

Forsaken not Forgotten

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[0 : 00] We'll turn again then to Psalm 22. Whilst this is a Psalm of David, it's also a prophetic Psalm of the suffering Saviour.

You see, at no point in this Psalm does David's experience what is described here. What is written here is the reality of the painful death of Jesus Christ. In 1 Peter 1, 10, 11, it tells us that the Spirit of Christ predicted these things hundreds of years before they took place, and this Psalm is a result of such predicting.

And it is the most accurate account of Jesus's suffering. And I think this Psalm must appleg Jesus's life as he went to and fro about what he was doing, as he meditated upon the Psalm.

It really must have been a source of great conflict and pain for him, because he would know every time he read it that this was his fate. Let's look at our first point tonight.

First point is the forsaken Son. Psalm 22, 1 and 2, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?

[1 : 19] Oh my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer by night, and I'm not silent. These are some of the very words that Christ used on the cross at Calvary.

And Jesus was clearly going through the Psalm and other scripture in his head as he hung on the cross, because the word of God was his source of comfort. It was his source of strength. And as he hung on the cross, he used these words, he said, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why does he cry this? Well, Jesus' cry is surrounded here in the relationship he has with the Father, that he has been in union with the Father from before time.

He was one with the Father. He's been in the same essence and in existence of law, the relationship of trust and dependence with the Father. And here he's making this cry from the depths of his soul.

My God, my God, the double repetition is the emphasis here. This is no random calling. It's calling us depth.

[2 : 27] To cry, my God, is to affirm there's a belonging. I have a personal possession of the one I'm crying out to, that in some way the one who's crying out owns a piece of the one he's crying out to, that he has a right to be heard.

Christ is calling out to the Father, my God, my God, the one who I have a right to call out to, the one who I have a right to have an audience with. Why have you forsaken me?

It's a search in question, friends. What has I done to you to deserve this? Why have you happened that you could do this to me?

Why would you leave me? I know you, God. I have a personal possession in this relationship, but you've turned your back on me. This verse 2 says, why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?

Why, God, why? The relationship between the Son and the Father is what's at heart here. The relationship, the communion the Son and the Father had.

[3 : 41] And here Jesus is saying, the Father no longer hears my cries. Here hangs the Savior of the world on the cross of man's cruelty, and he affirms, my relationship with the Father is breached.

You know, Jesus had been forsaken many times in his life, but he always had the Father. The disciples, his closest friends, they left him, they ran away from him, they abandoned him, but he had the Father.

As he knelt in the ground and gethsemane and prayed, he had the Father. And now he cries out, as I hang on the cross, I'm alone.

I have no one. I don't even have you, Father. He hung there on the cross, known he was completely humiliated because the eternal Son of God had been forsaken by his Father.

He was truly the forsaken Son. But friends, his cry is a cry of longing. It's a cry of hope.

[4 : 50] That soon he would see the Father's love once again. The Sam goes on and we could almost imagine Jesus reciting it in his head. He says, yet you are enthroned as the Holy One. You, God, are the praise of Israel.

And you, our fathers, put their trust. They trusted and you delivered them. They cried to you and were saved. In you they trusted and were not disappointed.

As he hangs there, he affirms Jesus, affirms, Father, you are God. And I'm clinging to who you are.

I cling to the fact that you are holy, you are perfect, you're complete. You are the one the people of this earth have cried out to. And you are the one when you have heard them cry out, you have saved them.

That those who David here calls his fathers, when they were in the pit of despair, they recall out to God, save us. And God in his mercy comes and saves them. Because the Father for them is one who does not disappoint an expectant soul.

[5 : 53] And here Jesus is an expectant soul. That his father has forsaken him. And though he is the forsaken son, nevertheless he says, I will still cry out to you, my father.

Jesus holds on to these thoughts because he feels so low. In verse six he says, But I am a worm, not a man, scorned by men, despised by the people.

Such is my pain for Jesus, such is my desertion, my abandonment man from my father. I am just a worm. God becomes man and says, I'm not even able to call myself a man for what I am going through.

Because the terror that I face, the conflict I face. Now we begin to glimpse this terror and conflict for Jesus in the Gospels. When Jesus, before he was betrayed, he began to pray to the Father in Garden of Gethsemane.

And Luke tells us, going a little further, He, that Jesus fell with his face to the ground and prayed, My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me.

[7 : 11] Yet not as I will, but as you will. And later on, Luke tells us, and he was in anguish so much so that he prayed, And his sweat was like drops of blood.

