

8/18/19 - Psalm 22 - "A Psalm of the Cross"

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 18 August 2019

Preacher: Brad Weber

[0 : 0 0] Let's pray. Father, we pray for your help this morning as we study Psalm 22. We know without your Spirit and without you applying it to our lives, we cannot understand it, nor can we live it out. So we pray for open eyes, open ears, and open hearts this morning, that we would leave here encouraged by this psalm, that we might make much of Christ in all that we do. And God, we love and praise you in Jesus' name. Amen. Psalm 22 says, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me from the words of my groaning? Oh my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer.

And by night, but I find no rest. Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you, our fathers trusted. They trusted and you delivered them. To you, they cried and were rescued. In you, they trusted and were not put to shame. But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people. All who see me mock me. They make mouths at me. They wag their heads. He trusts in the Lord. Let him deliver him. Let him rescue him, for he delights in him. Yet you are he who took me from the womb. You made me trust you at my mother's breasts. On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb, you have been my God. Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help. Many bulls encompass me. Strong bulls of Bashan surround me. They open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion. 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. My strength is dried up like a posthard, and my tongue sticks to my jaws. You lay me in the dust of death. For dogs encompass me. A company of evildoers encircles me. They have pierced my hands and feet. I can count all my bones. They stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots. But you, O Lord, do not be far off. O you, my help, come quickly to my aid. Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog. Save me from the mouth of the lion. You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen. I will tell of your name to my brothers. In the midst of the congregation, I will praise you. 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. For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him. But he has heard when he cried to him. From you comes my praise in the great congregation. My vows I will perform before those who fear him. The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied. Those who seek him shall praise the

Lord. May your hearts live forever. All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations. 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. Posterity shall serve him, and shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation. They shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.

[3 : 28] Martin Luther says about this psalm, this is a kind of gem among the psalms, and is excellent and remarkable. It contains those deep, sublime, and heavy sufferings of Christ when agonizing in the midst of the terrors and pangs of divine wrath and death, which surpass all human thoughts and comprehension. And I'm sure as we just quickly read through these 31 verses, the main point would jump out. We can see the imagery of what's going on here, and James Montgomery Boyce points this out as the psalm of the cross. He says this is the best description in all the Bible of the crucifixion of Christ. What's really interesting to note about this psalm, though, is that this clearly is about a crucifixion. We can see that with the words that are used, but you have to remember that crucifixion was not practiced during David's time. It was actually many centuries after that this psalm was written when they would start practicing crucifixion. It's not an account of suffering endured by an ancient person, but it is a prophetic picture of suffering to be endured by Jesus when he died on the cross to atone for our sins and to redeem us from a life of darkness. In other words, it is what's called a messianic psalm. It is entirely messianic in its nature. We also must keep in mind, too, this is the very psalm that Jesus quoted when he hung on the cross. So let's go to that scene as we begin, and I want to read. And I apologize, we're going to read a lot of verses, but that's just what happens. Every person that I, when I researched for commentaries and articles and stuff like that, everyone went to this scene, so I thought we would do the same as well. Turn over to Mark 15, and Mark 15, we're going to read down to verse 41.

So Jesus has been arrested on the previous night when day dawned. He was tried. He was convicted of blasphemy. They then took him to Pilate for sentencing. He's sentenced to death, even death on a cross.

And we'll set the scene here where Jesus quotes Psalm 22 with Mark 15. And it says, And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and the scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate.

And Pilate asked him, Are you the king of the Jews? And he answered him, You have said so. And the chief priests accused him of many things. And Pilate again asked him, Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you.

But Jesus made no further answer so that Pilate was amazed. Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. And among the rebels in prison who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas.

[6 : 42] And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. And he answered them saying, Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews? For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him released for them Barabbas instead. And Pilate again said to them, Then what shall I do with the man you call the king of the Jews? And they cried out again, Crucify him. And Pilate said to them, Why? What evil has he done?

But they shouted all the more, Crucify him. So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas. And having a scourge to Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. And the soldiers led him away inside the palace, that is the governor's headquarters.

