

# The Twenty-Second Psalm

by Arno Clemens Gaebelein

*Arno Clemens Gaebelein delves into the remarkable prophecy found in Psalm 22, revealing King David as the human instrument through whom this prophecy of Christ's sufferings was given. The Psalms, divided into five books like the Pentateuch, contains great prophecies about the Christ of God, detailing His path from Son of God to His exaltation by God. The Psalm 22 describes the sufferings and glory of Christ, emphasizing the immense cost of redemption and the depth of His atoning work on the cross.*

## Description

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## Transcript

the-twenty-second-psalm.pdf" txtUrl: "/pdf-text/text/a/arno-clemens-gaebelein---the-twenty-second-psalm.txt" thumbnailUrl: "" hasTranscript: true oneLinerSummary: "The 22nd Psalm contains a remarkable prophecy about the sufferings and glory of Christ, which is fulfilled in the New Testament." sermonType: "expository" topics: - name: "Christ's Suffering" slug: "christs-suffering" - name: "Atoning Work" slug: "atoning-work" bibleRefs: - text: "Psalm 22:1" bookId: "PSA" chapter: "22" verse: "1" - text: "Psalm 22:27-28" bookId: "PSA" chapter: "22" verse: "27" - text: "Romans 8:18" bookId: "ROM" chapter: "8" verse: "18" - text: "Hebrews 2:11" bookId: "HEB" chapter: "2" verse: "11" outline: - heading: "Introduction to the 22nd Psalm" - heading: "The Psalm contains a remarkable prophecy" - heading: "The prophecy is about the sufferings of Christ" - heading: "The Psalm is divided into two parts: sufferings and glory" faq: - q: "What is the significance of the 22nd Psalm?" a: "The 22nd Psalm contains a remarkable prophecy about the sufferings of Christ, which is fulfilled in the New Testament." - q: "Who is the human instrument through whom this prophecy was given?" a: "The human instrument is King David, who was a prophet and a type of Christ." - q: "What is the relationship between the 22nd Psalm and the book of Genesis?" a: "The 22nd Psalm corresponds to the 22nd chapter in the book of Genesis, where Isaac is bound upon the altar." - q: "What is the meaning of the Hebrew words 'Aijeleth Shahar'?" a: "The Hebrew words 'Aijeleth Shahar' mean 'the hind of the morning', which refers to the dawning of redemption." - q: "What is the significance of the cross in the 22nd Psalm?" a: "The cross is the central theme of the 22nd Psalm, where Christ's sufferings and death are

described." quotes: - "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me." - "But I am a worm, and not man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." - "Jehovah bade His sword awake-- O Christ, it woke 'gainst thee! Thy blood the flaming blade must slake; Thy heart its sheath must be-- All for my sake, my peace to make; Now sleeps that sword for me." applicationPoints: - "We must glory more and more in the cross of Christ." - "We must exalt and magnify the Person and Work of our blessed Lord as never before." - "We must be faithful to Christ and walk in separation from the world." keywords: - "22nd Psalm" - "Prophecy of Christ" - "Sufferings of Christ" - "Cross of Christ" - "Redemption" - "Aijeleth Shahar" - "Hebrew words" - "Meaning of the cross" ---

THE Twenty-second Psalm contains a most remarkable prophecy. The human instrument through whom this prophecy was given is King David. The Psalm does not contain the experience of the King, though he passed through great sufferings, yet the sufferings he speaks of in this Psalm are not his own. They are the sufferings of Christ. It is written in the New Testament that the prophets searched and enquired diligently about the coming salvation. The Spirit of Christ, which was in them testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ (1 Peter i:10-11). David was a prophet, and in this great prophecy the Spirit of Christ testified of the sufferings of Him, who is both David's Lord and David's son.

The book of Psalms, so rich and full of Himself, so inexhaustible in description of our ever blessed Lord, is divided into five books, which correspond to the five books with which the Bible begins, the Pentateuch. The first book (Psalm i-xli) contains some of the great prophecies about the Christ of God; these prophecies are in the so-called messianic Psalms. Perfect and divine is the order in which they are revealed. Son of God--The Second Psalm. Son of Man --The Eighth Psalm. Obedient One--The Sixteenth Psalm. Obedient unto Death, the Death of the Cross--The Twenty-second Psalm. Highly exalted by God--Revealed in each of these Psalms. This is the order in which the Holy Spirit describes the path of the Lord in Phil. ii:6-11. How perfect the Word of God is!

