

Lesson 56
Time – 4/2/30 to 4/3/30 AD, 14 Nisan
Approaching Noon on Wednesday Morning

Having been scourged, beaten repeatedly in the face and having had tufts of his beard ripped out, Jesus was given a heavy cross to carry up the northern ridge of Mt. Zion to Golgotha, “the place of the skull.” It was a steep ascent of over 200 feet in little over half a mile. In the last lesson we saw that that Golgotha (the Place of the Skull) was where Abraham had taken Isaac to be sacrificed. It was so called because it was the place where David had buried Goliath’s skull. That skull had been crushed by the stone thrown out of David’s sling. It was the place where Isaiah had said death would be defeated. It was the place where Psalm 48 said “the good offering” would be raised toward Heaven. While Jesus was torturously carrying His cross to the anciently predestined spot, He collapsed. The Roman soldiers then forced Simon of Cyrene to carry the cross the rest of the way. Having endured the mocking of his enemies and the shunning by his friends, Jesus arrived at the place of crucifixion and was stripped naked and nailed to the cross to suffer His sacrificial death. As His Cross was raised upright on that ridge He could look down on Jerusalem and the Temple. At the same time, they could have looked up to see both His shame and suffering. At the same time, they would have seen the unmatched glory of God’s love on display. Jesus had been led openly through the streets of Jerusalem carrying His cross. As a result, for the first time, a few of the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who had acclaimed Him the previous Sunday became aware of what was happening. Most of those who were in the streets of Jerusalem that late Wednesday morning were headed to the Temple to have their Passover Lambs sacrificed starting at two o’clock (the beginning of the ninth hour). At least some of them must have abandoned their trip to the Temple and followed the execution party. That party would have included the High Priests, the rest of the Sanhedrin of seventy, many of their servants, and some of the Temple guards. There were also the thirteen Roman soldiers who oversaw the crucifixion. It also would have included the party of Jewish women who always followed every execution procession to mourn for the victims and then offer them a drink of wine laced with the drug myrrh to ease their suffering. By the time they had ascended to Golgotha on the north side of Mt. Zion there was evidently also a moderately large crowd of other onlookers. Golgotha, on the northern ridge of Mt. Zion, loomed above the Temple on Mt. Moriah to the east. From His cross Jesus would have been able to look down on the Temple courts and see the many tens of thousands of worshippers who were already gathered there to await the sacrifice of their Passover Lambs. They also could have looked up to see Him. Because of its location on the elevated northern ridge of Mt. Zion, much of Jerusalem could have looked up and seen the three men being crucified. A very public display was always the intention of the Romans when they conducted any execution. They wanted any execution to be a lesson to the populace. There was an interval after He was first nailed to the cross and raised up. Then darkness covered the land. That was when His intense spiritual suffering for our sins began. During that interval he made three proclamations.

The First Interval

Three proclamations of Jesus on the Cross

There were three proclamations by Jesus on the Cross before the supernatural darkness began:

First, He spoke to the Father: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

Second, He spoke to His Mother and to the Apostle John: “Dear woman, here is your son,” and “Here is your mother.”

Third, He spoke to one of the dying thieves: “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Below are the accounts of that time in the four Gospels beginning with the arrival of Jesus at Golgotha.

John 19:17 Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha).

Luke 23:33a When they came out to the place called the Skull,

Matthew 27:33 They came to a place called Golgotha (which means The Place of the Skull).

Mark 15:22 They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means The Place of the Skull).

John says that they “went out” (the Greek ἐξέρχομαι {eks-e'r-kho-mī}).¹ Luke says that they “came out” (the Greek ἀπέρχομαι {äp-e'r-kho-mī}). Both the words in John and Luke spoke of the fulfillment of Scripture that stated that the death of the sacrifice had to be outside of the city as the Scripture specified. Matthew merely said that they “came” to Golgotha (the Greek ἔρχομαι {e'r-kho-mī}).² Mark said that that they “brought” Jesus (the Greek φέρω {fe'-rō}). The use of the words “they brought” seems to indicate that Jesus was so weak after He collapsed carrying the cross that He had to be supported the rest of the way.

¹ This was from John’s perspective. He was with the execution party from at the start, and from his perspective they “went out.”

² This was from Matthew’s perspective. When he heard Jesus was to be crucified, he and the others that knew Him had evidently known where the Romans conducted crucifixions and gotten there ahead of time and, probably fearing arrest, then stood at a distance (Luke 23:49, Matthew 27:55). From Matthew’s perspective they “came out” of the city.

Matthew 27:34 **There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it.**

Mark 15:23 **Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it.**

It was here that the party of Jewish women, who had followed the procession, offered Jesus a drink of strong wine mixed with gall. Its intended purpose was to deaden the senses and ease the suffering of the prisoner.

What is gall? The Hebrew word translated “gall” in Psalms 69:21 is רֹשׁׁ {rōsh}.³ The Septuagint, which was the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament and made 160 years before the crucifixion, translated this Hebrew word with the Greek word χολή {kho-lā’}. That is the same word used here. Gall was probably an extract of *Citrullus colocynthus*—a wild vine that clambers and climbs. The fruits are round and look like oranges, sometimes mottled with green. The pulp inside is poisonous and bitter. This plant was found around the Dead Sea. The effect of this drink would have been to shorten the death and render the drinker somewhat insensible. Below is the comment of Edersheim on this practice:

“It was a merciful Jewish practice to give to those led to execution a draught of strong wine mixed with myrrh so as to deaden consciousness. This charitable office was performed at the cost of, if not by, an association of women in Jerusalem. That draught was offered to Jesus when He reached Golgotha. Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, The Cross and the Crown, Chapter 15, Edersheim.

Jesus refused the drugged wine. He was determined to endure all the pain and humiliation that the Father had ordained for Him to take.

