

Psalm 22 – part 2

Introduction – It is Resurrection Sunday. Having suffered through His death on the cross, Jesus Christ has risen from the dead (John 20:1-10). Psalm 22, the Psalm of the Cross, is also known as the Fifth Gospel for it is here that the prophecies of Christ's death, resurrection, and their world-impact are so clearly sung by the Psalm-singer. Jesus had cried out on the cross (22:1), His body writhing in pain while onlookers mocked (22:6-8). Wicked, powerful dogs had pierced His hands and feet (22:16-18) and He thirsted (22:15). Praying that God would save Him from the lion's mouth, Christ ended this first section with this cry of victory: *"You have answered me!"* (22:21) even as He gave up His spirit and died.

Following the Psalm-singer's great despairing cry of faith, the second half of the Psalm (vv22-31) is His great triumphant cry of faith. The resurrection proves what He sang on the cross: In His death, Christ conquered death. Hades was put into an uproar even as it tasted of His flesh. *"O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"* (1 Cor 15:55).

Christus Victor (22:21b-31) – He will declare this victory in the assembly with His brethren (v22), and so all who fear God are summoned (v23), for God answers the prayer of the faithful including this one (v24). Christ shall offer up the sacrifice of praise with us to God (v25). The meek-poor shall eat with Him and be satisfied (v26). All the ends of the earth shall be converted (v27) for the Father has given Him the kingdoms of men (v28). Rich and poor alike shall eat and worship (v29), and this shall continue from generation to generation (v30) even to those who have not yet been born (v31). What shall be declared? *"That He has done this"* (v31).

The Victory Celebration of Christ with Christ – Verse 22 is quoted in Hebrews 2:12, a passage describing the greater work of sanctification that we are receiving in Jesus Christ. This is done through our union with Him; a union so perfect that the Son of God calls us brethren. He is one of us, and particularly here, in the summoned assembly every Lord's Day, He is with us. As we join with Him in singing Psalm 22 in worship, how vigorously, joyfully, and triumphantly do you think our Head is singing? Christ has in mind what His sufferings have accomplished and He turns to us first to make sure we know (and are reminded over and over again in Covenant Renewal times). Easter is not to be compared to going to the grave of a loved one and remembering what life was like with him or her. Easter is an ongoing celebration, led by the Victor Himself, singing over us with a sacrifice of praise (v25, Heb 13:5). But we are not only to listen; we are to join in the praise (v23), *"that He has done this."* (v31).

The Fellowship of Christ with Christ – We learn from verse 24 that the Father did not despise the cries of His Son; He heard Him. In union and communion with God the Father through Jesus Christ, we are invited – no – commanded to plead before Him all that we need and desire just as Jesus did. We know that as we come here, Jesus is our great Intercessor, speaking our names and needs before the Father (Heb 7:25).

But what do we ultimately and most desperately need? We need that which we could never purchase, and that is given to us here in the church. Here *"the poor shall eat and be satisfied."* Jesus said the poor would receive the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:3), that the meek would inherit the earth (Matt 5:5) and that those who hunger and thirst for righteousness would be filled (Matt 5:6). But how has He done this for us poor sinners? *"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him"* (2 Cor 5:21). Either Christ died on the cross for your sins personally and individually and you believe this and it is yours, or He did not. The glory of the fellowship we enjoy with Christ is that it is far more than "friendly." It involves the imputation of our sins upon Him who knew no sin and the imputation of His righteousness upon each one of us who had no righteousness of our own. What are we to do? Believe, *"that He has done this"* (v31).

The Kingdom Work of Christ with Christ – While on the cross, Jesus saw the vision of His great world conquest (vv27-31) and so how much more does our Ascended Psalm-singer sing with us now *"in the great assembly"* of His victorious rule over heaven and earth? This gathering is not for a small number of misfits out of the world; that is not what Jesus died for. His conquest extends to *"all the families of the Gentiles,"* to *"all the ends of the world"* (v27). His conquest extends to the rich and poor alike, whatever their status in life (v29) *"for the kingdom is Yahweh's, and He rules over the nations."* His kingdom work goes forth not only geographically but chronologically; *"a posterity shall serve Him"* (v30). And both take place because in Christ and with Christ, we, His people *"will declare His righteousness to a people who will be born"* (v31, Matt 28:18-20).

But will they believe? Will they come? We know they will, for we are not declaring that He tried to save the world, but rather, *"that He has done this"* (v31).

I hope you are ready to sing with King Jesus, the Greater David, the Great Psalm-singer, for even now, He is lifting up His voice over you.