

The Cross, The Crook, and the Crown

(Psalm 22,23,24)

- Introduction:
1. Probably, one of the most well-known, and most memorized Scriptures is the 23rd Psalm.
 2. However, if I were to ask a person what the 22nd or 24th Psalms are about, few would know.
 3. By failing to do so, we miss a powerful and beautiful triad.
 4. Taken together, we see reasons to give thanks for the cross, the crook, and the crown.

I. The Cross

- A. (Psalm 22).
- B. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
 1. God forsook him because he bore the sins of the world?
 - a. Is that what he did with Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:8-9)?
 - b. (2 Corinthians 5:21) Jesus became sin for us by bearing our sins.
 - 1) Metonymy - Reference to the sin offering (Hosea 4:8).
 - 2) (Lamentations 5:7) Bore the sins of their fathers. Who would argue that they literally took on the sins of their forefathers?
 - c. Martin Luther said - "that Christ should become the greatest transgressor, murderer, adulterer, thief, rebel, and blasphemer, that ever was or could be in the world." Another writer said that Jesus was the "vilest sinner of all time."
 - d. On the cross, Jesus paid the price for sin and was treated as a sinner, but he did not bear the guilt of sin.
 - e. Remember, Peter said Jesus died as a lamb without spot or blemish, not as the vilest sinner of all time (1 Peter 1:19).
 2. It was a moment of weakness and despair, illustrating his humanity.
 - a. If this be true, lesser men than Jesus died more nobly.
 - 1) Polycarp - "I bless you, Father, for judging me worthy of this hour, so that in the company of the martyrs I may share the cup of Christ."
 - 2) Ignatius - "I thank thee, O Lord, that Thou hast vouchsafed to honor me with a perfect love towards Thee, and hast made me to be bound with iron chains, like Thy Apostle Paul."
 - 3) Paul (2 Timothy 4:6-8).
 - b. Can you imagine Jesus going to his death asking God why he had forsaken him?
 3. It was an appeal to Psalm 22, that taught that it is possible for one to feel and look deserted by God, but not be deserted by him.
 - a. Think of how Jesus looked to those who saw him abused, "helpless," hanging on a cross, and dying.

- b. How could Jesus make people realize he was not God-forsaken on this occasion and to renew their hope?
- c. So, Jesus recalls the first line of a familiar psalm/song, the rest of which, the Jews would know.
- d. Psalm 22 is a song about looking and feeling “God forsaken,” but before the chapter ends, those feelings are resolved and it is concluded that God did not forsake him, even though his circumstances looked like it.
- e. Ills. – “I was sinking deep in sin, far from the peaceful shore, very deeply stained within, sinking to rise no more...But the master of the sea heard my despairing cry, from the water lifted me, now safe am I.” – The first line sounds ominous, but it is resolved in the remainder of the song.
- f. (Psalm 22:21, 24) He was answered; he was not despised or abhorred, he had not hidden from him, and when he cried, he was heard.

II. The Crook

- A. (Psalm 23).
- B. “The Lord is my shepherd...”
- C. As a sheep, following the Good Shepherd, we have no want.
 1. He provides for us (23:1-3).
 2. He protects us (23:4-5).
 4. He Preserves us (23:6).
- D. Who other’s voice would you want to follow?
 1. Could they provide such temporal blessings?
 2. Could they provide such eternal blessings?
- E. The answer to these two questions should be sufficient to answer why the Lord is my Shepherd.

III. The Crown

- A. (Psalm 24).
- B. “The earth is the Lord’s and all its fullness...”
- C. The Lord is high and holy.
 1. Only the righteous, the holy can approach him.
 2. He is described as the King of Glory!

- Conclusion:
1. Can you think of three better reasons to serve the Lord than to consider his cross, his crook, and his crown?
 - a. He died for us.
 - b. He guides us through this life and into the next.
 - c. He is worthy.