

STUDY SIX

PSALM 22 || MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?

With Psalm 22 open in front of you, watch Joel Limpic's performance at new.mpc.org.au/singwithjesus. Listen carefully for the argument David makes to God.

Some people say trusting in God is just 'wishful thinking.' How would you respond?



ISRAELITE IDEAL

1. What's David's main problem in v1-2?
2. What argument does David make to God in v3-5? How is his trust in God viewed by others?
3. How does David justify his hope in v9-11?
4. What's added by v12-21?
5. What changes in v22-31?
6. Who will join in at this point? v27-28
7. When you feel God is absent, what ideal response does this psalm portray?

ISRAEL'S FAILURE & JESUS' FULFILMENT

Doubtless Psalm 22 reflects David's own personal experience. But, as with all the Psalms, we see it's Jesus who fulfills its ideal more than anyone.

Read Matthew 27:35–46

8. How do Israel's leaders **reverse** the ideal from Psalm 22?

9. Jesus cries out to God, quoting the first line of Psalm 22 as he's left to die on the cross, abandoned by his family, friends, and his own heavenly Father. But what does the end of the psalm anticipate for Jesus?

35 When they had crucified Jesus, they **divided up his clothes by casting lots**. 36 And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. 37 Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS. 38 Two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. 39 Those who passed by **hurled insults at him**, shaking their heads 40 and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!" 41 In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. 42 "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. 43 **He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him**, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.' " 44 In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him. 45 From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. 46 About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "**Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?**" (which means "**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**")

Read Matthew 28:18–20

10. How does this ending to Matthew's gospel match the end of Psalm 22?

Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of **all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

SING WITH JESUS

Even when Jesus was most emphatically forsaken by his Father, left to die on the cross, he still trusted his Father. Even as he was mocked for it by Israel's leaders and the Romans, he still trusted his Father. And his trust was well placed. Because it was his Father who then raised him from the dead. But how do we get to share in that Psalm 22 experience?

11. Have you ever felt forsaken by God? Share your experiences.

12. When you feel forsaken by God, which comes more naturally to you: crying out to God for help, or giving up and forsaking him in return?

13. What does Jesus' death and resurrection mean for his followers' future? (see Matthew 28:20)

14. Could this help you cling to God like Jesus did, even when you feel forsaken? How so?

15. How could what we've seen in the example of Jesus move you to 'tell people about the Lord' as the Psalmist does at the end of Psalm 22, and Jesus calls us to do in Matthew 28?

In a time of prayer together, bring to God those times you've felt forsaken by him. Share with God how it felt to you. Then praise him for giving his son Jesus to save you. He left his beloved Son to die on the cross for you, and now you will never be left by God. Jesus will always be with you by his Spirit. And he gives you resurrection life with him forever. That's something to cling to and praise him for, especially when he feels most distant.