

The Sufferings of Christ and the Glories that Follow

Preached by Phil Kayser at DCC on 2021-04-04

Introduction: Background on Psalm 22

Psalm 22 is neatly divided into two parts. And I think 1 Peter 1:11 captures those two parts perfectly. It says that the Old Testament prophets “testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.” The “the sufferings of Christ” are Psalm 22, verses 1-21a. The “glories that follow” are Psalm 22, verses 21b-31. So this is one of my rare two-point sermons - of course, with a few subpoints.

Last week I pointed out that Psalms 22-24 are a trilogy of Messianic Psalms that are dependent upon each other. Psalm 22 shows Christ as the Suffering Savior who is guaranteed to reconcile the world to Himself. Psalm 23 shows Jesus to be a shepherd who gathers, protects, and cares for the sheep that He had died for. And Psalm 24 shows the divine king who is Lord of this people. And some have characterized these three Psalms as the cross, the crook, and the crown. Last week we saw how they fit together and complement each other perfectly. I won't repeat those ideas.

Well, for our resurrection day sermon I want to focus on the second half of Psalm 22 - on the glories that follow Christ's resurrection. So most of the sermon will be just on that second point.

The “sufferings of Christ” (vv. 1-21a) (A brief overview)

But over the next 4-5 minutes let me at least give you a brief overview of the first half.

The title says, “To the chief musician,” which ties this Psalm to the temple liturgy and the sacrifices that pointed to Jesus. It continues by saying, “Set to the Deer of the Dawn,” which foreshadows Jesus being hunted by men and by demons from the very moment He was born. He was hounded by Herod and his sons, by the Pharisees, Sadducees, and the other leaders of Israel. But more importantly, He was hounded by Satan who sought to destroy Jesus as soon as He was born and continued that hunt throughout His life. And this Psalm will have very vivid images of the demonic attacks that Jesus sustained.

Verse 1 shows Jesus forsaken on the cross by the Father. That verse contains words that Jesus cried out on the cross during the hour of darkness. So we know that this was during a time of intense abandonment. Abandonment is just one of the many kinds of suffering Jesus endured.

Yet verses 3-5 show a complete trust in the Father. He says, “You are holy.” He never questions God's goodness. That too is a kind of suffering - doing right and thinking right when life is terrible. It's a kind of self-denial. He also says,

...enthroned on the praises of Israel. 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.

Spurgeon reminds us: “Three times over is it mentioned they trusted, and trusted, and trusted, and never left off trusting...” Here is an example for us to trust when we are afflicted; to trust when everything goes wrong; to trust when demons appear to triumph and when humans are opposed to us. Don’t grumble as if God is unfair, but say to God, “You are holy... and I will trust You.” Job said, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.”

The next aspect of Christ’s sufferings are seen in verses 6-8 where Jesus receives the scorn of men. They heap upon Jesus incredibly demeaning words, ridicule, despising, and shame. This is suffering under verbal abuse, social abuse, and emotional abuse.

Verses 9-11 show that trouble was always near Him even from birth, yet He trusted God in it all. These verses show the active obedience of Jesus on our behalf throughout His life. It involved humility and self-denial.

Verses 13-14 introduce us again to the demonic tormentors that goaded men to torment him.

Verse 15 deals with the suffering of his body - weakness, bones being pulled out of joint, inner agony, and thirst.

Verse 16 gives six kinds of suffering. First is demonic attack: “For dogs have surrounded Me.” Then social attack by His countrymen: “the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.” Then comes physical pain: “They pierced My hands and feet.” Then the shame of nakedness “I can count all My bones.” Or, others say that the phrase shows that His bones were exposed from the scourging Jesus endured which (with the cat o’ nine tails) would have exposed every bone so that it could be seen. Either way, it speaks of another kind suffering. Then comes social pain - “They look and stare at Me.” Then losing everything - even His clothing - “They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.”

And then comes Christ’s prayer to the Father to be delivered from all of these sufferings. So that is a 5 minute overview of the first half of the Psalm.

The “glories that follow” (vv. 21b-31)

The resurrection as the pivot of the Psalm (v. 21b)

But the glories that follow start with the last sentence in verse 21 - “You have answered Me.” That is the hinge on which the whole Psalm swings.

