

The Power of the Cross

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon explores the profound impact of the cross, illustrating its power to heal and transform lives through personal connection and faith.

Duration: 1:38:23

Scripture: Proverbs 28:13, Amos 8:9, Matthew 6:33, Luke 22:53, John 8:34, Hebrews 3:7-8, 1 John 3:8

Topics: "The Cross", "Sin And Redemption"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the decay and rottenness of sin, even among churchgoers. He mentions a legend about the search for the real cross of Jesus, where three crosses were found but it was difficult to discern which one belonged to Jesus. The speaker then focuses on three miracles that occurred when Jesus was on the cross: the darkness upon the earth, the tearing of the temple curtain, and the rising of saints from the dead. He emphasizes the significance of these miracles and encourages the audience to study and preach about them.

Transcript

In verse 9 of 1 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 18, verse 18, 1 Corinthians chapter 1, For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. The matter about the cross is the power of God. I remember the legend which is told about those who are seeking the real cross of Jesus.

They sought and searched and eventually they found three crosses. As you know, there were two who were crucified on either side of the Lord, both criminals and murderers. They too were sentenced to death.

One of them you saw in the film last night, he kept on mocking the Lord, insulting Him, cursing Him, saying, if you really are the Christ, why don't you save yourself and us? The other thief, though, rebuked his colleague and said, how can you say that? We died justly. We deserve our punishment, but this man is innocent. These were men who were virtually identical in everything, in crime, they were soul mates, they were in prison together, they had done everything together, but now there was a separation.

The one had chosen Barabbas, the one the Lord Jesus. And the thief on the cross then cried out to the Lord, remember me Lord, when you enter into your kingdom. And the Lord Jesus said, today you will be with me in paradise.

I remember as well, my bosom pal at one time, my closest friend, when Jesus came and revealed himself, I went one way in choosing him, my other friend went in a completely different direction. And until today we have no more friendship. So this matter of Jesus is astonishing.

It is a sort of division. I prayed earnestly that the Lord would also call my friend and that he would serve the Lord with me in the gospel, but no, it never happened. He went in his own way completely.

But I received other friends better than he was. He became a woman's man, one who would only talk about girls and women with his pals. Once that was his line.

He would come home from holidays and boast about the number of girls that he had been with and others would say, but I was with so many, and they would describe in detail, just think those white boys at that time. But I was with so many, and they would describe in detail, just think those white boys at that time. You saw in the film how Judas then was with that decaying ass, the worms, the flies, that is symbolic of the rottenness of sin.

Now these boys that I speak about at school, they were churchgoers and yet they were in this rottenness, this putrid lifestyle. You'd expect such a thing of the heathen, godless people. But that's what you found in the churches, heartbreaking thing.

That's just the downfall of the white races, that it's like the way it is, it's only natural. How can God bless? Cursed are they. Now in this legend they sought the real cross and found three.

These crosses were very old and weathered. and you couldn't tell what was what and they had hoped that they'd see the nail marks in the one, but you couldn't tell. And so they couldn't discern which one belonged to Jesus.

Until one man said, I have an idea. And I'll show you which one belongs to Jesus. He said, bring along somebody who's completely disabled, one that will have to be brought in a wheelchair.

And indeed they brought a cripple. They took the first cross and they said to him, touch this. Nothing happened to him.

And the man said, well, that's not Jesus' cross. Bring another one. They brought the next one.

He touched it and said, no, that's not Jesus' cross. Bring the third one. He touched it and was instantly healed.

And they all said, this proves it is the cross of Jesus. Now that's the meaning. In other words, when you touch the cross, there is power there.

And I enjoy that story because of the symbolism behind it, that when a person's in contact with the cross, indeed, the real cross, there is a change, there is healing. Even if it doesn't cause physical healing, but there's true spiritual healing. A certain black preacher whom I love very much, I met him for the first time in 1955 in East London.

He stood up and spoke. And he said, this man said to the audience, you know, I've never traveled outside of our country. I've never been overseas.

I've never been to Israel, but I have been to Calvary. I've been there to the cross. Have you been to the cross? Even if you've been to every corner of this globe, you haven't been anywhere until you've been to the cross.

Now these are just words of introduction, and I don't forget, a certain lady in our midst came to me and said, she's free for us to speak about this, how the Lord touched her. She too couldn't walk. She said, but now I can.

I said, show me, demonstrate. And she was able to walk without a limp. She said, Jesus is alive.

