

Turn in your Bibles to Psalm 22. This Sunday will be Resurrection Day! The Sunday that we celebrate the fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. The resurrection is the cornerstone of true Christianity. Without the resurrection there is no hope beyond the grave. Without the resurrection there is no true salvation. The resurrection validates the deity of Jesus, his sinless nature, and the power of God. Of course, before you have a resurrection, you have to have a death.

May we see tonight the anguish in the cross and all that Jesus endured in his humanity as he took the wrath of God upon himself that we so deserved because of our sin.

Psalm 22 is a Psalm of prophecy. Psalm 22 was written around 1000 years before Jesus came to earth. It is called a Psalm of David; we see throughout the Psalm prophetic descriptions of what happened to Jesus on the cross. This once again gives evidence that the Bible is the Word of God given to man to know him and to show us our sin and need of salvation. Salvation is only available for us through what Jesus did for us on the cross.

It also reminds us of the life of David as he experienced many highs and lows in his life. Though anointed King he is chased by his father-in-law Saul. Nations surrounded him that were always wanting to destroy him. Sin he committed and sin within his family that caused a lot of anguish and turmoil. So, we can see David's life in this also.

Though we see agony and anguish through this Psalm we also see that there is victory and glory that is at the end. Let's delve into this Psalm, as we read verses 1 and 2 to begin with.

Psalm 22:1-2

¹ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? ² O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.

As many of you know these words are part of what is often called the "Seven sayings of Jesus on the Cross." This is one of the most talked about, one of the most recognized, and most used by Pastors in sermons about the cross. Why? Mainly because of what it represents.

These words spoken by Jesus are recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 27:46.

Matthew 27:46

⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"

It is also recorded in the Gospel of Mark. What is going on here? It is at this point that Jesus, while on the cross, experienced for the first time in all of eternity, separation from his Father! In experiencing that he let out a loud cry. Have you ever been in pain or grieved so deep that it feels like it comes from deep within and you yell out or you just sob uncontrollably? Well, that isn't even close to what is going on here.

You thought I was going to say that was what it was like. We can't come close in our human emotions to understand what Jesus was going through at that time, and this is why! The holy, perfect, matchless, sinless, Son of God, Jesus Christ, felt the separation from God our sin causes. Jesus Christ had the weight and darkness of the sin of all mankind placed upon his body though he had never sinned.

Jesus tasted and felt the unadulterated wrath of God poured out upon him because of our sin, though he had never sinned. As Pastor Kevin shared a few weeks ago about this very thing. The terror he felt as he is on that cross all alone, forsaken for you and for me.

As we see the anguish of these verses, there may be times in our lives that we have expressed those very words. “God, where are you? I just don’t sense you around me!”

Though God did have to pull away from Jesus while he paid the payment for our sins may we remember if you are a true follower of Jesus Christ, he is there. These beautiful words spoken many times throughout Scripture of God saying, I will never leave you nor forsake you. God is there for God is sovereign, holy. Even through the anguish of Jesus’ crucifixion we see God’s mercy extended and it is extended to us also. Listen to these next words.

Psalm 22:3-5

³ Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. ⁴ In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. ⁵ To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

Verse 4 is a good reminder for us that God is sovereign and is seated on his throne. This verse shows us that God is worthy of our praise and worship because of his holiness and because he is faithful to his promises. When we come in here on Sunday’s and Wednesday’s it not that we seek to generate worship but to remind us of this is a time of overflow of the worship that flows from our lives.

In the separation we may be feeling, we may ask, “God, where are you?” “You promised to never leave nor forsake us, you have shown yourself faithful, but I just don’t see you working.” Here in these verses, we see David mention God’s faithfulness to the nation of Israel as the nation would fall into sin but would cry out for deliverance and God would respond and rescue them time after time. Sometimes in our situations all we need to do is start praising the Lord. Once we start praising him, we are reminded of his power, his mercy, his love, his justice.

Sometimes in our lives we don’t see what is ahead of us, but we say, nonetheless Lord, not my will but yours be done.

As we look at these verses, what we are seeing is the spiritual battle that goes on within the life of a believer. In 2 Corinthians Chapter 4 verses 7 to 12 we see this laid out so clearly. The fight but victory in each battle.

2 Corinthians 4:7-12

⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. ⁸ We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. ¹¹ For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹² So death is at work in us, but life in you.

Did you see it?

1. Afflicted, but not crushed!
2. Perplexed, not in despair!
3. Persecuted, but not forsaken!
4. Struck down, but not destroyed.

Why? Jesus Christ is always with us giving us strength, wisdom, discernment, life, and love! Hallelujah!!

In the next few verses, we see again the anguish and the persecution that comes from following the Lord.

Psalm 22:6-8

6 But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people. 7 All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads; 8 "He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"

I want to show you two pictures.



What this shows is the Nation of Israel during the time of King Saul and King David. You see the nations that surrounded them. If you go through 2 Samuel and 1 Kings, you see David constantly in battle with these nations. Mocked and slandered! We read in those verses the people also despised him. This is referring to within his own nation or his own kindred.

