



**Foreshadow Of Suffering
David, On the Run, Sees the Cross
Psalm 22:1-18**

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Psalm 22:title–5

“For the music director; upon Aijeleth Hashshahar. A Psalm of David. **My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?** Far from my help are the words of my groaning. My God, I cry out by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest. Yet You are holy, You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel. In You our fathers trusted; They trusted and You rescued them. To You they cried out and they fled to safety; In You they trusted and were not disappointed.” (NASB 2020)



Psalm 22. is a graphic picture of death by crucifixion. The bones (of the hands, arms, shoulders, and pelvis) out of joint (v. 14); the profuse perspiration caused by intense suffering (v. 14); the action of the heart affected (v. 14); strength exhausted, and extreme thirst (v. 15); the hands and feet pierced (v. 16); partial nudity with the hurt to modesty (v. 17), are all incidental to that mode of death. The accompanying circumstances are precisely those fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ. (Scofield 1917, 608)

Three times in the Old Testament we encounter a picture of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, that leave us in awe of the scriptures. The first is in Genesis 22 and the story of Abraham, the command to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah and all the events connected to that.

Little did Abraham know that he was acting out a scene that would take place later, at the same location, where God did indeed provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering (Genesis 22:8).

The next high impact scripture would be where we are now, in Psalm 22. But first, what is the other high impact scripture? Isaiah 53.

Between Isaiah 52 and 53 combined, we are provided a picture of the crucifixion that has embedded in it at least 22 different prophecies, all prophecies that were fulfilled by Jesus Christ. But none as graphic as what we see here in Psalm 22.

Here in Psalm 22, as David is in despair of his being forced to run for his life while being chased by Saul. As David went into hiding, he was seriously in despair. There were times where he felt that he had been abandoned by God, totally forsaken. We see that he felt as if death was close, almost imminent as he describes facing his own execution here. God did indeed answer his prayer.

Jesus picked up on the words used by David here in Psalm 22 and expressed them Himself while on the cross.

Psalm 22 is a Messianic psalm. It is prophetic.

Here in Psalm 22, we obtain a rather detailed description of crucifixion, prior to its earliest historical reference which comes from 519 BC when King Darius I of Persia crucified 3,000 of his enemies in Babylon. The Assyrians also impaled people, and the practice was picked up by the Greeks and the people of Carthage as well. But it was the Romans who perfected it as a form of execution.

This psalm is all about Jesus, it is all about His crucifixion and "in Psalm 22 we have an X-ray which penetrates into His thoughts and into His inner life. In this psalm we see the anguish of His passion; His soul is laid bare. In the Gospels is recorded the historical fact of His death, and some of the events which attended His crucifixion; but only in Psalm 22 are His thoughts revealed." (McGee 1997, 706)

With this psalm, we are not down in the crowd with John and watching the proceedings, Instead, we are on the cross with Jesus.

Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, David will see the crucifixion from the perspective of the one who is on the cross. We will see what was going on in Jesus' heart and what He is thinking about as the events unfolded and what He saw.

2 Corinthians 5:21

"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (ESV)



Jesus willingly went to the cross for us and was made sin. He was not an unwilling victim, He never sinned, nor did He have the sin nature as we have yet he was also fully human and as such could indeed be our perfect atonement.

It seems that Paul's intent is to say more than that Christ was made a sin offering and yet less than that Christ became a sinner. So complete was the identification of the sinless Christ with the sin of the sinner, including its dire guilt and its dread consequence of separation from God, that Paul could say profoundly, "God caused Christ, who knew nothing of sin, to be sin for our sake." (Harris 2008, 482)

Christ became sin; that is, he came to stand in that relation with God which normally is the result of sin, estranged from God and the object of his wrath...We correspondingly, and through God's loving act in Christ, have come to stand in that relation with God which is described by the term righteousness, that is, we are acquitted in his court, justified, reconciled. We are no longer his judicial enemies, but his friends. (Barrett 1973, 180)

1 Peter 2:22–25

"He committed no sin nor was deceit found in his mouth. When he was maligned, he did not answer back; when he suffered, he threatened no retaliation, but committed himself to God who judges justly. **He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we may cease from sinning and live for righteousness.** By his wounds you were healed. For you were going astray like sheep but now you have turned back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls." (NET 2nd ed.)

