**Did The Father Forsake Jesus On The Cross?**

There is controversy among some Christians about whether God the Father forsook Jesus on the cross. What do the scriptures teach on this question?

**My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?**

I affirm Matt 27:46 means the obvious, that Jesus was forsaken. How could one deny the Father forsook Jesus when Jesus is plainly asking the Father why he did just that? If Jack asks a friend John “why did you forsake me?,” doesn’t that mean one of three things?: either (1) Jack is lying, (2) Jack is mistaken, or (3) Jack was forsaken. Which was it for Jesus?

If we can read “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and somehow conclude Jesus was not really forsaken, then I suggest something has gone completely haywire with our method of Bible interpretation. We certainly could no longer claim the common man can understand the Bible. We’ve always taught passages like Ephesians 3:3-4 - “How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge …” - teach the Bible can be understood just by reading and studying it – that is, it means what it says. I suggest a person could not reach the conclusion that Jesus was not really forsaken without help from someone else, who might just have discovered their idea from some highfaluting commentary authored by a false teacher.

**Thirty-One Examples Of Jesus Asking "Why" Somebody Did Something**

To nail down what the plain meaning of Matt 27:46 is, consider all 31 examples in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John of Jesus asking why somebody did something. In each and every case, Jesus’ question implies that the person or persons had done what Jesus is asking about. For example when Jesus asked his disciples in Matt 8:26 “Why are ye fearful?,” doesn’t that mean the disciples were fearful about the winds and the sea? When Jesus asked the rich, young, ruler in Matt 19:17 “Why callest thou me good?,” doesn’t that mean the rich young ruler called Jesus good? In Matt 26:10 “Jesus … said … Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.” Did they trouble her or not? In Luke 6:46 Jesus asked “why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” Doesn’t Jesus’ query imply they called Jesus Lord? In Luke 22:46 Jesus asked “Why sleep ye?” And verse 45 says “he found them sleeping.” John 7:19 has Jesus asking “Why go ye about to kill me?” Weren’t they conniving His death? Matt 12:14 and 26:4 say the Pharisees were doing just that. Jesus asks in John 18:23 “why smitest thou me?” because they had struck him according to verse 22. In John 20:15 “Jesus saith … Woman, why weepest thou?” because she was weeping in verse 11.

To be complete, here are the other cases of Jesus asking why somebody did something:

* Matt 6:28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:
* Matt 7:3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?
* Matt 22:18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?
* Mark 2:8 . when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?
* Mark 4:40 … he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?
* Mark 5:39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.
* Mark 8:12 And he … saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.
* Mark 8:17 …Jesus … saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? …
* Mark 10:18 … Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.
* Mark 12:15 … But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it.
* Mark 14:6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.
* Mark 15:34 … Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, … My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
* Luke 6:41 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?
* Luke 12:26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?
* Luke 12:57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?
* Luke 18:19 Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.
* Luke 20:23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?
* Luke 24:38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? …
* Luke 24:38 … and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?
* John 8:43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.
* John 8:46 … And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?
* John 18:21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me , what I have said unto them …

Everybody agrees what Jesus is asking why about is true in all 31 cases. Why should it be different in Matt 27:46? All these cases serve to confirm for us what we already know inherently - if Jesus asks somebody why they did something, that means they must have done that something.

**Jesus Was Not Forsaken But Only Fulfilling Psalms 22:1?**

Recently some brethren have been saying Jesus wasn’t really forsaken by God on the cross, but was only calling attention to the fact that he was fulfilling Psalms 22. But if Jesus was fulfilling “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?,” then he was forsaken, right? Since when does an event in the New Testament become untrue just because it was foretold in the Old? I would have thought Old Testament prophecy of a New Testament event makes the New Testament event even more certain to be true, not less. Of course what Jesus said in Matthew 27:46 is a quote from Psalms 22:1, but that doesn’t change the fact that Matthew 27:46 is still true, does it?

**David Just Thought He Was Forsaken In Psalms 22:1?**

But many say David just thought he was forsaken in Psalms 22:1, but that he really wasn’t. You mean David was inspired but wrong in Psalms 22:1? Have we forgotten the Holy Spirit is the real author of Psalms 22:1? Was the Holy Spirit mistaken? If the writer of Psalms 22:1 was inspired but wrong, then how can we trust anything in the Bible? And suppose for the sake of argument that David was wrong. Was Jesus also wrong when he applied these words to himself on the cross?

