

Psalm 022 - Messianic Psalm: The Shepherd Psalms: The Suffering Savior

In Ps 22 we see a picture of the Good Shepherd, giving His life for the flock. Ps 22 is the clearest description of what it's like to be crucified anywhere in Scripture and is the most often quoted Psalm in the New Testament. Written by David 1,000 years before the fact, it reads like a first person account of the pain and humiliation that form of punishment inflicted upon its victim. Surprisingly, it opens with the first words our Lord spoke from the cross and closes with His final ones. You have to read the Psalm in Greek to get this last tidbit, because in English the last phrase of v31 reads "He has done it." But in Greek it's is the same word John used in documenting our Lord's last statement from the cross, translated "It is finished" in John 19:30. The Greek word in both cases is *tetelesti* a legal term in Jesus' day that usually meant "paid in full" and was written across a paid invoice, for example. Upon his release, it was also written across the bill of charges for which a criminal had served time. The ex-convict carried this document with him as proof that he had paid his debt to society so he wouldn't be charged with the same crime again.

Used this way, the legal implications of the Lord's last words are staggering, and are explained in detail in Col 2:13-15. The bill of charges of which Jesus was convicted were actually the charges God has filed against us; our sins. With His last words, Jesus in effect declared, "Paid in full!" indicating that all our sins, past, present and future were paid for, our record exonerated, and we can never be charged with them again. "Because by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy" (Heb 10:12-14).

By the way, some of the modern translations omit a key phrase from Psalm 22 at the end of v21. It's proof that the Father had heard and answered the prayers of His Son. If your Bible doesn't have the phrase "You have answered me" at the end of the verse, add it. It's there in the King James and in the Hebrew inter-linear. It also leads the reader from a graphic description of the most painful form of execution ever devised to a declaration of God's faithfulness and a song of praise only possible if the One being executed was also resurrected from the dead. So this Psalm begins with the Lord on the cross and ends with His resurrection.

"The Suffering Savior"

This Psalm doesn't seem to relate to any identifiable occasion in David's life. It's a description of a criminal being executed! Numerous NT quotations confirm it is Messianic (all four Gospels; Heb 2:10-12). David was a prophet (Acts 2:30).

Psalm 22

Prophecy of the Death of the Messiah

1 My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my help are the words of my groaning.

1 My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.

1 My God! My God! Why have you abandoned me? Why are you so far from delivering me — from my groaning words?

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?

- "...My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" - these were Jesus' opening words annunciated at the cross (Matt 27:45-46; Mark 15:34)

— It is the the only time Jesus didn't call God "Father"

2 My God, I cry out by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest.

2 O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest.

2 My God, I cry out to you throughout the day, but you do not answer; and throughout the night, but I have no rest.

2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.

- In some inexplicable way, He experienced what condemned lost sinners experience "away from the presence of the Lord" (2 Thess 1:9; Matt 25:41)

- Compassion, justice, and the sacred covenant were strong arguments for God's intervention—but He was silent

3 Yet You are holy, You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

3 Yet You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

3 You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

3 But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

4 In You our fathers trusted; They trusted and You rescued them.

4 In You our fathers trusted; They trusted and You delivered them.

4 Our ancestors trusted in you; they trusted and you delivered them.

4 Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

5 To You they cried out and they fled to safety; In You they trusted and were not disappointed.

5 To You they cried out and were delivered; In You they trusted and were not disappointed.

5 They cried out to you and escaped; they trusted in you and were not put to shame.

5 They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.

6 But I am a worm and not a person, A disgrace of mankind and despised by the people.

6 But I am a worm and not a man, A reproach of men and despised by the people.

6 But as for me, I am only a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by people.

6 But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

- "...A disgrace of mankind and despised by the people" - Cf. John 1:11; 2:46)

7 All who see me deride me; They sneer, they shake their heads, *saying*,

7 All who see me sneer at me; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, *saying*,

7 Everyone who sees me mocks me; they gape at me with open mouths and shake their heads at me.

7 All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*,

8 "Turn *him* over to the LORD; let Him save him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him."

8 "Commit *yourself* to the LORD; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him."

8 They say, "Commit yourself to the LORD; perhaps the LORD will deliver him, perhaps he will cause him to escape, since he delights in him."

8 He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

[Matt 27:39-43]

9 Yet You are He who brought me forth from the womb; You made me trust *when* upon my mother's breasts.

9 Yet You are He who brought me forth from the womb; You made me trust *when* upon my mother's breasts.

9 Yet, you are the one who took me from the womb, and kept me safe on my mother's breasts.

9 But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.

10 I was cast upon You from birth; You have been my God from my mother's womb.

10 Upon You I was cast from birth; You have been my God from my mother's womb.
10 I was dependent on you from birth; from my mother's womb you have been my God.
10 I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.

11 Do not be far from me, for trouble is near; For there is no one to help.
11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near; For there is none to help.
11 Do not be so distant from me, for trouble is at hand; indeed, there is no deliverer.
11 Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help.

12 Many bulls have surrounded me; Strong *bulls* of Bashan have encircled me.
12 Many bulls have surrounded me; Strong *bulls* of Bashan have encircled me.
12 Many bulls have surrounded me; the vicious bulls of Bashan have encircled me.
12 Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.

13 They open their mouths wide at me, As a ravening and roaring lion.
13 They open wide their mouth at me, As a ravening and a roaring lion.
13 Their mouths are opened wide toward me, like roaring and attacking lions.
13 They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.
[Matt 27:27-30]

14 **I am poured out like water**, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me.

