

THE PSALMS

Series: Selected Psalms Phase 1

Psalm 22: Intensified/Unbearable Suffering . . . Take It to God . . . Victory

Assured Psa. 22:1-31

Part B: Trials and Tribulations, Surrounded and Closing in Psa. 22:12-21

Today's Study: Psa. 22:12-21

1. Remembering the Tormenting, In-Comparable Sufferings of Christ 22:12-18
2. Request God's Continued Presence and Help 22:19-21.

INTRODUCTION

1. Highlights from Psalm 22 Part A

(a) **Psalms 22, 23 and 24 forms a trilogy.**

(1) Psalm 22: shows us **"The Cross"** or **"The Suffering Savior."**

(2) Psalm 23: shows us **"The Crook"** or **"The Shepherd."**

(3) Psalm 24: shows us **"the Crown"** or **"The Sovereign."**

Quote by C. H. Spurgeon in regards to Psalm 22:

"This psalm is beyond all others 'The Psalm of the Cross.' It may have been actually repeated by our Lord when hanging on the tree; it would be too bold to say so, but even a casual reader may see that it might have been. It began with 'My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?' and ends [with the thought], 'It is finished.' For plaintive expressions uprising from unutterable depth of woe, we may say of this psalm 'There is none like it.'"

(b) **Complaint, God Withdraws Himself . . . Seemingly Psa. 22:1-2**

(1) Two important factors to be noted in: **"My God, My God!"** (22:1)

- The forsaken person had a genuine personal relationship with God. Although he was experiencing persecution of men his complaint was made to God and not against God.
- The repetition of the petition reveals the severity of the suffering that he was experiencing.
- The psalmist (Psalm 22 ... David) maintained, his commitment and unmovable faith in God. Despite the intensity of his suffering, he still had confidence in God! He addressed God as **his God**, although He seems to have forsaken him . . . **"My God, My God!"** (applicable also to Christ).

(2) He felt **forsaken** by His Beloved Father **" . . . why have You forsaken Me?"**

- As applicable to our Savior, this psalm (22) refers to those dreadful moments on the cross, when forsaken by men, He seemed also to be forsaken by God.

- The experience noted in Psalm 22:1, can be applied to David, or any child of God, desiring the attention of Divine favor. It shows someone who is pressed with the burden of his displeasure and overwhelmed under its load.
- (3) **“Why are You so far from helping Me?” (22:1c).**
- To the psalmist, God seemed far away, so far that He could not hear the sufferer’s intense cry or that He could not reach out to deliver him.
 - **God’s people must pray that He will stop evil and suffering. Meanwhile, we may be assured that though the day of justice has not arrived, the LORD has heard our prayers and will give strength to our hearts until the end . . . victory is assured!** (Note carefully Psa. 10:16-18).
 - The psalmist seems to be perplexed by God’s silence despite his unceasing petitions (see. 22:2).
- (4) The psalmist seems to be perplexed by God’s silence despite his unceasing petitions (see 22:2).
- There was no break in his suffering, and so were his supplications. During the day, he called to the Most High and during the night he was unable to maintain tranquility so he prayed through the night.
 - Matthew Henry notes:
“When we are lamenting God’s withdrawing’s yet still we must call upon Him our God, and continue to call upon Him as ours. When we want the faith of assurance of adherence. However, it be, God is good, and He is mine; though He do not answer me immediately, I will continue praying and waiting; though He be silent, I will not be silent.”
- (c) **Comforts Himself Knowing That He Knows the Father Psa. 22:3-5**
- (1) Despite the prevailing situations the psalmist maintained positive thoughts of God . . . **“But You are holy” (22:3a).**
- He was actually saying **“You are righteous and blameless.”**
 - This thought shows that the sufferer maintained unwavering confidence in God. Although his prayer seemed not to be heard, and though he was not delivered, he was not inclined to blame God.
 - The reality of this situation is applicable, not only to Jesus Christ, in whom it was demonstrated, but it is relevant also to the people of God.
- (2) Here is a profoundly powerful example for **all** believers; no matter what our experiences are, our confidence and continued commitment to God must remain unshakeable, even if the answer to our prayers seemed unanswered!
- (3) We need to praise Jehovah; we are reminded that He dwells where praises are offered (Psa. 22:3).
- It may comfort us in all our complaints – that although God seems, for a while, to turn a deaf ear, nevertheless He is delighted with His people’s praises and in due time they will fully realize that He is always there for His people . . . **“Hope in God for I shall yet praise Him!”** (Psa. 42:5, 11).

