

An Exegetical Study of Psalm 22:20-32

“My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?”

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This paper is a continuation of an exegetical paper treating Psalm 22 presented by Pastor David Reichel at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Morrison, Wisconsin on September 18, 2000. Pastor Reichel treated verses 1-19 (numbering corresponds to the Hebrew). This paper will treat the remaining verses of Psalm 22, verses 20 - 32.

In Pastor Reichel's paper "An Exegetical Study of Psalm 22, for Use in Lenten Preaching" by August Pieper was frequently quoted. This is an excellent commentary and exposition of Psalm 22. I will also be quoting Pieper's exposition of Psalm 22.

A title that has been given to Psalm 22 is: A Prophecy concerning the Messiah's Sufferings and Victory.¹ This title for Psalm 22 adequately pictures the content of this Psalm. Under this theme I have divided Psalm 22 into two parts.

I) The Messiah's Humiliation (vv. 1 - 22)

II) The Messiah's exaltation (vv. 23 - 32)

Professor Brug divided Psalm 22 in the following manner:

I) The Messiah's Suffering (vv. 1 - 22)

II) The Messiah's Glory (vv. 23 - 32)

Verses 20 - 22 are the closing words of the first portion of Psalm 22. In His humiliation the Messiah is crying out to His Father in anguish. He is also crying to Him for help. Verses 23 - 32 are the Messiah's song of praise because the Father heard His cry and delivered Him.

20 וְאַתָּה יְהוָה אֲל־תִּרְחֶק אֵילֹתַי לְעֶזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה

v. 20-NIV: "But you, O LORD, be not far off; O my Strength, come quickly to help me."

Pieper: "But you, O LORD, do not be far from me, O my Strength, come quickly to help me."

Mine: "But you, O LORD, do not be far off, O my Strength, to my help come quickly."

אַתָּה	Pronoun, second persona masculine singular	you
יְהוָה	proper name	LORD
אֲל	particle: Adverb	Not, no
תִּרְחֶק	Verb, qal imperfect, second person masculine singular of רָחַק	go away, be far off
אֵילֹתַי	Noun, feminine singular construct with first person common singular suffix	fortress, strength
לְעֶזְרָתִי	Noun, feminine singular construct with first person common singular suffix	help, aid
חוּשָׁה	verb, qal imperative, masculine singular with paragogic heh from חוּשׂ	make haste; flee

וְאַתָּה יְהוָה, “You O Lord”, are the first words of verse 20. They are placed there for emphasis. Notice a) that the Speaker no longer cries out to His God who is far from Him and b) how He addresses His God, יְהוָה, “O LORD.” The covenant God who said of the Speaker, “This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:1), is now being addressed. The hope the Messiah has is also expressed with the words, אֲלֵתֶרְחֶק, “be not far off.” This is a sharp contrast to His earlier words in the Psalm, “Why have You forsaken Me?” The Father is now addressed as “LORD.” He, the Messiah, whose strength is gone, placed His hope in the LORD. This is the covenant God who, having made a promise, will never break it.

With the words “But you, O LORD ...” Christ turned away from His tormentors and murderers, from whose hands He could hope to receive nothing. He turned to His God, of whom He had earlier confessed that He had abandoned Him and had laid Him in the dust of dearth (v. 16). In spite of that, He clung firmly to God’s faithfulness and mercy. He is the LORD, Israel’s covenant God, who in Hosea 2:19f had pledged:

I will betroth you to Me forever.

I will betroth you in righteousness and justice,
in love and compassion.

I will betroth you in faithfulness.

For that reason the LORD could not abandon Him forever.ⁱⁱ

The LORD is addressed with the words, אֵילֵיָי, “O my Strength.” His Father is the source of His strength. He who was far off is now near with His strength to help His suffering Servant. Even though he prays the LORD to come quickly, הוֹשֵׁה, imperative from הוֹשֵׁ in reality the LORD was always there with His help. This indicates that He is in need of immediate help. “LORD” is parallel to “O my Strength.” To “be far off” has its parallel in “come quickly.”

Verse 21 gives the reason for this imperative.

21 הַצִּילָהּ מִחֶרֶב נַפְשִׁי מִיַּד־כְּלָב יַחֲדָתִי

v. 21 - NIV: “Deliver my life from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dogs.”

Pieper: “Snatch my soul out from under the sword, my most precious possession from the claws of dogs.

