

Forsaken by the Father, Remembered by the Son

### Introduction

The words of the first verse of Psalm 22 are the very words that Jesus cried out on the cross following 3 hours of complete darkness that had covered the land...Eli, Eli lama sabachthani...

My God, My God why have You forsaken Me

Then after declaring "It is finished"

He yielded up his Spirit and died.

Matthew 27:51–54 (NKJV)

<sup>51</sup> Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, <sup>52</sup> and the graves were opened...

Crucifixion was a common practice by the Romans. They were known to be brutal and callous in their killing of criminals. At any given time there could be as many as 150 criminals crucified along the roads of the Roman Empire, just to remind the population of who was in charge and who could kill you, if you got out of line.

The callous nature of the Roman soldier who carried out the crucifixion spoke of a seared conscious and of just how common crucifixion was at that time.

But no one, and I mean no one, like Jesus had ever been crucified. This was different....He was different... He looked like a man and He suffered like a man but He was more than a man.

This was not just another law breaker or zealot trying to overthrow Rome. There was nothing they could accuse him of that was a true violation of the Law. The Religious leaders had to organize false accusations against him to bring charges. But even Pilate saw through their evil plotting and slander and declared him innocent.

This no doubt would have spread among the people and among the soldiers who would whip him and beat him and eventually crucify him. Just like slander and false accusations spread today, they were no different. The tongue would have been set on fire from Hell and would have found plenty of fertile ears to listen.

Here is a man, but no just any man, an innocent man... but not just an innocent man, the God-man, being brutally crucified for no sin of his own.

And no wonder

Matthew 27:54 (NKJV)

<sup>54</sup>... the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

The plotting, the planning, the persecution and the crucifixion of Jesus was not a mere accident or just an evil injustice that went off the rails. This was not just the outworking of evil men who could not stand to have a righteous person in their presence for fear it would expose them.

Oh no, it was much much more.

This was a divinely executed plan perfectly timed by the Father to execute His Son by the hands of evil men for the sin of evil men.

There was no happenstance or just an unfortunate escalation of event and bad choices.

Everything, and I mean everything from the betrayal of Judas to the selection of the nails and the growing of the thorn bush was determined by God long before there ever was a Sun and a moon or the earth and the stars. Long before dirt became man and the serpent fell from Heaven.

How do we know this.

Well first, the Bible tells us so.

Acts 2:22–23 (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup> "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—<sup>23</sup> Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

Acts 4:27–28 (NKJV)

<sup>27</sup> "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together <sup>28</sup> to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.

And the Bible does not just say it was so, but it proves it was so.

Long before Jesus was ever born, Long before he spoke his first word as a little boy, long before he ever experience his first passover as a young man, long before he ever picked Judas as a disciple... there was Scripture that had been written telling us this would happen and not just generally but specifically.

Five Hundred years before the depraved minds of the Persians would come up with the torture of the crucifixion that would be learned and perfected by the Romans. The Bible predicted it.... Specifically

That is what make Psalm 22 so amazing. It is clearly a Messianic Psalm written by David but not just about David. Woven throughout the Psalm are words and pictures of the agony and the torture of the Cross of Christ. There are things that David did not experience yet he wrote in the first person as if there was another person writing.

In this Psalm we see 3 perspectives of the agony of the Cross.

### **1. There is Physical Torture**

### **2. There Is Emotional Pain**

### **3. There is Spiritual Abandonment.**

On the surface you see,

*The psalmist apparently felt forsaken by God, as he was surrounded by his enemies' scornful persecution. He lamented his tremendous suffering and his desperate struggle with death, pleading with God to deliver him from such a horrible end. Apparently his prayer was answered, for he was able to declare to the elect and to the world that the Lord answered his prayer.*

Ross, A. P. (1985). Psalms. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 809). Victor Books.

But any student of Scripture would know that there is much more to this Psalm than David's agony and despair. Oh no, we see Jesus, not vaguely, not in veiled way, not in a allegorical way, but in a literal way. Jesus is plain to see.

Spurgeon once noted that someone he knew believed that every Psalm was a specific or veiled reference. I'm not sure that is the case but I can definitely say that Psalm 22 is one of those Prophecies of Christ.

*The Gospel writers also saw connections between some of the words in this psalm (vv. 8, 16, 18) and other events in Christ's Passion. Also Hebrews 2:12 quotes Psalm 22:22. Thus the church has understood this psalm to be typological of the death of Jesus Christ. This means that David used many poetic expressions to portray his immense sufferings, but these poetic words became literally true of the suffering of Jesus Christ at His enemies' hands. The interesting feature of this psalm is that it does not include one word of confession of sin, and no imprecation against enemies. It is primarily the account of a righteous man who was being put to death by wicked men.*

Ross, A. P. (1985). Psalms. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, pp. 809–810). Victor Books.

