**What is Good Friday All About?**

**[2020 Corona Virus Revised Version.**

**This was originally prepared for Observation of the Lord’s Supper, hence the first part of the message. I edited and added to the second section to reflect current relevant situation.]**

**A Sort of Disclaimer:**

In the midst of the many Good Friday messages I heard on “the air” today,[10/04/20] I was saddened to also hear erroneous theological statements such as: “***Jesus was made sin for us “; “God rejected, abandoned or turned His back on His Son,”*** and ***“God did not answer the prayer or cry of His Jesus on the cross. “***

Now, while I realize that the preachers may not have been concerned with accuracy of theology, but simply trying to emphasize a point and thinking that hearers would “know what I mean,” nonetheless, in my opinion, such statements convey close to heretical ideas an must be abandoned when we claim to preach the Word of God. Accuracy of Biblical truth is vital to its proclamation.

So, please take time to carefully read the attached message I preached/taught sometime back and has edited and revised it to make it more current … and let me know what you think.

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**Introduction.**

**What is “Good Friday” all about?** I don’t mean the day itself, the holiday. Not The hot cross buns; the fish; the “fun” trappings. But the true significance of the day. What does it represent? Why is it memorialized? Why, you say, that’s easy. It’s to commemorate the death of Christ. The day Christ died. That’s my point. That’s what I’m asking: **what does the death of Christ mean? Why is it so significant?** How should we respond to it in a way that honours God? Is it sacrilegious to go on the beach in commemoration of this event? To go fishing? Or to go to Miami to go shopping? Is that what Christ’s death was all about, to give us free time to do what we want, what pleases us? Now of course, you would say,” Absolutely not!"

Yet, some Bahamians behave as though that’s the case. They just simply disregard the significance of the day and do what they want to do because the day affords them that opportunity. Is that wrong? Not necessarily. It all depends upon what you really think about the day itself rather than what you think about what it signifies. After all, Paul teaches that one day is not more important than another, no matter what significance that day may have to others [Rom. 14:5,6]. What matters is that you are treating the event or person signified the way Scripture demands every day, as a way of life.

However, having said that, a day, such as today, Good Friday, does afford us the opportunity of focusing upon the event it signifies – as it is with the events many call Christmas and Easter – and even our own birthday! Should I be happy that I was born only the anniversary of that day? Or should I be happy that I am alive every day! Should I only be glad about the birth of Christ on December 25th, or should I be glad about it every day of the year? The answer is obvious! But yet, an anniversary gives me an opportunity to reflect upon the particular event in a special and even a more meaningful way.

That’s why I thank God, not only for every Friday, but especially for Good Friday. It gives me the opportunity to think a little more, to reflect a little longer, on why and even how Christ died on the cross. What His death really means. Good Friday should be, and is in actuality, an extended Lord’s Supper Worship Service, because it is designed for the sole purpose of “remembering” Him, in His suffering and death for us and climaxes on Resurrection Lords Day, [ I don’t like using the terms “Easter” and “Sunday!” They both hark back to ancient Grecian myths!] when we celebrate His resurrection for us that solidifies and guarantees our salvation [ 1Cor. 15”13-17]. We begin this remembrance process on God’s Friday.

**Transition:**

So, in a very real sense, we could say that the Lord’s Supper is designed by God to help us to remember the meaning and significance of Good Friday. They are both to help us to remember and to proclaim His death. Not His birth or even His life – but His death! His death as portrayed in the breaking of the bread and the outpouring of the contents of the cup. Both speaking of a violent, cruel death. God says, ***“Remember! Remember! Proclaim His death!”***

**Consider His body.**

**It was a specially prepared body – prepared by God Himself**. Prepared to be a body for a special, unique sacrifice. Hear and reflect upon the Word of God. Hebrews chapter 10, beginning at verse 4:

