

**April 19, 2026**

## **Psalm 22**

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? <sup>2</sup> O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest. <sup>3</sup> Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. <sup>4</sup> In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. <sup>5</sup> To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame. <sup>6</sup> But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people. <sup>7</sup> All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads; <sup>8</sup> “He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!” <sup>9</sup> Yet you are he who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother's breasts. <sup>10</sup> On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God. <sup>11</sup> Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help. <sup>12</sup> Many bulls encompass me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me; <sup>13</sup> they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion. <sup>14</sup> 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; <sup>15</sup> my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. <sup>16</sup> For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet — <sup>17</sup> I can count all my bones—they stare and gloat over me; <sup>18</sup> they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots. <sup>19</sup> But you, O Lord, do not be far off! O you my help, come quickly to my aid! <sup>20</sup> Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog! <sup>21</sup> Save me from the mouth of the lion! You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen! <sup>22</sup> I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you: <sup>23</sup> 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! <sup>24</sup> For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him. <sup>25</sup> From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will perform before those who fear him. <sup>26</sup> The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord! May your hearts live forever! <sup>27</sup> All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. <sup>28</sup> For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations. <sup>29</sup> 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. <sup>30</sup> Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation; <sup>31</sup> they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.

Scriptures for further study:  
Exodus 9:16

“David complains that he is forsaken by God, not that he had fallen away from faith, but because he was pressed by extreme afflictions.”

-John Calvin

“A groan may be a prayer when words fail.”

-Charles Spurgeon

“The soul may be in a storm and yet pray; yea, the very storm may drive it to prayer.”

-John Owen



## When God Feels Far but Isn't Psalm 22

**BIG IDEA:** Prayer is God's appointed means by which He meets us in our pain and leads us from despair to praise.

Or to say it more simply, prayer leads the sufferer to worship.

### OUTLINE

- A Present, Painful, and Desperate Prayer ( vv. 1–2, 6–8, 12–18)
- A Present, Powerful, and Redeeming God (vv. 3–5, 9–11, 19–21)
- A Response of Praise (vv. 22-31)

## DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE WEEK

These “Sermon Discussion Questions” are designed for study during the week for believers in a wide variety of ages & stages in their walk with Christ.

1. How have you responded to feelings of abandonment, humiliation, physical hurt, or despair, almost without hope? How did it work for you?
2. Refer to vv. 1-2, 6-8, 12-18. What can you learn about prayer from the way David pours out his heart to God?
3. Read verses 3-5, 9-11, and 19-21. Based on the verses, identify what David was recalling. What was the Lord’s strategy for leading David to do this? How can remembering God’s faithfulness in the past reframe your suffering?
4. After God uses prayer to redirect David’s focus back to reminding him of past faithfulness and renewing his confidence, what actions does this newfound confidence inspire him to take?
5. How does David’s example help you see that God meets you in your pain and leads you from despair to praise?

“Believers do not pray with the view of informing God about things unknown to Him, but that they may arouse themselves to seek Him, exercise their faith in meditating on His promises, and relieve themselves from their anxieties by pouring them into His bosom.”

-John Calvin

“Prayer is the way to experience a powerful confidence that God is handling our lives well.”

-Tim Keller

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This psalm has the appearance of an especially anguished individual lament, where the suffering comes from the attacks of unscrupulous people and is intensified by the mockery of those who should feel sympathy; this person, nevertheless, looks forward to vindication and joyful worship with the rest of God's people. However, in view of its prominent place in the crucifixion story, Christian readers have found in it a description of the sufferings of Jesus. Many Christians have taken it as a straight prediction of Jesus' sufferings, as if the primary function of the psalm was to foretell the work of the Savior; others have read it as a lament in its OT context, with a "fuller meaning" revealed by Jesus' use of it. It is better to see the psalm as providing a lament for the innocent sufferer, and then to see how all the Gospels use this to portray Jesus as the innocent sufferer par excellence.

- ESV Study Bible

***Praise to Jesus*** – Lord, we praise you for David's raw and gritty prayer, which shows us that we can be real with you. Thank you for the reality that Psalm 22 points all of us to Jesus! We remember and praise you because Jesus entered suffering and overcame it through His resurrection. Pain is not the final chapter of our story. The resurrection proves that Jesus is alive, and it is the pledge that pain will never be the period at the end of our sentence.

***Repent through Jesus*** – Lord, we confess the times that we have said, "God must not care about me; he doesn't know that my life is falling apart; no one understands me." Lord, we repent and, with David, feel deep emotions and keep praying. We will respond in faith, which means we will hold on to Your promises even when our emotions say otherwise.

***Consecration for Jesus*** – Because this Psalm points us to Jesus, we remember that Jesus entered and overcame suffering through His resurrection. Pain is not the final chapter of the story. Jesus is alive! Prayer is God's appointed means by which He meets us in our pain and leads us from despair to praise. May the Gospel continue to lead us to prayer and, in turn, lead every sufferer in Jesus to worship!

## FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

These questions are written to aid parents in leading family devotions with their children.

1. This psalm provides you with an opportunity to talk with your children about how some Old Testament passages have an original meaning and also have a direct meaning in the life of Jesus or His followers in the New Testament. This is a psalm of David. But this psalm also looks to the future to Christ's death on the cross.

2. What does it mean to be forsaken? Have you ever felt this way? (Other ways to translate this word are "abandoned" or "deserted." David felt abandoned by God. When Jesus quoted this verse from the cross, He was expressing how He took on our sin and our punishment.)