So the question comes, “When was the prayer of the first 21 verses answered?” There were some aspects that were answered the moment He died and went down to Paradise because at that point neither demons nor men could reach him. He was delivered from the power of the dog, the lion and the wild oxen. And for the same reason, we need not fear death. In a very real way death is a deliverance into glory and paradise for our souls.

But this prayer wasn’t *completely* answered at His death. His prayer was also a prayer that the Father would rescue Him from death itself, and in another Psalm it was to not leave His

soul in Sheol. And that happened on resurrection day. And so this phrase, “you have answered Me” is separated from the rest of verse 21 in our version because it is the glorious transition that happened on Sunday morning; resurrection day. That was the day in which every aspect of this prayer was completely answered.

And there is an immediate application that we can make from this phrase: don’t think that because the Lord doesn’t answer your prayers instantly, that He is not answering your prayers. The Father always heard the Son, and yet here was a delay. Yes, it was only a three day delay, but it was a delay. It was a testing of His faith - yet another form of suffering. But every prayer was answered, and Jesus was resurrected and ascended to His throne in glory.

The growth of Christ’s kingdom worldwide (vv. 22-31)

And the rest of the Psalm shows the gradually increasing glories that immediately followed His resurrection and will continue to increase to the end of time. Or another way of describing it is the gradual growth of Christ’s kingdom worldwide. His death was not in vain; His priesthood was not in vain. Eventually this will be a redeemed world.

Let’s look at each stage of this gradual growth because I think it helps to keep us from being discouraged. We wish for instant success. But all of the parables of the kingdom in the Gospels show a *gradual* growth of the kingdom. I’ve put a picture in your outlines of one parable - that of the mustard. And I think Jesus was probably referring to Brassica Nigra, or black mustard seed. The kingdom starts off very tiny - as tiny as a Brassica Nigra mustard seed, but it eventually grows into what Mark calls a herb (and it is clearly an herb) that is as big as a tree. What kind of herb that was growing in their gardens is as big as a tree? A Brassica Nigra Mustard. It could grow from 6-30 feet tall. That’s black mustard. A tiny seed that grows into an herb tall enough to be a tree.

It starts with a remnant of Jews (vv. 22-24)

And that’s what we see here in verses 22-24 of Psalm 22. The kingdom started with a remnant of Jews who got saved after His resurrection. A remnant is small. Verses 22-24 say,

22 I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You. 23 You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel! 24 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.

There are several things can be teased apart in that paragraph. But let’s look first of all at who these first words were describing. It’s not describing our generation - though we will see that exactly the same principles apply in later verses. If you look at verse 23 you will see that these Christians are called “the descendants of Jacob” and the “offspring of Israel.” This is not a metaphorical Israel, such as we are. This is referring to the literal descendants of Jacob, which was the twelve tribes of Jacob, and the literal offspring of Israel (and “Israel” was Jacob’s second name). So this speaks about the very first stage of Christ’s kingdom that was almost entirely composed of Jews in Israel.

And what's remarkable about this first stage of the kingdom is how it highlights Christ's mercy and forgiving heart. Israel had rejected and killed Jesus, yet Jesus *began* His kingdom by saving His enemies.

And He didn't just make them slaves. Jesus tells the Father, "I will declare Your name to *My brethren*; in the midst of the assembly I will praise You". Hebrews quotes this verse and glories in the union that the early church had with Jesus. It says,

For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.

And the word "assembly" is *ekklesia*, or church. He is not ashamed to call the church His brethren. And the early church was composed of Jews. It was the reconstituted Israel.

But let's think of that word "not ashamed." We might think that there is plenty for Him to be ashamed of in our lives. But the beauty of His salvation is that our sins have forever been taken away because of the sufferings of the first 21 verses, and because of our union with Jesus, we are adopted children of the Father, and thus brothers of Jesus. That's astounding. He calls us brothers - which, by the way, includes the females in Biblical language. All of us are adopted siblings (so to speak).

But there's more. Look at the word for "praise" in verse 22. It says, "In the midst of the assembly I will praise You." That word for praise is *hallal*, which can have the idea of *singing* praises. And so one version has it: "I will sing your praises in the midst of the assembly." And that's exactly the way Hebrews 2:12 translates this verse when it quotes it. So Jesus is somehow singing in midst of this first century church.