- We perceive God’s love most keenly when we are focused on His will and have devoted ourselves fully to His praise and purpose for our lives. We are instructed to abide in God, which means that we live and are committed to worship Him and be fruitful in His service (John 15:5-7, 10; 1 John 2:6). **The word “abide” carries with it a sense of habitation; we are commanded to live in the presence of God.**
- (4) A plea was made that God would manifest Himself as He did in the past (see 22:4-5).
- His plea was given added incentives because he (the psalmist) descended from miraculous wonders of God; he knew what God was able to do!
 - We may strengthen our faith in our trials by the assurance that God never changes; and in pleading with Him, we may make our requests by presenting our petitions in a reasonable manner noting that He has always intervened on behalf of His people.
 - Matthew Henry notes:
“Our fathers trusted in thee, cried unto thee, and you did deliver them’: therefore, thou wilt, in due time deliver me, for never any that hope made ashamed of their hope, never any that sought thee in vain . . .”
- (d) **Communicating the Acts of His Persecution Psa. 22:6-8.**
- (1) The following are six hostile responses experienced by the sufferer, noted in Psa. 22:6-8.
- They reproached or rebuked him (v. 6b).
 - They despised him (v. 6c).
 - They laughed and scorned him (v. 7a).
 - They jeered him (v. 7b).
 - They arrogantly mocked his faith in the LORD (v. 8a)
 - They called him a hypocrite, etc. (v. 8b)
- (These summarized thoughts are based on discussion from P.O.S.B.)*
- (2) The intensity of the conflict made David feel not only ignored but insignificant. God seems to help other men, but seems to give no help to worms (Psa. 22:6a). The low standing, he had in his own eyes and in the eyes of others added to his agony.
- (3) Spurgeon comments on 22:6 as follows (note: this is a partial quote . . . another paragraph is noted in Part A . . . Page 16):
“This verse is a miracle in language. How could the Lord of glory be brought to such abasement as to not only lower than angels, but even lower than men. What a contrast between ‘I am’ and ‘I am a worm.’”
- (4) The essence of what is being taught here (Psa. 22:8) is the taunting language of his enemies, with sarcastic attitude attacking the fact that he had wholeheartedly committed himself to the LORD as if He was his friend. The enemy noted that he expressed confidence in God and he believed that his cause was safe in God’s hand.

- Psa. 22:8 was also fulfilled in the case of the Savior . . . note carefully Matt. 27:43.
 - Speaking almost word for word what David prophesied, the rulers of the Jews fulfilled Psa. 22:8 (see Matt. 27:41-43; Luke 23:36).
- (e) **Confessing His Unshakeable Trust in God Psa. 22:9-11.**
- (1) ***“But You are He who took Me out of the womb”*** (22:9a NKJV) . . . in other words: ***“You are my all in all . . . I owe my life to You!”***
- Seemingly, the psalmist also used this fact to further emphasize the need for God to intervene and protect him.
 - Applying Psa. 22:9 to our Savior, it means that in His earliest childhood He trusted God. His first breathings were those of holiness. His first aspirations were for Divine favor. His first love was the love of God.
- (2) Commenting on 22:10, David Guzik notes:
- “The forsaken One argued on good, logical grounds. He reminded God of the care given since His earliest days. That prior grace might seem to be wasted if the sufferer was not rescued in His present crisis.”*

2. Introducing Psalm 22

- (a) Quote from the NIV Study Bible

“The anguish prayer of David as a godly sufferer victimized by the vicious and prolonged attacks of enemies whom he has not provoked and from whom the LORD has not (yet) delivered him. In the arrangement of Psa. 15-24, this psalm serves as a counterpart to Psa. 17. . . . The prayer is in many ways similar to Psalm 69, but it contains no calls for redress. . . . No other psalm fitted quite so aptly the circumstances of Jesus at His crucifixion. Hence on the cross He quoted from it (see Matt. 27:46 and parallels), and the Gospel writers, especially Matthew and John frequently alluded (as they did to Psa. 69) in their accounts of Christ’s passion (Matt. 27:35-39, 43; John 19:23-24, 28). They saw in the passion of Christ the fulfillment of this cry of the righteous sufferer. The author of Hebrews placed the words of v. 22 on Jesus lips (see Heb. 2:12). No psalm is quoted more frequently in the NT.”

- (b) P.O.S.B. quoted the following as presented by commentator Arno C. Gaepelin:
- “The sufferings described in this Psalm could never be David’s. He did not pass through anything like the agony and the deep waters pictured here. . . . The Holy Spirit came upon David and testified beforehand of the suffering of Christ. The New Testament applies this Psalm exclusively to the Lord Jesus Christ and His great atoning work on the cross. It seems to us that what He dictated into the pen of the fugitive king must have been unspeakable comfort to him. He beheld the suffering One who trusted God, the Holy One of God. Before his vision there passed the agony of the cross and the glorious reward of the sin bearer.”*

- (c) We are aware of David's very difficult days and the brutal wars he fought. This psalm (22) presents the ferociousness of his adversaries, however, his perception extended beyond his personal suffering to an excruciating experience neither he or any other man would ever know.

Whatever may have been the occasion for David writing this psalm, it was a dark, dismal period in his life. In writing this psalm, God directed his thoughts to the experience of the Messiah, who would suffer far more than anything David could endure. ***"His record is not a view of the cross, but our Savior's view from the cross."*** (P.O. S. B.).

- (d) Spurgeon notes:

"The crucified Son of David continues to pour out His complaint and prayer. We need much grace that while reading we may have fellowship with His sufferings. May the blessed Spirit conduct us into a most clear and affecting sight of our Redeemer's woes."