***“For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. 5 Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, ‘Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired, but a body Thou hast prepared for Me; 6 in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast taken no pleasure. 7 Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come (In the roll of the book it is written of Me) To do Thy will, O God.’” 8 After saying above, “Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast not desired, nor hast Thou taken pleasure in them” (which are offered according to the Law), 9 then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Thy will.” He takes away the first in order to establish the second. 10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; 12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. 14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.”***

Notice carefully: the blood of animals did not qualify to take away sins forever, that is, to remove the power and the penalty for sin for good, never to have them to bother the sinner again – forever! A special, unique kind of blood in a special, unique kind of body had to be specially prepared by God the Father. The blood of course, speaks of a sinless spotless life, for as, the Prophet said, ***“life is in the blood.”*** The kind of life necessary to put away the power and penalty of sin forever was a sinless, spotless, absolutely holy one. And that kind of life could only be lived in a special, unique kind of body.

And so, God, through the agency of His Holy Spirit, chose a young virgin, bypassing all natural means of procreation, and implanted within her womb, the long promised ***“seed of the woman,”*** of whom the angel said in Luke 1:35: ***“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God.”***

Jesus was born to be a sacrifice. A sacrifice meeting God the Father’s holy and divine specifications. Only He could provide what He Himself had demanded. **“Remember! Remember His body, prepared and given for you.** What happened on the cross, on that first Good Friday to the body of the Lord Jesus Christ? Consider this:

**His head** A crown of thorns, 1 to 1 1/2” in length, was crushed upon it**.**

**His cheeks** were punched with the fists of burly soldiers and his beard was pulled from its roots. And He said, ***“I hid not my face from shame and spitting.”***

**His shoulders** were bruised and scarred by the rough, heavy wooden cross.

**The flesh of His back** was ripped and torn with the pieces of bone and metal that studded the whip by which He was brutally beaten. He said: ***“I gave my back to the smiters.”* [Isa. 50:6]**

**His side** was pierced through and opened with a soldier’s spear.

**His hands and His feet** were pierced with large, iron spikes, and so He says, ***“They pierced my hands and my feet*.” [Psalm 22:16]**

This is why He could say in that upper room as He inaugurated this feast of remembrance and broke the bread: ***“Remember: this is my body, given for you. Remember. Remember.”*** [1 Cor. 11:24-26] This is what God’s Friday is all about - To remember the death of Christ. That He gave His body for us. ***“Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, (His body) 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” [***Heb. 9:20-23]

1 Cor. 11:25 “***In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”***  In Matt. 26:27, the text says***: “And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; 28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.”***

His blood was “poured out” for us. This, like the body broken or given, speaks of a violent death. In Jesus’’ case, it speaks of a perfect, Holy, spotless life, given or in exchange for, or in place of, a sinner’s life. However, We have to be very careful here, that we do not place undue miraculous or magical powers in the makeup of the blood of Christ itself, as a fluid or liquid. The blood speaks of life. It is a metaphor, symbol or metonymy for life. In Jesus’ case, a spotless, holy, sinless life. Here, as mentioned in the Lord’s Supper, it speaks of the violent, unjustifiable way in which His life was not really taken by man, but voluntarily given up as a sacrifice.

You see, the cruel act by unholy men of crucifying Jesus, was only half of the story – as man sees it. The other half, as God sees – and planned – it, is that Christ freely gave His life. Man did not take it, although they – and Satan – thought that they did! He gave it. Actually, we could also say, the Father Gave Him, the Son, as a sacrifice, and the Holy Spirit, serving as a divine Priest, did the actual sacrificing. Let’s look at a few passages of Scripture to validate this astounding truth:

**Isa. 53**, beginning at verse 4: “***Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, (notice now) Smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. 7 ¶ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living, For the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? 9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth. 10 ¶ But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.***

Notice, it was God, God the Father, who smote, afflicted, crushed and pierced Him through for our iniquities. It was the Father’s “good pleasure,” His perfect will, to do so. **Listen now to Romans 8:32**: “***He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?”*** God the Father did not ***“spare His own Son.”*** Spare from what? From what was involved in becoming a sacrifice for sin. ***“He “delivered Him up.”*** This is a sacrificial term. The Father did not withhold anything from what was involved in offering His Son as a sacrifice for sin. - A blood sacrifice. An atoning sacrifice.