What does it mean for Jesus to sing praises in the church? Well, the upshot of this verse is that from the resurrection on, Jesus is so identified with His people that when they gather to sing praises to the Father, Jesus meets with us to sing praises to the Father through us. He is the one who leads our worship. He is the singing Savior. He is in our midst today by His divine Spirit. It speaks of His mystical union with the church - an astounding concept that entire books have been written on - my favorite being, *The Abiding Presence*, by Hugh Martin. An amazing book.

Well, Christ singing in the midst of the congregation has huge implications for our worship. Let me list six implications.

First of all, it means that Jesus endorses singing in the church. That should be an obvious deduction. And yet some people don't get it; they don't believe in singing. There are some churches that have banned singing and only want preaching. But Jesus is a singing Savior. He sings in the midst of the assembly.

Second, He doesn't want to sing alone. The words, "in the midst," are a very strong description of Christ's union with and participation with the congregation. If Hebrews 2 indicates that He is not ashamed to call us brethren and to sing in our midst, then we ought not to be ashamed of meeting with Him and singing with Him. That's calling not just for

church attendance but also church singing. And yet some people don't like to hear themselves singing. It doesn't matter. He wants you to sing.

Third, there is a special presence of the Lord in the church that is not true elsewhere. That's why we speak of the gathered church as one of the means of grace. He is omnipresent as to His divine Spirit, so we are not talking about Him being absent from our homes. Not at all. But commentators indicate that there is a special presence and manifestation of Jesus when the corporate church is gathered. Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them..." and commentators point out that the context is talking about the church gathered - especially in church discipline.

Fourth, our worship services must be led by Christ and empowered by Christ. It's one of the implications of the resurrection. How do we do that when we don't see Him? Through His Word. The first phrase indicates that it is Christ's word that is delivered to the brethren (He declares the Father's name when the word is preached), and the second phrase indicates that it is Christ's songs that are lifted up to heaven. In fact, if He does not sing them, the songs won't get past the ceiling. Just as He needs to be the intercessor making our prayers worthy, He needs to be the intercessor for the rest of our worship.

Well, fifth, that means that all of our songs must either narrate the Bible word-for-word (as our Psalter does) or must be an exposition of the Bible (which all of our hymns and songs are). Our singing and all the rest of the worship must be Bible saturated, or they are not truly Christ's words being sung, prayed, and preached. And it very well may be that there is a special reference to singing the psalms in this verse. The Psalms are the prayers of Christ, and when the Psalms are sung, the Father always hears the prayers of Jesus. That includes the imprecatory Psalms that are almost 100% absent from the modern church. It's a shame. Awesome things would begin to happen if the church would be willing to sing the imprecatory Psalms - and that is precisely because Jesus is in our midst singing them with us.

And then finally, Edmund Clowney of Westminster Seminary points out that this verse is a key passage for Christ-centered worship. We must always remember His presence with us when we gather for worship.

So verses 22-24 shows Jesus building a Jewish church (what we call the New Israel) in the early stages of the first century. He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

It grows into a great assembly composed of Gentile families (vv. 25-27)

But in verses 25-27 this tiny remnant grows into a great assembly - a huge assembly. It does so by going way beyond the borders of Palestine and incorporating Gentile families into this New Israel (the church) from every tribe and nation. And I find it fascinating that it incorporates families, not just individuals. The family is the most foundational building block of the church, not the individual. It is a republic of families. And we will get to that in a bit. But let's look at the first phrase in verse 25:

25 My praise shall be of You in the great assembly;

Note that even though He is moving to a largely Gentile church, the exact same thing that was spoken about the early church of the apostles continues to be true. Jesus is still singing in the midst of the assembly - this time not a small remnant, but a great assembly. He goes on to identify with us in our vows as well, saying,

I will pay My vows before those who fear Him. 26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever! 27 All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You.

Notice that families worship as families. The church is made up of families. But those who eat of the sacrament are a subset - they are those who are able to take the vows, those who fear the Lord, those who seek Him, and those who remember and turn. Let me outline eight additional things that characterize the privilege of partaking of the Lord's Supper.

