

(How to Understand the KJV Bible) 18 Psalm 22

by Keith Simons

Psalm 22 is a powerful expression of David's suffering, trust, and hope in God's rescue and deliverance.

Duration: 26:50

Scripture: Psalm 22:1

Topics: "KJV Bible", "Suffering and Deliverance", "Prophecy of Christ"

Description

Keith Simons teaches on Psalm 22, emphasizing its dual significance as a reflection of David's suffering and a prophetic foreshadowing of Christ's crucifixion. He explores the imagery of the psalm, likening David's plight to that of a deer pursued by predators, and highlights the deep anguish expressed in the verses, particularly the cry of abandonment. Simons illustrates how David's trust in God amidst despair serves as a model for believers, affirming that God hears the cries of the afflicted and ultimately delivers them. The sermon culminates in the declaration of God's faithfulness and the universal call to worship Him for His righteousness and salvation.

Transcript

Welcome, my name is Keith Symons. I'm a Bible teacher from England and you're listening to the next in our series of talks on how to understand the King James Version of the Bible. Today we'll be looking at Psalm 22, a psalm which is very associated in the Christian calendar with Good Friday because it contains a prophecy about the death of Christ.

We could describe this psalm as a psalm about the suffering of God's King. In Judaism it's also considered as a prophecy, typically about Queen Esther and her troubles, but it's a psalm about suffering and about wonderful deliverance from death. So, beginning at the beginning, of course, with its title, to the chief musician, upon Ai-Jelet-Shahar, a psalm of David.

So we're going to look through the psalm word by word and verse by verse and just understand its meaning now. To the chief musician, that's the musician who leads the worship in God's house, the temple or the tabernacle. Then these unpronounceable words, Ai-Jelet-Shahar.

It really means the deer of the dawn. A deer is a very graceful animal, moves swiftly across the hills of Israel and this is specifically the deer in the early morning, the first light of early morning, the dawn. And people have asked what that means.

The general answer that people give is that it's reference to an ancient tune to which this psalm must be sung. But I'm not so sure. There's a lot of references in this psalm to animals, wild animals that would attack a deer.

There's reference to bulls and to dogs and to lions, all of which lived in ancient Israel. And the deer would be chased by these animals, yet the deer could at least sometimes get away by reason of its great speed and its great stamina, how long it could just keep on running until it wasn't in the hills and away from its enemy. And as this psalm is about an escape from death, a rescue from death, this picture of this morning deer, this deer at dawn, just glimpsed as it runs away, it seems very appropriate to the psalm.

Then the title we're so familiar with, Psalm of David. In other words, it's written by King David. It's describing in the first instance his sufferings.

And when we take it as a prophecy, we're applying his sufferings and his troubles and we're relating them to the future and in particular to the Messiah, the king from David's family, God's king, the perfect king who will reign for all time. So beginning or continuing at the first verse, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? To forsake means to leave, but it's more than just going away, it's abandoning someone. And so David is praying, God, why have you abandoned me when you're my God, when I've put my trust in you? Why art thou so far from helping me? And from the words of my roaring, roaring, crying out.

He's crying out in prayer, he's crying out desperately to God, yet God seems not to be near him, God seems not to be helping him. Verse two, oh my God, I cry out in the daytime, but thou hear us not, and in the night season, and I'm not silent. So I don't stop crying my desperate prayer in the night, and I cry this prayer in the day too, but God, you're not hearing, and I don't understand that, this isn't how it should be.

I need you to rescue me, I need you to help me, says David. Verse three, David hasn't forgotten who God is, his prayers are not desperate prayers to a God that he doesn't know. He knows who God is, he knows God's character, he knows God's name, he knows God's reputation, but thou art holy, oh thou that inhabit us to the praises of Israel.

You are the holy God, the perfect God, there is nothing wrong in anything that you do, and in that you're so, so different from us, so separate from us. We might fail to answer the cry of a friend who asks for help, but you're God, you're holy, you're not like that. Thou that inhabit us to the praises of Israel, Israel's people praise God, but God inhabits their praises.

The word literally means he sits among their praises. It probably means he accepts their praises, he receives them, they bring him pleasure. God's people praise God, they give honour to God, and God is pleased with them.

Verse four, our fathers trusted in thee, they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. Our fathers, the previous people in Israel, people like Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Moses and so many others, they trusted in God, and yes they had troubles, but they put their trust in God, and God rescued them from those troubles. And that is all that David is asking for here, that God, in whom he trusted, would rescue him in his troubles now.

He continues with the record of what the fathers, the previous people in Israel, did. Verse five, they cried unto thee, just as I confounded. The word for confounded means literally ashamed.