He is there. Last night, there was a certain professor in the audience and his wife, who's a doctor. Was it she who said, was it she who was 16 years? Yes.

And she had been in bed, he had been bedridden for 16 years. The Lord has raised him up and he wants to preach the gospel. His wife is a doctor and there's, on the other side of Tugela, towards Ishawi, there used to be a Catholic hospital, and she's in charge of that hospital.

She was operated on, the Lord helped her, and she said she got well, and she just desires to spread the gospel. Could I ask her to come forward just a bit? Tell us where you come from and your name. Just tell us, tell us some of your story.

Come closer. We need to measure how high you are to be at the microphone. Okay, look back.

I greet you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some have seen me come here before, I'm the mother of Mkululego. My surname is Mbuto.

I am from Harding, from where the Dals are. I came here in December, and I was ill. I wasn't able to walk.

I was wheeled around in a wheelchair. When I came here, there was doubt in my heart, whether I could ever walk again. When I got here, I was prayed for.

And when I was prayed for, I really called upon the Lord, that He would help me not to doubt. And indeed, the Lord helped me. I stayed for about a week, still not being able to walk.

But by the second week, Uncle Elo came there to our prayer hospital section to pray for the sick. I think it was just about two days later, I was able to get up, as you can see me walking now. Then I looked at the Lord, I beheld Him in my heart.

And something happened in my heart. And I said from my heart, I thank the brethren here at the mission. Those who have helped with Mkululego, my child.

Who have helped me. I'm heavy and they push me around in this wheelchair. The way in which they helped Mkululego, I pitied them at times.

The way I had to be pushed around, I being so heavy. I was sorry especially for Aunty Maria, who being old and the same age as me. As old as she was, she would push me all the way from there here to the auditorium.

And she would nurse her, despite my being so big and being so difficult. And as I stand here, I don't feel the slightest bit of pain anymore. I'm completely well.

And I'm well in my heart. And I thank God so much. Thank you.

I thought you were really a girl, but you are a grown up person now. She's got a big daughter. Has a big daughter.

One girl came to me, a big girl, and said, that's my mother. She's the one who gave me birth. Jesus is there and He lives.

And the main thing is not the healing of the body, but Jesus' power to heal us of our grudges, our hatred, our immorality, and our love for the world. I'd like to speak today about the miracles which happened when Jesus was crucified. There is so much, there are so many materials and different things one could look at regarding how He died in His death and in His resurrection.

It would take weeks to get through. I was sorry last night in that we didn't interpret, but I thought next time, the Lord willing, I'd like to be able to interpret for you into Zulu, so that you understand. Fully what was going on.

God has His ways in which He works. Nothing is too difficult for Him. He said, go into all the world and preach the gospel.

In 1966, I'd said, Lord, how can we ever go and preach the gospel to the whole world? Communism has simply blocked the possibility of going to the whole world. It didn't take very long, and the Iron Curtain fell. Those walls around Russia and that just collapsed.

I've often contemplated, but what about the Muslim countries? Lord, how will one ever get the gospel there? Because it's illegal. You can get killed if you witness directly about the Lord Jesus. But amazingly enough, this very film, The Passion of the Christ, has made inroads into my heart.

When I go to Islamic countries, they say that the Muslims are flocking to see it. They're just pouring in. And you know why? Israel, the Jews, have criticized this film.

Against it. Now all the Muslims want to see. Why are the Jews against it? They're flocking to it.

You see the wisdom of God. When I go to Islamic countries, they say that the Muslims are flocking to see it. They're just pouring in.

And you know why? Israel, the Jews, have criticized this film. When I go to Islamic countries, they say that the Muslims are flocking to see it. They're just pouring in.

And you know why? Israel, the Jews, have criticized this film. There's something wrong. Where Jesus is, there's always growth.

The gospel just automatically expands and new people are brought in. If in your church, or your congregation, there's a decline, a decrease in numbers, and people are not coming, and where you're actually going backwards and not forwards, then it just shows that there's death in your congregation. 20, 20, 20, 30, 30, 30.

Get in the feeling. Evangelia Hamba, Evangelia Kubega. Your congregation is just sitting at a number 20 or 30, and years and years go by, and there's no expansion, then you are dead, because inherent in the gospel is its power to expand and grow.

There must be something radically wrong in your life. Search yourself before God. You've got to change.

You've got to get converted. You are not right. The Holy Spirit can't work through you.

