

Psalm 22

"The Forsaken One"

March 31, 2024

1. Intro

- a. The name, Bernard Arnault, may not be a name that is familiar to many of us
 - i. But he's certainly well-known in Europe and among the wealthy across the globe
 1. Arnault is currently the richest man in the world, ranking right up there with Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos
 - a. It is estimated that he is worth approximately 229 BILLION dollars
 - i. He's amassed his incredible fortune through the ownership of familiar companies such as Christian Dior, Luis Vuitton, Tag Hueser, and many more
 - b. Arnault lives mainly in Bordeaux, France, in their 21,000 square foot castle
 - i. But he also a vacation home on the island of St. Tropez, France, as well as five homes in Beverly Hills
 - ii. As if that were not enough, Arnault also owns a 133-acre island in the Bahamas
 1. Why not, right??
 2. Arnault's wealth and luxury and lifestyle is something that we cannot even comprehend, can we?
 - a. Can you imagine being one of his kids?
 - i. Arnault has five children, all of whom have major roles in the family business today
 - ii. But just think about what it would be like to live in such a family...
 1. There is no need that they would have ever had under their father's care
 - a. The most lavish of foods
 - b. Beautiful homes to live in and vacation in
 - c. Access to the best doctors and healthcare
 2. And surely there were no wants that would have been lacking for them either
 - a. The freedom to travel anywhere around the world, at any time they want
 - b. Surely they had the coolest toys, and all the latest video games and gaming consoles
 3. When your dad is worth 229 billion dollars, you have homes all around the world, and you even have your own private island, what more could a son or daughter want, right?
3. Just imagine being one of Arnault's kids
 - a. And then imagine Arnault asking you, as one of his children, to leave ALL OF IT
 - b. Imagine him looking at you and saying, "Son... daughter... I have a plan to use my great wealth and resources to help MANY people, all around the world... but in order for this to work, I need you to leave
 - i. I need you to give up all your riches
 - ii. I need you to give up all your ease and comfort

- iii. I need you to instead go live the life of a servant who has absolutely nothing
 - iv. And in your moment of greatest need, when the burden of all of this weighs the heaviest upon your shoulders...
 - 1. When the world looks at you in scorn and derision
 - 2. When they mock you and ridicule you for claiming to be my son
 - 3. In the moment when you need me the most, I will turn my back on you
 - 4. I will forsake you, SO THAT I can help those who have rejected you
 - 4. Imagine if Bernard Arnault were to come up with such a plan
 - a. We would call him insane, wouldn't we?
 - b. We would look at all of that, and we would call it foolishness
- b. Yet this is where we find the man named Jesus, nearly two thousand years ago, as he was hanging upon a Roman cross
 - i. Jesus had lived in the little village of Nazareth for thirty years
 - 1. The son of a poor carpenter who had died, possibly during Jesus' teenage years
 - 2. The son of a widowed woman named Mary, who had come up with this crazy story that Jesus was conceived in her womb by the Holy Spirit
 - 3. Jesus had lived a relatively quiet, obscure life for thirty years, until he began going around preaching that the Kingdom of God had arrived, and that he was in fact the Son of God
 - ii. As Jesus traveled around for the next three years, he performed many incredible miracles...
 - 1. Healing the sick, casting out demons, calming storms, and even raising people from the dead
 - 2. Many people came from many miles to see this new rabbi, and to hear his new teachings, and to maybe benefit from one of his miracles
 - iii. But as he was healing the sick and calming the storms and raising the dead, he was also calling out the religious leaders in Jerusalem
 - 1. He confronted them on their hypocrisy and legalism
 - 2. He rebuked them for their greed and self-indulgence
 - 3. In front of the masses, he exposed them for not even knowing the God they claimed to be speaking for
 - iv. And so these godly, holy, religious men cooked up a fake trial in the middle of the night
 - 1. They captured Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane with his followers
 - 2. And they found him guilty of making the false claim that he was the Son of God
 - a. And then these religious leaders handed Jesus over to the Roman authorities
 - i. And the soldiers beat him till he was unrecognizable
 - ii. They put a crown of thorns upon his head, mocking him as the King of the Jews
 - iii. And then they nailed him to the cross
 - 1. As Jesus hung upon the cross, beaten and bloody, every breath an agonizing effort, the masses who had followed him were gone
 - 2. The great crowds who had ushered him into Jerusalem as the King of Israel just a few days before, were now silent
 - 3. His own disciples, those who had sat under his teaching for three years, those whom he had called his friends, had all fled