Such is the terror of the cross, as Jesus looks into the cup of wrath which is coming before him. It terrifies his soul. The reality that the burning anger of God for every sinful action committed, Is about to be poured out on his son.

But the power of Jesus, of the Savior, is at work here. Here is the point at which Jesus in the Garden affirms, Father, I know that all that is coming if I choose to follow you.

I know all that is coming if I choose to be the Savior. The struggle Jesus faces here is momentous. The struggle he faces against the power of evil in the flesh.

This is a changing point in history, as he knelt there in this Garden. The world's history was in the balance and the whole world's history changes. We have flashbacks to the Garden of Eden.

[8 : 19] Adam and Eve are faced with a choice. Will they sin or will they obey God? How the world could have been so different if they had obeyed God, but they didn't, they sinned. And now Jesus, the second Adam, he comes and in the face of this great sorrow and pain, He says, Father, I'm not like Adam Eve. I choose the path of obedience.

I choose the path of the suffering servant, the forsaken son. I choose the path which Adam and Eve could not. I choose the path of obedience that you have sent me into the world to save the world.

And he says, and I will obey you. That's why Philipians 2a says, and being found in appearance as a man, he that is Jesus humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross.

At this point, as Jesus is knelt in the Garden of Gethsemane, he's saying, Father, take me to the place where I will cry out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

He says, take me to where it must happen. And now less than 24 hours later, here Jesus Christ hangs on the cross. And he says, I am not even a man. I'm a worm and not a man.

[9 : 34] Jesus is saying, I'm a worm for what is my fate and below the privilege of mankind. Because I am receiving the punishment which mankind is due.

At this point, my Father doesn't hear my cries. He hears your cries. He doesn't hear mine. I'm in the pit. I'm like a worm. I'm rejected.

I am the forsaken Son. But for Jesus, he still holds on. But you God, you are my God.

Let's go on to our second point. Look to Jesus, the forsaken Son, that's look at him as the suffering Son. What part does mankind play in this? Do they roll out the carpet for Jesus for what he's going to do? No, they don't.

Sam 22, 7 and 8, all who see me mock me. They hurl insults, shaking their heads. He trusts in the Lord. Let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him since he delights in him.

[10 : 50] Jesus here is surrounded on the cross by people who hate him. And they're laughing at him. They're teasing him. Those who pass by hurl insults at him. They shoot their heads at him.

Matthew tells us of it. They cried out to him, you who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days. Save yourself. Come down from the cross if you're the Son of God. The same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders, they mocked him.

Those who were supposed to be his men on the ground. We're talking about those who are like the ministers, the elders, the deacons, the professors and colleges. Those people who sure know who Jesus was. They're the ones who are at the feet of the cross saying, kill him.

Crucify him. We don't want anything to do with him. He thinks he's God. Matthew goes on to tell us. They shouted at him. He saved others, they said.

But he can't save himself. They were mocking him. He's the King of Israel. Let him come down now from the cross and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants, for he said, I'm the Son of God.

[11 : 55] Friends, how they abused Jesus. But Jesus knew when he said in the Garden of Giftsem and he, not my will, Father, but yours be done, that he was giving up this right of God, rescuing him.

He knew you had to undergo the whole of the cross. He had to take the mocking, the shame. He couldn't jump down halfway through. He had to see it through to the very end.

So again, the words of comfort would be on his heart in verses 9 to 11 of Psalm 22, that you brought me out of the womb. You made me trust in you, even at my mother's breast. From birth I was cast upon you.

From my mother's womb, you have been my God. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near. There's no one to help. Jesus clings on to who the Father is, despite the Fathering not answering him.

But it gets worse still. Here in Psalm 22, 12, through to 18, the prophetic nature of the Sam builds, with the physical sufferings of Christ being talked about.

[13 : 02] This Christ hanging there, he says, below him the crowds are like hungry lions. They're like strong bulls. They want to tear him to pieces. They want his blood. They're hungry for his pain.

We're told his body's been physically broken. It's been shredded to pieces. Those rulers in the church, they show how much they hate Jesus by their vengeance of them. At this point, the hatred of mankind against the Son of God is in full flow.

Jesus saying he's getting taunted, he's getting mocked, he's beaten, and his strength is gone. He talks of his body like a pot shared, a piece of pottery that's so weak and brittle you could crumble it.

He's thirsting so badly that his tongue sticks to the roof of his mouth. He says, the reality is that I am just a worm, and soon as verse 15 says, I'll be laid in the dust of death.

