

A Prophecy of Jesus

Psalm 22

MEMORY VERSE

PSALM 22:16

“For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet;”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Four cotton balls, a scarf (or piece of cloth), and earmuffs.

Lined paper and pencils.

A copy of the “Roman Soldiers” template, card stock paper, markers, and scissors.

A string, a pencil, paper & teaspoons.

ATTENTION GETTER!

Lord, Are You There?

For this game, you will need 4 cotton balls, a scarf (or piece of cloth), and earmuffs. Choose one child to be “it.” Using two cotton balls and a scarf (or piece of cloth), blindfold the child. Using the remaining two cotton balls and earmuffs, place them over his or her ears and the earmuffs over the cotton balls. The idea is that the child should not be able to see or hear.

Move all of the obstacles from the room’s floor. The object will be for the child who is “it” to tag another child who will then become “it.” The other children can sneak up to “it” and lightly tag them and get out of the way, but whoever gets tagged becomes “it.”

After playing 5 to 7 minutes, take the blindfold and earmuffs off. Ask the child who was “it” what it felt like to not be able to see or hear any of the other children. Ask, “Did you know they were still there even though you could not see or hear them?”

Sometimes, we may feel like maybe God is far away, that He does not hear us or see us. We cannot go by feelings. We must go by what we know. **Jesus died for you and for me.** He was forsaken by God for a moment—when our sins were laid upon Him on the cross—in order that we might never be forsaken. He promises that He will be with us always.

LESSON TIME!

In John 10:11, Jesus says of Himself; "I am the Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep." Psalm 22 is a prophetic psalm known as "The Psalm of the Cross," because it primarily foretells the suffering of Jesus on the cross. Prophecy is defined as "the speaking forth of the mind and counsel of God." In other words, God wanted us to understand His plan to send His Son to suffer and die on the cross for our sins several years before it happened.

C. H. Spurgeon says of this Psalm; “It is the photograph of our Lord's saddest hours, the record of his dying words, ...his last tears, the memorial of his expiring joys. ...Before us we have a description both of the darkness and of the glory of the cross, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which shall follow." How remarkable is the wonderful truth that **Jesus died for you and for me.**

PSALM 22:1-3

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My groaning?

O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear;
and in the night season, and am not silent.

But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel.

Verse one opens with the same phrase Jesus so passionately cried on the cross, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabacthani" (Mark 15:34); "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" H.A. Ironside stated it beautifully when he said, "What He suffered from the hands of man could not atone for sin, but what He suffered from the hands of God during those three hours of darkness settled the sin question."

Referring to why God had forsaken Him, Ironside said, "Do you know the answer to that question? Well, I am the answer to it and so are you. Why was He forsaken? So that we might not be forsaken by God. It was because He was bearing our sins, taking our place, because He was made sin for us." Jesus became the sacrifice for all of our sin, once and for all.

Jesus was forsaken at that moment in time when He took our sins upon Himself in order that we might never be forsaken. God, who is holy cannot look upon sin; it was necessary that He turn away from His Son. Jesus' cry was not the "why?" of one who is impatient or does not understanding what God was doing. It was the cry of deep sadness, a cry of being separated for the first time from His Father.

Here we see a glimpse of the love of Jesus for us which draws our hearts toward Him. There is no greater love that God could show for you and me than to lay down His life for us. We deserved punishment for our sins; instead God sacrificed Himself to settle our debt. We who believe in Jesus will not be judged for our wrongdoing. Jesus took our judgment. That's the Good News—the Gospel: **Jesus died for you and for me.**

As we look at the cross and see the suffering of Jesus, we also know He understands any pain that we have or will endure. He suffered violent pain in the garden and on the cross. He was forsaken by His Father, deserted by His disciples, laughed at by His enemies, and under a curse for us. **Jesus died for you and for me.**

Yet, in the midst of the pain of being forsaken, Jesus still exhibited trust and hope; for, He did not cease to pray. Jesus turned to His Father with the words, "My God, My God."

Do you ever feel that your prayers to God are unheard? You are not alone; Jesus had to wait. Yet, He continued to pray. He prayed "in the daytime... and in the night season." Jesus continued to pray even though no comfortable answer came. Jesus knew the goodness of His Father and that His will would be perfect. May we follow His example of patience and obedience. The Bible says, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1).