John 19:18 **Here they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.**

Luke 23:33b **there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.**

Matthew 27:38 **Two robbers were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.**

Mark 15:27 **They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left.**

This setting connected to a shadow prophecy of the Cross that occurred during the Exodus over fourteen hundred years before:

³ *Messianic Psalms 69:21* “They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar (sour wine) for my thirst.”

Exodus 17:8-12 “The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, ‘Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.’ So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill. As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. When Moses’ hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up--one on one side, one on the other--so that his hands remained steady (*faithful*)⁴ till sunset.”

The “staff of God” in Exodus was always used a symbol of the Cross.

Luke 23:34a Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

This was Jesus’ first recorded comment during the Crucifixion. There is a valid question here. Who were the “they” for whom Jesus was praying to the Father for forgiveness? I don’t think it was the Romans. Jesus had already told Pilate that his sin was lesser than the sin of the Jews. I think Jesus was referring to the Jewish leaders and the Jewish people who stood by watching. In their past history they had merely desecrated the Temple built by human hands. That repeated desecration had led to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 585 BC. Here, they were desecrating the Son of God, who was the true Temple of God. Jesus pleaded for mercy on them until they had time to understand. God gave them another forty years from that day to either believe or not.⁵ The people of Jerusalem who hadn’t believed were almost totally eradicated by the Romans in 70 AD.

John 19:19 Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Matthew 27:37 Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Mark 15:26 The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Luke 23:38 There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Pilate had already washed his hands to signify that he was innocent of Jesus’ death. This was another way that he testified that it was the Jews that had contrived to have this done. The sign

⁴ The word for steady is אֱמֻנָה {em·ü·nä} which is the word used in Habakkuk 2:4 for “faithful” or “faith.” (The word is also from the same root as Amen).

⁵ This was precisely prophesied in Ezekiel 4:6. It was exactly 40 years, to the day, before the Romans laid siege to Jerusalem on Passover in 70 AD.

also signified that Jesus was killed because the rulers were afraid that Jesus actually was the rightful King.

John 19:20 Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek.

The name “Zion” זִיּוֹן {tsē·yōn'}, which is the name of the mountain where Jesus was crucified comes from the Hebrew word זִיָּב {tsē·yūn'} which means “signpost” or “monument.” I don't believe that this ancient name was a coincidence. Mt. Zion had always been set to become a monument to the love of God.

The three languages in which the sign was written were the official languages of the last three world empires that had ruled Israel. They were: Aramaic (Persian Empire), Greek (Macedonian Empire), and Latin (Roman Empire).

John 19:21 The chief priests High Priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, “Do not write ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews.”

When Annas and Caiaphas saw what Pilate had written on the sign that was to be posted, they protested. It sounded like Pilate thought that Jesus was the “King of the Jews.” This protest would have happened before the soldiers started to take Jesus to Golgotha. It is therefore clear that Pilate was under some conviction about what he had done. One also must wonder from whom John got the account of Pilate's statement. It seems possible that John got it sometime later from a converted Pilate himself.

John 19:22 Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

Pilate refused them point blank. He had submitted to their blackmail as far as he would. As I have mentioned before, for the rest of Pilate's Governorship he refused to sanction the use of Roman power against the Christians in Judea. There is an ancient tradition that maintains that Pilate and his wife even became Christians after their experience with Jesus and after witnessing the things that happened afterwards.

John 19:23-24a When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. “Let's not tear it,” they said to one another.

This is the comment of Edersheim:

“The quaternion of soldiers who crucified Christ made division of the riches of His poverty, taking each one part of His dress, while for the fifth, which, if divided, would have had to be rent in pieces, they cast lots. This incidental remark carries evidence of the Judean authorship of

the Gospel ⁶ in the accurate knowledge which it displays. The four pieces of dress to be divided would be the headgear, the more expensive sandals or shoes, the long girdle, and the coarse Tallith,⁷ all about equal in value. And the fifth undivided and, comparatively, most expensive garment. ‘without seam, woven from the top throughout,’ probably of wool, as befitted the season of the year, was the Kittuna, or inner garment.” Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Book: The Ascent, Chap. 26, Edersheim.

In the Messianic Psalms 69, speaking of Christ, it says:

Psalms 69:10-11 “When I weep and fast, I must endure scorn; when I put on sackcloth, people make sport of me.”

This indicates that, before Jesus had been flogged, they had deprived Him of this robe and His other garments. They had evidently dressed Him in a rough (sackcloth) prison garment when He had been condemned. If they had put this robe back on Him, it would have become so blood stained that it would have been worthless to his guards. His guards must have taken the unbloodied robe with them to Golgotha.

John 19:24b “Let’s decide by lot who will get it.” This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, “They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.” So this is what the soldiers did.

Matthew 27:35-36 When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. And sitting down, they kept watch over him there.

Mark 15:24 And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

Luke 23:34b And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

This fulfilled prophecy about the Messiah in the Messianic Psalm 22:

Psalms 22:18 “They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.”

Mark 15:25 It was the third hour ~~when~~ and they crucified him.

You might remember that John had said that Jesus was still at the judge’s seat in front of Pilate at the sixth hour:

⁶ When Edersheim wrote his book in 1883, the Church was struggling with the liberal contention that the Gospels had actually been written six hundred years after the time they were portraying. The discovery of the Textus Sinaiticus helped put that to rest.

⁷ A tallith was the outer garment which was similar to a short cape.

John 19:13-14 “When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge’s seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. ‘Here is your king,’ Pilate said to the Jews.”

Clearly, in that passage John was talking about the sixth hour since daylight. He was talking about the hour comparable to 11 AM to 11:59 AM.

Yet in our passage in Mark 15:25 it says it was the third hour. All the three synoptic gospels agree that shortly afterwards, Jesus was on the cross and darkness covered the face of the earth from the sixth hour till the ninth hour (Matthew 27:45, Mark 15:33, Luke 23:44). In all those cases it had to be speaking of the sixth hour since daylight.

