

# A SONG OF MESSIAH'S RESURRECTION

*Songs Of The Savior Our Messiah Revealed In The Psalms*

by Doug Goins

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In the last message we began a study of Psalm 22. In verses 1-21 we examined together the shame of the cross, the terrible trauma of the six hours that Jesus hung there at Golgotha. Those verses let us know something of what Jesus thought, of how he suffered, and of how he prayed when he was on the cross. They were a song of David, a song of lament and agony before the Lord. In them was vivid imagery of the crucifixion experience for Jesus. It was like devouring beasts tearing at his very soul. It shredded his confidence in Yahweh, a faith that was based on God's past faithfulness. His faith was based first on God's historical faithfulness to the nation Israel, and then it was based more personally on the fact that God had always been there for Jesus in his own life. So Jesus was sure that God would be faithful to him; that he would hear, save, and respond.

In this opening portion of the psalm we saw that Jesus came to understand that there would be no justification for him in this life. Yahweh would lay him in the dust of death. But we saw as well that when the agony of suffering had almost destroyed his hope in God's deliverance, Jesus was given a vision of the future. He knew he would be vindicated by the resurrection. We saw in the final phrase of verse 21 that Jesus had a growing awareness that he was no longer alone. Remember he said, "Thou dost answer me," which corresponded to Dr. Luke's memory of the cry from the cross in the gospel record (23:46): "Father, into Thy hands I commit My Spirit." Yahweh was there and Jesus knew his presence, and he sensed that the victory of resurrection was near. That was the joy set before him that allowed him to endure the shame of the cross. It strengthened Jesus during those long hours.

Most of us as Christians are probably relatively familiar with the prophetic passages that talk about the death of Jesus. Isaiah 53 is most well-known; Psalm 22 itself is a major instance. But if you're like me, you're probably less familiar with the fact that the Old Testament speaks as strongly of Jesus' resurrection as it does of his death. Yet that was the confident teaching of Jesus and the apostles.

Think back to the words of the resurrected Jesus to his disciples on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24:25: "...He said to them, 'O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?' And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures." Later in the day in Jerusalem with all the disciples gathered together, Jesus spoke again (verse 46): "...And He said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.'"

Similarly, the apostle Paul, writing years later, defined the essence of the gospel in two facts: that Messiah died for our sins, and that he was raised on the third day just as it had been predicted. In 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 Paul wrote, "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, and to the twelve." It wasn't "Plan B" to raise Jesus from the grave. It was Yahweh's intention from the beginning.

So let's go back to Psalm 22, pick up where we left off in the last message, and listen to the climactic triumph as this song of Messiah's passion continues. It tells us more of the joy that was set before him as he hung on the cross. Beginning with verse 22, this is a song of Messiah's resurrection. And remember what Jesus said to those disciples we will be able to hear the song if we are not foolish and slow of heart to believe.

At the heart of this affirmation of faith is the divine, powerful work of God. Five different times in these ten

verses Jesus says that it is God who accomplishes it all. In verse 23: "You who fear the Lord, praise Him...." Verse 26: "...Those who seek Him [Jesus] will praise the Lord." Verse 27: "All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord." Verse 28: "For the kingdom is the Lord's...." Verse 30: "It will be told of the Lord to the coming generation." This is a testimonial to the unstoppable work of Yahweh God, who hears, acts, and makes a profound difference in all of life and all of history.

### **The awesome resurrection**

What the Lord Jesus does in this psalm of resurrection is summarize some of the powerful implications of the resurrection, which still affect us today. The first one is in verses 22-24; the great news is that Yahweh did hear Jesus' cry from the cross, a cry that was repeated over and over again in the first 21 verses. Jesus says:

I will tell of Thy name to my brethren;  
In the midst of the assembly I will praise Thee.

You who fear the Lord, praise Him;  
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,  
And stand in awe of Him, all you descendants of Israel.

For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted [Jesus];  
Neither has He hidden His face from him;  
But when he cried to Him for help, He heard.

These are probably the greatest words in all of hymnody. David, the psalmist, gave these words of confidence to Jesus to express his faith while he was still suspended on the cross. God was near, God had heard, he would deliver Jesus after all the suffering he went through. He knew again the presence of God even on the cross. It is really only on the cross that these words have their greatest meaning. This pattern of lament that we have been surveying never served anyone better than it served Jesus on the cross, because in it David has expressed the depth of his pain and his crisis of faith.

