## OT Quote - Psalm 44v22

Laura Case, Year 11 English

“Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.”

## Context

The background of Psalm 44 lies in the superscription of Psalm 60, a psalm with a similar theme, of the enemy had invaded the land and God had not responded, where it states, “…when [David] strove with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand.” This shows that this Psalm is set at the time when David was fighting in the north with the Syrians, during this time the Edomites invaded the land. In response to these happenings, the Korahites offer a prayer to God asking for deliverance. David sends Joab and Abishai on their way back to Judah, to Edom to attack the enemy, and after a desperate struggle and with God’s help David’s forces overthrew Edom and saved the land.

## Audience

The author of this Psalm was the Korahites, Levites that remained in the land, to prove this the NKJV, NASB, NIV, BSB, and the LSB’s opening comments all state that it was of the sons of Korah, implying that the sons of Korah wrote this Psalm. According to BibleHub, this Psalm was first written “…as a plea of deliverance said to God…” as a nation struggled to remain faithful in an enemy-infested world around them. It was also written for the choirmaster and was likely sung in temple services, thus encouraging those that remained in the land. Therefore, the audience of this Psalm was firstly God and was received as a prayer, and then secondly for the benefit of the people as a plea of deliverance when it seemed God wasn’t supporting believers.

## Purpose

The purpose of this Psalm was to ask God why he was letting evil come upon the nation and all the faithful believers that remained in the land. This was done by the Korahites that remained in the land looking after the temple and continuing their roles as priests. Even though they still clung to their complete trust in God, at the same time they searched for the reasons as to why God should allow all this evil to ravage their lives. The NKJV states in the opening comments, “A Contemplation of the Sons of Korah”. This is the Hebrew word Maskiyal used to describe this particular Psalm means, “…a somber song of self-reflection…”, signifying that this was a psalm meant to invoke an inquisitive and contemplative mind searching for answers to why God was allowing this to happen to the nation.

## Interpretation of quote in context / Meaning of Passage

This passage is completely based on experience and confidence in God delivering us from sin and its effects on us. Therefore, the meaning of this passage is that God is with us if we trust in him and pray to him with absolute confidence and faith, then he will deliver us.

## NT Quote – Romans 8v36

“As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

## Context

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The context of Romans 8 was that the Gentile believers in the Roman ecclesia, after the persecution of the Jews under Claudius which resulted in many Jews fleeing Rome, thus the Roman ecclesia was mainly Gentiles. This ecclesia was treated very bitterly because they weren’t worshipping pagan gods, and were being seen as a suspicious, new, and different group who were being rebellious and unsupportive of the new emperor, Nero. This led to many people being negative and the new ecclesia being quite unstable. In some instances, you could be called up for your belief and maybe killed. Therefore, Paul was writing to encourage them.

## Audience

The audience to whom Paul is writing is referenced in Romans 1v7, where it states, “To all that be in Rome, beloved of God called to be saints:…”. This ecclesia would’ve been made up of mostly Gentiles, as it was situated in a completely Gentile province where pagan worship was dominant and popular.

## Purpose

The purpose of this quote is to show that God was with them no matter what they went through or were going to go through. This was a way to install hope and faith into the new and growing ecclesia, and hence unity and fellowship in one another’s sufferings.

## Interpretation of quote in context / Meaning of Passage

The meaning of Romans 8 is about God always being with the Roman ecclesia even unto death, as Paul states in verse 36, when he states, “We are killed all the day long”. This is supported by verses 38 and 39, and that “…neither life nor death…” nor any other thing can “…separate us [the believers] …” from God’s love.

## Paul’s Use of Quote

Paul uses Psalm 44v22 as an extreme example of an extreme situation. The Psalm is perfect for likening the experiences of the Gentile Roman ecclesia to that of David. Therefore, one aspect Paul’s audience would have found encouraging from the context of the Old Testament context was ­how David prays to God in a time of trial. This is because they would realize that God is with them even though they are going through this hard trial and it was going to get harder, God would always be there no matter how tough it got.

The Gentile ecclesia knew the significance of sheep in sacrifices, clothing, and food. This meant that shepherds cared greatly for their sheep and, this makes death a very powerful symbol. Believers were “sheep” and so this is symbolic of them, but the context of this chapter shows that nothing can condemn them, because they are saved for this suffering is for God’s sake. Acts 9v16 states that Paul would “suffer great things for my [God’s] sake”, and likewise the believers would also.

Therefore, by quoting the Psalms, Paul is showing that God’s people have faced persecution and hardship for generations and that all believers will “through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God”. He shows the Gentile believers that even though they would go through trials and persecutions, God was with them because they were his sheep.