- a. Judas had betrayed him
 - b. Peter had denied him
 - c. They had all run away when the guards came and took him in the garden
 - i. Only John was there at the cross, standing with Jesus' mom and a few of the other women who had followed him
- 3. Can you imagine the agony he must have been in?
 - a. Not just the physical pain, which had to have been absolutely excruciating
 - b. But also the emotional pain of virtually everyone he had poured himself into... gone
 - i. They had all deserted him
 - ii. They had all disappeared
- 4. But this was not the worst of it, friends
 - a. For in the moment of his greatest need... in the moment of his greatest agony... Jesus, who truly was the very Son of God, was forsaken by his Father
 - i. As we sang earlier, "How great the pain of searing loss? The Father turns His face away..."
 - 1. Jesus, the only Begotten Son of God
 - 2. Jesus, the BELOVED Son of God
 - 3. Jesus, the Son with whom the Father was WELL pleased...
 - a. Was forsaken by his Father
- 5. And as he was hanging upon the cross, in utter pain and agony over this reality, the words of an ancient Hebrew song came to his mind
 - a. This song was written by King David, who had reigned over Israel nearly a thousand years earlier
 - i. And this song will be our main text for this morning, Psalm 22
 - 1. We don't really know the historical context of when or where David wrote this hymn
 - a. If you're familiar at all with David's story, you know that there were many times throughout his life that he was afflicted and scorned
 - b. We typically would want to dig into the background of these Psalms, in order to truly get the intent of what David was writing about, and in order to be good students of the Word
 - i. But this Psalm stands apart as a unique passage of Scripture
 - ii. It so clearly points ahead to our Savior upon the cross that Charles Spurgeon would say of this Psalm, "David and his afflictions may be here in this Psalm, but, as the stars in the daytime sky are concealed by the light of the sun, he who sees Jesus in this Psalm will probably neither see nor care to see David!"
 - b. And so, as we read this Psalm of David, may the eyes of our heart see Christ, the TRUE son!

a. *To the choirmaster: according to The Doe of the Dawn. A Psalm of David. ¹My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? ²O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.*

i. This hymn immediately begins in tragedy

1. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

a. In chapter 27 of Matthew's Gospel, he records in verse 45 that as Jesus was hanging upon the cross, "from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour"

b. So on Friday, from noon to three the light of the sun was blotted out

i. This was no mere eclipse as some have tried to explain it...

1. This was the hand of God

a. The same God that caused the sun to stand still in the sky as Joshua warred against the Amorites

b. The same God that caused the sun to go BACKWARDS as a sign of His promise to King Ahaz

2. The only begotten Son was hanging upon a cross, cursed by God, as he was pierced for our transgressions...

a. As he was crushed for our iniquities

b. As the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all

c. And as darkness covered the land, at the ninth hour Jesus cried out the words of this Psalm, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

i. This darkness was much more than just a physical darkness

ii. It was a spiritual darkness as the Father turned away from the Son

1. In the midst of his groaning, in the midst of his cries

2. The Father did not answer His Son

a. We cannot even begin to comprehend what this felt like for Jesus, who had been one with His Father for all eternity past, now forsaken by His Father

d. But if verses 1 and 2 of this hymn were on Christ's heart during these moments, surely verses 3-5 were as well!

3. Psalm 22:3-5

a. *³Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. ⁴In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. ⁵To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.*

i. My friends, HOLINESS of God was not tarnished one bit by the horror of the cross

1. This was not a moment that God let things spin out of control on the earth

2. This was not a day when He suddenly lost His grasp upon the things of this world

a. When Peter stood up before the crowds in Acts 2, he said to them "YOU delivered this Jesus to be crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men!"

b. But he ALSO said to them that this was ALL according to the definite plan and foreknowledge OF GOD

3. God's holiness NEVER changes, no matter how dark the circumstances may seem around us

ii. God is holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel

1. If you know your Old Testament, and you know the history of the people of Israel, you know that they were an absolute mess

a. Even though they had been chosen by God to be HIS people, set apart as HIS possession, they were constantly rebelling against Him and trying to go their own way

- b. But, in the rare moments that they shined... in those few times where God was indeed enthroned upon their praises, it was when they REMEMBERED the times of their deliverance
 - i. It was when they REMEMBERED how they cried to God out of Egypt and were rescued by Him
 - ii. It was when they REMEMBERED how they placed their trust BACK in Him during their time of exile in Babylon, and they were not put to shame
- c. These were the times that God was seen as holy by His people
 - i. When they REMEMBERED His goodness
- iii. As Jesus hung upon the cross, forsaken by God, surely he also REMEMBERED his Father's holiness
 - 1. And he realized how much Israel had FORGOTTEN
 - 2. And so he prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."
- iv. The intensity of what Jesus was experiencing continues in verse 6...