If you recall, He did spare Abraham’s son. But He did not spare His own Son. He delivered Him up as a sacrifice – for us. He stopped Abraham from plunging the sacrificial knife into the bosom of his only son and provided a ram, caught in a thicket. He spared Isaac. But when it came to His own Son, He did not spare Him. He went all the way with the sacrifice. He, Jesus, was caught in the thicket of God’s will and His own love for the sinner. The sacrificial knife was plunged into the breast of the Son of His bosom. But now, who actually did this? Was it the Jews? The Romans? Was it even our sin? The Scriptures give us an amazing, awesome answer.

First it tells us that the events of Good Friday were planned in the council of the Eternal Godhead. Acts 2, verse 22: ***“Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know — 23 this Man, delivered up*** (notice now) ***by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.”***

Second, it tells us that it was the Father who ***“gave”*** or ***“offered up”*** His Son. We saw that in Romans 8:32, but the well-known John 3:16 tells us the same thing***: “For God so loved the world, that He gave – gave up – His only begotten Son.”*** Note, it’s His ***“only begotten Son,”*** meaning, His unique, one-of-a-kind Son. No one else like Him. He gave the One whom He tore the heavens apart in order to declare to the world: ***“This is my Son with whom I am well pleased.”*** [Matt. 3:17]

Third, the Scriptures also tell us that it was the Son who voluntarily gave Himself for us, meaning that He submitted to His Father’s will to be a sacrifice, an atonement for the sin of the world. Hear His words of submission through the writer of the Book of Hebrews once again. Hebrews chapter 10, verse 5: “***Therefore, when He (Jesus) comes into the world, He says, “Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired, But a body Thou hast prepared for Me; 6 In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast taken no pleasure. 7 “Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come (In the roll of the book it is written of Me) To do Thy will, O God.’” 8 After saying above, “Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast not desired, nor hast Thou taken pleasure in them” (which are offered according to the Law), 9 then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Thy will.”*** That’s Jesus speaking.

He also speaks in John chapter 10, verse 15:

***15 “... the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.” And in verse 17: “For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.” And again in verse 18: “No one has taken it (meaning, my life) away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.”***

But, fourth, we have the involvement of the Holy Spirit described for us in Heb. 9:14, listen to the author’s words: ***14 “how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”*** Notice, Jesus offered Himself through the Eternal Spirit. One could say then, that the Holy Spirit served as the sacrificing Priest. Please don’t miss the divine drama that is being described and acted out here! The Triune God is involved in the most awesome, dramatic, significant act of worship even enacted in annals of human history!

The Father is the Sacrificer, the One giving or providing the sacrifice. The Son is the perfect, spotless, unblemished, holy sacrifice. The Holy Spirit is the sacrificing priest. Note, unlike in the case of Abraham, the Father did not stop the Holy Spirit from plunging the knife of death and judgment into the breast of His One and only Son. The Son of His bosom.

Thus, it was God who crushed a willing Jesus on the Cross. It was God who smote an obedient Jesus on the cross. It was the Triune God who killed Jesus the Christ. What a profound truth! But **That’s what Good Friday is all about.** That’s the awesome concept we are to contemplate, to ***“remember”*** and to ***“proclaim”*** as we partake of these emblems today, “Good Friday.” That’s what Jesus meant when He said that His blood was poured out for us.

Peter too, speaks of the preciousness of this blood in 1 Peter 1:18 ***“knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.”*** And Paul in Eph. 1:7 ***“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.”*** And John in Rev. 1:5 ***“... “Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood.”*** So well might we say with Paul in 1 Cor. 10:16, as we partake of the cup: ***“Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ?”***

How we rejoice this Good Friday morning that we can take this cup of blessing and share in the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. What a privilege! What a joy!

