DARKEST DAY by Scott Miller

Many were excited to view the total solar eclipse that occurred this past spring.  A solar eclipse is a rare phenomenon where certain places along the “path of totality” will be completely dark in the middle of the day for just a few minutes. This is an infrequent but natural phenomenon that can be explained by the moon coming between the sun and the earth and casting its shadow on the earth. It is truly an odd sensation to have complete darkness in the middle of the day.

“Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him, ‘Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs?  When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me.  But this is your hour, and the power of darkness’” (Lk. 22.52-53).

When the Son of God submitted Himself to the evil will of the people for whom He would die, it was the power of darkness (Satan) that encouraged those events to occur.  For a relatively short period of time, God allowed Satan to “win” this battle between our perfect Savior sent to save us and the adversary hell bent on destroying us.

“It was now the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun’s light failed.  And the curtain of the temple was torn in two” (Lk. 23.44-45). For those not familiar with Jewish time keeping, the Jewish day started at 6 a.m.  So, the sixth hour is our noon, and the ninth hour is our 3 p.m.  Here we have recorded for us that for three solid hours of peak sunlight time, the “sun’s light failed” and the people were shrouded in great darkness as Jesus hung on a cross.

“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world.  Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’” (Jn. 8.12). For a period of time, the “light of the world” was extinguished, as it appeared the power of darkness had won.  Creation itself reflected the darkness of the moment as the Creator was put to death by His own creation.

The gospel helps us understand that this was a temporary victory for Satan.  In just a few short days, Jesus rose again from his tomb, conquering death and providing access to the “light of life” for all those who obey Him so that we, too, could rise again from the grave.  We model His death, burial, and resurrection and show~~ing~~ the path from darkness to light when we enter the covenant with Him as His disciple as we are baptized (buried) into Christ.  This is where the journey with Him and commitment to Him begins for those who desire to become His disciples. “… that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.” (Phil. 2.15). “And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the lamp is the Lamb.” (Rev. 21.23)

As you ponder with amazement God’s creation in a solar eclipse, consider how Christ took on the ultimate power of darkness for our sake so that we can have hope of His light in eternal life with Him.  No sun or moonlight is needed in heaven because we will be in the glory of God.  Let us be like Him in how we also refuse to walk in the darkness of this world and rather shine as lights for all to see reflecting the light of the Son.