

McGregor Baptist Church

06/16/85

Psalm:22

"THE SON WHO LOST HIS FATHER"

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Intro:

Today is "Father's Day" ... a day in which we express the tender sentiments which are really there beneath the surface, between every father and his children.

Those sentiments work both ways. When a father and his son are close, it is pure joy. If that father and son are separated by some disagreement or rebellion or hurt, it is pure agony. Most of us know of some family where a father has been forsaken by his; and we try to put ourselves in that father's place, and we hurt for that father.

But this mourning, I would like to tell you a true story about a son who lost his father. I would like to describe to you the anguish and pain that son endured when He was forsaken by His own Father. And then I'd like to show you how He went through this agony for my sake and yours!

Jesus Christ, the son of God, lost His Father when He hung on Calvary's cross, because that was the only way He could get you and me back into the Family of God.

Usually we look for the story of the cross in the New Testament biographies of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. But this mourning, we are going to find it in Psalm 22. In this Psalm, David was given by God, prophetically, the most accurate picture of Jesus' suffering that has ever been put into writing. Under the inspiration of God, 1000 years before it happened, David tells us the very events that would happen at the crucifixion of Christ, and more! He actually gives us an x-ray picture which penetrates into the very thoughts and longings of Jesus' heart, when the son of God was forsaken by His Father!

Now perhaps you are wondering how I can be so sure that Psalm 22 is a prophecy of Jesus' crucifixion. I believe it should be obvious because Jesus

His quoted it as He was on the cross. It has been pointed out that the “seven last words” or 7 last statements, of Jesus on the cross either appear in this Psalm or the psychological background for each of them is here in perfect sequence.

If you will consider the details given in this Psalm, it is a perfect description of a crucifixion: the jeering crowd gathered around, the piercing of hands and feet, the terrible thirst, the bones coming out of their joints from the weight of the bleeding body as it dangled from the spikes. It even tells how they gambled for His clothes. This is all too much to be a mere coincidence. No, it was a divine prophecy of the death of God's Son.

But what it shows me that I can find nowhere else is the real pain that Jesus suffered for me and for you. Some have told me that many men have died more terrible deaths than Jesus ... that His few short hours on that cross are nothing compared to the agonizing deaths of some others. Physically, this may be true.

But the physical pain was only a small part of what Jesus suffered for us. The agony of mind and soul that He endured was beyond what anyone else has ever known. He was the only begotten Son of God, being forsaken by His Father!

This mourning, let's look at that cross again. Let's not look back on it as an historical event. Let's not look up at it, as if we were spectators in the crowd. Let's look down from that cross, as if we were hanging upon it. Let's view the crucifixion through the eyes of Jesus. Let's hear the thoughts that raced through His mind, until they broke His heart. And let's never forget that He suffered like this for me.

Vs. 1 “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?” There is the crux of His

suffering - "My Father God, why have you forsaken me? Why have you deserted me, your only Son?"

The same verse speaks of "my roaring." What roaring? At Jesus' trial He was silent"... as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth" (Isa. 53:7). When they beat Him, He said nothing. When they nailed Him to the cross, He did not wimper. But when He realized that His Father had forsaken Him, He roared out these words like a lion roars when it is being cornered and put to death. I think that shriek echoed across the Kidron valley like the shriek of a dying animal echoes through the jungle.

Along with the disappointment and loneliness came some confusion (vs. 3b-5). In all the history of God's people, Israel, God had not forsaken His faithful people. "Our father's did trust in thee, and thou didn't deliver them ... they trusted in thee and were not confounded." Why, oh Father, have you forsaken me, your only begotten Son?

The answer comes in vs. 3: "But thou art holy ..." Why was He forsaken of God? Because on the cross in those last three hours, in the impenetrable darkness, He was bearing the responsibility of our sins. "He who knew no sin was made sin for us, so that we might become right with God through Him" (2 cor. 5:21). "God laid on Him the iniquity of us all." And when He bore our sins, a holy God could not even look on Him. His own sinless Father had to forsake Him! No wonder He roared in anguished pain!

By the way, before we take our own sins too lightly, saying "no one is perfect," may God help us to realize how serious this thing called sin is to God. He could not even come to the aid nor even look upon His Son, when Jesus carried the responsibility for our sins. Sin is that awful to God.

Surely, there is forgiveness, but there does not have to be carelessness on our part! "Shall we

continue to sin, that God's mercy may abound? God forbid! (Romans 6:1)

By vs. 6, our Lord felt like He was as low as you can get. "I am a worm, and no man ..." That's just how low Jesus felt – like a worm, in the eyes of all around Him.

It's interesting. The actual word for "worm" is "tola." When the tola was crushed, it's blood was used for a brilliant red dye. It was also used to dye the robes of the nobility. Our word "scarlet" literally means "the splendor of a worm."

Here Jesus says "I am a tola." He was being crushed under the weight of our sins, and His blood was being poured out, so that you and I could become the noble Sons of God, clothed in the royal robes of His righteousness. (Every word is packed with meaning).

Our Lord was also crushed by the rejection of His own chosen people, the jews. Read vs. 6b-8.

We might say that we don't care what other people think, but we do! We may say that "sticks and stones can break my bones, but words will never hurt me," but they do! Look through the eyes of our Lord on the religious leaders and priests at the foot of His cross, despising Him, laughing at Him. Listen to their words (vs. 8) "He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him ..." You are aware that these are the exact words spoken at the cross 1000 years later. (Compare, Matt. 27:43).

Next Jesus looked in the crowd and saw His mother. What went on in His heart when He saw His mother? As Jesus looked on her, His mind went back to Bethlehem at the time when He was born, and He says to the Father: "But thou art He that took me out of the womb; thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from

the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly" (vs. 9-10).

