

Part 2 - Lessons from a Worm

In part 1 we learned that, when Jesus quoted the first part of Psalm 22:1 He was *not* accusing God of forsaking Him as He hung on the cross. And that's because God *didn't ever* forsake Jesus Christ; not even as He was on the cross, paying for our sins. Rather, by quoting Psalm 22, Jesus was simply teaching us to 'search the Scriptures' because *they testify of Him* (John 5:39). That's why this Psalm 22 is so important; for, while it was written approximately a *thousand* years before Jesus Christ died on the cross (for our sins), Jesus' crucifixion perfectly fulfilled them even as He taught us on the cross (dying in agony), and many other verses in this Psalm were even fulfilled by people who crucified Him, or were watching Him be crucified. This shows us the faithfulness of God's Word, for God alone is able to prophesy of things that will come to pass (far in advance) without fail (Isa 45:11-22). We also learned that, just as David has been a 'type' of Jesus Christ in past Psalms, he is again in this one. As such, David had been crying out to God for help but had not gotten an answer from Him (yet) even though David remained faithful to Him. This shows us that, even when we have to go through 'hard times' our Heavenly Father is still with us, so long as we do not turn out back on Him and outright rebel, embracing sin as a lifestyle instead of continuing to seek God's Word (the truth) and strive to obey it faithfully with all our heart, mind, soul and strength (Deut 10:12-16). We'll now continue on in this great Psalm to see what else it teaches us...

Psalm 22

6 But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

After praising God for His faithfulness of helping Israel in the past (when they called out to Him for help), David again laments at his situation. He even calls himself a 'worm' to explain how very low he felt at this point in his life, for a worm is pretty low in the animal kingdom. And he does so because of the reproaches that people were giving him; he felt very despised by many people. And this is surely a type for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for He was indeed reproached and despised by many when He hung on the cross, paying for the sins of mankind... *including* those who were making fun of, and reproaching Him. Yet, in all His pain and suffering, His gracious soul had the ability to ask: *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do* (Luke 23:34). It takes an amazing amount of selflessness and maturing to be able to ask God to forgiven people who are so vehemently mocking, reproaching and despising you and yet, Jesus did this as He was *paying for their sins*. He truly knew how to keep God's will in His heart and mind at all times, even during times of great pain and humiliation. And, of course, this is a great lesson for us. As Paul says...

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
Phil 2:3-11

Many in the world try to ‘promote’ themselves to ‘get ahead’ in life but that’s *not* the way we get into the Kingdom of God. As Jesus said in Matt 6:33, *seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.* We are to seek truth (God’s Word) so we can learn to do what’s right; we aren’t supposed to let our ego grow and promote ourselves. Again, that may be the way to ‘get ahead’ in this world, but it’s not the way to ‘get ahead’ in the Kingdom of God. Jesus said: *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth* (Matt 5:5) and He was quoting from Ps 37:11, which says that *the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.* And He further taught that, in the Kingdom of God, *he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted* (Matt 23:11-12). And He reiterated this again, in Matt 18:1-4, when the disciples asked Him ‘*Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?*’ And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, *Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.* And in the 18th chapter of Luke, Jesus gave us another parable to explain this...

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.*

12 *I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.*

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

14 I tell you, *this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

Luke 18:9-14

Self-righteousness doesn’t impress our Heavenly Father, for *all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God* (Rom 3:23). We’re only ‘justified’ by the free grace of God *through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus* (Rom 3:24). This is why Peter cautioned those who are ‘elders’

(leaders in the Church) not to 'lord over' the congregation (with pride, or for filthy lucre) but to instead be humble and 'lead by example' (1 Pt 5:1-4). He then goes on to say...

*5 Yea, **all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.***

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

1 Peter 5:5-7

James also warns us of 'puffing' ourselves up in chapter 4 of his letter to the scattered Israelites...

*4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? **whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.***

5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

*10 **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.***

James 4:4-10

So, just as our 'prim example' Jesus Christ humbled Himself – by coming to earth in a flesh life, living without sin and suffering for our sake – so too should we put on the same mindset of humility, righteousness and doing God's will above our own - for we cannot expect to reign with Jesus Christ (let alone be rewarded with eternal life) if we do not *think like He does*. And humility is a very important quality for those who will reign forever with Jesus Christ. After all, pride is what caused sin to come into the world when Satan ruled the world (for God) in the first earth age [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/308>]. So, pride is something that Jesus Christ will not tolerate in His Kingdom, because His Kingdom is an *everlasting kingdom* (2 Peter 1:11).

