

Psalms 22-24

1. Introduction to the Book of Psalms

- A. "Psalm" = a poem to be sung accompanied by a stringed instrument.
- B. Many of them are lyrics or poems expressing the individual emotion of the poet, and intended for accompaniment by the harp or other stringed instruments. Fifty-five of the Psalms are addressed to "the chief musician"--the choir leader of the Hebrew worship service.
- C. Ever since they were written, the Psalms have played a large part in the life of God's people. The old time Hebrews used them in the temple worship and the Jews of today still use them in the synagogue. The Christians of NT times sang them, as we see from Col. 3:16 and James 5:13.
- D. Jesus spoke of the book of Psalms in Luke 20:42 and said that many things in the Psalms referred to Him and put Psalms on the same level as the law of Moses and the prophets. (Luke 24:44)
- E. Luke, the human instrument who wrote the Book of Acts by inspiration, referred to the Book of Psalms in Acts 1:20.
- F. The Psalms were also sung by the Hebrew pilgrims as they traveled up to Jerusalem three times a year as the law required the males to do. (Deut. 16:16) They were also sung as the remnant of Jews left Babylon and returned to Jerusalem.

2. The writer:

- A. The Holy Ghost (II Peter 1:21, II Tim. 3:16) but He used human instruments.
- B. David has 73 Psalms ascribed to him and he is called the "sweet Psalmist of Israel" in II Sam. 23:1. David was also a harp player.
- C. Twelve are ascribed to Asaph called a recorder and seer in Hezekiah's day. (II Kings 18:18; II Chron. 29:30) His name is usually associated with singing or musical instruments in the Bible.
- D. Eleven to the sons of Korah who was a Levite.
- E. Two are ascribed to Solomon, David's son.
- F. One is ascribed to Moses.
- G. One to Ethan who was also associated with musical instruments. (I Chron. 15:19)

H. Fifty are anonymous. We know King Hezekiah wrote some psalms after he was healed and had 15 years added to his life. No doubt some of these were also written by David.

3. The time span of writing the Book of Psalms probably spanned from Moses' day as he wrote one until at least the time of Babylonian captivity as Psa. 137:1-2 mentions the captivity. This covers about a 900 year period of time.

PSALM 22:

1. This Psalm has the inscription "To the chief musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, a Psalm of David."

A. "To the chief musician" = means this Psalm was intended for the choir leader and was given to him to regulate the manner of performing it; the idea is that the Psalm is to be performed under his direction.

B. "Upon Aijeleth Shahar" = means the hind of the morning; this is a title not a musical instrument; we do not know exactly what this phrase means; possibly stands for the morning sun scattering its first rays upon the earth; the image is one of gladness, as if the rays of the sun leaped and bounded over the hills with joyfulness, as the hart or hind does; why this is used we do not know so I'll just continue.

C. "A Psalm" = a poem to be sung to a stringed instrument.

D. "Of David" = means David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel, was the author--human instrument--of this Psalm.

2. Some say that David is describing in this psalm his own dangers, sufferings, and deliverance but he was never in the circumstances described in this psalm. Therefore, the only explanation concerning this psalm is that David, full of the Holy Ghost, was moved to speak of the Person of Christ, and to describe, not his own sufferings, perils, and deliverances, but those of his great Antitype (David is a type of Christ), the Messiah, which was revealed to him in a vision and which he was directed to put on record. This psalm is Messianic which means it applies to the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. This psalm is believed to be written at sometime when David was in severe persecution.

4. Psalm 22, 23, and 24 are considered a triad (a common harmony consisting of three) with Psalm 22 being labeled "The Psalm of the cross," Psalm 23 "The Psalm of the crook," and Psalm 24 "The Psalm of the crown." We might say that Psalm 22 gives us

the feelings of Jesus, the response, and the inner self of Jesus. The four gospels give us the scenes and events but here in the OT in Psalm 22, we find prophecy which is Christ oriented. We are able to view the spirit of Jesus while He is hanging on the cross. This psalm does not just portray the bitterness but the victory of the cross, which is not just His dilemma but His throne.

5. It would help us to review the NT sequence of events leading up to this psalm. All these events happened on April 14 that year--a 24 hour day that changed the world and gives us hope.

- A. His gathering of his disciples in the upper room for the last supper and washing their feet.
- B. The institution of the Lord's supper after Judas left to betray Him.
- C. His instruction to the eleven apostles of John chapters 14, 15, and 16 on the way to the garden of Gethsemane.
- D. His prayer of John chapter 17 which is really the Lord's prayer.
- E. His arrest and betrayal in the garden.
- F. His being forsaken.
- G. His trial before the Sanhedrin where He was condemned and mocked.
- H. He was turned over to the Romans--Pilate and Herod and Pilate desired to release Him.
- I. The cry of the Jews was to crucify Him and His blood would be on their hands.
- J. He was scourged, stripped, and robed with a scarlet robe and crowned with a crown of thorns.
- K. The crowd passed by and bowed in mock worship and said "Hail King of the Jews." They derided (laughed in contempt) Him, sneered, scoffed, and spit upon Him.
- L. His clothes were put back on Him and He was made to bear His own cross as they headed outside the gate of the city to Golgotha--Calvary--a place of a skull.
- M. He was stripped nude and nailed to a cross.
- N. Every bone was pulled out of joint.
- O. The soldiers gambled for His robe.
- P. Those who passed by wagged their head and reviled Him--said in essence "I thought He was something but look at Him now."

Q. The religious element (chief priest, scribes, and elders) mocked and laughed at Him.

R. Yet He said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

S. He took care of His mother.

T. Both of the two thieves railed upon Him at the beginning but the Lord worked repentance in one who said to the other thief, "We deserve what we are getting but this man has done nothing amiss," he then turned to the Lord and said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into they kingdom."

U. The Lord answering his prayer said in essence--you will not have to wait for the kingdom, I will take care of this matter today. "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

V. He hung on the cross for three hours in pain and agony.

X. Then, the sun was blackened and darkness came on the earth for three hours, and that is where Psalm 22 begins.

I. The cries of the cross. V. 1-2

V. 1

1. There are three questions in Christ's cry of desperation in this verse.

2. I want to look at the real essence and meaning of these cries.

1. Cry of execution or judgment. V. 1a

3. We are familiar with this first cry for it is recorded in Mat. 27:46.

4. This prayer is more than a prayer of words Jesus read in this psalm. He is suffering for sin. (II Cor. 5:21; I Peter 3:18; "Just" = the righteous One; "unjust" = the unrighteous ones). Why? That He might bring us to God.

5. "My God" = He did not say "My Father" because He had been made sin; yet, He did not say "God" in anger but said "my God" = still claims with confidence and reliance on God as His God.

6. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" = a cry of execution or judgment; what form of judgment was He facing?

1) Evidence of Divine withdrawal.

7. God withdrew:

A. His presence: for He is too pure to look at sin; it has been said He hid His face from the hideous scene, yet Isa. 53:10-11 says, "He shall see the travail of his soul;" this all may be hard to understand but we do know that He withdrew His presence when Christ became sin--He was not a sinner but was made sin. The unleashing of God's anger was judgment of Divine withdrawal. Christ had never known anything but the Father's presence.

a) He had known that before the creation of this earth. (John 1:1 "with" = face to face)

b) He knew His presence in creation.

c) He enjoyed the Father's presence throughout the ages even when He came to this earth and took on a body of flesh and was born as a baby. The Bible calls Jesus "Emmanuel"--God with us.

d) But now on the cross there is a sense God the Father is not present.

e) Thus, the cry of verse 1a.

B. His love.

a) Jesus was the beloved Son of the Father. The Father had proclaimed at His baptism (Mat. 3:17) and His transfiguration. (Mat. 17:5) He made it known He loved the Lord Jesus.

b) The Bible is clear that God hates sin and loves righteousness. (Psa. 33:5) Therefore, the cry of verse 1 a is a cry of judgment of Divine withdrawal of the Father's love.

C. His fellowship.

a) Jesus had communed with the father with an eternal communion. There had been harmony, fellowship, and oneness between the Lord Jesus and His Father. In eternity past there had been a sacred enjoyment of one another's fellowship.

b) But now the Father has withdrawn His fellowship. He could not touch the fellowship of the Almighty. He could not enter into that Holy of Holies; therefore, He cried verse 1a.

2) Judgment of Divine wrath.

8. God did not just withdraw His sacred fellowship from Jesus but God's wrath came down upon the Son. God's anger toward sin was expressed against the body and soul of Christ.

-He suffered my punishment.

-He suffered your punishment.

-He suffered my judgment.

-He suffered your judgment.

9. The anger of the Father had to be meted out against sin and it was meted out against Jesus who trod the winepress of the Almighty alone as God's wrath came upon Him; therefore, He cried verse 1a.

10. What does He mean by being "forsaken?" He sensed that His Father had deserted Him in this dying hour. "Forsaken" is equivalent to "abandonment." This cry is termed the cry of an orphan. In other words there is a separation of the Father from the Son as Jesus was made sin. Divine withdrawal and Divine wrath resulted in this cry of execution or judgment.

11. Apply this to you and me. If you are not saved, what Jesus felt on the cross is what you will experience in hell forever. Sure there is fire in hell, worms and darkness in hell, but the real issue and the worse thing about hell is that God abandons sinners to themselves. In hell there is no hope, no God, for God withdraws the blessing of His presence, the reality of His love and His fellowship. You will be cut off and excluded from God for ever and ever. No prayers will be answered in hell!

12. You may say, "I have buddies there."

There will be no buddies in hell. There is no buddy system in God's economy of judgment. What Jesus went through on the cross is what you will go through in hell when God abandons you to yourself. Judgment will be poured out upon you for all eternity.

13. However, there is hope for you, because the Lord Jesus had God's presence withdrawn from Him so that you do not have to be without God's presence, if you are saved. Since the Lord Jesus sensed the removal of God's love, you will not have to be separated from His love. By coming to Christ and being saved, you can enjoy God's fellowship forever.

14. Jesus was abandoned so that you might not be abandoned. His prayers were seemingly unanswered that our cry for mercy might be answered. He did not seem to get any help but was put in that condition so that you and I could get help--help forever.

15. Basically, He was cut off so that you and I might be joined in. There is hope because the tomb is empty!

2. Cry of exclusion or excommunication. V. 1b

16. "*Why art thou* so far from helping me" = second question in Christ's cry of desperation; Jesus cried this (recorded no where else) not just because He felt deserted but because He felt as though He was cut off and excluded as it were in the hour of predicament; the idea prevails "Am I not already going through enough?"

17. What did His predicament involve?

A. I have already mentioned sin (not His but ours) and with sin came sorrow and with sorrow came suffering and the Lord endured the whole package for us.

B. He bore it all. He died for our sins according to the Scripture. (I Cor. 15:3)

18. Why are you (God) so far "from the words of my roaring?" = third question in Christ's cry of desperation; "roaring" can be used in general terms as "lamentation" or "my time of lament;" the Hebrew word was used in Bible time for the moans of a dying animal; we do not have these moans recorded in the NT but He cried out with an audible voice, while on the cross, like a dying animal hanging on the cross; speaking of exclusion, there was no help in the hour of His pain and predicament.

19. I'm glad that's not the end of the story as we see next.

3. Cry of exertion or struggle. V. 2

V. 2

1. Even though this verse gives a measure of despair there is also a ray of hope and potential in this cry.

2. "O my God, I cry in the daytime but thou hearest me not" = even though Jesus felt that God did not seem to be hearing Him, we know He did hear--it just seemed like God did not hear; just like you pray and sometimes it seems like God is a million miles away--He still hears.

3. Yet Jesus said I'm not going to quit crying, nor quit praying, nor quit reaching out in the daytime or "in the night season."

4. "Am not silent" = He had determination:

A. I'll not quit crying out unto thee.

B. I'll not quit voicing my petition unto thee.

C. I'll cry in the night time.

D. I'll cry in the daytime, but I'm not going to quit crying.

E. Know the reason? Our redemption was at stake and Jesus said "I'll not give up."

F. In this Psalm of the cross:

1) We see the struggle of His heart.

5. This is not just the external man fighting to survive for we know how He died--"He gave up the ghost"--He yielded up His spirit. (Luke 23:46)

6. He was not struggling to live but this is the struggle of His heart struggling in mine and your place. Even though it seemed that the presence of God had been withdrawn, Jesus was not giving up for our sake.

7. A song writer wrote, "He didn't come down" and Hallelujah He didn't. He could have called 12 legions of angels--over 60,000--to deliver Him. (Mat. 26:53) But He struggled in His heart to keep crying out to God.

8. We not only see the struggle of His heart but:

2) We see the struggle of His hope.

9. "But" = first word in verse 3:

A. His hope was not in His feelings.

B. His hope was not in His circumstances.

C. His hope was not in the people.

D. His hope was not in the fact that He came to redeem.

E. His hope was in Jehovah God.

F. Basically He was saying, "I am not giving up, I am not giving in. I am going to give my life a ransom for mankind."

G. Because of His hope there is hope for us.

10. I want to look more at His hope and call this:

II. The conjunction of the cross. V. 3

V. 3

1. "But" = this a conjunction in the English language which reveals a contrast; it is amazing to note how many times a dark picture is painted and then comes a conjunction--Eph. 2:1-4a, 12-13; I Cor. 6:9-11; and now verse 3a.
2. "Thou" = God; personal reference back to God in verse 2.
3. "Holy" = when used of God means perfectly pure and complete in moral character; righteous and blameless.
4. "Thou *art* holy" = this indicates that the Sufferer still had unwavering confidence in God; He casts no reproach upon God, but "commits Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." (I Peter 2:23)
5. Someone said of the attributes of God:
 - A. Power is God's hand.
 - B. Omniscience is God's eye--He sees it all.
 - C. Mercy is God's bowels.
 - D. Eternity is God's duration.
 - E. But holiness is His beauty. (I Chron. 16:29)
6. God is holy in His character which refers to who He is. Get the setting--Christ is on the cross and there is an unholy environment around the cross as He is bearing our sin--our unholiness, in His own body, on the tree. While sin is everywhere around Him and He is made sin--He reflects upon God. "Thou *art* holy" in your character.
 - A. God in His character is personally holy--means His holiness is in Himself. He is holy in His nature. His name is holy. (Isa. 57:15) It is stated in the Scripture He is holy almost as many times as He is said to be Almighty. In John 17:11 Jesus ascribed holiness to the Father when He addressed Him as "Holy Father." This title should never be applied to mere man.
 - B. God in His character is perfectly holy--the Hebrew construction has emphasis on the word "thou" which means "thou and thou alone." God's holiness has never been found to have a flaw.
 - C. God in His character is persistently holy--for He is the unchanging One. (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8) Jesus is saying as wrath is poured out upon Him on the cross, "It does not look very good to me, but thou art holy. I have confidence in you."
7. God is holy in His conduct which refers to what He does. Even though this is not stated in our text it is suggested or implied. Jesus having known our darkness by being made sin, as He hung between heaven and earth, in essence is saying, "Whatever you

do is right--thou art holy." If the Lord Jesus could cling to the holiness of God while hanging on the cross, then you and I need to cling to that same holy, pure God in every aspect of His conduct. (Rom. 8:28) He knows what He is doing and He makes no mistakes. He said, "It seems you have forsaken me and have not heard my prayer, but thou art holy."

