> My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?

> Psalm 22:1 (ESV)
>
> My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Why are You so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

This Psalm opens with one of the most anguished cries in all of Scripture. It is the voice of a righteous sufferer who feels utterly abandoned by God. Though he prays day and night, he perceives no answer and finds no rest. This lament is not merely personal—it prophetically foreshadows the Messiah's suffering on the cross.

David's Experience of Feeling Forsaken

David, the author of this psalm, endured prolonged seasons of trial where God's silence felt unbearable. In Psalm 69:10–17 (NKJV), David describes how even his acts of humility—fasting, wearing sackcloth—led others to mock him:

"When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, That became my reproach. I also made sackcloth my garment; I became a byword to them. Those who sit in the gate speak against me, And I am the song of the drunkards. But as for me, my prayer is to You, O LORD, in the acceptable time; O God, in the multitude of Your mercy, Hear me in the truth of Your salvation. Deliver me out of the mire, And let me not sink; Let me be delivered from those who hate me, And out of the deep waters."

David even sought refuge among the Philistines—the very enemies he had once defeated and called "uncircumcised pagans" (1 Samuel 27:1–7). Yet this desperation did not stem from sin or prayerlessness. Scripture describes David as "a man after God's own heart" (Acts 13:22). But in the human experience of suffering, even the righteous can feel abandoned.

Despite this, David repeatedly urged himself and others to "Wait on the Lord" (Psalm 37:7; 27:14; 40:1). Waiting does not mean

inactivity but trusting in God’s timing, even when His silence is painful.

Jesus Quoting Psalm 22 on the Cross

Centuries later, Jesus took David’s lament upon His own lips as He hung on the cross:

> Matthew 27:45–46 (ESV)
>
> Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?

Was Jesus Truly Forsaken?

Theologically, this cry reveals both the depth of Christ’s suffering and the mystery of the atonement:

1. Identification with Humanity’s Pain:

Jesus was fully human (Hebrews 2:14-18) and experienced the anguish of feeling forsaken, just as David did. This demonstrates His ability to sympathize with our weaknesses (Hebrews 4:15).

2. Bearing Sin and God’s Judgment:

On the cross, Jesus became the sin-bearer for all humanity (2 Corinthians 5:21). As Isaiah 53:6 declares, “The LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” In this moment, He endured the weight of divine wrath—not because the Father stopped loving Him, but because justice required sin to be punished.

3. Prophetic Fulfillment:

By quoting Psalm 22, Jesus pointed to the fulfillment of prophecy. That psalm, though beginning in despair, ends in triumph and worldwide worship (Psalm 22:27–31). Thus, His cry foreshadows victory.

4. Not Literal Abandonment:

Jesus Himself affirmed earlier in John 16:32, “I am not alone, for

the Father is with me.” Though He felt forsaken, the Triune God was still united in the work of redemption.

From Darkness to Triumph

Immediately after Jesus breathed His last, extraordinary events confirmed that this was not defeat but victory:

> Matthew 27:50–53 (NKJV)
>
> And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised.

The tearing of the temple veil signified the removal of the barrier between God and humanity (Hebrews 10:19–20). Three days later, Jesus rose from the grave (Matthew 28:6), securing salvation for all who trust in Him.

Practical Encouragement for Us

There are seasons when believers feel forgotten by God—when prayers seem unanswered, illnesses linger, and hardships refuse to lift. In those moments, remember:

God’s silence is not His absence. He may be working in ways unseen (Romans 8:28).

Jesus understands your pain. He endured it Himself (Hebrews 4:15).

Victory often follows the darkest hour. Resurrection came after the cross.

Like David, choose to “wait on the Lord” (Isaiah 40:31). Like Jesus, entrust your spirit to the Father, even when you cannot see His hand (Luke 23:46).

Closing Exhortation

What begins as “Why have You forsaken me?” can end with “The

Lord has done it!” (Psalm 118:23). Hold on. Keep praying. Endure in faith. After the fire of trial comes the refreshing rain of God’s deliverance.

Shalom.

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