PSALM 22:4-5

Our fathers trusted in You; they trusted, and You delivered them.

They cried to You, and were delivered; they trusted in You, and were not ashamed.

In verses 4 and 5, Jesus speaks to God. He looks back over all the history of the Jewish people. Note that Jesus uses the word "our," showing that He was one with His people, even while He was on the cross. What stands out is that they "trusted." Three times the word "trusted" is mentioned; they trusted, and trusted, and trusted. They were dependent on God for their very life. In verse 5, we see that the saints "cried and were delivered; they trusted in you, and were not confounded." It was God who delivered them from their enemies, from all their difficulties, and miseries.

Jesus left us an example to follow. For when problems would have us drowning in despair, it is important to look back at God's record of faithfulness in the past. His unblemished record will give us assurance in the midst of an uncertain future. God will answer and deliver those who call upon Him.

PSALM 22:6-8

But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised by the people.

All those who see Me ridicule Me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,

“He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!”

As we see Jesus on the cross, He says, "I am a worm and no man." The Hebrew word He used for worm is the word "tola" (an oriental word). The tola of the orient is a little worm similar to the cochineal that feeds on a certain kind of cactus. In Mexico, "The people beat these plants until the cochineal fall into a basin; the insects are crushed, and their blood is used to make brilliant crimson dye to make the bright red Mexican garments." The scarlet dye of Palestine and Syria was made in the same manner. It was expensive, and only the rich could afford it. The scarlet cloth is referred to many times in scripture, and the word scarlet is literally "the splendor of a worm."

Ironside said, "Now the Lord Jesus Christ says, 'I am a worm; I am the tola,' and He had to be crushed in death so that you and I might be clothed in glory. The glorious garments of our salvation are the garments that have been purchased for us as a result of His death and His suffering." How could we ever then refuse His garment of salvation? Have you been covered by His sacrifice? If not, now is the time to receive His free gift. **Jesus died for you and for me.**

Consider the great love the God who created the heavens and the earth has for us! He was not only willing to stoop to our level in becoming a man and dwelling among us, but to suffer the shame and humiliation of the cross. Philippians 2:6-8 says, "Who, (Jesus) being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

In verse 7, we see the grief He endured as the people laughed Him to scorn. Scorn is defined as, "Contempt or disdain, as felt toward a person or object considered despicable or inferior. To consider or treat as contemptible or unworthy." Imagine for a moment, here is the Creator of the universe, the One who loves the world, hanging upon the cross, for the very people that had one week earlier hailed Him as their Messiah.

What were their feelings for Him? They laughed at Him with hatred. They saw Him as inferior and unworthy as they rejected Him now as their Messiah. Spurgeon said, "Which shall we wonder at the most, the cruelty of man or the love of the bleeding Savior? Can we ever complain of ridicule we may endure after this." It is said that to "shoot out the lip" (to protrude the lip) is considered a very strong indication of dislike towards another in the East.

The people began to blaspheme God, saying, "He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, seeing He delights in Him" (verse 8). This is aimed at Jesus' faith in God, as He suffers on the cross. Have you ever had someone who did not believe in Jesus make fun of you when you had a problem? Maybe laughing and asking, "Where is God now?" When we are troubled, let us remember Jesus understands. He went through the same thing. When they said, "seeing He delighted in Him," little did they know they were speaking the truth. The Father did delight in His dear Son, and Jesus delighted in His Father.

PSALM 22:9-10

But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother's breasts.

I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother's womb You have been My God.

Jesus did not believe those who scorned and laughed at Him. He knew the truth. God would not, could not disown Him, for it was against His very nature. Jesus acknowledges the tender care of the Father from the first moment of His existence. When He was just a baby, God poured out His loving kindness upon Him. Jesus could not be discouraged from praying to the Father.

Jesus reflected, "From My mother's womb You have been My God." Again, how helpful it is to reflect on God's past faithfulness. It will assure us that He will be faithful presently and in the future. How has God been faithful to you in the past? How has He protected you? It is easy to lose sight of what God has done for us, especially when we are in the middle of something difficult. But, when we remember what God has done for us in the past, it will encourage us for the future.

