

March 9th 2008: Pre-Easter Psalm 22: “900 Year Old Prophecy Fulfilled at Calvary.”

I have just read a novel by Matthew O'Reilly which I found to be extremely far-fetched but very interesting. A sci-fi type of novel it involves this team of warrior archeologists who are out to find certain ancient relics that will enable them to stop the world being destroyed.

What was most intriguing was that they found these relics through decoding correctly, ancient clues which were often the first line of an even more ancient writing. So they would locate a statement that they would realise contained a deeper hidden message. A message that was only clear to those who recognized that the statement was in fact, the first line of an old poem, and it was that poem which contained information about the whereabouts of the relic they sought. So that first statement was in fact a code for the people in the know.

Now I don't know whether Matt is a Christian, but if he were to consider Jesus' cry from the cross, “My God, my God why.....” he would discover Jesus doing exactly the same thing. **Giving a coded message**, if you like, to those who were prepared to search the Scriptures where they would find that Jesus was in fact quoting the first line of a 900 year old Psalm.

Then, when they read the rest of that Psalm, which we know as Psalm 22, they would find in it a description of what happened to Jesus on the cross, including a mention of the victory that was to happen when he rose from the dead.

I find that to be so incredible. And if you are perhaps still questioning whether Jesus is who He says He is. Whether His death was as important as we say it is.

Then you need to explain away a Psalm written before crucifixion was invented. A Psalm which so completely describes Jesus' death some 900 years before He died. A Psalm which He began to quote from the cross itself.

Psalm 22 falls neatly into three sections

Section one: verses 1-10 An appeal for help based on His covenant relationship

Section two: verses 11-21 is simply a desperate cry for help,

Section three: from v22 sees an immense transformation from despair to assurance of deliverance.

That this is a Psalm of David there is little doubt. That it has some connection with evil times he experienced is quite likely.

That it is Prophetic is certain.

Jesus uttered the first line with a loud cry. I believe He wanted it to be heard and recognized. He had no breath or energy for more. Some suggest that He would then have recited the whole psalm to Himself.

It's a cry from the heart. My God. My God why.....

Even though He senses that God has turned His face away, He still calls Him, my God, and looking at v2 and further, that doesn't change

- **He bore in His body every sin committed against God.**
That's why God turned away

2 Corinthians 5:21.

Yet He never abandoned His God

Even there in the Garden of Gethsemane

when He prayed to his Father and said:

Mark 14:36

“Abba, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

He knew something of what lay ahead of Him

And He knew because of his understanding of Psalm 22

- **In this first section He approaches God as one of God's people**
appealing on the basis of that covenant.

V3 You are the Holy One.... God is perfect He doesn't get it wrong

In v4-5 He reminds God how faithfully He responded to His people(our fathers)

Yet then in v6-8 He describes His current state

“But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: ‘He trusts in the Lord; let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.’”

But despite His low position He remembers in v9-10

how God has looked after Him from His mother's womb. Never stopped being His God.

That is why in the 2nd section. When He is so desperately in need.

He still does what they accuse Him off.....He trusts in the Lord

His cry is so painful to hear and the description so true of crucifixion

V14-15.....

V16.....

V17.....

**Yet despite all that He still cries to the Lord for help.
Still calls Him My Strength.**

And the most wonderful thing is that the Lord hears and acts

From v22 onwards the tone changes from agony to triumph

Our Lord knew and we now know that such a triumph was not until He had bore the fullness of the wrath of God

But on that 1st Easter Sunday His triumph was declared and it has been declared eversince

Hebrews 2:9 says

“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour because He suffered death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.”

And then just two verses later the author quotes directly Ps 22:21

*“I will declare your name to my brothers: in the presence of the congregation
I will sing your praises.”*

• And that's exactly what Jesus did

Straight after the resurrection He said to Mary Magdalene in **John 20:17**

*“Go to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am returning to my Father and
your Father, to my God and your God.’”*

What a tremendous change from verse one.
Indeed v24 says

“For he 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.”

But that listening had to wait till the punishment was borne

Then the ends of the earth will turn to the Lord(27)
Then all who go down to the dust will kneel before Him(29)
Future generations will be told about the Lord(30)
His righteousness proclaimed to a people yet unborn

Then the final words of the Psalm → For He has done it

And the final words from Jesus on the cross: It is finished....It is done

As we approach this Easter....

we need to remember that God the Son choose that death for us
He knew what it would mean to give His life a ransom for many

He did it all for us.....What are we doing for Him?

Enduring for Him Giving to Him

- In many churches this period.....is part of lent.....**

A time when Xtians are asked to give up

In light of Ps 22 let us prepare not by giving up....But by adding

Adding to our prayer life

Not just extra time.....but extra depth....intensity.....

Praying that this Easter

**Many will know the real story behind the cross and resurrection....
And turn to Jesus as their Lord and saviour.**