And they called together the whole battalion. And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. And they began to salute him, Hail, king of the Jews. And they were striking his head with a reed, and spitting on him, and kneeling down in homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak, and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Syring, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. And they brought him to the place called Golgotha, which means place of a skull. And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them to decide what each should take. And it was the third hour when they crucified him.

And the inscription of the charge against him read, The king of the Jews. And with him, they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. 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, save yourself and come down from the cross. So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, He saved others, he cannot save himself. 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. And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, leme salabachten, which means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And some of the bystanders hearing it said, Behold, he is calling Elijah. And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed, and gave it to him to drink, saying, Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.

[9 : 12] And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion who stood facing him saw that in this way he had breathed his last, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God. There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James, the younger and of Joseph, in Salem. When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered to him. And there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem. A couple of interesting notes that we see the imagery, I'm sure, but there's a couple other verses that I want to bring in too. Directly quoting in John 19, 28, Jesus says that he is thirsty. And we see that here in Mark 15, that the guards offer him wine vinegar on a sponge. Now, the only Old Testament verse that that could point to is Psalm 69, 21, which is actually very similar to Psalm 22. It says, They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink. Now, why is that important? Because it appears that as Jesus was on the cross, when he was enduring his final days, what was he doing? He was recalling

Old Testament texts. He was thinking through the words that were written many years ago about him. John also tells us that this statement was to fulfill the scriptures. So it seems that Jesus is deliberately reviewing these passages in his mind to make sure that he had fulfilled them completely.

Lastly, the phrase in John 19, 30, it is finished, is a direct quote from the last verse of Psalm 22. It says that he has done it, but in the Hebrew language, you could actually translate that as it is finished. So we have six sections. Yes, six sections. It's not that long. It sounds like a lot.

It's not. The last section, so it's like five and a half sections. How about that? Because the last section is like, we'll cover like 11 verses in it. But there's an interesting pattern to these verses here. The first, third, and the fifth sections describe the author's suffering. The second, fourth, and sixth are prayers to God. So there's a back and forth that will go. The pattern progresses, this intensity of the anguish. And the author's confidence in God moves upward as we navigate through these Psalms too. So first, I want to look at verse 1 and 2, the cry of agony by the forsaken one. Now, this scene in Psalm 22 is set rather quickly. And I think here, this verse 1 is probably the most memorable verse in this Psalm. And I'm sure many of us are familiar with that because of the words that Jesus says on the cross. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? There's three things to note here from verse 1. First, the subject, this forsaken one, he believes that he has been forsaken by God. So he asks the question, why have you forsaken me? Second, this forsaken one says that he receives no answer. Why are you so far from saving me from the words of my groaning? I cry by day, but you do not answer. The cause of this, lastly, then, is that he finds no rest. And so what exactly does it mean to be forsaken by God? If this is, in fact, a messianic Psalm, what does this mean for the relationship between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit? How does that work? Now, this is a very disturbing idea to many people, and there's no shortages of theories in relation to explaining what is happening in this verse. They're kind of all over the map. Boyce notes that some have supposed that Jesus was referring to the Psalm only to call attention to it, as if to say that what he was suffering was what the Psalm describes. Others have argued that Jesus felt forsaken when, in fact, he was not. So he actually wasn't, but the feeling that he had was that God had turned his back on him.

And the final outcome, of course, Jesus was not forsaken. This is what the Psalm as a whole shows. Besides, we know that the crucifixion was followed by the resurrection. All this aside, I do not hesitate to say that according to the teaching of the New Testament, Jesus was indeed forsaken by God while he bore the sins of his people on the cross. This is the very essence of the atonement. This is a good quote, Jesus bearing our hell in order that we might share his heaven. To be forsaken means to have the light of God's countenance and the sense of his presence eclipsed, which is what happened to Jesus as he bore the wrath of God against sin for us. Now notice the emphasis also in this verse. There is a definite question in these words of David, and as Jesus then applies him, applies these words to himself on the cross. What Jesus endured on the cross was so complex and so dark and it was so mysterious that at this moment, it was beyond his ability to figure it out, at least in the emotional sense, not from the standpoint of he was fully God and he knew what was going on. But in the emotional sense, that's why he's saying, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? We see the emphasis on the word you or thou, depending on a translation. It's quite a strong answer, almost, you can imagine.

