

Psalm 22 – “My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?”  
Small Group Notes

Opener: Have you ever had an experience where you felt compelled to tell a stranger about Jesus? Alternatively, have you felt compelled to tell your friends, family and colleagues about Jesus? Which happens more often – strangers or people you know? Why do you suppose that is?

Psalm 22 should be familiar to anyone who has read the passion narrative (death of Jesus) but that’s not what David was thinking about as he wrote it!!

**Read Psalm 22.**

You’ll notice in your Bible that there are paragraph breaks throughout the Psalm (between 2&3, 5&6, 8&9 etc).

**Q. Analyse David’s words and see if you can summarise each paragraph in a sentence to understand what the Psalm is about.**

A. David feels that God has abandoned him and that man has abandoned him so he prays for closeness from God. As a result the Psalm turns from a lament to a praise and David feels accepted by God and by faithful man (vv 24-25). The whole Earth will be drawn in to worship the God of Israel.

**Q. Did that happen? Was the whole Earth drawn in to worship Yahweh?**

A. Not really. This was the plan. Israel would be centripetal – drawing in the nations. But as a result of their unfaithfulness God would send people *out* (centrifugal) to the nations (after Pentecost).

**Q. Look through the Psalm and see how many prophecies of the passion narrative you can find.**

v1 “My God...” - Matt 27:46

v7 “wagging heads” - Matt 27:39

v8 “...let him deliver him” - Matt 27:43

v18 “divided my clothing” - Matt 27:35

Probably v31 “he has done it.” John 19:30 – “It is finished.”

Bonus! v29 “before him shall bow all who go down to the dust” - Phil 2:10 (not a passion allusion but a prophecy non the less.)

The prophetic aspect of the Psalm was intended by David but it was by God therefore this Psalm has two meanings – what it meant for David and what it meant in regards to Jesus.

**Q. Does this make you think differently about what Jesus meant when he quotes this Psalm from the cross?**

A. Normally we have considered these words to be Jesus saying he feels complete separation from the Father because he’s carrying the sin of the world. Jesus is fully man but he’s also fully God and this implies a rift in the perfect union of the Trinitarian God whose nature is unchanging! It could mean something along those lines but it could also (and *does* in my opinion) mean that Jesus was saying – “It is finished!” In fact the opposite of what Jesus *says* is what he *means*! “Father, why have you forsaken me” becomes “I have reconciled mankind to the Father!”

**Q. What is our place within this Psalm?**

A. We are the future generation who will serve him and proclaim his righteousness (vv 30-31).

**Closing:** Do you feel like you’re doing this? What does it mean to proclaim a righteous saviour? Do people see Jesus as a righteous saviour? Would it make a difference if they did? How can WE change their opinion?