First, the Lord's Supper is in a context of praise, not of sorrow. The Lord's Table is not something to feel badly about. Some people feel that they are not partaking properly if they don't mourn over Christ's death. But the New Testament speaks of this meal as a meal of rejoicing, thanksgiving, and praise. After all, Jesus is no longer on the cross. Hallelujah! He is a resurrected and glorified Savior. And crucifixes with Jesus still on them does a disservice to our faith. There is nothing to mourn about with regard to Jesus. Certainly *Jesus* is praising God as a resurrected Savior. And so the Psalmist says of the New Covenant times, "My praise shall be of You in the great assembly." Christ's resurrection power gives us every reason for joy.

The second thing to notice is that this communion meal to which Christ calls us to rejoice is in the *Great Assembly*. It's not a private meal (like the home church movement often makes it). It is a meal for the church gathered. And in the same way Paul several times speaks of the Lord's Table as being not for the private homes but for when the church is all gathered together.

Third, it is connected to vows. But I want you to notice who is making the vows: Jesus is. He says, "I will pay My vows before those who fear Him." Notice that the "My" is capitalized here. Jesus is rejoicing and Jesus is making vows in the Lord's Table. And He makes those vows in the great assembly before those who fear God. To me that is staggering - that He would be willing to make a vow on my behalf. Certainly we commit ourselves to Him when we come to the Lord's Table, but Jesus is so committing Himself to us that He does so by way of a vow. Partaking of this table is in effect partaking of a vow. His vows to us and our vows to Him. By the way, that's what the word "sacrament" means - the vows of commander and soldiers to each other. *Sacramentum* is the Latin.

Fourth, we who are gathered to eat with Christ are called to fear God. We are described as those who fear Him. The fear of the Lord is an absolutely essential feature of the Christian faith. It's compatible with praise and joy, but it does show reverence. We should come with reverence before this table.

Fifth, it says that the poor shall eat and be satisfied. Several commentators take the Hebrew word for "poor" as "meek" rather than poor. But either way, it works. If you are poor in spirit, you will be meek and in total dependence upon God. But the point is that this is not a

meal for the proud. This is a meal for the meek or the poor in spirit. We come, not because we are strong, but because we need His strength. We come not because we have it all put together, but because we need the riches of His grace. Yes, He has basic conditions for coming to the table (even listed here), but being strong in spirit is not one of them.

Sixth, it is these meek or poor who are satisfied. Some people come to the Lord's Table and it does nothing for them; nothing whatsoever. But when you come in faith; when you come in meekness, you are satisfied. What an incredible promise in connection with the Lord's Table – they will be satisfied. Why? Because Christ Himself is with us, fulfilling His vows on our behalf. He's not just a doctrine - He's a resurrected Savior who makes this sacrament effective.

Seventh, this is not a passive sacrament, but an active seeking of God by faith. It says, "Those who seek Him will praise the LORD." Why do we praise the Lord? Because if we seek Him by faith we will surely find Him. The reality of God's presence is guaranteed. But we must seek Him by faith.

And there is one more point in these two verses that is encouraging. Jesus speaks to us saying, "Let your heart live forever!" The very one who spoke the worlds into existence and who said, "Let there be light" and there was light, speaks to us saying, "Let your heart live forever!" And if Christ speaks that to you, your heart will indeed live forever. Those are words of security. Eternal life begins the moment of conversion, not when we die.

And by the way, we are currently living in the stage of the kingdom being described in verses 25-27 - a time when families from every tribe and nation are being gathered into the great assembly. There is still more gathering to be done.

It exerts its influence upon all nations (v. 28)

But verse 28 indicates that Jesus is not satisfied with families from all nations being saved. That's great. But He also claims the nations as nations. He says, "For the kingdom is the LORD'S, and He rules over the nations." He doesn't just rule over the church; He rules over the nations. He claims the nations. The Great Commission will not be fulfilled until all nations are disciplined and taught to obey all things Christ has commanded them in His Word. That hasn't happened yet. That is yet another future stage to the kingdom. We are contributing to that stage, but we are not there yet.

It eventually includes "all" - both the rich and the poor (v. 29)

But there are more stages after that. Jesus won't be satisfied with only the heads of nations making a covenant declaration of obedience to Christ. He wants everyone in every nation doing so. So verse 29 shows a further progress.

All the prosperous of the earth [Note that word "all" - *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.

Eventually planet earth will experience such revival and reformation that absolutely everyone from the richest to the poorest of these nations will worship by bowing down

before Christ. And by the way, all of us should learn to bow before God in our worship, whether private or corporate.