8. God is holy in His covenant which speaks of His relationship to His people. Why would Jesus see holiness of God in relationship to His people? That doesn't seem possible. But don't forget that is why Jesus is hanging on the cross--to produce a people that would eventually be conformed to His own image. God's people is Israel and the saved are referred to as spiritual Israel. (Rom. 2:28-29) God is smiting His Son on the cross to keep His covenant with His people. The Lord Jesus said, "Why have you forsaken me and not heard my prayers and moaning?" yet, He said, "Thou art holy."

9. "Thou who inhabitest the praises of Israel" = "inhabitest" means to dwell; to enthrone; implies that God has enthroned Himself in the praises of His people; indicates He dwellest where praise is celebrated; "praise" means laudation--to glorify on account of perfections or excellent works; to glorify God is to show forth to the world the correct opinion or estimate of who God is.

10. God is seen enthroned in His sanctuary where the praises (words and songs) and prayers of Israel are ever being offered up to Him (in David's day). Since He hears them, He will assuredly, in His own time, hear the Sufferer.

11. Psalm 22 starts out with a dark picture, but thou art holy. No matter what the circumstances, God is holy!

III. The consolation of the cross. V. 4-11

V. 4

1. "Our fathers" = "they" = "them" = refers to David's forefathers (patriarchs) in context but applies to those who came before Jesus, including David, who were types of Jesus and they trusted God and were delivered from whatever they were facing; Jesus says "our fathers" because it is His humanity that is crying out here on the cross.

A. Noah in his righteousness points us to the One who is perfect righteousness. (Heb. 11:7)

B. Isaac points us to the obedient Son.

C. Joseph points us to the One who cooperated with hardships in a perfect manner.

D. David, a man after God's own heart, also pointed to Christ.

2. "Trusted" = to place confidence in; to roll upon; to commit to the care of; to rely on.

3. "In thee" = "thou" = the use of this personal pronoun plainly lets us know that neither David nor Jesus gave credit to the arm of the flesh, instead they focused on God's person; many try to find consolation or comfort in the things of God instead of the God of the things; if not careful we try to take comfort in the blessings instead of finding refuge in the Blessor; we want to enjoy the benefits instead of adoring the Benefactor Himself; many had rather talk about the gifts than to talk about the Giver.

4. "Deliver" = means you brought them to a place of deliverance; indicates they trusted in God's power and God came through for them.

V. 5

1. "They" = our fathers.

2. "Cried" = to shriek from anguish or danger--in an audible voice

3. "Were delivered" = different Hebrew word than verse 4; word for protection and preservation; they found all they needed in Him, not only in His person but also His power.

4. "Thee" = God of verse 2--Elohim, the name of the Creator God and means putter forth of power; overseer of power.

5. "Were not confounded" = not confused; not ashamed; being ashamed is a result of being confused; in a sense they were not disappointed--this will not happen if you trust in God's person, God's power, and God's purpose; basically Jesus is saying that God is trustworthy.

6. Here Jesus hangs on the cross where He seems to be abandoned by God (verse 1) and said you are not even listening to my moans, but "thou art holy" (verse 3) and you are also trustworthy. (verse 4-5)

7. The argument is that God delivered their forefathers from their troubles when they called upon Him and Jesus now pleads with God that He would manifest Himself to Him in the same way.

V. 6

1. "But I *am* a worm, and no man" = the worm is a symbol of extreme weakness and helplessness; it is naturally despised, derided (to laugh at in contempt), trodden upon; indicates that Jesus was left forsaken, as if He were not worth regarding and treated as if He were the most insignificant, the most despicable of all objects, unworthy of the attention of God or man; means that he was forsaken alike by God and men, as if He had no claims to the treatment due to a man.

2. "A reproach of men" = disgrace; object of contempt and scorn; means He was reproached by men. (Isa. 53:3)

3. "Despised of the people" = to have the lowest opinion of; to deem worthless; to hate; refers to the people who witnessed His suffering; this was most evident when the people expressed their desire, that instead of Christ, a murderer should be granted to be set free. (Acts 3:14)

IV. The confession of the cross. V. 6

1. I would like to interject this thought which I could call the forgotten I AM. We remember that Jesus stated in the NT: I AM the Alpha and Omega, and many more. But here He said, "I *am* a worm."

2. These are words of deep abasement. The Hebrew word for worm here is the "scarlet worm." This is not just any worm but a special species of worm.

3. One scientist said about the "scarlet worm" and I quote, "When the female of the scarlet worm species is ready to give birth to the young, she would attach herself to the trunk of a tree fixing herself so firmly and so permanently that she would never leave again. The eggs deposited beneath her body were protected until the larva were hatched and able to enter their own life cycle. As the mother died, the crimson fluid stained her body and the surrounding wood. From the dead bodies of such female scarlet worms the commercial scarlet dyes of antiquity were extracted." End quote.

4. With these thoughts and the picture we see in verse 6a, let us make some observations of Christ's confession--"I am a worm." His confession reveals:

1. Christ assessment of the cross.

A. The cross has become, in religious circles, a popular symbol but the cross is more than a symbol. It points out the utter sinfulness of man. Therefore, when He cries out "I am a worm" it seems He is saying this is my assessment of sin.

B. Also He adds "and no man." Not only does He assess God's view of man and sin but He gives man's view of Christ--nothing but a worm. Here we see a special assessment concerning the cross.

C. A worm is a despised creature. Some may have pet cats, dogs, fish, and birds, but very few people ever have a pet worm. We need to go beyond this crimson species of a worm and see the Lord Jesus as He takes the position of a worm.

D. In essence He says I am the despised One--I am the lowly One. Nobody in their right mind wants to eat a worm not even fried. They are despised.

E. You let someone run over another's cat or dog and you have got a law suit on your hands. Better not hit some animals or you are in trouble. Oh, how we have our priorities wrong--abort babies but save the spotted owl. But I have not heard about anyone making a ruckus over running over a worm.

F. Verse 6a in a sense is a measure of rejection--being despised. I see Christ as our defenseless substitute. His confession reveals Christ's assessment of the cross and also:

2. Christ's appointment with the cross.

A. I know we are in NT days and have a tendency to look at the OT through a different set of spectacles. In Gen. 4, look at what happened when Abel offered a sacrifice of blood. It means more to us today than it did to them in that economy--because we know that sacrifice along with thousands of others, all speak of the supreme offering of that One who was coming--Jesus Christ and we must realize that the Lord Jesus was appointed to come to the cross.

B. Just as that red scarlet worm was born to die and had no real accomplishment in life except that she dies and gives her life for the life of the larva--another generation, so the Lord Jesus was appointed to die. He came to die on the cross.

C. Some say, isn't it awful how the Jews treated Jesus? Why, He was appointed for that destiny!

D. Some think the Romans got a little hasty! They could have approached Christ's crucifixion much differently! No! It was God's appointment for Christ to die in our stead.

1) He knew beforehand.

a. Just as the crimson, scarlet worm was known it would have to die before that worm was ever in existence, so Christ was appointed to the cross prior to coming into this world.

b. Bethlehem was not an accident and neither was Calvary. This was God's appointment. In other words verse 6a lets us know that Jesus is saying, "I have an appointment with death on a tree."

c. It was known beforehand but:

2) It has been celebrated beyond the event.

- a. I'm talking about a worm that is celebrated because of what it gave you and what transpired as a result of its death. The death of Christ--God's scarlet worm is a subject that will never quit being discussed.
- b. We not only celebrate today His cross and what He accomplished there, but that will be our celebration for all eternity--ages to come. Most people like songs about heaven, where there will be no more pain, death, and etc. (Rev. 21:4; Isa. 65:17) We will forget those painful experiences of life in heaven, but I will tell you there is one subject that we will never forget and that is that the Lord Jesus became a worm and died in our stead.
- c. We will celebrate it for ever and ever. In fact John saw the heavenly host sing a song about the Lamb that was slain. (Rev. 5:9)
- d. We will not ever forget Calvary--never forget Christ's death on the cross. The Lamb slain will be a subject celebrated way beyond the event of His death. Jesus said, "I am a worm."
- e. His confession points us to His assessment of the cross and His appointment with the cross and also:

3. Christ's attachment to the cross.

A. There is a liberal thought going about today that says Jesus could have avoided the cross--that His death was not necessary for our redemption.

B. I want to say, just as that scarlet worm attached herself to the tree and would never leave after she had firmly fixed herself to the bark of the trunk of the tree, so Christ attached Himself to the cross and He would never change directions--never, never. He not only came to die, He purposed to do it.

1) He was attached in prophecies.

- a. The OT prophecies show that He is attached to the cross. (Gen. 3:15) How would the seed of the serpent's head ever be crushed by the seed of the woman? He must be attached to the cross.
- b. How would there ever be a remedy for our transgressions? How would there be an antidote for our iniquities? (Isa. 53:5) He must be wounded for our transgressions. He must be bruised for our iniquities and with His stripes we are healed--refers to spiritual healing--salvation and not physical healing.
- c. There is hope for sinners because Christ is attached to the cross. All of the OT prophecies are spelled out in detail--especially Christ's crucifixion--right down to the minute detail of truth.

d. We have the record of Christ's death before He was nailed to the cross. Here is a thought--Christ was nailed to the cross before He was ever nailed to the cross. (I Peter 1:18-19) It was settled. He was attached. He fixed Himself to that purpose and He never left that Divine purpose.

e. Not only was He attached in prophecies but:

2) He was attached in practice.

a. He told Peter in the garden when Peter cut off the soldier's ear that He could have commanded and at the blink of an eye, the angels of the heavenly host would have swooped down and kept Him from the Cross. (Mat. 26:53) There is a song something like this, "He could have called 10,000 angels, but He died alone for you and me." He was fixed. He was attached to the cross in prophecies and He was attached in practice.

b. The crowd said--Mat. 27:40. Does not that sound like earlier temptations. (Mat. 4:3, 6) Satan's tactics have not changed--even while Jesus was hanging on the cross, "If thou be the Christ, why don't you come down?"

c. I have got news for the enemy--He is not coming down. He has attached Himself to the cross. Before there was ever a cross on a hill there was a cross in His heart and He is attached to it. (verse 6a)

d. His confession not only points us to:

-His assessment of the cross

-His appointment with the cross

-and His attachment to the cross but also:

4. Christ's arrangement through the cross.

1. I wrote a quote earlier of a scientist who said that the eggs of the scarlet worm were protected by her body until the larva were hatched and could enter into their individual life cycle.

2. This is a picture of what is ours in the death of Christ.

1) His arrangement through the cross was to give life to His little ones--life through death.

a. Someone has said, "It is so sad that Jesus had to die--our sins were so bad, I hate He had to die." Sorry! He had to die! That was the only course that would bring life to His offspring.

b. Just as a mother goes through the valley of death to bring a little baby into this life, so the Lord Jesus came into this world--the realm of death--that He might bring you and me into the realm of life. John 3:16 is precious! I have heard it thousands of times but it still declares truth--it is life through death.

c. Of course the little larva not only entered into life through death--the death of the mother but they entered:

2) Into light through darkness.

a. The light is extinguished in the female scarlet worm. She dies and the light of life is gone, but out from under the body of that dead mother scarlet worm are little worms crawling out and entering into light and blessing because mother endured the darkness.

b. Jesus endured our darkness. (verse 1a) We needed light when the sun was blocked and out of darkness came light. Now we can sing, "Amazing grace! How sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see." We can see because we have light because of the darkness endured by Christ.

c. We have life because of His death. That is the arrangement that is set forth in Christ's confession, "I am a worm." (verse 6)

d. His confession not only points us to His assessment of the cross, His appointment with the cross, His attachment to the cross, and His arrangement through the cross, but also:

5. Christ's accomplishment of the cross.

1. He was not dying for a cause, but dying for a people and when He died, it was not a hope-so event, it was an accomplishment.

2. A song writer wrote, "Tis done, the great transaction is done, I am my Lord's and He is mine." That was accomplished on the cross.

1) A process was involved.

- a. The scarlet worm was removed from the tree and crushed and all that red dye was gotten out of its body. Then they mixed it and made a dye that could produce the scarlet color--a highly sought after commodity of that day.
- b. If you wore scarlet, you must be kin to the king because that is what King's robes were made of--scarlet dye from the scarlet worm.
- c. I want to tell you that Christ's death was not in vain. He fixed, through His precious blood, the components of redemption that would bring you and me into the realm of righteousness where we are robed as a king for that is what we are (Rev. 1:6)--kings and priests unto our God.
- d. Not only was there a process involved but:

2) A price was attached.