**Did God Allow David To Write His Own Thoughts In Psalms 22:1-2?**

The view that God allowed David to write his own (incorrect) thoughts in Psalms 22:1-2 makes me wonder if God allowed Paul to write his own “male chauvinist” thoughts in I Cor 14:34-35 (as the liberals say), so that women preachers are really Biblical? Did God allow Moses to write his own pre-scientific thoughts in Genesis 1-3 and so really the creation story is just a myth as the modernists propose? Is God’s revelation subject to the whims of His human mouthpieces? Can somebody list for us all the other things the Holy Spirit authored that are wrong? To the contrary, Mark 12:36 says “For David himself said by the Holy Ghost …” and II Pet 1:21 says “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

**Are There Any Uninspired Statements In The Bible?**

It is true there are uninspired statements recorded for us in the Bible, but never a statement by the Biblical author himself. For example Job’s friends Eliphaz (4:7-8) and Bildad (8:4-6) claim sin was the cause of Job’s misfortunes. They were uninspired and incorrect in this case, but we know for sure what they said because the writer of the book of Job was inspired. And the writer of Psalms 22:1-2 (most likely David) was inspired and therefore what the passage says is correct. As with any of the 66 books, whatever the inspired writer reveals as the book's author must be correct - because God is the actual author of such.

**Psalms 22:1 Is A Question, Therefore Not A Statement Of Fact?**

Some say Psalms 22:1a is in the form of a question, therefore does not necessarily teach truth. But verse 2 is a statement of fact and elaborates upon how David was forsaken: “O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not.” Another thing to consider, since the following verses in Psalms are in question form, does that mean they don’t teach truth either? …

* 2:1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? (46:6 confirms “the heathen raged”)
* 4:2 O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after falsehoodNKJV?
* 35:10 … Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?

**David Couldn’t Be Forsaken And Delivered At The Same Time?**

Some say Psalms 22 is all at one particular time, and David couldn’t be forsaken and delivered at the same time. The truth is that David was in the state of having been forsaken (verses 1-2). And David was expecting deliverance upcoming according to verses 19b-22 beginning: “… haste thee to help me. (hadn’t happened yet, ptd) Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns. I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.” That’s also exactly what happened to Jesus, isn’t it? - forsaken in death, delivered in resurrection.

Consider the following other examples where David and/or the Israelites were forsaken but expecting deliverance just like we see in Psalms 22 …

We see forsaken in Psalms 60:1,9-10 (“O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again. … Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom? Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? and thou, O God, which didst not go out with our armies?”), but expected deliverance in 5,12 (“That thy beloved may be delivered … Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.”).

We see forsaken in Psalms 79:5,8 (“How long, Lord? wilt thou be angry for ever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire? …O remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us: for we are brought very low.”), but expected deliverance in 9-10 (“Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name’s sake. Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God? let him be known among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of thy servants which is shed.”).

We see forsaken in Judges 6:1,13c (“And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord: and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years. … but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.”), but expected deliverance in 14 (“And the Lord looked upon him (Gideon), and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?”).

We see forsaken and expected deliverance in Isaiah 54:7-8 (“For a small moment have I forsaken thee (unspecified reason); but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord …”)

If Psalms 60, Psalms 79, Judges 6, and Isaiah 54 are all talking about being forsaken and then expected deliverance, then why couldn’t Psalms 22 be talking about the same?

Before we leave this point, let’s notice three other instances where God forsook David and/or the Israelites because of sin. First, Psalms 89:38-46 – “But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed (David, v.35). ... thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin. … he is a reproach to his neighbours. Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou … hast not made him to stand in the battle. Thou hast … cast his throne down to the ground. … How long, Lord? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?” Second, Psalms 80:4-6 – “O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people? Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure. Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves.” And third, Jer 7:29-30 – “the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath. For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord …”

And note two more cases where God forsook David/Israelites because of unspecified divine reason (like Psalms 22:1ff). First, Psalms 43:1-2 – “Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man. For thou art the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?” And second, Psalms 35:1,17 –“Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me. … Lord, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions.”

Considering all these other instances, it shouldn’t surprise us when the Holy Spirit said David was forsaken in Psalms 22:1-2.

**In What Sense Was David Forsaken In Psalms 22:1?**

The reader might ask at this point – how was David forsaken? Isn’t it possible David was forsaken because of sin unmentioned in the chapter? I don’t presume to know what event in David’s life precipitated Psalms 22, but I could see how II Samuel 24 might fit - God punishing David/Israel (for David’s sin of numbering the people) thru verse 15, and then God relenting in verses 16-25.