[14:58] When Jesus says why, the answer might have been, because my son, you have chosen to stand in the place of guilty sinners. You who have never known sin have made the infinite sacrifice to become sin and receive my just wrath upon sin and sinners. You do this because of your great love and because of my great love, Charles Spurgeon says. Then God the Father might give a glimpse of the reward to his son, the righteously robed multitude of his people on heaven's golden streets, all of them singing their Redeemer's praise, all of them chanting the name of Jehovah and the Lamb. And this was a part of the answer to his question. So there certainly is a good result of this, even through the anguish.

Second, the forsaken one says, I've received no answer. He says, oh my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer. It's bad enough what the suffering that he's going through is, right? But what appears to be just as bad is his crying seems to be falling on deaf ears. It seems to be failing labor. There's no answer.

Now think about it this way. If our only means of relief under our calamities is calling upon God, if we derive no advantage of our prayers, what other remedy remains for us? To tie this in with the last point, because of the lack of answer, David says there's no comfort. There's no solace, nothing which could impart tranquility to his troubled mind. But what is interesting to note throughout all of this is David's consistency in his faith. There is affliction pressing upon him.

He's receiving no comfort. What does he do? All that is going on around him from the literal sense, all the sufferings, all the lack of answers, God seeming to be so far away, these things cannot interrupt David's prayers. The true rule of praying is therefore this, that he who seems to have beaten the air to no purpose or to have lost his labor in praying for a long time, should not on that account leave off or desist from that duty. Easier said than done, certainly. But what an example to us, and I want to apply this in our immediate context, and think about how real these verses are to us.

That we cry by day, we don't receive answers, we don't receive rest, which then causes what? Confusion, it causes you to be tired, it causes you to be irritable. I'm sure we can all relate to these statements at some point, either currently going through something like that. In the past you have, or maybe it is coming, but at one point there will be a season where you experience these words.

[17 : 54] Why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far away? Why are you not answering? But just like David, allow it to drive you to persevere in your faith and not to despair. And one of my favorite things in Scripture, and what this causes us to do, is what verse 3 says here. I love when there is a clear shift in perspective in Scripture. Not only because it makes it much easier to see the breaks in the text of how the author is flowing his words, but that something like this, it almost jumps off the pages, this word yet. David talks about his lack of answers, he talks about the lack of rest, he talks about the suffering servant being forsaken, but then we come to verse 3. And verse 3 says, yet you are holy.

Now this seems like a very interesting shift in perspective, because after reading verse 1 and 2, how in the world do you arrive at that response? How are you, you're crying out day and night, you're not getting an answer, you're not getting rest, and then your response is, you are holy, yet you are holy?

Because kind of what's going on here is, is you're saying, or David is saying, God, you're not answering me, but yet you are holy. He's saying, I'm tired and I'm not finding any rest, and yet you are holy.

God, you have forsaken me, and it's almost as if you have literally turned your back on me, yet you are holy. God has always shown himself to be gracious towards his chosen people, and David immediately reminds himself of that. I mean, really, we're two verses into the psalm. We know what's going on, because we read the entire psalm. We can see the imagery. Verse 1 and 2 sets a pretty graphic scene, and yet in verse 3, what does David say? It doesn't matter. You're holy.

It would be dangerous temptation for David to see himself to be forsaken by God, and to allow those thoughts to build and continue. Because think about that. Again, go back to the application of this applying to ourselves, and think about that when you don't receive answers, and you're getting really frustrated, and you almost like you shake your fist at God. Those things build. They just naturally build. It's just like a snowball effect, right? But that's not a good place to be in.

[20 : 18] So David recognizes that, and what does he do? He quickly turns his mind to the constant evidences afforded by the grace of God from which he might encourage himself. He looks around, right?

