Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?

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My God, My God

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?

O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.

Psalm 22:1-2

Introduction:

1. Paul as pattern for all preachers emphasized and exalted the crucifixion of Jesus (I Cor 2:2; Gal 6:14).
2. God forbad and I determine to be as Paul; let us know nothing and glory in nothing but Christ's cross.
3. David, as a biological and symbolic father of Jesus of Nazareth, wrote this psalm by divine inspiration.
4. This psalm is definitely Messianic – about the Messiah, Jesus Christ our Lord (Psalm 22:1 to Matt 27:46; Psalm 22:8 to Matt 27:43; Psalm 22:18 to Matt 27:35 & John 19:24; Psalm 22:22 to Heb 2:12).
5. Not only is it Messianic, but much of it is in the first person as Messiah stated His grief of crucifixion.
6. Not only is it Messianic, but it is the most graphic single account of our Lord's suffering at Calvary.
7. Jesus spoke these words, foretold by prophecy, to point out His relationship to God, declare the severity of His trials, move God to compassion for His situation, and also to fulfill inspired prophecy.
8. The Psalm ends describing our glorious duty and privilege, *They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this (Psalm 22:31)*.
9. Jesus paid the ransom to save us from God's wrath and Satan's power, so let us consider His payment.
10. After believing and obeying the gospel, it is a fabulous privilege and pleasure to eat the Lord's Supper.
11. We have detailed four ways Jesus suffered – *physically, psychologically, spiritually, divinely* – and it is this forsaking by God while on the cross in darkness that we call Jesus' divine suffering … We Would See Jesus (3 sermons), The Cup of Christ (1 Sermon).
12. If you add up and combine all His physical, psychological, and spiritual suffering, this is yet far worse.
13. For far more about Psalm 22, there are treatments of the whole Psalm for your profit … Psalm 22, the Psalm 22 commentary, a collection of Psalms commentaries (preceptaustin.org).
14. For more about this specific utterance prophesied here of our Lord Jesus while upon the cross … Seven Sayings of the Cross.
15. Jesus cried these words loudly about 3:00 after three hours of darkness before dying (Mark 15:33-34).
16. The Holy Spirit chose the verb *cry* and the prepositional phrase *with a loud voice* … and here *roaring*.
17. They are the perfect words from the perfect Man suffering under the enormous burden of our salvation.
18. There is no introduction or explanation for the abrupt words, so for 1000 years they were quite obscure.

19. An abrupt opening, double appeal to God, cried loudly (N.T.), with stated trouble, makes it emphatic.
20. If anticipatory prayer with angelic strengthening allowed *agony* in Gethsemane with accompanying sweat like great drops of blood, then how much more the cross with darkness and desertion?
21. **Agony** = contest from Greek games, a struggle for victory, mental struggle or anguish, a paroxysm of grief, convulsive throes, or pangs of death; the death struggle; extreme bodily suffering.
22. The Lord Jesus had borne all other forms of suffering without such an exclamation. Grasp the severity.
23. The Lord Jesus did not identify any other agony, grief, pain, suffering, or trouble but this divine one.
24. Thus, understand that He would not have cried out like this for all else we can learn of His crucifixion.
25. This is the middle saying, the fourth saying, of the seven on the cross. None of the others are like it.
26. If you or I think we can know the full sense of these words, they are far above us for the grief in them

MY ... the first of seven words.

1. The doubling of the introductory words, *My God,* powerfully emphasize the intensity.
    1. Compare the doubling of *Abba, Father* (Mark 14:36; Romans 8:14-15; Gal 4:4-6).
    2. **Abba**. Aramaic, Chaldean, or probably Syrian transliterated for *father,* or *O father*.
    3. Followed by its translation, *Father*, the inspired compound repetition carries weight.
    4. The Jews after Babylon adopted Chaldean words and created compound phrases.
    5. But earnestness in speech uses such repetitions (II Kgs 4:19; Jer 4:19; Ps 22:1; 43:4).
    6. Jesus used this same construction in prayer during grief in Gethsemane (Mk 14:36).
2. David used the combination, *my God,* about 50 times in Psalms, but not like His Son.
3. Though forsaken by God in agonizing ways, Jesus still said, *My God,* showing His faith.
4. What a grand confession of faith in the face of divine forsaking we cannot fully explore!
5. He proved faith when he died, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit* (Luke 23:46).
6. God was Jesus' God and Father in ways far beyond God as Adam's or angels Father.
7. The Gospels record them in Hebrew to help explain the reaction of the men present.

GOD ... the second of seven words.

1. The doubling of the introductory words, *My God,* powerfully emphasize the intensity.
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    6. Jesus used this same construction in prayer during grief in Gethsemane (Mk 14:36).
2. Jesus did trust in God and pray to Him as God (Hebrews 2:13; Luke 6:12; Mark 14:36).
3. David used the combination, *my God,* about 50 times in Psalms, but not like His Son.

4. Remember this Man was the Word made flesh, *In the beginning was the Word* (Jn 1:1).

WHY ... the third of seven words.

