

Read Psalm 22

1. Do you think David is describing his own situation or is he also speaking prophetically of Jesus Christ? Whether David is speaking prophecy or just describing his own situation, Jesus makes a number of very clear connections to this passage when He is on the cross. Maybe it's prophecy or maybe Jesus is just quoting Scripture, but you have got to love how it all ties together!
David certainly sounds like a man undergoing severe anguish caused mainly by his alienation from God. That sounds exactly like what Jesus went thru on the cross. There are other connections:
A. Psalm 22:1 *My God, my God why have You forsaken me?* Matthew 27:46 *My God, my God why have You forsaken me?* **B.** Psalm 22:15 *My mouth is dried up like a potsherd and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth.* John 19:28 *I am thirsty.* **C.** Psalm 22:31 *...He has done it* John 19:30 *It is finished* **D.** Psalm 22:8 *"He trusts in the Lord", they say, "Let the Lord rescue Him. Let Him deliver Him since He delights in Him."* Matthew 27:43 *He trusts in God. Let God rescue Him now if He wants Him for He said "I am the Son of God"* **E.** Psalm 22:6-7 *...I am scorned by everyone, despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads.* Matthew 27:38 & 41 *Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads. In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked Him. Crucifixion is also described in Psalm 22 – even though it had not yet been invented when the Psalm was written! Vs. 16-18they pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.*
2. Why do you think David felt like God had forsaken him?
Isn't that what we tend to think when God doesn't respond when and how we want Him to? When we feel distance from God, we somehow seem to think that He moved. When tough times come in our lives - it might be just because we live in a broken, fallen world; it could be because of sin in our lives or it might be that our suffering is just another opportunity for God to get glory, but somehow we tend to think that He is absent or not paying attention. Somehow it's all about us.
3. How does David respond to these feelings?
David responds by praising the Lord! He recounts back to God who God is and the things that He has done in the past. David reminds himself of God's track record and His sovereign ability to deal with whatever David is going through. What a great reminder to us! No matter what is going on in our lives – good or bad, blessing or suffering – God is on the throne. He can rescue us – He has done it before – and we can trust in Him. We can praise the Lord in good times AND in bad.
4. David goes back and forth between lamenting and rejoicing – between despair and praising. What do you think might have happened between verses 21 and 22 to change his attitude?
Maybe David was rescued. Maybe David just realized who he was talking to and made a conscious decision to praise the name of the Lord. Maybe David decided that he was going to tell people how good God is – whether God chose to save him from this situation or not. Maybe David acknowledged the sovereignty of God and let go of whatever he was trying to deal with by himself. Maybe what happened was David's focus changed – and that changed his attitude.
5. Have you, like David, ever been reproached for the sake of Jesus? Rejected because of Christ?
Allow people to share from their own experiences. Maybe they are going through something even now and we can encourage each other to praise God – no matter what. This is why we have small group! Sharing, encouraging, uplifting. You may even want to stop here and pray for each other.
6. What seems worse – God's distance or people's mocking?
Clearly we would rather be closed to God than people on Earth, but sometimes we all forget that. Sometimes we worry about what other people think about us and we work pretty hard at presenting an image of ourselves that will gain their approval. I am so glad Christ didn't do that!

This week's memory verse: Psalm 22:22

I will declare your name to my people; in the assembly I will praise you.

Challenge:

When you are reproached or rejected for Jesus' sake – when you feel distance from God

PRAISE HIM!