Faithfulness List

Take a few minutes and pass out a paper to each child in the class. Ask them to think of 3 – 5 things from their own lives of how God has been faithful to them. Then tell them to put this away in a safe place they will remember in the future. The next time they have problems, they can go to this list and read it again. They will find it easy to thank the Lord for what He has done in the past and be encouraged that He will be faithful once more as they seek His help.

PSALM 22:11-18

Be not far from Me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help.

Many bulls have surrounded Me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me.

They gape at Me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion.

I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it has melted within Me.

My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death.

For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet;

I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me.

They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.

This Psalm was written hundreds of years before Jesus went to the cross to bear our sins. It is amazing how God shows us His Word is true through prophecies such as these!

As you read all of these descriptions of Jesus on the cross, think about what happened. Review the scene of the cross from one of the four Gospels. How accurate is the Word of God!

In this part of our Bible reading, we see Jesus continuing to pour out His heart to the Father in prayer. He prays, "Be not far from me." Trouble was near, and He needed help from His Father. Everyone else had left Him, His disciples, friends, and all the others. He was alone on the cross. **Jesus died for you and for me.**

Verse 12 tells us, "Many bulls have surrounded me." The priests, elders, scribes, Pharisees, rulers, and captains roared about the cross like wild bulls. Those who hated Jesus desired His harm. The rulers of Israel knew that if the people turned to Jesus they might lose their own power and security. They did not really care about the people.

In verse 13 we read, "They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a raging and a roaring lion." Again, those that should have been Jesus' friends were the very ones wanting to tear Him into pieces like a lion going after its prey. They hated Jesus. There are many in the world, today, that still hate Jesus and try to come against Him and His people. This world is against the things of the Lord. Even though they desperately need salvation, they refuse to come to Jesus. Instead, they turn against the very One, the only One, who can give them eternal life.

In verse 14, we see Jesus' attention is turned away from His enemies to His dying on the cross. Our suffering Savior has become like water poured out upon the earth. Here is a picture of utter weakness—all of His bones are out of joint. One of the most painful things the body experiences is to have a bone out of place or to have a dislocated joint. When they raised Jesus up upon the cross, all the joints began to give so that the bones were separated from one another.

The intensity of His pain made His heart feel as wax that had melted within Him. The strength of heart is gone. We also see, that though He was in such tremendous pain, He retained His full consciousness throughout everything. He patiently endured-- Hebrews 12:2, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." The word "endure" in this verse means "joyful endurance." Jesus endured all of His suffering because of His love for us. He did this for us, for His precious bride. **Jesus died for you and for me.**

In verse 15, we see that Jesus compares His strength to a potsherd. A potsherd is a piece of earthenware baked in the fire until all the moisture is dried up from the clay. It is possible that His wounds became infected and that He was burning up with fever. His tongue cleaving to His jaws shows us the state of His outward distresses. We see the humiliation of Christ as He stoops to the dust of death, all out of love for us.

In verse 16, we see the condition of the crowd again. As a dog encircles its prey to devour it, so does the wicked crowd surround Jesus upon the cross. As a mad dog foams at the mouth, wild with rage, these wicked people are wild with anger and hatred for the Son of God. We are told, "They pierced my hands and my feet" (They nailed Him to the cross). It was the most cruel and cursed kind of death, yet our Lord did not refuse to die that way.

The hands and feet are very sensitive. The tearing of the tender tissues and tendons in the hands and feet, the cutting of so many nerves and the bursting of blood vessels produce tremendous agony.

As He felt pain in every part of His body, only nailed hands and feet supported Him for six hours of horrible agony. Isaiah tells us, "Behold I have graven you upon the palms of my hands" (Isaiah 49:16). Can we not see that we were engraved upon His hands when those nails pierced them for us? He may well carry those scars upon His hands throughout all eternity. **Jesus died for you and for me.**

In verse 17, He can count all His bones because He is forcibly stretched out, and all His bones stand out. In this horrible condition, He is a mockery to His enemies who just stand there gazing at Him with contempt. The sight of Jesus, dying such a horrid death should have stirred up compassion and sympathy in the people's hearts, but it did not.