- a. You could not expect to buy a scarlet robe at the flea market. You had to talk to somebody that was a dealer and had to enter into a contract and if you had the funds or finances necessary, then perhaps you could purchase the garment of scarlet. It was very valuable.
- b. I want to tell you what we have in the Lord Jesus can't be bought with money. (I Peter 1:18-19) What value, what price, what premium we should place on what He bought for us. This is the confession of the cross. (verse 6)
- c. Of course you know that because Jesus became a worm there is hope for worms like you and me. The only hope we have today is in Christ.
- d. There is a story of an Indian Chief that was saved. He experienced what David did in Psa. 40:1-3 and wanted to tell it but He wasn't gifted with words. Therefore, he created an object lesson to get the point across. He encircled a worm with leaves and set them on fire and at the last minute when it looked like the worm would be consumed by the fire, he reached and got the worm out of the fire and put it on a rock and said, "Chief was worm going to the fire, but God's Son Jesus lifted Chief out of fire and save me by putting me on a Rock." That is a profound testimony of God saving a worm.
- e. A song writer wrote, "At the cross" in which the first verse states "Alas and did my Saviour bleed? and did my Sovereign die? Would He devote that sacred head for such a worm as I?" Oh, we need to thank Him for becoming a worm that a worm like you and me might have life!

III. The consolation of the Cross cont.

1. "All they that see me" = refers to those gathered around the cross. (Luke 23:35)
2. "Laugh me to scorn" = the meaning here is to mock, to deride (treat with scorn by laughter); to treat with scorn (extreme contempt; the act of despising; Mat. 27:39); there is no evidence that this literally occurred in the life of David.
3. "They shoot out the lip" = means properly to burst open; to stretch the mouth in derision and scorn. (Psa. 35:21)
4. "They shake the head" = in contempt and derision (Mat. 27:39); this verse basically repeats itself with each phrase.

V. 8

1. This verse tells us some of what those around the cross said.
2. First and third "he" = second "him" = Jesus the Sufferer on the cross.
3. "The LORD" = second "he" = first "him" and third "him" refers to God who is the Father of Jesus.
4. "Trusted" = to roll upon the Father; to commit; the idea is that of being under the pressure of a heavy burden, and rolling it off or casting it on another; the language here is the taunting language of His enemies and the meaning is that He had professed to commit Himself to the Father as if He were His friend; this was actually fulfilled in the case of the Saviour. (Mat. 27:43)
5. "Deliver" = to set at liberty; to free from the confines of the cross.
6. "Let him deliver him" = different Hebrew word than the first one; means to snatch away; in essence they said, "Let Him come and save Him."
7. "Seeing he delighted in him" = the Sufferer claimed that God delighted in Him. (Isa. 42:1)
8. They are saying in a sense, "If this was so, let Him come and rescue one so dear to Himself. Let Him show His friendship for this vagrant (unsettled; wandering), this impostor, this despised and worthless man."
9. It is hard to imagine all the taunts and vile language that Jesus suffered from His enemies while hanging on the cross.

V. 9

1. "But thou *art* he that took me out of the womb" = Jesus said, "What they didn't know is that I didn't start trusting you yesterday; I have been trusting you since the Holy Ghost placed me in the virgin's womb."

2. "Thou didst make me hope" = keepest me in safety; may mean that God caused Him to trust even in very early life.

3. "When *I was* upon my mother's breast" = in His earliest infancy; as a result of that He is stating--I know you will not fail me now.

A. I trusted thee in the womb.

B. I trusted thee in life.

C. I trusted thee in the ministry.

D. I trusted thee in the hours of trials.

E. And I will trust thee in death.

V. 10

1. "Cast upon thee from the womb" = "cast" means rolled over on you--similar to the word "trust."

2. "Thou *art* my God from my mother's belly" = repetition of verse 9--thou hast been my God from my very childhood.

3. These sayings probably were not spoken in a public manner or at least they are not recorded in the NT as such; but you can be sure that all these things and more went through His mind while He hung on the cross bearing our sin.

4. Basically, Jesus is saying my God is trustworthy.

5. And He is trustworthy today as well as He was to the Sufferer on the cross.

A. He is trustworthy in spite of circumstances.

B. He is trustworthy in spite of condemnation.

C. He is trustworthy in spite of His concern.

D. He is trustworthy in spite of His cry.

E. He still finds consolation in the trustworthiness of God.

V. 11

1. "Be not far from me" = do not withdraw from me; do not leave or forsake me.
2. "For trouble *is* near" = near, in the sense that deep sorrow has come upon me; near, in the sense that I am approaching a dreadful death.
3. "For there *is* none to help" = literally, not a helper; none to protect or aid; there were those who could have helped but they would not--His foes; His disciples, all of them, had forsaken Him at His arrest; some had gathered around the cross and were now unable to help Him--they could not; there was truly no helper.

V. The Crowds of the Cross. V. 12,13,16

V. 12

1. The OT is full of types and they overlap. Animals are used to typify our Lord Jesus' death--a Lamb (Isa. 53:7; John 1:29); animals are also used to typify false teachers in II Peter 2:22--dog and sow.
2. Here we have animals used to symbolize human beings--the crowds--the very people who nailed the Lord Jesus to the cross.
 - A. In this verse the crowds is likened unto bulls.
 - B. In verse 13 the crowds is likened unto lions.
 - C. In verse 16 the crowds is likened unto dogs.
3. By using these animals I want to give a three-fold description of the crowds of the cross and that includes us for we were there. (Heb. 7:9-10, an example; also Rom. 5:12) Therefore, we were there and we are guilty of crucifying the Son of God.

1. Look at the visible comparison.

1. Look at the bulls, lions, and dogs and see a comparison to the crowds around the cross whether it was their accusations, attitudes, or whether it involved their vile action such as spitting, laughing, slapping, mocking or deriding; our Lord said they are like bulls, lions, and dogs.
2. These animals remind us of man's utter depravity and corruption before God. Apart from the grace of God we would all be like animals--bulls, lions, and dogs. So let us draw from that three-fold picture.

1) Bulls, proud bulls.

1. Bulls are a picture of goring, horning, and attacking the victim--a picture of the pride of man.
2. "Many" = abundant in quantity, size, age, number, rank and quality.
3. "Bulls" = fierce animals in all parts of the world and in Palestine particularly, wild and ferocious.
4. "Compassed" = to surround and revolve around; it is said that the bulls of Judaea had a habit of gathering in a circle around any unaccustomed object and could be easily instigated into charging with their horns.
5. "Strong" = mighty.
6. "*Bulls of Bashan*" = bulls from the richest pasture-ground of Palestine where the largest and strongest animals grew; this expression was paralleled with "the kine of Bashan" and became an expression for powerful oppressors (Amos 4:1); this place was east of the Jordan--the land that the half tribe of Manasseh settled on; it was noted for rich pasture land (Num. 32:1); animals that grazed there were said to be of the highest specimen.
7. "Have beset me round" = one word in the Hebrew; to surround; to inclose; to hem in; to besiege.
8. This was not just a lot of bulls, but strong bulls--Bulls of Bashan--full of life, full of self, full of interest for their cause, and full of endeavor for flesh--that which would please self.
9. By using bulls as a type of the crowds, the pride of man is set forth, stomping around, snorting, and pawing in pride. The central letter in pride is "I" and that is what pride is all about--self:
 - a. Self-centeredness.
 - b. Self-absorbed living.
 - c. Self-concerned ways.
10. There is no doubt but that the illusion to bulls passed through our Lord's mind while He hung on the cross surrounded by the crowds of persecutors and murderers.
11. Jesus likened the crowds, not only to bulls and the pride of man but:

2) Lions--powerful lions. V. 13

1. "They" = "their" = the crowds.
2. "Me" = David in context; applies prophetically to Christ on the cross.
3. "Gaped *with* their mouths" = literally opened their mouths against Christ--opened wide as if they would devour Him, as a lion does when he seizes upon his prey; eager to devour and ready to spring on the prey and crush it with its monstrous jaws.
4. "As a ravening and a roaring lion" = "ravening" means voraciously (with greedy appetite) devouring; refers to the lion as he tears his prey; as he is about to pounce on his prey he gives a vicious roar; the tumult and noise made by those who demanded our Lord's death is seen in Mat. 27:22-23.
5. A lion is known for its power; sometimes he is called the king of the animal family. When our Lord compares the crowds to lions, He is referring to the power of man, so full of themselves and so strong in their purpose--fierce and wild, undomesticated like a ravening, roaring lion challenging its prey. Satan is also likened to a lion. (I Peter 5:8)
6. But here the emphasis is not just on Satan but on the crowds around the cross--really a mob that is filled with the spirit of Satan. They have this same crouching, springing, roaring, cunning way, like the lion stalks its prey.
7. They have been looking for something to frame Jesus with. Now they are showing their power like a lion.

3) Dogs--persistent dogs. V. 16

1. "Dogs" = refers to oriental dogs that were savage and of unclean habits; the term "dog" in the East has always been and still is a term of reproach; when we usually think of dogs we think of dogs our children play with--tamed and domesticated; but these dogs are different; they run in packs and are vicious and rough; we can almost hear them howling here--the cry of a blood thirsty animal that have the smell of blood in their nostrils--"Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"--what the crowds said. In Phil. 3:2 Paul warned, "Beware of dogs."
2. "Compassed me" = to surround; revolve around just like the "bulls" of verse 12; just like a pack of dogs that encircle their prey, howling and coming after the Lamb; they are persistent--just keep dogging their prey and finally brought slaughter to their foe.

2. Look at the vicious cruelty.

1. The Lord does not liken this crowd to sweet house pets, nor to little lambs, nor to little fawns, but to vicious animals, wild, fierce, untamed, and un-handled by man:

1) Revenging bulls.

1. Like the rodeo bulls want to get back at the cowboy for putting the strap in their flanks and spurs in their side.
2. Like the bulls the Spanish bullfighters had taunted in the bull fighting arena--they stand their ground, outraged, stirred up--they try to trample, surround, and strike with their horns those bull fighters--vicious cruelty.
3. This pictures the vengeance of man fighting against God to his last fighting strength. Some would say, "That is not how we are!" Then tell me when we hear the gospel, why don't we come running to Christ? I will tell you why. Our nature is like revenging bulls--we back off from truth and fight and push God away and seek revenge and have an attitude, "No God for me."
4. Sometimes we would like to trust our fellow-man and times we ought to but by nature we are all fallen creatures and at our best we are cruel sinners. Others may lead the herd but if God doesn't intervene, we will join right in and rally the cause against the Lord Jesus--like revenging bulls.
5. When we get together with the herd we go farther than we intended to go. We may not mean to destroy, hurt, or engage in negative activity when we leave the house, but once with the crowd, once in that atmosphere, it seems as though we go like a herd of bulls.
6. That is evidence of the revenging nature of man. I will do what I want to do. I will act like I want to act.
7. Thus, we see the vicious cruelty in revenging bulls.

2) Ravaging lions.

1. Lions stalk their prey and they roar against it. Ex: a small girl saw a big kitty cat at the zoo until its nature came out over a piece of bloody meat--no longer was it a big kitty cat to the girl.
2. You might think of humanity as everybody being sweet and good, but if you ever hear the roar of a depraved soul crying out against God and taking a swing (one way or another) at God's Son and mocking and laughing at the dying Christ, then we have to say that humanity is no longer a sweet nice people, but we see depraved sinners in need of God's redemptive work in their hearts.
3. Thus, we see the vicious cruelty of the crowds in ravaging lions.

3) Relentless dogs.

1. In our society if you throw a rock at most dogs, they finally go on down the road. But in that society, if a dog saw an opportunity to survive, they were "relentless" = insensible to the distress of others; destitute of tenderness; intently fixed on disquieting objects. Once they smell the blood of meat, they just keep on coming.

2. Leave a sinner to himself and he will keep on going and going. Every Monday he will say, "I am going to stop living like this. I can't keep this up, it will kill me and I am going to hurt somebody."

3. But like a dog he just goes right back:

-right back to the blood.

-right back to the sin.

-right back to self-satisfaction.

-right back to self-fulfillment.

-right back to the pleasure of this world--just like a dog, relentless--stalking its prey until he conquers it.

4. And whether we realize it or not, that is what we (yes, I said we) did to God's Son on the cross--God's pure "darling" as He calls Himself in verse 20. God sent His darling Son into the world--that specimen of purity, that specimen of holiness. He came into this world as God's Lamb and instead of man saying "Welcome, we are glad you are here," we said "We don't want you in our environment" and we went after Him until we got Him on the cross.

5. The crowds of the cross: we see the visible comparison, the vicious cruelty, and the:

3. Look at the vain conspiracy.

1. Like bulls, lions, and dogs--the crowds conspired and thought "We've got Him."

2. But the Lamb died on the cross, not because they killed Him, but because He purposed that He would die.

3. Their conspiracy was vain because it could not hinder the Lamb:

1) Redemptive purpose.

1. Let the bulls stomp, and the lions roar, and the dogs yelp and pursue, but God's little Lamb is going to accomplish what He has come to do.

2. Oh, the bulls may look bigger than the Lamb and the lions may seem stronger than the Lamb and the dogs may seem like they are more than a match for the Lamb--but the little Lamb is going to win out.

3. The little Lamb has something He came to do and He is going to accomplish what He came to do. The crowds' conspiracy is vain because they can not hinder the redemptive work of the little Lamb.

4. He came to redeem sinners and redeem sinners He will. In fact, before this psalm is over in verse 30a He said, "A seed shall serve him" = denotes those who belong to the family of God--His children. The meaning in verse 30a is that, as a result of the work performed by the Sufferer, many will be brought to serve God--they will be redeemed. The church is founded on a Rock and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Mat. 16:18) He is going to redeem sinners and they will make up the seed--that is you and me.

5. It may seem like the devil is stomping Him to death and it may look like the devil has an upper hand, but the little Lamb is going to win out because He came to redeem us from our sins.

6. Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture (I Cor. 15:3) and we are going to celebrate it forever. We will shout with the heavenly host "Worthy is the Lamb that redeemed us to God by His own blood!" Calvary was not a mistake. It was God's redemptive policy.

7. The crowds' conspiracy will not hinder the Lamb's redemptive purpose nor His:

2) Resurrection power.

1. Jesus not only came to die, He came to come forth out of the grave and that He did--according to the Scriptures (I Cor. 15:4) In Psalm 22 we see He died and in verse 31c we see He said, "That he hath done this." And in Psa. 23:1a we see that He is not dead and gone but He is alive and well--"The Lord is my shepherd." Note "is" means ever present--alive because He arose from the grave, fulfilling His purpose.