They weren't ashamed because God rescued them. They put their trust in God, and God did not disappoint them. He came to them in their hour of need.

He came to them in their desperate trouble, and he rescued them. And so David is saying, why should it be different for me? Why should I be in such trouble? And yet God seems to have forsaken me. It seems to me that God has left me totally.

In verse six, David describes those troubles. But I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn.

They shoot out the lip. They shake the head. That's verse seven.

So I'm living, but I can hardly call myself a man. I am so weak. I am so much in danger.

People laugh at me. They hate me. They oppose me.

They shoot out the lip. It's figurative for how they insult him. They shake the head.

Just endless insults he suffers, saying verse eight. This is what the people are saying. He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him.

Let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him. Those are the words with which the people mock at David. Those are the words they say in order to insult him.

But in doing so, are they not insulting God? He, David, or the Messiah, or God's king, trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him. He put his trust in God. Well, then God should deliver him.

God should rescue him if he delighted in him. If God really finds pleasure in David, in his king, the Messiah, then God should rescue him. But they laugh because they don't believe that God is rescuing David, or the king, or the Messiah.

They don't believe it. They said he trusted in God. And however much people may have not been ashamed to trust in God in the past, he is ashamed.

He's not being rescued. He's in trouble and there is no one to rescue him. Not even God, who finds pleasure in him, will rescue him now.

And that is their insult. That is what they are saying against David, and against the Messiah, and against God. They dare to say that God is failing to rescue the one with whom he is truly pleased.

But David knows better. Verse 9. In other words, all my life, I've trusted thee. All my life, I've depended on God.

I was cast on you, God. It's you who caused me to be born. It's you who cared for me when I was just a weak little child.

I'm like that now. I'm a weak little child with all these enemies surrounding me. David had King Saul and an army of 3,000 men chasing after him.

For the space of several months, he was close to being killed at any moment. And he was desperate for help, and that help seemed to delay. It seemed not to come.

But David didn't give up his hope and trust in God. Verse 11. Be not far from me, for trouble is near, for there is none to help.

Verse 12, many bulls have come past me. Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. Bashan is the hills that we today call the Golan Heights.

And obviously there were strong and fierce bulls in that area. And David describes his enemies as if they were bulls surrounding on him. In fact, more than bulls, it's bad enough to be surrounded with bulls attacking you.

No, worse than that. Verse 13, they gaped on me with their mouths as a ravening and a roaring lion, as a lion so fierce in its attack, so powerful, so victorious over its enemy. That was what David's enemies were like.

David describes himself, verse 14, and it's words that very much describe reminders of Christ and his experience on the cross. I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax, it's melted in the midst of my bowels.

Verse 15, my strength is dried up like a pot shirt and my tongue clenches to my jaws and now has brought me the dust of death. Okay, wax is what you have in candles, just a little heat and it just melts away. That's how he describes his heart.

His bones that should be holding his body are falling apart out of joint like water. His strength is dried up like a broken piece of pot. That's what a pot shirt is.

And he's thirsty, he's desperate, he's nearly dead and now the picture is not of bulls or of lions but of dogs. Verse 16, for dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me, they pierced my hands and my feet. It's like being attacked by a company of wild dogs but it's not wild dogs, it's wicked people who've gathered to attack David, to attack God's king.

It's wicked people who are opposing him. Those words, they pierced my hands and my feet, that's one translation. The Jewish people prefer the translation, like a lion they are at my hands and my feet.

Both I think are equally valid translations. There's a lot of argument regarding that point but we often see this double meaning in the Psalms. Just as here I'm having to talk about David and the Messiah and Christ and apply these verses all to the different ones because they have these different meanings.

David was a prophet, he was speaking about the future at the same time as he was speaking about his troubles. So these double meanings occur in the themselves and the word for pierced also means like a lion. So it all makes sense.

Verse 17, I may tell all my bones, they look and stare upon me. In other words, he can see his bones and he feels so desperate, he's like a body in the grave. Verse 18, they part my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture.

Vesture means clothing. So they're gambling for the clothes. We don't know that that ever happened to David but it certainly did happen a lot in ancient times when there were a man's clothes to take that the people who took it split them up between them as robbers did just to add a gamble because the clothes were valuable in those days, a lot more valuable than they are now.

David turns to prayer, verse 19, but be not thou far from me, O Lord, O my strength, a title for God, haste thee to deliver me. Verse 20, deliver my soul from the sword, my darling from the power of the dog. Darling here means that which is precious to me.

