

## Psalm 22: ‘Lord, Why Have You Forsaken Me?’

*For the director of music. To the tune of “The Doe of the Morning.” A psalm of David.*

<sup>1</sup> *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*

*Why are you so far from saving me,  
so far from my cries of anguish?*

<sup>2</sup> *My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,  
by night, but I find no rest.*

<sup>3</sup> *Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;  
you are the one Israel praises.*

<sup>4</sup> *In you our ancestors put their trust;  
they trusted and you delivered them.*

<sup>5</sup> *To you they cried out and were saved;  
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.*

<sup>6</sup> *But I am a worm and not a man,  
scorned by everyone, despised by the people.*

<sup>7</sup> *All who see me mock me;  
they hurl insults, shaking their heads.*

<sup>8</sup> *“He trusts in the LORD,” they say,  
“let the LORD rescue him.*

*Let him deliver him,  
since he delights in him.”*

<sup>9</sup> *Yet you brought me out of the womb;  
you made me trust in you, even at my mother’s  
breast.*

<sup>10</sup> *From birth I was cast on you;  
from my mother’s womb you have been my God.*

<sup>11</sup> *Do not be far from me,  
for trouble is near  
and there is no one to help.*

<sup>12</sup> *Many bulls surround me;  
strong bulls of Bashan encircle me.*

<sup>13</sup> *Roaring lions that tear their prey  
open their mouths wide against me.*

<sup>14</sup> *I am poured out like water,  
and all my bones are out of joint.*

*My heart has turned to wax;  
it has melted within me.*

<sup>15</sup> *My mouth is dried up like a potsherd,  
and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;  
you lay me in the dust of death.*

<sup>16</sup> *Dogs surround me,  
a pack of villains encircles me;  
they pierce my hands and my feet.*

<sup>17</sup> *All my bones are on display;  
people stare and gloat over me.*

<sup>18</sup> *They divide my clothes among them  
and cast lots for my garment.*

<sup>19</sup> *But you, LORD, do not be far from me.  
You are my strength; come quickly to help me.*

<sup>20</sup> *Deliver me from the sword,  
my precious life from the power of the dogs.*

<sup>21</sup> *Rescue me from the mouth of the lions;  
save me from the horns of the wild oxen.*

<sup>22</sup> *I will declare your name to my people;  
in the assembly I will praise you.*

<sup>23</sup> *You who fear the LORD, praise him!  
All you descendants of Jacob, honor him!  
Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!*

<sup>24</sup> *For he has not despised or scorned  
the suffering of the afflicted one;  
he has not hidden his face from him  
but has listened to his cry for help.*

<sup>25</sup> *From you comes the theme of my praise in the  
great assembly;  
before those who fear you<sup>[1]</sup> I will fulfill my vows.*

<sup>26</sup> *The poor will eat and be satisfied;  
those who seek the LORD will praise him—  
may your hearts live forever!*

<sup>27</sup> *All the ends of the earth  
will remember and turn to the LORD,  
and all the families of the nations  
will bow down before him,*

<sup>28</sup> *for dominion belongs to the LORD  
and he rules over the nations.*

<sup>29</sup> *All the rich of the earth will feast and worship;  
all who go down to the dust will kneel before  
him—*

*those who cannot keep themselves alive.*

<sup>30</sup> *Posterity will serve him;  
future generations will be told about the Lord.*

<sup>31</sup> *They will proclaim his righteousness,  
declaring to a people yet unborn:  
He has done it!*

## Introduction

When we read the Bible, we must often remind ourselves that this is one book and God is the author. There are several threads of stories woven into this book, but they all come together around the person of Christ. He is God's answer to a rebellious and broken world.