2. The crowds could not hinder the redemptive purpose of the Lamb, nor the resurrection power of the Lamb, and neither can they hinder the:

3) Rule of the Lamb.

1. The rest of these verses in Psalm 22 reveal His rule and we will deal with them when we come to them (verses). He ruled in His death.

2. Many may have thought what Jesus did on the cross was in vain. Not so! But it was in vain what the crowds attempted to do, for Christ accomplished His redemptive purpose.

3. There is a story of a wolf that dressed as a Lamb and the shepherd thought he would kill a lamb to eat and guess which one he killed? The Devil thought he had Jesus when he had him on the cross but guess which one got slain. Guess which one was overwhelmed.

4. The Lord Jesus, the little Lamb, ended up winning the battle over the wolf on the cross.
5. The crowds around the cross are representative of you and me and our depravity, but that Little Lamb is the winner.
6. And now there is hope for sinners because a little Lamb is greater than all the bulls of Bashan, gaping lions, and howling dogs.
7. May we say Hallelujah for the Lamb! Hallelujah for the Lamb! He has wrought a mighty work in our redemption.
8. May the Holy Ghost seal these truths concerning the cross in our hearts.

VI. The conflicts of the cross. V. 14-21

1. Conflicts refers to struggling with things Jesus faced by looking at the physical pain and anguish of the cross. More is thought about the physical than the spiritual anyway. Just listen to our prayer requests.
2. The same is true concerning the suffering on the cross--more is said about the physical than the spiritual. The fact that Jesus had a crown of thorns on His head does not save you, but the fact that He was our substitute for sin gives us hope. Yet we tend to cater to the physical.
3. But the physical suffering of the cross cannot be evaded, even though that is not the heart of the gospel. The heart of the gospel is that Jesus was offered--the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God. (I Peter 3:18)
4. So here in these verses we have a seven-fold description of Jesus' physical suffering stated as if Jesus Himself spoke this while hanging on the cross.
5. I will refer to these seven physical sufferings on the cross as "The conflicts of the cross."
6. One thing we need to understand is that God was not pushed up in a corner when Jesus was hanging on the cross. When wicked men took Jesus and nailed Him to a cross, God did not say, "Now what am I going to do?" No, the cross was part of God's design. The Lord Jesus was purposed to be lifted up as a substitute for sinners.
7. The conflict was not in His Godhead. In fact as God, Jesus was in charge of His own death. The religious leaders thought that Jesus was playing into their hands when in reality they were playing into His hands. Jesus was in charge of His own death.
8. An old Puritan put it this way, "He ruleth from the tree." He didn't have to wait till He was enthroned in Heaven to rule, He ruled while He was dying. That is why the thief

cried out, "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." He saw Jesus was Lord and King while hanging on the cross.

9. The conflict that Jesus endured on the cross involved His humanity. So from that view point I want to magnify these seven statements so that we might see something about the human flesh.

1. Conflict with the wastefulness of human service. V. 14a

V. 14

1. "Poured out" = "poured out" indicates to shed; the same Hebrew word is translated in several OT verses as some form of the word "shed--"sheddeth" in Gen. 9:6; phrase indicates that all His strength was gone--we sometime use a similar phrase "I am as weak as water."

2. Water has a lot of potential and can be used for many different services. But once it is poured out on the ground, it is wasted--it is of no value as far as the flesh is concerned.

3. Jesus is as much as saying, "This world puts so much stock in the flesh, but I am hanging on the cross." The flesh and all the service it can render is set forth in its wastefulness.

4. We live in a society where even in our churches, emphasis is given on all we need to do for Jesus. Let me say, He is worthy of our service but all that we try to do for Jesus is vain unless we are looking unto Jesus for all that He can do for us.

5. Somehow we get twisted in our thinking in these days. We want to put emphasis on our activity and put the crown on our head--look at how many I won last year; look at how much I gave last year; look at the impact my ministry had; God was fortunate to get somebody like me!!

6. God save us from such vanity and pride. A songwriter wrote; "Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe, Sin has left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow."

7. "Poured out like water" = conflict of wastefulness of human service.

2. Conflict of wretchedness of human support. V. 14b

1. "All my bones are out of joint" = refers to his bones being dislocated, and He was unable to move His limbs; the meaning is that he was utterly powerless; the text is careful not to say His bones were broken because the Psalmist said in Psa. 34:20--"not one of them (bones) is broken."

2. If one's bones are out of joint, there is no structure in the body. Structure says you've got support for your activity. As Jesus hung upon the cross, it was something like a rack and that rack stretched the body of Jesus, especially as the weight of the cross, with Jesus on it, was dropped into a hole and He cried, at least within Himself, "All my bones are out of joint."

3. Verse 17 indicates that He was well aware that His bones were not together properly and that He was pulled apart. We might say that the Lord Jesus was unjointed.

4. At its best flesh cannot support itself. Human flesh is out of joint when it comes to God. This phrase reminds us how twisted humanity is--out of joint--out of joint. Jesus was stretched to show us the inadequateness of our own fleshly support in life. Many think they can handle things, but just give them an opportunity and they will show you what to do and how to do it.

5. The fact is that somewhere out there you will find that you do not have it. You will find that you are incapable and inadequate in yourself.

6. The Lord Jesus in His flesh faced that conflict while hanging on the cross.

3. Conflict of the weightiness of human sorrow. V. 14c

1. "My heart is like wax" = the idea here is that His strength was almost gone; His heart was no longer firm; His vigor was exhausted--"It is melted in the midst of my bowels" = filled the inner cavity of His body; some say He died of a broken heart because when the spear was thrust in His side, out came blood and water (John 19:33-34); if He died of a broken heart it was not because of your sin and mine, it was because He willed it to happen. (John 10:15, 17)

2. This last phrase of verse 14 in reference to Christ is saying "There is no sorrow like unto my sorrow." In Isa. 53:3 He is labeled a man of sorrow--the actual embodiment of sorrow and acquainted with grief.

3. Did you ever feel like God is a 1000 miles away, your heart is broken and full of grief, and sorrow has pricked your heart and the Devil has told you God doesn't care?

4. I want to tell you that in that condition you have more of an opportunity to enjoy God than anybody else. In fact Jesus found out that His best friends were "grief" and "sorrow." He was well acquainted with grief.

5. You may say, "Preacher, I am having such a hard time right now." I want to tell you that is the crowd Jesus hangs out with.

6. Some feel like they are alright and that they are wonderful saints--just ask them and they will tell you. Jesus is not real to them, but is near to a person like Isaiah in Isa. 6:5 who said "Woe is me," when he saw the Lord high and lifted up. I will tell you the Lord Jesus is near to that heart. (Mat. 5:3-4)

7. So Jesus took upon Him the weightiness of human sorrow. What did it do for Him? His heart was melted like wax. Sorrow is more than you can bear. Sorrow is more than I can bear. You may say, "How do you know that, preacher?" Because sorrow melted the heart of the Lord Jesus like wax into the midst of His bowels--filled the inner cavity of His body.

8. Jesus may not have publicly spoken these words but I am sure these thoughts passed through His mind when on the cross because He fulfilled every prophecy concerning the Messiah.

4. The conflict of weakness of human strength. V. 15a

1) Brokenness

V. 15

1. "My strength is dried up like a potsherd" = "potsherd" is a fragment of a broken pot; the meaning is that His strength was not vigorous like a green tree that was growing and full of sap, but it was like a brittle piece of pottery, so dry and fragile that it could be easily crumbled to pieces.

2. We do not know how the piece of pottery was broken, it may have been in a kiln--in a fire, it may have been in a market where some child ran through and stepped on it, or it may have been in a home after it was purchased. Not just a vessel that had been broken but also thrown out and the sun has bleached it and dried it and made it brittle.

3. Therefore, His strength is dried up like a potsherd.

2) Barrenness

1. Jesus experienced this weakness as He hung on the cross. The flesh seems to be barren, broken, and of no worth--"my strength is dried up."

2. This is a picture of a man without God as Jesus endured the judgment of God for you and me.

5. Conflict of the witness of human supply. V. 15b

1. "Tongue" = an instrument used for licking, eating, or speech; the tongue is known for what it verbalizes (express in words); known for what it says--our speech--our language--our conversation.

2. "My tongue cleaveth to my jaws" = Jesus may or may not have spoken this but you can be sure it went through His mind because He experienced this.

3. It is recorded in John 19:28 that Jesus said, "I thirst" that the Scripture might be fulfilled. The Scripture referred to is Psa. 22:15b. Jesus said this as He endured my hell and yours on the cross. His tongue cleaved to His jaws which explains in a measure His cry "I thirst" = explains His sorrow.

4. Jesus was silent before the cross. Isa. 53:7 shows the witness of Human supply. There is nothing to say. There is nothing to ponder. Fleshly speaking there was a need for outside assistance--"I thirst"--I need help and verse 19 says so.

5. The world philosophy is wrong for it says God helps those who help themselves. That is not found in the Bible. In fact just the opposite is true--God helps those who cannot help themselves.

6. He is a God of grace not a God of merit nor a God who awards our human achievement.

7. Here the Lord Jesus with His tongue rolled up in His mouth reminds us that man does not have enough faith within Himself to get him out of his problems. And man cannot produce enough to satisfy the flesh, "I thirst."

6. The conflict of the wilderness of human success. V. 15c

1. "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death" = this is Christ's verbal attitude and expression while on the cross.

2. "Thou" = speaking of His Father; man usually likes to blame other people when they hit bottom or blame self and pitch a pity party or blame our enemy--"the devil caused this;" but the Lord Jesus looked beyond all human personalities--back behind it all was God = "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death."

3. Daddy, mamma, can you see what you are going through from your vantage point? God is working it all out. There may be devils that have enjoyed everything that has happened, but God has worked behind the scenes.

4. An old woman prayed for bread and two mean boys heard her pray out loud. They went and got bread and left it at her door and when the woman saw the bread she rejoiced that God had answered her prayer. The boys spoke up and said, "God didn't give that to you. We heard you praying and we gave the bread to you." She said, "God may have used the devil to bring it, but He is the one who gave it to me."

5. "Thou" - hast brought

- has set up

- has ordained this hour.

You can pillow your head on that thought.

6. After man has left his mark upon this world and made all of His accomplishments, he still at his best lives in a wilderness all covered with dust.

7. I will tell you, human flesh at its best ends in dust of death.

7. The conflict of the wickedness of human sin. V. 16b

V. 16

1. "For dogs have compassed me" = see notes on verse 13 where I dealt with this phrase.

2. "The assembly of the wicked have enclosed me" = see notes on verse 13 where I dealt with the crowds of the cross.

3. "They pierced my hands and my feet" = I am told that this is not the normal Hebrew word for pierce but used and translated "dig" like digging a pit; used to describe digging a well or a grave--sepulcher.

4. "They pierced my hands" = they dug through my hand.

5. "They pierced my feet" = they dug through my feet; when this occurred a pit was being dug for Satan who thought he was going to be triumphant when really he was digging his own pit--man dug a pit for His enemy--Satan; that was where Satan's head was crushed (Gen. 3:15); they also dug a grave for sin.

6. We need to accept what the Bible says and not what others say. Some have said man tied ropes around His feet, waist, and hands to hold Him on the cross. Not so! His hands and feet were pierced.

7. What nailed Him there? The wickedness of human sin, that is what put Him on the cross. You may ask, "What low down fellow put Him on the cross?"--that was you and that was me.

8. When Christ's hands and feet were pierced or dug through:

1) A pit was dug for Satan.

2) A grave was dug for our sins.

3) And a well was dug for thirsty souls. (John 4:14)

9. A song writer wrote a song entitled, "My sins are gone."

- "They're underneath the blood, on the cross of Calvary,

- As far removed as darkness is from dawn;

- In the sea of God's forgetfulness,
- That's good enough for me,
- Praise God, My sins are gone."

V. 17

1. See notes on verse 14 where I dealt with this verse.

V. 18

1. This is the prophecy fulfilled in John 19:23-24.
2. "They" = "them" = the soldiers, four of them (the usual quaternion); this we know from John 19:23a--each soldier got a part.
3. "Part my garments among them" = "garments" is plural and refers to the outer garments, possibly including the sandals, were divided among the four soldiers; this action signified that the victim was going to die and He would never need His clothes again; this also signifies that the Sufferer was stripped naked when placed on the cross.
4. "Cast lots" = to obtain by lot; we do not know exactly how this was done; it could have been done by throwing dice or drawing straws or various other ways of gambling to determine which soldier would get the "vesture" = "coat" of John 19:23; refers to the "tunic" which was an undergarment made of soft material and worn next to the skin and covered the body from the neck to below the knees and it was without seam--not two pieces sewed together but "woven from the top throughout" (completely); Josephus, a noteworthy Jewish historian, says of the coat of the high priest that, "this vesture was not composed of two pieces, nor was it sewed together upon the shoulders and the sides, but it was one long vesture so woven as to have an opening for the neck and parted where the hands were to come out;" from the description in this verse, it seems that the Lord Jesus, the great High Priest of His people, also had a coat made in a similar manner.
5. It is not recorded that David ever experienced this, but our Lord the Messiah did when He was nailed to an old rugged cross.

V. 19

1. "But be not thou far from me" = the Sufferer reverts to His prayer (see verse 11); this is the burden of prayer in the whole Psalm--that Jehovah would not leave Him--all others have forsaken me and left me to perish.

2. "O my strength" = the source of my strength--the Lord, the one whom I rely on for support and deliverance.

3. "Haste thee to help me" = help me speedily; come to deliver me from these dreadful sorrows; He is not praying to be rescued from death for that is why He came and "set my face like a flint" (Isa. 50:7); He is praying for deliverance from those deep mental sorrows that had come upon Him.

V. 20

1. "Deliver" = to snatch away.

2. "My soul" = my life.

3. "From the sword" = used to denote an instrument of death; may symbolize the authority of the Roman government--that authority by which Christ was actually put to death; this prayer no doubt was made with the reservation previously made in Gethsemane (Luke 22:42); the human will in Christ was in favor of the deliverance; the Divine will, the same in Christ as in His Father, was against it.

