

A Prayer for Deliverance

Key Verse: “*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*”
—*Psalms 22:1*

Selected Scripture:
Psalms 22:1-19

PSALM TWENTY-TWO contains several prophetic statements concerning Jesus and his crucifixion. Several details were fulfilled exactly, one being the quote of our Key Verse by Jesus as he hung on the cross. (Matt. 27:46) Another is the statement: “They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.” (Ps. 22:18) John 19:23,24 states: “The soldiers,

when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: ... They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.”

Jesus’ earthly mission was to take Adam’s place in death so that the condemnation of sin and death could be lifted from him and all his progeny. Jesus was a Jew born under the Law Covenant. (Gal. 4:4) God’s promise to the Jews was that if they were obedient to the terms of the Law he would bless them. On the other hand, if they were disobedient God promised to punish them. The Jews were disobedient, and, therefore, if they were

ever to return to harmony with God, it was also necessary that their special punishment be lifted.

This, according to God's arrangement, required that Jesus die in a certain way—that is, by crucifixion. The Apostle Paul explains, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."—Gal. 3:13

In Numbers 21:4-9 is the account of the Israelites in the wilderness when they spoke against God and Moses. This experience of the children of Israel, and what they were instructed to do in order to have God's wrath lifted from them, was a picture of Jesus' purpose in coming to earth. We read: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life."—John 3:14,15

Then follows perhaps the best-known text in the Bible, and one that is part of the foundation of every Christian's hope: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."—vss. 16,17

In these texts we are reminded that it was God who designed the arrangement for the lifting of condemnation from the world of mankind, both Jew and Gentile, and that it was at a heavy cost, for Jesus was his only begotten Son. By this we see, at least in part, the measure of God's love for his human creation. The Apostle Paul expresses the matter with these words: "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8) With this, let us remember, too, the unselfish, loving sacrifice of Jesus, who was so willing to cooperate with his Father. "Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. 2:7,8 ■