Psalm 22:1–31 (NKJV)

### **I. The Death**

### **II. The Deliverance**

### **III. The Declaration**

### **I. The Death**

#### **1. Spiritual Agony**

#### **1 My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**

*Why are You so far from helping Me,*

And from the words of My groaning?

<sup>2</sup> O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear;  
And in the night season, and am not silent.

### **My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**

There is so much here, that we could spend all of our time on this one statement, but for tonight, let me just point out a few the the more important points,

#### **1. Why did Jesus Say this?**

From a human perspective Jesus would have been very familiar with the Psalm, from growing up in synagogue and becoming a Rabbi himself.

From a Divine perspective, he would have wrote it.

But more than the obvious is that for the Jew, to state the 1st sentence of a Psalm would be a means of recalling all of the Psalm. So when Jesus says this on the Cross, he is telling all of those who can hear, to recall the Psalm. Psalm 22. He is saying look a me, look at what is happening to me. I am the fulfillment of the Psalm. It would be a declaration, A sermon from the cross, a proof that He is Messiah.

So even in the midst of all the pain and torture, he is clear enough in mind to recall Psalm 22. and tell them all that He is the Savior.

But even more profound is...

#### **2. What does Jesus mean?**

Was he just saying it to remind everyone of the Psalm and who he is?

NO

Much more and much deeper.

He is experiencing this. There is a Spiritual abandonment by the Father. A turning away. A deep gulf created between the Father and the Sun. Or a rift in the Trinity.

This is no small thing and difficult of understand.

To get a little glimpse into this, we can look a couple of passages for perspective.

John 1:1-2 (NKJV)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God.

and only in later usage, is the idea of previous motion or direction completely dropped, and prós with the acc. is then the same as pará (3844), near, with the dat. (Matt. 13:56; Mark 2:2; 4:1; 6:3; John 1:1; Phile. 1:13).

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In The complete word study dictionary: New Testament (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

John 1:18 (NKJV)

<sup>18</sup> No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in **the bosom** of the Father, He has declared *Him*.

εἰμὶ εἰς τὸν κόλπον: (an idiom, literally 'to be in the bosom of') to be closely and intimately associated, with the implication of strong affection for—'to be closely involved with, to be close beside.' ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς 'who is close beside the Father' Jn 1:18. In Jn 1:18 one may speak of the Son as 'being at the Father's side' or 'being in closest communion with the Father.' Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 447). United Bible Societies.

John 10:30 (NKJV)

<sup>30</sup> **I and My Father are one."**

The phrase ἐν ἑσμεν (hen esmen) is a significant assertion with trinitarian implications. ἐν is neuter, not masculine, so the assertion is not that Jesus and the Father are one person, but one "thing." Identity of the two persons is not what is asserted, but essential unity (unity of essence).

Biblical Studies Press. (2005). The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible. Biblical Studies Press.

John 14:9 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

John 17:5 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Philippians 2:6–7 (LSB)

<sup>6</sup> who, although existing in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,  
<sup>7</sup> but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a slave, by being made in the likeness of men.

All of this to day that closeness the Father and Son have had from all eternity is not comparable to any earthly relationship we have ever experienced.

There is perfect unity, an union, with perfect love and fellowship, with complete distinction in persons yet equal in essence. There had never been a time that the Father turned away from the Son, nor had there ever been a chasm in the Godhead.

We dont' know for sure how long God the Father had forsaken the Son, but I personally believe it was for that 3 hour period of darkness. The full wrath of God in turning his back on His Son be covered in darkness. The lights go out when the Son suffers abandonment.

Why would God do this. What could possibly be the reason??

I believe the Psalmist answers his own Question

<sup>1</sup> **My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**

*Why are You so far from helping Me,  
 And from the words of My groaning?*

<sup>2</sup> **O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear;**

*And in the night season, and am not silent.*

verse 3 comes the answer....

**3. YOU ARE HOLY.**

There it is.. God is Holy

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> *You are of purer eyes than to behold evil,  
 And cannot look on wickedness.*

Psalms 5:4–5 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup> For You *are* not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness,  
 Nor shall evil dwell with You.

<sup>5</sup> The boastful shall not stand in Your sight;  
 You hate all workers of iniquity.

Psalms 34:16 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup> The face of the Lord *is* against those who do evil,  
 To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

The Old and New Testament are full of statements and examples of God's Holiness.

The Temple that was standing the day Jesus was crucified had a thick veil (curtain) to separate sinful men from the Holiness of God.

The Bible teaches that on the cross. All of sins of all of the people who would believe in Jesus were placed on Him and he was punished as if He were us. God turned his face away from his son because His son had become sin for us so that we could be made the Righteousness of His Son.