4. "My darling" = my only one; the Hebrew word is used poetically for life, as being something most dear or denoting all that we have and therefore, most precious.

5. "From the power of the dog" = refers to the hand of the dog with "dog" being used of the crowds of the cross who were enemies of the cross as having characteristics of a dog (see notes on verse 16 where I dealt with this verse); this is the image before the mind in this phrase.

V. 21

1. "Save me from the lion's mouth" = see notes on verse 13 where I dealt with this verse; the crowds of the cross (His enemies) are represented as fierce and ravening lions.

2. "For thou has heard me" = thou has saved in answer to prayer.

3. "From the horns of the unicorns" = the idea is, when surrounded by enemies as fierce and violent as wild beasts seeking His life, He called upon God, and God heard Him.

4. "Unicorns" = the Hebrew word can be used to describe wild bulls and also to describe an animal with one horn such as a rhinoceros; represents His enemies (the crowds of the cross) as being as ferocious wild cattle determined to inflict punishment or other evil as wild animals would with their horns.

8. Summary of the conflicts of the cross.

1. Jesus was poured out like water so that spiritual water might be poured into us.
2. All Christ's bones were out of joint so that the human family that was out of joint could get in alignment with God.
3. Jesus' heart was made like wax so that He could melt our hearts by His grace and love.
4. His strength was dried up like a potsherd that He might take a broken life like yours and mine and use it for His glory.
5. His tongue cleaved to the roof of His mouth and to His jaw so that you and I might speak the joys of salvation and set forth a message of Divine deliverance.
6. Jesus was brought into the dust of death that we might be brought into the blessings of life.
7. Jesus' hands and feet were pierced so that our hands could work in His name and our feet could walk in paths of light.
8. He died on the cross for you and for me.
9. Oh! how we need to thank the Lord for all that Jesus endured for a sinner--for me, make it personal.

VII. The children of the cross. V. 22-26

V. 22

1. Verses 22-31 seems to deal with the joys of Christ while on the cross--the joys set before Him. (Heb. 12:2)
2. "I will declare thy name" = it means that He would make the name of God known to men or that through Him that name would be made known.
3. "Unto my brethren" = refers to all mankind and those who have an ear to hear His name, it will be made known to them; this passage is quoted and applied to our Saviour in Heb. 2:10-12.
4. "The congregation" = refers to people assembled to worship; in the OT mainly refers to Jews but in the NT refers to the church. (Heb. 2:12)
5. "In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee" = this is the place where praise is commonly celebrated and he says that there He would make known the goodness of God; He will join with the brethren in praising and adoring His Father as soon as circumstances allow.

6. "Praise" = halal--Hebrew word; to shine; to make a show; to boast; to be clamorously foolish; to rave; to celebrate; to stultify--to make foolish--If God is in it, this is in order.

V. 23

1. "Fear" = reverential awe and respect of a holy God with a hatred for evil; all saved have this, therefore, we are told to praise (same word as verse 22) the LORD = Jehovah.

2. "All ye seed of Jacob" = refers to the descendants of Jacob or all Israel--later called Jews who are true worshipers of God.

3. "Glorify him" = to honor in worship; to ascribe honor to; to extol; to magnify.

4. "Fear him, all ye the seed of Israel" = repetition; refers to all who are true worshipers of Jehovah.

V. 24

1. First, second, and fourth "he" = 'his" = second "him" = God the Father.

2. First "him" = third "he" = Jesus the Sufferer on the cross.

3. "He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted" = "despised" means to scorn or to think unworthy of notice; "abhorred" means to hate extremely or detest; "affliction" means to be in a state of pain, distress, or grief; this phrase simply means the Father did not disregard His Son's affliction; every pang was marked and every suffering sympathized with.

4. "Neither hath he hid His face from him" = when growing up I always heard that God turned His back on His Son when it became dark while He was on the cross and that was the reason it became dark at noon day; but that is not true for this verse proves it and so does Isa. 53:11.

5. "But when he cried unto him, he heard" = there was no real turning away, no real forsaking; His prayer was heard (to hear intelligently and implies an answer is on the way); His work was accepted; the great object for which Jesus came into the world would be accomplished and He Himself would rise triumphantly from His suffering; and the cause for which He came to establish, and for which He died, would finally prevail in the world.

V. 25

1. "My praise *shall be* of thee in the great congregation" = repetition of verse 22 (see notes); if verse 22 refers to the Jews then here, I believe, He is referring to the Gentiles.
2. "I will pay my vows" = refers to Him keeping the vows He had made--while in His afflictions--that He would praise and serve God; these vows or promises were of the nature of a debt which He says He will be sure to pay.
3. "Before them that fear him" = refers to the brethren, the great congregation, the true worshipers of Jehovah.

V. 26

1. Verse 30 speaks of "A seed shall serve him" and verse 31 refers to "a people that shall be born" and "he hath done this" = fulfilled what He came to do.
2. Therefore from the cross He looks out into the future and sees that His suffering is not in vain for He will have children as a result of the cross.
3. He did not die in vain--there are children and there will be children as a result of the cross.
4. I want to look at three things from this verse concerning the children of the cross. And may the Lord speak to our hearts.

1. The children's vital signs of life. V. 26a

1. When a baby is born we want to make sure the vital signs are good.
2. What are the vital signs of the children of the cross?

1) We see their attitude.

1. "Meek" = mildness of disposition; gentleness of spirit; the word means afflicted, distress, miserable; denotes the poor as Jesus spoke about in the Sermon on the mount (Mat. 5:3-6; a progression to the point of salvation); "poor" means to be a beggar, powerless to accomplish an end and destitute; this is the opposite of pride and self-righteousness; one comes to recognize this condition when he gets honest with himself about what the Holy Ghost has revealed to him--work of Holy Ghost conviction; then he will mourn and have a teachable spirit and be saved. (See our book entitled "The Ladder of Happiness.")
2. Their attitude is revealed as being "meek" not proud, haughty, uncontrollable, nor wild and restless. Being born again is not just an overhaul but the braking and subduing of the will. I do not believe there will be anyone in heaven with a clinched fist toward

God. All of God's children have been broken and that is what the work of Holy Ghost conviction is doing in the lost.

3. I believe this verse includes even those who are coming to the Lord. (John 6:37b) The message of the cross has reached or is reaching their hearts and they have fallen on the Rock or they will fall and will not have to worry about the Rock falling on them. (Mat. 21:44)

4. The cross has been used by the Holy Ghost to crush us and subdue our stubborn will--broken. Those who want to rise up in our churches and show their haughtiness and show their control have never been broken. They still have their stubborn will.

5. Jesus referred to those who put Him on the cross as bulls, lions, and dogs in this Psalm, but not all are like that now. Some have been broken out of that condition and now we see them as little lambs because the Lamb has died on the cross.

2) We see their appetite.

1. "Meek shall eat" = talking about a spiritual appetite; a feast is provided as a result of what is happening on the cross; Jesus said they are going to come from all ends of the earth and set down at my table--table provided by my body and my blood and they are going to dine = eat; a song writer wrote, "Come and Dine."

2. The children of the cross have an appetite for the things of God. When you are saved the world will no longer satisfy, because you have tasted of meat this world knows not of. Example of Peter in John 6:67-68.

3. Even seekers are not fully satisfied in this world when they get a little taste of truth from heaven. A healthy baby will not take long till they let you know they are hungry. And healthy Christians have an appetite for the things of God. (I Peter 2:2)

4. In essence Jesus, while on the cross is saying, "I see them coming from all ends of the earth to eat at the table I'm providing." (Heb. 12:2; Rev. 7:9) That is one of the life signs--an appetite.

5. I see some who say they are saved yet there is no response to the things of God. When the Holy Ghost moves, they are not touched. But if you get some things going on in the church like a ball game or puppets, they can get stirred up about that. Some have asked me what we have for their kids--truth, hope, and salvation. That group, when it comes to the real things of God, seems like they just can't put their feet under the table.

6. If you are one of His children you have an appetite for the things of God--vital signs.

-attitude = no clinched fist.

-appetite = shall eat.

3) We see their appeasement.

1. "Be satisfied" = not restless; somehow they are at rest--at peace; their desires have been satisfied and appeased in God.
2. Some say the children are young and they have to sow their wild oats. That nature is in all of us and it came from Adam who fell in the garden due to sin and passed that to all mankind.
3. How blessed it is when God crushes our will and puts an appetite in our heart and we find our soul is satisfied with the Lord Jesus. Nothing else in this world will satisfy the inner man.
4. The children's vital signs. How are your vital signs when it comes to the children of the cross? Have you been broken? Do you have an appetite for the things of God? Are you satisfied with Him alone?

2. Children's life style. V. 26b What is their life centered around?

1) Life style involves a person.

1. "They shall praise the LORD" = "praise" who = the LORD = Him; it isn't that they have found a new cause, a new religion, nor just trying to get folks off their backs or trying to do better; no, they have had an encounter with God and He has become the central figure in their life.
2. "The LORD" = note the spelling--it has all capital letters; when you see that word in the OT, it is the word for Jehovah--has the basic idea that God is self-existent; He doesn't need any prop to lean on--nobody, nor anything--He is Jehovah. (Isa. 45:5 and eight other times the same thing is said).
3. "Seek" = to diligently follow after (Luke 13:24); to continue (John 8:31-32); He doesn't need anybody, but there is a people who found out they need Him--seekers; even those not yet saved are included here. He can get along without us but we can't get along without Him; we did not know about that until God broke our hearts and gave us a spiritual appetite, and we found out He only can satisfy.
4. Therefore, we need to realize that Jehovah and Jehovah alone is to be the object of faith and hope. That is the life style of a Christian. They rally around a person--the LORD.
5. There are some families who want you to do better but really don't want you to go to church all the time. Others want you to stop your meanness but don't want you to go

all the way, but saints find out that life is wrapped up in a person--Him--the LORD Jesus.

2) Life style involves a pursuit of God.

1. "Seek" = to diligently follow after; a person does not just believe at salvation but will continue to believe; same with repenting; same with seeking.

2. You do not just seek Him for salvation but something is put inside that causes you to continue to seek Him. The Lord looked down through the ages from the cross and said that they are going to pant or seek after Him.

-They are going to hunger and thirst after me.

-They are going to long for me.

-They are going to cry out for me.

3. There is nothing in this world that can satisfy. We need an encounter with the Lord again and again--experience Him like Paul stated in Phil. 3:10. Seek Him and keep on seeking Him.

3) Lifestyle involves the praise of God.

1. "Praise" = halal--Hebrew word; to shine; to make a show; to boast; to be clamorously foolish; to rave; to celebrate; to stultify--to make foolish.

2. We need to brag on Jesus. No praise is suitable for men. No flesh deserves any praise. Nobody has ever done for us what the Lord Jesus has. Therefore, we want Him to get all the praise and all the glory and all the honor.

3. We can not praise Him too much-- I am talking about real praise in the Spirit and not in the flesh. We have had services where we sing too much, preach too much, fellowship too much, and testify too much, but I have never been in a service where we praised Him too much.

4. Christ has come and crushed our will and given us an appetite for Him, and nothing else will appease or satisfy the inner man. Now we need to set our sights on Him and Him alone and as we seek after Him we want to praise Him and honor Him.

3. Children's life span. V. 26c

1. When a baby is born their life span is considered 70 years. (Psa. 90:10) Sometimes we have more and sometimes less, but the norm is 70 years--Bible.

2. That is in the physical realm but it is much better in the spiritual realm. He did not just give life (spiritually) for one life time, but everlasting life. (John 3:16)

3. The life span is introduced from the cross as:

1) Life without end.

1. "Heart" = the center and seat of spiritual life; refers to the born again--inner man.
2. "Shall live for ever" = the result of being saved is that, that person shall have life for evermore; for the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, worthily received, preserves man's spirit, soul, and body to everlasting life. (I Thess. 5:23)

2) Life without exception.

1. Note: "your" = had been saying "them" and "they" but now "your" heart = personal, no exception for all who will come God's way.
2. Red, yellow, black, white, or what ever the color of one's skin is, John has already seen them in heaven in Rev. 7:9 and all will join in the song of Rev. 5:9 in heaven.

3) Life without evil.

1. This verse has no reference to sin or evil. In verse 7 the Sufferer was made fun of and in verses 13, 16, 20, & 21, it speaks of evil being around the cross.

2. But, now He looks beyond and says:

-life with no end.

-life with no exception.

-life with no evil.

3. There will be no evil in that world. There will be no lions, dogs, bulls, enemies, opposition, or rebels with clenched fists in heaven. (I John 3:2)

4. The cross has come and crushed our will and gave us an appetite for holy truths and the reality of God satisfies us; therefore we have a desire to praise and pursue after Him. We will live forever as a family in the city of God. I am glad the Lord Jesus did not die in vain. (Isa. 53:11a) Children have come forth and will come forth. That gives us hope concerning our children and grandchildren.

5. The story of the cross is not some fairy tale or conglomeration but it is the story of salvation. God still saves sinners!

VIII. The contemplations of the Cross V. 27-29 - "Contemplation" = to study carefully; the act of the mind in considering with attention; meditation; to think about intently; consider.

V. 27

1. Verse 31 states, "He hath done *this*" = "done" indicates finished; therefore, these last verses of this Psalm are His thoughts before He cried "It is finished" and gave up the ghost.

2. Some would say today that :

-the gospel has failed.

-the church has failed.

-and Jesus has failed.

3. Not so! These last verses show His feelings while on the cross. He does not feel like a failure. In fact He saw His seed serving Him. Therefore, the gospel has not failed (Rom. 1:16) and the church has not failed. (Mat. 16:18) She is going through--you had better get on board!

1. Contemplation concerning Christ's praise.

1) There is an exclamation of praise.

1. In verse 22 (already dealt with) He expresses He will join the brethren in praising and adoring His Father as soon as circumstances allow.

2. In verse 25a (already dealt with) the idea is that He will meet with the early church made up of Jews and Gentiles and praise the Father. "The great congregation" includes you and me--the called out church of the firstborn. (Heb. 12:23) Heb. 2:12 also says, He "will sing praise unto thee" in the midst of the church.

