

Good Friday 2025 - Psalm 22

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[0 : 00] Well, good evening, if I haven't already said it to you. Very glad that you are here with us this evening. This is extra in the week, and I am greatly encouraged by how many people have joined us this evening.

As we gather to consider the sacrifice of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on the cross of Golgotha, I would like for us to consider some of Jesus' final words as he suffered on our behalf and reflect upon what may have been some of his final thoughts as he gave his life for the sake of ours. So, to do so, please join me in Psalm 22. This psalm serves as a divine commentary on much of what Jesus uttered on the cross, as we will see that three of his statements come from this psalm. Because Jesus cites this psalm so prevalently, I believe that it is safe to assume that he was pondering this psalm as he suffered. It may not have been the only text of Scripture that he meditated upon, but it was surely one of them, and it may well have been the dominant one, and therefore can grant us some insight into his thoughts.

The author of this psalm is King David, and no events of his life match the description found here. So it is widely agreed that this psalm is also prophetic, that David was speaking specifically of the suffering of Jesus Christ.

[1 : 35] We will see that it alludes to five incidences that occur in the process of Jesus being tried and crucified. Further, the apostle Peter, in reference to another of David's psalms, calls him a prophet in Acts chapter 2 and verse 30.

So as we take some time this evening to consider some of Jesus' final words, and most likely some of his final thoughts, I want to invite you to have your heart warmed by the loving kindness of God to us in the death of Jesus Christ.

I'll read the entirety of the psalm. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest. Yet, you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

In you our fathers trusted, they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried and were rescued. In you they trusted and were not put to shame. But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people.

[2 : 53] All who seek me mock me. They make mouths at me. They wag their heads. He trusts in the Lord. Let him deliver him. Let him rescue him, for he delights in him.

Yet, you are he who took me from the womb. You made me trust you at my mother's breasts. On you was I cast from birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God.

Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help. Many bulls encompass me. Strong bulls of bashing surround me.

They open wide their mouths at me like a ravening and roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax.

It is melted within my breast. My strength is dried up like a pot shirt, and my tongue sticks to my jaws. You lay me in the dust of death. For dogs encompass me.

[3 : 52] A company of evildoers encircles me. They have pierced my hands and feet. I can count all my bones. They stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing that casts lots.

But you, O Lord, do not be far off. O you, my help, come quickly to my aid. Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog. Save me from the mouth of the lion.

You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen. I will tell of your name to my brothers. In the midst of the congregation, I will praise you. You who fear the Lord, praise him.

All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel. For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard when he cried to him.

From you comes my praise in the great congregation. My vows I will perform before those who fear him. The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied. Those who seek him shall praise the Lord.

[4 : 59] May your hearts live forever. All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nation shall worship before you. For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations.

All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship. Before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep himself alive. Posterity shall serve him.

It shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation. They shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.

So, first, let's look at the five incidences that occurred in the process of Jesus being tried and crucified that this psalm alludes to. And remember, I'm making the case to you that this is at least prominently what's on his mind as he suffers and dies on our behalf.

So, first, the dividing of Jesus' garments and the casting of lots. We see this recorded in John 19, verse 23 and 24, where it says, when the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier, also his tunic.

[6 : 14] But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. That is, it was expensive. So they said to one another, let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.

This was, John says, to fulfill the scripture which says, and he cites Psalm 22 and verse 18. They divided my garments among them and for my clothing, they cast lots.

Secondly, we read about the piercing of Jesus' hands and feet and his severe beating. We only find out about the piercing of Jesus' hands and feet because of doubting Thomas.

In John chapter 20, beginning in verse 24, John records, Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, We have seen the Lord. This is the risen Lord. But he said to them, Unless I see his hand, the marks of the nails, and place my finger into the marks of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.

[7 : 19] Eight days later, his disciples were inside again and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, Peace be with you.

Then he said to Thomas, Such kindness here, such tenderness. Put your finger here and see my hands. And put out your hand and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.

Thomas answered him, My Lord and my God. We know that Jesus was severely beaten from texts like Matthew 27. And the prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 52 and verse 14, As many were astonished at you, his appearance was so marred beyond human semblance and his form beyond that of the children of mankind.

We see in Psalm 22, verse 16 and 17, For dogs encompass me, a company of evildoers encircles me, they have pierced my hands and feet, I can count all my bones, they stare and gloat over me. Thirdly, we can see the mocking of the soldiers. We can read of this in Mark chapter 15, verse 16 and following.

[8 : 43] There Mark says, And the soldiers led him away inside the palace, that is, the governor's headquarters. And they called together the whole battalion, and they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him.

And they began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they were striking his head with a reed, and spitting on him, and kneeling down in homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak, and put his own clothes on him, and they led him out to crucify him. Luke adds in Luke 22, verse 63 through 65, Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him. They also blindfolded him and kept asking him, Prophecy, who is it that struck you?

And they said, many other things against him, blaspheming him. Jesus became a mockery, an object of derision and sport for the Roman battalion.