In verse 24 Jesus is described as the afflicted. He was given that title in Psalm 40 as well, another prayer from the Lord in anticipation of the cross (see Discovery Paper 4424). Jesus ends that psalm this way:

"Since I am afflicted and needy, Let the Lord be mindful of me;  
Thou art my help and my deliverer, Do not delay, O my God."

Those were the words of Jesus about himself. Let's not make any mistake about him it is not that he suffered from poor self-worth; you can't read the gospel narratives about the Lord and gain that picture of him at all. Rather, there are two important implications of his being defined as the afflicted. The first has to do with his identification with us, the hurting world. He chose to share in our pain and our struggle, to take our sin upon himself. That is vicarious suffering. The prophet Isaiah talks about that kind of affliction which is for us and with us (Isaiah 53:2-3):

"For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot,  
And like a root out of parched ground;  
He has no stately form or majesty  
That we should look upon Him,  
Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.

He was despised and forsaken of men,  
A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;  
And like one from whom men hide their face,  
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him."

He gave up his glory at the right hand of the Father to become like us, to enter into our misery and difficulty. So when Isaiah talks about his being acquainted with grief and suffering, it refers to Jesus' own experience, but also to his focused identification with us in our struggle and pain.

The second implication of Jesus' identification as the afflicted is its reference to the cross. It was there that he was the man of sorrows, familiar with suffering. It was on the cross that he cried out to his God for notice, nearness, and help:

"Thou art my help and my deliverer; Do not delay, O My God."

The good news that we see here in Psalm 22:22-24 is that Yahweh God, Jesus' Father, did come near; he stooped down and reached out his hand. Remember Jesus' confidence in Psalm 118 (see Discovery Paper 4427) that God would extend his mighty right hand of salvation to save, to snatch him out of the jaws of death. God did that.

So Jesus' song of lament becomes a song of praise with confidence that Yahweh is near. He is able to offer the hymn of worship that we see in verses 22 and 23: "I will tell of Thy name...I will praise Thee." He is absolutely certain that he will live again, and he is going to tell his friends and disciples about it and show himself to them. And what he is going to say is that God gets all the credit, he is solely responsible for it. Even on the cross, Jesus knew that God would do that.

The writer of Hebrews picks up this theme, and in 2:12 he puts the very words of Psalm 22:22 in the mouth of Jesus. The writer of Hebrews declares in 2:10-13 that it was the purpose of God to bring many people to glory. It was fitting, he says, that he should make the author, the captain, of our salvation perfect through suffering and through resurrection. He goes on to say,

"Both the one who makes men holy [Jesus] and those who are made holy [all of us] are of the same family.  
So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.

He says [quoting Psalm 22],

'I will declare your name to my brothers;  
in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises.'

And again [quoting from Isaiah 8],

'I will put my trust in him.'  
And again he says, 'Here am I, and the children God has given me.'"

What an incredible picture of the results of the resurrection: the calling out of a people of God who belong to him, who are one with him, who can share the very life of Jesus! There is a sense in which we are brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. He is our older brother who has gone on ahead, paved the way, fought the battle for us. We are joint-heirs with him, members as he is of the family of God.

So in verse 23 after Jesus has sung alone, he invites the community to join in and praise God. That praise is in the context of the history of covenant relationship. So he calls for all the descendants of the fathers of promises, the descendants of Jacob (or Israel), to praise Yahweh. The deliverance of Jesus from the bonds of death is part of the continuing work of God in keeping covenant faith with his people. Jesus came as the Messiah of Israel. So the first call to praise Yahweh goes appropriately to the Jewish people. They are the descendants of Jacob.

In wrestling with these first two verses of our passage last week, I was struck with the profundity of the resurrection. There is nothing superficial or interestingly cool about the resurrection. The words here are the words of someone whose mind has been blown, who is speechless. It is awesome what God did, miraculous and surprising that he brought life out of death, that he perfected this One through suffering and so made him the captain of our salvation. The resurrection ought to evoke in us praise of God, a desire to glorify God, not just on Sunday morning with our mouths but with our lives, with lives that evidence the effect of the resurrection. It should have a deep effect on us of awe toward God for what he did. And while it is a frightening thing that God can break the laws of nature and bring life out of death, we don't have to be afraid. Remember the first words that Jesus said to the women who saw him: "Do not be afraid."

### **Resurrection life, eternal life**

Verses 25 and 26 speak of another incredible accomplishment because of the resurrection. It says that God himself was the very source of the praise that Jesus offered. This same God meets every spiritual need we have; he is the God of spiritual provision.

From Thee comes my praise in the great assembly;  
I shall pay my vows before those who fear Him.  
The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;  
Those who seek Him will praise the Lord.  
Let your heart live forever!