Intensified/Unbearable Suffering . . . Take it to God Victory Assured Psa. 22:1-31

Part A: Take Your Innermost Feelings to God Psa. 22:1-11

- A. Complaint, God Withdraws Himself . . . Seemingly Psa. 22:1-2**
- B. Comforts Himself Knowing That He Knows the Father Psa. 22:3-5**
- C. Communicating the Facts of His Persecution Psa. 22:6-8**
- D. Confessing His Unshakeable Trust in God Psa. 22:9-11**

Part B: Trials and Tribulations Surround and Closing in Psa. 22:12-21

E. Remembering the Tormenting, Incomparable Sufferings of Christ Psa. 22:12-18

1. Deadly, Destructive and Diabolic Attackers (Psa. 22:12-13)

"Many bulls have surrounded Me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion" (22:12-13 NKJV)

- (a) Bashan . . . a few brief pointers:

- (1) The land of Bashan, located east of the Sea of Galilee, was well known for its strong well fed cattle.
 - Its cattle grazed in rich green pastures and they grew larger and stronger than other cattle of the region.
 - Because of its grain fields, (wheat) Bashan was often referred to as the bread-basket of Palestine.
- (2) Bashan . . . conquered by Israel:
 - King Og of Bashan came out against the Israelites under the leadership of Moses, on their way into the Promise Land, but was vanquished in battle (Num. 21:33-35; Deut. 3:1-7).
 - Along with the half of Gilead, Bashan was given to the half-tribe of Manasseh (Deut. 3:8-17, NB Vv. 12-17; Josh. 13:29-31).

- (b) ***"Strong bulls of Bashan"*** (22:12)

- (1) The bulls of Bashan were a symbol of power and strength.

- (2) As noted in our text the bulls of Bashan are referred to as being remarkable for their size, their strength and their fierceness; and are intended to represent men that are fierce, savage like and violent.
- (3) **As this verse applies to our Savior**, the reference is pointing to the fierce and cruel men that persecuted Him and sought His life.
- The attackers of Christ were so vicious that David compared them to hungry wild animals
 - These were men with the fierceness and fury of bulls (Isa. 51:20; Psa. 68:30)
- (c) Note their viciousness and determination to destroy.
- (1) They were like bulls that surround their target (v. 12).
- They slowly move in on it (their target), ridiculing it, poking it with their horns, waiting for the opportune moment to pounce on and destroy their intended victim.
 - Spurgeon notes:
“The priests, elders, scribes, Pharisees, rulers and captains bellowed round the cross like wild cattle, fed in the fat and solitary pastures of Bashan, full strength and fury; they stamped and longed to gore Him to death with their cruelties.”
- (2) His attackers were like ferocious wild animals . . . like hungry lions devouring their prey (v. 13).
- Note, they were **“Like a raging and roaring lion.”** (NKJV). . . **“ . . . a ravening and a roaring lion.”** (KJV).
 - The word **“ravening”** (v. 13 KJV) means emphatically devouring, and the reference in the Hebrew word points to a lion as he tears his prey . . . rending it in pieces to devour it.
 - This is intended to show the greediness and viciousness with which the enemies of the Redeemer sought His life.
 - They swoop upon Him with wide open mouths, roaring savagely with the objective of mutilating and destroying Him.
 - Spurgeon notes:
“Like hungry cannibals they open their blasphemous mouths as if they were about to swallow the man whom they abhorred. Like roaring lions, they howled out their fury, and longed to tear the Savior in pieces, as wild beast raven over their prey.”
2. **Drained, Dehydrated, Despairing Sufferer** (Psa. 22:14-15).
“I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it has melted within Me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death” (22:14-15 NKJV).

In these verses (22:14-15) we observe the fact of the Savior dying in pain and anguish, because He was to ultimately pay the price for sin, which brought great pain, and for which we would for eternity be in torment. **Here we observe:**

(a) **The dissolution of the whole frame of His body, “I am poured out like water”** (22:14a NKJV).

(1) The sufferer now turns from his enemies and describes the effect of all these outward persecutions and trials that He was experiencing.

- The meaning of this expression (22:14a) is that all His strength was gone. He was weak as water, and yielding to the power of death, emptying Himself of all His human nature.
- An expression similar to this occurs in Josh. 7:5: “. . . *the hearts of the people melted and became like water.*” (NKJV) (compare Lam. 2:19; Psa. 58:7).

(2) Beloved, the Forsaken One felt completely empty. He perceived that no resource in Himself was able to meet the crisis on hand. Whatever strength or resistance He had was “**poured out like water**” upon the ground.

(3) Spurgeon notes:

“He was utterly spent, like water poured upon the earth; His heart failed Him, and had no firmness in it than running water, and His whole being was made a sacrifice, like a libation (“libation”: liquid sacrifice . . . insert mine) poured out before the LORD. He had long been a fountain of tears, in Gethsemane His heart welled over in sweat, and on the cross He gushed forth with blood, He poured out His strength and spirit, so that He was reduced to the most feeble exhausted state.”

(4) It should be realized that this account (Psa. 22) was only by divine revelation that David was able to present such accurate details in regards to the crucifixion of Christ. *“The curtains of the future were parted and David witnessed from the Savior’s perspective the darkest day in all history – the death of the Messiah” (Preacher’s Outline & Sermon Bible).*

(b) **The dislocation of His bones, “All my bones are out of joint”** (22:14b NKJV).

(1) This described the physical extremity of David at the time, but it also is an amazingly specific prophecy of the future suffering of the Son of David on the cross.

- The deliberate awkward and strained position of the specified man meant that on the cross Jesus could say, **“My bones are out of joint.”** David did not know the practice of crucifixion in his day, but he described the physical agony of it with the accuracy of a prophet of the LORD.
- The essence of what is conveyed based on the Hebrew is: *to break off, break in pieces, to be separated or divided.*
- The meaning of what is conveyed in our text is that the Sufferer, Christ, was utterly prostrated and powerless, He was as if His bones had been dislocated, and He was unable to use His limbs.