In 2 Samuel Chapters 15 to 17 we see where Absalom, his own son, along with Ahithophel, King David's closest counselor conspired to remove David from the throne. This caused many of the men that at one time protected David, now to betray him and David fled Jerusalem. Betrayal is a very hard situation in anyone's life. Betrayal seems to come out of nowhere to the person it happens to.

Within these verses we also see the prophetic aspect that comes along with this Psalm.



You see this crowd surrounding the cross. In that crowd were people who just a week before were shouting, ***Hosanna, to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! Just a few short hours ago were screaming, Crucify him! Crucify him!***

Now, with the scribes, the pharisees, and the roman soldiers, deriding, mocking Jesus. Look at these verses from the Gospel of Mark. These words are recorded in Matthew and Luke as well.

Mark 15:29-32

29 And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, 30 save yourself, and come down from the cross!" 31 So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. 32 Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

Of course, this is the Lord Jesus Christ being mocked and reviled. As we know through Scripture though if you stand on the truth of God's Word persecution will eventually come your way. Look at this verse from 2 Timothy 3:12

Timothy 3:12

12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

I will agree with you there are times of persecution that you can feel alone. You feel like the only one proclaiming the truth of the Lord Jesus surrounded by a multitude that mocks and scoffs at the Gospel. In times of difficulty, whether it be sickness or a tough situation, people may say, "If God is so good, why are you going through this?"

Jesus told his very clearly, ***"In this world you will have tribulation but take heart, I have overcome the world!"*** Even in the struggle we again get reminded the Lord is in control. The Lord walks along with us and we stop and praise again. Let's read verses 9 to 11.

Psalms 22:9-11

⁹ Yet you are he who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother's breasts. ¹⁰ On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God. ¹¹ Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help.

I like that word “Yet” at the beginning of verse 9 and as we saw it in verse 3. It is a conjunction that shows contrast. Though the circumstance looks tough, Yet, or even, nevertheless, I will praise you. What is being recognized here is God’s providential and powerful hand of creation. God created us all and as we all came out of the womb of our mother, and we took that first breath we were under God’s providential care.

As a helpless baby he provides us sustenance through our mother and throughout our life he sustains us. If you are here tonight and you have truly repented of your sin and are fully trusting in the Lord Jesus, he has provided the most glorious provision that is needed and that is forgiveness of sin and eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ. If you have not repented, look at your life and realize that the very next breath you take is a gift of God and in that breath, he is calling out to you to repent and surrender your life to him.

The Psalmist, who is David, continues to show the anguish and the torment that he is in. As I have mentioned several times there is the prophetic that is on display in this Psalm. We have seen the spiritual battle that David was engaged in with being surrounded by so many enemies without and within. We see how it matches up so perfectly with Jesus in his earthly ministry.

Jesus was harassed constantly from without as he was continuously questioned and ridiculed by the Pharisees. It was from within his core group that he was betrayed and handed over to be arrested, beaten, and nailed to a cross to die. Yes, there was the spiritual battle that Jesus constantly faced. As Tim pointed out last week he walked everywhere where we walk. Jesus was tempted in everyway but was without sin. He perfectly lived the paths of righteousness for the sake of God the Father’s name.

He did so knowing we could not walk those paths of righteousness without him. As we think of righteousness, we must again look to the cross. Though it is a spiritual transformation that we all need from the old self to the new self. Meaning we need forgiveness for our sin that so easily beset or entangled us in our unsaved state. The payment for that transformation in the Old Testament was the shedding of blood from a perfect lamb. The blood being offered upon the altar with a heart of repentance.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ!

All those lambs a picture of the final, perfect, sinless, lamb of God that would shed the blood and take on the physical death to provide the way of salvation for all who will call upon the Lord in repentance to be saved.

As Jesus hung on the cross, he experienced the most horrific spiritual emotion that can be felt as the Father separated himself from him as he hung there with the sin of the world upon his body. Jesus also experienced the physical death that we all may face one day. Jesus took this upon himself first and foremost for our salvation but that also death was not something that had to be feared.

I want to quote from Tim’s message last week pertaining to fear:

Here’s the wonderful news! Since Christ has delivered us from the fear of death, He has also delivered us from all fear. We truly have nothing to fear, Christians! That is the secret of the Christian that no other person can know. If He has delivered us from death, we can confidently face anything in this life.

Once again, we see this prophecy written out as we can picture Jesus hung on the cross. Look at verses 12 to 21

Psalm 22:12-21

¹² Many bulls encompass me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me; ¹³ they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion. ¹⁴ I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast, ¹⁵ my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. ¹⁶ For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet ¹⁷ I can count all my bones— they stare and gloat over me, ¹⁸ they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots. ¹⁹ But you, O Lord, do not be far off! O you my help, come quickly to my aid! ²⁰ Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog! ²¹ Save me from the mouth of the lion! You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!