Mark must have been speaking about the third hour since the Jews had brought Jesus back to Pilate. In that three-hour interval, Pilate had first interviewed Jesus privately. He had then devised his plan to threaten to release Barabbas if they didn’t agree to release Jesus. He had then sent Jesus into the Antonia Fortress to be scourged, He had then appealed to the crowd once again for clemency for Jesus and then had a basin brought to wash his hands. He had then had the other two prisoners brought forth, and had the crosses provided and the sign painted for Jesus’ cross.

The question then becomes: What was the significance of Mark’s comment? Why was it important? The Scriptures never waste words. Lightfoot speculated that the purpose of this passage was to indicate the degree of the wickedness of the High Priests. Here they continued to linger to prosecute Christ to the death, even to the third hour, when they ought to have been attending the service of the Temple, and offering the peace-offerings; it being the day when they should have been attending the offering of the Passover lambs in preparation for the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when there was to be a holy convocation. At that very time, when they should have been presiding over the worship in the Temple, they were venting their malice against the Lord Jesus. These were the men who were supposedly so zealous for the Temple that they had tried to condemn Christ for supposedly speaking against it.

Mark 15:28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was reckoned with transgressors.⁸

Below is the Messianic passage in Isaiah to which Mark referred:

Isaiah 53:12 “Therefore I will ~~give him a portion among the great~~ *divide him among the many,*⁹

⁸ Mark 15:28 is in the Textus Receptus, though not in the faulty Codex Sinaiticus.

and he will divide the spoils with the ~~strong~~ *multitude*,¹⁰ because he poured out his life unto death,¹¹ and was numbered with the transgressors.¹² For he bore the sin of many,¹³ and made intercession¹⁴ for the transgressors.

Matthew 27:39 **Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads**

Mark 15:29a **Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying,**

This fulfilled what was written of the coming Messiah in Psalms 109:

Psalms 109:25 “I am an object of scorn to my accusers; when they see me, they shake their heads.”

Matthew 27:40-41 **and saying, “You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself!¹⁵ Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!” In the same way the chief-priests High Priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him.**

Mark 15:29b-31a **“So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, come down from the cross and save yourself!” In the same way the chief-priests High Priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves.**

Luke 23:35a **The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him.**

It is ironic that in the comments of the crowd and the leaders there was a great deal of truth. But those that spoke that truth didn't understand the truth they spoke. They made their statements mockingly. In fact, Jesus was the Son of David who God had promised would build the true

⁹ *I have substituted the literal translation of this phrase for the faulty NIV translation. This literal translation calls up the picture of Jesus Christ dividing the bread, which stood for His body, among His disciples.*

¹⁰ *The Hebrew word here is מַלְאָכָה {ä-tsüm'} It is a word which often a multitude. Often, in context, the multitude determines might, but the context here denotes the multitude of His body, the Church and true Israel, with whom He will divide the spoil of Satan.*

¹¹ *Here is a picture of our High Priest holding up the cup of his life and pouring it out into the death on the Cross. This was what was portrayed in the Mosaic worship when the High Priest poured out the twice daily drink offering (Exodus 29:38-41).*

¹² *This is also quoted in Luke 22:37.*

¹³ *2 Corinthians 5:21 “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”*

¹⁴ *Romans 8:34 “Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.”*

¹⁵ *Ironically, at that very moment Jesus was actually in the process of finishing God's True Temple which was constructed of His own life, death, and resurrection.*

Temple. He was replacing the old stone Temple, which was merely a figure of the truth. He was replacing it with the Spiritual Temple of His life and the sacrifice of His death. His death was the only real and effective (*efficacious*) atonement. All the animal sacrifices that had been made over the thousands of years since Adam had only been symbols of the real atoning sacrifice that the LORD Himself had promised to make. The Jews were trying to destroy His body, but He would raise it up in three days as He had said at the beginning of His ministry on Passover three years earlier:

John 2:19b “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.”

Matthew 27:42 **“He saved others,”¹⁶ they said, “but he can’t save himself! He’s the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.**

Mark 15:31b-32a **“He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.”**

Luke 23:35b **They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.”**

This was a deep truth that the crowd spoke mockingly. Jesus was in the process of saving others, but He couldn’t save Himself from the Cross if He was to be the Savior of the World. In expressing their incredulity that “the Son of God” would ever submit to such an indignity, they actually echoed Satan’s opinion. Yet it was because He was the Son of God that He did not come down from the Cross. He had come to demonstrate beyond question just how much the LORD loves all of those He has made.

Jesus had never claimed publicly to be the King of Israel although some of the people had drawn that conclusion. However, Pilate’s sign did proclaim it openly, and the High Priests were reacting to the sign’s stinging indictment.

Matthew 27:43 **He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”**

This fulfilled what Psalms prophesied would be the taunts made to the coming Messiah:

Psalms 22:8 “He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.”

¹⁶ They were probably referring to the resurrection of Lazarus a few months before, just outside of Jerusalem.

Psalm 42:9-10 “I say to God my Rock, “Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?” My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, ‘Where is your God?’”

Luke 23:36-37 The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar ¹⁷ and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.”

This was the second time Jesus had been offered a drink. This was just the same wine that the soldiers drank. It wasn't drugged, but it was designed to inebriate. Jesus didn't partake.

John 19:25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, ¹⁸¹⁹ and Mary Magdalene.

Mary of Clopas (possibly the wife of Clopas) was evidently a relation of Jesus from Joseph's side of the family. There was also Mary Magdalene. She had been a demon possessed prostitute before she trusted in Jesus. Now she was one of the five believers who stood at the foot of the Cross. As we shall see, John was also there.

John 19:26a When Jesus saw his mother there,

There was also Jesus' mother Mary. She saw fulfilled here the prophecy of old Simeon on that day in the Temple 33 years before when Jesus had been dedicated as the firstborn son:

Luke 2:34-35 “Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: ‘This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword ²⁰ will pierce your own soul too.’”