- (2) **“My bones are out of joint”**: in fulfillment of Scripture care was taken that not one of them should be broken (see **John 19:36**), but they were all out of joint possibly by the violent stretching of His body upon the cross. *Scholars vary as to why His bones were out of joint, for example: when the cross was planted it violently shook His body which was already dehydrated, battered, etc. which resulted in the dislocation of His joints.*
- (3) *“His bones were put out of joint that He might put the whole creation into joint again, which sin had put out, and might make our broken bones to rejoice.” (Matthew Henry)*
- (4) The Preacher’s Outline Sermon Bible (P.O.S.B.) notes:
“Scripture states that all of Jesus’ bones were forced out of their joints. The reality and the pain of such an occurrence is simply beyond human comprehension.”
- (c) **The disintegration of His spirit, “My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me”** (22:14c NKJV).
- (1) Excessive weakness and intense pain made His innermost life feel like wax melted in heat.
- (2) The meaning here is that His heart was no longer firm and strong; we are witnessing at this point the prostration (weakness, etc.) of His strength in His last struggle.
- By careful observation it is believed (based mainly on John 18:34) that on the cross Jesus suffered from a ruptured heart, making the words **“My heart is like wax it has melted within Me”** . . . remarkably distinct.
 - The fire of Almighty’s wrath would have consumed our souls forever in hell; it was **not** an easy undertaking to be a substitute, experiencing the heat of an anger so justly terrible.
- (3) P. O. S. B. notes:
“Medical doctors have determined that the blood and water that flowed from Jesus side was caused by a ruptured heart. . . . David described this exactly: the heart of Jesus melted like wax and its fluid ran down into His abdomen (v. 14c).”
- (4) Matthew Henry notes:
“‘My heart is like wax,’ melted to receive the impressions of God’s wrath against the sins He undertook to satisfy for, melting away the vitals of a dying man; and as this should help soften them. When Job speaks of his inward trouble he says, ‘The Almighty makes my heart soft’ (Job 23:16).”
- (d) **The declining of His natural force, “My strength is dried up like a potsherd”** (22:15a NKJV).
- (1) **“. . . potsherd”** . . . a potsherd is a fragment of a broken pot, or a piece of earthen ware, example see Job 2:8.
- (2) **“. . . like a potsherd”**: the meaning here is that the sufferer’s strength was not vigorous like a green tree that was growing, and that was full of sap, but

it was like a brittle piece of earth ware, so dry and fragile that it could be easily crumble to pieces.

- (3) **“My strength is dried up like a potsherd”** . . . emphasis continues on presenting a graphic picture of the sufferer’s enfeeblement.
- Christ is hereby compared to a broken piece of earth ware, or an earthen pot, baked in the fire until the last particle of moisture is totally removed from the clay.
 - It is stated by some that a high degree of feverish burning afflicted the Savior’s body; all His strength was **dried up** in the immense flames of avenging justice, even as the paschal lamb was roasted in the fire.
- (4) Beloved, we must not lose sight of the price that our Savior paid for **our** sin (remember, He was sinless . . . the price that He paid was our debt)!! His strength was completely depleted as He hung on the cross, leaving Him fragile and brittle like a piece of pottery (22:15).
- (e) **The dampening/drying of His mouth, “My tongue clings to My Jaws”** (22:15b NKJV).
- (1) The clinging of the tongue to the jaws was a normal experience for anyone under the agony of crucifixion.
- The meaning here is that the sufferer’s mouth was dry, and speaking was either very difficult or not possible.
 - Eventually, His tongue stuck fast to the roof of His mouth so that He could not use it – another description of the effects of the intense thirst being experienced (compare John 19:28).
- (2) Spurgeon notes:
“Thirst and fever fastened His tongue to His jaws. Dryness and a horrible clamminess (“clamminess”: dampness, sogginess, etc. . . . insert mine) torment his mouth, so that He could scarcely speak.”
- (3) Reference here is being made to severe dehydration, which would have painfully damaged Christ’s vital organs. It also caused His tongue to cling to His mouth (*this fact also noted above*).
- (4) The sogginess of His mouth (22:15) is a usual symptom of approaching death.
- This was fulfilled both in His thirst upon the cross (John 19:28) and in His silence under His sufferings (Isa. 53:7-9).
 - **Isa. 53:7 NKJV**
“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearer is silent, so He opened not His mouth.”
- (f) **Death draws near and it is inevitable, “You have brought Me to the dust of death”** (22:15c NKJV).
- (1) The meaning conveyed here is that he was near death or was just ready to die.
- **“. . . brought Me to the dust of death:** or some states as: **“. . . to the dust – to the grave;”** to the dust where death reigns (see Dan. 12:2).

