

Skegness Community Church - Weekly Bible Study 2025

52 passages of Scripture that every believer should know

Week 41 - FORSAKEN: Matthew 27:46

“About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”
-which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

During the intense struggle of the cross, our Lord spoke seven times as He hung suspended between heaven and earth. This was the strangest of all His cries: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Was Jesus actually forsaken by the Father during His moments of agony? As the battle raged, Satan tried his best to entice Christ to give up and to give in. This was a spiritual battle, and Satan is at work trying to make us also give up and give in. You know one of the reactions to the loss of a loved one, is that people feel forsaken; “why has God done this to me”. And it’s not just with bereavement that many people know the haunting feeling of being forsaken; some people have once stood at a wedding altar and heard their lover promise to never leave them nor forsake them. But that didn’t prove true, and now they know the painful reality of being forsaken. Countless children who have been abandoned by fathers and mothers also know the meaning of the word. Perhaps there is no more haunting word in our English language than the word forsaken. But we should remember that even Jesus was forsaken by His family; by His friends; and there is even the suggestion that He felt He was forsaken by His own Father, during the intense struggle of the cross. Jesus’ answer in every situation was, instead of giving up, to pray to His Father.

IN GALILEE JESUS WAS FORSAKEN BY HIS FAMILY (Matthew 13: 53-58)

Jesus’ own brothers and sisters distanced themselves from Him when he began His public ministry. It was at this point that He said, “only in his home town and his own house is a prophet without honour” (Matthew 13:57). But when those who knew Him best forsook Him, instead of giving up ... Jesus reached up. When Jesus was forsaken by His own family, He did not give up. **He reached up** to His heavenly Father. Instead of giving up, we can reach up to the Lord in prayer. He is the only one who can truly identify with your feelings and needs. For He too knows what it is to be forsaken.

AT GETHSEMANE JESUS WAS FORSAKEN BY HIS FRIENDS (Matthew 26: 36-56)

That night, before the Crucifixion, Jesus needed his friends and followers more than He ever had. But immediately after He had agonised in prayer, sweating drops of blood in Gethsemane’s garden, the Bible bluntly states, “Then all the disciples deserted Him and fled” (Matthew 26:56). They forsook Him. And that is not all. They fled! They ran away. They denied they had ever known Him. Jesus was forsaken, abandoned, in His hour of deepest need, by His own friends! But our Lord did not give in to the circumstances that swirled around Him. Instead **He reached in** - into the depths of His own being to find solace not in His own will but in the will of the One who sent Him. He had prayed, “Yet not as I will, but as You will” (Matthew 26:39). Have you reached in lately? That is, have you come to the place in your own experiences where you join Jesus in praying, “not as I will, but as You will”?

AT GOLGOTHA JESUS WAS FORSAKEN BY HIS FATHER (Matthew 27: 33-46)

Does a loving God forsake His own? There are just so many accounts in the Bible where God does not forsake His own. So why this strange cry from the lips of our Lord in His most agonising moment? The Bible tells us that a holy God cannot look upon sin. On the cross Jesus was bearing your sin and mine in His own body, suffering the punishment for our sins as though they were His own. There on the cross, bearing our sin, Jesus was momentarily forsaken in order that we might never be forsaken. Our Lord was tempted by the devil to give out; but instead **He reached out** and said, “Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34). Yes, our Lord was forsaken by His family, His friends, and His heavenly Father - but only so we might never be forsaken. “Surely He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows” (Isaiah 53:4). **What a Saviour!**

As you memorise this verse, meditate on the way we never experience anything in this life that Jesus Himself did not experience before us and for us. Forsaken? Don’t give up; reach up. Don’t give in; reach in. And don’t give out; reach out.