The Twenty-second Psalm, the center of the first part of the book of Psalms, the Genesis portion, corresponds to the twenty-second chapter in the book of Genesis. There we see Isaac bound upon the altar having been led there and put upon the altar by his Father while he opened not his mouth. Here we behold the true Isaac on the cross. Everything in this Psalm speaks of our blessed Lord; in the first part of His sufferings, in the second part of His Glory and exaltation.

And we must not overlook the two Hebrew words the Holy Spirit has put over this Psalm: Aijeleth Shahar. The margin tells us they mean "the hind of the morning." This has a beautiful, though hidden meaning. Some have thought of the innocent suffering of a wounded hind and the dawn of the morning brings relief. They have applied this to the death and resurrection (in the morning dawn) of the Lord. But the meaning is better still. The oldest Jewish traditions give us the key. They take the expression "Aijeleth Shahar" to mean the Shechina, the glory cloud, which was visible among His people and they speak of "the hind of the morning" as being the dawning of redemption. The dawning of the morning is compared by them with the horns of the hind, on account of the rays of light appearing like horns. According to their tradition the lamb was offered as the sacrifice in the morning as soon as the watcher on the pinnacle of the temple cried out "Behold the first rays of morning shine forth."

But what pen can describe the predictions and the fulfilment of His sufferings, the sufferings of the Holy One! Here we behold what it cost Him to redeem us. Here we have the full description of what His atoning work meant. Here we see the full meaning of the sin-offering.

Well may we bow our heads and hearts here and worship as we gaze upon this picture. The opening word of the Psalm expresses the consummation of all the sufferings of Christ, that word which came from the darkness, which surrounded the cross and in which we are face to face with the unsearchable depths of His atoning work. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me." He who was ever with the Father, one with Him in all eternity, who could say on earth "I am not alone" was left alone. He was forsaken of God. But more than that. Jehovah bruised Him; He put Him to grief. The spotless One bore the wrath of God alone. It was then that He who knew no sin was made sin for us. How significant it is then that the Holy Spirit puts that word of the Lord Jesus Christ before the predictions of His physical sufferings. They tell us what our redemption cost Him --the awful price, forsaken of God. The Psalm also emphasizes what man under the terrible instigation of Satan did unto Him. We glance at some of these sufferings as expressed by His own Spirit.

"But I am a worm, and not man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people" (verse 6). This is His own complaint. No longer a man but writhing on the ground like a worm, the substitute of sinners, thus the Holy One felt when He was numbered among the transgressors. The Hebrew word "worm", means the small insect, the coccus, from which the scarlet color is obtained by death of this worm, that color which was used in connection with the tabernacle. Thus He died as our substitute that our sins though they are as scarlet might be white as snow. Men reproached Him; His own people despised and rejected Him. Then we read how He was mocked and scoffed at. They "laugh me to scorn," they "shoot out the lip," they "shake the head." The very language of the leaders of the people as they surrounded the cross is given by the Spirit of God. "He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him" (verse 7). What depths of the depravity of the human heart they reveal! And in all this, while He suffered thus from man His sole trust was in God (verses 9-10). His whole life was to trust in the Lord to lean upon Him, till that moment came when God could no longer know Him as His own, when the sword, the sword of judgment awoke against the Man, the fellow, the companion of the Lord of hosts (Zech. xiii:7). What that sword did to Him is expressed by the cry of the forsaken One.

And what else do we find here? We can follow the whole story of the cross in the first part of this Psalm. His enemies are described, the bulls and the ravening and roaring lion.--"I am poured out like water."--"All my bones are out of joint."--"My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels." Like fire melteth wax so His heart melted in the fire of wrath against sin. The strength of the mighty One, who fainteth not and knows no weariness, failed. His tongue cleaves to His jaws. "Dogs" and "the assembly of the wicked" --Gentiles and Jews were there. "They pierced my hands and feet;" crucifixion, unknown among the Jews when David lived, is here predicted by the Holy Spirit. "I may tell all my bones" as well as the words "all my bones are out of joint" refer to His suffering on the cross. Then after they hung the Prince of Glory at that cross we read "they look and stare upon Me" (verse 17). "They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." What man did to Him, what He suffered from man and from Satan's power is here described. Yet it was God who bruised Him. Concerning man the sufferer spoke what "they" did unto Him; but He also addresses God "THOU hast brought me into the dust of death."

