

LESSON 11

MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?

Psalm 22

*To the choirmaster: according to The Doe of the Dawn.
A Psalm of David.*

- ¹My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me,
from the words of my groaning?
- ²O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.
- ³Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
- ⁴In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
- ⁵To you they cried and were rescued;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.
- ⁶But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.
- ⁷All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;
- ⁸“He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!”
- ⁹Yet you are he who took me from the womb;
you made me trust you at my mother’s breasts.
- ¹⁰On you was I cast from my birth,
and from my mother’s womb you have been my God.
- ¹¹Be not far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.

WELCOME: *Fixing Our Focus*

Leader: Ask the members of the group if they have a burden they've been carrying for a long time. This is a matter that they have brought to the Lord but he hasn't answered them yet. Allow them to share their burden to the group.

WORSHIP: *Adoring Our God*

Suggested songs:

God is Able by Hillsong Worship

Trust His Heart by Babbie Mason

WORD: *Understanding the Word*

Introduction

Have you been crying out to the Lord for deliverance from your problem, but he doesn't seem to respond? Do you feel as if the whole world is against you; and God, although he is able to rescue you, is not doing anything about it? We know that God listens to his children, he rescues the oppressed, but your experience contradicts that. What are you to do? Can you complain to God about it? Will that be considered a sin? How can we keep our life in tune with God when he remains silent?

Leader: Lead in reading Psalm 22:1-11 aloud together. Then read the paragraph on the "Key Verse."

Key Verse: Although the psalmist begins the psalm feeling abandoned by God, the truth of the matter is God hears the cry of the afflicted. His response may not come immediately, but it is sure to come. This is reflected in verse 24, "For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him."

Psalm 22:1-11. Theme: _____

1. How did the psalmist describe God in light of his current circumstances? Encircle the phrases used by the psalmist in verses 1 and 2.
2. Underline all phrases that describe God in verses 3 to 5. How does it compare to the earlier verses?
3. How did the psalmist see himself in verses 6 to 8? Encircle the phrases. Why did the psalmist feel this way?
4. What did the psalmist assert in verses 9 to 11? What was he trying to say in these verses?

In the space above, write what you think is the theme of verses 1-11.

Psalm 22:12-21. Theme: _____

Read verses 12-21 together.

¹²Many bulls encompass me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
¹³they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.

¹⁴I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;

it is melted within my breast;
¹⁵my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.

¹⁶For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet—

¹⁷I can count all my bones—
they stare and gloat over me;

¹⁸they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.

¹⁹But you, O Lord, do not be far off!
O you my help, come quickly to my aid!

²⁰Deliver my soul from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dog!

²¹Save me from the mouth of the lion!
You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!

1. How did the psalmist describe his enemies in verses 12 and 13? Encircle the animals used by the psalmist to describe his enemies.
2. Underline the objects used by the psalmist to describe himself in verses 14 and 15. How do you imagine the psalmist based on his descriptions?
3. How did the psalmist describe his enemies in verses 16 to 18? How do they treat the psalmist?
4. When all things seemed hopeless, to whom did the psalmist turn to for deliverance? (vv. 19-21)

In the space above, write what you think is the theme of verses 12-21.

Psalm 22:22-31. Theme: _____

Read verses 22-31 together.

²²I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:
²³You who fear the Lord, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him,
and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
²⁴For he has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and he has not hidden his face from him,
but has heard, when he cried to him.

²⁵From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will perform before those who fear him.

²⁶The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the Lord!
May your hearts live forever!

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the Lord,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before you.

²⁸For kingship belongs to the Lord,
and he rules over the nations.

²⁹All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the one who could not keep himself alive.

³⁰Posterity shall serve him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;

³¹they shall come and proclaim his righteousness
to a people yet unborn,
that he has done it.

1. Underline all occurrences of the word “praise” and its synonyms. How did the tone of the psalmist change after God had answered his prayers? How did the psalmist respond to

God's salvation? (vv. 22-26)

2. Encircle all the people mentioned in this passage who will worship God in the future. What is the scope mentioned by the psalmist? What is the reason why psalmist thinks these people will worship God in the future? (vv. 27-31)

In the space above, write what you think is the theme of verses 22-31.

Allusions to Psalm 22 at Christ's crucifixion

1. There are several allusions to Psalm 22 during the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Note the table below and read the passages mentioned.

<i>Crucifixion passage(s)</i>	<i>Passage in Psalm 22</i>
Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34	"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (v. 1)
Matthew 27:39; Mark 15:29-30	"they wag their heads" (v. 7)
Matthew 27:43	"He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!" (v. 8)
Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:23-24	"they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots" (v. 18)

Discuss the significance of each allusion to Psalm 22 in the crucifixion passages.

WALK: *Applying the Word*

Questions for Adults

1. How do you reconcile the truth that God is good, that he rescues the oppressed, and the reality that God sometimes remains silent while you are suffering?
2. Where would you draw the line between blaspheming/questioning God and raising our complaints (against God) to God?
3. Are you going through a period of difficulty and experiencing the silence of God? Resolve to keep clinging onto the Lord desperately, knowing that God is faithful and hears the cries of the afflicted. If you know of somebody going through a period of difficulty and experiencing the silence of God, get in touch with that person this week to encourage and pray for them.
4. Individually and as a group, pray back this psalm to God. You could start by saying something like:
Father, why are you silent when I cry out to you? I feel overwhelmed by my circumstances. I know you are faithful and you love your children. But Lord...
5. Pray for one another (Based on prayer requests shared during Welcome).

Questions for the Youth

1. From carnival rides to trendy shops, people fall in line and wait for an experience they believe is worth their time. Some do this for phones and gadgets by reserving them months before they are released. They believe these things are worth the wait and will make them happy. What are some things you are willing to wait for?
2. However, there are times when waiting can be excruciating, such as when waiting for test results of university admissions and try-out acceptance for competitions. How do you cope with the agony of waiting?
3. What are some reasons why you should wait on God even when going through difficult moments in life?

Questions for Children

1. Why does David still seek and pray to the Lord even when he thinks God is quiet? In verses 4 & 5, what did God do to David's fathers?
2. Write down one prayer you have been praying for. Now if the Lord does not respond right away, how should you respond?
3. In verse 22, what are we to do when God answers our prayers? How can you tell others about what God has done for you?
4. Do you know of anyone who's lonely or abandoned? Why don't you pray for them right now?