1. Every word is emphatic. Consider the abrupt opening here and on the cross, the double appeal to His God, cried out loudly (the Gospels), and the stated trouble, it is emphatic!
2. Hear the cry and roar of desperation from the One deserted to God's and His enemies.
3. What is the cause? How is to be accounted for? How should I understand you leaving? What does it accomplish in this work of salvation? I know that thou wilt yet receive me.
4. Remember how God had thundered from heaven on several occasions lauding His Son.
5. How could God leave His Son at such a time, in such a plight, against such enemies?
6. As Surety and Mediator for our sins, He had to undergo the same punishment due to us.
7. Consider a few of many reasons why Jesus asked about God His Father forsaking Him.
    1. He had never experienced this before; His relationship with God was always perfect.
    2. He had always been heard by His Father in prayer without exception (John 11:42).
    3. He had never failed to obey His Father and had never disappointed Him (John 8:29).
    4. He knew He had submitted to God's will in the matter, why then divine forsaking?
    5. He had never sinned, though tempted and touched by humanity. Why the forsaking?
8. Isaac Watts explained the darkness of Calvary in his song, *Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed,* where he formed his words this way: *Well might the sun in darkness hide, and shut his glories in; when Christ the mighty Maker died, for man the creature's sin.*
9. A few sins separate us from God, close His ears, and shorten His hand (Is 59;1-2), so we should calculate the holy consequence of Him bearing all the elect's sins on Calvary.

HAST ... the fourth of seven words.

1. The helping verb *hast* is the second person singular present indicative of English *have*.
2. The form *hast forsaken* is present perfect tense of an action past yet true in the present.
3. The psalm is a prophecy one thousand years in advance, but it describes past forsaking.
4. At the end of three hours of darkness over the whole earth, Jesus knew He died alone.

THOU ... the fifth of seven words.

1. Jesus was not surprised others forsook Him (John 16:32), but His last and only friend?
2. He knew Judas to have a devil and be the son of perdition, but how could God withdraw?
3. He knew Peter to be impulsive and fearful, and He had let Satan sift him, but His Father?
4. God was Jesus' Father, which He declared repeatedly in John. How could He remove?
5. In 18 hours, Jesus' relationship with God was altered from John 17 to this by our sins.

FORSAKEN … the sixth of seven words.

1. The forsaking was a lack of help and not hearing His roaring or prayers day and night.
2. God did not utterly forsake Him; He withdrew His comforting Presence and fellowship.
3. The union between the Word of God and Lord's human nature was not interrupted.
4. God withdraws fellowship from us for sin (Ps 51:8-12; 66:18; Is 59:1-2; I John 1:6).
5. But this was the first time Jesus knew guilt, shame, fear (Matt 3:17; 17:5; John 8:29).
6. The degree of loneliness is created by the degree of love, fellowship, unity earlier.
    1. The relationship between Jesus and His Father had been inviolate for His life (Isaiah 42:1; Matt 3:17; 11:27; 12:50; 17:5; 26:39,42,53; Luke 2:49,62; John 1:18; 5:17; 8:19,28; 10:17; 14:20; 15:10; 18:11).
    2. God did hear and send help, but not any crucifixion comfort (Ps 22:21,24; Heb 5:6-10).
    3. Though strengthened by angels (Luke 22:43), Jesus saw coming agony (Luke 22:44).
    4. Sin sent angels out of heaven, our parents out of Eden, and Jesus from God's fellowship.
7. Isaac Watts exalted the darkness of Calvary in his song, *Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed,* where he formed his words this way: *Well might the sun in darkness hide, and shut his glories in; when Christ the mighty Maker died, for man the creature's sin.*
8. We generally fear darkness and the unknown; Jesus endured both three hours in agony.
9. The waves and billows of God's wrath rolled over Jesus' exposed soul (Psalm 69:1-3).
10. For more about the baptism, waves, and billows of God's wrath Jesus endured … Baptism and Cup of Christ.
11. For more about the horrible cup and its dregs Jesus drank the wrath of God from … The Cup of Christ (1 Sermon).
12. Sinners will be punished from the presence of God, but not us, for Jesus did it for us.
13. Jesus was not surprised others forsook Him (John 16:32), but His last and only friend?
14. We should not deny Jesus suffered what the wicked shall and we should (II Thess 1:9).
15. Where was the God of all comfort, even the Father of the Lord Jesus (II Cor 1:3-4)?

ME … the seventh of seven words.

1. Am I Thy beloved Son? Did you not declare your affection to the world several times?
2. How can you forsake and desert my darling soul to power of the dog (Ps 22:20; 35:17)?
3. We must not forget Jesus' humanity, incarnation, and humility – He was and is a Man, and therefore subject to all our griefs, dependent on, and subject to, Almighty God.
4. Can you not hear my roaring (Ps 22:1)? This describes great anguish (Job 3:24; Ps 32:3).

Conclusion:

1. God should forsake us forever in the blackness of darkness and torment of the lake of fire for eternity.
2. God forsook His beloved and perfect Son in His greatest hours of desperate need, so He would never forsake you in any of your lesser difficulties, though we deserve His eternal forsaking (Hebrews 13:5).

3. Let us fulfill the Psalm's conclusion by remembering, worshiping, serving, declaring (Ps 22:27-31).