David would not allow his present crisis, his doubt, his confusion to doubt or stain the holiness and greatness of God. Whatever he did not know in this present situation, there were some things that he did in fact know, and that's what he used to motivate him to shift his perspective. A quote from one of the commentaries. Here is the triumph of faith. The Savior stood like a rock in the wide ocean of temptation. High as the billows rose, so did his faith. Like the coral rock, wax greater and stronger till it became an island of salvation to our shipwrecked souls. It is as if he had said, it matters not what I endure. Storms may howl upon me, men despise, devils tempt, circumstances overpower, and God himself forsake me. Still, God is holy. There is no unrighteousness in him. David remembers here how God had answered and delivered many times before. He says, and you our fathers trusted. They trusted and you delivered. To you they cried and were rescued. And you they trusted and were not put to shame. This is interesting language, though, here.

Because picture, if you will, what is happening. God had answered many times before. It's clear from that verse. David's making, he's recalling past events that he's seen God answer, right? David knows this, but now this same God who has done so many good things in the past, this same God now seems so distant and silent. And I mean, you can almost hear the agony of this forsaken one. To you they cried.

To you they trusted and you delivered them. But I cry and you do not answer me. I cried to you and I find no rest. Sort of how fair is that? You've done this in the past and yet now I'm asking and you're not delivering. Why? He is, what David's really doing here is he's gathering examples of all the past ages to encourage, strengthen, and persuade himself that as God has never cast off any of his chosen people, he also would be one of the number of those for whom deliverance is securely laid up in the hand of God.

He expressly declares that he belongs to the offspring of those who had been heard. He's an heir of the same grace that they had experienced and he reminds himself of that.

[23 : 08] Simply put, really, David is trusting in God. David's trusting God. Regardless of what David sees at this present moment, he knows that God is for him.

We, like, we know that verse. If God is for us, who can be against us? And we know, you know, God works all things together for good for those who are called, right? We know verses like that. We know how the New Testament describes the life of a believer. That we are to, his ways are higher than our ways, right? But ask yourself that question. Put yourself in this situation here and remember the times that we've all cried out for an answer and not gotten one. Or remember the times that we've prayed and we've gotten a different outcome than we have hoped. Because often we use that verse, God works all things together for good, and we think something bad happened and now God's going to do something better, right? You lost a hundred dollars, but don't worry, he's going to give you a thousand.

That's not what that verse means. What it means is your eternal good, God is working all of these things out for that. That ultimately, the good that comes one day far outweighs the suffering that we go through now. Are we able to echo this confidence and this trust that David has, that he knows that?

Are we able to stand firm on the word of God and trust it in its entirety and know that it is true? Because if we believe certain verses, then that means we have to believe all of it.

We don't get the luxury of just picking and choosing things that apply to us. Our confidence is on the very words of God. It's not on our emotions or our feelings or our experiences. It's on the word of God, on the infallible and errant word of God. And then in verse 6 through 8, Spurgeon says this verse is a miracle in language. How could the Lord of glory be brought to such loment as to be not only lower than the angels, but even lower than man?

[25 : 16] What a contrast between the I am statement and this here that says I am a worm. The forsaken one here feels himself to be comparable to a helpless, powerless, downtrodden worm.

Passive while crushed and unnoticed and despised by those who trod upon him. He selects the weakest of creatures here. I'm going to read Matthew 27 verse 39 through 43.

Matthew 27. 39 through 43.

And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, you who will destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself if you are the son of God. Come down from the cross. So also the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him saying, he saved others. He cannot save himself.

He is the king of Israel. Let him come down now from the cross and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God deliver him now if he desires him. For he said, I am the son of God.

[26 : 39] Now here in Psalm 22, David's misery is multiplied at those who mocked and misunderstood his agony. They used it as an excuse to call into question his relationship with God, even as the friends of Job did.

It was as if they would say to him, it seemed that he trusted in the Lord, but we all know that the Lord rescues those who trusted him. It seemed that he delighted in God, but that must be false because he's not delivered.