Now, the word 'worm' is really quite interesting. While it's obviously being used by David as an analogy here - to explain the degradation and humiliation he felt by those who reproached and despised Him - there's also a deeper teaching within this little word. Now, most people, when reading this verse, think that Christ was comparing Himself to an earthworm to show the vast difference between the reality of Almighty God and the lowliness of humanity. However, that is not really the case, for David specifies this worm specifically a *tola* worm (#8438), not *rimmāh* (#7415), which denotes a maggot. So, the "worm" of this 6th verse in Psalm 22 refers to the female *Coccus ilicis* - an insect whose dried body is used to make an *exclusive and expensive* red dye. The same word is oftentimes also translated as "scarlet" or "crimson," (see Ex 25:4 and 26:1

for example) so the 'tola worm' is also known as the "scarlet worm." But how do people get red dye from *a worm*? Well, when the female of the 'scarlet worm' is ready to lay eggs, she attaches her body to the trunk of a tree. And she fixes herself permanently to it *because she will not ever leave again*. She stays there, lays eggs, and protects them *under her body* until the larvae are hatched and ready to enter their own life cycle. The important point is that *the mother dies in this process*; and, as she dies, she excretes a crimson fluid and *that's* where the dye comes from. This crimson fluid is so potent that it not only stains her body, but the surrounding wood as well. So, of course, this is a beautiful 'type' in nature for the great sacrifice Jesus Christ made for us. For indeed, Jesus Christ died 'on a tree' and shed His precious blood to "bring life" to us who believe upon Him.

So, it's easy to draw a direct parallel from the 'tola worm' to Jesus Christ, who *willingly* went to the cross and *remained there* until His life's mission was finished (John 10:18)... just as the tola worm does for her eggs. And just as a portion of the tree from the 'scarlet worm' is covered with a crimson, gel-like fluid (which does not fade with age, harsh wind or even washing) so too does the blood of Christ remain upon us *when* we remain faithful to Him in faith, love and obedience. And *because* Jesus' blood stays spiritually 'upon us' - when the Father looks upon us, *He sees Christ's own righteousness, whose death covered us with His blood*, justifying us before the Father. Paul writes in Colossians 1:21-22 that, although we used to be aliens and enemies of God, *Jesus has reconciled [us to God] in the body of His flesh through death, to present us holy, blameless, and above reproach in His sight*. Isaiah 1:18 also says: *Come now, and let us reason together; says the LORD. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool*. Here, "crimson" is the Hebrew word *tola*, again referring to the blood-red, dried body of the insect known as *Coccus ilicis*. In Exodus 26 and 28, God directed the use of the dye made from these worms in the construction of the Tabernacle, and even in the garments worn by the high priest and his sons. [To learn more about it, check out this link: https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Exodus/176].

Further, Matthew 27:27-28 says that *the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe*. The Greek word rendered "scarlet" is the Greek word *kokkinos* (#2847), which also refers to the scarlet (crimson) gel-like fluid of the worm that was used in making red dye. So, when the soldiers clothed Jesus with a scarlet robe, as they mocked Him, they (unwittingly) helped to fulfill Scriptures. Further to this, when the newborn 'tola' worms hatch, they not only stay under their mother's crimson, protective shell, they literally feed on her still-living body! This fact should remind us of Jesus' words in the book of John...

53 *Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*

54 *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*

55 *For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*

John 6:53-55

Jesus was using a common figure of speech of the time to refer to taking His Words into oneself just as we take food and water in our body. But, Jesus also explained, very clearly, what this means in verse 63 when He said: *It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.* And, just as the dead mother worm's body loses its crimson color and turns into a white wax which falls to the ground like snow (after three days), and is then is collected and used as shellac to protect wood, so too is Jesus Christ always with us, protecting us even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20). As John writes in Rev 12:11: *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.* Faithful Christians will achieve victory and overcome the Devil (Satan) by the shed blood of our Lamb, Jesus Christ.

So, the fact that David uses the 'tola worm' (i.e. the 'scarlet' worm) here in this Psalm, which speaks of the atonement His blood gives us (as well as His great sufferings within doing so) we see that there's truly a beautiful lesson in it, through another 'type' in the 'scarlet worm'. And in Isa 41:14, the Lord (YHVH) even calls Jacob/Israel a 'worm' when promising to help and redeem them. And much more can be learned from Scriptures such as Isa 66:15-24, Mark 9:38-50 as well (makes a great side-study). But the point for our study in Psalms is that, when David says he felt like a worm (a derogatory term) when men reproached and despised him, the Holy Spirit was truly prophesying of the great shame, mockery, reproach and despising's that His only begotten Son would go through *for us* to save us from our sins – just as the little 'scarlet worm' sacrifices herself for her 'children' too. As was prophesied by Isaiah...

3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all

Isa 53:3-6

So, Jesus allowed Himself to die a criminal's death, which is the lowest form of death, and to be mocked, spit upon, reproached, despised and literally tortured to death, all so we can be healed. As Peter said...