- The loss of the required moisture commenced the decline of the body and to the dust from which it will ultimately return after death (see Gen. 3:19; Ecc. 3:20).
- (2) David used this moving poetic phrase to describe the extent of his (also Christ's) misery:
- Psa. 22:15c: ***"You have brought Me to the dust of death"*** (NKJV).
Psa. 22:15c: ***"And You have laid me in the dust of death"*** (Amp Bible).
- It is possible that the psalmist had in mind the curse God pronounced upon Adam when he sinned: ***"For dust you are, And to dust you shall return"*** (Gen. 3:19c NKJV). Owing to the fact that all humanity was contained in Adam, this curse extends to the entire human race (Rom. 5:12, 17), and David himself was close ***to the dust of death!***
 - Obviously, David did not die in the crises described in this psalm; he lived to write it and other psalms.
 - Indeed, there was a close call when he came to the edge of mortality when God ***brought*** him ***to the dust of death.***
 - However, Jesus, the Son of David, did not merely come to the edge of death, He plunged into ***the dust of death*** and into all of the cursedness that was included in this situation. ***Jesus bore the sting of Adam's curse for us (Gal. 3:13) so that we would not have to bear it ourselves.***
- (3) Spurgeon notes:
- *"... so tormented in every single part as to feel dissolved into separate atoms, and each atom full of misery; the full price of our redemption was paid, and no part of the Surety's body or soul escaped its agony."*
 - *"Behold the humiliation of the Son of God! The LORD of Glory stoops to the dust of death. Amid the mouldering relics of morality Jesus condescends to lodge."*
3. **Dreadful, Agonizing and Heinous Onslaught** (Psa. 22:16-18).
- (a) Compassed by violent, hateful enemies (Psa. 22:16
"For dogs surround Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet" (22:16 NKJV).
- (1) Engulfed by vehement, vengeful and vicious enemies.
- As it relates to David, the crisis that he was facing would be bad even if surrounded by sympathetic friends; his misery was compounded because he was encircled by violent and wicked men.
 - In His death, the Son of Son David ("son of David": Matt. 1:1; 15:22; etc.) had few sympathizers. Even on the cross Jesus Christ was surrounded by haters, scoffers and mockers (Matt. 27:39-44; Mark 15:29-32).

- (2) David further presented a more vivid account of the people who contributed to Christ's death . . . in our text referred to as: "**. . . the dogs surround Me; The congregation of the wicked enclosed Me . . .**"
- During the days of David, dogs were predators that scavenge the streets in ferocious groups. These animals fed on garbage, and even human remains (example see 1 Kings 16:4).
 - Those of Christ's adversaries who displayed such animalistic behavior included (a) the Jewish leaders who demanded that Christ be crucified (b) the Roman officials who approved of His crucifixion and (c) the soldiers who carried out the crucifixion.
 - **"In addition, dogs refer to the blood thirsty crowd and who cried, 'Crucify Him' and cheered His execution with gloating and satisfaction" (P. O. S. B.).**
- (3) The sufferer was **surrounded** and **enclosed** (Psa. 22:16)
- The enemies are men who resemble **dogs** in their attitudes and objectives. They were harsh, snarling, ferocious and determined to destroy their prey.
 - They surrounded Christ, they were on all sides making sure that their prey had no way of escaping.
 - They surrounded the Savior in the Garden of Gethsemane when they arrested and bound Him (Luke 22:47-53).
 - They surrounded Him on His trial before the Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:57-68).
 - They surrounded Him when He was taken before Pilate (Matt. 27:1-2, 11-26)
 - They surrounded Him when He was on the cross (Luke 23:26-48)
- (4) Spurgeon notes: *"Hunters frequently surround their game with a circle, and gradually encompass them with an ever-narrowing ring of dogs and men."*
- *"Such a picture is before us. In the center stands not a panting male deer but a bleeding, fainting man, and around Him are the enraged and un pitying wretches who have hounded Him to His doom."*
 - *"Here we have the 'hind of the morning' of whom the psalm so plaintively sings, hunted by bloodhounds, all thirsting to devour Him."*
- (5) **"They pierced My hands and feet"** (Psa. 22:16c).
- Here is another prophetic reference to the crucifixion of our Savior (Luke 23:32-34; John 20:25-27).
 - Reference here is not pointing to David, or anyone else but exclusively to Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the once crucified but now the exalted Son of God! Oh Beloved! If only we would take time out to sincerely focus on the wounds, the excruciating pain of our Blessed Redeemer!!
- (6) Definitely, we are not able to go in more details but note the following quotes (commenting on 22:16).
- P. O. S. B. (Preacher's Outline Sermon Bible):

“Jesus was held to the cross not by cords but by spikes driven through His hands and feet (v. 16b). This especially cruel method was reserved for the most despised criminal. Usually the humane method of tying the condemned to the cross was used. The prophet Zachariah would also foretell this detail of Jesus’s death (Zech. 12:10; 13:6).

- Barnes (“They pierced My hands and feet”):
“It is remarkable that it is nowhere quoted or referred to in the New Testament as applicable to the Savior; and it is no less remarkable that there is no expressed statement in the actual history of the crucifixion that either the hands or the feet of the Savior were pierced, or that He was nailed to the cross at all.”
 - **Indeed, none of the Gospels in the New Testament mentions whether Jesus was nailed or tied to the cross.** However, the Gospel of John reports wounds in the risen Jesus hands and side (John 20:24-29, NB v. 27). It is this passage, perhaps, that has led to the overwhelming tradition that Jesus’ hands and feet were nailed to the cross, rather than tied to it and such was a method used in the crucifixion for the worse criminals.
- (b) Because of the condition of His body; the crowd stared at Him in a mean demeaning manner (Psa. 22:17)
- “I can count all my bones, They look and stare at Me” (22:17 NKJV).*
- (1) **“I can count all my bones”** . . . meaning that he could count all His bones.
- They are protruding so much, they are so bare that I can see them and count their number.
 - The idea conveyed here is that of being so thin and feeble from continued suffering or other caused.
- (2) Matthew Henry notes:
“He was stripped. The shame of nakedness was the immediate consequence of sin; and therefore our Lord Jesus was stripped of His clothes, when He was crucified, that He might clothe us with the robe of righteousness, and that the shame of our nakedness might not appear.”
- (3) His blessed body was skinny and wasted with labor, grief and fasting, during the whole course of His ministry and as a result He looked twice His age.
- If being able to count His bones was not a result of His worn-down body then possibly it was because His body was stretched upon the cross, which made it easy to count His ribs.
 - Spurgeon notes:
“The zeal of the Father’s house had eaten Him up; like a good soldier He had endured hardness. Oh that we cared less for the body’s enjoyment and ease and more for our Father’s business! It were better to count the bones of an emaciated body than to bring leanness into our souls.”
- (4) **They look and stare at Me”** . . . that is, they stare at my protruding bones, and instead of showing compassion, they found pleasure in making me a remorseful spectacle.

