

Psalm 22

Title: A Cry of Anguish and a Song of Praise

Author and Date: David

Key Verse: Psalm 22:1, 22, 27

Outline

- A. Prayer: a cry of anguish in time of trouble (verses 1-21).
- B. Praise: a song of praise in time of triumph (verses 22-25).
- C. Prediction: a word of promise in time of turning (verses 26-31).

Notes

Title: "For the Chief Musician; set to Aijeleth hash-Shabar. A Psalm of David." The words "Aijeleth hash-Shabar" mean "the hind (deer) of the morning." These words may have been a title of a well-known song at this time. For the rest of this title, see the notes on Psalm 3 and Psalm 4.

Verses 1-21: The psalmist alternates between words of complaint (verses 1-2, 6-8, 12-18) and words of trust (verses 3-5, 9-11, 19-21). This style is typical of the lament psalms where the psalmist cries out in suffering (see Psalm 6, 10, 30, 31, 43, etc).

Verse 1: The language of the psalmist here is similar to Psalm 10:1 and 6:6. These are not the words of an unbeliever, but rather the words of someone crying out in deep anguish (see also Psalm 6). The first part of this verse is quoted by Jesus while he cried out from the cross (Mt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34). There was also strong crying from Jesus in the garden before the cross (Heb. 5:7). The persecutions and sufferings of the psalmist (David) here are parallel to (a type of) the sufferings of Christ.

Verse 6: Compare this description with Bildad's words in Job 25:6. Note how the psalmist uses poetic parallelism and figurative language throughout this section: "worm" (verse 6), "bulls" (verse 12), "lion" (verse 13), "melted" (verse 14), "dogs" (verse 16), etc. Neither the psalmist nor the Christ experienced these things in a literal way.

Verse 8: What the enemies suggest in a mocking way, the psalmist does in actuality. The psalmist commits himself to God in time of trouble (see verses 9-11 and 19-21). The enemies of Jesus mocked him in a similar way (Mt. 27:39-43; Mk. 15:29).

Verse 12: The region of Bashan, east of the Sea of Galilee, was known for its fine pastures and cattle (Deut. 32:14).

Verse 16: The hands and feet of Jesus were pierced (Mt. 27:35; Jn. 20:25).

Verse 18: This verse is quoted in John 19:24 with reference to the soldiers casting lots for Jesus' garments (see also Mt. 27:35; Mk. 15:24; and Lk. 23:34).

Verse 20: The Lord is very "precious" (NIV, ESV) to the psalmist. The psalmist calls the Lord "my darling" (KJV, ASV); literally, "my only one" (or "my only life," NASV).

Verse 21: The "unicorn" (KJV) is a wild oxen.

Verse 22: This verse is quoted by the author of Hebrews and applied to Jesus' sanctification of mankind (Heb. 2:12).

Questions

1. What question does the psalmist ask of God (verse 1)?
2. What does the psalmist do and how does God respond (verse 2)?
3. How does the psalmist describe God (verse 3)?
4. What thought about Israel's fathers is contemplated by the psalmist (verses 4-5)?
5. How does the psalmist describe himself in this time of trouble (verse 6)?
6. What do the psalmist's enemies do to him (verse 7) and what do they say (verse 8)?
7. What relationship does the psalmist have with God from his birth (verses 9-10)?
8. What request does the psalmist have in time of trouble (verse 11)?
9. How does the psalmist describe his enemies (verses 12-13)?

10. How does the psalmist describe his intense suffering (verses 14-15)?
11. How do the evil-doers act toward the psalmist (verses 16-18)?
12. What does the psalmist ask of the Lord (verses 19-21)?
13. What does the psalmist promise to do after he is saved from his trouble (verse 22)?
14. Who is called upon to praise the Lord (verse 23) and why (verse 24)?
15. What more does the psalmist promise to do (verse 25)?
16. What will the meek do (verse 26)?
17. What do the people of the earth do with the Lord (verse 27 and 29) and why (verse 28)?
18. What things will future generations do with the Lord (verses 30-31)?

Applications for Today

1. The psalmist cried out: “My God, my God...” (verse 1). How is this verse used in Matthew 27:46?
2. It is important to learn to trust God from an early age (verses 9-10). What was Timothy taught from an early age (2 Tim. 3:15)?

3. The psalmist's enemies took his garments and parted them (verse 19). How is this verse used in John 19:24?

4. The psalmist praised God after he was saved from his trouble (verse 22). How is this verse used in Hebrews 2:12?

5. It is important for the faithful "seed" to serve the Lord and tell future generations about his righteousness (verses 30-31). What does Peter say Christians are to do (1 Pet. 2:9)?

6. Like the psalmist, the Christian goes from persecution (verses 1-21) to praise (verses 22-31), from suffering to glory. The cross comes before the crown. What does Paul say about this in Romans 8:17? What does Peter say about this in reference to the Christian (1 Pet. 1:6-9) and to the Christ (1 Pet. 1:10-11)?