



PSALM EMOJIS (Week 8) - Messianic

While dying on the cross, Jesus quoted Psalm 22. Most of us aren't fortunate enough to leave last words before we die. Even those who are fortunate enough to leave last words don't really say anything memorable. I read through 65 supposedly memorable last words and found none of them to be memorable and certainly none of them to be profound.

I found a few that were funny to me.

For instance, James W. Rodgers, the last man executed by firing squad in the United States in 1960, when asked if he had a last request, replied, "Bring me a bullet-proof vest."

When Groucho Marx, the famous comedian of the 1930's, 40's and 50's, was dying, he is reported to have said: "This is no way to live!"

Wilson Mizner, a successful playwright in his day, best known for the line, "Be nice to people on the way up because you'll meet the same people on the way down." When he was on his deathbed, a priest said, "I'm sure you want to talk to me." Mizner told the priest, "Why should I talk to you? I've just been talking to your boss."

When Harriet Tubman (the leader of the Underground Railroad through which slaves escaped during the Civil War) was dying in 1913, she gathered her family around and they sang together. Her last words were, "Swing low, sweet chariot."

That is a fitting way for a Christian to die. Christians don't need memorable last words. Christians need memorable last thoughts and those thoughts should be of Jesus.

It's only fitting that the most influential figure in world history should leave us last words that are pondered for centuries and Jesus Christ has left us such last words.

In Psalm 22, we find a movement from despair to unbridled hope. It's encompasses what so many Psalms are about — the soul expressing to God feelings of abandonment, then reasoning with self according to the Word of God and ultimately finding great cause to feel confident.

In other words, the soul finds hope in the word of God. This is the pattern that we see in Psalm 22 and can apply immediately. Because it is a pattern in our lives, in our relationship with God — feeling low, discouraged, despairing even, then going to the Word and finding comfort and hope in the Word of God to us.

There's a reason Jesus quoted Psalm 22 while dying on the cross for our sins. Today we're going to look at how this Psalm intersects with the cross and how both this Psalm and the cross intersect with our lives.

Psalm 22

To the choirmaster: according to The Doe of the Dawn. A Psalm of David.

22 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

Matthew 27:46

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice,

When you cry loudly you're expressing deep emotional pain, deep physical pain. It's a cry that expresses the turmoil of the soul. When you cry loudly, it is usually a last ditch effort to be heard.

saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

So, in our first movement, we find a soul who feels abandoned by God.

This very human cry acknowledges some interesting things about God.

- 1) "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me" acknowledges that God has the power and the control to change our circumstances. "My God, my God, why have You allowed this to happen? You didn't have to." That's why the soul cries out to Him, because God can change our circumstances.**

- 2) But it also acknowledges that sometimes God wants us in dire circumstances, that He has placed us there. To us, this feels like abandonment.**

- 3) "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me" acknowledges that He is our God. The reason we can cry to Him so boldly is because He is "my God." He is your God. This is why it is painful. We know He is our God. So, why then did He leave us in these circumstances? We know He cares, but now it doesn't seem that He does. The God we once believed cared for us, the God we once believed loved us seems now to have deserted us.**

- 3) The third thing we learn from this cry is the pain of Christ.**

The question is, what are the implications when Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me"?

Jesus suffered this separation (this relational abandonment) to a degree that is beyond anything we can

understand. Remember, Jesus is God from eternity, the God with no beginning and no end, the God who is one God but three Persons, always in perfect and loving harmony with the Father and the Spirit. But in His humanity, Jesus now experiences God turning away from Him as He bears our sins.

From a human standpoint, we understand that the closer you are to someone, the more power they have to hurt you if they abandon you relationally. The more intimate you are with another human being, the more being abandoned by them hurts. That's just on a human level. We can't imagine what it is like to have infinite love pulled away.

We do not even come close to the emotional and spiritual abandonment that Jesus Himself felt on the cross. What can it possibly feel like to know infinite love and then to have that love taken from you?

So, when we cry out to Jesus in our distress, He more than knows how we feel. Jesus is

telling you on the cross with His last words that He knows exactly the hurt you feel. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me" is the cry of someone who knows the very depths of human suffering. He doesn't judge this very human cry that we make. He empathizes with it.

This is where the cross intersects with human suffering and human suffering is caused by human sinfulness. Jesus isn't on the cross judging. He is on the cross being judged on our behalf. And the Father is judging His Son so that He can love us freely. Because in judging His Son, He shows that He takes the suffering caused by sin most seriously.

The Psalm goes on:

Psalm 22

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

Here we find the state of this person's soul. They pray and receive no answer. It's as if God is not listening. This makes the person anxious. He can't sleep. Not only are his troubles keeping him awake, but the silence of God is keeping him awake.