Verse 18 tells us that Jesus' clothes became the property of the Roman soldiers. His outer garment was divided, but the other garment could not be divided because it was woven. The soldiers gambled for it. It was fulfilled in Matthew 25:35, "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet..." (this is referring back to Psalm 22:18). It seems that they valued the garment more than they valued the man who wore it. How much do we value Jesus and what He did for us? **Jesus died for you and for me.**

Roman Soldiers

In Psalm 22:18, we are told how Jesus' garments would be divided and lots cast for them. Roman soldiers fulfilled this at Jesus' crucifixion. Again, remember that this was written hundreds of years before it actually happened. Make this shield to remember God's faithfulness to His Word and to each one of us by giving salvation through Jesus Christ.

For this craft you will need a copy of the template provided, card stock paper, markers, and scissors. Before class, copy the template onto card stock paper (4 crafts per sheet of card stock). Cut the card stock into quarters to give one soldier to each child. Have the children cut out the soldier. Next, color and decorate each soldier. As a class, read Psalm 22:18 and talk about how this was fulfilled at Jesus' death. Write Psalm 22:18 on the back of each soldier.

PSALM 22:19-21

But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me!

Deliver Me from the sword, My precious life from the power of the dog.

Save Me from the lion's mouth and from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered Me.

Verse 19 shows us that through all of this, Jesus desired only His Father. He cries out to God for deliverance of His own soul, "from the power of the dog" (from Satan). He wants to be saved from "the lion's mouth." In 1 Peter 5:8b we read, "Satan goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." Satan thought that he would devour the Son of God. Little did he know that soon the work of redemption would be finished. Salvation for the entire world would be provided. **Jesus died for you and for me.**

Then, all His suffering was over. We read in Luke 23:46 that Jesus cried, "Father, into Thy hand I commend My spirit." His suffering was over. The darkness and despair were gone; He was no longer alone. His work was done. He was faithful to God to bring salvation to the world. **Jesus died for you and for me.**

PSALM 22:22-25

I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise You.

You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, and fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!

For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; nor has He hidden His face from Him; but when He cried to Him, He heard.

My praise shall be of You in the great assembly;
I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.

The scene now shifts from the crucifixion to the resurrection of Christ! He will now declare the name of His Father to His brethren. Jesus is saying that we are His brothers and sisters, because of His sacrifice. We are now the sons of God if we believe in Christ's atonement at the cross. Jesus calls us to a heart of praise and worship to the God of our salvation.

Jesus' sufferings did not take Him away from His Father, but drew Him into intimacy as only suffering can. In verse 25, we see the joy of Christ as He pours out the expression of His praise. Jesus accomplished what the Father set out for Him to do. We also can do what God wants us to do when we keep our eyes and hearts focused on Him. **Jesus died for you and for me.**

PSALM 22:26-31

The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever!

All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You.

For the kingdom is the LORD'S, and He rules over the nations.

All the prosperous of the earth shall eat and worship; all those who go down to the dust shall bow before Him, even he who cannot keep himself alive.

A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation,

They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, that He has done this.

In these final verses, we see the results of what Jesus has done for us. Because He died on the cross, salvation can go out to the ends of the earth. Now there is hope for a dark and hopeless world. Without Jesus we all would have to spend eternity separated from God in Hell. But, Jesus suffered and died for us. Our sins are forgiven. This is the Gospel—"Good News." Indeed, it is great news! Now it is up to us to declare it to everyone we can.

We understand from Psalm 22 that Jesus knew ahead of time what He would do for our salvation. Yet, He still "endured the cross, despising the shame." The death on the cross was the worst form of execution, for the pain was unbelievable. We must never forget what price Jesus paid for us, to redeem us and make us His own. God loves us, and desires a relationship with us. We can trust Him with all of our heart, for He has poured out His heart for us. **Jesus died for you and for me.**

A Teaspoon Full of Questions

Use this game to review the lesson. You will need string, a pencil, paper, and teaspoons. Tape a piece of string to the floor. Write different Bible questions on paper and wad them up small enough to fit on a teaspoon.

Divide the class into teams and line up. Give the first person on each team a teaspoon with a Bible question on it. The child must put the handle of the teaspoon in his mouth and walk the string without dropping the question. At the end of the line, he un-wads the question, reads it, and answers it. The next person must follow. The team that answers the most questions correctly wins the game.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord for all He has done for them, especially giving thanks for what Jesus has done on the cross. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.

