

GOOD FRIDAY 2022

PSALM 22

*“MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME? WHY ARE YOU SO FAR FROM SAVING ME, FROM THE WORDS OF MY GROANING?” PSALM 22:1*

ON GOOD FRIDAY, JESUS CRIED OUT FROM THE CROSS THESE WORDS FROM PSALM 22.

WHEN WE LOOK AT THESE WORDS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WHOLE PSALM, WE BEGIN TO REALIZE THAT THIS IS THE CRY OF ONE UNDERGOING EXILE FROM GOD. THE SUFFERER IS LAMENTING – MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY? WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME? WHY ARE YOU SO FAR FROM SAVING ME?

JUST AS ISRAEL WAS EXILED FAR AWAY FROM THE FACE OF GOD, SO NOW THE MESSIAH, JESUS IS ALSO, BECAUSE THE CROSS IS THE ROMAN EXILE OF THE MESSIAH.

THE WORD FORSAKEN IS A WORD THOSE WHO HEARD FROM THE PSALM, AND INDEED FROM THE LIPS OF JESUS WOULD UNDERSTAND IS STEEPED WITH EXILE CONNOTATIONS.

IN DEUTERONOMY GOD SAYS THAT IF HIS PEOPLE FORSAKE HIM BY WORSHIPING FALSE GODS, HE WILL FORSAKE THEM AND HIDE HIS FACE FROM THEM.

IN JEREMIAH, GOD SAYS HE HAS FORSAKEN HIS HOUSE, ABANDONED HIS INHERITANCE AND GIVEN HIS BELOVED INTO THE HANDS OF HIS ENEMIES. IN OTHER WORDS, ISRAEL WILL GO INTO EXILE IN BABYLON.

IN 2<sup>ND</sup> CHRONICLES, WHEN ISRAEL FORSOOK THE TORAH, GOD SENT THE PROPHET TO WARN THEM – YOU HAVE FORSAKEN ME SO I ALSO HAVE FORSAKEN YOU.

IN OTHER WORDS, WHEN THE ISRAELITES HEARD THE WORD FORSAKEN, THEY HEARD EXILE.

JESUS WAS EXILED FROM GOD ON THE CROSS, AS ISRAEL WAS. THE QUESTION IS WHY?

WE USUALLY SAY JESUS WAS FORSAKEN BECAUSE HE BECAME OUR SIN (WHICH IS WHAT SCRIPTURE TELLS US IN 2<sup>ND</sup> CORINTHIANS 5:21. BUT THIS PSALM 22 SAYS NOTHING ABOUT

THE SIN OF THE ONE PRAYING. INSTEAD, IT IS THE RIGHTEOUS COMPLAINT OF ONE WHO CRIES OUT TO GOD BECAUSE HE IS INNOCENT, NOT GUILTY.

AND THAT, MY FRIENDS, IS EXACTLY THE POINT. PSALM 22 IS THE PLEA OF AN INNOCENT, RIGHTEOUS MAN WHO IS TREATED LIKE A GUILTY, UNRIGHTEOUS ONE. HE IS EXILED, EVEN THOUGH HIS HANDS ARE CLEAN. HE IS FORSAKEN EVEN THOUGH HE TRUSTS IN GOD. HE IS CAST AWAY EVEN THOUGH HE CLINGS TO YAHWEH.

THE FIRST EXPLANATION JESUS EVER MADE ABOUT HIS DYING – AFTER HE HAD RISEN FROM THE DEAD – WAS WHILE HE WAS WALKING TO EMMAUS WITH THE TWO DISCIPLES WHO DIDN'T RECOGNIZE HIM AND WHO WERE STUNNED BY ALL THAT HAPPENED ON CALVARY.

JESUS WAS TRYING TO EXPLAIN TO THEM WHY THE CROSS HAD TO BE. “DID NOT CHRIST HAVE TO SUFFER THESE THINGS AND THEN ENTER HIS GLORY?”

IN OTHER WORDS, CAN'T YOU SEE HOW FITTING THIS IS – THAT THIS IS WHAT HAD TO HAPPEN? “FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD...”

HEBREWS 2:17 TELLS US THAT “HE HAD TO BE MADE LIKE YOU AND ME IN EVERY WAY... AND IT WAS FITTING THAT GOD, FOR WHOM AND THROUGH WHOM EVERYTHING EXISTS, SHOULD MAKE THE AUTHOR OF THEIR SALVATION PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING.”

IT WAS FITTING.

SO, AS JESUS HUNG FROM THE CROSS, “KNOWING THAT ALL WAS NOW COMPLETED, AND SO THAT THE SCRIPTURE MIGHT BE FULFILLED, JESUS SAID, ‘I AM THIRSTY.’”

“I AM THIRSTY”...

...WHERE HAVE WE HEARD THAT BEFORE?

JESUS WAS ON A JOURNEY THROUGH SAMARIA, AND “TIRED AS HE WAS FROM THE JOURNEY” HE SAT DOWN BY A WELL.

AND A WOMAN, AN OUTCASTE, A LOST AND LONELY SOUL CAME TO THE WELL AT THE VERY SAME TIME AND JESUS SAID TO HER, “WILL YOU GIVE ME A DRINK?,” BUT WE NEVER DO FIND OUT HOW LONG IT TAKES FOR JESUS TO GET A DRINK FROM THAT WELL BECAUSE JESUS AND THE WOMAN GET INTO A LONG CONVERSATION...

...AND THEN JESUS OFFERS THE WOMAN SOMETHING HE CALLS "LIVING WATER," AND SHE HASN'T A CLUE WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT!

