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The Suffering and Glory of Jesus - Psalm 22



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #273 ~

The chapter in the Bible that best talks about the suffering and glory of Jesus Christ is Psalm 22. It was written by David, and there's no doubt he experienced some of what he wrote in this Psalm, but its primary focus is Jesus. Psalm 22 vividly tells us what Jesus was thinking and feeling when He was suffering on the cross, but it also shares His hope, a glorious future that centers on Him and directly affects us. And so, it's unique for it describes aspects of both Jesus' first coming and second coming. Let's go through this Psalm and see what it says about Jesus' suffering and glory.

Psalm 22:1. Shortly before Jesus died, He cried out to His Father – *"My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?"* (Matt. 27:46). Jesus feels absolutely terrible, worse than He had ever felt before. Jesus is physically suffering. Every inch of His body is hurting; He's in great pain; and He's exhausted. Jesus is emotionally hurting. He, the Son of God, is being mocked and laughed at; He, an innocent man, is being punished for our sins; surely, He feels guilty; and He's all alone. Jesus is relationally separated from His Father. They had been perfectly united since eternity past, but now His Father rejects Him and isn't talking to

Him because He's bearing our sin. Jesus is spiritually separated from His Father. He's experiencing and feeling the holy wrath of God. But Jesus' suffering and death is the only way a person can be saved. *"Christ died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh."* 1 Peter 3:18, John 14:6

Psalm 22:2. Jesus keeps crying out to His Father, but to no avail. His Father is completely silent – He could not answer Jesus because He's treating Him like a sinner – He has to be just, He has to punish His own Son. *"God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."* 2 Corinthians 5:21

Psalm 22:3-5. Jesus knows He's bearing the guilt of sinners and that His Father is doing the right thing by punishing Him. So what does He do? He thinks about the saints of old, many who were persecuted, and yet they trusted God. Here is Jesus in extreme physical, emotional, and spiritual anguish, and He too is trusting God, for He's convinced that He will be delivered and be greatly blessed. *"I trust in You, O Lord… How great is Your goodness which You have stored up for those who fear You."* Psalm 31:14-19

Psalm 22:6-8. Jesus is hated and so He's persecuted – He's taunted and ridiculed. *"If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross… He saved others, He cannot save Himself"* (Matt. 27:39-44). But Jesus knows He's doing the right thing, that He's dying for sinners so they can be saved from their sins. And He knew the plan and power of His Father, that He would miraculously raise Him from the dead. *"You will not abandon my soul to Sheol, nor will You allow Your holy One to undergo decay"* (Psalm 16:10). *"God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death."* Acts 2:23-24

Psalm 22:9-10. Jesus trusted in His Father His entire life, as a fetus, a baby, a toddler, a boy, a youth, a teenager, a young man, during His ministry years, and now on the cross. Jesus' faith, His complete and

total reliance on His Father is critical, for it enabled Him to live a perfect life, have a successful ministry, and die on the cross to pay for all the sins of all the people who would ever believe in Him.

Psalm 22:11-13. Jesus again prays to His Father. Big time trouble is near, for Jesus' enemies are like animals, like mad bulls and roaring lions. They hate Him with a passion, they can't wait until He's dead.

Psalm 22:14-18. Jesus pours out His heart to His Father – He tells Him that all His bones are out of joint. Can you imagine how excruciatingly painful this must have been? The physical stress Jesus is experiencing is putting incredible pressure, an unbelievable strain on His heart, so much so that His heart feels like wax. Jesus is so dehydrated that His tongue cleaves to His mouth. And He feels extreme pain in His hands and feet, for they had been pierced through by huge spikes. Every time Jesus pushes up to get some air, this screaming pain shoots through His hands and feet.