I don't believe this was just a statement to remind them of Psm 22 or just an expression of the way Jesus felt. I believe there was a real separation, a real turning away, a temporary reproach Christ bore that caused the Eternal Father to look away.

In the midst of this extreme spiritual agony, He turns his mind and heart back to the character and faithfulness of God

- <sup>3</sup> But You are holy,  
Enthroned in the praises of Israel.
- <sup>4</sup> Our fathers trusted in You;  
They trusted, and You delivered them.
- <sup>5</sup> They cried to You, and were delivered;  
They trusted in You, and were not ashamed.

## 2. Emotional Agony

In the depth of despair of the spiritual agony of the separation from the Father, pain upon pain is added by the relentless disrespect and sarcastic ridicule of the ones who hate Him so much. Most of his disciples have ran away, his own people rejected him and cried for his crucifixion

<sup>6</sup> But I am a worm, and no man;

On the surface, “worm” is a powerful metaphor for **extreme humiliation, weakness, and contempt**.

- The speaker (originally David in his distress, but pointing forward to the Messiah) feels reduced to something utterly insignificant and despised — lower than a human, something people would casually trample underfoot without a second thought.
- It expresses deep rejection and dehumanization: “not a man” highlights how the sufferer is treated as less than human, a reproach and object of scorn.

This fits the context of verses 6–8, where passersby mock and sneer, shaking their heads — imagery echoed in the Gospels during Jesus’ crucifixion.

### The Hebrew Word: Tola’ath (or Tola)

The Hebrew term here is **tōlā’** (or tōlā’ath / tola’at), **not** the more common word for a generic worm or maggot (*rimmah*). This specific word is used about 43 times in the Old Testament, and it frequently means **scarlet** or **crimson** (a vivid red color) rather than just “worm.”

- In the Torah (e.g., Exodus 26:1, 31; 28:5–6), *tola’* (often paired with “shani” for “scarlet”) refers to the expensive **crimson/scarlet dye** used in the Tabernacle curtains, the veil, and the high priest’s garments. This dye was precious and symbolically tied to blood, atonement, and the presence of God.
- The dye came from a small insect (the **crimson worm**, scientifically associated with *Kermes ilicis* or similar scale insects common in the ancient Near East, including Israel). These insects were crushed to extract the red pigment.

### The “Crimson Worm” Illustration

Many Bible teachers highlight a deeper symbolic layer based on the life cycle of this scarlet worm (sometimes called the “coccus ilicis” or tola worm):

- When ready to reproduce, the female worm climbs a tree (or attaches to wood), fixes herself firmly in place, lays her eggs, and then dies.
- In dying, she releases a crimson fluid that stains the wood and protects/nourishes her young. The body eventually shrivels and turns white, leaving behind the red stain.

- This process is said to produce the enduring scarlet dye used in sacred contexts.

Interpreters see this as a beautiful picture of **Jesus on the cross**:

- He “attached” Himself to the wooden cross (a “tree”).
- He was “crushed” and shed His crimson blood to redeem and give life to many.
- His sacrifice turns what was stained with sin into something cleansed (compare Isaiah 1:18: “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow”).
- He became utterly lowly and despised (“a worm and not a man”) so that we could be brought near to God.

<sup>6</sup> But I *am* a worm, and no man;  
A reproach of men, and despised by the people.  
<sup>7</sup> All those who see Me ridicule Me;  
They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*,  
<sup>8</sup> “He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him;  
Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!”

The psalmist, though scorned by men, was convinced that the God of his youth would not abandon him forever. David lamented the fact that men despised him. He felt like a worm, worthless, defenseless, and treated with utter contempt. They hurled insults at him, mocking his faith since the LORD was not rescuing him

Ross, A. P. (1985). Psalms. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 810). Victor Books.

We see this in

Matthew 27:39–44 (NKJV)

<sup>39</sup> And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads <sup>40</sup> and saying, “You who destroy the temple and build *it* in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

<sup>41</sup> Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, <sup>42</sup> “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. <sup>43</sup> He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

<sup>44</sup> Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.

### **In the midst of His emotional pain, He turns to the compassion and care of God**

<sup>9</sup> But You *are* He who took Me out of the womb;  
You made Me trust *while* on My mother’s breasts.  
<sup>10</sup> I was cast upon You from birth.  
From My mother’s womb  
You *have been* My God.  
<sup>11</sup> Be not far from Me.  
For trouble *is* near;  
For *there is* none to help.

When I was helpless you taught me to trust you. When I could not take care of myself you provide the protection and provision of a mother. You have been my God to carry me, to provide for me, to have compassion on me when trouble is near. I trust you.

Now add to the Spiritual Agony and the Emotional Agony,....