BUT JESUS TELLS THIS WOMAN THAT THE LIVING WATER HE WILL GIVE HER WILL QUENCH HER THIRST FOREVER. BUT JESUS WASN'T TALKING ABOUT PHYSICAL WATER WAS HE?

AT THE HEART OF ALL THIS, THERE IS THE FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH THAT IN THE HUMAN HEART THERE IS A THIRST FOR SOMETHING THAT ONLY JESUS CHRIST CAN SATISFY!!!

WE ARE ALL THIRSTY, ARE WE NOT?

AND WE ARE ALL GOING TO TRY AND QUENCH OUR THIRST WITH SOMETHING. BUT JESUS, ONLY JESUS CAN SATISFY.

YET, WITHOUT HIM, WE FIND OURSELVES BECOMING THIRSTY.

PSALM 42 SAYS IT SO WELL...

... "AS THE DEER PANTS FOR STREAMS OF WATER, SO MY SOUL PANTS FOR YOU, O GOD. MY SOUL THIRSTS FOR GOD, FOR THE LIVING GOD."

DO YOU SUPPOSE...

...COULD IT BE POSSIBLE...

...THAT AS CHRIST HUNG ON THAT CROSS...

...THAT AS CHRIST EXPERIENCED SEPARATION FROM GOD THE FATHER FOR THE VERY FIRST AND ONLY TIME...

...FOR YOU AND FOR ME...

...AND IN PLACE OF YOU AND ME...

DO YOU SUPPOSE THAT WHILE CHRIST BLED ON THAT LONELY CROSS FOR MY SINS, FOR YOUR SINS AND FOR THE SINS OF THOSE WHO DO NOT YET BELIEVE...

...DO YOU SUPPOSE THAT WITHIN THAT SCENE OF DARKNESS AND DESPAIR THAT JESUS' CRY OF: "I AM THIRSTY" WAS BECAUSE HIS SOUL WAS THIRSTING FOR GOD?

AND DO YOU SUPPOSE IT'S POSSIBLE, AS WELL, THAT "KNOWING THAT ALL WAS NOW [FINALLY] COMPLETED" JESUS CHRIST BEGAN TO THINK ABOUT THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.

AND PERHAPS HE SAW WHAT WE SEE WHEN WE READ REVELATION CHAPTER 7 THAT THE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN JESUS...THAT THE FOLKS WHO HAVE ENDURED THIS OFTEN DIFFICULT LIFE AND WHO HAVE "WASHED THEIR ROBES AND MADE THEM WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB"...

...THAT THEY PROVE THAT WHAT CHRIST WAS ENDURING ON THE CROSS WOULD NOT BE IN

VAIN BECAUSE CHRIST HIMSELF WILL ONE DAY LEAD ALL WHO ARE SAVED “TO SPRINGS OF LIVING WATER.”

WHEN JESUS SAID, “I AM THIRSTY,” THERE STOOD THE ENEMY JUST ABOUT TO BE DEFEATED AND DOOMED.

JESUS CHRIST HAS COMPLETELY FINISHED THE WORK OF SALVATION.  
THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN ADD TO IT.

IT IS THE MOST AWFUL, WICKED, AND INCONGRUOUS THING THAT HAS EVER HAPPENED ON THIS PLANET.

CHAD BIRD IN HIS BOOK “THE SINNER/SAINT DEVOTIONAL” SAYS THAT PSALM 22 IS THE LAMENT OF AN INNOCENT MAN WHO SUFFERS WHAT THE GUILTY DESERVE. THE FOCUS IS NOT SO MUCH ON HIM BECOMING SIN AS IT IS ON HIM BEING SINLESS BUT PUNISHED AS IF HE IS SINFUL.

HERE IS THIS MAN, FULLY ALIVE, FULLY RIGHTEOUS, FULLY HUMAN, TREATED IN A SUBHUMAN WAY. THIS PRAYER MAY BE THE MOST FULLY HUMAN EXPRESSION JESUS EVER UTTERED.

HE IS TREATED THIS WAY, SO THAT WHEN GOD HEARS HIS PRAYER, BRINGS HIM BACK FROM THE EXILE OF THE CROSS, AND DRAWS HIM UP FROM DEATH, THE EFFECT WILL BE ASTOUNDING AS THE PSALM’S 27<sup>TH</sup> VERSE ATTESTS TO “ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH SHALL REMEMBER AND TURN TO THE LORD.”

WHEN WE FIND TIME TODAY TO SIT QUIETLY BEFORE THE CROSS... IT WILL BE BORNE UPON US THAT ONLY A CRUCIFIED SAVIOR CAN MEET OUR NEEDS...

...ONLY A CRUCIFIED SAVIOR WHO EXPERIENCED OUR JOY, OUR TEMPTATIONS, OUR HUNGER, OUR THIRST!!!

HIS RETURN FROM EXILE THROUGH HIS RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD WILL MEAN RESURRECTION FOR ALL. WHAT JESUS EXPERIENCES, ALL WHO BELIEVE WILL EXPERIENCE IN HIM.

BECAUSE JESUS PRAYED “DO NOT FORSAKE ME”, WE KNOW THAT GOD WILL NOT FORSAKE US. THE MESSIAH HAS BROUGHT US HOME FROM EXILE HE HAS MADE US FULLY ALIVE IN HIM.

IT WAS THE WORLD AT IT’S WORST, BUT IT WAS HEAVEN AT IT’S BEST.

IT IS FITTING.

IT DOES MAKE SENSE. NO WONDER TODAY IS CALLED GOOD.

THANKS BE TO GOD.

AMEN.