

This is the Sunday that we wait for all year long, much in the same way the Jews waited for the Day of Atonement, only our celebration is for a once and for all time act (Hebrews 7:27ⁱ). It is the day we celebrate victory over man's greatest problems, sin and death. We must remember that death is the just sentence for sin, which is our rebellion against God, our Creator (Genesis 2:17ⁱⁱ). There is no escaping it, because God is just. But death does not have to be the final word. Every Christian funeral or memorial service celebrates the fact that death is not the end but rather graduation to glory for those who have received the forgiveness that Jesus gained for us through the cross (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14ⁱⁱⁱ).

This morning I want to show you some of the wonder of a psalm written a thousand years before the crucifixion and resurrection, and yet the clearest description of crucifixion in the Bible. We are going to focus on the resurrection aspect that is predicted in Psalm 22. In honor of God's Word would you stand with me as I read it.

At the Good Friday service we saw that Jesus uttered the first and final words of this psalm just before He died. In those final moments of the miraculous three hours of darkness He said, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me." And then just before surrendering His spirit up to the Father, He quoted the last line of the psalm. In the gospels we read, "It is finished," and that is the essence of the last line of this psalm which is translated, "He has done it."^{iv} Both mean it is accomplished. I am convinced that Jesus was not only comforted by this prophecy as He suffered and saw it being fulfilled, but He was directing His disciples and us to this psalm to consider it when we think of the cross and His suffering.

The somewhat hidden first hint of the wonder of what would be accomplished is in verse six. *⁶ But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people.* Psalm 22:6 The usual Hebrew word for worm is "*Rimmah*," but Jesus referred to a special worm, a *Tola*. "The scarlet worm is a beautiful type of the Lord Jesus in His death. In order for this worm to bring forth life, it attaches itself to the trunk of a tree, lays its eggs and dies. In dying it stains the tree scarlet. Just as this worm lays aside the right to live to bring forth life, so the Lord Jesus was willing to lay aside His life to bring forth many sons unto glory. In the process of dying the worm stained the tree scarlet which is a graphic picture of Christ's shed blood on the cross.

Further to this, H. A. Ironside makes this interesting point: *' In Israel and Syria they use the tola [to obtain] the beautiful permanent scarlet dye (which they often used for clothing) It was very expensive and was worn only by the great and the rich and the noble. It is referred to again and again in Scripture. Solomon is said to have clothed the maidens of Israel in scarlet. Daniel was to be clothed in scarlet by Belshazzar. And that word "scarlet" is literally "the splendour of a worm." "They shall be clothed in the splendour of a worm." Now the Lord Jesus Christ says, "I am a worm; I am the tola," and He had to be crushed in death that you and I might be clothed in glory. The*

glorious garments of our salvation are the garments that have been procured as a result of His death and His suffering. What a wicked thing to refuse the garment of salvation, to think of spurning it and turning away from it when Christ had to go through so much in order to prepare it for us."By I. Gordon on Jesusplusnothing.com

From verse nineteen on the tone changes. The psalmist begins asking for deliverance and then predicts a glorious ending. Verse 21b declares He has been rescued. *21b You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!* Psalm 22:21b Horns of the wild oxen represents the power of the out of control authorities. You *have* rescued me! David, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, I believe, was writing about his own deliverance, but the Holy Spirit inspired him to write in such a way as to put a voice to our Savior, the Son of David, as He endured the cross. I believe Jesus was going over this psalm in His mind. It fits so perfectly, like psalms often do for us in times of trial, but even more so. When Jesus got to verse 21 in His mind, He knew it would be a future declaration from His own lips, "You have rescued me," when He would be raised from death. If Abraham had the faith that God would raise Isaac (Hebrews 11:19^v), certainly the One who had raised the dead believed it possible. In fact, He told the disciples He would rise after three days (Mark 8:31^{vi}). At that point His Spirit must have begun to rejoice even in the agony He was enduring.

22 I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you: Psalm 22:22 Now the voice of faith grows stronger. Jesus could declare these words to the Father. I will tell of Your name to my brothers! After the resurrection Jesus called the disciples brothers (John 20:17^{vii}). We are sons and daughters of God by faith in Him (Galatians 3:26^{viii}). Let the wonder of that term sink in! He is not ashamed to call you His brother or you sister. Did you have an older brother you were proud of? We certainly do now. Your big brother is the King of kings, the Lamb of God, the Prince of Peace, the Wonderful Counselor, the very Word of God, seated on the throne of God and inviting you to sit beside Him because you are family (Ephesians 2:6^x). Maybe your family was great, or maybe it was horrible, but either way, you now have the greatest family anyone could ever have! We are learning to be a family right now.

Our big brother looks out for us. He intercedes for us (Hebrews 7:25^x). But what is most wonderful of all is that He declares God's name to us. In other words, He reveals the nature of God to us.

