

Feeling Forsaken

- Assad regime used chemical weapons
- This required a response

Psalm 22:1-21

To the choirmaster: according to The Doe of the Dawn. A Psalm of David.

"Feelings of forsaken-ness in the Christian REQUIRE a response of faith and hope in our saving God!"

- 1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?
- 2 O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.
- 3 Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
- 4 In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
- 5 To you they cried and were rescued;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.
- 6 But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.
- 7 All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;
- 8 "He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"
- 9 Yet you are he who took me from the womb;
you made me trust you at my mother's breasts.
- 10 On you was I cast from my birth,
and from my mother's womb you have been my God.
- 11 Be not far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.

*12 Many bulls encompass me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
13 they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.*

*14 I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
15 my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.*

*16 For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet—*

*17 I can count all my bones—
they stare and gloat over me;*

*18 they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.*

*19 But you, O Lord, do not be far off!
O you my help, come quickly to my aid!*

*20 Deliver my soul from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dog!*

*21 Save me from the mouth of the lion!
You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen*

The Forsaken-ness of David

→ of forsaken-ness

David's Feelings – v1-2, 6-8, 12-18

1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

2 O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,

and by night, but I find no rest.

- There are times when God's people feel abandoned
- There is no help in sight and the best one can communicate with God is merely groans
- This seems unending; day and night it continues
- Part of feeling forsaken is the silence of God

→ We do well to recognize this and not live in denial.

6 But I am a worm and not a man,

scorned by mankind and despised by the people.

7 All who see me mock me;

they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;

8 "He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him;

let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"

- The enemies of David speak out: you are worthless and nobody cares if you die *→ Categorically deny this!*
- To scorn is to ridicule and insult, to despise is to devalue to the point of worthlessness
- The enemy's contempt is seen in their mocking, in their chirping, in their faces and posture
- Their words are cutting and cruel; as they are killing him they are challenging him to trust God – possibly covenant people because "Yahweh"

↳ sometimes our greatest times of trial, and our greatest wounds, come from those closest to us

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strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
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*16 For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet—*

*17 I can count all my bones—
they stare and gloat over me;
18 they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.*

- David's enemies are animals – strong, powerful, vicious, brutish, and senseless
- David's suffering is intense on all levels, physically, emotionally, mentally
 - He is tired, his energy is spent, he is wracked with pain, every joint feels dislocated, he has been pierced, he is thirsty, and emaciated
 - The heat of the opposition has melted his heart, he has lost his spirit; no courage, no faith, no hope
- His very clothes are taken from him; he is as good as dead
- What is it to feel forsaken? – to experience the silence of God and the scorn of men

*We need to
be vigilant
when these
areas are
under stress*

*↳ any one
of them*

David's Declarations – v3-5, 9-10

3 Yet you are holy,

enthroned on the praises of Israel.

4 In you our fathers trusted;

they trusted, and you delivered them.

5 To you they cried and were rescued;

in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

- David response to feeling forsaken is to recall the history of others – God saves *⇒ the Bible, from other's testimonies ⇒ BAPTISM SERVICE*
- The fathers trusted and were delivered; the fathers cried and were rescued; the fathers trusted and were not put to shame
- The constancy of God's salvation is evident in the metaphor: God's people would be delivered, God's people would praise him for their deliverance, and this happened so much that God could sit on the accumulated praises of his people! *⇒ We @ WCA could do that! Flavel p260*
- This is how David responds to his feeling forsaken – with declarations of faith and hope
- Is that true of us? Is God enthroned on our praises or dethroned under our complaints?

9 Yet you are he who took me from the womb;

you made me trust you at my mother's breasts.

10 On you was I cast from my birth,

and from my mother's womb you have been my God.

- David also declares his own experience with God
- God may seem to abandon, but this is not David's history
- This is a second source of confidence. Yahweh has always been David's God
- If God seems far, the trouble seems close; if God seems far, help seems far
- David declares that God isn't far and hasn't abandoned him: My God!

"...the work and business of believers, both in this world and the one to come, is to search and admire, acknowledge and magnify God for his abundant grace..."

