I. FIRST, JESUS EXPERIENCED DARKNESS ON THE CROSS.

A. Mark recorded this darkness—Mark 15:33.
   1. Tertullian recorded that it was a **world-wide** darkness.
   2. It couldn’t have been a solar eclipse because it was Passover and it always occurred during a **full** moon.
   3. There is no historical record of a **sandstorm** or intense cloud cover during this time.
   5. Luke indicates it was a **supernatural** occurrence.
   6. It was also **prophesied**—Amos 8:9.
   7. It was also similar to the darkness of the ninth **plague** in Egypt—Exo. 10:22.

B. There are spiritual implications too of this darkness.
   1. It identifies Jesus with the **sinner’s** darkness.
      a. Sinners have a darkened **mind**—Rom. 1:21.
      b. Sinners **deeds** are marked by darkness—Rom. 13:12.
      c. The wicked powers of the **devil** are characterized by darkness—Eph. 6:12.
   2. It should also remind us that Jesus alone is the answer for this spiritual darkness—John 8:12.

II. SECOND, JESUS NOT ONLY EXPERIENCED DARKNESS ON THE CROSS, HE ALSO EXPERIENCED DISPAIR.

A. Mark records Jesus’ despair—Mark 15:34.
   1. Jesus’ cry was a fulfillment of **prophecy**—Psalms 22:1.
   2. Rather than being a question of doubt, it was a cry of **faith**—“MY God, MY God”.

B. Jesus’ despair was the result of his abandonment.
1. The word “forsaken” means “abandon” or “desert”.

2. Why did his Father abandon him?

3. Sin is the only thing that can separate a person from God—Romans 6:23.

4. Therefore, when Jesus became sin for us, his Heavenly Father had no choice but to forsake him—Isa. 53:6; 2 Cor. 5:21 and Heb. 9:28.

5. So Jesus was forsaken so we would never be forsaken—Heb. 13:5.

C. Jesus’ words were misunderstood—Mark 15:35.

1. Mark records Jesus’ words in Aramaic which are “Eloi” for “My God”.

2. Matthew, however, records these same words in Hebrew (Matt. 27:46) which are “Ell” for “My God”.

3. If Jesus was quoting Psalms 22:1 on the cross, which he must have been doing, he did so in the language it was written in, Hebrew.

4. The Hebrew word “Ell” could have been easily misunderstood as “Elijah”.

LESSONS FROM THE DARKNESS AND DISPAIR.

1. First, during times of suffering, God is near even when He seems far away---Matt. 28:20 “I am with you always, even to the end of the world.”

2. Second, during times of suffering we must remain faithful even when God seems far away—Jesus cried out “My God” not just “God”.