(5) Spurgeon notes:

- *“Unholy eyes gazed insultingly upon the Saviors’ nakedness, and shocked the sacred delicacy of His holy soul.”*
- *“The sight of His agonizing body ought to have ensured sympathy from the throng, but it only increased their cruel eyes upon His miseries.”*
- *“Let us blush for human nature, and mourn in sympathy with our Redeemer’s shame. The first Adam made us all naked, and therefore the second Adam became naked that He might clothe our naked souls.”*

(c) Clothing was divided among His executioners (Psa. 22:18).

“They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots” (22:18 NKJV).

(1) They divide, share out My clothing.

- This refers to the fact that they (His executioners) made such division of His garments; the manner in which it was done is noted in the second part of this verse (22:18b).
- The word **garment** (22:18a) is a general term and is applicable to any part of the garment.

(2) It was customarily that the garments of the executed were the perquisites of the executioners in most situations, but it was not often that they cast lots at the division of the spoil.

- This account shows how clearly David, in his vision, saw the day of Christ and how assuredly the Man of Nazareth is He whom the prophet spoke: *“... **these things therefore the soldiers did.**”* (John 19:24).
- Oh, Beloved! Jesus Christ, the Savior, gave His life and His precious blood to cleanse us from sin and gave His garment to clothe us in righteousness! Someone rightly stated: *“This precious Lamb of God gave up His golden fleece for us.”*

(3) *“**And for my clothing they cast lots**”* (22:18b).

- While it was David who wrote the psalm the facts noted points clearly to our blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ. The account of the sufferer’s clothing taken by his executioners was completely fulfilled in the Savior (John 19:23-24). This verse (22:18) further authenticates the evidence that the psalm refers to Jesus Christ.
- The Preacher’s Outline Sermon Bible notes: *“A remarkable prophecy concludes the account of Chris’s suffering (v. 18). Its fulfillment is recorded by all four gospel authors (Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:23-24). Jesus’ clothing was stripped from Him to heighten His humiliation and disgrace. The soldiers divided his garments – items that could not be sold for a significant price – among themselves. John specifies that they did not divide his coat, which they deemed to be especially valuable, but cast lots to determine who among them would receive it.”*

F. Request God's Continued Presence and Help Psa. 22:19-21.

Herein we notice that the psalmist has shifted from complaints to cry for continued help, always directly addressing God . . . beloved, ***“Men always ought to ought to pray and not to lose heart.”*** (Luke 18:1b). As it will be observed later in the psalm (Psalm 22), that the psalmist resort to giving praises to God; however, transmitting from lament to praise was sudden but in continued sincerity and faith in God!

The psalmist cries out to God for salvation from bitter and ferocious enemies (see Psa. 22:20-21). On the surface it seems that in verse 21 the psalmist inexplicably focused on praise for deliverance from the horns of a wild oxen. However, the Hebrew shows that the psalmist may or may not have been rescued at the time the psalm was written, but his prayer has been heard, and the fact of God hearing his prayer is enough for the psalmist (as well as Christ on the cross). Now that God has heard, the psalmist moved from the depths of despair to the heights of praise.

Jesus hung on the cross, stripped of His clothing, whether everything was removed or He was left with the bare essential; there was also the animalistic attitude by His adversaries who surrounded Him; there was also the fact of His drained, run-down body, etc. He hung there in humiliation, disgraced, ridicule, excruciating pain, etc. but He endured it all because of our sins.

Oh, that we all would sincerely loose ourselves and find in Jesus Christ!!

Psa. 40:6, 8 Amp. Bible

“Sacrifice and offering You do not desire, nor have You delight in them; You have given me the capacity to hear and obey [Your law, a more valuable service than] burnt offerings and sin offerings [which] You do not require. . . . I delight to do Your will, O my God; yes, Your law is within my heart. [Heb. 10:5-9].”

1. Acknowledge that God is Your Strength (Psa. 22:19).

“But You, O LORD do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me!” (22:19 NKJV).

(a) I need Thee! Oh I need Thee! . . . from David's standpoint.

(1) The request of Psa. 22:11 is here repeated. David seemed to believe that he could endure anything if he employed the conscious presence of God – **his plea is not focused on the change of his situation, but on the presence of God in the crisis.**

(2) Although David was having difficulty realizing the presence of God, he continued to wholly lean on Him for fortitude and victory.

- David remained focused on God, looking forward to God, looking forward to God to draw near to Him and looking to Him to supply all that was necessary to endure and prevail in this situation confronting him (David).
- The word **strength** as used here (22:19) as well as in Psa. 88:4, refers to the strength of life, the courage to go on living instead of dying.