Mine: “Snatch from the sword my soul, from the hands of dogs my life.”

הַצִּילָהּ	Verb, hifil imperative, masculine singular with paragogic heh from נָצַל	draw out; take away, deliver
מִחֶרֶב	Noun, feminine singular	sword, cutting instruments
נַפְשִׁי	Noun, feminine singular construct with first person common singular suffix	soul, life
מִיַּד	particle: Preposition + Noun, feminine singular construct	hand
כְּלָב	Noun, masculine singular	dog
יַחֲדָתִי	adjective, feminine singular construct with first person common singular suffix	only one, life (precious thing)

The distress of the Messiah is further stressed with הַצִּילָה, “to snatch” or “take away.” נַפְשִׁי, “my soul” is parallel to יְחִידָתִי, “my life” and מַחֲרֵב, “sword” is parallel to מִיַּד־כְּלָב, “hands of dog.” The imperative applies to both parts of the verse. He was facing imminent death. Therefore the imperative of נִצַּל is used, “snatch.” The “hands of the dogs,” is a literal translation. It refers to the paws of the dogs, that which they use to scratch and dig. Such digging or scratching could cause death.

מַחֲרֵב, “sword” was the weapon usually used to kill people. It stands for those implements which take lives.

His נַפְשִׁי, life, and יְחִידָתִי, “soul” or “life” is in peril of being taken. “Soul” stands standing for the entire person. As with us, His “life” (as I have translated) (literally - only one) was very valuable to Him (Pieper translates “my most precious possession”). We have only one soul and life. Once it is gone, we will never have it again. No wonder it is so precious.

“My most valuable possession” characterizes the human soul, human life, as the most valuable treasure a person can possibly lose. Because the enemies, true to their canine character, scorned the true value of His soul and recklessly tried to destroy it, the Sufferer pleaded, “Snatch my soul ... from the claws of dogs!”ⁱⁱⁱ

More dangers are mentioned in verse 22. The progression moves on to the “jaws” of the lions and then to the “horns of oxen.”

22 הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי מִפִּי אַרְיֵה וּמִקַּרְנֵי רָמִים עֲנִיתָנִי

v. 22 - NIV: “Rescue me from the mouth of the lions; save me from the horns of the wild oxen.”

Pieper: “Rescue me from the jaws of lions, yes, from the horns of wild bulls-you answered me.”

Mine: “Set me free from the mouth of the lion, and from the horns of oxen you spoke.”

הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי	Verb, hifil imperative, masculine singular with first person common singular suffix from יִשַׁע	be spacious; save, set free, preserve
מִפִּי	Noun, masculine singular construct + - particle: Preposition, from +	face or mouth
אַרְיֵה	Noun, masculine singular,	lion
וּמִקַּרְנֵי	Noun, feminine dual number construct,	horn
רָמִים	Noun, masculine plural,	oxen, bull
עֲנִיתָנִי	Verb, qal perfect, second person masculine singular with first person common singular suffix from עָנָה	sing; speak, answer

הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי, “set me free” from יִשַׁע, is an imperative. The distress of His soul is revealed in these words.

Notice that עֲנִיתָנִי, “spoke” from עָנָה is not an imperative. It is a Hebrew perfect. We would have expected it also to be an imperative to carry out the Hebrew parallelism. But the Holy Spirit did not make a mistake when choosing this verb form. The LORD answered Him. Pieper points out that this shift in verb forms is due to

divine inspiration because of the shift of verb forms. Therefore, this is not a plea that the LORD answers Him. It is an acknowledgement that the LORD did answer Him. The line of thought in the Hebrew is expressed in Pieper's translation, which I have followed, rather than the NIV.

What does, "From the horns of the oxen you spoke" mean? I take it to mean the Messiah is in danger of being gored by His enemies. From that position He hears the LORD speak.

The enemies of the Messiah as listed in verses 20 and 21 (dogs, lions, oxen) are in the opposite order they are found in verses 12 - 16 (v. 12 - oxen, v. 13 - lions, v. 16 - dogs).

That the LORD answered Him is expressed in verses 23 - 32. No longer does the Messiah speak words of distress and plead for help. Verses 23 - 32 express words of praise encouraging the congregation of believers and then the whole world to join Him in singing praises to the LORD. Pieper writes:

The hour of God-forsakenness had passed. God had shown compassion to the Son who even in His agony had clung tightly to Him. He had delivered Him from hell and received Him again into His grace. The blessed peace of God had once again entered His soul; his heart overflowed with thankfulness and His mouth with praise.^{iv}

The praise of the Messiah is expressed to 1) His brothers, 2) God's people, and 3) the gentiles.

