

Why Have you Forsaken Me? - Psalms 22 **Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

Notes from the Sermon

Our Psalm this week is one of the great mountain peaks of Scripture. It is another of the Lament Psalms, expressions of deep darkness, pain, depression, anxiety, and loss of hope. We are not sure the situation from which David writes, but we can know he is in distress. Worse, David is struggling to see God's presence or experience His promises. Yet, from this moment he is inspired by the Holy Spirit to write a Psalm that transcends his moment and prophetically pictures someone else's suffering and anguish in a way that is, well, unbelievable.

Take a minute right now to read verses 6-18 and ask yourself what David is describing. You should see it clearly, somehow David is being carried into the events that happened on Good Friday, giving a fairly vivid description of the crucifixion of Jesus and putting words into Jesus' own mouth. From the cross Jesus actually quotes the Psalm, crying out "'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which is Aramaic for "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" (Verse 1). This is more than just a cry of feeling abandoned by God the Father by Jesus the Son. Jesus is identifying Himself with the cry of the entire Psalm and the hope that lies within. In fact, all the Gospel writers see this and will reference and quote this Psalm. Psalm 22 is referenced or quoted 24 times in the New Testament, 17 of those are in the four Passion Narratives (stories of Jesus' suffering in the Gospels). Matthew actually follows the flow of Psalm 22 to create his writing outline for his version of the story. From the cross we see Jesus being seen as less than human, scorned by every person present (v. 6), mocked by soldiers, and having all present at his crucifixion wagging their heads and scorning Jesus (v. 7). The religious leaders cry out, "He saved others, why can't he save himself (v. 8). He is surrounded by people who run him through like bulls, attack like a pack of dogs, and devour Him like a lion. The suffering of Psalm 22 is an execution, specifically a crucifixion, death by cross, where the executed is made public spectacle. "They have pierced my hands and feet (v. 16)," reveals this death. And we also see the Roman soldiers dividing up and casting lots for Jesus' clothes as declared in verse 18.

From his own anguish David writes a song that was sung for a thousand years that vividly describes the events of the cross of Christ. Yet, David never saw a crucifixion. David lived around 1000 BC. Death by cross was invented by the Persians about 300 years before the time of Jesus or some 700 years after David lived, then perfected by the Romans as an awful, cruel, humiliating form of capital punishment used to squash rebellions and insurrections. Yet the song existed and people sang this cry of hope from the feeling of abandonment for a thousand years before Jesus showed up, lived, and died. Prophetically, David pointed us to the cross of Jesus as the place of redemption for our suffering and the proof that God has not forsaken us. When Jesus quoted verse 1 from the cross the religious leaders and the people should have heard that, run to Psalm 22 and seen it. They should have cried out to God in repentance right there, knowing that Christ is the one described in this passage. Yet, this was God's purpose, and Jesus' death is the culmination of God's redemptive plan. It was on the cross where God dealt cosmically with the fallen world and His sinful people. God the Father really did abandon Jesus on the cross, pouring out His wrath that had been stored for our sin on His Son. This Psalm takes us to the cross of Jesus, the place where Christ died in my place, for my sin, dying the death I should have died. Jesus experienced all the fury of hell for me, and His suffering that day was more than the cumulative suffering of all humanity as the perfect, sinless Son of God freely laid down His life for me.

This is Holy Week, the week before Easter where Christians around the globe pause

to deeply remember the event of the cross. But that should only be a reminder that Christianity is a cross shaped faith. Our hope is never found in our own remedies and works. We cannot pull ourselves up from the pit, yet, Jesus' death means that all of our suffering and brokenness can find redemption and purpose because of Jesus. We may feel abandoned, but the great message of the cross is this, because Jesus truly was abandoned by the Father we can know that God will never leave us or forsake us. Nothing can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8). All of this is true because of Jesus, our God, who stepped in to humanity to become all that Psalm 22 predicted. May we praise the God who both inspired the Psalm a thousand years before the event happened and became flesh so He could become the sufferer of the Psalm for us. Hallelujah!

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Ezekiel 2	Ezekiel 3	Ezekiel 4	Ezekiel 5	Ezekiel 6	Ezekiel 7	Ezekiel 8

Reading from this past week: Psalm 22

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Psalm 24

Family Worship

Song - *O Help My Unbelief*

<https://youtu.be/EfUwioXUwzM>

Gospel Project

Story: The Hall of Faith

Story Point: God works mightily through people who have faith in Him.

Big Picture Question: What is the Gospel?

Answer: The gospel is the good news that God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to rescue sinners.

Scripture: Hebrews 11

New City Catechism

Question #13: Can anyone keep the Law of God perfectly?

Answer: Since the fall, no human has been able to keep the law of God perfectly.

Verse: Romans 3:10-12

Scripture

Psalm 22

- Have you ever felt like God abandoned you? Why is it helpful to know by faith that He never does actually leave us or forsake us?
- Read verses 6-18. What is being described? Can you see the story of Jesus crucifixion in this text? What are some specific ways this Psalm predicts the story of Jesus death on the cross?
- Why is Jesus death on the cross our hope when we are suffering and feeling like God has left us?

Prayer

*Pray for our Good Friday Service and our Easter Kids event on Saturday.

*Give thanks this week and think deeply about the cross of Jesus.