

## ***Overhearing Jesus Pray?***

Psalm 25

*[This is another longer psalm today, so I invite you to read this psalm before moving on to the devotion. But one verse in particular will be the focus for this meditation, v. 7:*

**Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;  
according to your steadfast love remember me,  
for the sake of your goodness, O Lord!]**

I mentioned in my devotion on Psalm 22 that some scholars believe that Jesus prayed that entire psalm while hanging on the cross; that Matthew records only the first words as a kind of shorthand - for the Jews would have known the rest of the psalm by memory after hearing only the first few words. Like if I were to say to you the words "Silent Night." I don't have to say the rest of the words to that song - you know them and are probably already saying them in your mind! That Jesus would be praying the psalms on the cross would be in keeping with the fact that the psalms are the prayerbook of the Bible. They are prayers to pray in our time of need.

Well, there are other psalms that contain words that we know Jesus spoke from the cross as well. Psalm 31:5, for example, contains the words "*Into your hands I commit my spirit.*" So perhaps Jesus prayed that psalm, too.

What about the psalm for our meditation today - Psalm 25? At first, it is hard to imagine Jesus praying some of these words, such as "***remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions,***" and "***pardon my guilt***" - for Jesus had no sin to forgive! But we must remember that Jesus came to take our sin upon Himself; to make our sin His sin, and atone for it by His sacrificial death on the cross in our place. So in that way, with our sin, He can pray these words, for He is making our sin His sin.

And if that's true, then what if the thief on the cross next to Jesus - the one who asked for help - did so because he heard these words of our psalm today? ***“Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O Lord!”*** Hearing those words, perhaps he thought of the sins of his youth, the sins for which he was hanging next to Jesus, and so he took the words of this psalm on his own lips, offering his prayer to Jesus and saying: *“Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom”* (Luke 23:42). And that, of course, is the very thing Jesus wants to do! And not only for that thief next to him, but for you and me.

Well, perhaps you think I am going too far with this and that Jesus didn't really pray this psalm and the thief next to him didn't ask for Jesus' help in that way, because he heard these words. Fair enough. So instead, pray this psalm for yourself. Ask Jesus to ***remember not the sins of your youth*** (v. 7), and how you have strayed and need Jesus ***to teach you the way you should go***. Ask Jesus for the ***pardon you need for your guilt, for it is great*** (v. 11). Ask Jesus to ***guard your soul and deliver you and take refuge in Him*** (v. 20). Or in other words, make this psalm your prayer, for surely these words apply to you! And maybe even think of yourself as that thief hanging next to Jesus, saying to Him: *Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom*. And know that Jesus will! It is the very thing He wants to do.

For the final verse of this psalm: ***Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles*** - that's exactly what Jesus was doing on the cross. And so you are redeemed. For He has made your trouble His trouble, to set you free. And you are free, from the guilt, shame, and condemnation of sin, by grace through faith in your Saviour, Jesus. And as Jesus would later say: *If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed* (John 8:36).

So next time you are in trouble, or the guilt or shame of your sin is weighing heavy upon you, pray this psalm. And know that you are forgiven, you are redeemed, you are not forgotten. For the Lord indeed and in fact, remembers you.

*Lord Jesus, now that you have come into your kingdom, remember me! Remember my sins to forgive them. Remember my trouble and rescue me. Remember my ignorance and teach me. Remember my foes and protect me. Remember my weakness and preserve me. Remember my failures and help me to walk in your ways. Remember my doubts and fears and give me confidence in you and your great love for me, which never fails. For you are my Redeemer, and I am your dear child. Thank you for all that you have done, are doing, and will do for me, to lead me home to dwell with you forever. Amen.*