Our fatal spiritual wounds we inherited from Adam, have now been healed in Christ.

As we look at this psalm, it is indeed arising out of the experiences of David, who then takes his own perplexity at how God could allow this to happen at the hands of Saul, and further expands it so that we can clearly understand the Messianic implications of what we read here.

We clearly see Jesus here in this text, it is 3pm on the day of His crucifixion, at the very moment that the Father, due to Jesus taking on our sin, looked away.

Psalms 22:1

"My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my help are the words of my groaning." (NASB 2020)

This "God-forsakenness" rather than the physical suffering is, perhaps, what he had most dreaded in Gethsemane, so that he begged for the cup to be taken away. **In giving his life as a ransom for many for the forgiveness of sins he must, for the moment, be separated from his Father.** But it is surely also significant that Jesus, like the abandoned psalmist, still addresses God as "my God;" **this shout expresses not a loss of faith, but a (temporary) loss of contact.** (France 2007, 1076-1077)

Psalms 22:title–5

"For the music director; upon Aijeleth Hashshahar. A Psalm of David. **My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?** Far from my help are the words of my groaning. My God, I cry out by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest. Yet You are holy, You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel. In You our fathers trusted; They trusted and You rescued them. To You they cried out and they fled to safety; In You they trusted and were not disappointed." (NASB 2020)

David, as he was driven out by Saul, was totally honest with God about what he was going through.



This is not simply distress, this has now moved to a feeling, in the middle of suffering, of being totally abandoned by God. He feels disconnected yet still trusts; and this was also true of our Lord as He took on our sin.

We too, like David did, fully understand who He is and that He is aware of our situation and has never left us, yet knowing that, we too at times in the middle of trials, feel abandoned, disconnected. The only difference, David is willing to talk about it.

And David is also expressing the heart of Jesus Christ while on the cross. The very first line of this psalm deposits us at the cross.

Mark 15:34

“Around three o’clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”” (NET 2nd ed.)

Jesus has read the entire psalm, He knows what comes at verse 22 and 23, triumph. David, as is typical, begins on a serious downer and ends up in triumph.

Jesus also knows that ultimately. Here He is disconnected from the Father for the first time in all eternity. The relationship He has with the Father is temporarily interrupted; but all done for the joy He will have in the future knowing that you and I can now be with Him forever.

Hebrews 12:1–2

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.**” (ESV)

But notice this, for David and for Jesus on the cross, they both still are holding onto God.

For Jesus, “He knows the Lord to be the all-sufficient support and succour of his spirit, and therefore appeals to him in the agony of grief, but not in the misery of doubt.” (Spurgeon n.d., 325)

But for a time, there on the cross, as Jesus paid for our sin, He is forsaken because of our sin. It is possible this also reflects His surprise at the separation. It is our sin that causes this temporary breach. Why would David experience this detachment, this anguish, this feeling of desertion?

Part of God’s purpose for seemingly deserting David in his great need was to point us to the somber truth that God would one day turn His back on His beloved Son when He bore our sin on the cross. Almost 1,000 years earlier, God had ordered Abraham to offer Isaac upon an altar as a sacrifice to Him. In so doing, Abraham had portrayed the anguish of the Father at Calvary. Here, in the present passage, David was given the incredible privilege of portraying the anguish of the Son. (Leadership Ministries Worldwide 2013, 173)

On the cross, at the moment that Jesus utters these same words, a transaction is taking place. Not only did Jesus endure the withdrawal of fellowship with the Father for the first time in eternity, but He is also suffering the outpouring of the Father’s wrath upon Him as a substitute for you and me.

Just as those who wind up being condemned for all eternity to hell and are eternally separated from God, Jesus experienced that for us there on the cross, the separation, even temporary, was still separation and something Jesus had never experienced before.