All these evildoers are around Jesus, staring at Him and making fun of Him – and they are gambling for His clothes. Trouble is upon Jesus in every way imaginable, and only by faith, by trusting His heavenly Father can He make it through these horrendous and hellish six hours. What helps Jesus is knowing that this is His Father's will – *"You lay Me in the dust of death."* And He knows it won't be long before He dies and His work on the cross to pay for our sins is finished. John 19:30

Psalm 22:19-21. Again, Jesus prays to His Father, and He calls Him Lord, the One who directs His life. Jesus asks Him for help, and to hurry up, to bring this unbelievably difficult ordeal to an end. He wants to be rescued from His enemies, ones who are like lions, oxen, and dogs, like wild animals.

Then there's a dramatic change in the direction of this Psalm. The first

21 verses describe Jesus' suffering on the cross. But 9 of the last 10 verses speak of Jesus' hope, of His future (*"will"* is stated 11 times), and this hope helps Him endure to the end, to finish the work of paying for our sins. But it's verse 24 that explains why this sudden change in the Psalm.

Psalm 22:24. Jesus knows His Father has not looked down upon Him, detested Him, or disregarded what He's going through. He knows His Father deeply loves and cares for Him and has not forgotten Him, and that He will answer His prayer. And this is what vs. 24 tells us – *"when He* (Jesus) *cried to Him* (God the Father) *for help, He heard."* That Jesus' Father heard Him and was satisfied that He paid for our sins is the reason He had hope and is looking forward to the future.

Jesus knows the plan and promise of His Father, that He would physically die and immediately be with Him, and then 3 days later, be raised from the dead, be given a glorified body. He understood that His victory on the cross was the basis, the reason for a glorious future, for the coming church and kingdom ages. He realized His death and resurrection would bring eternal glory to Him and His Father, and would greatly, powerfully, and eternally affect every person who would ever live, resulting in incredible blessings for a great multitude of people, ones who would be His spiritual brothers and sisters. Jesus has hope – He knows the future is extremely bright for Him and all who put their faith in Him.

So what is this hope? Hundreds of Old Testament verses describe the hope God has given to His people, and these last verses of Psalm 22 give us a glimpse of what is soon to come. And in my understanding, these are fulfilled during the kingdom age, but some may also be referring to the church age.

Psalm 22:22-23, 25. God is being praised, and it's the main theme in these *"hope"* verses that are primarily speaking about the kingdom

age. We read, *"In the midst of the assembly I will praise You,"* and who is the *"I"*? It could be referring to David, but there's no doubt that Jesus, who is in Jerusalem at this time, is honoring His Father. In John 17:2, Jesus prays, *"Glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You."* Phil. 2:10-11 says, "*every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* Jesus wanted His Father glorified and the Father wanted Jesus glorified. Speaking of Jesus, Psalm 47:6 says, *"Sing praises to our King, sing praises."*

Then we read, *"all you descendants of Israel*" – all these Jewish people are praising the Lord and standing in awe of Him. That it says *"all"* means this is not taking place during this church age for not *"all"* descendants of Israel are worshiping the Lord at this time, but they will be during the kingdom age.

Psalm 22:26. The afflicted are the poor, the needy, the humble, and they are seeking God, and He's helping them, saving them, and they live forever, they have eternal life, and He's forever satisfying and blessing them. *"He will deliver the needy when he cries for help… He will have compassion on the poor and needy, and the lives of the needy He will save."* (Ps. 72:12-13). This could be speaking of both church age and kingdom age believers, for people are turning to Christ and getting saved during both these times.

Psalm 22:27. Everyone on earth, all nations and all peoples, and all Jews and Gentiles, including unbelievers, will be worshiping the Lord. Again, Phil. 2:10-11 predicts this – *"that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow… and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord"* – and this sure isn't occurring now, which means it must happen during the coming kingdom age. Psalm 67:3

Psalm 22:28. There will be a kingdom, and this is Christ's kingdom, and He'll be reigning over the world and ruling with a rod of iron. *"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His*