*↓
in the past*

David's Petitions – v11, 19-21

*11 Be not far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.*

*19 But you, O Lord, do not be far off!
O you my help, come quickly to my aid!*

*20 Deliver my soul from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dog!*

*21 Save me from the mouth of the lion!
You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen*

- These are prayerful responses to verse 1 – My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
- Psalms instruct us on how to pray
- David prays for a sense of God's closeness because the sense of distance amplifies his fear of trouble and his sense of abandonment ⇒ **TURKEY HUNTING**
↳ turkey can't sense me but I'm there
- David prays for a quick response from God
- David prays for deliverance, that God would save him, and in particular, that God would save him from his enemies

Fighting Feeling Forsaken

- There is a rhythm to David's response to feeling forsaken: *It starts with feeling forsaken: silence of God + the scorn of men!!*
- 1. He articulates and expresses his feelings to God
 - a. We shouldn't bottle up our feelings - Homer Simpson: "Just squeeze your rage into a bitter little ball and release it at an appropriate time. Like that day I hit the referee with a whiskey bottle. Remember that, when daddy hit the referee?"
 - b. We also shouldn't release our feelings all over those around us
 - c. ~~Take your burdens to God in prayer!~~

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- ① Pray that you would be able to perceive the reality of the situation: GOD IS NEAR
- ② Pray that God would respond quickly
- ③ Pray for deliverance

2. He declares hope-filled and faith-building truths about God from the experience of himself and others
 - a. Psalm 92:1-2 It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; **to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night,**
3. He prays for help, for salvation, for deliverance
 - We have good and godly instruction here; put it into practice!

- in regards to praying in the midst of our feeling forsaken (Previous page)

The Forsaken-ness of David's Son

Points of Continuity

Matthew 27:39-46 ³⁹ And those who passed by **derided him, wagging their heads** ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, **save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.**" ⁴¹ So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, ⁴² "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. ⁴³ **He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'**" ⁴⁴ And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. ⁴⁶ 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?"**

John 19:23-24, 28 ²³ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, **they took his garments and divided them into four parts,** one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, ²⁴ so they said to one another, **"Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be."** This was to fulfill the Scripture which says,

"They divided my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots."

²⁸ After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), **“I thirst.”**

In Psalm 22 we see the lament of David for the suffering he was going through, but these points of continuity between David and David’s greatest Son remind us that Psalm 22 is also the lament of Jesus as he suffers for the salvation of his people. This reminder leads us from the points of continuity to a point of curiosity.

Point of Curiosity

*14 I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
15 my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.*

God seemed absent in this situation. And yet, David seems to indicate that at some level not only was God not absent, but he was actually involved in David’s death; to be laid in the dust of death is to be lowered into a grave!

This, again, was hyperbole in the life of David as David did not die in a struggle like this. However, if we consider this line in regards to the forsaken-ness of the true Son of David, we get an accurate and astonishing picture of the death of Jesus.

God was sovereign over the death of Jesus

Acts 2:22-23

²² “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— ²³ this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

God is behind it in such a way that he is sovereign over it, it is ordained by him, and yet humans, and not God, are blameable. BUT GOD IS INVOLVED!

Jesus's death was God's self-sacrifice

People were blameable, but Jesus was not ultimately a victim

John 10:17-18

¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

• God has ordained it.
• Jesus has accepted it
• People are responsible

Jesus died in our place; he was our substitute

John Stott: "The concept of substitution may be said to lie at the heart of both sin and salvation. For the essence of sin is man substituting himself for God, while the essence of salvation is God substituting himself for man. Man asserts himself against God and puts himself where only God deserves to be; God sacrifices himself for man and puts himself where only man deserves to be. Man claims prerogatives that belong to God alone; God accepts penalties that belong to man alone."

"God sacrifices himself" !! God laid God in the dust of death!

People ask, "Why did God do that to Jesus?" – God did that to God ⇒ OTHER ISSUES W/ SUBSTITUTION + SELF-SACRIFICE

Stott: "The proud human heart is there revealed. We insist on paying for what we have done. We cannot stand the humiliation of acknowledging our bankruptcy and allowing somebody else to pay for us. The notion that this somebody else should be God himself is just too much to take. We would rather perish than repent, rather lose ourselves than humble ourselves."

Christians? ⇒ Marvel!

Non-Christians? ⇒ Repent!
Believe!

• BLOODY BUSINESS
• DIVINE CHILD ABUSE