### **3. The Physical Agony**

<sup>12</sup> Many bulls have surrounded Me;  
Strong *bulls* of Bashan have encircled Me.

<sup>13</sup> They gape at Me *with* their mouths,  
*Like* a raging and roaring lion.

David compared his enemies to cruel and insensitive beasts (bulls and lions) who would destroy him and then described his agony.

#### **Bulls of Bashan.**

In Amos 4:1 The upper-class women were called cows of Bashan. Bashan, in Transjordan east of the Sea of Kinnereth (Galilee), was famous for its lush pastures (Jer. 50:19; Micah 7:14), and its well-fed cattle (Ezek. 39:18; Ps. 22:12). Amos accused the rich women of being equally pampered, insisting that their husbands continually supplied them with intoxicating drinks

Sunukjian, D. R. (1985). Amos. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 1435). Victor Books.

<sup>14</sup> I am poured out like water,  
And all My bones are out of joint;  
My heart is like wax;  
It has melted within Me.

<sup>15</sup> My strength is dried up like a potsherd,  
And My tongue clings to My jaws;  
You have brought Me to the dust of death.

*Because of his enemies' attacks, David's strength was sapped like poured-out water, and his joints were racked. Moreover, like melted wax his courage (heart) was gone—he had lost his desire to resist. His strength was gone and his mouth was dry. In his weakness he was at the brink of death*

Ross, A. P. (1985). Psalms. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 810). Victor Books.

<sup>16</sup> For dogs have surrounded Me;  
The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.

*His enemies tortured him and watched him insensitively. He compared them to dogs (cf. v. 20), who in the ancient world were scavengers. Like dogs, his foes (evil men) surrounded him, waiting till he was dead so they could tear at his limbs. To compare his enemies to dogs was to say that he was almost dead*

Ross, A. P. (1985). Psalms. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 810). Victor Books.

They pierced My hands and My feet;

*The words they have pierced my hands and my feet figuratively describe such a tearing as if by animals. Of course in the New Testament, these words in reference to Jesus Christ have greater significance*

Ross, A. P. (1985). Psalms. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 810). Victor Books.

But they clearly prophesied of the crucifixion of Christ, since it was the practice to nail the hands the feet with these long spikes, 6-9 inches long

John 20:24–28 (NKJV)

<sup>24</sup> Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord."

So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

<sup>26</sup> And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "**Peace to you!**" <sup>27</sup> Then He said to Thomas, "**Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.**"

<sup>28</sup> And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

- <sup>17</sup> I can count all My bones.  
They look and stare at Me.  
<sup>18</sup> They divide My garments among them,  
And for My clothing they cast lots.

John 19:23–24 (NKJV)

<sup>23</sup> Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. <sup>24</sup> They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says:

*"They divided My garments among them,  
 And for My clothing they cast lots."*

Therefore the soldiers did these things.

It is amazing that All 4 gospels mention this, 2 of them quote psm 22 the other two mention the event of casting lots for garments to draw attention to the Psm

**In the midst of physical Pain and Death, He turns to the only one who can Deliver Heal.**

## I. The Death

### 2. The Deliverance

Psalm 22:19–31 (NLT)

- <sup>19</sup> O Lord, do not stay far away!  
You are my strength; come quickly to my aid!  
<sup>20</sup> Save me from the sword;  
spare my precious (only) life from these dogs.  
<sup>21</sup> Snatch me from the lion's jaws  
and from the horns of these wild oxen.

We learn from v.21, end of the verse and v.24 that God did not ignore the cries of the Savior... He answered

21c You have answered Me.

- <sup>24</sup> For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;  
Nor has He hidden His face from Him;  
But when He cried to Him, He heard.

### 3. The Declaration

Forsaken by the Father, Remembered by the Son

- <sup>22</sup> I will declare Your name to My brethren;  
In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.  
<sup>23</sup> You who fear the Lord, praise Him!  
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,  
And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!  
<sup>24</sup> For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;  
Nor has He hidden His face from Him;  
But when He cried to Him, He heard.  
<sup>25</sup> My praise shall be of You in the great assembly;  
I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.  
<sup>26</sup> The poor shall eat and be satisfied;  
Those who seek Him will praise the Lord.  
Let your heart live forever!

<sup>27</sup> All the ends of the world  
Shall remember and turn to the Lord,  
And all the families of the nations  
Shall worship before You.

<sup>28</sup> For the kingdom is the Lord's,  
And He rules over the nations.

<sup>29</sup> All the prosperous of the earth  
Shall eat and worship;  
All those who go down to the dust  
Shall bow before Him,  
Even he who cannot keep himself alive.

<sup>30</sup> A posterity shall serve Him.  
It will be recounted of the Lord to the *next* generation.

<sup>31</sup> They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born,  
That He has done *this*.