But we are also to ***“proclaim His death”*** through this feast and these emblems. We have done that to some degree already, of course. But there is still so much more to proclaim about His death on that Good Friday some 2020 years ago. Perhaps one vital fact is the fact that He died, not for Himself, but for us. Not for what He had done, but because of what we have done. The Father gave Him up for us. He gave Himself up for us. The Holy Spirit sacrificed Him for our sin. Yet, on the cross, He cried: ***“My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken me?”*** He cried this cry of despair between the hours of 9 AM and 12 noon of Good Friday. A time of deep darkness.

Matthew says: ***“Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour.”*** (Mat. 27:45). Mark says: ***“And when the sixth hour had come, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour.” (***15:33). Luke says: ***“And it was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour.”*** It is as though God who said, “***Let there be light,”*** when He chased away the darkness of chaos in Genesis 1, says, on Calvary on that first Good Friday, ***“Let there be darkness,”*** and chases away the light He Himself had made. Why? Is it because He does not want the world to see the punishment – the hell – the Triune God would miraculously and mysteriously execute upon one of their own members? Was this such a holy undertaking that no human eye could see it and live? Or, was this such a horrible ordeal that a human could not comprehend its severity and still believe that God is a God of love? Whatever the reason, only the Triune God witnessed the terror of the Son on the cross when “***He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us.”*** [ 2Cor. 5:21].

Now, let’s be careful here, because this is precisely where some well-meaning but uninformed preachers go astray! We must not even imagine that Jesus became a ***sinner*** on the cross, such as Kenneth Hagen, Paul Crouch, Benny Hinn or Joyce Meyer do or did, and who even went so far as to say that Jesus actually became a demon on the cross, went to hell as a demonized, sinful person, and that it was there in hell, that Jesus was born again and became a Son of God after His resurrection. Now, my friends, don’t you for a moment believe that heretical teaching. That is the “proclamation” of rank heresy! That is not what this Supper or Good Friday is all about! Yet either unthinking or simply due to a lack of proper study of the Word, some of our preachers state or imply the very same thing this Good Friday!

We must take time to address and correct this kind of erroneous preaching and teaching.Please listen carefully! Jesus Christ, the sinless, spotless, holy Son of God, did not **become** a sinner on Calvary. If He did, it would have disqualified Him as the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world. No, but rather, He became the ***bearer*** of sin’s penalty on our behalf. He was our sin-offering, not the bearer of our actual sins. Judicially, God did indeed see us, the sinner, in Him, the sinless One, but that is imputed or transferred guilt, not actual, personal guilt. He ***bore*** the penalty for our guilt. Our sin. He did not ***become*** guilty because He was infused or literally contaminated with our sins. He became ***a bearer-away*** of the ***penalty*** of our sin because God charged our sin to His account – although He did not in fact sin Himself, even as His righteousness was charged, reckoned or imputed to us, even though we are not righteous in ourselves. So, 2 Cor. 5:21 actually and accurately reads: ***“He, who knew no sin, was made a sin-offering for us.”***

Jesus no more become literally contaminated with our sin as did the scape goat in the Old Testament did not actually become contaminated with the people’s sin by the laying on of hands upon its head by the priests. He became our sin-offering, nor our sin bearer. Now, I realize that some who preach using this phrase, use it perhaps as a Tautology, a figure of speech that uses different words to mean the same thing, or they simply do so reflecting the KJV of the text, but it is now recognized by able Bible scholars that is not a correct rendering of the original. In fact, here’s how the New Living Testament translates that verse: ***“For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.”*** I encourage our preachers and teachers to study that passage carefully and reverently.