John 19:26b-27 and the disciple whom he loved (*John*) standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Dear woman, here is your son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

The disciple was John. As we have already established in our previous lessons, John was the first cousin of Jesus. His mother Salome, who was Mary's sister, was also present. This action confirmed that Mary's husband Joseph was no longer alive. At that point, Jesus was the oldest male in His family and thus responsible for His mother. He here transferred that responsibility

¹⁷ *This was just cheap or sour wine mixed with water which the soldiers drank themselves.*

¹⁸ *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, The Cross and the Crown, Chapter 15, Edersheim* “What we have every reason to regard as a trustworthy account (*Hegesippus in Euseb. H.E. 3:11 and 4:22*) describes Clopas as the brother of Joseph, the husband of the Virgin.”

¹⁹ See my section “*The Relatives of Jesus*” in Lesson 11, pages 9-20.

²⁰ *The cross is identified figuratively as a sword as also in Zechariah 13:7 and Isaiah 27:1.*

to John. Tradition indicates that Mary stayed in John's care for the rest of her life, even when He moved to Ephesus about forty years later. At that point she would have been close to ninety. However, that is tradition unsupported by Scripture. Mary isn't mentioned in Scripture after Acts 1.

Matthew 27:44 **In the same way the robbers who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.**

Mark 15:32b **Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.**

Luke 23:39 **One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!"**

Mark 15:32b **Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.**

Evidently at first, both criminals heaped insults on him. There is no reason given in the text not to suppose that this abuse began when they were first given their crosses to carry in the courtyard of Fortress Antonia. Both of them were undoubtedly aware who Jesus was, and that, if He had wanted to, He could have had His disciples instigate a deadly riot with just a few of those hundreds of thousands who had welcomed Him into Jerusalem the previous Sunday. They had also probably witnessed Pilate's last appeal to the crowd and the washing of his hands saying Jesus was innocent.

Luke 23:40-41 **But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."**

After first abusing Jesus, the second thief continued to observe the way He carried himself. In the prior three and a half years he had probably heard Jesus or one of Jesus' disciples speak. The dying thief's confession of faith is sometimes used as an example of how little faith is required for salvation. However, it occurs to me that the man was faced with imminent death and was surrounded by the highest representatives of his religion and his culture who were all condemning Jesus. Despite all of that, because of what He had seen of Jesus he chose to put his faith in the Lord. It occurs to me that his faith wasn't so unsubstantial even if it was brief!

Luke 23:42 **Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."**

After they had all been hung on their crosses the second thief turned and expressed his saving faith to Jesus.

Luke 23:43 **Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."**

Probably better than any other passage in scripture this exchange nailed down the fact that saving faith occurs at a point of time and does not require maturity or works. There is no doubt that genuine saving faith in a life that God extends beyond the point of salvation will produce works, but they are the result, not the cause of salvation.

This also makes clear that, until Jesus ascended to the Father forty-three days later taking the residents of Paradise with Him, all Old Testament believers resided in Paradise (also known as Abraham's bosom) with all the other Old Testament saints. They couldn't live in Heaven with the Father until Jesus had lived His life of perfect righteousness. Until then He couldn't impute it to those who had believed in Him. Until His righteousness could be imputed to them, no believer could stand in the presence of the Father.

The Second Interval

Darkness began covering the land creating an early twilight just before noon.

Matthew 27:45 **From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land.**

Mark 15:33 **At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.**

Luke 23:44-45a **It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, for the sun stopped shining.**

According to Exodus 12:6, the Passover lamb was to be killed at twilight by each man in front of the tent where the Passover Lamb was to be eaten. On this last Passover, there was an early twilight which came just before noon. That was at the end of the sixth hour.²¹ This not only would have preempted those who celebrated Passover according to the Mosaic Law, but it also preempted those who followed the customs of Christ's day on that Passover. On that day in 30 A.D., the Jews had gathered in companies at the Temple to have their lambs slaughtered by the Levitical priests according to the contemporary practice. To accommodate the thousands gathered to offer their lambs, the rulers had made a special decree. For ceremonial purposes, the Passover twilight lasted from between the beginning of the ninth hour (2:00 PM) and the end of the eleventh hour (5:59 PM).²² However, on that day there was a supernatural first twilight. For the Passover of 30 AD, only the true "Lamb of God" met the requirements of the Law for the sacrifice of the Passover. At noon, two hours

²¹ *The day began at sunrise or 6 AM. The hours of the day were as follows: 1st – 6:00 – 6:59 AM, 2nd - 7:00 – 7:59 AM, 3rd - 8:00 – 8:59 AM, 4th - 9:00 – 9:59 AM, 5th - 10:00 – 10:59 AM, 6th - 11:00 – 11:59 AM, 7th - 12:00 – 12:59 AM, 8th - 1:00 – 1:59 AM, 9th - 2:00 – 2:59 AM,*

²² *Wars of the Jews, Book VI, Chapter 9, Paragraph 3 by Flavius Josephus "So these high priests, upon the coming of that feast which is called the Passover, when they slay their sacrifices, from the ninth hour till the eleventh" (2:00 PM to 5:59 PM).*

before the prescribed sacrifices in the Temple were to begin complete darkness fell on Jerusalem and the Temple.

Near the end of the darkness. Event 1

The fourth proclamation of Jesus on the Cross

To the Father: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Matthew 27:46-47 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”--which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.”²³

Mark 15:34-35 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”--which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” When some of those standing near heard this, they said, “Listen, he’s calling Elijah.”

Jesus uttered only this cry aloud. However, it fulfilled the prophecy of the Messianic Psalm 22. Psalm 22 also gives us the privilege of reading the rest of His thoughts. Thus, though Psalm 22 was written more than a thousand years before Jesus’ crucifixion, it gives us an intimate view into the “mind of Christ” in that Psalm. We will study that great Messianic Psalm now.

Psalm 22

Here we should review the basics of understanding the Messianic Psalms. First, we should remember the passage from 1 Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 2:16 “‘For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?’ But we have the mind of Christ.”

