

## **The Psalms and the cross**

When you sing the Psalms, you are singing about Easter! We look at what three of the Psalms say about the crucifixion.

by rev. Werner Brotherton

How do you explain the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ without using Matthew, Mark, Luke and the rest of the New Testament? Have you ever wondered about that? Of course, you use what you have, the Old Testament. That's what believers in New Testament times did. In 2 Timothy 3:15 we learn that the Holy Scriptures, which is the Old Testament, can teach us about our salvation in Jesus Christ. The Old Testament is enough to teach us about Christ. However, we have the New Testament to make clear that which was unclear for us in the Old Testament. More than that though, the church has, and continues to sing and read about the cross and resurrection through the Psalms.

We look at three examples from the Psalms:

### **Psalm 22**

The anxious words of Jesus on the cross, which we read in Matthew 27:46, is the same words with which Psalm 22 starts: *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"* In this psalm David is making known his fear that the Lord will ever leave him. Yet, there was only one who was truly Godforsaken and that was Jesus Christ. The psalm ends by urging us to speak about Christ's righteousness. He did it! Christ fulfilled the requirement of the law in our place. He even called out: *"It is finished!"* (John 19:30). The debt of our sins has been paid in full.

### **Psalm 16**

In Psalm 16 the church of the Old Testament sings about their awaited resurrection in Christ, singing: *"Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay"* (Psalm 16:9-10). We know that David is not writing about himself here, as he is not yet dead. Christ did not stay in death, He is risen! The first sermon that was given after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was about Psalm 16. Peter used Psalm 16 to prove that the Old Testament was fulfilled, and to preach the gospel. You can read the sermon in Acts 2:25-33.

### **Psalm 2**

We conclude with a reference to Psalm 2, one of the royal psalms. The reference is in Acts 13:32-33, Paul says: *"We tell you the good news: What God promised our ancestors he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: 'You are my son; today I have become your father.'"* Paul is teaching us that Christ becoming King was only possible through his death and resurrection. That is wonderful news! Christ is risen and sits as the King on the righthand of God. Sing about this, fellow believer! Confess and live every day in this truth that your Saviour rose from the dead. Sing the Psalms and know that you are also singing about Easter!