In this psalm a number of verses stand out to us because it points to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Jesus quoted this Psalm when he cried in anguish 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken me' as he hung on the cross. We are all no strangers to suffering. In a broken world filled with suffering, many have struggled with the question 'where is God in the midst of suffering?' Some Christians would rather not pursue this line of questioning in fear of what the answers may reveal. Some would come to the conclusion that God has abandoned us because He is not present in our suffering. Psalm 22 does not evade this question, nor does it accept the conclusion that God has abandoned us. The psalm allows for two conflicting themes to flow through it. First, the experience of abandonment and despondency, and second, the certainty of God's goodness and presence.

The amazing thing here is as we read this Psalm and struggle through these questions, the psalm invites us to behold the cross, the place where we discover God's answer to a suffering world. God is not only present in our suffering; he has embraced our suffering. The cross becomes our source of strength, hope, comfort, and salvation because Jesus Christ who bore our suffering is exalted above all things. **'He has done it'**. Amen!

## Structure

Psalm 22 is a lament. The Psalmist is facing a very difficult situation. As much as he cries out to the Lord in anguish and speak of the many challenges that surrounds him, he continues to proclaim his confidence in the Lord. Observe how the Psalmist moves between the two strands of thought.

### God's Sovereignty and Faithfulness

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• God why have you forsaken me and why do you not hear my prayer?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You are in control</li><li>• You are exalted</li><li>• In the past the people looked to you in times of trouble, and they were not put to shame</li></ul>
<p><sup>1</sup> <i>My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?</i> <i>Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,</i> <i>by night, but I find no rest.</i></p>	<p><sup>3</sup> <i>Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the one Israel praises.</i> <sup>4</sup> <i>In you our ancestors put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them.</i> <sup>5</sup> <i>To you they cried out and were saved; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.</i></p>

## Trust

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I am despised</li><li>• I am mocked</li><li>• They enemies taunts me 'let us see if the Lord will save him'</li><li>• I am mocked for trusting you</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• From day one you have taught me to trust you.</li><li>• There is no one else for me</li></ul>
<p><sup>6</sup> <i>But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people.</i></p> <p><sup>7</sup> <i>All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads.</i></p> <p><sup>8</sup> <i>"He trusts in the Lord," they say, "let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."</i></p>	<p><sup>9</sup> <i>Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you, even at my mother's breast.</i></p> <p><sup>10</sup> <i>From birth I was cast on you; from my mother's womb you have been my God.</i></p> <p><sup>11</sup> <i>Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.</i></p>

## You are My Strength and Salvation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I am surrounded by powerful forces who want to destroy me</li><li>• I have lost all hope</li><li>• My enemies gloat over me and have made me a spectacle for all to see</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliver me from their hands</li></ul>
<p><sup>12</sup> <i>Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle me.</i></p> <p><sup>13</sup> <i>Roaring lions that tear their prey open their mouths wide against me.</i></p> <p><sup>14</sup> <i>I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me.</i></p> <p><sup>15</sup> <i>My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;</i> <i>you lay me in the dust of death.</i></p> <p><sup>16</sup> <i>Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet.</i></p> <p><sup>17</sup> <i>All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me.</i></p> <p><sup>18</sup> <i>They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.</i></p>	<p><sup>19</sup> <i>But you, Lord, do not be far from me. You are my strength; come quickly to help me.</i></p> <p><sup>20</sup> <i>Deliver me from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dogs.</i></p> <p><sup>21</sup> <i>Rescue me from the mouth of the lions; save me from the horns of the wild oxen.</i></p>

## **I will worship and declare your praises to all people**

1. After moving back and forth, the psalmist arrives at a place of worship. The Lord is present before Him, and the Lord is faithful and true. This is a powerful declaration of the greatness and goodness of God.
2. The psalm's first line was a cry of anguish <sup>1</sup> *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?* <sup>2</sup> *My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, but I find no rest.* Now the Psalmist with joy and confidence proclaims:
  - a. God has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help.
  - b. Those who seek the Lord will praise Him.
  - c. All dominion belong to the Lord and all nations will come before Him.
  - d. 'He has done it': A proclamation that will resonate throughout eternity.