Another good possibility is that David was forsaken through no fault of his own, but because of good (divine) reason on God’s part - like …

* Job is an example of a person who was forsaken (through no fault of his own) in the sense that God withdrew a layer of physical protection from him (Job 1:1ff).
* Jesus was “forsaken” at the cross (Matt 27:46), not because He had done anything wrong, but because God purposed His death for our salvation before time began.

My father-in-law wrote in a 5-14-14 email answering in what sense David was forsaken: “Since it does not say, I cannot … hold any strong position. There are times David was "forsaken" because of sin (Absalom’s usurpation) and there were times when he was, like Job, refined in the crucible of affliction (as in the case of his fleeing from the jealousy of Saul). All I know is that he was forsaken.” I agree with Papa: We don’t have to know why David was forsaken to know he was. The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries say Psalms 22:1 “represents a cry … as God's familiar, protective presence is withdrawn.” (Volume 14a, p.106, Derek Kidner). At the very least, David was forsaken in the sense related in verse 2 - “I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not.” The bottom line is that David was forsaken, and when Jesus applied the verse to himself in Matt 27:46, that informs us that He was forsaken likewise.

**“Shouted” Means Jesus Was Only Speaking For The Benefit Of Onlookers?**

Back to Jesus and Matt 27:46, some say the fact that Jesus shouted in Matt 27:46 proves Jesus was not really forsaken but was quoting Psalms 22:1 only for the benefit of his onlookers. I would counter, does the fact that Jesus also cried with a “loud voice” “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit” (Luke 23:46, ASV) prove: (1) what he said there wasn’t true either?, and (2) Jesus was only speaking for the benefit of his onlookers? What about Elizabeth in Luke 1:42 and the unclean spirit in Mark 5:7, does the fact that they used a “loud voice” mean they were only speaking for the benefit of onlookers and didn’t mean what they said? Jesus cried with a loud voice again in Matt 27:50, without saying any words evidently. Who was He doing that for? A lot of times, when people are in excruciating pain, they speak or cry out with a loud voice. I know I do. We probably shouldn’t read any more into it than that.

**They Thought He Was Calling For Elias**

If Jesus was not really talking to (conversing with) the Father, but only calling the onlookers’ attention to Psalms 22, then it seems strange to me he didn’t bother to make himself clear enough to even keep some of his audience from thinking he was calling for Elias (verse 47). The fact is, for all we know, the Father is the only one that correctly understood Jesus. All we can definitely establish is that Jesus was praying to the Father. What effect he was trying to have on those below him is just speculation. We shouldn’t build a doctrine based upon reading Jesus’ mind. Why didn’t Jesus say anything close to “It may look like to you that I am forsaken by God, but I’m not forsaken any more than David was in Psalms 22” … if that is what He meant?

**Other Cases In Psalms 22**

If Jesus was just alluding to Psalms 22, but not really fulfilling Psalms 22:1, that wouldn’t be consistent with the rest of the fulfillments of Psalms 22 which are following:

22:6 “I am a … reproach of men” - didn’t Jesus fulfill that?

22:7 “shoot out the lip” - people really did shoot out the lip in Matt 27:39ff

22:7 “shake the head” - isn’t “wagging their heads” in Matt 27:39 its fulfillment?

22:8 “He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him” - they really did say that in Matt 27:43

22:15 “thirst” (Psalms 69:21) - fulfilled in John 19:28-30

22:16 “they pierced my hands” - fulfilled in Christ - John 20:25

22:18 “They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture”- fulfilled in Matt 27:35

In all these Psalms 22 cases, the Old Testament passage quoted was actually fulfilled; it wasn’t just an allusion to a precedent. Why should Matthew 27:46’s quote of Psalms 22:1 be any different?

**Other Cases Outside Psalms 22**

Consider also how prophecy and its fulfillment works. When the New Testament quotes an Old Testament prophecy, it does so to state fulfillment. Notice these illustrations of such …

Matthew 2:15 quotes “Out of Egypt have I called my son” (Hosea 11:1). The very point is that Jesus was fulfilling said precedent, right?

Acts 1:20 quotes Psalms 69:25 and 109:8 to say “For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take” to refer to Judas’s demise and the choosing of a new apostle to take his place. Was this a case of fulfillment or was it only alluding to a precedent?

Heb 8:8-9 quotes Jer 31:31-32 to say “For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.” – was this a fulfillment or only alluding to a precedent?

Rom 11:26 - “as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob” - fulfillment or only alluding to a precedent?

Luke 2:23 - referring to Jesus’ birth - “As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord” - fulfillment or only alluding to a precedent?