We know that David, when he saw himself unjustly condemned of the world, was accustomed to support and console himself with the assurance that since he had the approving testimony of a good conscience, he had God in heaven for his guardian, who was able to execute vengeance upon his revilers. But now all who saw him reproached him, that with vain arrogance, he had groundlessly boasted of the succor he would receive from God. Where is that God, they say, on whom he leaned? Where is that love to which he trusted? Satan has not a more deadly dart for wounding the souls of men than when we endeavor to dislodge hope from our minds by turning the promises of God into ridicule. David's enemies do not simply say that his prayers were in vain and that the love of God of which he boasted was fallacious, but they indirectly charged him with being a hypocrite. And that in that he falsely pretended to be one of the children of God from whom he was altogether estranged. Ever had that experience before? Ever had an outsider mock your faith or a family member question your calling? That you see all these things that are going on in your life and it's from somebody who doesn't believe in God and they point to that as a reason why God doesn't exist, right? The existence of evil does not necessarily mean that there's no God.

We talked about this in the previous section. Don't allow these things, though, to cause you to lack trust in God. Don't allow the mocking and the scorning to wear you down. And then there's another shift, again, in verse 9 through 11. That word yet again. And this is a beautiful section here because what David does, he declares that even before he was born, God had shown towards him such evidence of his fatherly love that now, although he was overwhelmed with the present darkness of death, he might, upon good ground, venture to hope for life from him. He's basically saying, will God not continue to be faithful to me now? Will God not continue to be faithful to us right now?

Just because David's present situation might be overwhelming, that doesn't cause him to forget how good God has been to him since birth. God has been so intimately involved in his life from day one.

[29 : 40] David understands that both for himself and prophetically speaking for the later to come Messiah, that in the depth of agony and this sense of God abandoning him, one could still appeal to God in the remembrance of better times. David and the forsaken one here, they did not say, since I feel abandoned by God, I will abandon him, right? Because that could have been his response.

You're not listening to me, God, so I'm done with you. He remains steadfast through the dark of night. He still made an appeal to the God who cared for him since birth. Spurgeon says, that child, now fighting the greatest battle of his life, uses the mercy of his nativity as an argument with God.

Faith finds weapons everywhere. He who wills to believe shall never lack reasons for believing. There's that phrase again, yet. Even though all these people around him are mocking him, they're making fun of his faith, they're wagging their heads. David says, yet you are he who took me from the womb. David knows, again, regardless of the present situation that he is in, that God has been sovereign over his life the whole time. It's almost, again, as if God, or if David is thinking here, if God is for me, who could be against me? And again, that he works all things together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. Then we shift back to anguish in verse 12 through 18. There are a couple of mentions that I want to address here before we get into the big section of verse 14 and 15. This statement, many bowls encompassed me. Strong bowls of Bashan surround me. Bashan was a very fertile area that would have been east of the Sea of Galilee.

It would have been north of the Yarmouk River to Mount Hermon. And these Bashan bowls, as it doesn't take much explaining, an angry bowl is terrible, but these Bashan bowls, they were the choicest and they were the heaviest breed of the day. They would encircle their prey and they would move in for the kill.

And that, of course, describes the soldiers that are crucifying Jesus here. He says that they are like the bowls of Bashan, but he does not stop with that, for he is being devoured by wild animals.

[32 : 25] That is what his tormentors have become. The people involved in arresting and condemning Jesus were only beasts attacking their creator. They opened wide their mouths at me like a ravening and roaring lion. His enemies, with the vigor of bowls and cruelty of lions, surrounded him, eagerly seeking his ruin.

Now, what's he talking about here? He's talking about Rome, right? Because Rome crucified him, and the lion was the representation of Rome. So he's comparing these people to Rome in David's language. It's, again, it's a messianic, it's prophetic. Now notice his condition here. Now again, keep this in mind, that crucifixion was not a thing during David's day. It was unknown to him, okay?

So Rome was the ones that, they were the ones that instituted crucifixion, and they weren't even in existence yet. But here is a picture, here is a clear picture of a man dying by crucifixion.

C.I. Schofield, who created the Schofield Reference Bible, if you're familiar with that, he says, Psalm 22 is a graphic picture of death by crucifixion. The bones out of joint, the hands, the arms, the shoulders, the pelvis, the profuse perspiration caused by intense suffering, the action of the heart affected, strength exhausted, extreme thirst, hands and feet pierced, they are all associated with that mode of death, with crucifixion. The accompanying circumstances are precisely those fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ. The desolate cry of verse 1, the periods of light and darkness in verse 2, the contemptuous and humiliating treatment of verse 6, 7, 8, and 12, and 13. The casting lots of verse 18 were all literally fulfilled. When it is remembered that crucifixion was a Roman, not a Jewish form of execution, the proof of inspiration is irresistible.