We usually use darling to mean someone you love but here it means the soul, the inner person, the inner life. Rescue my life from death, from the violent death that a sword or a dog would cause or indeed a lion. Verse 21, save me from the lion's mouth, for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

At the time of the King James Version, the unicorn was a fierce wild animal, a legendary animal, one which didn't exist, which had one horn and which people spoke about in their stories. But David is not talking about that, he's talking about a real animal, an animal that was familiar with him, a fierce animal with horns that would attack people and probably some type of bull. And here David starts to announce that he's being rescued, thou hast heard me.

And that may be unclear in the Hebrew in verse 21 but it becomes very clear when David starts to praise God in verse 22. I will declare thy name unto my brethren in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee because he's rescued me. I'm going to give him honour amongst all the people.

Verse 23, ye that fear the Lord praise him, all the seed, all the family of Jacob glorify him and fear him, all ye the seed, the family of Israel. For he has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, the troubles of the one who had troubles. Despise, to treat lightly, abhorred, to treat as if it's heavy and disgusting.

He didn't consider it too light to care about my troubles, he didn't consider them too severe that he hated those troubles. He acted, neither had he hid his face from him. God didn't hide his face.

At the beginning David says, why hast thou forsaken me? But now he declares boldly, in the end God did not hide his face but when he, David, cried unto him, God, he, God, heard. God heard his cry, God heard that desperate prayer and now he will hear David's praise too. Verse 25, my praise shall be of thee in the great congregation.

I will pay my vows, carry out my promises before them that fear him. The meek, the poor, shall eat and be satisfied. They that praise the Lord shall seek, they shall praise the Lord that seek him.

Your heart shall live forever. In other words, God will revive their heart so that they have strength to continue praising God and not to stop. And it's not just God's people in Israel who turn to God because of this wonderful thing that God has done, no.

Verse 27, all the ends of the world, people in every nation, shall remember and turn unto the Lord and all the kindreds of nations shall worship before thee, before God. For the kingdom is the Lord's and he is the governor among the nations. He is establishing his rule.

God is the king. God who rules through his Messiah, through his king, is showing his rule by the way he has rescued his king from death. All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship.

That's referring to the rich people. Poor people were thin in those days and anyone who was fat, people assumed that they were overweight because of their wealth. But now they're not fat because they depend on themselves.

No, they eat because the Lord is a governor, the Lord is a king and God provides. So God provides for the wealthy. But what about the poor? What about those who are so poor that they seem almost in their grave as David was earlier? All they that go down to the dust shall bow before him.

God is providing for them too. God is looking after the rich and the poor alike in earth because no one can keep alive his own soul. It's God who brings life to the dead as David knew, as David testified, as God's king, God's Messiah would testify.

It's God who rescued him from death. And David continues with a vision of the future. A seed shall serve him.

Remember how we spoke of the seed of Jacob in verse 23, as the family of Jacob. So God's people in the future will serve him because of the wonderful things that he's done for his king. It shall be counted to the Lord for a generation.

Verse 31, they shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born that he hath done this. In other words, people long into the future will discover the wonderful thing that God has done and they will declare that God wasn't the and abandoned his holy one, his king. No, God came to him in his emergency.

God rescued him. God delivered him. God provided for him.

And so people in all ages to come will remember this and shall declare the praise that is due to God. Please write to me. My email address is 333kjv at gmail.com. In closing, let me read you the whole psalm.

Psalm 22. To the chief musician, upon a Jaleth Shachar, a psalm of David. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me and from the words of my roaring? Oh my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not, and in the night season, and I'm not silent.

But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in thee, they trusted and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee and were delivered.

They trusted in thee and were not confounded. But I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn.

They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, he trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him. Let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him. But thou art he that took me out of the womb.

Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb. Thou art my God from my mother's belly.

Be not far from me, for trouble is near, for there is none to help. Many bulls have come past me. Strong bulls of passion have beset me round.

They gaped upon me with their mouths as a ravening and roaring lion. I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

My strength is dried up like a potsherd and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. The dogs have compassed me. The assembly of the wicked have enclosed me.

They pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones, they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them and they cast and cast lots upon my vesture.

But be not thou far from me, O Lord. O my strength haste thee to deliver me. Deliver my soul from the sword, my darling from the power of the dog.

Save me from the lion's mouth, for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns. I will declare thy name unto my brethren. In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

Ye that fear the Lord, praise him. O ye that seed of Jacob, glorify him and fear him. O ye the seed of Israel, 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. My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation. I will pray my vows before them that fear him.

The meek shall eat and be satisfied. They shall praise the Lord that seek him. Your heart shall live forever.

All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord. And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's and he is the governor among the nations.

All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship. All they that go down to the dust shall bow before him, and none can keep alive his own soul. A seed shall serve him.

It shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.

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