We all know this part of the new testament that is found in the gospels of Matthew and Mark where Jesus makes an exclamation to God saying: “Eli, Eli lama sabachtani” that means "My God, My God why have You forsaken me?" Often this is been a center of discussions and different doctrines, but now we are not going to look at these different points of view. We will just try to see this event from another side. I mean that we will not discuss why is that God had abandoned Him, even if this is important and it happened in this way, so that prophesies and scriptures from the old testament can be accomplished and also, that Jesus being a man at that point (and God in the same time) could experience everything that we are experiencing now. And this is that, because of sin God abandons us. This is the truth. God can not bear any sin. And if today we can be close to Him, it is because the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross is having the power to change us, if we go with faith to Him. Through this sacrifice the portals of heaven are opened.

We are separated from God, because of our sin and Jesus felt abandoned because of the sin that was accounted to Him. And that was still our sin. So it means that He took all of the separation that should have belonged to us. He took it and felt it on the cross. He was tempted in everything as we are and He felt abandoned as we are.

Let us see a passage in Matthew 27:45-49

“Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, “This Man is calling Elijah!” Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. The rest said, “Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him.”

We can see an interesting fact here in v. 47 where we see the people saying that Jesus was calling Elijah for help even though we know that He was calling God. But why did they think so? Was it because they couldn’t understand the language? I don’t think so. It was because of their unbelief. Why Elijah? Because the meaning of the Elijah in Hebrew is “my God is Yahweh” or “Jehovah is God” as well. As we see, the name itself is having to do with God. And as “Eli” was meaning “my God”, high or ascended and this was what Jesus was saying, the people thought that He was calling Elijah instead of calling God. The two words were almost pronounced in the same way in Hebrew language.

Elijah in Hebrew: “ אליהו “ pronounced Eliyahu. (I hope not to be mistaken) So we see the presence of “Eli” in the beginning of the word. But this is not the only point. The point wasn’t that they didn’t hear properly, but what they believed in and the way they believed. Obviously they didn’t want to recognize any reference that Jesus was having with God. They didn’t want to accept it. It was going to be humiliating for them. This is the way they believe till today’s day. They were and they are still waiting for a Messiah that is going to deliver them from all their enemies and maybe was going to deliver them from the Romans too, but instead they found a Messiah that came to show them the right way to follow and that their ways were wrong. He came humble and exposed all their mistakes. It was kind of not what they were expecting. He wasn’t the victorious Messiah that was going to deliver Israel from all their enemies, as they thought. He will indeed come one day as a victorious king of kings and all of His enemies will lay on His feet, but this will be His second coming. The first one was an invitation of repentance and turning toward God. What happened was that they didn’t understand properly the scriptures. In one way they took just what was convenient for them. Just the part that they were going to be victorious with the Messiah and were going to reign with Him, but without the part that was demanding them to humble themselves and to repent. We need to accept the whole word of God, not just what might be convenient for us.

This was the reason why when they heard Him calling God, they assumed that He was calling Elijah for help. First of all, it is impossible, because Jesus is much higher than all of the prophets and Elijah and He wouldn’t call them for help. Obviously He was calling His father God. They didn’t have faith in that and this was their sin and mistake. They didn’t believe that Jesus was what He was telling them that He is. The Savior, the Messiah , the Prince of peace and the Son of God. He wouldn’t call Elijah, but He would obviously turn to God. Any other man would’ve probably called Elijah, but Jesus cried out to God.

What happened is that Elijah came to prepare the way before the Messiah. (Malachi 4:5,6) He came back again as John the Baptist. The scriptures tell us that John the Baptist came in the spirit of prophet Elijah. Speaking about Jesus he said that he was not worthy to loose His sandal strap.

Today people can have the same attitude as the people from that time. People can think that a word they are receiving from someone is not having to do with God. They can think that even the word they are reading in the Bible is not having to do with God. And this is a sin. A sin of unbelief. The someone that the Jews were having when they were not receiving the words from Jesus spoken to them in that time. We need to bind together the word we are listening with faith, meaning that it comes from God, the Creator of the universe and everything else. Obviously not everything we hear around comes from God, but when we are speaking of something clear and basical as Jesus and what He taught and the Bible, we certainly have to have faith. Having that we will also see confirmations and we will be convinced. The question is that a man, same as 2000 years ago like those Jews and the same today, always wants to have a god according to his own preference.

“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgement: **of sin, because they do not believe in Me**;” John 16:8,9

Here we see how the unbelief is described and not any unbelief, but the unbelief in Jesus. It says that is a sin. Jesus is the way as John 14:6 says. This is how God has established for us to be saved. And He didn’t just established it, but He had to do it in that way, because it was the only way to save sinners. By a sacrifice. That’s why it is so important to believe in Jesus. The question is that Jesus’ way many times is opposite to the way this world offers and that’s why people would rather prefer another way, according to their own manner. According to what they prefer, so that they can feel comfortable. It happens because people don’t know Jesus. The only way to believe, to follow and to realize that Jesus’ way is good is by leaving Him to do His work in us, so that we can be really convinced. Otherwise people will never truly follow it. It will be a foolishness for them as 1 Corinthians 1:18 says:

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved is the power of God.”

We need to be convinced by Him, so that we can truly believe and accept His way. We need rather to leave ourselves to Him, so that He can convince us and do His work in us. In Him is found salvation, redemption and all the answers of our questions.