3. What descriptions of David's struggle remind you of Jesus' arrest and death? (Look at verses 1, 7, 8, and 18.)

4. In verses 22-31, who does this psalm say will praise God? (In verses 22-25, it is the Israelites. David describes them as his "brothers", "offspring of Jacob", "offspring of Israel", and "the great congregation". Then in verse 26, we read that the "afflicted" or the poor will praise Him. Next, we read in verses 27-28 that "the families of nations" will praise Him, which refers to the Gentiles or non-Jewish people. This psalm is another reminder of God's plan that would include people from every nation around the world.)

5. Who is mentioned in verses 30-31? (The "coming generation" and "a people yet unborn." This includes current followers of Christ like us.)

Scriptures for further study:

Matthew 27:32-54

John 19:28, 36-37

Galatians 3:13

2 Corinthians 5:21

## FOR STUDENTS

Scriptures for further study:

Matthew 27:32-54

John 19:28, 36-37

Galatians 3:13

2 Corinthians 5:21

Hebrews 12:2-3

1. David cries, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Have you ever felt distant from God or wondered where He was in a hard moment? What does it show us about faith that David brings this question directly to God?
2. In verses 3–5, David remembers God’s past faithfulness even while he is suffering. How can remembering what God has done in the past help you trust Him in the present?
3. Look at verses 6–8. David describes being mocked and rejected. Where do you see similar moments in Jesus’ life? What does this show you about how Jesus relates to our suffering?
4. What details in verses 14-18 stand out that point forward to Jesus’ crucifixion? Why does it matter that this was written before Jesus came?
5. There is a shift in verse 22. What changes from the first half of the psalm to the second? What does this teach us about how God works through suffering—even when it doesn’t feel like it in the moment?
6. What do verses 27-28 show about God’s plan for all nations? How does that include you?

## FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

1. Biblical scholars tell us that Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies from the Old Testament. Psalm 22 alone is fulfilled in multiple ways in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' crucifixion. (See, for example, Psalm 22:7-9 and Matthew 27:39-43; Psalm 22:1 and Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34; Psalm 22:18 and John 19:23-24; not to mention Psalm 22:14-16 predicting how Jesus would experience his bones being out of joint, his extreme thirst, and his hands and feet being pierced.

Question: How does the preponderance of fulfilled prophecies, especially those that Jesus could not have purposely tried to fulfill, help one believe in the divine inspiration and truthfulness of the Bible, as well as the character of God?

2. Regardless of the kind of suffering you and I may experience, how does Psalm 22 help us face our afflictions and honestly cry out to the Lord? How important is it also to cry out to the Lord with a trusting heart? (See verses 3-5, 9, 10).

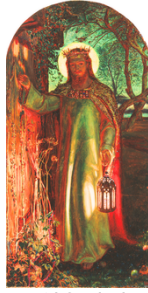
3. If we see Jesus' suffering on the cross through the lens of Psalm 22, then we should better understand the viscerally terrifying predicament Jesus was in: surrounded by beastly people, desperately thirsty, pierced with nails, clothing divided, torn apart, etc. We are meant to feel the terror, pain, agony, shame, and utter abandonment at the cross.

Reflect: If we understand furthermore that Jesus endured all this for us, how should that move us to profound gratitude?

4. Verses 1-21 speak of great suffering, but verses 22-31 shift dramatically to a note of praise and joy.

Question: How does knowing our amazing future in Christ also help us endure or present difficulties and sorrows?

# The Blessed Life: A Study of the Psalms



*"The Light of the World" (1851-1853) by William Holman Hunt*

## **Psalms Introduction**

The Book of Psalms is the sacred place where the living God meets His people in the most intimate and personal of ways. He invites them to know Him not merely as an idea, but as their refuge, portion, shepherd, and King. From the opening doorway of blessedness in Psalm 1 to the climactic Hallelujahs of Psalm 150, the Psalter reveals that the truly happy life is one rooted in the person and work of Almighty God, whose steadfast love holds His people through every season of the soul. As the Psalter moves from anguish to adoration, from darkness to dawn, it becomes a mirror of the Christian life itself. It teaches us to pray honestly, to hope stubbornly, and to sing faithfully, even when night seems long. In the deepest valleys, the Psalms give voice to the church's groan; on the highest heights, they train the church's doxology. And in every line, every cry, and every hallelujah, Christ Himself comes near, revealing the light of the world in the dark night of the soul and leading His people into the blessedness that only His grace can give.

– Pastor Bill

## **About the artwork and artist.**

The Light of the World, 1851-1853, is an iconic allegorical painting by William Holman Hunt. The painting depicts Jesus Christ as a regal figure in flowing robes, wearing a crown of thorns, holding a glowing lantern, and preparing to knock on a weed-overgrown wooden door with no external handle. This illustrates Revelation 3:20 from the Bible: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him..." The artist William Holman Hunt is showing us that Jesus is the divine door to the living God who meets His people in the most intimate and personal ways. The closed, overgrown door → representing the human soul or "obstinately shut mind" that has long ignored spiritual calling. There is no handle on the outside → the door can only be opened from within, emphasizing free will and personal invitation to faith. The lantern → Christ as the light of the world (John 8:12), illuminating darkness and offering salvation. The work marked Hunt's deepening Christian faith (from earlier agnosticism) and became one of the most reproduced and devotional images of the Victorian era, inspiring oratorios, hymns, and widespread popular piety. It's often called a visual sermon on personal salvation.