

## Psalm 22

---

*“To the chief musician upon ‘‘Ai-je-leth Sha-har, a Psalm of David.’’*

- Ai-je-leth: means the “doe of a fallow deer” or metaphorically “the wife of one’s youth.”
  - Sha-har: means the morning dawn, or rising up, the coming of daylight; used metaphorically to describe the beauty of a bride or a bridegroom.
  - These could be the names of other tunes or songs to which this Psalm is played or sung to; or it could be a reference in some way to the dawning of a new day, commemorating the genesis of and the beauty of His bride and His rising up.
  - If Jesus didn’t first die on the cross, there would be no glorious resurrection.
- 
- **Psalm 21** ended with the expectation, the looking forward to of the Messiah, the day of the Lord when the promised King would sit upon His throne and bring the enemies of the Lord into Judgment.
  - The Messiah coming to conquer and reign in His glory - that is one line, albeit the popular line of Messianic prophesy.
  - Psalm 22 is obviously a Messianic psalm; the test of a Messianic psalm being that it is quoted in the New Testament referring to Jesus. This Psalm is a little over the top in the sense of it’s Messianic implications.
  - Psalm 22 is a Messianic psalm, but of a different sort, or of a different line as it portrays the line of the Messiah as He is despised and rejected, as He suffers and dies on the cross.
  - This is the line that was generally rejected or neglected by the Jews as it didn’t make sense to them, and it didn’t lead to prosperity or the restoration of the glorious kingdom of Israel under David.

**Isaiah 53:3** “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.”

---

V: 1 This sounds like a desperate, or a forlorn plea - why have you forsaken me, where are you?

- This is probably one of those situations that we can all relate to at times, longing for His intervention, and His presence during hard and difficult times.

- We recognize these as the words of Jesus while He was hanging on the cross.

**Matthew 27:46** “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?”

- Jesus made 7 statements from the cross, this is the 4th, the middle statement, which deals with the centrality of His relationship with His father.
- Sometimes we're so focused on these being the words of Jesus from the cross that we forget that David penned these words, obviously being inspired of the Holy Spirit - but I wonder what David was going through that would cause him to give utterance to these words.
- While it can't compare to what Jesus was going through, it must have been a pretty difficult situation.

“... *why are you so far from helping me...*”

- Jesus is in anguish of soul, feeling the estrangement and separation from God the Father.
- The words of His roaring; this is a raw desperate plea for help.

V: 2 Jesus was crucified at about 9:00 AM, his trial - so called was much earlier in the day as he stood before Caiaphas and Annas, Pilate, Herod, and finally being sentenced to crucifixion by Pilate.

- Jesus had been on the cross for about 3 hours, at about noon the sky turned to darkness, hence the declaration.
- “I cry in the day time... and in the night season...” It's the middle of the day, but it's the night season because of the darkness.

V: 3 Here we have the answer to the question in verse 1, “... *why hast thou forsaken Me? Why are you so far from helping me...*”

- Because God is Holy.
- Jesus is on the cross and the reality that He had anticipated in the Garden of Gethsemane is now a present reality.

**2 Corinthians 5:21** “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

- As Jesus has taken upon Himself the sin of all mankind, as He has become sin for us - He is experiencing the separation from God the Father that sin causes.

**Isaiah 59:1-2** “<sup>1</sup>Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: <sup>2</sup>But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that He will not hear.”

- One of the inevitable consequences of sin is that it separates us from God.

**1 Corinthians 6:15-17** “<sup>15</sup>Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. <sup>16</sup>What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith He, shall be one flesh. <sup>17</sup>But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.”

- If we are one with Christ, and we seek to do these things, then we’re trying to make Jesus a participator in our sin, and He won’t have it, He won’t join Himself to sin. He cannot be one with sin.
- Just as He says here “<sup>3</sup>*But thou art Holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.*”
- Because of the holiness of God, when Jesus received our guilt and our iniquity, He was forsaken by the Father, and separated from Him.