Acts 3:25-26 - “saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities” - fulfillment or only alluding to a precedent?

Galatians 4:30 quotes Genesis 21:10 to say “Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” While Sarah was only talking about Hagar, Ishmael, and Isaac, Paul uses the words to refer to something true about the two covenants.

Mark 1:2-3 - “As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” - fulfillment or only alluding to a precedent?

Romans 15:9 - “And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name” - fulfillment or only alluding to a precedent?

Romans 10:15 - “as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”- fulfillment or only alluding to a precedent?

II Cor 10:17 quotes Jer 9:24 regarding one not boasting about his preaching accomplishments - “But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” - fulfillment or only alluding to a precedent?

I Corinthians 2:9-10 - “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit …” - fulfillment or only alluding to a precedent?

II Corinthians 8:14-15 - referring to helping needy saints - “But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality: As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack” - fulfillment or only alluding to a precedent?

When II Cor 9:9 reinforces helping needy saints by alluding to a precedent “As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor; His righteousness remaineth for ever” (Psalms 112:9), doesn’t that mean it was being fulfilled?

I’m confident we could show dozens more cases where Old Testament prophecy is fulfilled in the New. I don’t recall a single case in the Bible where prophecy is just alluded to, but not fulfilled.

If Jesus was just calling the audience’s attention to Psalms 22:1ff in Matt 27:46, but not fulfilling it, then how do we know the following two fulfillments of prophecy ever really happened?:

Matt 2:16-18 “Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, … and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.” – I guess for all we know, there was never any crying by mothers in Israel over Herod’s killing of their children; Matthew was just calling our attention to Jeremiah 31:15.

Matt 12:17,20 “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, … A bruised reed shall he not break , and smoking flax shall he not quench …” - I guess we don’t know for sure from this verse that Jesus didn’t break bruised reeds nor quench smoking flax (whatever that means); Matthew might have just been calling the readers’ attention to Isaiah 42:3.

If anything, in Matt 27:46 Jesus was “calling attention” to the fact that he was fulfilling Psalms 22:1.

**The Father Would Not Leave Jesus Alone**

It is argued that John 8:29 and 16:32 teach the Father would not leave Jesus alone and therefore that proves Jesus was not forsaken on the cross. This is the same argument Baptists make in debate with me when they array Matt 28:20b (“I am with you always, even unto the end of the world”) against passages that clearly teach “Once Saved Always Saved” is false. They say if Jesus is to always be with us, that is the same as saying he will never, ever (under any circumstance) break fellowship with us.

If two verses look like they contradict, our procedure has never been to array one passage against another, to say one of the verses is wrong (which is what is said about Psalms 22:1). Instead we find a way both verses can be correct. To that end, note that John 16:32 (“Behold … ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.”) shows Jesus was left alone by his disciples in that they “scattered,” not that they broke spiritual fellowship from Jesus, right? So we’re talking about two different things here. There’s a difference in being “with” someone (support morale-wise) and spiritual fellowship. Illustrations:

* I grew up a Baptist and after obeying the gospel I never could persuade my Dad to become a true Christian. So at no time did I have spiritual fellowship with my Dad, but I was always “there for him” and he was certainly always there for me. We never left each other “alone.”
* Suppose against God’s wishes a woman marries a non-Christian. She cannot have spiritual fellowship with him, but does that mean she has to leave him utterly “alone”?, she can’t ever “be there for him”?, she can’t provide “moral support” for him, in his job, and etc.?

**How Could God Forsake Someone Who Had Done Everything Asked Of Him?**

One preacher wrote “Now if the Father did actually forsake Jesus on the cross, then this means that it is possible for God to forsake one who has done everything asked of him.” But that human rational ignores the very point that we all agree on → what happened at the cross was not done because of something Jesus did, but because of what we did (our transgressions). The Father couldn’t rescue Jesus from the cross else that would spoil God’s whole eternal plan of salvation!

**You Mean Jesus Didn’t Know Why He Was Forsaken?**

Still some argue that Matt 27:46 can’t be taken at face value because if Jesus was forsaken, He would have known why such was the case and therefore wouldn’t be asking why. But apply that same logic to Matt 36:39. Jesus knew the plan but still said in Matt 26:39 “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.” You mean Jesus didn’t know he had come to this earth to die? I’ve been a jogger for years and many a time I’ve said to myself “why am I doing this?” not because I didn’t know why, or because I would choose differently, or even out of frustration, but out of pain. I like the way J.T. Smith explained it in the April 2011 issue of Gospel Truths: “Was it because the flesh was in such misery that He cried out from the torment of His situation?”

