**Jesus Was Forsaken - Some Objections Considered**

Let’s consider some objections to the obvious meaning of Matthew 27:46 that Jesus was forsaken by the Father.

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

Recently some brethren have been saying Jesus wasn’t really forsaken 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?,” wouldn’t that mean he was forsaken? Since when does an event in the New Testament become untrue just because it was foretold in the Old?

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

Some say David was not really forsaken in Psalms 22:1; he only “felt” that way. This dangerous view that God allowed David to write his own (incorrect) thoughts in Psalms 22:1-2 raises the question: Did God also 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? Can someone list for us all the other things the Holy Spirit authored that are wrong? Is God’s revelation subject to the uninspired whims of His human mouthpieces? To the contrary, Mark 12:36 says “For David himself said by the Holy Ghost.”

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

Some reason Psalms 22:1a is in the form of a question, therefore does not necessarily state 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.” I wonder also, since the following verses in Psalms are in question form, does that mean they don’t state 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 falsehood?” (NKJV)

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

Back to Jesus, some say the fact He shouted in Matthew 27:46 indicates Jesus was not really forsaken but was quoting Psalms 22:1 loudly 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) mean: (1) what he said there wasn’t true either?, and that (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” indicate they were only speaking for the benefit of onlookers and didn’t mean what they said? Jesus cried with a loud voice again in Matthew 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 conversing with the Father, but only calling the onlookers’ attention to Psalms 22, then it seems strange he didn’t even bother to make himself clear enough to keep His audience from thinking he was calling for Elias (verse 47). The fact is, all we can definitely establish is Jesus was praying to the Father. What effect he was trying to have on onlookers below is just speculation. We shouldn’t build a doctrine based upon trying to read Jesus’ mind. I would ask: Why didn’t just Jesus say “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 Fulfillments Of Psalms 22**

And if Jesus was just alluding to Psalms 22:1, but not really fulfilling it, that wouldn’t be consistent with the rest of Psalms 22:

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 Matthew 27:39ff

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

22:8 “He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him” – that was really said in Matthew 27:43

22:15 “thirst” Does the fact Jesus said “I thirst” in John 19:28 in order to fulfill Psalms 22:15 mean He really wasn’t thirsty?, that Jesus’ statement was untrue? (Psalms 69:21)

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 Matthew 27:35

In all these Psalms 22 cases, the Old Testament passage quoted was actually fulfilled (which is how prophecy works, duh). Why should Jesus’ quote of Psalms 22:1 be any different?

**The Father Would Not Leave Jesus Alone**

It is argued since John 16:32 teaches the Father would not leave Jesus alone, therefore Jesus was not forsaken on the cross. This is the same argument Baptists make in public 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’s the same as saying he will never (under any circumstance) break fellowship with us. To the contrary, let me demonstrate that being “with” someone is not necessarily the same as having spiritual fellowship with them …

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 being said about Matthew 27:46 in effect). Instead we find a way both verses can be correct. To that end, notice 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,” but 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 (morale support) 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. 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, like in his job and etc.?

If one can see either of the above two illustrations, then he is admitting not leaving Jesus alone does not contradict the idea of the Father having to break fellowship with Jesus because of our sin.

**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 one of the ABCs about the cross 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). Alas, the Father couldn’t rescue Jesus from the cross as that would spoil God’s whole eternal plan of salvation!

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

Still some argue Matthew 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 Matthew 36:39. There Jesus knew the plan but still said “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? Consider as an illustration that God asked Adam two questions in Genesis 3:11: “Who told thee that thou wast naked?” And “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 questions dozens of times in the gospels, and doubtless He already knew the answer every time. He was omniscient, remember? So the fact Jesus was asking a question proves nothing. I’ve been a jogger for years and many times I’ve said to myself “why am I doing this?” not because I didn’t know why, or even because I would choose differently, 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?”

**A Quibble That Backfired**

When we get rid of all the quibbles, we are left with the following regarding “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”: either Jesus was lying, Jesus was mistaken, or Jesus was forsaken. We all know the third option has to be the correct one. One brother recently admitted my logic here would be sound except for the fact Jesus was quoting the Old Testament. I don’t know why that should make a difference, but even if it did, it only proves further Jesus was forsaken. Because Psalms 22:1 is not a quote of a previous text, therefore according to my brother’s own reasoning, David was forsaken. And we all agree if David was forsaken so was Jesus, since Jesus was quoting Psalms 22:1 in regard to himself. Conclusion: Jesus was not mistaken; He was forsaken.