<sup>22</sup> *I will declare your name to my people;  
in the assembly I will praise you.*

<sup>23</sup> *You who fear the Lord, praise him!  
All you descendants of Jacob, honour him!  
Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!*

<sup>24</sup> *For he has not despised or scorned  
the suffering of the afflicted one;  
he has not hidden his face from him  
but has listened to his cry for help.*

<sup>25</sup> *From you comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly;  
before those who fear you I will fulfill my vows.*

<sup>26</sup> *The poor will eat and be satisfied;  
those who seek the Lord will praise him—  
may your hearts live forever!*

<sup>27</sup> *All the ends of the earth  
will remember and turn to the Lord,  
and all the families of the nations  
will bow down before him,*

<sup>28</sup> *for dominion belongs to the Lord  
and he rules over the nations.*

<sup>29</sup> *All the rich of the earth will feast and worship;  
all who go down to the dust will kneel before him—  
those who cannot keep themselves alive.*

<sup>30</sup> *Posterity will serve him;  
future generations will be told about the Lord.*

<sup>31</sup> *They will proclaim his righteousness,  
declaring to a people yet unborn:  
He has done it!*

## Jesus Christ

1. **22:1**— *“<sup>41</sup> My God, my God why have you forsaken me?”*

Jesus bore our sin and was condemned for us. He endured the anguish of the separation from God so that we may have access.

2. **22:7**— *“<sup>7</sup> All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads.”*

Jesus endured scorn and derision.

<sup>9</sup> *Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads<sup>40</sup> and saying, “You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!”* Matthew 27:39-40

3. **22:8**— *“<sup>8</sup> “He trusts in the Lord,” they say, “let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.”*

<sup>41</sup> *In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him.<sup>42</sup> “He saved others,” they said, “but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.<sup>43</sup> He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”<sup>44</sup> In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.*

Matthew 27:41-45

4. **22:18**— *“<sup>18</sup> They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.”*

*And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.<sup>35</sup> The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One.”<sup>36</sup> The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar<sup>37</sup> and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.”* Luke 23:34-37

5. **22:31b**— *“he has done it.”*

**‘It is finished’.** Jesus has delivered us. In Him we have eternal life. As the psalmist proclaims that God has done it, we can proclaim the finished work of Christ.

6. **22:22**— *“<sup>22</sup> I will declare your name to my people; in the assembly I will praise you.”*

### Hebrews 2:11-12

<sup>11</sup> *Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.<sup>12</sup> He says, “I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters; in the assembly I will sing your praises.”*

The book of Hebrews tells us that it is Jesus who will proclaim the goodness of God to his people (family, all nations) throughout the ages. Through his suffering and resurrection, Jesus will glorify God among all people. All people will know that God will not forsake those whose trust are in Him.

# Prayer

<sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

**Hebrews 12:2-3**

## Church

- An intimate desire to be in His presence (Prayer, Word and Worship), where we learn to see God for who He is.
- For wisdom in planning our return back to physical services.
- Workplace: God will grant us the opportunity to represent Him; that we will be a voice of wisdom, hope and change during this difficult times.
- Trusting God with the small opportunities to bring glory to him, uniting our hearts as a Church to care for others, with our resources and abilities.
- Ministries:
  - In this season of waiting, we may learn to sow (in our learning and preparation).
  - Our vision may be refreshed in His presence.
  - Our hearts may be steadfast in Him, learning to trust in His timing.

## Covid-19

- Economy (people's livelihood)
- Wisdom and good governance
- Comfort for those who have lost loved ones
- Healing for those who are sick
- Mental health, stress, domestic violence
- Return to 'norm', people will continue to be vigilant

## Malaysia

- God will guide the leaders of our nation
- Healing that brings unity to the church to embrace her call of becoming instruments of reconciliation
- God will restore Justice and Compassion. The leaders will look into the needs of the poor and vulnerable.