And thus He suffered and died for us. Our sins were laid upon Him and He bore them in His own body on the tree. At what an infinite cost we have been redeemed! What a price has been paid! The Father did not spare His only begotten Son, but delivered Him up for us all. The Son of God, was made sin for us, smitten, stricken and forsaken of God.

Jehovah bade His sword awake-- O Christ, it woke 'gainst thee! Thy blood the flaming blade must slake; Thy heart its sheath must be-- All for my sake, my peace to make; Now sleeps that sword for me.

The Holy God did hide His face-- O Christ, 'twas hid from thee! Dumb darkness wrapt thy soul a space--  
The darkness due to me. But now that face of radiant grace Shines forth in light on me.

Wonderful Love! But how unable we are to realize adequately these blessed facts! How little after all we think of these marvellous things and how weak is our devotion to that blessed, loving Lord, who loved us thus!

And what do we behold about us? An ever increasing darkness; a turning away from the blessed Gospel of the Son of God as it centers in the Cross; a greater rejection and neglect of the great salvation which God has so graciously provided in the great sacrifice. It is fearful to see the enemies of the cross increasing and rushing on to their coming doom. What is to be our attitude? It is for us to glory more and more in the cross of Christ. We must exalt and magnify the Person and Work of our blessed Lord as never before. The more He is rejected by the world, His blessed work on the cross disowned in such latter day delusions as the new theology, Christian Science and the numerous other systems, the more we must give Him the pre-eminence.

But it means also for us if we are faithful to Him the fellowship of His sufferings. God has called us into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. This includes the fellowship of His sufferings. Never, of course, suffering from God as He did. But as He is rejected and despised so are we called to share His rejection and take upon us His reproach. He suffered without the gate and the Word exhorts us "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." In these last days we must like Moses "esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt (the world)." And if we are faithful to Him, if we walk in separation from the world, including the great "religious world" with its Christ and the Cross rejecting schemes and tendencies, we shall know something of the reproach of Christ and the fellowship of His sufferings. Oh! that we might know more of that in these easy going days. Such a precious Word of God as contained in 1 Peter iv:13-14 ought to make us long for bearing His reproach and for sufferings with Him. "But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified."

Be true to Christ and to the cross of Christ. Live out the doctrine of the cross "crucified with Christ"--dead to the things here below, then you will have some suffering from the side of men and Satan as well.

And what will be the awful judgment for the multitudes, the ever increasing multitudes who reject the Cross of Christ, who are either opposing it by their ethical gospel, to whom the preaching of the cross is foolishness, or who are indifferent? The Holy Spirit has told us that where the Gospel, the Cross of Christ is rejected or perverted the Anathema, the curse of God must follow (Gal. i:9; 1 Corinth. xvi:22). Well has one said "Distance from God was the climax of the Lamb's dying sorrow." It is a fearful solemn thought that the world while with heedless selfconfidence it still pursues its way, is no nearer now to God than Jesus was when, under the burden of the world's iniquity, He cried, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" How solemn this is! May we learn to say more fully with Paul, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

The Glory of Christ.

The first twenty-one verses of this Psalm describe the sufferings of Christ. This part closes with an appeal to Jehovah for deliverance. "But be thou not far from me, O Lord; O my strength, haste thee to help me. " Save me from the lion's mouth." Then comes the joyful statement that He has been heard. The answer He received to His cry is resurrection. We find therefore that the second part of this great Psalm, which reveals so fully the Cross of Christ, is taken up with the Glory of the forsaken One. God raised Him from the dead, and so we hear at once in this Psalm the notes of triumph coming from the lips of Him who is dead and now liveth. His triumph and His Glory are revealed. All for whom He died, the Church, Israel, the ends of the earth, the nations are mentioned. He is seen in the midst of the church as well as in the midst of the future great congregation. All the ends of the earth are yet to remember and turn unto the Lord. The nations will come to worship before Him; His will be the Kingdom, He will rule among the nations. But we must look at some of these precious predictions a little closer. We need to consider them as much as the Sufferings, the Cross of Christ.