אֲסַפְּרָה שְׁמִי לְאֶחָי בְּתוֹךְ קְהַל אֲהַלְלֶךָ 23

v. 23 - NIV: "I will declare your name to my brothers; in the congregation I will praise you."

Pieper: "I will proclaim your name to my brothers; I will praise you in the congregation."

Mine: "I will make known your name to my brothers;. in the midst of the Congregation I will praise you."

אֲסַפְּרָה	Verb, piel imperfect, first person common singular cohortative from סַפַּר	scratch; make known, write, tell with praise
שְׁמִי	Noun, masculine singular construct with second person masculine singular suffix	name
לְאֶחָי	ל particle: Preposition + אֶחָי - Noun, masculine plural construct with first person common singular suffix	brother
בְּתוֹךְ	בְּ particle: Preposition + תוֹךְ - Noun masculine singular construct	in the middle
קְהַל	Noun, masculine singular	congregation, assembly
אֲהַלְלֶךָ	Verb, piel imperfect, first person common singular with second person masculine singular suffix from חָלַל	praise

The parallelism in this verse is chiasmatic. אֲסַפְּרָה, "I will make known" parallels אֲהַלְלֶךָ, "I will praise you" and אֶחָי, "brothers" parallels קְהַל, "congregation."

This verse is quoted in Hebrews 2:12. In Hebrews 2:12 Jesus is the speaker of these words: "I will declare Your name to My brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing Your praises" (NIV).

The mood in this and the following verses is definitely different from the mood in the first twenty-two verses. The Messiah speaks in such a manner that you get the impression that He is no longer on the cross but

has risen from the dead. It is necessary for us to remember that Psalm 22 is prophetic. The Messiah knew that the LORD would “see the light of life and be satisfied” (Isaiah 53:11). Brug writes: “Finally we get the answer to the opening question, “Why have You forsaken Me?” The Father let the Son die for the sins of His people so that He could give them eternal blessings.”^v

שְׁמֵי, the “name” of the LORD is everything that we know about Him as He has revealed Himself to us in His Word. His name is “LORD.” His name reveals to us His majesty and glory. אָחֵי, the “brothers” of the Messiah are believers. They are קְהָל, the “congregation,” the gathering of believers who have come to faith in Jesus as the Messiah. They are synonymous to זֶרַע יַעֲקֹב, the “descendants of Jacob,” and יִשְׂרָאֵל, the “seed of Israel” in verse 24. The Messiah’s goal was to glorify the name of His Father among believers so that they would not be ashamed of the LORD. How blessed we are to have the LORD come to us and address us as brothers. This means that we are also heirs with Him (Romans 8:17). What is His is ours. What is ours became His.

24 יִרְאֵי יְהוָה הִלְלוּהוּ כָּל־זֶרַע יַעֲקֹב כְּבִדּוּהוּ וְגִוְרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ כָּל־זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל

v. 24 - NIV: “You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!”

Pieper: “You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify him! All you descendants of Israel, revere him!”

Mine: “You who fear the LORD, praise him! All descendants of Jacob, glorify him! Revere him all seed of Israel!”

יִרְאֵי	Verb, qal participle, masculine plural from ירא	fear
הִלְלוּהוּ	Verb, piel imperative, masculine plural with third person masculine singular suffix from הלל	praise
כָּל	Noun, masculine singular construct	all
זֶרַע	Noun, masculine singular	seed; descendants
יַעֲקֹב	proper name	Jacob
כְּבִדּוּהוּ	Verb, piel imperative, masculine plural with third person masculine singular suffix from כבד	be heavy; honor
וְגִוְרוּ	Verb, qal imperative, masculine plural from גור	tarry; fear, revere
מִמֶּנּוּ	particle: Preposition with third person masculine singular suffix	
יִשְׂרָאֵל	proper name	Israel

הִלְלוּהוּ, כְּבִדּוּהוּ, and גִּוְרוּ, meaning “praise,” “glorify,” and “revere” respectively are all imperatives. Even though the Messiah had endured such humiliation even at the hands of His Father, He encourages all the people of the world, spiritual Israel, to praise, glorify, and revere the LORD. יִרְאֵי is a participle, the object of those being addressed by the Messiah. It literally means “to turn aside out the way of another because you are fearful or timid.” Who among us is not fearful or timid in the presence of the LORD? We want to turn aside out of His

way for fear because we know He has every right to destroy us. Think of Adam and Eve when the LORD came to them after they had eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Instead of warning us to fear and turn away from the LORD, we are encouraged to praise, glorify and revere Him. We can only do so because He is kind and gracious to us.