A couple of references that we'll look at, this I am poured out like water, most likely a reference to the excessive perspiration of a dying man in the sun. Bones being out of joint. What happens when a man would be crucified, he would begin to lose blood and his strength would literally just fall out of him and what that would cause is bones would start to just slip out of joint, just naturally pop out joint. That in and of itself is a terrible thing, right? If you've ever had something like that happen to you, you know the pain that it goes through. He says, my heart is like wax, my strength is gone, my tongue is stuck to my jaw, they cast a lot from my clothes, my bones are exposed, they are mocking me.

[35 : 30] And for Jesus, for our Lord Jesus Christ, these things were literally true. These were actual events. He was physically drained. He was suffering. His bones were popping out of joint one by one.

And you'd have to think that this pain and suffering that he was going through would cause his mental state and his emotions to be affected. I was in my recliner the other night and somehow I moved and my right knee just locked up and it like made this pop noise and it put me on the ground. And I mean, even in that little bit of a situation, I cried like a little girl, like a little baby, like I was just in so much pain. And yet that is just such a small example to what we see going on here. Right? Just, just, they're, they're, they're, the imagery here, we can't allow that to just sort of like, yeah, we know the story of the crucifixion, right? We have to ask ourselves, why?

Why did this happen? Why did this need to happen? Why did an event like this that's so horrible, why did this need to happen? I want to look at Isaiah 53 because it really ties in this point that we're trying to make here. We might be familiar with this section, but I'll read, um, we only have 12 verses, but I'd like to read the chapter.

Isaiah 53 says, who has believed what he has heard from us and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground.

He had no form of majesty that we should look at him and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as one from whom men hid their faces. He was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray and we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent. So he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away, and as for his generation who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him. He has put him to grief. When his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring. He shall prolong his days. The will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

[38 : 54] Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied. By his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors. Yet he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors. Now, we could spend weeks upon Isaiah 53 and pull out all of what's going on in there, but there's just a couple of statements that I want to highlight that apply to Psalm 22 and this question of why. Why did this happen? An interesting verse, verse 10, yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him.

So this description of the crucifixion in Isaiah 53, this description in Psalm 22, that was the plan all along. It was the will of God to do this. That was the plan. There was a sovereign purpose and plan behind all of this. There was not a plan B, right? There was not, this was not something that God came up at the last minute and said, well, what are we going to do now? I didn't think that was going to happen. It was the will of the Lord. It was his plan. Jesus, according to the will of God, the Father was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities, and now with his wounds, we are healed. Of course, this, that verse there, we have to make a caveat to it. This healing being spoken of here is a spiritual healing. You could actually translate this verse as healing has been accomplished for us. It is a healing that restores the whole person, restoring fullness and completion.

This healing is salvation, right? It's healing in the sense of salvation being accomplished. That's why this happened. That's why Psalm 22 is so important, so that we could be saved.

It's not just a story. It's just a literal event. It's just something that really happened, and there was a purpose behind it. And our last point is simply titled, It Is Finished, this story and this sermon. But again, we see here, if we flip back over to Psalm 22, it appears that the suffering Savior has found his communion with God restored. He says, You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen. Now, this is a cry of triumph. This is not a cry of despair. What's going on here is it marks the moment at which the period of darkness passes in Jesus after he had suffered true alienation from the Father as punishment for our sins. He becomes aware of God's presence and God's favor once again. We have an entirely different tone now to this Psalm, don't we? It begins to celebrate the victory of the cross. This brings imagery of 1 Corinthians 15.

[42 : 21] Death has swallowed up in victory. Oh, death, where is your sting? Oh, death, or I'm sorry. Oh, death, where is your victory? Oh, death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ. That's what's going on here. That's why we can look at a story like the crucifixion and all this dark imagery. That's why we can look at that story and rejoice. That's how it helps us to, when we read Isaiah 53 verse 10, where it says it's the will of the Lord to crush him, and we immediately want to say, well, that's not what that really means. Crush is just used there in imagery word, and it wasn't really the will. No. Like, we look at the cross from our, what has been applied to our account, and that causes us to rejoice. As heartbreaking as it was, for those of us who have placed our faith in Christ, this is a good event.