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

24 *Who **his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree**, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: **by whose stripes ye were healed.***

25 *For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.*

1 Peter 2:21-3:1

Psalm 22

7 *All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head saying,*

The *Companion Bible* points out that the word ‘all’ is actually a figure of speech “*Synecdoche*” (apx. 6) which means ‘the greater part’. So, while not everyone who was around David did this (his family and faithful followers didn’t), he is saying that *most* people were treating him this way, at this time in his life. Likewise, not all who watched Jesus be crucified did this to Him (i.e. His own mother, the apostle John and other faithful women) but the ‘greater part of’ (the majority of) the people did this. The Hebrew word for ‘scorn’ here is *la`ag* (#3932) and means to deride (to laugh at or insult contemptuously). And, even though people did this at His death, they even did it to Jesus when He was alive (Matt 9:24). Now, to ‘shoot out the lip’ means to open one’s lips *in mocking* and to ‘shake the head’ means to shake the head in a gesture of surprise or astonishment, at something strange or astonishing. And while they did this to David at some point in his life, they did this to Jesus Christ as well. And what did they say when they laughed Him to scorn, ‘shot out the lip’ and shook their heads when Jesus Christ was on the cross?

Psalm 22

8 *He trusted on the **LORD** that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.*

Verses 7-8 are written about in three out of the four Gospels to document that this indeed happened to Jesus Christ...

39 *And they that passed by **reviled him, wagging their heads,***

40 *And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.*

41 *Likewise also the chief priests **mocking him**, with the scribes and elders, said,*

42 *He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.*

43 *He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.*

44 *The thieves also, which were crucified with him, **cast the same in his teeth.***

Matt 27:39-44

29 *And they that passed by **railed on him, wagging their heads,** and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days,*

30 *Save thyself, and come down from the cross.*

31 *Likewise also the chief priests **mocking** said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.*

32 *Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him **reviled him**.*

Mark 15:29-32

35 *And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them **derided him**, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.*

36 *And the soldiers also **mocked him**, coming to him, and offering him vinegar;*

37 *And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.*

38 *And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

39 *And one of the malefactors which were hanged **railed on him**, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.*

40 *But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?*

41 *And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.*

42 *And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*

43 *And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

Luke 23:35-43

So, from the religious leaders to the soldiers and even one of the thieves (the other wisely repented and asked Jesus' for salvation) many indeed shook their head at him, laughed Him to scorn and 'shot out' their lips against Him. And some were even so foolish as to *mockingly* call upon God to save Him now – which is a way to express extreme disrespect for Jesus and even joy in seeing Him suffer, because they truly hated Him so much. But as Rev 1:7 warns: *Behold, he cometh with clouds; and **every eye shall see him**, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.* And, as Paul says: *Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For **we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ**; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, **whether it be good or bad*** (2 Cor 5:9-10). And yet, even as Jesus was in excruciating pain - and was being openly deride, mocked and totally humiliated - He still had compassion to say (concerning those who did so ignorantly) - *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do* (Luke 23:34). And when we are 'begotten' of the Holy Spirit (James 1:18, 1 John 5:1-5), He will give us the grace to be able to do the same, just as He did for Stephen when he was murdered after the Holy Spirit used him to give one of the best testimonies of history and the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 7:59-60). As Paul advises us...

17 *Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*

18 *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Rom 12:17-13:1

Psalm 22

9 But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.

10 I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.

David now gives the Lord (YHVH) credit for giving him life, even in the flesh. While his mother birthed him, David realized that our Heavenly Father is still the creator of life (1 Pt 4:19, Eph 3:9, Col 1:16, John 1:1-4, 14, Rev 4:11) *because all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made* (John 1:3). In another Psalm, David even says: *For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well* (Ps 139:13-14). In other words, our Heavenly Father created all flesh bodies and He is the one that allows our soul to go into the womb and gives our mother the strength to bring us to term and give birth to us. He is also the one who created a woman with the life nourishing breasts with which to feed her child. And, if you were selected for service by God in the first earth age (Gen 1:4, Eph 1:4, Rom 8:29-30) then you are especially looked after, simply because He has specific duties for His 'elect' (selected ones) to do. As God told Jeremiah: *Before **I formed thee in the belly I knew thee;** and before thou camest forth out of the womb **I sanctified thee,** and **I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations*** (Jer 1:5). While God loves all of His children, there are some He has ordained to serve Him in special ways, as was Jeremiah, Moses, David and of course, Jesus Christ. God even appeared to Joseph in a dream when he was thinking about 'putting away' Mary (after she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit) to take her to wife because Jesus was His holy child who would save Israel from their sins (Mth 1:19-25). And the Lord also warned Joseph, several times, to flee when Herod was seeking Jesus' life (Mth 2:12, 22). So, God indeed took care of His only begotten Son. He provided an earthly man to adopt Jesus and raise Him as his own, care for Mary and Jesus and protect them from the dangers in life. And once you become one of God's 'children', through accepting Jesus Christ and being 'begotten' of the Holy Spirit, *God looks closely after you too*, despite whatever your physical heritage is (Rom 8:14-17).

28 And we know that **all things work together for good to them that love God,** to them who are the called according to his purpose.

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 ***What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?***

32 *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, **how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?***

33 *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

34 *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

35 ***Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

36 *As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

37 *Nay, **in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.***

38 *For I am persuaded, that **neither** death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

39 *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

Rom 8:28-39

We'll pick this up in part 3...

AMEN.