But, that’s what happened on the cross, on that first Good Friday, between 9AM and 12 Noon, on April 3, 33 AD - in the dark! Jesus Christ “bore” or “took away” the punishment or penalty for our sin. He took our judgment away by bearing, experiencing or receiving that judgment in His own body on the tree. It was then that ***“He, who knew no sin, was made a sin offering for us.”*** And He did it to please the Father – and it did. That’s what Resurrection Lord’s Day is all about. It is the dramatic, awesome validation that the Father was pleased with the sacrifice of His Son as our sin-offering. As one Bible commentator says: “The resurrection was God’s ‘AMEN!’ to Jesus’ “***It is finished”*** on the cross!

But some still insist that Christ was actually made a sinner on the cross and That’s why God turned His back on Him. They erroneously quote Hab. 1:13 to teach that a holy God cannot look upon sin or be near sin because sin would mar His holiness. That’s why He turned His back upon His Son on the cross, they shout. That’s why they say Jesus cried out**, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?”** Ah, my friends,could God turn His back upon Himself? Could the Father abandon the Son who was always “in the bosom of the Father?”

We have already established from Scripture, the fact that Jesus was not made a sinner on the cross. But was He abandoned by the Father? Did God the Father really “forsake” His Son on the cross? Did the Father “turn His back” on His Son? His supposed being made a sinner is the basis for the necessity of God the Father turning His back to His son, whom He loved, until it seems, He was hung on the cross! However, let’s look carefully at these texts we quote so quickly and so casually to suggest that the Father did in fact do so.

Matthew 27: verse 46: ***“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?”*** Mark records the same words.

Now, as we all know, Jesus is quoting, and thus fulfilling, the words of David, in Psalm 22, specifically, verse 1. In fact, we can say, He is actually quoting these words in order to fulfill the prophecy. Jesus, as the Greater David, is literally reliving what David experienced, in a lesser degree, in his own life. This Psalm is a prophetic declaration of the death of Christ on the cross. The question is therefore, did God forsake David in Psalm 22? Let’s turn to the Psalm.

Verse ***1: “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.”*** There, you see, it’s clear, these preachers say. David was forsaken by God; therefore, Jesus was also forsaken and even abandoned on the cross. But let’s continue with our study. Let’s really study this Psalm to see why Jesus really quoted it. First, Let’s go through the Psalm and look at David’s repeated plea for help:

**Verse 2: “*O my God, I cry by day, but Thou dost not answer; And by night, but I have no rest.”* Verse19: *“But Thou, O LORD, be not far off; O Thou my help, hasten to my assistance.* Verse 20 *Deliver my soul from the sword, My only life from the power of the dog.* Verse 21 *Save me from the lion’s mouth.”*** David is pleading and praying for God’s help again and again.ButNotice now, something that so many preachers seem to miss: right in the midst of his prayers for help he also says: ***“And from the horns of the wild oxen Thou dost answer me!”*** Did you get that? Do you see that?David says he was heard, that God did hear and answer His prayer. He repeats this statement in verse **24: “... *He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Neither has He hidden His face from him; But when he cried to Him for help, He heard.*”** Notice, David specifically says that **God DID NOT HIDE HIS FACE FROM HIM!**

Don’t you think Jesus knew the rest of the Psalm!!?? In fact, history of the Jewish people tells us that it was a practice for them to quote the beginning of a Psalm with the understanding that the hearer would know the rest of it as well. That’s what Jesus is doing here. He well understood that those who heard Him quoting these words knew that He was thinking about the entire Psalm as well. So let’s continue with a general overview of the Psalm:

In his introductory remarks, in verses 1-10, David, in the midst of his desperate situation, which he will also describe in these verses, deals with his doubts about God's care by remembering God's faithfulness to his believing forefathers and to himself in the past.