The people who believe in the Messiah, those who realize that He has redeemed them, are referred to as **זָרַע יַעֲקֹב**, descendants of Jacob and **זָרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל**, seed of Israel. They need this encouragement because, after seeing the Messiah in His great humility, they would naturally turn from Him and seek another messiah.

The question has been asked: “Is the Messiah still speaking or is the Psalmist David now speaking?” I am following the interpretation of the previous presenter when he quoted Pieper, “With the exception of the superscription, the entire psalm is spoken by the Messiah.”^{vi}

It is significant that the Messiah directs our attention to **יְהוָה**, “the LORD,” the covenant God who has loved us with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3).

כִּי לֹא־בָזָה וְלֹא שָׁקַץ עֲנוֹת עֲנִי

וְלֹא־הִסְתִּיר פְּנֵיו מִמֶּנּוּ וּבִשְׁוֹעוֹ אָלָיו שָׁמַע

v. 25 - NIV: “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.”

Pieper: “For he has not despised or disdained the suffering of the afflicted one, he has not hidden his face from him, but when he cried to him, he heard.”

Mine: “Because he has not despised and he has not loathed the affliction of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him, but in asking him for help, he heard.”

כִּי	particle: Preposition	
בָּזָה	Verb, qal perfect, third person masculine singular	despise
שָׁקַץ	Verb, piel perfect, third person masculine singular from שָׁקַץ	contaminate; loathe
עֲנוֹת	Noun, feminine singular construct	poverty; affliction
עֲנִי	adjective, masculine singular	poor; afflicted
הִסְתִּיר	Verb, hifil perfect, third person masculine singular from סָתַר	hide
פְּנֵיו	Noun, feminine & masculine plural construct with third person masculine singular suffix	face
מִמֶּנּוּ	מִן particle: Preposition with third person masculine singular suffix	
וּבִשְׁוֹעוֹ	Verb, piel infinitive construct with third person masculine singular suffix	be ample; ask from
	שׁוֹעַ	help
אָלָיו	third person masculine singular suffix, object of שׁוֹעַ	
שָׁמַע	Verb, qal perfect, third person masculine singular from שָׁמַע	hear

The subject of **בָּזָה**, **שָׁקַץ**, and **הִסְתִּיר** is God, the One who is spoken of in verse 2 as forsaking the Messiah. The **עֲנִי** “afflicted one” is the Messiah. It is the Messiah who did the **וּבִשְׁוֹעוֹ**, “asking.”

Is it something so extraordinary, that God should finally have taken pity on His Son on the cross and answered His plea for help? Yes, it is! Remember that Jesus appeared here not as God's beloved, His one and only Son, but as the Substitute for a world under God's curse, as a condemned sinner who was detestable in the eyes of God.^{vii}

מֵאַתָּה תְּהִלָּתִי בְּקִהְלָרַב נְדָרֵי אֲשֶׁלִּם נִגְדָּי יִרְאֵיו 26

v. 26 - NIV: "From you comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly; before those who fear you will I fulfill my vows."

Pieper: "My praise of you will resound in the great assembly, I will fulfill my vow before those who fear him."

Mine: "From you – my praise in the large assembly, I will pay my vows before those fearing him.

מֵאַתָּה	particle: Preposition with second person masculine singular suffix	from you
תְּהִלָּתִי	Noun, feminine singular construct with first person common singular suffix	praise; hymn
בְּקִהְלָרַב	Noun, masculine singular	congregation, assembly
רַב	adjective, masculine singular	great, large; many
נְדָרֵי	Noun, masculine plural construct with first person common singular suffix	vow, promise
אֲשֶׁלִּם	Verb, piel imperfect, first person common singular from שָׁלַם	be whole, safe; keep safe; pay, restore
נִגְדָּי	particle: Preposition	in the presence of
יִרְאֵיו	Verb, qal participle, masculine plural with third person masculine singular suffix from יָרָא	fear, reverencing

מֵ indicates source. The Messiah is saying that His praise has its source in the LORD, the God of grace and mercy. Not only is praise about the LORD, it is also from the LORD. The בְּקִהְלָרַב, "assembly" is רַב, that is, "large" or "great" because it is made up of so "many." It is made up of all the believers of the world. It is parallel to יִרְאֵיו, "those fearing" Him.