- As noted in our text, David asked God to rush (**“haste”** KJV; **“hasten”** NKJV) . . . that is to rush quickly to his side and do not delay any longer (22:19b).
- (b) Relating this experience to our Savior . . . Christ is praying, and with that supporting Himself under the burden of His suffering.
- (1) The agonizing Christ prayed, earnestly prayed that the cup of bitterness and suffering be taken away (Matt. 26:36-46); and yet He was committed wholly to God’s perfect will!!
- (2) When the prince of this world (Eph. 2:2) with his terror focus upon Him as a roaring savage/ferocious lion He fell to the ground and prayed, desiring Him from whom His strength was derived (22:19).
- He didn’t seek for comfort; He was content if God was near to Him! It was as if He was saying: **“Stay Thou nearby! Whom have I Lord but Thee!!”**
 - Matthew Henry notes:
“When we cannot rejoice in God as our song, yet let us stay ourselves upon Him for strength, and take the comfort of spiritual support when we cannot come at spiritual delights.”
- (c) We can summarize this prayer as follows—He prays:
- (1) That God would be with Him, and not stay far from Him (v. 19a).
- As noted above this is a repeated request (see verse 11).
 - Matthew Henry notes:
“The nearest of trouble should quicken us to draw near to God and then we may hope that He will draw near to us.”
- (2) That God would help Him and make haste to help Him, help Him to bear up under His troubles (v. 19b).
- This was necessary to make sure that He did not fail, or become discouraged, it was compulsory that He neither diminish from His undertaking nor sink under it.
 - **Heb. 5:7 NKJV:**
*“Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and **was heard** because of His godly fear.”*
- (3) That God would deliver and save Him (Vv. 20-21).
These verses (Vv. 20-21) will be discussed below.
- **“Be not far from Me, O Lord”** (Vv. 11, 19) is the substance of the prayer in this psalm, it is a request that God would not leave Him but sustain and deliver Him.
 - Spurgeon – one of the thoughts shared in regards to 22:19:
“Mark how in the last degree of personal weakness he calls the LORD ‘My strength;’ after this fashion the believer can sing, ‘when I am weak, then I am strong.’”

2. Ask Him . . . Fervently – to Deliver and Preserve Your Well-being (Psa. 22:20-21).

“Deliver Me from the sword, My precious life from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion’s mouth and from the horns of the wild oxen!” (22:20-21 NKJV)

(a) Brief clarifications:

- (1) **“Deliver my soul . . .”** (KJV): the word **“soul”** here means **“life”** (as used in the NKJV), and symbolize a living person. It is equivalent to **“deliver me.”**
 - (2) The word **“sword”** is used to identify an instrument of death, or anything that pierces like a sword (compare 2 Sam. 11:24-25). We are hereby looking at sources of destruction, from such the psalmist sought deliverance.
 - (3) **“My darling”** (KJV) . . . **“My precious life”** (NKJV).
 - In general, this phrase can mean several things, for example: (a) **“one alone, only”** as in reference to an only child; (b) or one alone, as forsaken, solitary, wretched (Psa. 25:16; 68:6); (c) or one only, the only one, in the sense of **most dear, darling**.
 - As used in our text (22:20), it is used poetically for life, as being something most dear, or as denoting all that we have, and therefore most precious.
- (b) The psalmist (David) in this account continues to point to the crucifixion of Christ and here we see him calling upon God to deliver him from the threat of death.
- (1) He besieged God for deliverance: **“Deliver my life from the sword, my dear life [my only one] from the power of the dog [the agent of execution]” (Psa. 22:20 Amp. Bible).**
 - (2) As noted before **“darling”** (v. 20 KJV) refers to **“life”**, his **one and only life**.
 - The word has a theological connection to Christ. **It refers to an only child** (this was noted above) and is used for example in **Gen. 22**, where we have seen where Abraham was willing to offer his only son as a sacrifice (Gen. 22:2, 12, 16).
 - This solemn account (Gen. 22) is a prophetic illustration of Christ’s crucifixion where-in Isaac represents Jesus Christ.
 - **“My only one!”** Jesus Christ our Redeemer was God’s **only Son** and He (Christ) was God’s beloved Son (John 1:14, 18; 3:16; Matt. 3:17; 17:5; etc.).
 - The message conveyed in Gen. 22 and as fulfilled in the New Testament points to the fact that God freely gave His **only** begotten Son, who paid the ultimate price for our sins (Isa. 53, NB Vv. 1-8; Matt. 8:17; Heb. 9:28; etc.).
 - **Oh, Beloved! Isaac was in process of being offered but that was only to prove Abrahams commitment, Isaac was NOT sacrificed but Christ went ALL the way for us!!!**
All the Way to Calvary
The Chorus
 All the way to Calvary He went for me,
 He went for me, He went for me,
 All the way to Calvary He went for me,

He died to set me free.

(c) The dramatic change commencing at verse 21 . . . the fact remain: **“God never fail us and never will no matter how the situation seems to be!!”**

(1) **“For thou has heard me”** (22:21b KJV)

- The word **“heard”** as used here is equivalent to **“saved”, in answer to prayer.**
- The fact of hearing the prayer, and answering it, is regarded as so identical, or the one as so certainly following from the other, that they may be spoken of as the same thing.

(2) **“From the horns of the unicorns”** (22:21c KJV) . . . (NB **“unicorns”** or **“wild bull”**. **“wild oxen”**) . . . the idea here is, that he cried to God when exposed to what is here called **“the horns of the unicorn”** (KJV), . . . **“the horns of the wild oxen”** (NKJV).