This passage was written before all but four of the books of the New Testament were written,²⁴ so when Paul said “We have the mind of Christ” he had to be speaking of the Old Testament. Every believer should understand that the aim of, and the power for, our Christian life must come from having “the mind of Christ” made true and real to our spirit by the Holy Spirit. The

²³ *Perhaps these unbelievers thought Jesus was calling out in frustration to the spirit of Elijah who was supposed to be the prophet of the promised Messiah: Malachi 4:5 “See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes.”*

²⁴ *These were the Gospel of Matthew, Galatians, 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians.*

key to achieving that is to read and be taught the revealed mind of Christ. This is what the scripture teaches us in Hebrews:

Hebrews 12:2-3 “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

I have found that most Christians do not realize how much we need to learn from the Old Testament about the mind of Christ and the character of God. Also, it is only when we read the Old Testament in the light of the Gospels, that we can comprehend the depths of meaning revealed there about Christ Jesus, the incarnate God. As Peter explained in his epistle:

1 Peter 1:10-12 “Concerning this salvation (*the First Advent of Christ*), the prophets (*writers of the Old Testament*), who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves (*Old Testament believers*) but you (*the Church Age believers*), when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.”²⁵

Some of the places I have found the greatest treasures of these insights into the mind of Christ are the Messianic Psalms.

In my admittedly limited experience, I have rarely heard or seen any of the Messianic Psalms which are the inner thoughts of Christ taught as what they are. Yet they reveal to us the Lord’s innermost thinking. Eleven of them are certified as Messianic in the New Testament by Jesus or the Apostles as the very mind of Christ, yet even their testimony doesn’t seem to be enough to convince some.

We will now study one of the greatest of them. This Psalm contains the words Jesus spoke after the condemnation for our sins had fallen upon him.

It is almost impossible to miss the fact that Psalm 22 is Messianic. It is obvious from the first verse to the last. It is also obvious that this is one of those Psalms whose voice is that of Christ Himself. We have confirmation of that in the New Testament when verse 22 of this Psalm is quoted by Paul in Hebrews. There, he says that these are the very words of Jesus Christ:

²⁵ *Perhaps one of the things that both elect and fallen angels long to understand is how the LORD has known the end from the beginning.*

Hebrews 2:11b -12 “So **Jesus** is not ashamed to call them brothers. **He says**, ‘I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises.’”

As we read the Psalm we can see that no part of the thought expressed in it can belong to any other mind than that of our Savior.

Thus, this Psalm gives us the privilege of reading the very thoughts in the mind of Christ as He underwent His trial of crucifixion and bearing the punishment for the sins of the world. These were words that even John and Mary, standing at the foot of the cross, could not hear. In fact, the actual event was so private that the Father covered the earth in darkness. All we have in the Gospels are the seven utterances that He made on the cross. But one of those utterances leads us back to this Psalm which reveals so much more to us.

Psalm 22

For the director of music. To the tune of “The Doe of the Morning.” A psalm of David.

Here we have what is called “the superscription” which precedes the main body of the Psalm. It is also part of the inspired scripture. Among other things, it tells us that David wrote the Psalm. However, we know that it was really the Holy Spirit speaking through David.²⁶ That helps us to understand the Psalm, because the body of this Psalm has nothing to do with anything we know about the life of King David.²⁷

The Psalm was to be sung to the tune “The Doe of the Morning.” A doe is a graceful and beautiful animal which is dedicated to the care of her young. She doesn’t have horns. I believe that this tune was meant to speak of the love and care of God. His love was best presented in the First Advent (morning) of Jesus Christ. Later, in His Second Advent He will come back as a lion and a warrior.

Psalm 22:1 *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?*

We just studied the first sentence of this verse in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark as being what Jesus cried out when he was almost finished with suffering the spiritual agonies of bearing our sin. He was forsaken because He had to do it alone without any help from the Father or the Spirit. He asked the Father “Why?” even though He knew the answers in His humanity. The test was that His humanity required faith in the answers the Father had taught Him.

Psalm 22:2 *O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, and am not silent.*

²⁶ *Matthew 22:43 “He (Jesus) said to them, ‘How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord?’”*

²⁷ *The Bible tells us more about the life of David than any other person in Scripture except Jesus.*

The reference to daytime and night refers to the fact that He was first nailed to the cross during the daylight of the sixth hour but was soon plunged into a supernatural darkness. He was on the cross in that darkness that covered the land for about three hours:

Matthew 27:45 “From the sixth hour (anywhere from 11:00 AM to 11:59 AM) until the ninth hour (anywhere from 2:00 PM to 2:59 PM) darkness came over all the land” (Mark 15:33, Luke 23:44).

That darkness at noon was the first of two twilights on that day. The ceremonial Passover set up by the Mosaic Law was always intended to be a figure, year after year, of the real Passover when the LORD Himself would pay for the sins of the world. According to Exodus 12:6, **Passover wasn't a day, but a moment**. Exodus said that Passover was to be the moment at twilight on 14th Nisan. That was when the Passover lamb was to be sacrificed. On the 14th Nisan in 30 AD, the moment of twilight when darkness fell came just before noon. This was the “real Passover” that would ransom the world from the penalty of sin.²⁸

Why was this twilight near noon rather than some other time? For some time before 30 AD the practice had been changed from the one laid down in the Law by Moses in the desert. In the desert the head of each household would wait at the entrance to their tent to see the instant of twilight, as the Sun disappeared. At that moment they would slaughter the Passover Lamb. In Jesus' day the Jewish heads of the households would instead gather in companies at the Temple to have their lambs slaughtered by the priests. Because there weren't nearly enough priests to sacrifice all the lambs at once, the rulers of the Temple had decreed that for ceremonial purposes between 2:00 PM and 6:00 PM (sundown) would be considered twilight and the accepted time for sacrificing the lambs. In 30 AD, all of those sacrifices were delayed for an hour or more as the true Passover Lamb became the only sacrifice that could atone. Jesus was the only Lamb of the Passover who died at the first twilight of Passover on 14 Nisan in 30 AD. That Passover sacrifice of His death finally fulfilled, in reality, the figure of all the other Passover sacrifices that had merely looked forward to this day.²⁹

Psalm 22:3-5 Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the praise of Israel. In you our fathers put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them. They cried to you and were saved; in you they trusted and were not disappointed.

