

It was “The 3rd Hour when they crucified Jesus” (9:00 am)

And everyone who passed by, blasphemed Him – they slandered Him.

And the religious leaders (the chief priests and the Scribes), well, they stood around, enjoying the spectacle and took the opportunity to mock Him too...

And the ones who had actually done the deed – the ones who had nailed Him to the cross, and hung Him up in the air, they taunted Him and insulted Him...

And for 3 hours, He hung there. And on the 6th Hour (midday), the sun went out. We don't know what form of inexplicable darkness this was, but there was darkness over the whole land for 3 hours. (a solar eclipse doesn't do that. This was something extraordinary).

And it was at the 9th hour (3:00 pm), (By this stage, Jesus had endured the agony of the cross for 6 hours), when He cried out:

“Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?”

And some of the bystanders thought He was calling out for Elijah, but He wasn't calling out for Elijah. It was a cry of despair. It was a cry of horror at the apparent abandonment by God.

“Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” ... means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

But, did God truly abandon His Son at the cross? I can't answer that, because the Bible doesn't tell us. But I'll tell you what I do know:

At 3:00pm, as Jesus breathed His. And in the Greek, the same word “*pneuma*” refers to “breath” and “spirit”. And so *ἐξέπνευσεν* (*exerpeusen*) means he exhaled His breath/Spirit....

And in the Gospel of Mark, the final words of Jesus, **Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?**, are as good as:

- a Dewey-decimal system to locate a bible in a library;
- an index to say “Book of Psalms”;
- Chapter 22;
- Verse 1.

Let me give you an example. If I was to say:

- Mary had a little lamb;
- Once a jolly Swagman;
- You're the voice, try and understand it ...;

You get the point, don't you... When they crucified Jesus, He had the last word. And His last word, was the opening verse of Psalm 22.

And Psalm 22, for the one going through it (and even for those who are watching on), it has every appearance of abandonment by God... But things are not as they appear.

It begins with a moment of despair. It's a cry of the horror of abandonment... But what begins on a note of despair, ends in joyous triumph...

Psalm 22, is a Psalm of David. David himself, was well acquainted with despair. But this psalm speaks of circumstances that David did not go through... This Psalm is prophetic. It looked forward to Jesus.

Let me read it.

22 TO THE CHOIRMASTER: ACCORDING TO THE DOE OF THE DAWN. A PSALM OF DAVID.

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

² *O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.*

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

⁴ *In You our fathers trusted; they trusted, and You delivered them.*

⁵ *To You they cried and were rescued; in You they trusted and were not put to shame.*

⁶ But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.

⁷ All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;

⁸ "He trusts in YHWH; let Him deliver him;
let Him rescue him, for he delights in Him!"

⁹ Yet You are He who took me from the womb;
You made me trust You at my mother's breasts.

¹⁰ On You was I cast from my birth,
and from my mother's womb You have been my
God.

¹¹ Be not far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.

¹² Many bulls encompass me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;

¹³ they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.

¹⁴ I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;

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

¹⁶ For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet—

¹⁷ I can count all my bones—
they stare and gloat over me;

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

¹⁹ But You, O YHWH, do not be far off!
O You my help, come quickly to my aid!

²⁰ Deliver my soul from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dog!

²¹ Save me from the mouth of the lion!
You have rescued me from the horns of the wild
oxen!

²² I will tell of Your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise You:

²³ You who fear YHWH, praise Him!

All you offspring of Jacob, glorify Him,
and stand in awe of Him, all you offspring of
Israel!

²⁴ For He has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and He has not hidden His face from Him,
but has heard, when he cried to Him.

²⁵ From You comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will perform before those who fear Him.

²⁶ The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek Him shall praise YHWH!
May your hearts live forever!

²⁷ All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to YHWH,
and all the families of the nations shall worship before You.

²⁸ For kingship belongs to YHWH,
and He rules over the nations.

²⁹ All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;
before Him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the one who could not keep Himself alive.

³⁰ Posterity shall serve Him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;

³¹ they shall come and proclaim His righteousness to a people yet unborn,
that He has done it.

Wow!!!!

As Jesus hung on the cross, they mocked Him, and said,
“Come on, Prophecy....”

It’s like Jesus is saying, “You want me to prophecy? Well,
cop this. How about a prophecy from King David – will this
one do??? And of course, it was a prophecy about
Himself....

Psalm 22 was written 1000 years earlier, and there on the
cross, it was fulfilled in Jesus.

And you and I, are continuing to fulfill it today.

³⁰ Posterity shall serve Him;

it shall be told of the Lord to the coming
generation;

³¹ they shall come and proclaim His righteousness
to a people yet unborn,
that He has done it.

That’s us, folks. You and I are the people who were yet to
be born. We are the future generation who proclaim the
righteousness of God. And we proclaim today, that God did
not turn His back on Jesus.

V²⁴ For He has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and He has not hidden His face from Him,
but has heard, when he cried to Him.

As Jesus died on the cross, it had every appearance that His Father had:

- ignored His cry;
- turned His back on Him...

Not so...

His Father **heard** the cry. And He **didn't** hide His face...
At the cross, not everything was as it appeared.

Yes,

- Jesus **was** executed.
- He **was** killed.
- He **did** die...
- He did breathe His last,
As He expelled His breath/spirit...

And yet, in V29, we are given a picture of worship. And even the one who dies, shall worship...

And so, through our Lord Jesus Christ, we discover a new kind of deliverance. At one time, man's only hope was to be "delivered from death" (God, please don't let me die)... But through our Lord Jesus Christ, there is now deliverance **through** death.

Jesus died. And yet, on the 3rd day, He rose....

And by faith, **we** also know, that we also, will be raised.
And the faith we have, is firmly established on:

- the Person of God;

- the Character of God; and
- the history of the faithfulness of God.

When Jesus called out to God, He cried out to “My God. My God.” (a reference to Psalm 22). And throughout the Psalm, David uses God’s personal Name YHWH. Every place in Psalm 22, where “THE LORD” appears in all capitals, the actual word in the original Hebrew, is God’s personal Name YHWH...

It is not just any old God, whom Jesus called upon. It is YHWH – the One **True** God – **this** is the one in Whom we trust.

And the Psalm highlights the Character of God:

- V3. He is Holy.
- V4. He delivers.
- V5. He is dependable.
- V9. He is the one who knows us, and is with us from the beginning.
- V25. He is praise-worthy
- V31. He is righteous

This is the Character of God.

And we can depend on His faithfulness, because our Lord has a long history of being faithful. Our forefathers have trusted in Him, and He has delivered...

This all comes through in the Psalm.

At one time, the people of Israel, would sing Psalm 22, looking forward to the promise of deliverance of which it spoke.

Today, we sing very similar songs about Jesus.

He is:

- our Lord;
- He is the One who suffered, and yet lives.
- the One in Whom we trust;
- He is the one who is faithful;
- He is the one Who will deliver **us**, even from death.

And we'll talk more about that on Sunday – being saved through faith in Jesus Christ.

But today, we remember the One Who was pierced – the one who was killed, and yet He lives.