2) There is an exhortation of praise.

1. In verse 25b (already dealt with) those that fear the LORD are exhorted to praise Him. Even those that are not saved but fear Him can praise Him also, in fact they are exhorted to do so.
2. Our Lord while hanging on the cross is praising Jehovah--the Father; therefore, we ought to praise Him in our trials and afflictions. Rom. 5:3 says we ought to give a shout of triumph when in afflictions.

2. Contemplation concerning Christ's prayers.

1) He considered the feelings of the Father.

1. Verse 24 (already dealt with) shows that the Father did not turn His back upon His Son. (Isa. 53:11)
2. The Sufferer praised Him because He had heard His prayers; therefore, His prayers were not in vain.
3. The Father loves for people to move in His direction. (Heb. 4:16)

2) He considered the faith of the Father regarding prayers.

1. Verse 24 says, "neither has he hid his face from him."
2. He should have turned His back on us but He hasn't, so:
 - Keep on praying.
 - Keep on crying out.
 - He will hear.
3. He has not turned His face away from the afflicted heart that is troubled.

3. Contemplation concerning Christ's perseverance.

1) Referring to vows of the covenant.

1. In verse 25 (already dealt with) the word "vow" is covenant language. He is saying, "I have vowed myself to keep the covenant made with the Father."
2. What covenant? Back in the council halls of God, before the foundation of the earth, the Father planned salvation's plan and the Son said, "I'll provide the payment."

3. And now on the cross He says, "I will pay my vows--I will do it." He went to the cross to go all the way through. He didn't come to give up in Gethsemane, "Not my will but thine be done."

2) Referring to the victory of the covenant.

1. Now we can have victory, not because I will but because He will and did.
2. He would not come down nor give up. He persevered.

4. Contemplation concerning Christ's people.

1. His people are on His heart while hanging on the cross. (verse 26, 27, 30) And in verse 31 He refers to a people that shall be born again--saved.
2. He is thinking about His seed on the cross. He is also thinking about a remnant--you and me while hanging on the cross.
3. In verse 26 (already dealt with) He is thinking about each one individually for He refers to the "meek" which is singular--thus individually.
4. In verse 27 He is thinking internationally:
 - A. "All the ends of the world" = refers to all parts of the earth, Gentiles included; the Gentiles from every quarter shall come to Him; this does not mean that all will be saved but there will be a remnant saved; refers to those who have an ear to hear, they will "remember" -- to have in one's mind something he may have been taught at one time but had forgotten, and "turn unto the LORD" = the idea is repentance toward God, which involves to turn away from their idols to worship the living God.
 - B. "And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee" = a repetition of previous phrase; this is not speaking of every person in the world but a remnant from all nations shall worship in His presence; John has already seen this group in Rev. 7:9.
5. Some will be saved--may be one here and one there. Many may get discouraged but He has not quit saving. That is why Jesus died and while hanging on the cross, He sees people that shall be born again--saved. Therefore, our mission endeavors are not in vain. Our preaching week after week is not in vain. Our praying is not in vain. Just keep on preaching, praying, praising, loving because He is going to save sinners. He will save them from their sins--that is what He came to do.
7. Therefore, the gospel preached is not in vain. Keep giving, keep serving for the gospel still has power. (Rom. 1:16)

8. He first said He thought the Father was not hearing Him when He took the position as a worm, but He did.

5. Contemplation concerning Christ's position.

1) He is Lord in life--right now.

V. 28

1. "For the kingdom *is* the LORD's" = "Kingdom" is singular and refers to those subject to a King; refers to the kingdom of God that will be set up on this earth--1000 year reign of Christ; also refers to heaven after 1000 year reign, but now it is within the hearts of saints (Luke 17:20-21) where its ruler, King Jesus, sits upon the throne of one's heart and life; that kingdom belongs to Jehovah, purchased and paid for by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ--shed on the cross.

2. "And he *is* the governor among the nations" = refers to Jehovah as being the rightful ruler over all nations--His rightful position; He is king right now.

3. The thief saw Christ's Lordship and Kingship when He spoke of His kingdom. (Luke 23:42) We do not know how the thief came to know this but he did. One thing is certain, Jesus knew who the thief was. (Luke 23:43)

2) He is Lord in death.

V. 29

1. "All *they that be* fat upon the earth" = this image is often used to denote prosperity; the meaning is that the rich, the great, the prosperous would be among the multitudes who would be converted to the living God.

2. "Shall eat and worship" = this expression is derived from the custom of offering sacrifices and of feasting upon portions of the animal that was slain; refers to the blessings of salvation as being represented as a feast to which all are invited.

3. "All they that go down to the dust" = refer to those who are crushed, broken, and oppressed--the poor, the sad, the sorrowful; salvation is for them as well as for the rich and the great.

4. "Shall bow before him" = shall worship before the true God.

5. "And none can keep alive his own soul" = he who cannot keep his soul (that is, himself) alive; refers to those who are ready to perish, who are about to die--the aged,

the sick, the dying; those helpless, feeble, and sad, shall also become interested in the great plan of salvation, and shall turn unto the Lord.

6. The Lord has the keys of death. (Rev. 1:18) When He uses the keys of death nobody can come back nor can anyone bring another back. There is hope of salvation as long as there is a long-suffering God, a striving Spirit, an open door, and a preacher of righteousness.

7. Yet all will bow! (Phil. 2:9-11)

8. Since Jesus contemplated on these things while hanging on the cross may we also contemplate on these same things. If He could see the positive side of truth while hanging on the cross, may God help you and me to catch a little glimpse of it in this hour we live in.

9. The song writer caught a glimpse for he wrote the song "At the Cross."

"Alas and did my Saviour bleed?

And did my Sovereign die?

Would He devote that sacred head

For such a worm as I?

At the Cross, At the Cross, Where I first saw the light,

And the burden of my heart rolled away,

It was there by faith I received my sight,

And now I am happy all the day!"

10. May God help us to keep looking at what took place on the Cross and contemplate, meditate, and reflect upon it!

IX. Conquests of the Cross V. 30-31

V. 30

1. What happened when Jesus died on the cross was not a defeat, nor a tragedy but a triumph. It was victory--"conquest" = word means the act of conquering.

2. "A seed shall serve him" = a race, stock, or family--denotes those who belong to the family of God--His children; the meaning is that as a result of the work performed by the Sufferer, many would be brought to serve (to obey and worship; to act in conformity to the law of a superior and treat Him with due reverence) God.

3. "It" = the seed mentioned; the people referred to.

4. "Shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation" = the people referred to shall be reckoned to the Lord (Adonai, not Jehovah; a word used as a name of God) as a generation of His own people; they would not be a generation of aliens and strangers.

V. 31

1. "They shall come" = the sense is that some would come and the lineage of such men would be kept up from age to age.

2. "And shall declare his righteousness" = to preach the gospel reaching many and bringing them into the kingdom of God; to state the way in which men may be made righteous.

3. "Unto a people that shall be born" = to future generations.

4. "That he hath done *this*" = "done" means finished, fulfilled, accomplished; implies that God has done or accomplished what is stated in this psalm.

5. I would like to take this word "done" and say some things about the conquest of the cross.

6. I try to teach my grandchildren that when we start something we finish it. That is a good character trait in a person--to finish what they have started. However I must confess I have started some things I never finished and that is a problem many have. I would like to point out that the Lord Jesus did not have that problem. He always finishes what He starts. Therefore, He did not fail in what He came to do. He came to finish our redemption.

7. Some say, "Why did He have to hang on the cross?" He had to finish our redemption and there was no other way for Him to do that than to die on the cross. I know there are many things Jesus finished in His death, but I want to magnify this redemptive truth. The Lord Jesus did not just pay a down payment nor put it on a monthly installment, but He paid it in full.

- "It is finished."

- "He hath done this."

8. Remember what He said at 12 years of age, (Luke 2:49) what He prayed on the way to Gethsemane (John 17:4) and next to the last words on the cross, He said, "It is finished."

9. What was necessary for Him to finish this redemptive work?

1. He had to possess the traits of a redeemer.

1. Not just anybody could redeem. We like to feel like we can handle any situation life allows to come our way. In God's economy in OT time, when somebody got in a debt and could not get out, God had some provisions.

2. Concerning property: If a person had property he could sell it to pay his debt. Yet a kinsman could redeem it back for the man who sold it. (Ruth 4:3-9) A kinsman nearer than Boaz could not do it because it would mar his inheritance, but Boaz could.

3. Concerning people: A person could sell himself as a slave and he would be given a roof over his head and something to eat. But if a kinsman--one qualified to redeem--paid the price, that allowed the slave to be set free and start over.

4. Three traits of a redeemer:

1) Had to be related.

1. A rich man could not do it unless he was related to the person who sold the land or himself as a slave.

2. Jesus qualified as our Kinsman, because He was related. He came into this world as a baby--a member of the human race; therefore, He was related. He became our near Kinsman and was qualified on this trait as our Kinsman Redeemer.

2) Had to be rich.

1. Being related was not enough, he had to have some supply of wealth or money. Boaz was qualified because he was near kinsman and a man of wealth.

2. Jesus was qualified because He was rich. He had many accounts:

-riches of His goodness.

-riches of His mercy.

-riches of His love.

He has everything necessary to meet our need all the way home.

3) Had to be ready or willing.

1. Boaz was such a one--related, rich, and ready. He said, "I will redeem Ruth."

2. The Lord Jesus was willing--a great cornerstone of the gospel. (John 10:17-18; II Cor. 8:9) "He hath done this." How could He do it? He possessed the traits of our Kinsman Redeemer--related, rich, and ready.

2. He must perceive the time of redemption.

1. A kinsman in OT time could not do it when he wanted to. It had to be on the redemptive time slate. There were special times, one of which was the year of Jubilee. (Lev. 25:10-13)

2. The Lord Jesus came to the cross not in some wild spur of the moment of time. He came on time, in time, every time. "It is finished."

3. It was time to set the captives free, time to deliver the prisoners, time to give back sight to the blind. The time of His redemption had come. That is what Gal. 4:4 states.

4. He must:

A. Possess the traits of a redeemer.

B. Perceive the time of redemption.

3. Pay the transaction for one to be redeemed.

1. I want to remind you that the transaction has not been left at the bar of judgment. All people will not be at the same judgment, as some think, where the good outweighs the bad or vice versa. The transaction will not be at the bar of judgment.

2. But the transaction has been taken care of, "It is finished." "He hath done this"--He paid the transaction for all the saved.

3. A song writer wrote something like this:

- "There was a time on earth

- When in the book of Heaven

- An old account was standing

- For sins yet unforgiven;

- My name was at the top

- And many things below,

- The old account was large,"

- "And growing every day,
- For I was always sinning,
- And never tried to pay. :
- But when I looked ahead
- And saw such pain and woe,"

It would be sad if he ended here but he also wrote:

- "When at the judgment bar
- I stand before my King,
- And He the Book will open,
- He cannot find a thing,"

4. Why? I tell you--He has already paid our account in full. "He hath done this." He hath accomplished this. He hath fulfilled this. Your sins are gone if you are saved. He paid the transaction; therefore, you do not have to suffer His wrath. Paid in full! "He hath done this."

5. A doctor died and his wife took the books and tried to collect the outstanding debts. She noticed he had written on some large bills, "debt forgiven" and signed it. She said that is not right, so she went to a lawyer and showed him the bills written on and said. "I want to collect." The lawyer said, "You won't be able to collect because he signed it. His signature will stand up in court that the bills were paid in full."

6. Some times the Devil will yank out some sin and say "What about that? It will not stand up in court." Oh, yes, it will, for "He hath done this." In fulness of time He paid off the note hanging over our sins. Therefore, we need to thank Him for the conquest.

7. There may come a time that you try to pay Him back. You cannot do so for it has already been taken care of.

8. You may come to a place where you say, "I am unworthy." That is true, but that doesn't have a thing to do with what has already happened. He took care of it all on the old rugged cross. "He hath done this."

9. Redemption has been accomplished. That is why He hung on the cross. Cash in on what is yours. "He hath done this"--the conquest of the cross.

10. The song writer also wrote:

- Then will my heart be glad,
- While tears of joy will flow

- I'll sing redemption's story,
- And praise Him for His love;"

11. "He hath done this."

PSALM 23:

1. This Psalm has the inscription "A Psalm of David."

A. "A Psalm" = a poem to be sung to a stringed instrument.

B. "Of David" = means David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel, was the author--human instrument--of this Psalm; a human, subject to like passions as we are.

2. This Psalm may have been written by David when he faced danger of death from his enemies. No doubt he used his experience as a shepherd of sheep to apply these things to the Great Shepherd--the Messiah, thus Messianic, which means it applies to the Lord Jesus Christ. Psalm 22, 23, and 24 are considered a triad (a common harmony consisting of three) with Psalm 22 being labeled "The Psalm of the cross," Psalm 23 "The Psalm of the crook (shepherd's staff)," and Psalm 24 "The Psalm of the crown." This Psalm is perhaps memorized by more people than any other Psalm and used for comfort to bereaved families than any other Scripture.

3. This Psalm is the voice of a veteran king, looking back over his past, telling of his experiences with the Lord.

4. Let us look at some questions and then some answers in this Psalm.

1. "The LORD"--who is He?

V. 1

1. "The LORD" = notice it is in all capital letters; Jehovah; the self-existent One who stands alone with no aid from anybody or any other being in this world or out of this world; the self-existent One who reveals Himself; we need someone to help us stand but the LORD does not.

2. "The LORD"--who is He? David gives us 4 answers.

1) Author of our conversion--salvation.

1. "My" shepherd = I am not qualified to call Him my shepherd until I am saved; salvation is of the LORD--back in the council halls of God in eternity past: 1) the Father planned salvation for man, 2) the Son provided the sacrificial death on the cross, and 3) the Holy Ghost produces it in the heart of man; there is a sense He still shepherds you before you are saved. (Rom. 8:28)

2. He knows His sheep even before they are saved. (John 10:16)

2) Origin of our certainty.

1. The LORD "is" = did not say was and now ceases to be; did not say will be; but is--right now this very day, very hour, very minute--my shepherd.

