

Psalm 22

No Christian can read this Psalm without being vividly confronted with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Not only because Jesus Christ quoted the opening words of this Psalm on the cross, [**Matthew 27:46**] nor the matter of prophecy being minutely fulfilled, but also the sufferer's humility for there is no plea for vengeance.

Psalms 22:1-2 [New King James] *“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My groaning? O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; and in the night season, and am not silent.”*

The Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit which was in King David and the prophets, testify in this Psalm the suffering of our Saviour, Jesus Christ on the cross.

Yet the first meaning of this Psalm must be sought in the days of its composition.

What that experience was that David was going through cannot be precisely stated, it could well be founded on some dark period of his life ever painful and sometimes despairing outlaw days.

Sensing his helplessness in the face of surrounding foes, David's utter dependency on God, his confident assurance of divine aid, ends in rejoicing.

For King David the poignant words indicate the perplexity of spirit which has been introduced by the severe affliction and the apparent heedlessness of his situation.

Yet David still trusts in God, but finds intolerable the suspense of waiting for evidence that God has **not** turned away from him.

Three comfortless thoughts possess King David's mind, his suffering [groaning, cry], his ceaseless supplication [day and night] and the utter silence of God [forsaken, far from, no answer].

Psalms 22:3-5 [New King James] *“But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in You; they trusted, and You delivered them. They cried to You, and were delivered; they trusted in You, and were not ashamed.”*

In the absence of any response from God, King David is cast back on his former beliefs, foremost among them being the concept of God as just and righteous.

This belief is strengthened by the long precedent of Israel's praises for deliverance in earlier years.

God has never failed to help those who trusted Him in previous generations.

This is not a cry of doubt, but an urgent appeal to the Almighty God.

What is more, King David makes for the highest ground of all that a human being can go.

God is enthroned as the Holy One by the praises of those who put their trust in Him.

God's earthly throne or place is not the physical temple but in the hearts of His people, [Isaiah 66:1].

Psalms 51:16-17 [NIV] *“You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”*

The people of God are not depicted by a building, however grand, but holiness, active indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and human spirit, [Job 32:8], producing the very “fruits” [character] of our Creator God, [Galatians 5:22-23].

Psalms 22:6-8 [New King James] *“But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised by the people. All those who see Me ridicule Me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, ‘He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!’”*

The scorn hurts because both King David and his greater Son, Jesus Christ, belong to humanity and care for all humanity.

There is **no** detachment from the human race, [**Philippians 2:1-8; Acts 13:22**] Jesus Christ diverted pity away from Himself, [**Luke 23:26-30**].

Notice the false promise from which unbelievers argue [**verse 8**] as always that God is there for our convenience, if He is there at all.

Matthew 27:39, 43 [New King James] *“And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads” ... “He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”*

The very gestures and words were reproduced at the cross of Jesus Christ.

Psalms 22:9-11 [New King James] *“But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother’s breasts. I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother’s womb You have been My God. Be not far from Me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help.”*

The thought of his dependence on One who cares so much for him causes King David to remember his days as a young child and his dependence on his mother and the love she had for him.

The very fact of his birth was to King David evidence of the Creator God’s divine intervention in human life.

There is in every human being a spiritual component that science cannot examine or explain.

Job 32:8 [Amplified Bible] *“But there is, a vital force, a spirit of intelligence in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives men understanding,”* [**1 Corinthians 2:11**].

The human spirit is the only part of human life that passes through physical death and returns to God who places it in all human beings, [Ecclesiastes 12:6-7; Acts 7:59].

God is **no** casual acquaintance who offers perfunctory help, His loving concern does not only begin on the day we are born and conclude on the day we die. It reaches back to the days long before we were born, and reaches forward into eternity, [**Job 10:8-12**].

Psalms 139:1-16 [NIV] *“O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. You hem me in, behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become*

night around me,' even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."

Never forget just how well our Creator God knows all about us, and has a plan and purpose for our individual life.

Psalms 22:12-18 [New King James] *"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. 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. For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots."*

This is a scene often enacted in human history, the strong closing in on the weak, the many on the one.

The crowd is pictured as bestial, but it is all too human where there is **no** fear of God, [**Romans 1:28-30**], whether this deed is done with subtlety or openly as with the brutality of crucifixion, the context of these verses suggest some motives.

Resentment – towards those who make high claims, [**verse 8**].

The compulsion of crowd-mentality – [**verses 12, 16**]. **This crowd-mentality is very vividly seen at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, [Matthew 27:20-25; Mark 15:11-15; Luke 23:13-23; John 19:10-16].**

Greed – even for trivial gains, [**verse 18**].

Perverved tastes – enjoying a harrowing spectacle, [**verse 17**].

Verses 14 and 15 could describe merely a desperate illness, had to wait until Jesus Christ's scourging and crucifixion to clarify their true meaning.

Psalms 22:19-21 [New King James] *"But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me! 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!"*

The third cry for help, even more passionate than those before, ending with a triumphant statement of God's personal intervention.

Psalms 22:22-26 [New King James] *"I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise You. You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, and fear Him, all you offspring of Israel! For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; nor has He hidden His face from Him; but when He cried to Him, He heard. My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him. The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever!"*

Verse 25 is the key to King David's response to God's intervention, and the way we should respond to the many blessings we have from our Creator God.

Especially our response to the loving sacrifice of our Saviour Jesus Christ which is foretold in this Psalm.

Verse 22 is referred to in **Hebrews 2:11-12** as our response to the Messiah.

Psalms 22:27-31 [New King James] *“All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations Shall worship before You. For the kingdom is the LORD’s, and He rules over the nations. All the prosperous of the earth shall eat and worship; all those who go down to the dust Shall bow before Him, even he who cannot keep himself alive. A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation, they will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, that He has done this.”*

King David then extends the merciful intervention of God into the future when all people will eventually come to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord.

John 19:28-30 [New King James] *“After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, ‘I thirst!’ Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

“It is finished!”