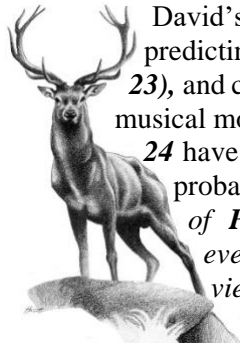


'THE SON OF GOD'S PERSONAL HYMN-O-SCOPE'
(A Messianic Trilogy of Jesus as Savior, Shepherd and Sovereign)
Psalms 22, 23 & 24

Cross, Crook & Crown



David's musical masterpiece is a symphony of three consecutive, separate psalms predicting the prophetic roles of God, the Son, as Savior (*Psalm 22*), the Good Shepherd (*Psalm 23*), and coming sovereign King (*Psalm 24*). Only *Psalm 22* has introductory explanation of the musical mood to be conveyed '*Set to the tune of 'The Deer of the Dawn'*'. Since *Psalms 23* and *24* have no such introductory remarks, it may be assumed that the music David had in mind probably should be applied to all three as well (*the deer hunted and killed / being first half of Psalm 22, the deer coming back to life and its amazing story being shared everywhere around the world / last half of Psalm 22; a little lamb's loving and thankful view of his (her) shepherd / Psalm 23; a king's triumphal entry into his kingdom following a great victory / Psalm 24*).

Psalm 22 / a symphony in three movements

Psalm 23 / calm and melodic

Psalm 24 / triumphant and majestic.

Historically, the trilogy marks great focal points in Christ's personal intervention in the world:

Psalm 22 / Christ's past, first coming sacrifice

Psalm 23 / Christ's current Church Age
ministry to His flock

Psalm 24 / Christ's yet future second coming
Millennial Kingdom reign

When the Holy Spirit moved David to compose these three very special musical pieces (*around 1000 BC*), they were about things that were all still future at the time and therefore are to be regarded as prophetic, Messianic Psalms (*1 Peter 1:10-12*). The Lord Jesus' roles are best summed up in the *cross* period (**Savior**), the *crook* or *staff* era (**Shepherd**), and *crown* (**Sovereign**). In terms of the Lord Jesus' relationship to His people – Christians first come to know Christ Jesus as Savior and soon thereafter learn to follow Him as their Shepherd and then eventually fully submit to Him as the sovereign Lord and King of his or her whole life (*1 Thessalonians 5:23*).

Cross Talk

(The Father-Son Communion at Calvary)

Psalm 22

Psalm 22 was no doubt written by David to describe a desperate time or possibly even a near-death experience he had in his life. But as he wrote, the Spirit of God directed him to include things he had never felt or endured, that could only have future reference to a greater King to come who would go through even more extreme agony (*22:1-21*) and miraculous recovery (*22: 22-31*) (an experience of OT prophets writing without complete comprehension of who, what, or when they were referring / *1 Peter 1:10-12*).

No doubt David went through some experiences similar to what he was writing, so it becomes the reader's task to sort out what is about David and what can't possibly be about him and therefore must be a preview of '*the greater David*' to come (*Zechariah 12:10-13:1, Matthew 22:41-46, Revelation 22:16 / Messianic verses in Psalm 22 = vs. 1, 8, 14, 16, 18*).

Psalm 22:1-21 is the view from the cross through the eyes of Christ dying there as the Lamb of God taking the punishment for our sins. It is only the Lord's communion with the Father during those final minutes before 3 pm when He died (**Matthew 27:45-46**). Christ's sayings during the previous 6 hours on the cross are not included in **Psalm 22** ('*Father forgive them*', '*behold your mother*' (to John about Mary) and '*you will be with Me in Paradise*' (to the saved criminal on the cross next to Him). Nor are the remaining three statements of Jesus from the cross specifically given in **Psalm 22**, although eluded to in v **15** 'I thirst', v **21** '*It is finished*,' and v **20** '*Into Your hands I commend My spirit*'. "*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*" (**22:1**) is the fourth word of Christ from the cross and therefore the centerpiece of God's last words to mankind at the end of the Old Testament dispensation.

The first three statements from Jesus before noon are *horizontal* earthly issues of man (*forgiveness, family responsibility, and repentance*). The last three statements are *vertical* issues regarding God and us (*thirst for God, confessing faith in the finished work of Christ for forgiveness, and entrusting your soul to God for everlasting life*). Christ's being forsaken (*the 4th statement*) to atone for our sins makes the other six things possible – He was forsaken, so we, by His grace, never would be.

Psalm 22:22-31 is the message of the Savior in Sheol / Paradise to the Old Testament saints during the three days His body rested in the tomb (*vs. 22-24 / 1 Peter 1:18-24*), when He arose and took the OT saints out of Sheol and moved them to heaven on Resurrection Day (*vs. 25-26 / Matthew 27:51-52, Ephesians 4:8 / Psalm 68:18*), the spread of the gospel message during the Church Age (*vs. 27-28*) and the kingdom of God on earth (*vs. 29-31*).

Discussion Group Questions:

Crucifixion Considerations

(Thoughts in coming to the communion table)

What Jesus said in vs. **1-2** was Him feeling the full unmitigated wrath of God against sin being poured out on Him for 6 full hours! If God hates sin so much that He must pour out eternal wrath on His Son Who was sinless, just think what would have come to us, who are sinners, and still is coming on all our unsaved friends and family!

- Talk about how glad and thankful you are (if you are a Christian) for Christ's substitutional sacrifice for you on the cross. Talk about His cross example of 'radical love' for us.
- Verses that helped Jesus endure the crucifixion are vs. **3-5**, vs. **9-11** and vs. **19-21**. In what ways can these kinds of thoughts of God's faithfulness in the past, His goodness to you throughout your life and His presence in the midst of trials help when you are hurting or even dying (**1 Peter 2:21-25**)?
- How can these verses help you come to communion (*the Lord's Table*) with greater love and reverence for Christ? When you look at the broken bread and the cup, will it mean more to you if you recall these graphic events that communion symbolizes? (*Discuss how you hope Psalm 22 will make communion extra special next time you partake of it*) (**1 Corinthians 11:23-32**).

Resurrection Considerations

(Thoughts in going from the communion table)

- What should be the proper response of Christians who have remembered Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, especially following communion? (*vs. 22, 25, 30*)
- Jesus *declared* what He had done in the *assembly* of departed OT souls (**22**), to the *great assembly* of heaven (**25**) and now wants it done by us '*to the ends of the world*' (**27**).
- Did you ever think of communion as a time to renew your commitment to the mission of telling people about Jesus (the unleavened bread) and His shed blood on the cross (the cup of grape drink)?
- Talk about how taking Communion is a picture of how we have taken the message of salvation into our heart and life, spiritually energizing us to share about the cross and Christ with others.
- Isn't v **31** a prediction of us today and what we are saved and here to do with the new resurrection life He has given us? Sunday is communion – how do you hope **Psalm 22** will help you come ready and reverent to meet the Savior at the table of remembrance?