The creator of all the universe became a laughingstock to those whom he created. Psalm 22, verse 6 and 7, there says, But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people.

[10:02] All who seek me mock me. They make mouths at me. They wag their heads. Fourthly, we can see the mocking of the bystanders and the religious leaders.

Matthew 27, verse 39, says, All those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads. Again, Psalm 22, verse 7, and then into verse 8, All who seek me mock me.

They make mouths at me. They wag their heads. He trusts in the Lord. Let him deliver him. Let him rescue him. For he delights in him.

He mocked who he said that he was. In Luke 23, verse 35 and following, we read, And the people stood by watching, but the ruler scoffed at him, saying, He saved others.

Let him save himself. If he is the Christ of God, his chosen one. The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine and saying, If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.

[11:10] There was also an inscription over him, this is the king of the Jews. And John adds in John 19 that even that was controversial.

They wanted it to be worse, the sign that hung above him. There he says, Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews.

Many of the Jews read this inscription for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. That is to say, everybody could read it.

So the chief priest of the Jews said to Pilate, Do not write the king of the Jews, but rather, this man said, I am the king of the Jews. And Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written.

So there's a mocking of the bystanders and the religious leaders. Fifthly, we see the mocking of the criminals. Matthew 27 and verse 44 records, and the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

[12:16] And in Luke 23, 39, we get a little more detail. One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him saying, Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us.

And Luke goes on to tell us that the other criminal rebuked him and placed his face in Christ. And so we see this mocking, Are you not the Christ?

Save yourself and us. Psalm 22, 8. He trusts in the Lord. Let him deliver him. Jesus was even mocked by those found guilty and experiencing the very same death.

In Luke 23, we find him so willing to forgive the transgressions at whose hands he suffered. In verse 34, he utters the words, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

He pitied the ignorance that would murder the one who came to save their souls. And so we see all of these connection points back to Psalm 22.

[13:23] So, we ask, I think it's right for us to muse, what must have been going through the mind of our Savior as he experienced the most cruel of deaths ever to be employed by a nation state.

This is not argued. This was the worst. This form of death was not only extremely painful, it was meant to be a spectacle. The condemned replace on display in a place of prominence for all to see and to consider the cost of law-breaking.

The Romans wanted to make it very clear what would happen to those who went against Rome. So not only is he dying a painful physical death, he is being rejected at every turn by those that he loves.

Psalm 22 verse 12 and 13, many bulls encompass me, strong bulls of Bashan, which is modern day Syria, surround me. They open wide their mouths at me like a ravening and roaring lion.

In the midst of all David's prophecy of the suffering of the coming Christ, he writes these reprieves. When I read the total psalm to you, I tried to give some pauses to highlight that.

[14:42] These moments of rest and reflection from all of the suffering. And here I think we get the most wonderful glimpse of the mind of Jesus.

I'm making the case to you. I think this is what he's thinking. As I'm going to show you in a moment, he's citing this psalm. I think this is what's going through his mind.

And I think David prophetically has told us what he would suffer and is giving us some hints at what he must have been thinking. So just before the text I read, the bulls encompassing, the strong bulls opening wide their mouths like a ravening roaring lion, just before that we get this reprieve.

Verse 9-11, Yet you are he who took me from the womb. You made me trust you at my mother's breast. On you was I cast from my birth and from my mother's womb you have been my God.

Be not far from me for trouble is near and there is none to help. The psalmist, as I've argued, shows us that Jesus suffered greatly but that he looks to God the Father who was with him from the very beginning and is therefore to be trusted for help, comfort, peace, and finally deliverance.

[16:09] Now let's take a look at three statements that Jesus uttered on the cross that are found in this psalm. First, we can read in Matthew 27 and verse 46, also in Mark 15, 34.

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani. That is, I'm thankful for the translation, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani. my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? At about 3 p.m., the sky went dark and Jesus laid his life down.

The sinless for the sinful, the worthy for the unworthy, the blessed for the destitute. John Stott once said, our sins blotted out the sunshine of his father's face.

2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 21, Paul says, for our sake, he, God, made him Christ to be sin who knew no sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

[17:31] In the garden of Gethsemane, the night before Jesus' crucifixion, he prayed as recorded in Matthew 26, verse 39, my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.

Nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will. Jesus' great concern was not the physical torment that he was going to go through.

It was drinking the cup of God's wrath against sin, your sin and mine. Jesus' anguish over his coming crucifixion was because of that reality that he knew was coming.

He knew he was going to bear God's wrath. He knew that God would turn his face away from him. Jesus would have had in mind patches like Jeremiah 25, verse 15 and 16 and verse 27.

God is just and God is unchanging and therefore God must punish sin.

[19:02] He can't simply overlook it. It must be punished. If you and I were to have any hope of the forgiveness of our sin, we needed a substitute.

We needed someone to die in our place. Jesus came to die our death, so as he hung on that cursed tree, he bore all of the wrath for all of the sin due you and I and all those who will ever or ever will be called by his name.

