

Forsaken

Երեսէ Չգուած

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Seven Words From the Cross

Psalms 22:1-11

Matthew 27:46 & Mark 15:34

As we are going through these dark times, I am going back to the Seven Words of Jesus. It is the season of Lent. In an upside down world, I would like to live right side up with the help of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have been studying the seven sayings of Jesus from the cross. Today we arrive to a painful statement: **“Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**

Beside the physiological suffering and pain, which Jesus was enduring on the cross for more than 5-6 hours, in this statement he expresses an extremely dark and painful situation. **“Oh God, why have you forsaken me?” “Oh God, why have you turned your face away from me? Oh God, why have you left me alone?”**

To be forsaken is a terrible situation. I hated it when my friends abandoned me for different reasons. It can happen to any of us. Suddenly you can find yourself alone. With this new situation where there should be social distancing, people are alone; some are literally alone and it is driving them crazy. Some even they don't have anyone to call them.

Have you ever felt forsaken? Maybe you feel that way today when the world is going through this crisis? **Did God abandon us?**

Let me evaluate the scene:

-Time:

Executing people through crucifixion is a cruel way of killing. The intention of crucifixion is to kill someone slowly, painfully. It is torture. Some would remain on the cross for more than a day. The Gospel of Mark tells us, **“It was the third hour when they crucified him”** (Mark 15:25). Luke tells us: **“It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour”** (Luke

23:44).-Jesus' hanging lasted six hours. The seven words of Jesus were uttered between the 3rd and the 9th hour. (In modern terms 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM).

-Darkness:

Both Matthew and Luke say, **“when it was the sixth hour darkness came over”** (Luke), **“darkness over all the land”** (Matthew). Luke continues with a description of the darkness: **“while the sun's light failed.”**(Luke 23:45)

Why darkness? The word used is "stopped shining" (NIV), "failed" (ESV), "was darkened" (KJV) is the Greek *ekleipō* (from which we get our English word "eclipsed"). It means to “fail, give out, die out.”

God is using nature to tell us an important message:

It is a dark hour. **God's justice and love meet on the cross.** I can see the agony and pain not just of Jesus on the cross. God the Father allowing His only Son to be hanging on that cross to pay the price of sin.

It is a dark hour. **Yes, dark hours, but hours that will bring the greatest change in human history.** Luke adds:

“...while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.”

The dark hour will end.... **The curtain of separation** will be torn and a new life will come.

-Eli, Eli “My God, My God”:

Jesus prayed to his Father. In all his other recorded prayers, Jesus he uses the term **"Father,"** probably reflecting the intimate form **Abba, daddy.** But here in his hour of greatest desolation, **he addresses God as judge.** This doesn't represent the loss of faith. The fact that he is praying, **"My God,"** shows that **he still trusts God.** He addresses His Father *Abba* as JUDGE.

Why judge? He addresses God as a “judge” because the wages of sin is death. Jesus is taking this on his shoulder. The God of righteousness and justice is giving the verdict to Jesus.

-Why Have you Forsaken me:

a. Why?

Jesus is not asking a question looking for an answer “Daddy, where are you?” but he is expressing the horrors of abandonment.

Instead he says, “God the Judge, why have you forsaken me?” The intimacy of fellowship with the Father is on hold. Jesus can no longer feel his Father's presence. How painful is this.

b. Have you forsaken me

A verse from the Old Testament helps us understand:

"But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59:2)

God is holy and righteous. He cannot stand sin. Someone has to pay the penalty of sin.

How painful it is for God the Father to allow this to happen. How painful it is for God the Son, Jesus Christ our Savior to be forsaken... abandoned by his Father, abandoned by his disciples as well. They left him alone.

When I compare with the story of Abraham and Isaac. Abraham obeyed God and took his son to become the sacrifice. Yet, God interfered and stopped the sacrificial ceremony and spared Isaac. But when it comes to His Son, God allows this to happen.

How much love can one find on the cross.

Application:

1. God will never forsake us

Because Jesus was on the cross and died for us, God will never abandon us.

How ironic is this. **Jesus was forsaken on the cross so we would never be forsaken.**

Christ was forsaken by God so that believers may never be forsaken by him, either during life or after death:

“I will never leave you nor forsake you.” So we can confidently say,

“The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?” (Hebrews 13:5-6ESV)

This verse I used it last Sunday. I asked you to read these verses every time fear knocked the door of your heart. I hope you did, and that gave you comfort.

2. God Loves us.

The hymn lyrics of “Beneath the Cross of Jesus” say:

The cross is the **“place where heaven’s love and heaven’s justice meet.”**
(Elizabeth C. Clephane)

- We have a promise from God, that nothing will separate us from Love of God.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?³⁶ As it is written,

**“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”**

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8: 35-39)

Illustration:

One night I dreamed a dream.
As I was walking along the beach with my Lord.
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,
One belonging to me and one to my Lord.

After the last scene of my life flashed before me,
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.
I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,
especially at the very lowest and saddest times,
there was only one set of footprints.

This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it.
"Lord, you said once I decided to follow you,
You'd walk with me all the way.
But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life,
there was only one set of footprints.
I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me."

He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you
Never, ever, during your trials and testings.
When you saw only one set of footprints,
It was then that I carried you." ¹Margaret Fishback Powers

Jesus is in pain and agony crying out to God the Father and God the Judge. These words say something about how much both the Father and the Son love us, so much that they are willing to be split for a time so that we will be saved.

Please, every time you read the words "Eli, Eli lema sabachthani" remember God's love toward you.

1. <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/225401-one-night-i-dreamed-a-dream-i-was-walking-along>

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, it was a dark hour when your Son was forsaken on the cross. He experienced all the pain and rejection for us.

He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins.
He was beaten so we could be whole.
He was whipped so we could be healed.
He was rejected so we could be restored.

Thank you for your amazing grace.

Today we experience dark hours, but we know we will never be forsaken.

In the name of your precious Son, we pray

AMEN!