Did the Messiah make a נְדָר, a "vow" when He was forsaken by God?

"Fulfilling a vow, carrying out a promise made at a time of fearful suffering, is an Old Testament expression of giving thanks (Psalm 50:14). ... The One whom God delivered now pledged to bring a thankoffering in the presence of all who fear God. They were to see it and hear it and be encouraged to join in the thanking and praising."^{viii}

The Messiah was not ashamed to give glory to the LORD. He praised the LORD in the presence of many others because the LORD accepted the sacrifice that He gave to the LORD and the LORD delivered Him. Our praise is given to the LORD, not because of any sacrifices we offer to the LORD, but because of the sacrifice the

Messiah gave to God on our behalf as our Substitute. By looking at the manner in which He gave thanks we learn to give thanks.

Praise follows thanksgiving. The reason for giving thanks is expressed in the words of praise. We see this in the next verse.

27 יֹאכְלוּ עֲנָוִים וְיִשְׂבְּעוּ יְהַלְלוּ יְהוָה דְרָשׁוּ
יְחִי לְבַבְכֶם לְעֶד

v. 27 - NIV: “The poor will eat and be satisfied; they who seek the LORD will praise him—may your hearts live forever!”

Pieper: “The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the LORD will praise him. Your hearts will live forever.”

Mine: “The poor will eat and be satisfied, those who seek the LORD will praise him. Your hearts will live forever.”

יֹאכְלוּ	Verb, qal imperfect, third person masculine plural from אָכַל	eat, devour
עֲנָוִים	adjective, masculine plural	poor
וְיִשְׂבְּעוּ	verb, qal imperfect, third person masculine plural from שָׂבַע	satisfied, filled
יְהַלְלוּ	Verb, piel imperfect, third person masculine plural from הָלַל	praise
דְרָשׁוּ	Verb, qal participle, masculine plural construct with third person masculine singular suffix from רָשָׁה	rub, tread; seek
יְחִי	Verb, qal imperfect, third person masculine singular apocopated from חָיָה	live
לְבַבְכֶם	Noun, masculine singular construct with second person masculine plural suffix from לֵב	heart
לְעֶד	Noun, masculine singular with ל particle: Preposition	forever

עֲנָוִים, “poor” can refer to those who are physically or spiritually poor (Matthew 5:3). I understand it to be the latter. If עֲנָוִים refers to only the physically poor, David as well as other wealthy believers in the Old Testament would have been excluded. יֹאכְלוּ, “eat,” יְהַלְלוּ, “praise,” and יְחִי, “live,” are imperfects. I have translated with the English future. The picture before us is one of sharing. When an individual brought an offering of thanks to the LORD, he invited his friends to join him in the feast that was prepared (Leviticus 7:11 ff). They would eat the offering given to the LORD. The Messiah has invited us to join in the thanksgiving He offered to His Father. Through the offering the Messiah has given to the LORD our hearts are satisfied and we are led to praise and thank the LORD.

Luther points out that this spiritual eating by the poor in spirit takes place when in faith they hear the proclamation of the gospel; in support he adduces Luke 4:18 and Matthew 1:5: “The good news is preached to the poor.” This is the thanksgiving meal from which we receive life eternal.^{ix}

לֵב, “hearts” represent the souls of the people. As believers in the Messiah we are assured that we will not die. We will live forever because He has forgiven our sins (Psalm 23:6; John 11:25, 26).

Those who דָּרְשׁוּ, “seek” the LORD, those who want to have His name revealed to them, will want to know more about Him. When they know more about Him, they will יְהַלְלוּ, “praise” Him. You will not be able to stop them from speaking about what the LORD has done. Praise is natural when the heart is filled with thanks.

What has been stated in verses 23 - 27 about Israel is now promised to the Gentiles as well.

יִזְכְּרוּ וַיָּשׁוּבוּ אֶל־יְהוָה כָּל־אֲפִסֵי־אָרֶץ 28
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְפָנֶיךָ כָּל־מְשַׁפְּחוֹת גּוֹיִם

v. 28 - NIV: “All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him,”

Pieper: “All the ends of the earth will become aware of this and turn to the LORD, all the families of the nations will bow down in worship before your face.”