If the Holy Spirit cannot work through you, don't claim that you are alive. If you can't if you can't. If you can't if you can't.

If you can't if you can't. If you can't if you can't. You are sitting in that same condition you busy with your own thing.

You're not busy with real life because the gospel has this inherent life which expands where you win other people where you draw your neighbors in otherwise you are just playing church and your church is just strangling you. Even if some leave the church but it should happen that many more will come in. If you preach the true gospel, that which really is alive, not that you say well let's dance in church so that we can win others and be more attractive to the world, but if you preach the true gospel, that which really is alive, not that you say well let's dance in church so that we can win others and be more attractive to the world, but if you preach the true gospel, that which really is alive, not that you say well let's dance in church so that we can win others and be more attractive to the world, but if you preach the true gospel, that which really is alive, not that you say well let's dance in church so that we can win others and be more attractive to the world, but if you preach the true gospel, that which really is alive, not that you say well let's dance in church so that we can win others and be more attractive to the world, but if you preach the true gospel, that which really is alive, not that you say well let's dance in church so that we can win others and be more attractive to the world, but if you preach the true gospel, that which really is alive, not that you say well let's dance in church so that we can win others and be more attractive or smoke so that you can win the smokers.

I met one man who actually told me, preacher I smoke because I'm reaching out to the smokers. I said no you're not, they've reached out to you, they've won you. Now there are so many things that struck me regarding the miracles at the cross that I wanted to mention many of them but we don't have time.

I'm going to rush through some verses. I hope you haven't left your bible at home. You should always have your bible with you and a pen.

Make notes, get back home and study it for yourself. Preach about it too. So I'm going to touch upon perhaps only three of the miracles which happened when Jesus was on the cross.

Many other things happened, all of them miraculous. Jesus in Luke chapter 22 verse 53 said, Well let me read the whole verse. Every day I was with you in the temple courts and you did not lay a hand on me but this is your hour when darkness reigns.

On many other occasions they had sought to arrest Jesus and sometimes even when they'd wanted to stone him he would just slip out of the crowd. But at this point he declared this is now your hour. Darkness has its way.

And then you saw for instance depicted in the film how at that moment all manner of evil and wickedness had its way. Now three main points I'd like to highlight. The first miracle of the darkness upon the earth.

Secondly, the tearing of the curtain of separation in the temple where it was torn utterly in two. And thirdly, many of the saints who rose from the dead at that moment came out of the tombs. Let's start then with this darkness upon the earth.

It was dark upon the world. It was also the time of darkness. It was the opportunity that hour given to satan and his people.

God let them loose to do as they would do. And even though they had their way, even the very elements like the sun hid her face and like a woman who covers her face with a shawl when her husband dies in grief, in mourning, the sun hid her face. That's what the Zulus do.

They cover themselves with a blanket if her husband has died. I say the sun did that because the sun's created and maker is satan. There was darkness upon the face of the earth.

This is not just a biblical statement. There are also historical records which back that up. It is said that it is said that in Egypt there was a man and an academic called Dionysius.

He had a home in the city of Heliopolis. Helio meaning the sun. Heliopolis, the city.

So that was sun city. So they also had a sun city in Egypt. You know sun city, don't you? In South Africa.

There where sin is consumed, it's dark there. That's where people go to gamble and to be sexually immoral. You can go there, you who are immoral.

You'll find every manner, every sort of person and their type of immorality. Now in this sun city, that should be called rather black city or some other name but not sun city. Dionysius records that when he noticed in his city of Heliopolis that it became dark, he recorded that it is between two possibilities.

Firstly, God who's created all things is suffering. The wheels of the earth are stopping to turn and it's about to be the destruction of the earth. So that's an Egyptian historian who took note of that very time when it became dark saying it seems like the God of creation is suffering.

There are people who are sharp and observant and who are able to sense and they can get a whiff of what's happening and they have a sharpened sense. Maybe you are in a room with a dead rat, you also have a nose but you don't even detect that there's a rotten smell. Like Christians who can be surrounded by rottenness and they just don't know what's going on.

Blinded, completely blinded and lacking in discernment. A woeful condition for those who are meant to be children of light but find themselves in darkness. They don't rebuke the darkness.

They don't rebuke the wickedness. Instead they abide in it, they stay in it and they are in total darkness. But that Egyptian man had the discernment to understand that something of great significance is happening to cause this darkness upon the earth.