Consider as an illustration that God asked Adam two questions in Genesis 3:11: (1) Who told thee that thou wast naked? And (2) Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?” Does this mean God didn’t know the answer to those two questions? More to the point - Does this prove Adam had not eaten of the fruit? Then how does Jesus asking why He was forsaken prove He wasn’t forsaken? Jesus asks a question dozens of times in the gospels, and doubtless he already knew the answer every time. He was omniscient, remember? So the fact that Jesus was asking a question proves nothing in this case.

**Jesus Is Actually Talking To The Father**

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” in Matt 27:46 is a quote from the Old Testament, but not just a quote; Jesus is actually conversing with his Father. Consider the other 14 cases in the gospels where Jesus addresses the Father:

* Luke 23:34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. …
* John 17:21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.
* Matt 26:39 … O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.
* Matt 26:42 He went away again … and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.
* Luke 10:21 … I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.
* Luke 23:46 … Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit …
* John 11:41 … And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.
* John 12:27 … Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.
* John 12:28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.
* John 17:1 … Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:
* John 17:5 … O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.
* John 17:11 … Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.
* John 17:24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.
* John 17:25 … Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

In all 15 cases where He addresses God, the consistent pattern is that Jesus is talking to the Father. The thoughts expressed are always Jesus’ personally. That also is the case in Matt 27:46.

**Matthew 27:46 Is Figurative?**

Some say Matt 27:46 should be taken figuratively, but I ask - which of these terms (in bold) in verses 45-48 are figurative?: “Now from the **sixth hour** there was **darkness** over all the land unto the **ninth hour**. And about the ninth hour **Jesus** cried with a loud **voice**, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My **God**, my God, why hast thou **forsaken** me? Some of them that **stood** there, when they **heard** that, **said**, This **man** **calleth** for **Elias**. And **straightway** one of them **ran**, and took a **spunge**, and filled it with **vinegar**, and put it on a **reed**, and gave him to **drink**.” The context is literal, isn’t it? Let’s be careful not to use the tactic of denominational preachers - who too quickly dismiss as figurative any text they don’t agree with.

**How Did The Father Forsake Jesus?**

After determining that Jesus was forsaken by the Father, the next question might be – how did the Father forsake Jesus? First, I don’t have to know the answer to that question to know that Jesus was forsaken. But physically, Jesus was forsaken in that the Father didn’t deliver Jesus from His gruesome death (with good reason – for our salvation):

* Isaiah 53:10 it pleased the Lord to bruise him
* Isaiah 53:4 smitten of God
* Acts 2:22-23 … Jesus … being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God …
* Rom 8:32 He … spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all

In this physical sense, “forsaken” in Matt 27:46 means the same as it does in Psalms 22:1 - not delivered to safety. The bottom line is that Jesus was forsaken is the plain meaning of the verse.

**Jesus Was Spiritually Separated From God**

Matt 27:46 is also describing Jesus being spiritually separated from the Father. If our sins were laid on Jesus (as Isaiah 53:6b says), we should expect the following:

* Isaiah 59:2 the Father was “separated” from the Son
* Isaiah 59:2 the Father “hid his face” from the Son
* Hab 1:12-13 “O mighty God … Thou … canst not look on iniquity”
* Psalms 51:11a “Cast me not away from they presence”

Matt 27:46 and Isaiah 53:6b fit hand in glove. Since sin is a spiritual idea not a physical object, the words of Isaiah 53:6b mean nothing (are just hollow words) unless there were some spiritual ramifications for Jesus. R.L.Whiteside said it best when commenting on Matt 27:46 in his book Reflections - “Jesus died … as if he were a criminal. … God withdrew his presence from him in the hour of death. Hence, in full measure he took the place of the sinner.” (p.197). I imagine this was the hardest thing Jesus ever had to endure, even above all the physical pain and torture He had to suffer on the cross. It’s the first and only time in history Jesus was separated (spiritually) from his Father.

**Conclusion**

When we get rid of all the objections, we are left with what we said in the beginning about Jesus’ question in Matt 27:46: either (1) Jesus was lying, (2) Jesus was mistaken, or (3) Jesus was forsaken. We all know the third option has to be the correct one in this case.

Besides, is there any real reason not to accept Matt 27:46 at face value? It doesn’t contradict anything else in the Bible, does it? Matt 27:46 is clear that Jesus was forsaken by the Father. He was forsaken because we forsook God (II Chron 24:20), not because of anything Jesus had done.