Mine: “All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the tribes of the nations will bow down before your face.”

יִזְכְּרוּ	Verb, qal imperfect, third person masculine plural from זָכַר	remember, recollect
וַיָּשׁוּבוּ	Verb, qal imperfect, third person masculine plural from שׁוּב	turn, return
אֲפִסֵי	particle: Adverb	cease, end, extreme
אָרֶץ	Noun, feminine & masculine singular	earth
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ	Verb, hitpael imperfect, third person masculine plural from שָׁתַח	bow oneself down; worship, honor
לְפָנֶיךָ	Noun, feminine & masculine plural construct with second person masculine singular suffix with לְ - particle: Preposition	to your face; before you
מְשַׁפְּחוֹת	Noun, feminine plural construct	kinds, tribe, nations
גּוֹיִם	Noun, masculine plural	nations

With these words the barrier of race is removed.

אֲפִסֵי־אָרֶץ, “the ends of the earth”, is parallel to מְשַׁפְּחוֹת גּוֹיִם, “the tribes of the nations.” כָּל־, “all”, is repeated in both segments of this verse indicating universality. The promise of God’s forgiveness in the Messiah is universal. It is for all people. It is to be shared by us with as many people as we can.

יִזְכְּרוּ, remember, וַיָּשׁוּבוּ, turn, and וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ, bow down (literally it indicates that we turn our bodies to the ground) are imperfect tenses. These words are a call to repent. They are also a promise that the word of the LORD will accomplish what He desires (Isaiah 55:11). We are confronted with the great news of our rescue. We have heard about it. It is something that we are to hear daily and recall. זָכַר, “remember,” is not only to recall what has been told to us, but that we keep turning it over in our minds. We are to hide it in our hearts (Psalm 119:11) and meditate on it all day long (Psalm 119:97). We are also to be God’s instruments to carry it to “all the ends of the earth” so that “all the tribes of the nations will bow down before” the face of the LORD.

Proud heathen, who have turned their backs on God and served idols with mindless and perverted devotion, will be confronted by God’s great act of rescue, recognize it as true, and repent and turn to the LORD.^x

We can be so thankful that the LORD has revealed His name to us. We willingly bow before our exalted LORD and give glory to Him. The day is coming when “every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:11) whether they do it willingly or are forced to do so.

The following verse states the cause of why the nations will worship the LORD.

29 כִּי לַיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה הַמַּשֵּׁל בְּגוֹיִם

v. 29 - NIV: “for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations.”

Pieper: “For dominion is the LORD’s and he will rule over the heathen.”

Mine: “because to the LORD is the dominion and ruling over the nations.”

הַמְּלוּכָה	Noun, feminine singular	dominion, kingdom
הַמַּשֵּׁל	Verb, qal participle, masculine singular from מַשֵּׁל	make like; rule
בְּגוֹיִם	Noun, masculine plural of גוֹיִם + בְּ insep. prep. w/ article	

כִּי is causal. לַיהוָה is placed toward the beginning of the sentence for emphasis. הַמְּלוּכָה, “dominion” belongs to the LORD and none else. This is as it should be. The dominion and ruling that the LORD exercises is not what the world thinks of, however. We pray, “Thy kingdom come.” It is this kingdom, ruling with the Gospel that is referred to here. How sad that there are so many who think that they are worthy of such honor. מַשֵּׁל is a Qal active participle. It along with הַמְּלוּכָה, “dominion” are the objects which belong to the LORD. Who in our world can claim “I rule among the nations?”

God alone deserves dominion, and He has always exercised it. Now, however, He wants to exercise dominion in another sense. Through the gospel He wants to bring the world under the scepter of His grace, to turn it around, so that it serves Him willingly.^{xi}

If anything can convince the nations of the world that the LORD is “ruling over the nations,” it is the gospel message, the victory that the Great Sufferer has won. How comforting and reassuring, especially in the time of affliction this is for us.

30 אָכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ אֶרֶץ לְפָנָיו

יִכְרְעוּ כָּל-יֹרְדֵי עָפָר וְנִפְשׁוּ לֹא חַיִּים

v. 30 - NIV: “All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him—those who cannot keep themselves alive.”

Pieper: “All the rich of the earth will feast and fall down in worship, all who go down to the dust, who cannot keep themselves alive, will bow before him.”