²⁸ *Leviticus 23:5-6a “The LORD’s Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. On the fifteenth day of that month the LORD’s Feast of Unleavened Bread begins.”*

Numbers 9:2-3 “Have the Israelites celebrate the Passover at the appointed time. Celebrate it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month, in accordance with all its rules and regulations.”

²⁹ *Jewish days lasted from twilight to twilight. The moment after the twilight of Passover on the 14th of Nisan was the beginning of the 15th of Nisan, which was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.*

Here the Savior reflected on an irony. Throughout the history of Israel, the LORD had delivered them when they called. Isaiah 65:24 “Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.” Yet He had not been delivered from this suffering. It had been the Father’s will. He had prayed: Matthew 26:39 “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

Psalm 22:6a **But I am a worm**

The word for worm used here is the word for the female scarlet worm or ‘coccus ilicis.’ When the female of the scarlet worm species was ready to give birth to her young, she would attach her body to the trunk of a tree, fixing herself so firmly and permanently that she would never leave again. The eggs deposited beneath her body were thus protected until the larvae were hatched and able to enter their own life cycle. As the mother died, a crimson fluid stained her body and the surrounding wood. From the dead bodies of such female scarlet worms, the commercial scarlet dyes of antiquity were extracted. What a picture this gives of Christ, dying on the tree, shedding his precious blood that he might “bring many sons unto glory” (Hebrews 2:10)! He died for us, that we might live through him! This was also the dye that was used to dye the curtains of the tabernacle.

Psalm 22:6b **and not a man,**

This may refer to the fact that he had been beaten so badly that his face didn’t even look like a man’s face. As Isaiah had prophesied:

Isaiah 52:14 “Just as there were many who were appalled at him -- his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness—”

Besides beating him and crucifying Him, they had done to him the two most humiliating things for a Jewish man. They had stripped Him naked, and they had pulled out tufts of His beard:

Isaiah 50:6 “I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting.” (See also 2 Samuel 10:4-5)

Psalm 22:6c **scorned by men and despised by the people.**

Jesus, who had been feared by the leaders and adored by the crowds, had suddenly become exposed to scorn and revulsion. He had not been the Messiah that the people expected. They had expected one who would drive out the Romans.

Psalm 22:7 **All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads:**

Every class of people around the cross and on the way to it mocked him. From the highest class, which included the High Priests and King Herod Antipas, to the Roman soldiers who had scourged Him, and even to one of the felons who was to be executed next to him. According to the Messianic Psalm 69:12, even the drunkards had made him the object of mockery:

Psalms 69:12b “I am the song of the drunkards.”

Psalm 22:8 “He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.”

As the Gospel of Matthew tells us, these were the very mocking words of the Sanhedrin:

Matthew 27:41-43 “In the same way the High Priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. ‘He saved others,’ they said, ‘but he can’t save himself! He’s the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

Psalm 22:9 Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you even at my mother’s breast.

This refers to the fact that from His earliest thoughts, the humanity of Jesus began to consciously trust in the plan of the Father. This is also expressed in Isaiah 7:15 “He will eat curds and honey (*baby food*) when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right.”

Psalm 22:10 From birth I was cast upon you; from my mother’s womb you have been my God.

This speaks of the fact that Jesus was born of a virgin, with no sin in His flesh to separate Him from God. He was the only human being ever born that was not separated from God even from the womb.

Psalm 22:11 Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

Jesus knew the Father could not help Him, but He trusted that He would not be far. He knew what He had to do; He had to do by Himself. The word for “trouble” used here was often used to express the work of a bitter adversary. The “adversary” in this case was Satan.

Psalm 22:12 Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle me.

In scripture, Bashan refers to those who are God’s opponent. (Psalm 68:15-16, 22, Isaiah 2:12-18, Ezekiel 39:18, Amos 4:1, Zechariah 11:2). The “bulls” of Bashan would refer to the unseen minions of Satan. Those would have included fallen angels and demons.

Psalm 22:13 Roaring lions tearing their prey open their mouths wide against me.

Lions are also often used to speak of Satan and his demons. (Psalms 10:9, Psalms 17:12, Psalms 35:17, Psalms 58:6, Psalms 91:13, 1 Peter 5:8). This suggests that of the crowd of humanity there, Jesus alone was able to see the demon armies (bulls of Bashan and roaring lions) surrounding Him on the cross. Picture the scene as Jesus experienced it. After 3½ years of pouring love out to these people, He was hung on the cross, naked, His beard torn out in tufts, His face beaten to a pulp. Surrounding Him were the Jewish leaders and their servants who mocked Him. Besides that there were the Roman soldiers who hated Him just because He was a Jew. Many of the pilgrims who had come to Passover were standing around indifferently just to see the show. The demon armies, whose evil hatred of Him was almost tangible, were celebrating what they thought was their victory. In the distance He might have seen many of His own disciples confused and frightened. The Father and the elect Angels had left Him alone. How could He stand in faith?

Psalm 22:14a I am poured out like water,

This connects us to the meaning of the drink offering in the Temple which was customarily poured out on the ground (Numbers 28:7). It also reminds us that Jesus is the water that is poured out for us. After He died, water poured out from Him on the ground on Mt. Zion at the very place where the river of the water of life will originate in the Millennium. We must come and drink.

Psalm 22:14b and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me.

This has been described as the exact physical sensation of one hanging on a cross. The shoulders were usually dislocated by the weight of the body. That made it almost impossible to heave up one's diaphragm so that they could catch their next breath. The only way to do it was to relieve the weight on their shoulders by pushing up with their legs against the spikes which were driven through their feet just behind their Achilles tendons and impaled their heels against the vertical post of the cross.