14 I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me.

14 I am poured out like water; all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax, melting within me.

14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

- "I am poured out like water" - a reference to the spear that pierced His side (Cf. John 19:34)

15 My strength is dried up like a piece of pottery, And my tongue clings to my jaws; And You lay me in the dust of death.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And You lay me in the dust of death.

15 My strength is dried up like broken pottery; my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth, and you have brought me down to the dust of death.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

16 For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; **They pierced my hands and my feet.**

16 For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet.

16 For dogs have surrounded me; a gang of those who practice of evil has encircled me. They gouged my hands and my feet.

16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

- "...They pierced my hands and my feet" - clearly, a description of a man being crucified: stripped of his clothing, placed on a cross, nails driven in hands and feet (Cf. Matt 27:35)
— He suffered dehydration, intense thirst, and finally, suffocation

Due to the pain endured by the weight of the body hanging from the nails, which damage the medial nerves and tear at the tarsals, the respiratory torture, the cramping, the pleurel effusions, concluded that "death by crucifixion was in every sense of the word excruciating, literally 'out of the cross.'" [On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ, Journal of the American Medical Association, March 21, 1986]

17 I can count all my bones. **They look, they stare at me;**

17 I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me;

17 I can count all my bones. They look at me; they stare at me.

17 I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.

- "...They look, they stare at me" - Cf. Luke 23:35

18 They divide my garments among them, And they cast lots for my clothing.

18 They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots.

18 They divide my clothing among themselves; they cast lots for my clothing!

18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

[Luke 23:34]

19 But You, LORD, do not be far away; *You who are* my help, hurry to my assistance.

19 But You, O LORD, be not far off; O You my help, hasten to my assistance.

19 But as for you, LORD, do not be far away from me; My Strength, come quickly to help me.

19 But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

20 Save my soul from the sword, My only *life* from the power of the dog.
 20 Deliver my soul from the sword, My only *life* from the power of the dog.
 20 Deliver me from the sword; my precious life from the power of the dog.
 20 Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.

21 Save me from the lion's mouth; From the horns of the wild oxen You answer me.
 21 Save me from the lion's mouth; From the horns of the wild oxen You answer me.
 21 Deliver me from the mouth of the lion, from the horns of the wild oxen. You have answered me.
 21 Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

The Resurrection of the Messiah

Ps 22:1-21 is a prophecy of the death of the Messiah. In v22-31, the same One who died in v1-21 is very much alive.

22 I will proclaim Your name to my brothers; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.
 22 I will tell of Your name to my brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.
 22 I will declare your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation, I will praise you, saying,
 22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

23 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.
 23 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.
 23 "All who fear the LORD, praise him! All the seed of Jacob, glorify him! All the seed of Israel, fear him!
 23 Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.
 - "...fear the LORD" - *yare'*, to fear, to revere, to be afraid, to stand in awe of
 — The Hebrew word *yare'*, is context-dependent...meaning, depending upon the context, it could mean "trembling severely" or "trembling softly"
 - The turning point in this Psalm: From prayer to praise; from suffering to glory
 - Having "endured the cross" He now "enters into the joy that was set before him" (Heb 12:2)
 - He had prayed to be delivered out of death, and that was answered (Heb 5:7)

24 For He has not despised nor scorned the suffering of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from him; But when he cried to Him for help, He heard.

24 For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from him; But when he cried to Him for help, He heard.

24 For he does not despise nor detest the afflicted person; he does not hide his face from him, but he hears him when he cries out to him."

24 For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.

25 From You comes my praise in the great assembly; I shall pay my vows before those who fear Him.

25 From You comes my praise in the great assembly; I shall pay my vows before those who fear Him.

25 My praise in the great congregation is because of you; I will pay my vows before those who fear you.

25 My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

- His work on the cross was accepted by the Father, proven by His raising from the dead (Rom 4:24-25)

26 The afflicted will eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. May your heart live forever!

26 The afflicted will eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever!

26 The afflicted will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the LORD will praise him, "May you live forever!"

26 The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.

27 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations will worship before You.

27 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations will worship before You.

27 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD; all the families of the nations will bow in submission to the LORD.

27 All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

28 For the kingdom is the LORD'S And He rules over the nations.
28 For the kingdom is the LORD's And He rules over the nations.
28 Indeed, the kingdom belongs to the LORD; he rules over the nations.
28 For the kingdom is the LORD's: and he is the governor among the nations.

29 All the prosperous of the earth will eat and worship, All those who go down to the dust will kneel before Him, Even he who cannot keep his soul alive.
29 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.
29 All the prosperous people will eat and bow down in submission. All those who are about to go down to the grave will bow down in submission, along with the one who can no longer keep himself alive.
29 All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

30 A posterity will serve Him; It will be told of the Lord to the *coming* generation.
30 Posterity will serve Him; It will be told of the Lord to the *coming* generation.
30 Our descendants will serve him, and that generation will be told about the Lord.
30 A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

31 They will come and will declare His righteousness To a people who will be born, that **He has performed *it*.**
31 They will come and will declare His righteousness To a people who will be born, that He has performed *it*.

31 They will come and declare his righteousness to a people yet to be born; indeed, he has accomplished it!
31 They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.
- "...He has performed *it*" - prefixed to sentences depending on an active verb, applying to it the place of an accusative: thus, constantly, completed
— "It is finished" (John 19:30); Gr. *tetelestai*, finish, complete, end
— "Paid in full" (Col 2:14)