

## The Sufferer, the Shepherd, the Sovereign.

Over the next few studies we will be looking at Psalm 22-24.

### Psalm 22: The Sufferer

In tonight's study it is important to get the overview, or shape, of the psalm. Verses 1-21 describe the psalmist's distress and his cry for deliverance. There is a major change in verse 22 and the rest of the psalm is a joyful anticipation of God's salvation and an exhortation to praise him.

1. This psalm is regarded as Messianic ie David is describing his own plight, but he is also prophetically describing what will be the experience of the Messiah. Go through the psalm carefully and identify ways in which it applied to Jesus.
2. We are so used to seeing this psalm as Messianic that we can forget that it can apply to many believers too. How does David describe the physical, mental and spiritual state of a believer who finds himself in this situation? How close is this to what has been your own experience?
3. God has promised his children that he will never leave them nor forsake them, yet David claimed that God had forsaken him. How then can verses 1 and 2 ever be the experience of a child of God? Have you ever felt like this?
4. Do you think verses 3 – 5 show David being encouraged or discouraged?
5. How would you describe the change in the psalm starting from verse 22? Why do you think there is this change?
6. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews, in chapter 2 verses 11 and 12, relates verse 22 of this psalm to the Messiah. It is easy to see the sufferings of the Messiah in the first half of this psalm, but what do verses 25 – 31 suggest about the blessings that flow from his sacrifice?
7. Compare verse 31 with John 19 v 30.
8. In spite of the opening verse, how can this psalm make us more certain that no matter how we may feel, God will never forsake us?