Either the creator himself is suffering or the world is coming to an end. So that Dionysius from Egypt, there's also another place his name was Flegon was a Roman historian and he records that in the 14th year of the rule of Tiberius there was suddenly darkness across the whole earth. A great darkness.

He said it was so dark that one could even see some stars. So it's a historical fact. That's not a legend.

It's something that historians recorded. It actually did happen. But like I said last night at the film, what we see here is just a very small fraction of what really happened.

And the wounds of Jesus that you saw, it didn't depict completely, they're small in comparison. You saw how they then tied him to that lowish slab where he was tied. That was used in those days to give maximum exposure to the back and also to the rest of the body and even the armpits where they would whip, they'd use a kettle nine tails which would have things, nails and things that would claw into and rip and shred a person.

Jesus said, I've been with you a long time teaching you but now this is your hour, this is the time when darkness reigns. It's amazing. It was, humans fell, he fell in the Garden of Eden.

Through that woman in the Garden, she brought sin. Sin had entrance through her and her husband washed out that he was, he identified with her instead of rebuking her and so they sinned together. That happened in a garden.

When Jesus came to work, that work of redemption, he began in the Garden, in the Garden of Gethsemane. It was there that he came to rescue us. There, the very place where we fell.

It wasn't just an eclipse which happened where the moon gets between the earth and the sun and there's just for a few minutes a partial darkness but it records that from for those three hours there was darkness. When Jesus works, he works in mighty power, in awesome power, that even nature itself is affected and the sun being an inanimate object, the burning fire so far away, even it was, darkness came upon it as it felt what was happening. The Pharisees and the priests should, just because of that event, they should have repented but no ways because they had hardened their hearts already and when a person hardens their heart, doesn't matter what miracle, what sign might take place, they just persevere in their sin.

Never harden your heart for once you've hardened it, it is extremely difficult for it to be softened again. We've often witnessed that people who were at the revival in the beginning in 1966 who hardened their hearts at that time and even though they've tried at times and they wanted to repent but somehow it just doesn't come right, they hardened their hearts. And with such people you might speak until you're blue in the face but no words can convince a person whose heart has been hardened.

If you do find that your heart has been hardened, cry before the Lord, call out to him, mourn before him as you seek that he changes your heart. And all the wonderful and miraculous things which happened were recorded already, they were prophesied about in the Old Testament. Just listen to what Amos says, Amos who lived many centuries before the Lord Jesus.

In Amos chapter 8 verse 9. In that day declares the sovereign Lord, I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight. The prophet spoke inspired by the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit speaks, he always speaks in accordance with his word with the Bible.

And he says, Amos 8 verse 9, in that day, in that distant day declares the sovereign Lord, I will make the sun go down at noon and it will darken the earth and I'll darken the earth in broad daylight. An astonishing wonder that darkness should come upon and with the darkness that came upon the all nature could feel the grief, whether it was the birds or the trees, the grass, everything felt the darkness and sensed the darkness that had come upon it. For Jesus is God, Jesus God made flesh or manifested in the flesh.

For God had wondered how he would save and redeem man. A certain white person overseas in Europe who had been walking down a street, it was in winter. When the ground is covered with snow, the white person overseas in Europe, they have the practice there also of feeding the cattle either inside or placing

food for them in the forests and places where the cattle would be that they wouldn't starve.

The white person overseas in Europe, they have the practice there also of feeding the cattle either inside or placing food for them in the forests and places where the cattle would be that they wouldn't starve. As this man was walking down the snowy street, he noticed a whole flock of sparrows gathered together and they were eating. What had happened was a vehicle transporting wheat had come and as they were carrying the wheat bags, one of them had a hole in it and there was a lot of wheat that had spilled and all these sparrows were eating from it.

He thought, let me get closer to them and see if I can get hold of one of these sparrows. He walked very cautiously, slowly, but then he noticed that they took fright. When he was just about two steps away from the nearest one to get one of the sparrows, they all took off together and flew off into the trees in the local forest.

He thought to himself, why should they just flee like this? My intention was to help. It's so cold, I thought I'd get one not to hurt it, but to protect it in this cold weather. Why did they just take fright? He thought, well why have they flown away? What else can I do? Then he said to himself, well it must be because of the largeness of my figure, that must have put them off.

They must have seen me such a big figure and got a fright and then flown away. Then he pondered upon this predicament. He thought, you know, if only I could change into their form so that I would become a bird myself, like them, I would be able to fly with them.