It was heartbreaking, but it was serving a greater good. Without this event, then death still has its sting. Without this event, death gets the victory, right? Paul, what does he say? If Christ is not raised from our sins, then we are the ones that should be pitied the most. Our faith and our preaching is in vain if Christ is not raised. For those followers of Christ, this is a good event.

And listen, this is good news too if you're not a follower of Christ, because this work can be applied to your account as well. By simply trusting in the finished work of Christ, if you confess with your mouth and you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, right? You will be saved.

Trusting in that finished work, you have access to this victory as well. You place your trust in him. You place your faith in him, right?

[44 : 22] Believers, what are we doing to grow our trust and our faith in Christ? What are we doing to work out our salvation with fear and trembling? Are we reflecting upon the finished work of Christ on our behalf on the cross? Or has this become, again, as we read words like this, like, yeah, we know it's the crucifixion. Has it become some far-off reality to us? We see this interesting statement here in verse 22. It says, I will tell of your name to my brothers in the midst of the congregation. I will praise you.

Now, that's Hebrews chapter 2, right? That's a clear representation of Hebrews chapter 2. In verse 9 of Hebrews chapter 2, it says, But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God, he might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting that he for whom and by whom all things exist in bringing many sons to glory should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, I will tell of your name to my brothers in the midst of the congregation.

I will sing your praise. So do we see all these connections that are going on here, right? We start in Psalm 22, and from that one section of text, we go to Hebrews 2, and Isaiah 53, and 1 Corinthians 15, and there are so many examples more that we could use, but what we're seeing here is this plan that is just sort of unfolding throughout all of Scripture. The work of the cross, right? The work of the cross.

The work of the cross. The finished and complete work of Christ on the cross adopts us into the family of Christ. That is why he is not ashamed to call us brothers. Who's them, right? Who's the them that he is referring to? It's us. If you're a follower of Christ, that's who he's referring to. Christ literally says that we are his family. Christ literally says that we are his own. He says that he bought us with his own blood. He redeemed us from a life of darkness and weakness. And you want to know what the great thing is, too. As we started, verse 31, they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn that he has done it, right? It is finished. They tell us, the great work has been accomplished and finished on our behalf. There is no need for us to contribute, right? Christ has done the work for us. We'll close with this point. And the book of Hebrews talks about many themes, but ultimately, you could just summarize it in a statement that Christ is better. Christ is compared to the angels.

He's compared to Moses. There's even a little bit of imagery of Melchizedek. But throughout the book of Hebrews, there's this discussion of the Levitical priesthood and that Christ is our great high priest, that he intercedes for us all the time. But in the book of Hebrews, it says what? After making atonement for sins, he did what? He sat down. And the only reason he would need to sit down is why his work was finished. Because in the Levitical priesthood day, there was no seats for the priest to sit down because their work was never done. They were always making sacrifice for sin. They had to make a sacrifice on behalf of their selves. They had to make a sacrifice on behalf of their people. And this system just repeated over and over and over again. But yet when Christ did the work, he sat down.

[48 : 12] Because again, his work was complete and finished, which then applies to the believer's account and those that have trusted and put their faith in Christ. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for Psalm 22. I thank you personally for what a blessing it was this past week, this past two weeks to study it and how real it has become. And I pray that those in this room as well would understand these truths more. And that we would grow in our love for you and that as we leave today and what seems like immediately certain things happen to cause us to get off of our path and to lose our faith and to focus our eyes on something other than you, that we can remember the work that you did on our behalf and that it is finished. Father, for those that might be here today that don't know you, I pray that you've worked in their hearts and you've drawn them to you, that they would come to know you and that they would place their faith in you and they would understand the work that you've done again on their behalf as well. Strengthen our faith, cause us to believe, help our unbelief, and God we love and praise you in Jesus' name. Amen.