We see this in the life of Jesus, praying in the garden late at night, unable to sleep, His soul troubled by what is ahead.

Matthew 26:36-38

36 Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go over there and pray.” **37** And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. **38** Then he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.”

And yet, in this Psalm, this person doesn't just sink inward into his feelings of despair. He looks to the Word of God, which reveals the nature and character of God.

3 Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
4 In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.

He's remembering the stories told in the Scriptures and he gains comfort from them because the stories reveal how God has worked in the past, which is always a clear indicator of how God will work in the present.

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

What category of Psalm are verse 3-5? This is what a Psalm of remembrance looks like. He is reminding himself of how God has taken action in the past. The people cried and God rescued.

Even in the case of one human being's last breath of hope, God rescues. God raised Christ from the dead. Ultimately, even in the darkest situation there is rescue. Can circumstances get any worse than death?

Then suddenly, the Psalmist compares himself to his forefathers. As soon as he takes his eyes off God, he begins to sink. Voices of self-comparison condemn him. Maybe voices from others in his life condemn him.

The same way we say to ourselves (or at least I do), “I'm no Martyn Lloyd-Jones. I'm no George Whitefield. I don't have the insight of Lloyd-Jones. I don't have the gift of evangelism like Whitefield. I'm a worm compared to them. And others are telling me I'm a worm.”

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 the Lord; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!”

They mock him for his faith in God.

“The world will let a man go to hell quietly, and never try to stop him. The world will never let a man go to heaven quietly — they will do all they can to turn him back.”

This idea of mocking people for their faith in God becomes more unimaginable when we begin to realize this is how people treated God come to earth. Listen to this description from the gospel of Matthew.

Matthew 27:39-43

39 And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads
40 and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

Jesus quotes Psalm 22, because he is experiencing Psalm 22 on the cross.

There is always such ignorance in our objections to God. Jesus could have come down from the cross, you nitwits. And then the payment for the penalty of your sins

would not be finished. So, He could come down off that cross, you would then be convinced that He is who He said He was but unfortunately, if He comes down off that cross He can only come down to judge and not save you. For in order to save you, He has to die.

Our objections to God are always bathed in ignorance.

41 So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, 42 “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. 43 He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

This God took on human flesh. And in doing so, He showed us (humanity) the deep, deep darkness of sin that is in us.

A people who do not know what will happen in the next second want to do away with a God who knows the end from the beginning.

A people who create illusions of control in their lives want to do away with the God who controls all things.

**A people who cannot command the whether
want to do away with the God who tells
lightening where to strike.**

**A people who delude themselves with being
loving because puppies make them feel
warm want to do away with the God who
demonstrates His love in the cross as we
demonstrate how cruel our hearts have
become by crucifying the One who created
us.**

Psalm 22

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.

**God had a plan for your life from before you
were born. But it's often hard to believe that
because of our circumstances. It often
doesn't seem like a good plan to us.**

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

**It is just a fact of spiritual life that God often
places us in circumstances where we have
no choice but to trust in Him alone.**

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.

John 19:28-30

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." 29 A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

**Here is the Son of God, thirsty and dying. Now
at the beginning of John's Gospel, we see
Jesus turn water into wine. The wine is so
good everyone comments on how superb it
is.**

**Before He made this wine, Jesus said to His
mother, "Woman, my time has not yet come."**

Now, the time is here, and the wine has gone bad.

Jesus is offered sour wine that fails to soothe the pain or delight the tastebuds. The point is, He gave us His best and then took our worst.

Psalm 22

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

This is astounding. This was written approximately 1,000 years before the crucifixion, but what's more astonishing is that crucifixion hadn't even been invented as a form of capital punishment, another reason Jesus quoted this Psalm while on the cross.

This is the confirmation people are looking for but when they are presented with evidence that God is there, that He has a plan, that He gives us assurance of His plan and His love... suddenly, it's not enough.

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.

Matthew 27:35

35 And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots...

Psalm 22

19 But you, O Lord, 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:

Hebrews 2:8-12

Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. 9 But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. 11 For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, 12 saying,

“I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”

Psalm 22

23 You who fear the Lord, 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.

This is so key. Jesus who felt abandoned and who cried out to God was heard. Did He feel like He was being heard? Doesn't appear that way in the text? He sounds distraught and distressed. That should give us hope when we cry to God in deep trouble of soul, not feeling like God hears or even cares, that He does hear and He does care and He will rescue.

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 the Lord!
May your hearts live forever!
27 All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the Lord,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before you.
28 For kingship belongs to the Lord,

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.

Jesus quoted the first line of Psalm 22 on the cross. Then His last words on the cross mirrored the last line of Psalm 22. It is finished. Salvation is accomplished. Hope is alive. Rescue is on the way.

John 20:26-29

26 Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." 28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."