As this death approaches our Saviour, his tormentors have pierced his hands and feet. And he realizes he is one who is hung on a tree.

[14 : 11] How the Scripture would have filled our Saviour's head. Deuteronomy 21, 23, anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse.

Christ Jesus, the Son of God, knows I'm under God's curse. I'm under my own Father's curse.

And adding to this is the humiliation that soldiers are taunting him, they're stripping him off his clothes. He's partly naked, and they're showing him his face is sealed, Jesus.

We're casting lots for your clothes, Jesus. And all they would say, he won't need them anyways. John 19, 23, and 24 says, let's not tear it, they said to one another.

Let's decide by lot who will get it. This happened that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which said, in Psalm 22, 18, they divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.

[15 : 11] So this is what the soldiers did. How the Lamb of God is suffering at mankind's cruelty. Then at the sixth hour darkness comes across the land.

And after three hours of Jesus hanging there in this torment, baring the curse of God and the scorn of mankind, he cries out, my God, my God.

Why have you forsaken me? Jesus knows he's the suffering son, because he's a forsaken son.

Jesus is crying out because he's alone. He's alone with no aid. He is as those in hell would be. He has no comfort from his father.

And what makes it worse is there is no restraint put over these people before him. These wild dogs are attacking him. Truly as 2 Corinthians tells us, God made him who had no sin to be sin for us.

[16 : 12] God made him sin on that cross. And how Christ endures this, the punishment of a sinner, the worst kind of punishment ever poured out upon him on the cross, despite never sinning, is incomprehensible.

How the Trinity can forsake part of itself and allow this, we don't understand it fully. But Jesus here has become the suffering son, also that he who had sin, he who had no sin, could be made sin for us.

Friends, I want to ask you a question. Do you know the magnitude of your own sin? You see, I don't believe any of us truly do. I don't believe any of us truly know the magnitude of our own sin.

I think God just shows us enough of our sin to save us from it. God only shows us enough of our sin to show us our need to get to him. If God were to open our eyes and uncover all our sin, so that we could see the totality of our sin and what it's done, to see how our actions has caused Christ to go through the pains of hell, I think we would assign ourselves a place of lost and damned forever.

We'd never raise our heads again. God may give us a horror of our sin in this lifetime, but even then the full knowledge and comprehension of just what we are like and what we have done, God is too gracious and loving to do that to us.

[17 : 51] He doesn't let us see the totality. But could you imagine, just for one moment, you could grasp that totality? You could see exactly what your actions have done.

You could comprehend your sin. You could see your sin its entirety. Imagine looking at your sin and then looking up and seeing how holy God is.

And knowing because all that festering sin within you, you can't get close to Him. You can't be near God. And knowing it, you know there is nothing you can do to get back to God because you are so sinful.

Friends, we will never experience the full horror of that because Jesus Christ experienced that for us on the cross. The misery of Christ is intensified by the fact that He sees the fullness of sin and He looks up to see the Father and knows I cannot get near.

I'm going further away from Him because I have been forsaken in this moment. The knowledge that His glory with the Father was no more, that He was just a worm becoming the sin for us.

[19 : 09] Jesus experienced hell on the cross in its entirety. That total separation of the Father, that's why He cries out, My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?

Why have I been made sin when I had no sin in me? Why do you not hear my prayers? Jesus needed no answer because the Father, the Son, whose Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit love this world, they love you so much.

When Timothy 2 tells us, this is good and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth, there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men.

The reason Jesus chose the cross, the reason Jesus chose to take the Father's wrath upon Himself is because He wants you to know how much He loves you.

He wants you to know the truth and remain in that knowledge, that we can see it's our fault Jesus hung on the cross. We put Him there. It's my fault Jesus hung on the cross.

[20 : 31] It's not just the soldiers' fault, it's not just the people back then. We did it, you and I. We are responsible for the Son of God dying and taking our sin because we lost communion with God.

And God says, I love you so much, I want to bring you that back. He chose to give up His life knowing that we can know how much He loves us.

This is the suffering Son and He hangs on the cross and He hangs there for you and I.

Let's go on to our last point. We've looked at the forsaken Son and the suffering Son. Let's now look at the Saviour's Son. In Psalm 22 we pick up again at verse 19, But you, O Lord, be not far off, O my strength, Come quickly to help me, deliver my life from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dogs, rescue me from the mouth of the lion, save me from the horns of the wild oxen.