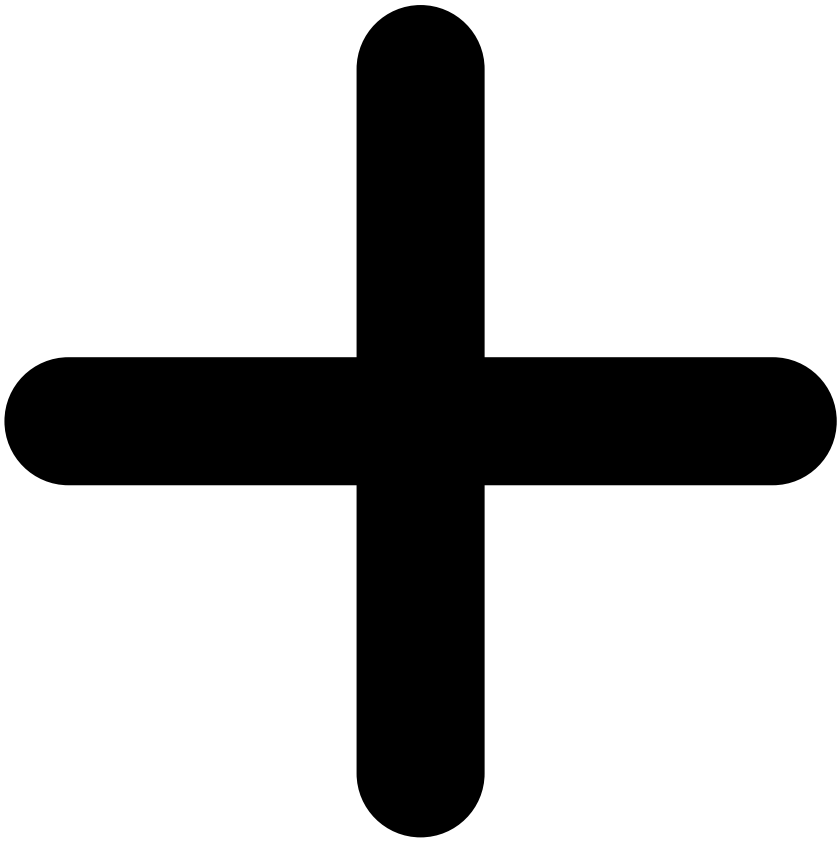
Christ" (Rev. 11:15). *"The Lord will be the King over all the earth"* (Zech. 14:9). Psalm 2:9, Matthew 6:10

Psalm 22:29. All those who are rich, whether they're saved or not, are not just eating good food but are worshiping the Lord. This must take place during the kingdom age because there's no way all rich people are worshiping Christ during this age. Not only that, but all those who die, who go down to the dust, will bow to the Lord. God makes His point loud and clear that all people, whether they live or die, whether they are rich or poor, will worship Jesus Christ. Again, we're seeing the truth of Phil. 2:10-11, that *"at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth."*

Psalm 22:30-31. Our posterity, our spiritual descendants, will worship and serve the Lord, in this age and the next (Matt. 4:10). And how? By telling people that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior, by proclaiming His righteousness and their unrighteousness, by telling them that Jesus died on the cross to pay for their sins *("He has done it"* – He finished the work to pay for people's sins), and if they repent of their sins and believe Jesus died for them and rose again, they'll be forgiven and be given eternal life.

This big-picture Psalm is all about Jesus' suffering and glory. Be very thankful that He suffered and died to save your soul and give you eternal life. But now's our time to serve our Lord and suffer for Him. Rom. 8:18 tells us, *"suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him."* 2 Cor. 4:16-17 says, *"momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory."* Now we suffer, but in the future, we will be glorified, and be blessed forever, and worship and serve the Lord forever! Hallelujah, what a Savior! *"I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and will glorify Your name forever. For Your lovingkindness toward me is great, and You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol."* Psalm 86:12-13

P.S. This is what’s most important, that Jesus Christ died and rose again to save our souls, to give us His life, to bless us forever that we might worship and glorify Him forever. Keep thinking about what He did for you so that you might love Him all the more. Here are three posts about Christ’s resurrection: *“The Resurrection and the Rapture of Believers”*, *“Christ’s Resurrection Means the Best is Yet to Come”*, and *“The Resurrection: Death to Life in Body – and Spirit.”*





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