2. Thank the Lord we can know now. We do not have to live in doubt and confusion.

3) Means of a good comparison.

1. David compared Jehovah to a shepherd and Christians to sheep.

2. He was qualified to make such a comparison, because he was a former shepherd boy and could recognize the:

A. Duties of a shepherd.

-What they were.

-What he was to do.

-He had been there before.

B. Discernments of a shepherd.

-He could hear the breaking of a twig.

-He could hear the crackling of a leaf.

-He could hear the cry of a wolf.

-He had watched skillfully and faithfully over his sheep.

3. David was qualified to know about sheep.

A. They are defenseless, helpless, stupid, and have no sense of direction.

B. You may not want to be compared to sleep, but we are sheep.

C. Sheep nibble themselves:

-Away from the shepherd.

-Away from the pasture.

-Away from protection.

-Over the side of a cliff.

-Into the face of wolves.

D. You have got to have a shepherd to take care of sheep because they cannot take care of themselves.

4) Reason for our confession.

1. "The LORD *is* my shepherd" = He may be the shepherd of your grandmother, your parents, your brother or sister, but that will not help you unless they were the human instrument who introduced you to Jesus.

2. The Shepherd is inherited on a personal basis. He may never be the shepherd of the world or your shepherd, but that does not stop him from being my shepherd at all times. He does not divide His attention among His sheep nor does He let circumstances stop Him from being my Shepherd.

3. He looks at every sheep as if He did not have any other sheep to look at--telescopic view. (Psa. 34:15) "Eyes" and "ears" are plural, not singular. This means He is looking and listening to you as if he did not have anyone else to see and listen to. It means you are so precious in God's sight that He cannot take His eyes and ears off you and me.

4. He is my shepherd and that does not stop Him from being your shepherd.

2. The LORD, what is He doing?

-I can report that the Shepherd of our soul is constantly and actively engaged in doing marvelous, miraculous, wonderful, unexplainable, and unbelievable things for all His sheep all the time.

1) Revealing His ability unto His sheep.

1. He gathers His sheep--refers to salvation as His work. (Isa. 40:11)

2. He knows His sheep, even though not in the fold yet. (Mar. 15:24; John 10:16) This is due to the foreknowledge of the Lord.

3. He has got strong arms to gather and powerful enough to deliver His sheep from all that has him bound--flesh, world, and the devil of Eph. 2:2-3.

4. He carries them in His bosom. There is a place in the bosom of God for every one of His sheep.

5. "I shall not want" = this is a future tense verb, not present tense, or past tense; we want to live in the past but this is future.

6. David said, "He has done so much for me in the past, and in the present that I am convinced it will be okay in the future--I shall not want."

7. You may ask, "What about recession?"--I shall not want. "What about depression?"--I shall not want. "What about my bank account melting like a snowball in August?"--I shall not want. "What about the war on terrorism?"--I shall not want.

8. I am here to report a known fact today that will take care of tomorrow's unknown future. Today's fact: "The LORD is my shepherd." Tomorrow's unknown future: "I shall not want."

9. Our shepherd takes care of not only our needs, (Phil. 4:19) but also our wants and desires. (Mark 11:24; Psa. 34:10; 37:4)

10. He gives, not only our needs but our wants and desires. You will not understand that statement until you understand this statement--when sheep get to the place where the shepherd wants them to be, and acts the way the shepherd wants them to act, and do what the shepherd wants them to do, then the sheep do not want anything or desire anything the shepherd does not want them to have and does not go anywhere the shepherd does not want them to go, and does not do anything the shepherd does not want them to do--that is when He provides our wants and desires.

11. Until we get there, we will never have real happiness. Do not worry for He can take care of His sheep because He is constantly and actively revealing His ability to His sheep.

2) Resting His sheep in green pastures.

V. 2

1. "Green pastures" = pastures of tender grass; we will never be able to understand this sub-topic until we understand what green pastures are:

A. They are not clover and fescue that has been watered and well fertilized.

B. I hold in my hand the Bible, acre after acre of God's green pasture--field after field--farm after farm of God's green pasture.

C. Green pastures are talking about God's infallible, inspired Holy Word and we need to believe it from cover to cover--every word of it.

D. We do not have to defend this book, just open it and it will defend itself.

E. Sheep like green pasture; therefore, if you do not like the "Book," you may not be a sheep.

F. When a sheep lies down in green pasture, they will not get their wool muddy and will not come up with a mouth full of saw-briers or cockle-burrs.

2. "He maketh me to lie down" = this seems to have an element of force; there are two ways to make sheep lie down:

A. Get a two by four and hit them between the eyes and they will fall down--this may kill the sheep and the shepherd.

B. To lead them in green pastures as an example and let them eat until satisfied and full to capacity and they will lie down full, content, and restful. Paul said you ought to follow him (II Thess. 3:7) and do what they learned from him as an example. (Phil. 4:9)

3) Refreshing His sheep.

1. "Still waters" = waters of quietness; peaceful waters; not stagnant waters, but waters not tempestuous and stormy; refers to the personal ministry of the Spirit of God in our lives. (John 7:38); just as plenty of fresh water makes pastures green, the Holy Spirit makes the Word of God real in our lives--that is His job (John 16:13); the Holy Spirit wrote the Book and He will show you green pastures.

2. "He leadeth" = to bring beside; the tense shows continuous action; to guide or conduct by showing the way.

4) Restoring His sheep.

V. 3

1. "Restoreth" = to bring back to a former or normal state by repairing or rebuilding; man fell into sin in Adam and our Shepherd will restore you to your original condition--as Adam was before he sinned in the garden; I know this takes a completed work of Holy Ghost conviction called "reproval" in John 16:8 and then one must come God's way--repent and believe--obey the gospel; "soul" refers to the real individual.

2. If sheep hurt, the shepherd will nurse the wound. If sheep are sick, the shepherd will give him medicine. Sick sheep cannot produce. Apply this to a sin sick soul, saved but lost their first love, (Rev. 2:4) then you need to confess your sin (I John 1:9) and the Shepherd will bring you back to normal state--forgiven, which is what you were when you were first saved.

3. And one day He will restore even the body at the rapture, just like Adam was before he sinned. God would not have let His Son die to do half the job. After the rapture, we'll look as if sin never touched us. (I John 3:2)

5) Relating us rightly in paths of righteousness.

1. "Leadeth me" = to guide or conduct by showing the way; the tense is continuous action.

2. "Paths of righteousness" = first He will lead in the right way (paths) by which they may become righteous--saved; then He leads in the way of uprightness and truth;

3. God wants us to be in a right relationship with Him and our fellow man "for His name's sake" = that His name may be honored and magnified as a gracious and merciful God.

4. "Righteousness" = purity of life; rightness; correctness of thinking, feeling, and action. (I Tim. 6:11; II Tim. 2:22)

5. The "paths" spoken of here would refer to the old paths in Jer. 6:16 that the Lord wanted Israel to walk in. The sad thing they said, "We will not walk therein."

6. If we find ourselves in other paths and they are not the paths of righteousness, they had nothing to do with the leadership of the Shepherd. If we are in other paths, the Lord suffers most.

7. The Shepherd guides in the right paths and He will not put more on you than you can stand. (I Cor. 10:13)

3. The LORD, what is He going to do in the future?

1. I am convinced the best is yet to come.

2. The future is as bright as the promises of God. The future is the brightest for sheep. In reality it has already been done--He has done all He is going to do for He said on the cross "It is finished," but it has not been completed in my life. (Rom. 8:30)

1) He will handle death.

V. 4

1. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death" = David faced death many times in his life; therefore, in context, he may have been referring to such a time when he faced Goliath in a valley, (I Sam. 17:44-47) but we can apply this as long as we do not violate the principle of the Scriptures because II Tim. 3:16 states, "All scripture is profitable for doctrine."

2. Again in reality, He has already handled death on the cross, but it has not been applied personally.

3. David said I don't care. I am not frustrated. I do not feel any anxiety about the future, because the Lord will handle my death.

4. David said death does not bother me because of three words:

a. "Walk" = no decreasing of activity.

1. If you walk you are not standing still; if you walk you are not running because you are frightened; if you walk you are not falling, because you are weak--no decreasing of activity.

2. For the saved, at the time of death, you are just beginning to do what God always wanted you to do. You will not be just guessing at the path. You will not have to figure out whether you need to go left or right, take this fork or that fork. We will be settled on the path.

3. When the saved die, you can say they just took a walk.

b. "Through" = no delays, detours, or layovers.

1. I am glad he did not say "in" or "wandering around" but going "through."

2. I am going through, not on the basis of what I have done, but on what He did. We will be on the other side before you know it--closer every day. No delays, No layovers. No such thing as soul sleep. Your saved loved ones are not in the grave yard.

3. I do not care how talented a mortician may be, he is not talented enough to stuff a saint in a casket. Saints do not go in caskets. Saints do not go to the grave yard.

4. The only ones who go to the graveyards are those left behind and do not understand fully what has taken place.

5. No layovers, not wandering around, but going through. When I refuse to answer roll here, I will be present and safe on the other side. (II Cor. 5:8)

c. "Shadow."

1. I am glad he said shadow of death instead of just death. Saints do not die. I do not care what anybody says. They never have and they never will. No death, just a shadow.
2. A shadow of a sword cannot cut you. A shadow of a dog cannot bite you. A shadow of a car cannot crush you. A shadow of a building cannot interrupt your progress. You can walk right through a shadow and not be hurt--never feel it--no pain.
3. There is no pain in death because the debt has already been paid--for the saved. All pain that death would cause any of us has been taken up by Jesus on the cross.
4. All the anger that God had for sin was taken out on Jesus on the cross and He is not angry any longer at us. So thank the Lord we are going through the shadow of death. Jesus paid the price!
5. If a shadow is there, there has to be a light. In John 9:5 Jesus said, "I am the Light." (also in John 8:12)
6. "Thou *art* with me" = He goes through the valley with us; some say I hope I am alive when Jesus comes back; Hey! I am going to be alive when He comes back; there is not any other way for a child of God to be.
7. I am either going to be alive and coming back with the Lord to get you who have not gone on, or I'll be alive to be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. I will be alive in either location.
8. You mark it down, I am not going to die because the Lord is my shepherd. You may say that I Thess. 4:16 says the dead in Christ will rise first but you must understand I Thess. 4:14-15. He said those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him--those who die in the Lord. The phrase "died in the Lord" in the NT means to separate us from down here to over there. It means when the Lord comes back that He will bring the saints (soul and spirit) back and raise those who died in the Lord. The only thing He will raise is the body, because the body is the only thing that dies. He is going to unite body with the spirit and then I Thess. 4:17.
9. It does not matter how I go, God is in charge of both trips. Some say, "You reckon we will know momma when we get to heaven?" We will not become dumber over there than we are here. Paul said, "Those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (I Thess. 4:14)
10. You do not look a bit different after you have slept four nights since I last saw some of you--I still recognize you. If a saved loved one left in bad shape, he will be in better shape over there and you will be in better shape then to recognize your loved ones.

11. There were no formal introductions on the Mount of Transfiguration. Peter, James, and John saw something--more than spirits on that mountain. If Peter had seen only a spirit, he would not have wanted to stay on the mountain. Heaven is not a ghost town where a bunch of spirits are. We will not have to hang sheets on them to figure out who is over there and what they look like.

12. Heaven is a lot different since there will be no devil or sin involved. The Lord is going to make a new earth for a purpose--to use it. We can agree that what goes on in the millennium, some of those things will go on in heaven. Why would we need plowshares and pruning hooks if we are not going to use them. I do not know what all will be going on in heaven, but there will not be a bunch of inactivity. We will not spend all of our time dangling our feet into the river of life and eating fruit all the time.

13. He will handle death.

2) He will handle dread.

1. "I will fear no evil" = the tense is future; the true believer has nothing to fear in the most gloomy scenes of life; he has nothing to fear in the valley of death; he has nothing to fear in the grave; he has nothing to fear in the world beyond; why? "for thou art with me."

2. We do have a dread of what we call the separation of body and spirit. We had better face that or we will live a defeated life. We fear what we do not know. You get on a plane and it looks like you are going down and you will get frightened or you are not normal. You go down the highway and a car looks like it is going to hit your car and you don't try to dodge it, I am not going to ride with you.

3. There is some fear because of the flesh, but do not set around and wring your hands about it. When time comes His grace will be sufficient. I heard of a man who was sick to the point of death, but he said he knew he was not going to die because he didn't have dying grace. When time comes, "I will fear no evil"--future tense. (Rom. 4:21) You will not fear, because He will handle dread.

3) He will handle danger.

1. My enemies are still raging. Some say the devil is chained, if so, he is on a mighty long chain. I want you to know when the sheep have a tendency to get frustrated, the shepherd never gets upset because He has weapons to handle danger.

2. "Rod and staff" = these two words bear some similarity in their definitions:

A. "Thy rod" = seems to have been used by the shepherd to club snakes and drive off the enemy; the shepherd goes before the sheep and beats the bushes with his rod or club to run the serpents off; every now and then a serpent would be brave

enough to leap out at the shepherd but he was quick as a flash and would bring his club down on the head of that serpent; it would not do any good to hit a serpent in the stomach; his vital organs are in his head; you can hit a serpent in the stomach and he can still put those fangs into your blood vessels and poison you and kill you; got to hit a serpent in the head not in the stomach (Gen. 3:15); God clubbed the serpent with the seed of the woman--Jesus Christ; He landed that blow on the head of the serpent when He died for our sins and was resurrected: He hit the serpent in his vital organs and defeated him; he is not dead but he is defeated--that brings comfort; it was also used for counting sheep; when the shepherd put his sheep in a fold, he would drop the rod behind each one and say I count you, you are mine; the Holy Spirit of God backed us up in a corner with the Word of God (law) and showed us there was not but one door out and when I walked through that door the shepherd of our soul dropped the rod behind me and counted me as sheep for time and eternity; right now I am a sheep and then I will be a sheep--that is comfort to a child of God.