Jesus makes a strong commitment here to praise God after his resurrection, and that is exactly what he did. As we read earlier, on the road to Emmaus and then again that evening in Jerusalem, Jesus showed himself to his friends to keep his promises to praise Yahweh. On each occasion that the risen Lord showed himself to be alive, it was in fulfillment of these vows. Think of all the times he appeared in the gospel narratives and the book of Acts. He appeared to many individuals, like Mary Magdalene and Peter. Later on Jesus even personally revealed himself to the great apostle Paul. He appeared to groups of men and women gathered together. He appeared to the disciples as a group. And at one point he appeared to more than five hundred people at the same time who saw him and heard him in his resurrection body. In each of those post-resurrection appearances he demonstrated what Yahweh had done. In each he showed that God had heard his cry, and he praised and glorified his Father.

In verse 26 Jesus' words of praise given to him by David include a special invitation to the afflicted to join him in a banquet of praise and adoration. These afflicted are the hurting of the world, the poor in spirit, the disenfranchised, those with whom he made the identification that the earlier verses told us about. The afflicted are invited as well to enjoy God's spiritual feast. The promise is made absolutely that they will have their spiritual hunger fully and completely satisfied, never to hunger or thirst anymore.

The last phrase in verse 26 is, "Let your heart live forever!" Here the Lord Jesus promises eternal life for those who seek him. In his earlier teaching, Jesus himself had blended those two ideas of spiritual nourishment and satisfaction with the reality of eternal life, which begins here and now. In John 6:51 Jesus said, "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh." He was saying, "Come to me, eat of me don't just nibble around the edge, but eat like a starving person!" That is what Jesus wants in terms of spiritual hunger and thirst. The promise is that even though the experiences of affliction and difficulty continue and he doesn't promise to get rid of them, he does promise to satisfy us spiritually.

Last Sunday morning in the first service Carlos and Julie White were introduced. My wife Candy and I had lunch with that dear couple last week. Carlos was an intern here at PBC a number of years ago, then they went back to their home in North Carolina. Then Julie was found to have cancer, which was treated. A few years later it came back and went into her bones, and two years ago Julie was diagnosed with terminal bone cancer. We were praying for them last year at Easter because Julie wanted to live until Easter, to celebrate the resurrection one more time before she went home to be with the Lord. She almost died, and then miraculously

she went into remission and got the use of her legs back. Her doctor told her it was totally unexplainable. His words were, "There's something bigger than me at work here, and I don't understand what's going on."

The future is still uncertain from a medical perspective. Carlos and Julie don't really know what the quality of life is going to be like or how much longer this will go on, whether she is totally cured, how much more time on earth God will give her, or whether the pain will come back. But even in the midst of that uncertainty, this is a couple who is experiencing resurrection life and resurrection power. They are confident of eternal life, savoring it right now even though there is still pain and difficulty in mobility for Julie. They are feasting on God's great goodness. As Carlos said, "It's a severe goodness, but it is good what God has given us." They are completely secure in God's love and provision, whatever lies before them. Carlos' words were, "There's something cosmic going on here!" That is resurrection.

## **Resurrection life for all**

The vow of Jesus on the cross here is that he will praise his Father for the deliverance he is about to receive. Part of that vow extends directly to his friends, for it was to them that he would show himself first. And we saw in the earlier verses that this vow extends to the whole Jewish community, because he came as Messiah of Israel in fulfillment of God's covenant promise. Certainly it would make sense that this word of resurrection would go first to the people of Israel, the descendants of Jacob. But Jesus really came to redeem all of humanity. The purpose of the Jewish Messiah was not just to deliver Jewish people. God's intention for his Promised One was always to save the people of all races, all ethnic groupings, all cultures, all socioeconomic classes. The resurrection impacts them all equally. Look at verses 27-29, where Jesus rejoices over this:

All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord  
[turn away from sin and toward God's forgiveness],  
And all the families of the nations will worship before Thee.  
For the kingdom is the Lord's,  
And He rules over the nations.  
All the prosperous of the earth will eat and worship,  
All those who go down to the dust will bow before Him,  
Even he who cannot keep his soul alive.

There is a stark contrast here between those who aren't in control of their own quality of life, their own health the poor and powerless; and the prosperous the healthy, wealthy, and powerful. The two extremes socio-economically and physically will bow together before the greatness of God because of the resurrection. That was the promise of God from the very beginning, when Yahweh first spoke to Abraham and brought him into covenant relationship with himself, with the final intention to bring the blessing of Abraham's seed to all the families of the earth. God said to Abraham, "...In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:3). So for these reasons we find Jesus in these three verses promising the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth. Jesus may have had this passage in mind when he said that the Old Testament Scriptures contained the message that "...repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47).