They wouldn't take fright, they wouldn't be scared of me. And so, God, too, if he had come to me and said, in his terrible holiness and as the light that he is, who would have survived? As the Bible records in the Old Testament, that even when he tried to show a bit of himself, people would have died and Moses even had to be hidden from seeing him completely. And so, God, too, if he had come to me and said, in his terrible holiness and as the light that he is, As the light that he is, who would have survived? So, too, God became a sparrow, so to say, so that the other sparrows wouldn't take fright.

But God became flesh, he was incarnated, became a human being. Not just a human being, but a little baby, more acceptable. People, if they see a little baby, they are drawn to it.

They would say, oh, shame. And with some whites who have feelings and racist feelings against blacks, but if they see a little black baby, they will say, shame. So Jesus became God incarnate, he took upon himself our flesh, came as a little baby, grew up among them so that he was seen as a person.

Then they beat him, whipped him cruelly, taking him just as a man, not realizing that he also was God. But when they treated him in that way, there was a sign of his divinity. Something of that divinity was shown when darkness came upon the face of the earth and the sun hid her face.

Secondly, the earth shook. There was a shaking, an earthquake. And as the choir sang earlier on in Zulu, that even the rocks broke up and cracked and split.

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others who spoiled him, they got him into trouble.

And look at you parents, how you defend your child, you'll be willing to part from the Lord. You choose hell and defend your child in sin, rather than clearly state the case. Do you hear what Jesus said to the woman? Now I forgive you, you go and sin no more.

It was to be the utter end of her sinning, and so too it should be. Why do Christians confess something the one day, and the next day they beckon the same thing again? You've got to let go. And then they confess again.

What causes that? That's a terrible thing. It's a bad thing. And I speak to you men.

If your wife had to come to your husband and say, please forgive me, oh husband, I have committed adultery with another man, how would you feel about it? It would be a bitter pill to swallow. It's easier for a woman if the man says, I've sinned with another woman. But a man, if his wife comes and says, I've sinned with another man, please forgive me, he'll have sleepless nights, he will want to divorce her.

He'll do anything in this world. He can't just stand it, he can't just stay. Maybe there's an exception to the rule and he'll say, I forgive you.

I forgive you, because I must. God said I must forgive. And then tomorrow she comes again, forgive me, I've done it again.

What will you do? Will you kick her? Fist her? Or divorce her? You've got a right to divorce her, but don't get married again. Then you've got to live without a wife. Now, you will say, hey, don't do it again.

Now you sin, and that sin is worse in God's eyes than what your wife has done. It's worse to the Holy God. Your anger, your resentment, whatever it may be.

And you do it again. And I don't want to get married again. I don't want a divorce.

I want to live without a wife, without a son. I don't want to live like that. I don't want to be in a position where I have to let my anger out.

When I am angry, I lose my temper, I lose my temper, and my anger rises. You know what I told them, if they've sinned with another man, they shouldn't tell it to their husband, shouldn't. We had a case in Durban, it was another church, and the man went to a service and got converted.

And he was so convicted of a sin, when he got home, he did what many men do, anoint their wives as their counsellors. He said, oh my wife, I've sinned terribly. Please forgive me.

I sinned with your best friend. That's where it usually starts. He sinned with his wife's best friend.

She was shook, shaken to the core. And he said, it's not only that, there's another one, and there's another one. And he carried on for an hour, for two hours.

Till she was sick of it. She wanted to vomit. She never believed that her husband could be so evil.

A woman trusts her husband, she can't think. She left everything, her father, her mother, got married to him. She can't think that he'd be unfaithful to her.

And then, suddenly, it started throbbing here inside. And she says, well, he's so honest, at least, he tells me all this. And I am not guiltless.

I sinned one day, once with another man. And then it welled up in her heart. If he confesses all that, then I've got to confess this as well.

What he's done hundreds of times, I did it once. And she says, my husband, I forgive you. And she says, I've got something to confess as well.

He says what? She says, I was unfaithful once. With whom? And it was his friend. And he says, I can't forgive you.

I can't forgive you. They phoned me from Durban and says, please come. That marriage is on the rocks.

You see how evil men can be. Now, if your wife comes and says, forgive me, I've done that. And then she comes and says, forgive me, I've done it as well.

I thank God that God spared me, that I never had to face such a thing. I think it would have been very, very, very, very, very, very difficult for me. Well, that would have been a test.