Isaiah 53:10–12

“But it was the LORD’s good plan to crush him and cause him grief. Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, he will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the LORD’s good plan will prosper in his hands. **When he sees all that is accomplished by his anguish, he will be satisfied. And because of his experience, my righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous, for he will bear all their sins.** I will give him the honors of a victorious soldier, because he exposed himself to death. He was counted among the rebels. **He bore the sins of many and interceded for rebels.”** (NLT)

Psalms 22:1

“My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my help are the words of my groaning.” (NASB 2020)

There were times in the life of David where he not only felt abandoned but would pray and ask why God was so far from helping him. We lose the meaning of what David is saying in the English translation. The word translated as groaning is נַאֲגַח (sa-agah). It means “roaring. This feminine noun is used to refer to roaring literally or figuratively. Of special interest is Ps 22, which, along with Isa 53, so well foretells the Messiah’s suffering. Here in Ps 22:1 the Messiah asks the Father why he is so “far from helping me, from the words of my roaring?” The Messiah—it must be answered—is roaring, groaning, as did David in Ps 38:8, because of his estrangement from the Father or his abandonment to judgment upon the cross as he bore the sins of many (Mt 27:46).” (Cohen 1999, 890)

“Roaring words” is not an elegant phrase, but is an exact translation of the Hebrew. This is not groaning or complaining or whining. These words are expressed in the raspy scream of one in deep distress. (Jacobson and Tanner 2014, 233)

For David, this has not been a temporary issue but would indeed continue for over a decade as he is on the lam from Saul. Once again, his experience is echoed by Jesus.

Psalms 22:2

“My God, I cry out by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest.” (NASB 2020)

The forsakenness of the Crucified One, however, is unique; and may not be judged by the standard of David or of any other sufferers who thus complain when passing through trial. (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 195)

Jesus, prayed prior to going to the cross and there in the Garden was deeply moved in prayer even sweating blood as He asked, three times if there was any other way. But there is no other way.

God appears to have not answered the prayers of Jesus in the Garden, yet Jesus already knew the answer and had been provided with and helped devise what the plan truly was. He spoke this the prior evening.

John 14:6

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” (ESV)

What Jesus was about to go through had been decided on prior to the creation of the world. There is no plan B. There was no need to answer a prayer He already knew the answer to.



Ephesians 1:3–10

“Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! For in our union with Christ he has blessed us by giving us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly world. **Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be his through our union with Christ, so that we would be holy and without fault before him. Because of his love God had already decided that through Jesus Christ he would make us his sons and daughters—this was his pleasure and purpose.** Let us praise God for his glorious grace, for the free gift he gave us in his dear Son! For by the blood of Christ we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven. How great is the grace of God, which he gave to us in such large measure! In all his wisdom and insight God did what he had purposed, and made known to us the secret plan he had already decided to complete by means of Christ. This plan, which God will complete when the time is right, is to bring all creation together, everything in heaven and on earth, with Christ as head.” (GNB)

The events of the crucifixion had been planned, every detail. The very real reality is, when we feel abandoned, we have not been. The Holy Spirit has been promised to every believer, and He is inside of each of us no matter how far away we think He is. The reality, He isn't.

On the cross, Jesus had a very different reality for this pre-planned event. The event essential for our redemption. In all He did, He pleased the Father.

John 8:29

“And he who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, because I always do what pleases him.” (GNB)

But there on the cross, He truly was, for a short while, abandoned by God. “There was no place to turn, either on the human plane or on the divine. He had no place to go. The Man Christ Jesus was forsaken. No other ever has had to experience that. No one. He alone.” (McGee 1997, 707)

Psalms 22:3–5

“Yet You are holy, You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel. In You our fathers trusted; They trusted and You rescued them. To You they cried out and they fled to safety; In You they trusted and were not disappointed.” (NASB 2020)

For David, even though he felt like God was silent, He still knew who God was and still had faith in Him. Jesus also knew and trusted far more than David, as He was indeed the God man. And at the very moment God was reconciling the world to Himself in the work of Jesus Christ, Jesus was forsaken.

We have no conception of what that means. For all here on planet earth, there are some who act as if they have been forsaken by God, but as long as they are breathing, they still can believe. But for Jesus, what David is describing, is He was alone with all the sins of the world on Him.

David knew God is holy, he knew that God would indeed receive praise from those in Israel who believed. The view David is taking here is looking at how God has performed in the past revealing who He is and how He will perform in the present and the future. God does not change, he knows this.

It then follows that since God has been faithful and delivered those who belonged to Him in the past, will He also not be faithful to me and deliver me as well? Even though I feel forsaken and abandoned will He deliver?

As Jesus hangs on the cross, He too would be reflecting on the faithfulness of the Father and the protection of the Father, yet He also has overlaid on that, the absolute need for Him to be there and suffer and die for us, again for the joy of us being with Him for all eternity.