4. Psalm 22:6-8

- a. *⁶But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people. ⁷All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads; ⁸"He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"*
 - i. My friends, this is unfathomable
 - 1. The Son of God, the One THROUGH whom and FOR whom all things have been created... saw himself as a worm, and not a man
 - a. Scorned by the very race that he had created in Genesis 1
 - b. Despised by the very people His Father had chosen to be His own
 - i. They mocked him...
 - ii. They wagged their heads at him...
 - iii. In utter foolishness they mimicked David's words in these verses, scoffing at Jesus and saying in Luke 23:35, "He saved others, let him save himself!"
 - ii. Yet in the midst of their mocking, again, Jesus REMEMBERED!

5. Psalm 22:9-11

- a. *⁹Yet you are he who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother's breasts. ¹⁰On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God. ¹¹Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help.*
 - i. Jesus, who was fully God, was also fully man
 - 1. He thought back to how he was conceived in young Mary's womb through the power of the Holy Spirit
 - a. The Beloved Son who had all the riches and treasure and glory in heaven with the Father, emptied himself of it all
 - b. Though he was in the form of God, he did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, so he emptied himself, and took on the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men
 - 2. But even at his mother's breasts, Jesus knew who his God was
 - a. He had emptied himself of the glories of heaven, but he did not lay aside his identity
 - i. On his HEAVENLY Father, Jesus was cast from his birth
 - ii. From Mary's womb, Jesus was ALWAYS the Son of God
 - 1. And so it was to his Father that Jesus looked, as trouble was all around him, and there was no one to help

6. Psalm 22:12-18

a. ¹²Many bulls encompass me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me; ¹³they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion. ¹⁴I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; ¹⁵my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. ¹⁶For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet – ¹⁷I can count all my bones – they stare and gloat over me; ¹⁸they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

i. The land of Bashan was known for its fertile soil and lush crops, and so the cattle of Bashan were fat and lived lives of ease and comfort

1. The religious leaders of Jesus' day were like these fat bulls

a. They had grown powerful and prosperous in the land that God had given to them

b. They had grown fat and lazy as they peddled the Word of God for their own benefit

2. And so these bulls of Bashan surrounded Jesus, and roared at him like lions

ii. His body was broken

iii. His heart melted like wax

1. As he neared the dust of death, his tongue stuck to his jaws, and so in John 19:28, he likely gasped out, "I thirst."

iv. The dogs encompassed him... the evildoers encircled him

v. And in direct fulfillment of David's prophetic words, John tells us that the soldiers divided his garments into four parts, and they cast lots to see who would get his tunic

1. Wicked and lawless men, doing EXACTLY what God had determined by his definite plan!

a. Jesus continues his pleas for his Father's help in verses 19-21

7. Psalm 22:19-21

a. ¹⁹But you, O LORD, do not be far off! O you my help, come quickly to my aid! ²⁰Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog! ²¹Save me from the mouth of the lion! You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!

i. But then notice how the language shifts starting in verse 22

1. Everything that we have read up to this point were the things that Jesus was experiencing upon the cross

a. The agony... the hopelessness... the despair

b. But starting in verse 22, this song that might have been played in minor notes, changes to a tune of hope

i. Even a tune of PRAISE!

8. Psalm 22:22-24

a. ²²I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you: ²³You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel! ²⁴For 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. ²⁵From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will perform before those who fear him. ²⁶The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD! May your hearts live forever!

ii. The writer of the book of Hebrews gives us a crucial insight into the heart of our Lord

1. In Hebrews 12:2, after he exhorts us to lay aside every weight, and the sin which clings so closely, and to run WITH ENDURANCE the race that is set before us, the writer says, "looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who FOR THE

JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

- a. How did Jesus endure the pain and agony of the cross?
- b. How did he WILLINGLY face shame and the scorn and the rejection of all the people?
- c. How did he run his race, all the way to the end, even as he was forsaken by His Father?
 - i. He did it all for THE JOY that was set before him!
 1. The one who was forsaken by God would very soon be seated at the right hand of the throne of God
 2. The Father would NEVER AGAIN forsake His Son
 - a. This is why Jesus cried out with his very last breath, "It is FINISHED!"
- iii. Jesus knew his race here on earth had come to an end
 1. But he also knew that this was just the beginning!!
 - a. Through his death, Christ was ransoming a people from the futile ways of their forefathers
 - b. Through his precious blood, Christ was purchasing a people for God, from every tribe and language and people and nation
 - c. Through his sacrifice, he was sealing the New Covenant that God would make with all who fear the Lord!
 2. My friends, this is the answer to Jesus' agonizing question upon the cross
 - a. WHY did God the Father forsake His Son?
 - i. Because this was the ONLY way that YOUR sin and MY sin could be forgiven
 1. You see, the Bible paints for us a very clear and unapologetic message:
 - a. We are ALL sinners
 - b. We have ALL, like dumb sheep, gone astray and turned to our own way
 - c. And therefore, we are ALL enemies of God
 - i. We are dead in our transgressions
 - ii. Fully incapable of being able to do anything that will earn our way back into the favor of God
 - iii. And the ONLY thing that we deserve because of our willful rebellion... is death
 - b. So God, in His great grace and mercy, sent his Son to die on OUR behalf
 - i. For our sake, God made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him, we might become the righteousness of God
 - ii. And when the spotless and perfect and sinless Son of God became sin, for us, the Father turned away from the Son
 - c. WHY did the Father forsake His Son
 - i. Because of YOUR sin, my friends
 - ii. Because of MY sin
 - d. But through his blood, we have been made righteous
 - e. Through his blood, we have been forgiven and washed clean
 - f. Through his blood, we have been adopted into the family of God
 - iv. So who are the brothers, and sisters, to whom Jesus now speaks of the name of His Father?

1. It is all whom the Lord Jesus has purchased, and all whom he WILL purchase!
 - a. It is THE CHURCH!
 - i. WE have been grafted into the tree of God's people
 - ii. WE are the offspring of Jacob, which is why we glorify God!
 - iii. WE are the offspring of Israel, which is why we stand in awe of the Lord!
 - b. By the grace of God, Christ was despised and abhorred, so WE could be accepted
 - c. By the grace of God, the face of the Father was hidden from His Son, so WE could now see Him by faith
 - d. By the grace of God, God turned a deaf ear to the cries of His Son, so that WE could be heard when we cry out to Him
 - i. This is indeed a God who is WORTHY of our lives!!
 - v. But God's plan of purchasing a people for Himself didn't stop on the cross, did it?
 1. For on the third day, God raised Jesus from the dead
 - a. And because of HIS resurrection from the dead, ALL who have surrendered their lives to him will be raised as well
 - i. The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied
 - ii. Those who seek the Lord shall praise His great name
 - iii. And our hearts shall live FOREVER, in bodies clothed with imperishable immortality!
 1. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:54-55, on THAT day...
 - a. *⁵⁴When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"*
 2. This is where we place our hope, Christians
 - a. For Christ is just the first of those who will be resurrected
 - b. Paul also writes in 1 Corinthians 15:20-26
 - i. *²⁰But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²²For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶The last enemy to be destroyed is death!*
- vi. My friends, there will come a day when David's closing verses of this incredible hymn come to pass...

9. Psalm 22:27-31

- a. *²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. ²⁸For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations. ²⁹All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep himself alive. ³⁰Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation; ³¹they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.*
 - i. Isn't that incredible?

1. This hymn, which began with such anguish and sorrow, ends in triumphant victory!
 - a. For Kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over ALL the nations
- ii. As Paul writes in Philippians 2, *"Christ emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father!"*
 1. These are the things we are commanded to tell to the coming generation
 2. These are the things we have been entrusted to proclaim to a people yet unborn
 - a. That God has done great and marvelous things, through the life, and death, and resurrection of His Son
- b. These are the promises for all who fear the name of the Lord
- c. These are the promises for all who surrender their WHOLE life to Christ
- d. These are the promises for all whom the Lord has ransomed through his precious blood
 - i. Can that be said of you, my friends
 1. Do you KNOW this Christ of whom we have spoken of this morning?
 2. Is your heart TRULY surrendered to him
 - a. The offer of God's salvation goes out to everyone
 - i. It is a free gift of His amazing grace
 1. You cannot earn your way into His Kingdom
 2. You can never do enough good works to earn His favor
 - ii. He has sent His Son to pay the price that your sin has demanded
 1. And it has been paid FULLY upon the cross
 - a. But now you must surrender
 - i. Not just one area of your life here, and another area there
 - ii. You must surrender ALL of it
 - iii. And you must pick up YOUR cross, dying to yourself and your wants and your rights
 - b. Like your Savior, you must humble yourself and become obedient even to the point of death
 2. But we do so, knowing that even as we die for the name of Christ, we WILL be resurrected!
 - iii. For Christ is our firstfruits
 1. And when he returns, ALL who belong to him WILL be raised from the dead, to the glory of God the Father!
 - a. So praise His great name in the congregation, and proclaim HIS righteousness to a people yet unborn
 - i. For God has done it ALL!