- That is, when surrounded by enemies as fierce and violent as wild animals seeking his life – he had called upon God, and God heard him.
- As it relates to David, this would refer to some period of his life, when surrounded by dangers, or exposed to the attacks of wicked men, and when he called upon God, and had been heard.
- The fact that he was delivered from danger, he is assured of continued deliverance and thus presented his plea once more for God’s intervention (see also 22:9-11) . . . indeed, God will deliver!!
- Briefly note, the graphic images presented in the psalmist (as well as Christ’s) plea for deliverance from the threatening, determined adversaries whose objectives were to destroy him . . .
 - . . . **“the power of the dog”** (Vv. 16, 20b KJV)
 - . . . **“the mouth of the lions”** (Vv. 13, 21a KJV)
 - . . . **“The horns of the unicorn”** or wild oxen (Vv. 12, 21b KJV)

(3) A partial quote from P.O.S. B.

“A seemingly subtle, yet drastic change suddenly occurs in David’s (and Christ’s Matt.26:36-46) situation (v. 21). The verse begins with David’s praying for deliverance and ends with David proclaiming deliverance. Note the NKJV translation:

‘Save Me from the lion’s mouth And from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered Me’ (Ps. 22:21 NKJV).

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This drastic transformation can point to only one event: the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ. Between the beginning of verse 21 and the end, Christ has risen from the dead!”

(d) The following is a partial quote, commenting of the prayer in 22:21, by Matthew Henry:

*“. . . This prayer of Christ, no doubt, was answered, for the Father heard Him always. **And though He did not deliver Him from death, yet He suffered Him not to see corruption, but the third day, raised Him out of the dust of death, which***

was a greater instance of God's favor to Him than if He had helped Him down from the cross; for that would have hindered His undertaking, where as His resurrection crowned it.

... ..

In singing this we should Meditate on the sufferings and resurrection of Christ till we experience in our own souls the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering."

The Hymn: **There Is a Green Hill Far Away** by Cecil F. Alexander

There is a green hill far Away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
who died to save us all.

We may not know, we cannot tell,
What pains he had to bear;
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there.

He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heav'n,
Saved by his precious blood.

There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin;
He only could unlock the gate
Of heav'n, and let us in.

O dearly, dearly has he loved,
And we must love him too,
And trust in his redeeming blood,
And try his works to do.

DO NOT JUST READ THE BIBLE STUDY AND OBEY IT

2 Tim. 2:15 NKJV

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

2 Tim. 3:16-17 NKJV

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

PSALM 16 PART A
Review Questions

1. Complete by choosing the correct answer . . . Taken from a quote introducing Psalm 22 ... The NIV Study Bible:

“No other psalm fitted quite so aptly the circumstance _____ .”

- (a) of the birth of Jesus.
- (b) of the rejection of Jesus.
- (c) of Jesus baptism by John-the-Baptist.
- (d) of Jesus at His crucifixion.

2. Complete the following . . . a partial quote from P.S.O.B.

“The (a) _____ described in this (b) _____ could (c) _____ be (d) _____. He did not pass through (e) _____ like the (f) _____ and the (g) _____ waters (h) _____.”

3. Complete by choosing the correct answer (In regards to David writing Psalm 22, noting what the psalm portrays):

“His record is not a view of the cross, but our _____ ” (P.O.S.B.).

- (a) Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem.
- (b) Jesus being tempted by Satan.
- (c) Savior’s view from the cross.
- (d) Saviors’ resurrection, ascension, second coming.

4. Give at least two outstanding features in regard to the land of Bashan.

5. Briefly explain how Christ’s adversaries were like **“bulls”** (Psa. 22:12a).

6. Briefly explain: (a) what is meant by **“ravening”** (Psa. 22:13 KJV) ... (NB NKJV uses **“raging”**). (b) The message conveyed in this verse (22:13).

7. Briefly explain: **“My heart is like wax, It has melted within Me”** (Psa. 22:14c).

8. Briefly explain: **“My tongue clings to My jaws”** (Psa. 22:15c).

9. (a) What term was used (in our text) to show that the sufferer was about to die? (b) What important fact is associated with this reference (Psa. 22:15c). (Noted any supporting references)?

10. The **“dogs”** in Psa. 22:16: . . . briefly explain the usage of **“dogs”** used in this text.

11. Complete the following: a partial quote by Spurgeon . . . commenting on Psa. 22:16:
“Such a picture is before us. In the (a) _____ stands not a panting (b) _____ (c) _____ but a (d) _____ fainting man, and around Him are the (e) _____ and (f) _____ wretches who have (g) _____ Him to His (h) _____.”

12. What is the consensus in regards to how Christ was held to the cross and for who the cross and for who the Romans generally apply such cruel method?

13. (a) Answer True or False. (b) Explain your answer: *As noted in Psa. 22:19: David was solely focused on having his difficult situation changed.*

14. Complete by choosing the correct answer (a quote by Matthew Henry on Psa. 22:19a):
“The nearest of trouble should quicken us to draw near to God and then we may hope that _____.”
(a) He will be too busy to care.
(b) He will draw near to us.

- (c) He may be willing to help.
- (d) He most likely will forsake us.

15. Discussing Psa. 22:20-21 what outstanding Old Testament account was noted, briefly explain the significance?