V: 4-6 The fathers trusted in God, they were a sinful lot, they weren’t all so righteous, but they trusted in you, and you delivered them. This points directly to the grace of God.

**Ephesians 2:8-9** “<sup>8</sup>For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. <sup>9</sup>Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

- They trusted in you and were not disappointed.

“<sup>6</sup>*But I’m a worm* (less than a man), *and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people.*” - “There is no hope for me - because I am separated from you.”

- None of them, none of us, was ever separated from the Father the way that Jesus was when the Father turned away from Him.
- No one ever really experiences that until the day that they die without being born again of the Spirit, then they know that dread wretched reality.

- Prophetically, as you go through the Gospels, Jesus was certainly a reproach of men and despised of the people.

V: 7-8 As we read through the Gospel accounts of the crucifixion: **Matthew 27, Mark 15 & Luke 23**, we read these very things that were spoken to Jesus while He hung on the cross, ridiculing Him.

- As we read these words here in the Psalms, understand that they were penned 1,200 years before the event. This is pure prophecy.

**2 Peter 1:19-21** “<sup>19</sup>We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: <sup>20</sup>Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. <sup>21</sup>For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

V: 9-10 David had learned to trust and hope in the Lord from a very early age.

- How early did Jesus recognize His divinity: was it at conception? Was He aware all through Mary’s pregnancy? As He was nursing, growing up?
- Luke’s Gospel describes His awareness at the young age of 12.
- Jesus, Joseph, Mary and the rest of the family had gone to Jerusalem for the Passover and on the way back they discovered that Jesus wasn’t among them. Mary and Joseph turned back to find him, only to discover that He was in the Temple engaging with the teachers of the Law. When asked why He would do such a thing His response was:

**Luke 2:49** “... How is it that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?”

V: 11-13 Again the prayer: be not far from Me - You are My only hope.

**John 6:68** “Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.”

- This describes the crucifixion scene, Jesus is surrounded, gaping upon Him with their mouths and He was mocked.

V: 14-15 Describing parts of the crucifixion: De-hydration, through the beatings, the scourgings, the loss of blood and fluids, crucifixion, literally being hung out to dry in the hot middle eastern sun.

- All his bones out of joint: Hanging there by his wrists; his shoulder muscles probably giving out first, pulling, separating his shoulders - all so very painful. The hip joints and knee joints never being able to rest.
- His heart being like wax; the incredible stress, unable to gather breath, the miocardial sac around His heart filling with fluid, swelling, and impeding the ability of the heart to function properly. Instead of a fleshy muscle, it's become hard and thick like wax.
- His strength is dried up, no strength left, the incredible thirst that goes with the dehydration, on the brink of death.

V: 16 For dogs have surrounded him, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed Him. It's safe to assume that the assembly of the wicked refers to the Jews.

- So that leaves the Romans being described as “dogs.”
- The word for “dogs” means dog (s) in various contexts. Dogs were known to growl and be menacing in their behavior which would in some instances fit the description of a Roman soldier.
- But the first definition listed after “dog” is that of a male prostitute, or a male cult prostitute. The same word being used in other parts of the Bible to describe people that way.
- I was very surprised in Israel to learn that a large segment of the Roman army were homosexual men, my tour guide described from historical accounts that as the Roman army fought their way through Israel, raping and pillaging along the way that the Jews were in more fear for their sons than they were for their daughters.
- Gibbons affirms this in his classical work, “The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire” where he gives detailed evidence to the same.
- This explains what would seem to be an unusual or perhaps even derogatory use of the word “dog” in this passage.

V: 16b “... *they pierced my hands and my feet.*” It doesn't take a real deep thinker, or a theologian to figure out what this is referring to.

- Again, understand that crucifixion was not even invented when David wrote these words. Crucifixion was invented by the Persians around 400 BC, then later perfected and used extensively by the Romans. These words were written 1,200 years before Jesus was crucified.
- This prophecy also goes along with another Messianic prophesy in Zechariah.