And He will lead us in praising the Father. He does so even now as He moves our hearts when we sing to Him. Some Sundays we are transported right to the throne of God as we sing. That is Jesus, our big brother, in our midst praising the Father. He praises Him with us. He praises Him through us.

23 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! Psalm 22:23 Praise Him for victory over death, for making us His brothers, for eternal salvation, for clothing us in that red robe of righteousness, for forgiving all our sins. First it is a call to all who fear the LORD to

praise Him! Then a call to Israel, the reverse of the order in the gospels and the letter to the Romans: to the Jew first (Romans 1:16^{xi}). How awesome it is that He would take our sins to the cross and die for us and then conquer death and hell. Indeed, we should stand in awe of Him!

²⁴ 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. Psalm 22:24 God hid His face from sin. Remember the beginning of the psalm. But when the debt of sin was paid He heard the cry of Jesus, and did not despise or abhor the affliction that sin caused Him. Jesus is the same with us, for His nature is the same as that of the Father. Sin so damages our thought life, even our bodies, and can bring our souls into deep anguish, but Jesus does not despise us or abhor the affliction sin caused in our lives. He hears us when we cry out to Him for deliverance, for salvation.

²⁵ From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will perform before those who fear him. Psalm 22:25 God stirs our hearts to praise Jesus when we gather to worship. We praise Him for the sacrifice described in this psalm. David was promising to fulfill his vows to God before the people of God, foreshadowing that Jesus would promise to do the same. Jesus' vows include being with us to the ends of the age (Matthew 28:20^{xii}), to clothe us with power from on high (Luke 24:49^{xiii}), to be our light in the darkness (John 8:12^{xiv}), to be the refreshing spring of water within our souls (John 4:14^{xv}), to one day transform our bodies to be like His glorious resurrected body (Philippians 3:20-21^{xvi}), to give us eternal life in His presence, and we could go on and on. Now when man promises it is one thing, but when Jesus promises, you can take it to the bank. It is as good as done, for it can't help but come to pass.

²⁶ The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD! May your hearts live forever! Psalm 22:26 We eat of the bread which came down from heaven, the bread of life, pictured in communion. Was Jesus thinking of this verse when He said, *⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.*"? John 6:51 I wonder if Jesus could see through the ages as the church celebrates communion. The afflicted refers to the poor, the meek, and the humble. These are the ones who seek Him because they see their need. We are those who are afflicted by sin and this fallen world, but when we seek Him we will end up praising Him. Could He see the millions of worship services praising Him for paying our sin debt? Is that why His declaration to us who worship Him is, "May your hearts live forever!"?

²⁷ All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. Psalm 22:27 When I read this I start to realize what the author of Hebrews meant when he wrote that for the joy that was set before Him Jesus endured the cross and is set down at the right hand of God (Hebrews 12:2^{xvii}). As Jesus' thoughts passed over this verse He could surely see the very purpose for which God sent Him, God's love for the world (John 3:16^{xviii}), for all mankind in the very ends of the earth who would remember that Jesus suffered and died for us. In

remembering the price He paid, they will turn to the LORD. And this has been fulfilled millions of times over. Who could have imagined when the psalmist penned this the ultimate fulfillment would be that in Mongolia, and the islands of Indonesia, in Greenland and Tanzania, in Japan and the Congo there are millions who remember this day what Jesus has done for us and turn to Him as Savior of their souls and worship before the Father (Matthew 24:14^{xix}; Revelation 5:9^{xx}). Every knee will bow.

²⁸ For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations. Psalm 22:28 That is why all will know Him, and we will either bow in worship because He is our brother, Savior, and Lord, or we will bow because we have no choice but to acknowledge His supremacy. To us who know Him, His rule is welcome and longed for. We are tired of man trying to play God and the havoc that causes. We are tired of the pain and suffering caused by greed and selfishness. We recognize that man is completely incapable of governing himself. We welcome the reign of Christ now over our lives and in that day over the nations of the world. Jesus is the only one who deserves to be king. He is the only one who can be trusted with absolute power. He has forever had that power, but He has allowed us to go our own way so we can see the blessing of having Him reign over all.

²⁹ 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. Psalm 22:29 It is not only for the meek and poor, but also for the prosperous. They shall eat too (see verse 26). In other words, they too will enter into communion with Jesus, which is what eating together implies (Revelation 3:20^{xxi}). They too will worship and serve Him.

Even the dead will rise to bow before Him. Here is the resurrection for all who have gone before, for no human can cheat death. Not only will Jesus rise to reign forever, but all people will rise to bow before Him (Philippians 2:10^{xxii}). That doesn't mean that all the dead will accept Him as Savior. It does mean that they will have to acknowledge His authority over all things.