B. "Thy staff" = a stick carried in the hand for support or defense by a person walking; possibly has a crook on one end used to seize the legs of the sheep when they were inclined to run away and thus keep them with the flock; with this staff he rules and guides the flock to their green pastures and defends them from their enemies; also he corrects them when disobedient and brings them back when wandering.

C. "They" = the rod and staff.

D. "Comfort me" = they show that the shepherd is there and imparts confidence, showing that He will not leave me alone and that He will handle danger.

E. Together, these two words paint a picture of a strong, protective shepherd whom we can trust.

C. Table set.

V. 5

1. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies" = right in the middle of the raging enemies, He takes out His best table cloth and pitches His biggest feast.

2. "Thou preparest" = do you know who the chef is?--the shepherd.

3. It is a "prepared table" = it does not mean I showed up and He wasn't looking for me. It does not mean I had to squeeze in between two oversized men at the table. No Sir! He had a place prepared for me. The chef knew who was coming and He "prepared" a table.

4. You know where He did it--before me in the presence of mine enemies. This means He put it on a Lazy Susan and everything I need He just passes it by me. I do not have to move to get to it--it is right "before me."

5. Whatever I need the Lazy Susan will bring it around--"before me." I do not have to plan it or prepare it. He will take care of it.

D. Anointing oil.

1. "Thou anointest my head with oil" = "anointed" is from a Hebrew word which means "makest fat;" this entire phrase means that oil was poured on his head so abundantly that he seems to be made fat with it; this expression indicates abundance.

2. Oil is the symbol of Holy Ghost power (Acts 1:8; Phil. 4:13), power to overcome and have victory "because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." (I John 4:4)

D. Cup overflows. V. 5c

1. "My cup runneth over" = it is not merely full; it runs over; this also indicates abundance and from the abundance of the favors bestowed on the psalmist he infers that God would always provide for him, and that He would never leave him to want.

2. The overflow is where the blessings come from. Some say they need a bigger cup. But David said he had abundance--enough for him and others also. (I Peter 1:8; Psa. 30:5; Gal. 5:22-23) "The joy of the Lord is your strength." (Neh. 8:10)

4) He will handle destiny.--In reality He has already done it, but in the future he is going to make it clear.

1. "Surely" = certainly; undoubtedly; indisputable fact; no need to debate it; it is not up for discussion; it is settled.

2. "Goodness" = uprightness of the soul that abhors evil; uprightness of heart and life; a clear-cut honesty of motive and conduct; refers to that quality in a man who is ruled by and aims at what is good; it is one of the nine-fold fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. 5:22-23)

3. "Mercy" = to aid the afflicted; to bring help to the wretched; to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior; keeps us from getting what we deserve.

4. Goodness and mercy are a great deal more than we deserve. Some have said that these are God's footmen to smooth the way before us, but this verse says they "follow

us" = which means they will take care of the rear, left, right, above, and below and the Shepherd will take care of everything in the front.

5. Others have said that these are angels named Goodness and Mercy. Goodness is there to take care of our supply and Mercy is there to take care of our sin. Pretty good interpretation!

6. "All the days of my life" = our first thought about this phrase is that as long as life in this body continues--David felt confident that everything needful for him would be bestowed upon him; another thought concerning this phrase is that it refers to all the days we have here on earth and all the days we will have in heaven--really we cannot number them for there will be no end to the days there.

7. Are you glad goodness and mercy will be with you here and there? Are you glad goodness is around to take care of your supply? Are you glad mercy is around to take care of our sins--all the time, all the days of our life and we will live forever?

8. They follow me. I do not have to find them. I do not have to wake up each morning and say good to have you on my journey. I could, but I do not have to.

9. I do not have to say to them "wake up, we have a lot to do today." No, while I slept they stood watch and I did not have anything to do with dispatching them or assigning them to me. God has assigned them the responsibility of taking care of me.

10. "And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever" = "dwell" means to remain permanently; some songs are not scriptural such as "Build my mansion next door to Jesus"--I am not going to live next door to Jesus, I am going to live in God's big house; God is able to build one big enough to take care of His family and I am part of the family.

11. "For ever" = that means on Monday I will not have to go anywhere to look for pasture and on Tuesday I will not have to go look for a fresh water supply; that means the grass supply is plentiful and the water supply is fresh and plentiful and I will not have to go anywhere.

12. I am satisfied! I have reached my destination and I have no desire to go anywhere else. I have settled down for time and eternity in God's home--God's house. (John 14:1-2 "mansions" = abiding places)

13. "House" = is in the singular; I am going to be a part of the family for time and eternity.

4. The LORD, do you know Him?

1. Is He the author of your conversion? Have you been saved? If not, then what we have dealt with in Psalm 23 does not fully apply to you until you become a member of the family of God.

2. If you do not know Him as Lord and Saviour, you come to Him at His invitation, not man's. And He will restore you to the condition man was in before the fall--a new creation. (II Cor. 5:17)

3. Psa. 23:1-6: Read it, study it, memorize it, meditate upon it and it will bring comfort to your soul.

PSALM 24:

1. This Psalm has the inscription "A Psalm of David."

A. "A Psalm" = a poem to be sung to a stringed instrument.

B. "Of David" = means David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel, was the author--human instrument--of this Psalm; a human, subject to like passions as we are.

2. This Psalm is believed to be written by David when he determined to bring up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the tabernacle which he had prepared for it on Mount Zion. (II Sam. 6:12-17) The particular reference of this psalm seems to be the entrance of the ark into the city rather than into the tabernacle (tent).

3. Psalm 22, 23, and 24 are considered a triad (a common harmony consisting of three) with Psalm 22 being labeled "The Psalm of the cross," Psalm 23 "The Psalm of the crook," (shepherd's staff) and Psalm 24 "The Psalm of the crown." All three are Messianic, which means they apply to the Lord Jesus Christ--the King of Glory.

1. The Lord's claim. V. 1-2

V. 1

1. "The earth is the LORD's" = "the world" (synonymous with "earth") = refers to Jehovah's creation and He has a right to dispose of it as He pleases--by fire, or flood, or tempest; Gen. 1:1 says "God created the heavens and the earth;" think about the heavens and what is out there beyond what our eyes can see; it has been said there may be a 100,000,000 galaxies and we are in the Milky way--one of many; also has been stated that 100 billion stars are spinning around a center in a form of a giant disc, an enormous disc of stars and yet He placed a moderate star to warm this earth--sun; and around that sun are nine planets--the earth one of them; yet, the all seeing eye passes over the galaxies and super-galaxies, and focuses on earth, the rebel planet; this earth is a puny place, just a microscopic speck of dust in terms of all the suns and stars and satellites of space; but this earth is important to God because of what happened here. (Col. 1:16-17; "consist" to hold together; to cohere; the tense is perfect which

means a past completed action with existing results; Christ created all things, put them in order, and they continue to remain in order.)

2. "And the fulness thereof" = all which it contains; everything which goes to fill up the world--animals, minerals, vegetables, and men; all belong to God and He has the right to claim them for His service, and to dispose of them as He pleases.

3. "And they that dwell therein" = all the inhabitants of the earth; refers to animals and to man--saint and sinner; you belong to Him; He has a claim on your life; all things consist in Him--my breath, my life are in His hand.

V. 2

1. "He" = Jehovah.

2. "It" = the earth and the habitable world.

3. "Founded" = "established" = to fix firmly; to lay a foundation. (Job 38:6)

4. "Hath founded it upon the seas" = "and established it upon the floods" = as the earth appeared to be surrounded by water, it was natural to speak of it as found and established upon the waters (seas and floods); this is probably an illusion here to the statement in Gen. 1:9-10 where the waters are said to have been so gathered together that the dry land appeared; above all the waters, the earth was established, so as to become the abode of plants, animals, and men.

5. The essential thought is that this earth has become what it is by the fact that God has founded it and therefore, what it produces belongs of right to Him.

6. It is the mercies of God that He gave us another day, that He gave us an ear to hear.

7. When you consider this earth, how small it is in comparison to all of His creation, and the fact that He would come to this earth to die, shed His blood for a band of rebels on this little speck of dirt--that ought to awe us.

8. This is His claim!

2. The Lord's call. V. 3-6

1) The questions asked. V. 3

V. 3

1. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?" = this is Mount Zion--called "the hill of the Lord" because it was the place designated for His worship; the idea is "Who is worthy to dwell there?" In reality, "God's hill" is the highest heaven wherein He has His

dwelling place; its representative on earth was, at the time this psalm was written, the Mount Zion where it was already determined in the Divine counsels that the temple should be built and where David was now about to transfer the ark of the covenant.

2. "Who shall stand in His holy place?" = who shall stand and minister inside the tabernacle, when the ark has been placed therein, and it has thus become in a special sense, God's holy place; in David's day only the high priest of Israel could stand in the holy place--Holy of Holies--and then only briefly.

2) The questions answered. V. 4-6

V. 4

1. "He that hath clean hands" = an answer to the questions of verse 3; this is a parallel passage to Psa. 15:1-2 where verse 2 tells us what it means to have "clean hands;" this refers to one not living a lifestyle in the practice of iniquity but striving always to do that which is right; the high priest had to purify himself before he could minister in the holy place.

2. He that hath "a pure heart" = it wasn't enough to just have one's external conduct upright, but he needed his heart to be pure since the heart is the source of all evil (Mat. 15:19-20) and wrongful words and wicked acts are the necessary results of the heart being impure.

3. "Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity" = refers to one who hath not lusted after vain and worthless things, whose desires are subdued, brought into captivity to the Law of God, and kept under strict control.

4. "Nor sworn deceitfully" = refers to false swearing which is one of the worst sins of the tongue.

5. The psalmist is saying a man is not fit to draw near to God unless he is righteous in act, in thought, and in word. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. (Heb. 12:14)

V. 5

1. "He shall receive the blessing from the Lord" = on the pure in thought, word, and act, God's blessing is sure to rest (Mat. 5:8); in other words God bestows His favor on those who possess the character here referred to.

2. "And righteousness from the God of his salvation" = this is the key to verses 3-4--the only righteousness (the condition of a person that is now before God accepted and forgiven--saved) that God will accept is His Son--made unto us righteousness. (I Cor. 1:30)

2. All our righteousness or self-righteousness is as filthy rags--leper's rags removed from their sores and thrown in the streets. (Isa. 64:6; Mat. 5:20)

3. No man can claim to be holy and have a pure heart unless the Holy Spirit has done a completed work of conviction. (John 16:8)

V. 6

1. "This is the generation of them that seek him" = this describes the race of those who seek Him; this is their character (just described).

2. To seek Him indicates an earnest desire to know Him and to obtain His favor. It denotes also humility of mind, and a sense of dependence on God.

3. "That seek thy face, O Jacob" = Jacob became Israel when he was saved in Gen. 32 at brook Jabbok; Paul made it plain that not all descendants of Jacob were true Israel in Rom. 9:6. The true Jacob consisted of those Israelites (includes Gentiles as well) who answered to the character of verse 4.

4. Let me say that the only reason any person will seek God is because He has begun a work in him. For the natural man does not seek God. (Rom. 3:11) Therefore, God gets all the glory for our seeking salvation.

5. "Selah" = it is believed this word has something to do with music and means to lift up, boom it out, pull out the stops; some say it is equivalent to "amen" but I believe it means to pause and think about what has been said--what do you think about that?

3. The Lord's coming. V. 7-10

V. 7

1. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates" = in context this may refer to the gates of the city; this may have been uttered as the procession bearing the ark approached the city where the ark was to abide, as a summons to admit the King of glory to a permanent residence there; the gates of olden times were not to open, but to be lifted up by weights and pulleys.

2. "And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors" = the ark was to be fixed and settled there; it was no longer to be moved from place to place--it had found a final home; the idea of "everlasting" is that of permanence.

3. "And the King of glory shall come in" = the glorious King; on the cover of the ark or the mercy seat, the symbol of the Divine presence--thus, Shekinah--rested; therefore, it was natural to say that God would enter through these gates; in other words, the cover

of the ark was regarded as His abode--His seat--His throne; and as thus occupying the mercy-seat, He was about to enter the place of His permanent abode.

4. This is definitely Messianic and it applies to the gates of the Heavenly city. No man had ever approached the gates of that city but after the first advent of Christ He ascended leaving the disciples behind. They saw Him go into a cloud but they did not see what happened afterward but David writing a thousand years before saw what happened next. He demanded the gates of the heavenly city to be opened.

V. 8

1. This demand was challenged by the keeper of the gates--(who we do not know)-- "Who is this King of glory?" = the answer came back.

2. "The Lord strong and mighty" = Jehovah, the Strong and Mighty One.

3. "The Lord mighty in battle" = He who displays His power in overthrowing hostile armies; what "battle" is he referring to one may ask--the battle of Psalm 22--the cross; and in so doing He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. (Col. 2:15)

4. The gates swing open, or are lifted up, and in He went to take His place at God's right hand.

V. 9

1. This is repetition of verse 7 and is designed to give force and emphasis to what is uttered (context.) An application can be made in verse 7-8 concerning the ascension of our Lord.

2. Between verse 8 and 9 could refer to the long centuries of this present age of grace that come and go. And now the time has come. The Lord steps off His throne and the trumpet sounds (I Thess. 4:16-17) and He cries "Arise my love, my fair one, and come away." (Song of Solomon 2:13) The day of the rapture has dawned.

3. Instantly the graves of the believing dead are emptied. Not one single believer will be left behind. The OT saints are there. The Church is there. The Lord is there!

4. Again and for the second time the mighty shout goes forth, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in" = it almost seems that the gates of the city shall voluntarily open themselves to admit the great and glorious King who is to reign there for ever.

V. 10

1. Again the keeper of the gate responds, "Who is this King of glory?" and this time the Lord points to those who have been saved by His blood, that enormous multitude, the redeemed of all ages.
2. And He cries, "The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory" = the essential idea is that God rules over the universe arrayed as hosts or armies ready for battle; all are under His command.
3. God is the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, and He should everywhere be recognized and regarded as such.
4. Sovereign simply means chief, superior to all others for there is no other!
5. "Selah" = it is believed this word has something to do with music and means to lift up, boom it out, pull out the stops; some say it is equivalent to "amen" but I believe it means to pause and think about what has been said--what do you think about that?

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