But I love the extent to which Christ's kingdom is guaranteed to go. Amillennialists sometimes mock those of us who take this literally. And they mock us by calling us Triumphalists. OK, what's the alternative to being a Triumphalist? Being a defeatist, a failure, a washout? I have no problem with being labeled a Triumphalist. This is one of hundreds of passages that guarantees that Jesus will have the victory over everyone. 1 Corinthians 15 says that all enemies must be put under His feet. Colossians 1 says that all things that are created must be redeemed and reconciled to Christ. Jeremiah 31 says that the New Covenant progress will eventually be so successful that evangelism won't be needed anymore because *everyone* will know the Lord. At that stage we will be long past the swamp's, marshes, and salt pits of Ezekiel 47:11. When this stage arrives, the church won't be able to find anyone to evangelize. Jeremiah 31 says,

No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, "Know the LORD," for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD...

So this section anticipates some period in future history when everyone is eventually in the church.

His universal kingdom in which all are saved (v. 29 above) will span multiple generations - a "posterity" (זָרַע) and "a next generation" (דֹּר) and yet another "people who will be born" (vv. 30-31)

But that's not the last stage of history either. The Postmillennial optimism of this chapter is off the charts. Just having one period of history when everyone believes would be wonderful in its own right, but verses 30-31 say that this characteristic will continue from that period on and extend to all generations - as long as there are humans being born. It says,

30 A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation, 31 They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, That He has done this.

He has done this. *Only* He could do this. His universal kingdom in which all are saved (which is in verse 29) will span multiple generations - a "posterity" (זָרַע) and "a next generation" (דֹּר) and yet another "people who will be born." So at least three generations after verse 29. This is one of many Scriptures that proves that Christ's final coming cannot be imminent. There are way too many things that still have to be fulfilled. Isaiah 19 gives several more - for example, showing several stages of Egypt's history, from partially converted, to a majority converted, to fully converted, and then having ongoing godly relations with two other converted nations - Israel and Assyria. No, there is much more to human history.

And His resurrection from the grave was the assurance that God had begun His kingdom and would fulfill all the ancient promises made for planet earth.

So back to the last sentence of verse 21. The resurrection of Jesus was not only God's perfect answer to Christ's prayers, it was the guarantee that the Father always answers all

Christ's prayers. And He continues to intercede for His elect. And He continues to pray for the advancement of His kingdom. Those prayers will be answered no matter what Marxists, Critical Race Theorists, or other God-hating opponents might arise.

This means that the resurrection of Jesus was not only the hinge upon which this *Psalm* swings open, but it is also the hinge upon which all of history swings. Prior to the resurrection, the general scope of history was downwards, with a few reversals. But it was downward until almost everyone abandoned Jesus on the cross - as He worded it, the sheep were scattered. Nothing but Jesus was left, and He was hanging on a cross.

But the cross and resurrection reversed all of history so that the general scope of New Covenant history is upwards, with a few reversals in regions of the world. The West is seeing a bit of a reversal, but worldwide the kingdom of Christ continues to grow non-stop. That is guaranteed by Christ's resurrection. His resurrection was the first new thing of the New Creation. And the New Covenant guarantees that every aspect of the fallen creation must eventually be made new. Jesus promised, "I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it."

And according to the last verses of this Psalm, history will not end with a whimper and a Great Apostasy, as so many people have supposed. That is a gross misinterpretation of Revelation 20. As my sermon series on that book showed, Revelation 20 shows that the final gathering of Gog and Magog is at a time when the entire world is converted, and Gog and Magog (long since dead and no longer even existing on earth) will be resurrected from Hades to give one last attempt to overcome and overwhelm a Christian world. But before they can do so, Christ will judge them and cast them into the lake of fire and cause this world to enter into its final and permanent stage of glory.

And so very literally, this Psalm predicts what 1 Peter 1:11 says had already begun to happen. The sufferings of Christ had already taken place, and the glories that follow those sufferings had already begun to increase.

The bottom line is that we ought never to grow disheartened or discouraged. If Jesus was raised from the dead (which He certainly was) then the Bible guarantees (as Isaiah 9:7 words it), that

7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Or as the last phrase of our Psalm words it - "He has done this." His resurrection guarantees it. May we believe it. Amen.