

# The Suffering Servant

Psalm 22

Pastor Adam McMurray

## **A Psalm for Those Who Suffer**

Psalm 22 is often referred to as a “passion” psalm, or the “psalm of the suffering servant.” It is one of many psalms that touch on the issue of suffering in our world. As in the entire Psalter Psalm 22 gives us ample instruction in how to come before God in a proper way, bearing the frequent suffering which this world brings upon us. It encourages us to face honestly the hurt and the abandonment that is all around us and often times a part of our own experience. In Psalm 22, we not only find an honest and refreshing look into the reality of suffering, but we get a glimpse into the meaning and purpose of suffering.

## **“My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me”**

Psalm 22, is ultimately about the true “suffering servant”— Jesus Christ. When Jesus hung on the cross, He prayed the beginning of Psalm 22. And He not only made it clearly His prayer, but for the first time gave the psalm its full meaning. Ultimately, it is Jesus Christ who truly suffered, it is Jesus Christ who was forsaken (vs. 1), it is Jesus Christ who was mocked and insulted (vs. 8), it is Jesus Christ who was “poured out” (vs. 14) and “pierced” (vs. 16.) We see Jesus’ full pain. It becomes the doorway into the mystery of His dying horrors. Through it we begin to understand that we do not—nor will we ever—suffer to the extent that we truly deserve, because there is the One who has suffered on our behalf. Isaiah 53:10 tells us that “it was the Lord’s will to crush Him and cause Him to suffer” in our place. Jesus bore our iniquities, and we have been justified. Psalm 22 ends fittingly with praise to God for the righteousness that He accomplished.

## **Sharing in His Sufferings**

All of this leads us to the reality of personal suffering. What, if any purpose is there in *our* suffering? What happens when *we* suffer? More importantly, what should happen? In verse 20 David writes, “Deliver my life from the sword...my precious life”. What David (and you and I) most fear losing is our life. When we suffer, and do so with Christ, we are reminded that the thing which we fear losing the most is the very thing that Christ was willing to lay down for us. When we experience the “fellowship of sharing in His sufferings” (Phil 3:10) we become like Him in His death and we can begin to truly grasp the new life that we have through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross. We begin to understand that we have been bought at a price and that our very lives and everything we have is ours through Christ alone (1 Cor 6:19 & 20.) We fall on our knees and we turn our lives over to the Savior.

## **Ideas for Reflection & Discussion**

This week, spend time praying, studying and meditating on Psalm 22.

## **Understanding Suffering in My Life**

What, if any, personal sufferings have you experienced in your life? How has this suffering impacted your faith? How did your faith help you to understand your suffering? In what ways might your suffering be impeding your walk of faith? In what way does Psalm 22 shed light on personal suffering?

## **Suffering and Submission**

The suffering portrayed in Psalm 22 serves as a reminder of the great price that was paid for us. The only proper response to this is total submission to Jesus Christ our Savior. Are there areas in your life today that you have not turned over to Christ? Explore this. What is keeping you from total submission to Christ? Read Philippians 3:10 & 11 noting the heart of Paul towards Jesus. What are your thoughts?

## Coming Up

### **WEDNESDAY 8/22**

Jr. High & High School  
Bocce Ball Tournament  
6-8pm @ Willamette Park  
Contact Pastor Josh  
522.8571 or  
Josh@riverwest.org

### **FRIDAY 8/24**

1st Annual River West Golf  
Tournament @ Chehalem  
Glenn, Reg. begins @  
12:45, tee time starts @  
1:45. Contact Dave Olson  
@ 678.5444 or  
dolson@hawksoftinc.com

### **SATURDAY 8/25**

Jr. High & High School  
River Day, 2-9pm @ The  
Hamilton's. Contact  
Pastor Josh  
@ 522.8571 or  
Josh@riverwest.org

### **SUNDAY 8/26**

All Church Service. 10am  
@ Lakeridge  
High School Performing  
Arts Center

### **UPCOMING!**

**Financial Peace University**  
Tuesdays, Starting in Sept.  
Sign up now. Contact Julie  
@ 699.2226