The day of His Resurrection is first mentioned.

"I will declare Thy Name unto my brethren

"In the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee."

It is a joyous word which stands at the head of the glory section of this Psalm. Raised from the dead He met His own with an "All hail" --rejoice. In the Gospel of John we see Him meeting her who sought the living One among the dead and telling her "Go and tell my brethren." How literally this prediction has been fulfilled. And what He tells her of "my Father and your Father, my God and your God" declares that intimate relationship which is the result of His death on the cross. Brought through Him to God, we are Sons of God and Heirs of God. "He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one, therefore He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. ii:11). Precious truth! He owns us as brethren. He is the Firstborn among many brethren. The congregation mentioned here is the church. In the midst of the church His praise is heard (Heb. ii:12). It is true the church is not revealed in the Old Testament but it is anticipated. And as we, saved by Grace, in possession of His life, approach God in His worthy Name His own voice is heard; He is the leader of our prayers and our praises. That new and intimate relationship brought about by His atoning death at the cross is mentioned first. He gave Himself for the church (Eph. v:25). In the next place we hear Israel praising Him. "All ye the seed of Jacob glorify Him; and reverence Him all ye the seed of Israel." They who rejected Him, His people who despised Him and had such a part in the suffering of Christ, now own Him. They acknowledge Him, whom they thought afflicted of God, as having been heard of God.

That time will come when He returns in power and glory, when Israel will see the Man in Glory, the First begotten coming in the clouds of Heaven. Then they will realize the full truth of Isaiah liii. The blessed Lord will then have the travail of His soul and be satisfied. But there is more glory still for Him.

A great congregation is mentioned; there too His praises will be heard. All the ends of the earth will remember and turn unto the Lord. Nations will worship before Him.

"For the Kingdom is Jehovah's And He ruleth among the nations" (verse 28).

The great congregation are the nations of the millennial age. Then the ends of the earth will remember Him while He ruleth among the nations. What Glory awaits Him! Now we behold Him, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. It is a spiritual vision;

we see Him there by faith. But a little while longer and He will appear in the Glory of His Father bringing His co-heirs with Him, the Son bringing many sons to glory, the sons He is not ashamed to call brethren, for whom He was forsaken on the cross. What a procession of triumph and glory that will be when the Heavens open and He is coming forth, bringing His church with Him! What will be His Glory when Israel at last owns Him and nations submit under His rule, when His visible Glory will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea! All hail! Oh blessed, blessed Lord!

And we do need to consider all these precious predictions, so numerous in the Scriptures, the prophecies of His Glory. The God of this age Satan is unfolding the glories of this present age which is almost at the end, with a skilful master hand. He knows how to blind the eyes not only of those who believe not, but of many who are Christians. He makes everything so attractive and many of God's people have fallen into his snares. We need to look through the Word of God upon the brightness of His Glory, the glorious things to come, so that our eyes may be blinded to the miserable playthings of the dust, which the fire of God's vengeance will ere long consume. We need these glorious visions of the great realities so that we can go forward with joyfulness to suffer, be rejected of men and bear the bright and blessed testimony, the Father expects from His beloved children. Take up the watchword of the last days! True to Christ--all in Christ--all for Christ--Onward to Glory. Soon He will call us into His glorious presence.

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. viii:18).

"For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. v:17).

Oh what will be the day when won at last  
The last long weary battle, we shall come  
To those eternal gates the King hath passed,  
Returning from our exile to our Home;  
When earth's last dust is washed from off our feet;  
The last sweat from our brows is wiped away;  
The hopes that made our pilgrim journey sweet  
All met around us, realized that day!

Oh what will be the day, when we shall stand  
Irradiate with God's eternal light;  
First tread as sinless saints the sinless land,  
No shade nor stain upon our garments white;  
No fear, no shame upon our faces then,  
No mark of sin--oh joy beyond all thought!  
A son of God, a free-born citizen  
Of that bright city where the curse is not!

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