For Jesus, the Father will indeed deliver, He will do so through the resurrection and that forever changes everything.

Psalm 22:6–8

“But I am a worm and not a person, A disgrace of mankind and despised by the people. All who see me deride me; They sneer, they shake their heads, saying, “Turn him over to the LORD; let Him save him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him.”” (NASB 2020)

I am sure that David, at times, felt as if he was the dregs of the earth. We all tend to feel that way while undergoing a trial or test if we allow ourselves to go there. It is a very short trip to the pity pot from there where we can be heard saying woe is me. Nobody knows the trouble I've seen. But Jesus can say, been there, done that, got the t-shirt. He went through this for us. He loves us and He gets it. We see the mocking at the cross here in Psalm 22:6-8.

Matthew 27:39–43

“Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to, for he said, ‘I am God’s Son.’ ”” (NRSVue)

Just as David reflected it in Psalm 22, that is what indeed took place. Jesus is mocked while hanging on the cross.

Isaiah 52:14

“Just as there were many who were astonished at him —so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals—” (NRSVue)

Just as David sees it, that is what took place at the cross.

“According to Matthew 27:39–44, there were five forms of taunt hurled at the Lord Jesus; this special piece of mockery is probably mentioned in this psalm because it is the most bitter of the whole; it has a biting, sarcastic irony in it, which gives it a peculiar venom; it must have stung the Man of Sorrows to the quick. When we are tormented in the same manner, let us remember him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, and we shall be comforted.” (Spurgeon n.d., 327)

Again, all of these events were planned, and David is telling us about them beforehand.

Isaiah 53:10–12

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.” (NKJV)

Here's what was happening on the cross: God was punishing His own Son as if He had committed every wicked deed done by every sinner... And He did it so that He could forgive and treat those redeemed ones as if they had lived Christ's perfect life of righteousness. (MacArthur, Jr. 2000, 219)



Psalm 22:9–11

“Yet You are He who brought me forth from the womb; You made me trust when upon my mother’s breasts. I was cast upon You from birth; You have been my God from my mother’s womb. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near; For there is no one to help.” (NASB 2020)

What we see is typical of the way David writes, he began in deep despair, feeling abandoned by his God, but now he is moving back to faith. Hope is starting to show up again. He does so by again, reflecting on what it is God has done for him.

Jesus would have done the same on the cross, reflecting on the incarnation and growing up human yet being God. Possibly triggered by what He sees.

It is reflections such as this that may have been part of what was behind some of the comments Jesus made from the cross.

John 19:25–27

“Now standing beside Jesus’ cross were his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. **So when Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing there, he said to his mother, “Woman, look, here is your son!”** He then said to his disciple, “Look, here is your mother!” From that very time the disciple took her into his own home.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Seeing her there reminds Him of her faith and loyal love towards Him.

Something else we see in John 19, all the disciples apart from John had left Him. We saw the list there in John 19. That was it. As He is hanging there on the cross, He sees who is and is not there. As Jesus considers, He asks the Lord to be near to Him as there is indeed no one to help. They have all left. But of course, Jesus is also aware of what is taking place in real time in the unseen realm.

Psalm 22:12–13

“Many bulls have surrounded me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They open their mouths wide at me, As a ravening and roaring lion.” (NASB 2020)

This is not a statement saying Jesus saw livestock while on the cross. This has nothing to do with that at all. This is not a metaphor directed towards the Sanhedrin either. This is a statement of activity in the unseen realm.

Let’s back up a little in the life of Jesus. A few weeks prior to the crucifixion, Jesus and His disciples were north in Caesarea Philippi (Luke 9:18-27) and Mount Hermon (Luke 9:28-36). Jesus knew the crucifixion was coming soon (Luke 9:44).

While in the north, Jesus intentionally picked a fight with intelligent evil. Yes, He had indeed been doing that for over three years, but what He said and did at those two locations was in your face and calculated to push the enemy over the brink and react emotionally. They did and Paul tells us the following.

