

Good Friday 2016 – Ps 22:1-21

Pray (at end of worship set; seat people) – You paid it all, Lord; And for that we're not only thankful, but we grieve; At the same time; Impress it on our hearts, and etch it on our minds

- Ps 22; This is a Psalm that King David wrote about 1000 years before Jesus was born And while it was originally intended to help give us expression in the midst of unjust suffering – you'll see very quickly that it's a Messianic Psalm That is, a prophetic psalm, that describes the suffering of Jesus on the cross; In disturbing detail no less So much so, that Jesus quoted it, and Mathew used it in the New Testament, to describe the actual events

So I'd like to read v1-21 together, make some comments along the way, and highlight 4 aspects of the crucifixion, that make my heart ache

- [22:1] *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? [2] O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.*
The very words spoken by Jesus in Mt 27:46 – “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” Which means – “*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*” And indicates that the cross of Christ was **relationally shattering**
The perfect fellowship between God the Father and God the Son, from before time began, was broken; As in God forsook him; Their relationship was shattered
- [3] *Yet [the sufferer speaking to God says] you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. [4] In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. [5] To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.*
Even in the midst of such brokenness, he diverts his attention to the goodness of God
- [6] *But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people. [7] All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;*
Alluded to by Matthew in describing the crowds who passed by – Mt 27:39
[39] [They] *derided him* [mocked him], *wagging their heads* . . . [40] *saying, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God [if you're God in the flesh], come down from the cross.”*

They mocked him, despised him, and treated him like a worm

Which would have made the whole thing **emotionally grueling**; Draining; Exhausting Especially when you add the derision of the religious leaders; Who said in Mt 27:43 . . . *He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him.* (Mt 27:43)
Quoting v8 of Ps 22, almost verbatim – [8] “*He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!*”

Did they know what they were doing? Did they know they were quoting Scripture?

Following the script of a Psalm, that was written to describe the plight of an *unjust sufferer*, at the hands of unjust people?

Playing the part of sinful accusers, right down to the biting sarcasm? Did they know? I don't know; But it had to have been emotionally grueling

- [9] *Yet you are he* [again, this is the sufferer who is speaking to God] *who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother's breasts* [Notice how he keeps coming back to the sovereignty and goodness of God]. [10] *On you was I cast from my birth* [to depend on you], *and from my mother's womb you have been my God.*

And then it's back to the suffering

[11] *Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help.*

[12] *Many bulls encompass me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me; [13] they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion.*

Bashan is the area known today as the Golan Heights

A region in David's day that produced such large, strong bulls – they became synonymous with pride and self-reliance

So vs 12-13 are saying – Many prideful, self-reliant people have surrounded me, and would like nothing more than to chew me up and spit me out Including Satan himself; Who the Apostle Peter calls *a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour* (1 Pet 5:8); It fits

- And then there's the **physically crushing** aspects

[14] *I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint;*

Not hard to imagine after hanging on a cross for 6 hours; Especially after being whipped to within an inch of your life; Your ligaments could only take so much

[14b] *My heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast;*

Certainly that was intended metaphorically, but it would have been true physically as well Congestive heart failure was one of the issues for people who were crucified Their weakening lungs just couldn't keep up with the fluid around their heart Hence the water with the blood, when Jesus was speared in his side
My heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast (14b)

[15] *My strength is dried up like a potsherd* [an old, broken piece of pottery], *and my tongue sticks to my jaws;* Which gives us insight into his cry of thirst (Jn 19:28)

You lay me in the dust of death [a grave]. [16] *For dogs encompass me;*

Another metaphor describing those in power, but closer to the *literal* truth than David could have imagined

B/c dogs often gathered at crucifixions to gnaw on those who were dying; Especially if the crosses were low enough

[16b] *A company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet*

[amazing]—[17] *I can count all my bones—they stare and gloat over me; [18] they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.*

Again, quoted by Matthew (Mt 27:35)

- [19] *But you, O LORD, do not be far off!* [Can you imagine this running through his mind?] *O you my help, come quickly to my aid!* [20] *Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog!* [21] *Save me from the mouth of the lion!* *You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!*

IOW you've delivered me in the past from out-of-control powers; Do it again It was relationally shattering, emotionally grueling, and physically crushing

➤ And on top of all that, and *worst* of all, it was **spiritually devastating**
B/c Jesus – the holy, sinless, perfect Son of God – took on our sin; The sins of the world
Bearing them *in his body* it says, *on the tree*; The cross (1 Pet 2:24)
He who knew no sin, actually *became* sin the Bible says (1 Cor 5:21)

And though it grieves us, thank God for it
B/c what was devastating for *him*, was *saving* for us
What was crushing for him, was *healing* for us
What was grueling, was fueling
And what was shattering, was reconciling

Pray – Lord Jesus, thank you for enduring such difficulty, and abuse,
and sin; Thank you for dying in our place; We're so sorry that it came to this; So sorry
for our sin; So sorry for the devastation it wrought; Receive our worship now
