

**April 25**

**Scriptures:** Read Psalms 21 & 22

**Key Verse:** “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord.” (Psalm 22:27a)

### **Overview**

Psalm 21 is closely linked with Psalm 20 and serves as a natural sequel. It is a psalm of thanksgiving to God for answering their prayer for victory over the enemy (Psalm 20). God did fulfill their desire and save the king (20:9), as well as granting him many blessings — all because of the mercy of God and the king’s trust in Him (20:3-8). This psalm, like Psalm 22, is clearly Messianic. Only the Lord Jesus can be “blessed forever”, and also be blessed with “length of days forever and ever” (21:4, 6). The passage continues to prophetically declare that all those who hate God and have plotted evil against Him and His people will experience His fiery wrath: “the fire shall devour them” (see 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8; Revelation 20:14-15). The congregation of the Lord, however, will forever sing His praises (21:13).

From the first verse of Psalm 22, it is clearly evident that this is a Messianic prophecy. It is the most explicit of all psalms that deal with the suffering of the Messiah at the time of His crucifixion (also Psalm 69). Those who do not see this have a veil over their eyes. No doubt some of the experiences within the psalm relate to David personally, but most of them could not possibly have been actual experiences of David (e.g. 22:14-18). The Holy Spirit inspired David to prophetically write these words. The New Testament authors and Jesus Himself understood this psalm as Messianic, and frequently quoted it as being fulfilled in Jesus. Upon the cross, Jesus uttered the exact words of the first question which are so familiar to believers (22:1a; Matthew 27:46). Indeed, when He who knew no sin became sin for us (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:21), God had no choice but to forsake Him and not heed Him; however, God still loved Him, heard Him, and did not forget Him (22:24).

The attitude of the people toward Jesus fulfilled the prophecy: He was “despised of the people” (22:6; Matthew 27:39; Mark 15:29) and put to scorn (Luke 23:35). Even the words of the unbelieving priests and scribes fulfilled this Scripture by applying its words to Jesus: “He trusted in God, let Him rescue Him” (22:8; Matthew 27:43).

We learn of the intimate relationship between the Father and the Son (22:9-10), who had been cast upon God from birth, and who trusted God while yet a nursing child. The anguish caused by the separation from God at the time of the crucifixion, then, was greater than the physical torture, and there was no one to help Him (22:11); all had fled from Him, as the strong and influential priests, Pharisees, scribes, and ravenous crowd (“bulls”) encircled Him and sought His destruction, “raging and roaring” like their father Satan, the lion, seeking to destroy Him (22:12-13). Then Jesus was handed over to the Romans, and by this time He no longer had any strength and His mouth was parched from thirst (22:14-15; John 19:28). The Romans (“dogs have surrounded Me”, 22:16) pierced His hands and feet (22:16) to hang him upon the cross. “They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots” (22:18). The fulfillment of this prophecy clearly refers to the conduct of the Roman soldiers, so much so that each of the

four gospel writers specifically notes its fulfillment at the crucifixion of Jesus (Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:24).

Once the crucifixion and atonement were completed, God answered Jesus' cry for salvation (22:11-21). Jesus was victorious over the evil schemes of Satan (see 21:11), as well as over sin and the grave. The Perfect Sacrifice was acceptable, and His vicarious atonement was effectual and complete, "for He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; nor has He hidden His face from Him; but when He cried to Him, He heard" (22:24). The risen Lord Jesus now victoriously sings praises to God and He will declare His Name, not only to the Jews (22:22-23) but to the whole world who shall remember the crucifixion, that loving sacrifice Jesus made for them, and they shall turn to the Lord (22:27)! The risen Messiah now envisions the results of His suffering: many Gentiles, rich and poor alike, all worshipping God, and all those who were hungry for spiritual sustenance "shall eat and be satisfied" (22:26, 29a). The finished redemptive work of Jesus Christ shall fill them. All will bow down to the Great King of the earth, including those who have died (22:29b; cf. Philippians 2:10-11).

The good news of Jesus' redemption has been preached and experienced throughout every generation. The Lord has always and will always have a posterity to serve Him (22:30) — a faithful remnant who will proclaim the message of what Jesus has done to each successive generation. The good news (gospel) will never grow old and die.

## **Prayer**

Gracious Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Jesus to endure sin's penalty on our behalf and become victorious over death and Satan. May we be Your faithful remnant to proclaim this truth to all generations.