



PSALM 22 (Selected verses) Vs. 1 My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping me, and from the words of My groaning? Vs. 2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; and in the night season and am not silent. Vs. 14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me. Vs. 16 Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me, they pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. Vs. 18 They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment. Vs. 22 I will declare your name to my people; in the assembly I will praise you. Vs. 23 You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!

David, the psalmist begins with a complaint:

Psalm 22:1 *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?*

It is evident that David is going through a difficult time in his life. But this psalm is much more than a sorrowful lament centered around David. Psalm 22, is a prophetic foretelling of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. Several verses in this psalm describes the crucifixion of Jesus that would not take place for another four hundred years.

Psalm 22:16 *Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and feet.* The words written by David in verse one, and verse sixteen thru verse eighteen, are actual descriptions of the crucifixion. This clearly shows that David's words are a revelation from God. As the psalm continues, David finds the inner strength to move his spirit from a place of sorrow to a place of praise.

Psalm 22:22 *I will declare your name to my people, in the assembly I will praise you!* Perhaps David took a moment to rehearse his past battles where God showed himself faithful. He killed a lion, a bear and even slayed a giant. We must also remember that the suffering and death of Jesus ended in His victorious resurrection.

We know that Jesus died for our sins, by why did God allow him to suffer such a horrible death? Let's take a closer look at the power and purpose of suffering. Isaiah prophesied – *He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5).*

SUFFERING REVEALS THREE THINGS:

1. SUFFERING REVEALS YOUR TRUE HEART

Luke 6:45b – For it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks (NIV).

2. SUFFERING REVEALS THE HEART OF PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE.

Psalm 55:12-13 – If my enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were rising against me, I could hide, but it is you, my companion, my close friend (NIV).

3. SUFFERING REVEALS THE HEART OF GOD.

Romans 8:18 – I consider that our present sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed in us (NIV).

QUESTION: How has praising God in difficult times worked to your advantage?

TASK: Find a psalm of praise and write down a key verse.