1 Corinthians 2:6–8

“Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. **None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”** (ESV)

Bashan, where the alleged bovines referred to here in Psalm 22 are from, is also in the north, we would call it the Golan Heights today. Bashan was the location of a Rephaim named Og, a giant and a really bad



guy that Moses and the nation conquered before entering the land. Moses gives us the cliff notes version in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 3:8–11

“So at that time we took the land of the two Amorite kings in the Transjordan from Wadi Arnon to Mount Hermon (the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion and the Amorites call it Senir), **all the cities of the plateau, all of Gilead and Bashan as far as Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. Only King Og of Bashan was left of the remaining Rephaites. (It is noteworthy that his sarcophagus was made of iron. Does it not, indeed, still remain in Rabbath of the Ammonites? It is 13½ feet long and 6 feet wide according to standard measure.)**” (NET 2nd ed.)

Og was a giant who lived in what is now, demon central.

Bashan carries a lot of theological baggage. It was the Old Testament version of the gates of hell, the gateway to the underworld realm of the dead. It was known as “the place of the serpent” outside the Bible. It’s associated with Mount Hermon, the place where Jews believed the rebellious sons of God from Genesis 6:1–4 descended.

Simply put, if you wanted to conjure up images of the demonic and death, you’d refer to Bashan. (Heiser 2015, 289-290)

The man set free from Legion, was in Bashan. Amos gave a heads up.

Amos 4:1–2

“Listen to this message, **you cows of Bashan who live on Mount Samaria! You oppress the poor; you crush the needy.** You say to your husbands, “Bring us more to drink!” The Sovereign LORD confirms this oath by his own holy character: “Certainly the time is approaching when you will be carried away in baskets, every last one of you in fishermen’s pots.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Who is Amos targeting here? Yes the people up north worshipped the golden calf first brought to us by Aaron. So, is he targeting the priests and prestresses of Bashan? Or are the cows the demons behind the false gods being worshipped? Most likely since they crush the needy.

What we see here in Psalm 22 is that Jesus, at the moment of agony and death on the cross, was surrounded by livestock. Nope, He was surrounded by the bulls of Bashan, the demons and fallen ones who had been opposing the work of YAHWEH for centuries there in the land.

Most folks in Israel would associate the area, as touched on before, as ground zero for the invasion and corruption caused by the watchers who came to earth in Genesis 6. Most likely one of several reasons for the concentration of demons in the area. 1 Enoch gives us background on the origin of demons being the spirits of those Nephilim who were produced as a result.

Enoch 15:8–16:1

“And now the giants who are born from the spirits, even the strong spirits of flesh upon the earth, their dwelling will be on the earth. Evil spirits went out from their body, for they came from the higher places, and the beginning of their creation and foundation is from the watchful holy ones. **They will be called evil spirits. And so for the spirits of heaven, their dwelling will be in heaven, and the spirits that are born upon the earth, their dwelling will be upon the earth.** The spirits of the giants were doing unjustly, destroying, attacking, and wrestling with each other and thrown together upon the earth, the hard spirits of the giants. They are making courses, and no one is eating, but they are fasting and thirsting and stumbling spirits. These will rise up against the sons of men and women because they have gone forth from them. “During the days of slaughter, destruction, and death, when the spirits are



proceeding from the life of their flesh, there will be destruction without judgment. Thus they will be destructive until the last day of the great judgments, in which the great eternity will be completed.” (Brannan, et al. 2020, Enoch 15:8-16:1)

Demons are the spirits of the Nephilim. They are in league with the devil but not necessarily working for him.

David has seen the cross and is describing the scene for us. We are seeing what Jesus saw. First were those people who were there as well as those who were not there.

Then we move to the spiritual level and once again, who is there? All of those demons that Jesus had ticked off up north as well as a few fallen angels along the way too. They want Him dead and based on Jesus showing up in His glorified state on Mount Hermon, ground zero for the demons, His appearance was like thumbing His nose at them and saying “here I am, what are you going to do about it.” The cross was their solution, and they have no idea how badly they are being played.

Spiritual warfare was very real there at the cross. Satan and all who are aligned with him thought they had won. But as Paul has already told us, they did not have a clue that they are signing their own death warrants.

Back to Jesus on the cross, we now know the spiritual assault taking place there, what about His physical state?

David gives a description of what all of the aspects of the crucifixion, combined, do to the body.