These were memories. He had told His mother that His hour had come (John 2: 4). Now it was happening. To this end, He had been born. But even His mother could not help Him now. (vs. 11) "Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help."

Now His attention goes back to those who are crucifying Him - vs. 12- 13 "Many bulls have compassed me ..." He compares these soldiers who crucified Him to bulls – wild animals. "They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and roaring lion."

At vs. 14, it is really starting to get to our blessed Lord. His physical pain is getting so bad that it is what He notices now. Read vs. 14-17.

By the way, if you have any problem with the Bible being the inerrant divinely-inspired Word of God, pay close attention to the minute details of these next verses. Ask yourself how a man living 1000 years before could blend all these details so accurately into one story. Only the inspiration of Almighty God could have given David such a clear picture!

This is no educated guess, as some self-proclaimed "prophets" give each year to the Enquirer. This is no nebulous generality, as was given by some Delphic Oracle or tea-leaf reader. Listen to the intricacies and add 1000 years. Only God could know the future like this.

And this is a perfect description of a crucifixion. Yet the idea of death by crucifixion was never invented or used until 600 years later, by some unheard-of people called Romans, who were not even dreamed-of when David wrote this Psalm.

Notice (vs. 14) : “ I am poured out like water” – the excessive perspiration of a dying man out in that sun. “My strength is dried up...”

“All my bones are out of joint” – the horrible thing about crucifixion is that, when a man began to lose blood, his strength ebbed from him, and all his bones slipped out of joints. It was a terrible suffering.

Then He says something that is indeed strange, “My heart is like wax; it is melted within me.” Jesus died of a broken heart. Many doctors have said that a ruptured heart is the only medical explanation for the blood and water coming out, when the soldier pierced Jesus' side with a spear. May I say it this way: Jesus died of a broken heart.

(vs. 15) “My tongue cleaves to my jaws.” He suffers the agony of thirst. The New Testament tells us that He cried, “I thirst,” only to be offered vinegar to drink.

(vs. 16) “dogs have compassed me about: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet.” Dog” was the name any Jew called a Gentile or heathen. Interesting: it said that these “Gentile dogs” would pierce His hands and feet. The Romans did not allow the Jews to execute anyone; so, Jesus was actually nailed to the cross by the Roman “dogs,” just as it predicted. The piercing of hands and feet could not speak of any other kind of death except the Roman form of crucifixion used on our Lord Jesus Christ.

“I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.” This again speaks of the disjuncting agony of the crucifixion process. Gradually, the victim is suffocated by his own uncontrollable weight.

“They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.” Jesus hung naked upon that

cross. In an age of nudity and pornography, it may be difficult for us to realize the great humiliation it was to the spotless Son of God to hang naked on that cross, while the soldiers gambled for His clothes.

Finally, our Lord looks to His Father in one last prayer. “Be not far from me, O Lord ... haste to help me. Deliver my soul from the sword; my only one from the power of the dog.” (vs. 19-20) Would this not be the same idea as Luke 23:46, where Jesus says, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”

“Save me ... for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.” There is no such a thing as a unicorn (ask Barnum and Bailey). The Bible translators in 1611 weren't sure of the meaning of this word and translated it “unicorn.”

Every Hebrew scholar today however, know that it means an “aurochs,” or wild ox, with branching horns as sharp as needles. Executioners used to bind condemned men to these horns and set the wild ox loose in the desert until the man was dead. What an appropriate comparison for our Lord to imagine, as He was pinned to that cross by those three sharp spikes.

From vs. 22 on, this Psalm deals with what would happen after the crucifixion and as a result of it. Our Suffering Saviour, anticipates the results and rewards of His agony.

In vs. 22, He speaks of His “brethren” – that's you and me brought to God through His death.

In vs. 24-25, Jesus wants to make sure that we do not think of His Father as being cruel. God had to turn His face from His Son if He was to save us.

In vs. 26-31, He shows the results of His suffering. Anyone “meek” enough to come to Jesus for forgiveness can “live forever.”

(27-28) Some day the whole world will turn to Jesus. All nations will bow down and worship Him. This is speaking of what will follow Jesus' second coming ... someday yet in the future.

Meanwhile (vs. 30) “a seed shall serve Him.” A small part of the world's population, the born-again, blood-brought, true church, will serve Him.

And (vs. 31) they will “declare His righteousness to the people” that “He has done this.” Notice the last word “this” is in italics. That means it was added. I wonder why. If you leave it off, it says “He has done.” Or, as the last words Jesus said on the cross, “It is finished!”

This is our message to the world: By dying on that cross, He finished paying for all the sins that could ever separate us from a Holy God. The anger of God at sin was finished, being spent upon His own Son. “He took our sins and nailed them to His own cross, blotting out the record-keeping that was against us.” (Col. 2: 14) He finished paying the sin debt in full. Now everyone can be forgiven.

This is the true story of the Son (of God) who was deserted by His Father. Perhaps, as fathers, we have trouble understanding how God the Father could have stood by and allowed His Son to go through all that. We think we would have run to our son's aid and fought or even laid down our lives to save our son's. Why would God not do the same?

It was because of His love for you and me. (John 3: 16) “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him might not perish but have everlasting life.”

God did what He had to do, because He wanted to make it possible for you to be saved.

My friend, God invested a lot in you and me. He offers us salvation and a place in His family because of what Jesus did. Please don't turn Him down. Please don't walk away today and "trample the blood of God's Son under foot as if it were an unworthy thing."

Respond to His love. Meekly admit that you deserved to die for your sins and accept Jesus' death in your place.