**SINCE GOD APPARENTLY DID NOT RESPOND TO HIS CONTINUAL PLEAS FOR HELP, DAVID ASKED GOD WHY HE HAD FORSAKEN** HIM (vv. 1-2) “***My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? 2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season and am not silent.”***

**BUT THEN DAVID ACKNOWLEDGES THAT GOD IS HOLY AND HAS NEVER BETRAYED HIS BELIEVING FOREFATHERS' TRUST** (vv. 3-5)

***3 But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. 4 Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. 5 They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.***

**DAVID, HOWEVER, FELT ABSOLUTELY HUMILIATED AND ALMOST SUBHUMAN, BECAUSE PEOPLE WERE MOCKING HIM FOR TRUSTING A GOD WHO HAS OBVIOUSLY ABANDONED HIM** (vv. 6-8) ***“6 But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. 7 All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 8 He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.”*** *What a disappointing, humiliating experience! The God he trusts has let Him down****.***

**DAVID REMINDS GOD THAT HE HAD BEEN HIS GOD SINCE BIRTH AND THAT HE HAD TRUSTED HIM ALL HIS LIFE. (vv. 9-10**)

***“9 But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.10 I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.”*** This Could also well be referring to the fact that Jesus was filled with the Spirit in Mary's womb. Remember, Jesus is actually CONSCIOUSLY living out this Psalm on the cross.

In the next section, David kept asking God for deliverance from his troubles until he finally got an answer.

**DAVID ASKED GOD TO BE CLOSE BECAUSE HE WAS IN TROUBLE AND HAD NO ONE TO HELP HIM** (v. 11) ***“Do not stay so far from me, for trouble is near, and no one else can help me.”*** In Jesus case, it's a reflection of His prayer in Gethsemane: ***"Father, if it's possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but let Thy will be done!"*** The question of verse 1 now becomes a prayer, however, now it’s a sign of faith, not fear! Notice, David asks for nearness and not rescue. He wanted to feel the presence of God even in his desperate condition. However, he then goes on to describe the depth of the dangers he is experiencing in verses 12-18.

Remember, Jesus is living this out as He is dying on the cross.

His enemies surrounding him are like strong, ravenous animals (vv. 12-13). ***"My enemies surround me like a herd of bulls; fierce bulls of Bashan have hemmed me in! Like lions they open their jaws against me, roaring and tearing into their prey." (***Psalms 22:12-13 NLT)

*He then describes his terrible physical suffering (vv. 14-15)*

***“My life is poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax, melting within me. My strength has dried up like sunbaked clay. My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You have laid me in the dust and left me for dead****." (Psalms 22:14-15 NLT).* David is describing both his and Jesus' emotional and physical suffering by evil men who acted like wild beasts. They are at the very point of death!

David further describes his helplessness as he was mistreated by his vicious enemies (vv. 16-18). But now he goes beyond his own experience to that of Jesus, but he still feels it himself.

***“My enemies surround me like a pack of dogs; an evil gang closes in on me. They have pierced my hands and feet. I can count all my bones. My enemies stare at me and gloat. They divide my garments among themselves and throw dice for my clothing***.” (Psalms 22:16-18)

Now, in the next section of the Psalm, **DAVID ONCE AGAIN ASKS GOD TO DELIVER HIM, AND THIS TIME, GOD ANSWERED HIM (vv. 19-20)**

“***O LORD, do not stay far away! You are my strength; come quickly to my aid! Save me from the sword; spare my precious life from these dogs.”*** (

For instance, here is the NIV:***20 Deliver me from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dogs. 21 Rescue me from the mouth of the lions;save me from the horns of the wild oxen.*** Notice, verse 21, is still in the form of a prayer or plea.

Also the NLT: ***“Snatch me from the lion’s jaws and from the horns of these wild oxen.*** (Psalms 22:19-21 NLT) Verse 21 is still in the form of a prayer or plea.

But here are the other more accurate translations:

This is the KJV: ***“Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.”*** Notice “***Thou hast heard me.”*** It is a statement! God has answered!

Now the New English Translation: ***“Rescue me from the mouth of the lion, and from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered me!”***

Notice again, “you have answered me.”

Now, the American Standard Version: ***“Save me from the lion’s mouth; Yea, from the horns of the wild-oxen thou hast answered me.”*** Note again: “Thou hast answered me.”