**Zechariah 12:10** “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

Also:

**Zechariah 13:6** “And one shall say unto Him, what are these wounds in thine hands? Then He shall answer, those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends.”

V: 17-18 As Jesus is further dehydrated you can see all his bones, his muscles are breaking down rapidly and He's looking skeletal.

- Jesus is being sacrificed as the perfect Passover Lamb and according to **Exodus 12:46** none of it's bones were to be broken.

**Psalm 34:20** “He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.”

- Blood is produced in the bones; none of the bones being broken ensures an unlimited, un-interrupted supply.
- At this point Jesus probably presents a grotesque figure of suffering and pain, and people are staring at him in astonishment.

**Isaiah 52:14** “As many were astonished at thee; His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:”

**Matthew 27:35** “And they crucified Him, and parted His garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, they parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture did they cast lots.

- Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies concerning his birth, his life, His death, and resurrection. If you took just the prophecies contained in this Psalm concerning Jesus and the chances of one person fulfilling them it would be 10 to the 17<sup>th</sup> power - yet Jesus, and Jesus only fulfilled each one.

V: 19-21 Again the plea, the longing for comfort which can only be found in fellowship and communion with the true and living God.

- Figuratively the horns of the unicorn is understood to mean the horn of power; on the altar before the Holy Place, at each corner there was a “horn” like the horn of a bull, symbolizing power.

- At times people would run to the temple and grab onto the horns of the altar seeking protection, to pray, and to beseech God. Here the Psalmist is invoking that power in his prayer.

V: 22 Now we move beyond the cross, we move on to the resurrection and towards the glorious day when He rules and reigns in righteousness.

V: 23-24 This seemingly describes two groups of people: the combined group - those that fear the Lord who should praise the Lord. The seed of Jacob and the seed of Israel.

- The seed of Jacob is generally a reference to the man of the flesh, Israel is a reference to the man that is governed by God truly.
- I believe this particular reference is slightly different. The seed of Jacob refers to the descendants of Jacob, the Jews who believe, bearing in mind that the church started out as primarily a Jewish movement. The reference to Israel is to all those who are governed by God, Jews and Gentiles alike who will praise Him.
- God heard his cry, the promise of God expressed in **Psalm 16:10**.

**Psalm 16:10** “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”

V: 25-26 The response: I will praise you in the great congregation, I will pay my vows...

Sounds like:

**Psalm 116:12-14, 17** “<sup>12</sup>What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? <sup>13</sup>I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. <sup>14</sup>I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people.” - “<sup>17</sup>I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.”

- The meek shall eat, they shall be satisfied.

**Matthew 5:5-6** “<sup>5</sup>Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. <sup>6</sup>Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”

- Those who seek the Lord will praise Him. Why? The promise of eternal life. “<sup>26b</sup>... *your heart shall live forever.*”

**John 3:16** “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

V: 27-28 There is a coming day when all the earth will see and acknowledge Jesus in His glory for who He is.

**Philippians 2:9-11** “<sup>9</sup>Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: <sup>10</sup>That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; <sup>11</sup>And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

- Lets say it now, say it with me: “**Jesus Christ is Lord!**”

**Matthew 6:13** “... For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”

- He is coming again to reign in His glory upon the earth!

V: 29-31 Those that are fat upon the earth, compared to those that are dust in the ground, those that are alive shall be fed, and shall worship.

- Those that are dead shall be raised up to worship.

**Romans 14:11** “For it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”

- No one can keep their own soul alive, only God can do that.
- A seed, a descendant shall serve Him. They shall declare to the next generation, a generation yet to be born - that’s us!

**Psalm 96:3** “Declare His glory among the heathen, His wonders among all people.”

- And here we are reading that declaration.
- The declaration that He has done this, “**Tetelistai**, it is finished!”