Psalm 22:15a My strength is dried up like a potsherd,

The Hebrew word here translated "potsherd" is **קֶרֶשׁ** {kheh'-res} which speaks of the clay which is hardened in the potter's kiln to make pottery or jars. Usually, it is spoken of together with the word vessel when it speaks of a whole jar or pot. Thus, the concept of a broken jar is valid. The Father was the potter that made Him (Isaiah 29:16), but now, in this hour of the power of darkness, Jesus saw His life as a broken pot. Everything had been poured out. Usually, the destination of broken pottery was the "Potsherd Gate" in the valley of Hinnom, or Gehenna (Jeremiah 19:2). This was the trash dump of Jerusalem where fires burned the refuse continually. This word, in the Greek (γέεννα {ge'-en-nä} was used by Jesus Christ 11 times³⁰ in the Gospels

to be a figure of Hell. Furthermore, before Joseph of Arimathea made the offer to Pilate to provide his tomb for Jesus' burial, Gehenna was to be the destination of Jesus' body, as condemned criminals were buried in the potter's field just adjacent to the dump.

Psalm 22:15b and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;

This describes the dehydration that would have accompanied Jesus' ordeal. It also leads us to the reason why He said in John 19:28 "I thirst." He needed to lubricate his tongue and his mouth to be able to speak his last two utterances loudly and clearly – "It is finished!"³¹ and "Into your hands I commit my Spirit!"³²

Psalm 22:15b you lay me in the dust of death.

This acknowledged that Jesus, the sinless and innocent, would accept the curse that the sin of Adam brought on the human race. Genesis 3:19b "For dust you are and to dust you will return."

Psalm 22:16 Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet.

The word "dogs" refers to the Romans soldiers who were Gentiles. Gentiles were referred to as dogs in Matthew 15:22-28 and Mark 15:25-29. These were the very men who had nailed Jesus to the cross by his hands and feet. It should be noted here that by the language of that time, what we consider two separate things, wrists and hands, were described by one word. We see that in Acts 12:7 where the Greek word for "hands" was used where it says that chains fell off Peter's "wrists." Jesus wasn't nailed to the cross by putting the spike between finger bones in His upper hand. That wouldn't have held the weight of His body, and it would have broken those fragile bones.³³ The spike in His "hands" was nailed between the two bones of His lower arm (the ulna and the radius), just at the wrist. That would be secure and bear the weight.

Psalm 22:17a I can count all my bones;

This probably refers to the fact that according to prophecy "not one of His bones will be broken." John 19:32-35 "The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so

³⁰ *Matthew 5:22, 29, 30, 10:28, 18:9, 23:33, Mark 9:43, 45, 47, Luke 12:5.*

³¹ *John 19:30.*

³² *This last statement, recorded in Luke 23:46, was also prophesied in another Messianic Psalm, Psalm 32:5.*

³³ *Remember, not a bone of Him could be broken.*

that you also may believe. These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken,” Also Psalms 34:20, Exodus 12:46, Numbers 9:12

Psalm 22:17b **people stare and gloat over me.**

The High Priests and the Pharisees, who had been humiliated when they tried to use the Scriptures against Him, could now gloat. His death on the cross, they thought, was the final repudiation of His teachings and He had nothing to say in reply:

Matthew 27:39-40 “Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, ‘You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!’” Also Mark 15:29, Luke 23:36-37

Psalm 22:18 **They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.**

This was fulfilled as recorded in the Gospel of John:

John 19:23-24 “When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. ‘Let’s not tear it,’ they said to one another. ‘Let’s decide by lot who will get it.’ This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, ‘They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.’” Also see Matthew 27:35, Mark 15:24, and Luke 23:34.

Psalm 22:19 **But you, O LORD, be not far off; O my Strength, come quickly to help me.**

Before Jesus took upon Himself the flesh of mankind, He had the free exercise of His omnipotence as God. However, in His incarnation He had to live out His life in the weakness of a man. By faith, He had to rely on the strength of the Father, just as every believer does. The humanity of Jesus Christ is to be our role model.

Psalm 22:20a **Deliver my life from the sword,**

A sword not only looks like a cross, but it also refers to human power (Romans 13:4). Prophetically, the sword was used to speak of the cross, as in Zechariah, Luke, and Isaiah.

Zechariah 13:7 “‘Awake, O **sword**, against my shepherd, against the man who is close to me!’ declares the LORD Almighty. ‘Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones.’”³⁴

³⁴ Both Matthew 26:31 and Mark 14:27 make it clear that this verse in Zechariah was fulfilled by the crucifixion of Christ.

Luke 2:34-35 “Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: ‘This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a **sword** will pierce your own soul too.’”

Isaiah 27:1 “In that day, the LORD will punish with his **sword**, his fierce, great and powerful sword, Leviathan the gliding serpent, Leviathan the coiling serpent; he will slay the monster of the sea.”³⁵

In the aftermath of Adam’s fall in the Garden of Eden there was displayed, in a figure, a great truth. When Adam fell, the “tree of life” became guarded by a flaming sword (Genesis 3:24). As the Second Adam, Jesus was going to become the means of access to “the tree of life” for Adam’s descendants. To get there, He had to be struck, as it were, by that “flaming sword.” He then became that tree of life.³⁶³⁷

Psalm 22:20b ~~my precious life~~ **“my only son” from the power of the dogs.**

The word translated “precious life” by the NIV translators here is the Hebrew word יָקָרָה {yaw-kheed'}. In most cases that Hebrew word is translated “only son.” If the translators understood the context of this Psalm as speaking of “God’s only son” I cannot understand how they chose this translation. I believe the phrase should be translated “my only son” here. “My only son” would have been a name by which the Father would have known and addressed the incarnate Christ. My preferred reading of the verse would be, “Deliver my life from the sword, deliver ‘my only son’ from the power of the dogs.” The dogs were those who were crucifying Him.

Psalm 22:21 **Rescue me from the mouth of the lions; save me from the horns of the wild oxen.**

The lions and wild oxen here are the lions of verse 13 and the wild bulls of verse 12. They were the demon armies of Satan surrounding Jesus on the cross. They were unseen by men but seen by Jesus Christ.

