

TRUTH B-P CHURCH
Adults Sunday School

PSALM 22 – THE SUFFERING CHRIST (PART 3)

I. REVISION

Psalm 22 is a messianic psalm. It depicts how the psalmist was going through much suffering which also describes the suffering Christ. And it is based upon the psalmist's experiences in his suffering. This psalm is also known as the messianic psalm.

We have covered how the psalmist cried due to suffering (1-2). However he continued to trust in God due to his faith in Him (3-5). He remained humble as he was enjoying close fellowship with God. He knew who he was before the Almighty God. He did not see himself worthy and it was God's delight that gave him the comfort. He was full of hope when he looks to God. He realizes that in himself there is no hope at all.

We continue with what we have left off as the psalmist continues to look to God as he fix his eyes upon the Messiah and what He will be going through the sake of the salvation of His own people.

II. LOOKING TO GOD FOR HELP

Verse 18, “They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.”

This prophecy was fulfilled in John 19:24 when the soldiers cast lots for the Lord's garments while He was hanging on the cross. They cared not for Him who had done no wrong and yet was sentenced to die the most cruel death on the cross. They cared not for justice and equity be upheld but only have rooms for material things that blinded their eyes from the Saviour before them. They were at the foot of the cross where Jesus died and yet they were so far from God and His kingdom. Let us not think that we are better than these soldiers who cared more for the garments than the Lord who wore them.

Verse 19, “But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.”

When troubles abound and enemies surround, the situation can be so overwhelming that you begin to fear and lose sight of God's presence. The psalmist cried out to God in his moment of desperation. The presence of God became very precious to him. He knew that the only way out is God by His side. It is not money. It is not any great man who can fill up the gap. Only God!

How powerful is this covenantal relationship that has been restored and established because of Christ? The only help available in the eyes of the psalmist as well as all of God's people is God Himself. God has all the power and strength to help His people out of the most difficult and trying circumstances. The call for help is urgent. There is no time for procrastination and delay for the next time. We need God's strength now: “Haste thee to help me.”

Verse 20, “Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.”

It was at the point of death that the psalmist had arrived in his trouble. This sword is not his own but the enemy's. He called upon the Lord to save him and deliver him. This verse is synonymous parallelism. My soul and my darling are referring to the same thing. The sword and the power of the dog are also referring to the same thing.

The dog here is not the kind of pet dog we rear at home. The dog mentioned here are the wild dogs. And they were usually very fierce and attacked you when you are alone. They came in packs and roamed along the streets for food and water at night. But God can protect you from all enemies when you trust in Him.

Verse 21, “Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.”

Danger is near. There is no time to waste. The lion's mouth is already opened and ready to devour. The unicorn is an unknown animal. It was believed to be a very ferocious and powerful beast. Be it a lion or an unicorn, the psalmist knew that only God can deliver and help him.

As believers, we must understand that deliverance does not always mean physical safety or prevention from death. God may have delivered the psalmist from physical harm and death. The only reason was for God's higher will and plan to be fulfilled so that the Messiah can come. If David's life is taken, how will the promise of the Messiah be fulfilled?

For believers, deliverance is always spiritual. No man can do anything to harm or kill our soul. Since the day we are born again, we are under God's protection and His watchful eye. Our salvation will never be lost. Man may harm or kill us. That's all they can do to us. They can never harm or kill our soul.

III. FEARING GOD

Verse 22, “I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.”

The psalmist is full of praise because God has been his perfect help. There is nothing for him to fear since God is with him. How can the psalmist not testify of God's name to all those around him? Others need to know and come and find protection from God. There are many who are still outside God's kingdom. Who will go and tell them? Will you?

Verse 23, “Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.”

The psalmist knew that he is not going to fear God and praise Him alone. All those who are with him must also testify of God's goodness and faithfulness in their life. God's people had no reason not to praise Him. When they fear Him, they have all the reason to gather themselves to testify what God has done for them. As the seed of Jacob, they were reminded of their humble beginning. And as the seed of Israel, they were reminded how they began as one man and became a great nation. This is God's doing. And Israel must always remember their humble beginning.

Verse 24, “For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.”

This verse calls for patience and trusting in God no matter what happen. When help seems to be delayed, it does not mean that God does not care for His own anymore. It does not mean that He became shameful of us because of the humiliation we are going through. God knew our heart. For when we cried to Him, He heard. His face was not turned away. That is a great comfort, isn't it? God did not forget His own. He continues to remember them and care for them.

(To be continued)