That would have been a test. Jesus said, sin no more. And you confess your sin, and then you do it again.

Are you playing the fool with God? That confession is no confession. The Bible says, he that curses sin shall not prosper, but he that confesses and forsakes it. Jesus says, I forgive.

But don't confess again. And don't sin again. But we're so used to sinning.

We're so used to sin that it's natural for us. Then one's got to ask, what kind of a child are you? Are you a child of the Lord, or are you still a child of the devil? Test yourself. Test yourself.

One person asked me, do you want to tell me then that I won't sin again? That I'll never sin again. Then I said, look, which sin is it that you don't want to part with? Jesus said, sin no more. Maybe it's just your anger, your resentment, your touchiness.

Which is worse, to be immoral or to get angry? Which sin is greater in your eyes? If Jesus can tell her, who was a prostitute, sin no more, then how much more should you be able to heed that word in the small things? Maybe it's that very sin which is grieving the Holy Spirit, quenching Him in your life. When Jesus died, the earth was shaken. So too, your life needs to be shaken up.

Rocks split apart. The veil was rent in two. The cross works powerfully.

No wonder Paul said, to those who are being destroyed, the cross is utter foolishness, but we who are being saved, it is the power of God. The rocks and boulders in our hearts must split apart and break up. Otherwise, the death of Jesus hasn't brought about that earthquake in your life.

What's the time? I haven't got my watch. Is your behind sore? Let's come now to the final point. With that mighty earthquake, there were saints of God who came alive out of the tombs.

And when Jesus had been resurrected, they, these risen people, came and revealed themselves in the cities. The death of Jesus has power to resurrect the dead. Even if you are dead in your sin, now I know I'm just illustrating, in this case, these were saints who were raised.

But even if you're dead in sin, dead and buried, and there's no hope, the Lord is able to raise you up. Let's read in the Old Testament from Hosea. In Hosea, chapter 13, verse 14.

What does it say in English? I will ransom them from the power of the grave. I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction? Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, are your plagues? His death reached even into the place of the dead.

They rose up because of the death of Jesus. A great day comes. The great day comes when Jesus will return and the trumpet shall sound and everyone will, even your friends and relatives, everyone will be raised out of their graves.

In Hosea, verse 15. In actual fact, the dead are not even in the grave. That's just their body that lies in the grave.

The dead ones are with the Lord. If they're not with the Lord, then they're in hell. And it doesn't help for you as in animistic beliefs or ancestral worship where you talk to the dead or you talk at the grave.

They won't hear. It doesn't matter if you perform rituals for the dead. The dead are gone and they're either with the Lord or not and in hell.

Some perform occult rituals and even ceremonies where they give them Christmas food and other things for the dead. The dead are gone and they're either with the Lord or not and in hell. It doesn't help for you as in animistic beliefs or ancestral worship where you talk to the The dead are gone and they're either with the Lord or not and in hell.

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Now these are just some of the rituals of ancestral worship. They go to terrific length to, they have dreams and they dream that they must slaughter for the dead person. Meantime, it's only the living who really eat it.

If you're going to really slaughter for the dead, why don't you do it properly? Madagascar, when they even take the bones out of the sepulchre or the crypt and they take them around in a ritual and they give all the meat and the beer to these bones. But Jesus said, let the dead bury their dead. You, follow me.

Animism is so full of contradictions. You actually mock the dead when you do things like that. You claim to be so pious once the person is dead.

But when they were alive, you didn't feel sympathy. You weren't compassionate. You didn't buy them a vest when it was winter, but suddenly now that they're dead, you've got to perform all these rituals, and you seem so pious.

You can't do a thing like that. They'll curse you. They're not blessed by a thing like that.

So, the first miracle, it became dark. The sun became dark. Then, the veil was rent, so that we could enter into the Holy of Holies.

And then, saints, many saints were raised from the dead. The death of Jesus worked even to the furthest stars. And on earth.

And underneath the earth, in the graves. Every sphere of creation was touched and stirred and shaken. I wonder whether you've been shaken.

Shall we pray? Lord, thank you that we can hear again about your death, even though it's so painful for us as we observe that even the sun became dark. And darkness had its way. But you worked mightily, things on the earth like the rocks and the boulders and the veil.

And you worked under the earth too. Where you were able to unite corrupt bodies and their souls again, that they could be risen from the dead. Lord, may your death work mightily in each and every one of us.

May not one be untouched. Amen.

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