Psalm 22:22a **I will declare your name to my brothers;**

³⁵ *In this verse, the sword (the cross) which caused Jesus’ death became the weapon which would condemn Satan by displaying the love of God who Satan had rejected.*

³⁶ *The Cross is referred to as a “tree” in the New Testament many times. Acts 5:30, 10:39, 13:29, Galatians 13:13, 1 Peter 2:24.*

³⁷ *We now have access to the tree of life because Jesus Christ was struck by the sword (cross) that guarded the way. Revelation 2:7 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.”*

This was Jesus' response of faith. Despite the situation, He had total confidence in the Father. He had promised His resurrection to His disciples: John 14:19-20 "Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you."

Psalm 22:22b in the congregation I will praise you.

As mentioned before, the Epistle to the Hebrews makes it clear that these verses are the very thoughts of Jesus Christ:

Hebrews 2:11b-12 "So **Jesus** is not ashamed to call them brothers. **He says**, 'I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises.'"

How did Jesus praise the Father before men? He did it by demonstrating who the Father was by His life:

John 14:9b-10 "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work."

The purpose of His sacrifice was to demonstrate the love and mercy of the Father and thus glorify the "name" of the Father. Just four days earlier, as He had entered Jerusalem He had said:

John 12:27-28 "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.'"

Psalm 22:23 You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!

This was addressed to those who were the descendants of Jacob (Israel) by faith. Romans 9:6b-ff. "For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel." The "descendants of Jacob" included both Old Testament and New Testament believers of every racial origin.

Psalm 22:24 For he (*the Father*) has not despised or disdained the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help.

In listening to the cry of the Lord Jesus on the cross, the Father was also listening to the cry of humanity for deliverance from sin and death.

Psalm 22:25a From you comes my praise in the great assembly;³⁸

Literally here the Hebrew says: “from you comes my praise in the Great Assembly.” This corrected translation raises a valid question – Is this “my praise” the praise that originated with Jesus directed toward the Father, or the “my praise” in the sense of the “praise of me” originating with the Father and directed toward Jesus. I believe it is the latter. Although the people at the “great assembly” of the Passover did not praise Jesus, the Father did.

Psalm 22:25b before those who fear you will I fulfill my vows.

One of the vows Jesus made at the Last Supper was that He would not drink the fruit of the vine until He drank it new with them in the kingdom of God. He did not drink it until just after he said, “I am thirsty” and just before He said, “It is finished” (John 19:28-30). By then He had won the Kingdom of God for them and for us.

Psalm 22:26 The poor will eat and be satisfied; they who seek the LORD will praise him-- may your hearts live forever!

Who are the “poor”? When Jesus announced the beginning of His ministry He said:

John 4:18-19 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

What He meant was that the whole human race was poor, blind, and oppressed because of their sin. His message could only be heard by those who were willing to acknowledge that condition and seek the truth of God. What were these poor to eat? They would eat the true bread that came down from heaven, and the flesh of the true Passover lamb. They would be satisfied, and their hearts would live forever.

Psalm 22:27-28 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations.

One day the Lord will reign. People from all the nations will turn to Him. This same scene was shown to Daniel in a vision:

³⁸ *Four times in the Psalms (Psalms 40:9-10, Psalms 26:12, Psalms 22:25 and Psalms 35:18) the voice of the Psalmist speaks of giving thanks or praise in the “great assembly.” Each of the other times are also Messianic Psalms. They speak of Jesus Christ standing up in the “great assembly.” That could refer to any of the “great assemblies” for the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:37-38) or Passover.*

Daniel 7:13-14 “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven.³⁹ He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”

Psalm 22:29a All the rich flourishing of the earth will feast and worship;

The Hebrew word translated “rich” here is דָּשָׁן {dā·shān'} which occurs three times and really means flourishing or fertile. Those who flourish on the earth at that time will be those that “feast and worship.” Those who “feast” will feast on the true bread, the Manna which came down from heaven. This feasting is also described in Isaiah:

Isaiah 25:6-9 “On this mountain (*Mt. Zion*)⁴⁰ the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine-- the best of meats and the finest of wines.⁴¹ On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations;⁴² he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces;⁴³ he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. In that day they will say, “Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.”

Psalm 22:29b all who go down to the dust will kneel before him—

Those “who go down to the dust” are those who have died. This refers to the LORD’s pronouncement of Adam’s condemnation in Genesis:

Genesis 3:19 “By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”

³⁹ *Jesus referred to this passage in His trial before the Sanhedrin and it enraged them (Mark 14:61-62, Luke 22:69).*

⁴⁰ *The context shows that “this mountain” was Mt. Zion (Isaiah 24:23), the mountain on which Christ died.*

⁴¹ *John 6:53-57 “Jesus said to them, ‘I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.’”*

⁴² *Notice that salvation was always intended for “all the peoples” and “nations.” This also teaches unlimited atonement.*

⁴³ *Revelation 21:4 “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”*

Psalm 22:29c **those who cannot keep themselves alive.**

These will kneel down and worship because of the provision of the LORD's Christ and the defeat of death for all who trust in Him.

Psalm 22:30 ~~Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord~~ ***A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.***

The literal translation which I have substituted is also the translation of the King James, Darby's and Webster's. It is far superior and reveals the true meaning of the passage. It is "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." What is the seed that will serve him? It is the seed of Abraham, the seed of faith! The Lord's family will not be the "generations" of the flesh, but the generations of the spirit of those that believe in him. (Romans 4:16-17, Galatians 3:6-7, 3:16, 3:26-29, Isaiah 53:8,10).

Psalm 22:31a **They will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn**

This was a prophecy of the Great Commission – Mark 16:15 "He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.'"

Psalm 22:31b **-- for he has done it.**

This is another way of stating Jesus' triumphant cry at the last where he shouted out. "It is finished" (John 19:30).