**THIS IS THE TURNING POINT IN THE PSALM, WHERE DAVID'S PRAYER IS ANSWERED**.  "You have heard me!” - “You finally responded to my prayer!”

David, finally, after much intense prayer, received his answer from God - and the implication is that he had been delivered from death at the last possible moment. But of course, for Jesus, the One Who is greater than David, He is saved THROUGH death - and this is the final message of the Psalm!

At this point, from verse 21, the whole atmosphere of the psalm changes! And what most preachers seem to miss out in their preaching, so verse 1 is taken completely out of its context! So, as an overview of the Psalm: In verses 1-21, we have David's and Jesus' Desperate Prayer for deliverance. In verses 22-31, we have their Joyous Psalm of praise. The speaker: {David – and by extension Jesus}, was previously dying in agony, But now, he is living in victory. He was formerly surrounded by enemies, But now, He is in the presence of God and his people. HIS DESPAIR IS TURNED INTO PRAISE. This is the result of his prayer of faith in a faithful God. Now, David turns to publicly praising God for not abandoning him and answering his prayer:, verses 22-31:

**DAVID PRAISED GOD AND EXHORTED THE GOD-FEARERS IN ISRAEL TO DO THE SAME** (vv. 22-26)

***"I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:*** (He is no longer in the midst of his enemies, but in a praise meeting with his brothers!) ***You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!* {AND NOW HE EXPLAINS WHY HE IS PRAISING GOD with His brothers!** *(We could say, with members of the incredible body of Christ."****]***

***“For he has not despised  or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him. From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will perform before those who fear him. The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord! May your hearts live forever!”***

***David now foretells the results of JESUS' death and resurrection: (27-29):***

* **{This is “the Glory” Jesus saw that was set before him on the cross.”}**
* ***It will be remembered all over the earth*** *(through the proclamation of the Gospel)*
* ***It will cause many to turn to God:***
* ***Some from every tribe and nation***
* ***Both rich and poor.***
* *Listen to these glorious words****: [Vs. 27-29]***
* ***“All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the LORD’S: and he is the governor among the nations. All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul. A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.”***

Now, in verse 1, David may have FELT as though God had forsaken him and had not heard his prayer. But the Psalm is clear: God did **not** forsake him and God d**id** answer his prayer. Can the same thing be said about Jesus on the cross? Yes, most definitely! Because the Psalm depicts and foretells that experience. But more than that, we have a New Testament passage to confirm this very fact. Hebrews chapter **5, verse 7,** speaking of Jesus says: ***“In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.”***

Like David, God did not save him FROM the experience, but THROIUGH it! However, while going through it, they both FELT as though they were abandoned – but in actual fact, they were not! Both David and Jesus continued to trust in God in spite of their sufferings. The very words of their cry of anguish show this: ***“MY God, MY God!”*** They still recognized and acknowledged the fact that God was their God. A God they trusted.

Listen to the writer of the Hebrews exhortation to us concerning endurance: **Heb. 12:2 *“ ... fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.”***

Jesus’ faith in His Father enabled Him to endure the suffering of the cross, knowing that He would not abandon Him.David knew this also. Listen again to the words of Paul in Acts 2:29 ***“Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 “And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants upon his throne, 31 he looked ahead and* spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned *to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay.”***

No, my friends, Jesus was made a ***sin offering*** for us. He did not ***become*** a sinner for us. He was not abandoned by His Father on the cross: He was approved by His Father for submitting Himself to His will. Jesus’ death on the cross was a holy, acceptable sacrifice because of the fact that He was holy, spotless, unblemished and sinless. His sacrifice, in the words of the Old Testament, ascended into the nostrils of God as a sweet-smelling savor. He accepted Christ as our substitute, as our Saviour. The resurrection is proof of this!

The question is, have ***you*** accepted Jesus as your already God-accepted sacrifice and Saviour?If you have or will, this Resurrection Day will really be a glorious day for you.

Selah!