³⁰ Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation; Psalm 22:30 Generation after generation has passed on their faith in the Lord Jesus. They shall serve, or we can translate that word, worship. And they have throughout the generations since Jesus ascended. And here we are, that coming generation has come and I am telling of the Lord Jesus and what He accomplished for you and me. We are a part of that posterity. We are that coming generation. And now it is our duty to pass it on to the next generation.

³¹ they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it. Psalm 22:31 "They" could refer to the Apostles or to all who have shared the message of the Gospels. When we proclaim His righteousness, we are telling of Jesus' sinless life and willing sacrifice so that we might make that great exchange of our sins for His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21^{xxiii}). We are the people that were yet unborn, as are those yet to be born in the future. Even through the Millennium those who will

be born will be told of the greatest act of love mankind will ever witness. I think we will forever be talking about it. It's been 2000 years and here we are still proclaiming the greatness of it.

It's not often then you read of yourself in the Scriptures, but here it is. Now we too can proclaim that the He has done it. It is finished. Both are ways of expressing that an act was completed. The sinless life and the sacrificial death completed that great plan of God that was set into motion before the world began (Ephesians 1:7-10^{xxiv}). When Jesus' thoughts came to the end of the psalm He knew it was one line He had to declare out loud. It was a defiant proclamation to Satan and all the fallen angels and at the same time a shout of praise to the Father. "It is accomplished!" Victory!

Everyone's life and eternity centers on what they will do about this work that Jesus accomplished. We accept it or reject it. We see this amazing prophecy and its details that came to pass a thousand years after it was written. We marvel at the details. Those of us who have accepted that gracious exchange rejoice and praise God for His mercy and love.

We still have one more decision that we must make on a continual basis. **Will I let the life within me, the power of the Holy Spirit, lead and guide me today, or will I go my own way?** Every day in many ways we face this choice. The more we listen and yield to the Holy Spirit, the easier it is to hear Him and obey. But the same is true for our old nature. Which do you give the most attention? Jesus came to give us an abundant life (John 10:10^{xxv}). He saved our eternal soul from judgment, but He also saves us from this present evil world if we will listen and obey (Galatians 1:4^{xxvi}). Jesus summed this truth up with an expression that invites us to do for Him what He did for us: *⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.* Matthew 10:39

Questions

- 1 Why is Easter greater than the Day of Atonement?
- 2 What kind of worm did the psalmist refer to and why?
- 3 What analogy did Ironside make with the crimson robes?
- 4 When and how does the psalm shift?
- 5 What does it mean to you to be called a brother or sister of Jesus?
- 6 How is verse 24 for Jesus and for us?
- 7 What do we eat that satisfies and gives life?
- 8 How is verse 27 fulfilled today?
- 9 Where are you in the psalm. What will you do about it?
- 10 When must we decide to yield to the Spirit of God?

ⁱ **Hebrews 7:27 (ESV)**

²⁷ He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

ⁱⁱ **Genesis 2:17 (ESV)**

¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

ⁱⁱⁱ **1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 (ESV)**

¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.

^{iv} *Because he has finished it*, namely, the work of redemption. The broad, significant term *עשה*, (*'asah*), here rendered “he hath done,” often takes the sense of *accomplish, fulfil, execute, finish*. It is the word which expresses the completion of the six days’ work of the Creator, (Genesis 2:2-3,) the accomplishment of special, providential deliverances, as Psalms 37:5 ; Psalm 52:11; the redemption of the Church, as Isaiah 44:23. In this sense it should be here understood, answering to the last utterance of Christ, except one, upon the cross— “It is finished.” Thus the beginning and the final words of this wonderful psalm are the most solemn echoes of Calvary. From Whedon’s commentary on the Bible

^v **Hebrews 11:19 (ESV)**

¹⁹ He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

^{vi} **Mark 8:31 (ESV)**

³¹ And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.

^{vii} **John 20:17 (ESV)**

¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

^{viii} **Galatians 3:26 (ESV)**

²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

^{ix} **Ephesians 2:6 (ESV)**

⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

^x **Hebrews 7:25 (ESV)**

²⁵ Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

^{xi} **Romans 1:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

^{xii} **Matthew 28:20 (ESV)**

²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

^{xiii} **Luke 24:49 (ESV)**

⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

^{xiv} **John 8:12 (ESV)**

¹² Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

^{xv} **John 4:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

^{xvi} **Philippians 3:20-21 (ESV)**

²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

^{xvii} **Hebrews 12:2 (ESV)**

² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

^{xviii} **John 3:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

^{xix} **Matthew 24:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

^{xx} **Revelation 5:9 (ESV)**

⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,

^{xxi} **Revelation 3:20 (ESV)**

²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

^{xxii} **Philippians 2:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

^{xxiii} **2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)**

²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

^{xxiv} **Ephesians 1:7-10 (ESV)**

⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

^{xxv} **John 10:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

^{xxvi} **Galatians 1:4 (ESV)**

⁴ who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,