Jesus still holds on to who the Father is. He still holds on that the Father will hear my cries yet again, that He will rescue me when the time comes.

[21 : 51] And as He hangs there on the cross, cursed and broken, He lifts His head and He tells us it's finished. Luke 23, 46, He says, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

And when He had said this, He breathed His last. His last plea to the Father is, Father, I've done it. And He quotes the last phrase of the Psalm and He's saying, I've been obedient. All that remains for me now is to die, to take upon myself the fullness of death so that you will only see a shadow of death.

But with these last words before He can speak no more, He cries out to the Father. Once more, hear me now, Father, though you are nowhere in sight. Once it's over and once it's complete, once it's done, once I have defeated death, once I have purchased the salvation of those who love me, once I have defeated the devil, then and only then come, come and rescue me from the grave.

Don't leave me in the dust of death. Jesus didn't ask to receive a partial punishment. He wanted to take the whole punishment, but with His last words, He cries to the Father, once I've done it, take me home to be with you.

Take me back to heaven. Psalm 22, 22, I will declare your name to my brothers in the congregation.

[23 : 26] I will praise you, this is the cry. Take me home that I can declare your name, that I will praise you. Jesus wants to go back to heaven to praise the Father for what He's done, praise the Father for burning down all the anger of sin upon Him.

He wants to praise God for that, because He knows in this, the love of God has been shown to mankind. He says, I want to praise you.

Does the Father do it? Yeah, He does it. From now on we're told the Son of Man is seated at the right hand of the Father. The Father accepts the Son's sacrifice.

The Father accepts the Son, He accepts His work, and if you go to Him, He will accept you. Friends, Jesus was forsaken, but He was not forgotten.

And if you're a Christian, you will never forget the cross of Christ in this life or the next. You will be allowed to forget what Jesus has done for you. The rest of this psalm speaks to the triumph of God, that at this time, this night, we may have the fullness of God come into our lives.

[24 : 46] Friends, if you go to Christ, you can have the fullness of God within you. God has given Himself to those who love Him.

And I ask, how can God give Himself to me? How can I have a part of God? How can I have this fullness well within me? Friends, God has given Himself to us on the cross, that He can give Himself to us in the form of the Spirit who comes into our life, who's the guarantee of our faith, who's the token of our salvation, who's the proof of our conversion, and He has given us the Spirit.

He's given Himself so that one day we can be joined together with Jesus in heaven. All that God can give us Himself forever in eternity and paradise.

So that if you believe this message, you know this, one day you're going to die and you're going to come before the judgment seat. But if you've accepted Christ, God, as your Saviour, and you have received His Holy Spirit, God is going to look upon you, and He's not going to see your sin, He's going to look upon you and see His own Spirit, and seeing Himself, He will never deny Himself.

And the Father will say, come on in to my kingdom, come on in. And as you go in, if He sees any tears in your eyes, Revelation tells us the Father will stoop down and He will wipe the tears away from your eyes.

[26 : 10] And He will bid you come in to my kingdom, because what my Son has done for you in Jesus our great Shepherd will be there, the risen Lamb of God, and He will lead us to drink of the water of life, which is at the heart of the throne of God.

Jesus will take us to the centre of God's glory at His throne, and we will get to gaze upon the excellencies of God for all eternity, where we will never tire, where we will always want more, and He will give it, He will give it in abundance.

We will gaze into the face of Almighty God, and we will know we're at peace with Him, because Jesus on the cross cried out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And it all comes back to the truth that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit love you so much that they didn't want to see you suffer in hell for eternity.

They wanted you to have the full access to the Godhead in this life and the next, when John 4 says, and so we know, and rely on the love of God has for us.

[27 : 26] God is love, whoever lives in love lives in God and God in Him. Friends, our purpose tonight is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, that Jesus Christ came to this earth and died for our sins, and He gave that promise.

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. If you cry out and you see the Son of God is the forsaken Son, the suffering Son, and you go to Him, you can experience Him as the Savior's Son for all eternity.

Let's pray together. Gracious Father, what love you have shown us that our words cannot be even begin to express our gratitude.

Lord, that you would die such a horrific death for us, that you would be separated from the Father, and that you would experience hell itself on the cross so that we can come to you this time, and we can ask a few this moment to come into our lives and to save us from our sin, to take our sin away from us, and dwell within us, that we may have your fullness within us.

We praise you God and we look forward to the time in heaven when we will stare into your face and know that we are accepted in Jesus' name.

[29 : 02] Father, strengthen us until that day and help us to grow in your grace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.