What a horrific description of the agony that is being experienced here. This reminded me of the hymn, Lead Me to Calvary, published in 1921 by Jennie Evelyn Hussey. Look at the screens and imagine Jesus in the garden and on the cross!

Lead Me to Calvary

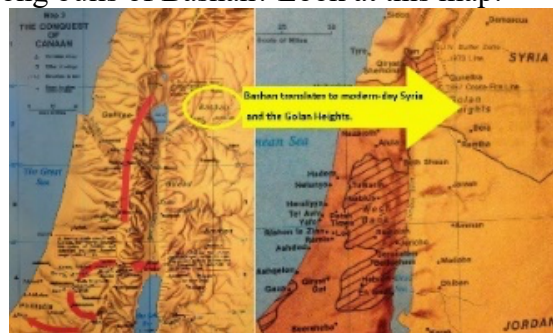
Lest I Forget Gethsemane

Lest I Forget Thy Agony

Lest I Forget Thy Love For Me

Lead Me to Calvary

That is what I want to do over the next few moments. Lead you to calvary. I was intrigued by these verses in several spots. What were these strong bulls of Bashan? Look at this map:



I really liked this map because it gives us some context of today also. You see the yellow oval and that shows us where Bashan was mentioned in Biblical times and is now part of modern-day Syria and the Golan Heights. This region was very fertile and was great grazing land for cattle. There were cattle that were raised for meat and were domesticated. You also had this herd of wild, ferocious cattle that would actually attack and go around goring people.

The bulls, and the dogs, were references to the evil doers that were surrounding the cross, yelling insults, mocking, slandering, humiliating Jesus. You saved others! Save yourself! Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now off the cross that we may see and believe! Oh, dear sir, dear ma'am you do not want him to come down off the cross at that time, for if he did there would be no hope of salvation for you!

Isaiah 53:3

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

The word potsherd is the description of a piece of a broken clay vessel laying in the dust. Nine-inch nails driven into his hands and his feet, piercing into him to hold him on the cross. Again, fulfilling prophecy from this Psalm and again from Isaiah 53:5:

Isaiah 53:5

But he was pierced for our transgression; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

The body of Jesus stretched out upon that cross, his heart pumping to try send blood through his body because of the blood that was pouring out of the wounds from the nails in his flesh, the wounds from the scourging from the cat of nine tails that left his inner organs exposed, blood pouring from his head from the crown of thorns as they were thrust upon his head piercing his skin once again.

Jesus' lungs filling up with fluid as his body seeks hydration but there is none to be found, as he cries out, "I thirst!" The bones feeling that they have come out of socket as his strength goes away and he can't do anything but just let go! The many around him unaffected of what was truly going on upon that cross as the Roman soldiers take his clothes to divide them and cast lots for them. Once again prophesied in the Psalm and fulfilled at the cross.

John 19:23-24

²³ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, ²⁴ so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." So, the soldiers did these things.

The end coming quickly, crying out for the father to once again spare him, "Do not be far off! Come quickly to my aid! Deliver my soul! The whole time the father, saying, "Not this time son, not this time! My God, My God, why have you forsaken me!" Look at this!



Defeat! It's over! Satan and his demons, saying, "We have won!" Many in this world have looked upon the cross of Jesus as defeat but may I tell you tonight, it was the greatest victory of all time. Because of that, three days later came this!



From the cross that looks like defeat, comes triumph! From the cross, comes the greatest news ever to be told! Jesus, forsaken for you! All that was described tonight was for you, for me, for the world!

If you are truly saved tonight, then we can proclaim in triumph these words.

Psalm 22:22-26

²² I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation, I will praise you: ²³ You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel! ²⁴ For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him. ²⁵ From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will perform before those who fear him. ²⁶ The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord! May your hearts live forever!

The greatest need we have is to be saved from our sin. That is our greatest affliction. As it says in verse 24 if we cry out to him in repentance he hears. In our time of need, when we cry out to him, he hears. No matter the situation there is victory ahead. As we look at affliction, persecution, a chaotic world, just as the Psalmist said, “Yet, you are holy, and I will praise you!”

Jesus has brought redemption for all people. So, we have work to do! In these verses we see this as a gathering of the Church as a whole but also that we come together, forsaking not the gathering of ourselves to praise the Lord together. We are to go proclaim this Gospel, this Good News to a world. I keep going back to this, time after time, someone proclaimed the Gospel to you! Look at verses 27 to 31.

Psalm 22:27-31

²⁷ All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. ²⁸ For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations. ²⁹ All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep himself alive. ³⁰ Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation; ³¹ they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.

This proclamation of the Gospel is to be a generational proclamation, and to the world. To tell everyone of what Jesus has done for our salvation! We do nothing and have done nothing for our salvation. Jesus accomplished it

all on the cross of calvary. That is why Jesus' proclamation on the cross of "It is Finished!" is why we go and tell everyone he has done this for you!

You see there is a culmination to all of this, there is an end! One day as the Scripture tells us in Philippians 2:9-11.

Philippians 2:9-11

⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.