Our text here in Psalm 22 includes all peoples, all families, all races, all classes, all cultures. It calls for all to come to the knowledge of the great King Yahweh; to come to the resurrected, exalted, glorified Jesus Christ whom the Father has delivered from death itself. The spread of the gospel to all the nations was always an essential part of the plan of God. World missions has not been an innovation of modern times but a biblical priority from the beginning, as well as a central priority defined by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was a global mission that would blend together everyone into the body. There is only one body of Christ. We share in common one Lord, one faith, one baptism. God's plan breaks down all the barriers that divide.

I am thrilled that in the last ten years PBC has become a church of great diversity. God has brought people from every tongue and tribe and nation to this place. We can legitimately say we are an interracial church, an international church if you will. God has broken down all kinds of socioeconomic divisions in this church. There are people of great wealth who worship, minister, and serve alongside people with very limited

resources. We come as equals to the foot of the cross, and as equals we express gratitude for what God has done for us. This is what God has been doing among us to fulfill the promise in this text of the result of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

## Joyful triumph

The psalm ends in the last two verses with an amazing contrast to the way it began. We started in the previous message with a horrible cry of abandonment, aloneness, and dereliction: 'My God, where are you? Why have you left me?' But look at how the Singer ends the song. He is going to say not only that the salvation that is offered is universal, but that the effect of it is eternal:

Posterity will serve Him;  
It will be told of the Lord to the coming generation.  
They will come and will declare His righteousness  
To a people who will be born [generation after generation],  
that He has performed it.

Here again is the joy of God's people who take confidence in this. God will finish what he has started here and now. When we recall the "new song" of all redeemed humanity sung before the throne in John's vision of heaven (Revelation 5:9-14) this song of joy in Psalm 22 really does go into eternity because of the things God has done for the Singer of this song, our Savior. It also tells us the way the central story of God's deliverance will be told from one generation to another. Look back at the spread of the gospel over the last two thousand years, from Jerusalem to Samaria to Antioch, then to Asia Minor, then to Greece, to Rome, and finally all around the world. This story of the resurrection life of Jesus Christ has been told and retold to generation after generation. It is still circling the globe. The promise here is that it is going to continue. God wills it until Jesus comes back.

The question for us is, do we want to be a part of it and enter into that exciting process? We join this celebration of the ages whenever we tell somebody else about the death that Jesus died for them, about how their sins can be forgiven, and about the resurrection life that Jesus now lives for them, that he can be in charge of their life and that they don't have to be anymore.

In some ways, the very last phrase of the psalm is the most important "...He has performed it," or "...He has done it." Literally in Hebrew it is the statement "...It is finished" or "It is accomplished." That was the final cry from the cross just before Jesus surrendered his spirit to the Father. Jesus died the death that brought us peace with God. The certainty here is that the Father has exalted Jesus to a position of highest honor and glory. So when Jesus was about to die he was able to say, 'It is finished' because his sacrificial death was accomplished, and the hope of the resurrection was certain.

Who could have imagined a poem that would start with such despair but end with such confidence and excitement about the future? Who but God? And who could sing this song of resurrection and of God's complete triumph but Jesus the Savior? God will finish what he starts. He will bring men and women and children to salvation, to this great good news.

Joe Bayly is a great hero of contemporary Christian leadership for me. He died of a heart attack in his early sixties. I knew Joe as a younger man. He and his wife had seven children, but three of the seven died tragically. A twenty-one-year-old son was killed in a sledding accident. A six-year-old son died of hemophilia. Then a newborn died when he was just a few days old. So Joe understood what affliction was about, that life wasn't perfect. But he was a singularly exuberant person and one of the funniest people I have ever known, because he had an incredible joy in this God of resurrection, a confident certainty that in spite of difficulty he could trust God for the future. This is a psalm for Easter that Joe wrote:

Let's celebrate Easter with the rite of laughter. Christ died and rose and lives. Laugh like a woman who holds her first baby. Our enemy death [has been defeated]. Laugh like a man who finds he doesn't have cancer or he does but now there's a cure. Christ opened wide the

door of heaven. Laugh like children at Disneyland 's gates. This world is owned by God and He'll return to rule. Laugh like a man who walks away uninjured from a wreck in which his car was totaled. Laugh as if all the people in the whole world were invited to a picnic and then invite them.

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