



Psalm 22: Messiah's Agony And Victory Now

Psalm 22: Messiah's Agony And Victory Now. Entitled 'The Calvary Hymn,' this psalm resonates deeply with Christians. The opening verse, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' instantly evokes the Lord's anguished cry from the cross on Calvary.

Centuries prior to His momentous sacrifice, David, under divine inspiration, eloquently depicted the anguish, mortality, and ultimate redemption of the Messiah—God's own Son¹. The first half of the psalm contains the pain and prayer for deliverance of the sufferer. The second half expresses heartfelt gratitude in a prayer of thanksgiving for our deliverance. The words of this psalm are deeply moving for many reasons.

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The popular view of the crucifixion often overlooks the intense suffering Jesus endured on the cross. The Lord's inner strength allowed Him to endure the pain, even as He uttered only a few words. From Medieval art on, the image of the Christ hanging on the Cross usually looks almost serene.



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Yet, the Lord suffered just like any other person would have suffered. In [John 6](#), Jesus taught the multitude that He was the bread of life. After His great discourse, John wrote, "From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him." When that happened, Jesus said to His disciples, "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Rejection hurt Him just like any person.

However, the true horror of what he endured on the cross never seems to soak in, because the crucifixion has become a little too abstract. But Jesus did indeed suffer! In Psalm 22, **revealed** the true pain and suffering. Read verses 1-[21](#) very carefully. Within that

first section, there is a shifting back and forth. The attention of Jesus is first centered upon the pain and rejection. Then, His attention shifts to the truth that those who trust the Lord will be saved. How many times have we experienced severe pain or deep distress from an illness? Often our mind will bounce from one thought to another much in just the same way as described in Psalm 22.

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In verses 6-8, we encounter a profound sense of despair. Specifically, in Verse 8, the taunts described closely mirror the insults directed at Jesus while He was crucified. In verses 12 and 13, we can almost picture Jesus looking down upon His enemies as they stood like bulls and lions at the base of the cross.

In verses 14 and 15, the physical pain increasingly intrudes upon the thoughts of the suffering Christ. His strength was draining away. Due to the nailing of His body to the cross and the strain caused by His unnatural position, Jesus experienced dislocated bones in His joints, a common outcome of crucifixion. He **voiced His anguish**, declaring, "My strength has withered like a shard of pottery, and my tongue clings to the roof of my mouth." You have **laid me low in the dust of death.**" In Verse 15, we discern the **thirst** that Jesus began to endure. In [John 19:28](#), Jesus said, "I thirst."

Verses 16 and verse 18 point to the accuracy of David's prophesy. In verse 16 David wrote, "...they have pierced my hands and my feet."



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In verse 18 he wrote, "They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing."

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Then, suddenly, the entire tone of the psalm changes in verse 22. In this crucial moment, Jesus proclaimed, 'It is finished,' and committed His spirit into the Father's loving hands. We really cannot definitively say; however, the rest of the psalm is a song of praise before the Lord.

Although tragic, Jesus' death on the cross was an absolute necessity. Humanity, ensnared by sin, had no means to save itself. The means of salvation had to come through the sacrifice of God Himself. At the "fullness of time" the Word became flesh and Jesus Christ took upon Himself the sins of the world. He became the sacrifice needed to resolve the problem of sin, defeat death, and bring the hope of eternal life. We must be saved by no other name under heaven.

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