Every ounce of that eternal wrath for our sin. And it's in that final moment that he cries out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

God the Father turned his face away from his Son and poured infinite wrath on him. Charles Spurgeon once said, it seemed as if hell were put into his cup.

He seized it and at one tremendous draught of love, he drank damnation dry. I don't know if anybody will have a way with words like Spurgeon ever again.

[20:19] Psalm 22 verse 1 and 2, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me from the words of my groaning? Oh my God, I cry by day but you do not answer and by night but I find no rest.

And then Psalm 22 gives us another one of these reprieves that I mentioned and I suggest the hope that pulled Christ the man through this immeasurable suffering.

The writer of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 12 too that Jesus endured the cross for the joy set before him. So maybe it's a thought like this that's going through his mind right after the text I just read verses 3 through 5 yet you are holy enthroned on the praises of Israel in you our fathers trusted they trusted and you delivered them to you they cried and were rescued in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

Second thing he says we find in John chapter 19 and verse 28 this is briefly but I'm connecting you back to Psalm 22 again after this Jesus knowing that all was now finished said and John puts in parentheses to fulfill the scripture I thirst now this is certainly a direct reference to Psalm 69 and verse 21 there that says they gave me poison for food and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink and this one is a bit more difficult to find in Psalm 22 but I contend that it is there in verses 14 and 15 where he says I'm poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint my heart is like wax it is melted within my breast my strength is dried up like a pot shirt and my tongue sticks to my jaws you lay me in the dust of death thirdly when Jesus had received the sour wine he said it is finished

I find these to be the three most precious words in the Bible it is finished and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit Jesus upon accomplishing the task that he became a man to accomplish uttered these simple but profound and packed full of meaning words it is finished that redemptive price has been paid all that we need to have the salvation of our souls has been accomplished it's done it is finished a work that he did on our behalf and doesn't expect a work from us to have it an astounding thing the author of Hebrews writes in Hebrews 1 and verse 3 Jesus Christ is the

radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature and he upholds the universe by the word of his power after making purification for sins he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high and this language is striking to those who are familiar with this early

[23 : 59] Jewish practice of temple worship the priests there who were making intercession sacrificial intercession for God's people never got to sit down there is no furniture in that temple no place for them to sit and to rest they work in shifts around the clock to make purification for sins the Levitical priests who could never make atonement the way we need atonement so Christ comes through a different line that of Melchizedek for another time perhaps and he makes a once for all sacrifice of himself he finishes the work it's finished and he sits down at the right hand of the majesty on high the work is done psalm 22 verse 29 and following all the prosperous of the earth eat and worship before him shall bow all who go down to the dust even the one who could not keep himself alive posterity shall serve and they shall be told of the

Lord to the coming generation they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn that he has done it it is finished praise be to God well four brief points of application and I'll be done and we'll conclude with some closing songs some things we want to witness Jesus doing as he hung on the cross first the case I'm making to you is that he was pondering the word of God that he had stored up texts!

psalm 22 so that he could consider them and all of the promises of God could pull him through the great suffering that he experienced and beloved we need to do the same we will suffer in this life and we need to have ready access to God's word at all times secondly we see him praying to God for help in times of need psalm 22 verse 19 there's this cry and following but you oh lord be not far off oh you my help come quickly to my aid and it goes on our God hears us and he's ready to answer us and because of the righteousness we have in Christ we can boldly approach him boldly lay our requests at his feet and trust in his loving responses third of suffering connecting us to psalm 22 verses 2 through 5

I read this before oh my God I cry by day but you do not answer by night but I find no rest yet you are holy enthroned on the praises of Israel and you our fathers trusted they trusted and you delivered them to you they cried and were rescued and you they trusted and they were not put to shame God works in the suffering of his people to bring about faith in him right trusting his good promises exalting him because we believe him he is who he is and he has said things and we believe those things to be true and that keeps the honor on him that is due him fourth proclaiming God's goodness to one another and to the world to one another we see this in 22 and following I will tell of your name to my brothers in the midst of the congregation I will praise you you who fear the Lord praise him all you offspring of Jacob glorify him and stand in awe of him all you offspring of Israel for he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted and he has not hidden his face my vows I will perform before those who fear him the afflicted shall eat and be satisfied those who seek him shall praise the Lord may your hearts live forever we are to proclaim God's goodness to one another all the time day in and day out hear me I'm thankful for this evening and I'm thankful for it seems in our culture that this is the black Friday for churches and I just want to say we gather to celebrate the resurrected Christ 52 Sundays out of the year unless something catastrophic happens that's what we gather to do we do it regularly why because we need to hear the good news of

[28 : 58] Jesus Christ regularly and God has ordained that we hear it regularly so we should proclaim God's goodness to one another and also to the world verse 27 all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord all the families of the nations shall worship before you for kingship belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations so I hope once again that your heart has been warmed by the loving kindness of God to us and the death of Jesus Christ I hope that this time serves us well as we look forward to resurrection Sunday in a few short days please join me in prayer next