Psalm 22:14–15

“I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me. My strength is dried up like a piece of pottery, And my tongue clings to my jaws; And You lay me in the dust of death.” (NASB 2020)

“Christ would have been nailed to the cross as it lay flat on the ground. The nails used were long, tapered iron spikes, similar to modern railroad spikes, but much sharper. The nails had to be driven through the wrists (not the palms of the hands), because neither the tendons nor the bone structure in the hands could support the body's weight. Nails in the palms would simply tear the flesh between the bones. Nails through the wrists would usually shatter carpal bones and tear the carpal ligaments, but the structure of the wrist was nonetheless strong enough to support the weight of the body. As the nail went into the wrist, it would usually cause severe damage to the sensorimotor median nerve, causing intense pain in both arms. Finally, a single nail would be driven through both feet, sometimes through the Achilles' tendons. None of the nail wounds would be fatal, but they would all cause intense and increasing pain as the victim's time on the cross dragged on.

After the victim was nailed in place, several soldiers would slowly elevate the top of the cross and carefully slide the foot into a deep posthole. The cross would drop with a jarring blow into the bottom of the hole, causing the full weight of the victim to be immediately borne by the nails in the wrists and feet. That would cause a bone-wrenching pain throughout the body, as major joints were suddenly twisted out of their natural position.” Thus, what we read here in Psalm 22. (MacArthur, Jr. 2000, 199-200)

Psalm 22:16–18

“For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; They divide my garments among them, And they cast lots for my clothing.” (NASB 2020)



Now we are once again looking down with Jesus at the scene around the cross. He compares those who are killing Him to a pack of wild dogs, the word is כלבים (klabim). But in the Hebrew, we also see them referred to as a עדה (egah) a congregation or assembly, a mob of evil doers.

This might mean, as we learned with the Bulls of Bashan, more than we think.

In the Psalms, the kelābîm represent the enemies who oppress the individual worshipper. They, the band of the wicked (sometimes with demonic overtones), surround the faithful psalmist and rob him of all chance for life (Ps. 22:17). (Botterweck 1995, 156)

As Jesus looks out, He does indeed see those who were behind what is taking place, both the physical as well as the spiritual.

As He looks at them, they are referred to as a mob of demonic dogs. Just as the Bulls of Bashan, the same is reflected here with the demonic and unclean dogs encircling Him.

Dogs, at the time of David, were considered to be unclean scavengers. At times, gentiles were considered to be dogs, but I do not think that is what is going on here. The picture is one of a demonic mob surrounding Him and waiting to pick His bones clean at the moment of death. To leave nothing behind. For David, these wild dogs would pierce his hands and feet testing to see if he was dead and ready to be lunch.

But this is also an amazing reference to the crucifixion. David makes a clear reference to a form of execution that did not yet exist. In fact, the later Masoretic Hebrew text of the middle ages it appears to have been deliberately altered here in an attempt to change the meaning to “as a lion.” They as a lion my hands and feet? Really?.

The Septuagint, translated over 200 years prior to the crucifixion taking place, has pierced.

Psalm 21:17

“For many dogs encircled me. A gathering of those doing evil surrounded me. They **pierced my hands and feet.**” (Brannan, et al. 2020, Psalm 21:17)

This suggests that the Masoretic text with its vowel pointing is just wrong and that alternative vowels should be supplied. It may even suggest that the Masoretic text was deliberately pointed in the way it was by later Jewish scholars to avoid what otherwise would be a nearly inescapable prophecy of Jesus’ crucifixion. (Boice 2005, 196)

After commenting on those who around Him, there is the reference to His hands and feet having been pierced as He looks down. None of His bones were broken.

Then there is shame from people staring at Him. “Aside from the physical pain of crucifixion, the most notable feature of this type of execution was the stigma of disgrace that was attached to it. Victims were mercilessly taunted. They were usually hanged naked.” (MacArthur, Jr. 2000, 202)

We know that to be the case from what we read in verse 18.

Psalm 22:18

“They divide my garments among them, And they cast lots for my clothing.” (NASB 2020)

This was indeed the case historically.



Mark 15:24

“And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take.” (ESV)

The garments of the executed were the perquisites of the executioners in most cases, but it was not often that they cast lots at the division of the spoil; this incident shows how clearly David in vision saw the day of Christ, and how surely the Man of Nazareth is he of whom the prophets spake. (Spurgeon n.d., 330)

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ went through all of this, because of His love for you and me and His desire that we be with Him for all eternity.

That means taking advantage of what He did on the cross for us.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

ABC’s of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.



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