY?

The curtain was there to remind people that their sin separated them from God.

When Jesus died, he dealt with the problem of sin completely. So God ripped the curtain in the temple in two, to show there is nothing to separate us from him anymore.

Oh, there's one more surprise...

★ 4 JESUS DIDN'T STAY DEAD! ★

Jesus was buried in a tomb. But when some of his friends went to see the tomb three days later, it was empty! An angel told them, "You are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here" (Mark 16 v 6).

Jesus is alive! He's still alive today, living in heaven and ruling the world. And we can enjoy knowing him as our Friend and King.