

# Why Have You Forsaken Me?"

(Series: CrossWords; Message Four)  
Matthew 27: 45-50

- A. At the sixth hour (noon), a chilling darkness came over the whole land
- B. Out of eerie darkness came an anguished cry in Jesus' native tongue:  
"Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani." ("My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?")

## THE CRY

- A. Matthew and Mark record just one statement of Jesus from the cross
  - 1. It is the cry of dereliction; it's a quote from Psalm 22:1
  - 2. It is the cry of abandonment, of being left alone, of believing no one cares
- B. Jesus, nailed to a cross, is struggling with the worst kind of abandonment,  
God the Father has turned his back on God the Son
- C. When his Father turned his back on him, Jesus could no longer stay quiet  
"God forsaking God, who can understand that?" (Martin Luther)

## THE CAUSE

- A. What would cause the Father to forsake his Son?
  - 1. Jesus was carrying the sins of the entire world for all time  
"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21)
  - 2. God was punishing his only Son as if he had committed all our sins
- B. By virtue of his justice and holiness, God has to condemn and reject sin  
"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole'" (Galatians 3:13)
  - 1. The Father's abandonment underscores the seriousness of sin
  - 2. It is easy to forget the cost of our salvation, but we can't
- C. Why Jesus went to the cross is hard to understand
  - 1. There are the official answers: "To satisfy the law" or "To fulfill prophecy"
  - 2. But there is more: something deeply compassionate
    - a. Jesus may not solve our dilemma; but having been alone, he understands
    - b. With the penalty paid; Jesus provides our way to the Father's love
- D. Why did God the Father abandon his Son? Because of his love for us

"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1)  
"Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5)

- 1. The goat was to be carried outside the city and released. Sin must be purged; the scapegoat must be abandoned. (cf. Lev. 16:22)
- 2. The sinbearer is alone. The Father is satisfied. His people are saved

## THE CONFIDENCE

- A. Amazingly, Jesus cry of despair is not without a glimmer of hope
  - 1. In his cry of dereliction, Jesus quotes Psalm 22 (Messianic Psalm)  
"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish? My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, but I find no rest." (Psalm 22:1-2)
  - 2. Those who heard it would recognize it and know the words that followed
- B. Psalm 22 finds David suffering at the hands of his enemies
  - 1. It's a poignant parallel to what Jesus is experiencing on the cross  
"All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: 'He trusts in the Lord,' they say, 'Let the Lord deliver him.'" (22:7,8)  
"My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death" (22:15)  
"Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they pierce my hands and my feet" (22:16)  
"They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment" (22:18)
  - 2. Toward the end of the Psalm, David affirms his trust in God  
"For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help" (22:24)
  - 3. In quoting this Psalm, Jesus is reminding people this is not the end  
it is Friday, but Sunday's coming
- C. "God, where were you in our deepest need, when we needed you most...?"
  - 1. When you feel abandoned by God, don't forget the rest of the Psalm...
    - a. Jesus has compassion for those going through difficult times; he knows...
    - b. Out of his love, he gave his life to break the grip of death
    - c. The Father is always there for you if you trust in Jesus
    - d. The Father will have the last word  
"In this world you will have trouble, But take heart. I have overcome the world" (John 16:33b)
  - 2. One day soon that victory will be apparent to all

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