

Why Have You Forsaken Me?

Scripture Reading — Psalm 22

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? — Psalm 22:1

Psalm 22 asks one of history's most haunting questions. We don't know if King David of Israel experienced the scenes here in his life or perhaps in a dream or vision, but several parts of this psalm accurately portray the crucifixion of Jesus, the Son of God, who was also a descendant of David.

When I first read this psalm as a new Christian, I was astonished. I could see why Christ exclaimed the opening line of Psalm 22 while he hung dying on the cross (Mark 15:34).

Jesus was no unwitting victim of a Jewish-Roman conspiracy. He had led a parade into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-11) before a cheering, hopeful crowd, only to disappoint them by week's end. Then he surrendered to his captors' sham trial, endured his disciples' abandonment, and suffered death by crucifixion. His singular complaint was, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

We can understand why Jesus cried David's question. When the unbearable happens, we want to know "Why?" We might never know the answer fully. But Jesus knew God's answer. The Son of God endured God-forsakenness so that we might be forgiven forever. His righteousness paid for our redemption.

And of that finished work we sing, "Thank you, O my Father, for giving us your Son"!

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were God-forsaken so that we don't have to be. How can we ever thank you enough? Help us to show our gratitude for all your grace to us. Help us to live for you. In your name, Amen.

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