Mine: “All the rich of the earth will eat and bow down before your face, all going down to dust will bow down, even his soul he cannot keep alive.

אָכְלוּ	Verb, qal perfect, third person common plural from אָכַל	eat; feast
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ	Verb, hitpael imperfect waw consec., third person masculine plural from שָׁתַח	bow oneself down; worship, honor
דִּשְׁנֵי	adjective, masculine plural construct	fat; rich
יִכְרְעוּ	Verb, qal imperfect, third person masculine plural from כָּרַע	bend, bow to one’s knees
יֹרְדֵי	Verb, qal participle, masculine plural construct from יָרַד	go down, descend
עָפָר	Noun, masculine singular	ground, dust
וְנַפְשׁוֹ	Noun, feminine singular construct with third person masculine singular suffix	
חַיָּה	Verb, piel perfect, third person masculine singular of חָיָה	

The LORD also removes the barrier of social status.

The LORD has prepared a spiritual banquet for us to enjoy. There is not one person you can name for whom this banquet has not been prepared. It is for the דִּשְׁנֵי, literally “fat” and then “rich.” It is for those who יֹרְדֵי עָפָר, Qal participle, are dying, “going down to dust.” The last phrase לֹא חַיָּה וְנַפְשׁוֹ, “even his soul he cannot keep alive,” I have taken to be exegetical to the second phrase. Pieper’s translation and the NIV bring out this thought very well.

אָכְלוּ is a Qal perfect. I have translated it as a prophetic perfect. וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ, Hithpael imperfect, “bow oneself down,” “worship,” and יִכְרְעוּ, qal imperfect, “bend” (one’s knees) or “bow,” are acts of worship.

About כָּל, “all,” Pieper writes:

People from every situation in life, of whatever rank- master and subject, rich and poor, virtuous and scandalous, free and slave, educated and uneducated, living and dying (the thief on Calvary)- will come to know God’s grace and praise Him for it. No one’s position in life makes him ineligible for the mercy of God.^{xii}

31 זָרַע יַעֲבֹדֵנוּ יִסְפָּר לְאֲדָנָי לְדוֹר

v. 31 NIV: “Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord.”

Pieper: “Posterity will serve him; children’s children will be told about the LORD.”

Mine: “Descendants will serve him; he shall tell about the LORD to the generations.”

זָרַע	Noun, masculine singular	seed; descendants
יַעֲבֹדֵנוּ	Verb, qal imperfect, third person masculine singular with third person masculine singular suffix of	scratch, write; tell
יִסְפָּר	Verb, pual imperfect, third person masculine singular from	

לְאֲדָנִי	Noun, masculine plural construct with first person common singular suffix with
לְ	particle: Preposition
לְדֹר	Noun, masculine singular with לְ particle: Preposition

Now the LORD removes the barrier of age.

זָרַע, “Descendants”, literally “seed” from every generation will serve the Messiah. Such service will be in telling, יִסְפֹּר, Pual imperfect, literally “scratch” or “write” and then to “tell” about the LORD. לְאֲדָנִי is used instead of לְאֲדָנִי. The זָרַע, “generations” are those yet unborn who will in turn believe in the LORD and praise Him for His glory with the result that future generations will also believe in the LORD.

יְבֹאוּ וַיְגִידוּ צְדָקְתוֹ לְאָם נוֹלָד כִּי עָשָׂה 32

v. 32 NIV: “They will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn—for he has done it.

Pieper: “They will come and proclaim his righteousness to a people not yet born: ‘He has accomplished it!’”

Mine: “They will come and they will tell his righteousness to a people to be born: ‘He has done it.’”

יְבֹאוּ	Verb, qal imperfect, third person masculine plural apocopated from בּוֹא	go; come
וַיְגִידוּ	Verb, hifil imperfect, third person masculine plural from נָגַד	be in front; show, tell
צְדָקְתוֹ	Noun, feminine singular construct with third person masculine singular suffix	righteousness, justice
לְאָם	Noun, masculine singular + לְ particle: Preposition	people
נוֹלָד	Verb, nifal participle, masculine singular from יָלַד	bring forth, bear; be born
עָשָׂה	Verb, qal perfect, third person masculine singular from עָשָׂה	make, do

“It” in the second part of this verse refers to צְדָקְתוֹ, the “righteousness” that the LORD has עָשָׂה, “work,” “do.” כִּי can state either 1) cause or 2) a quotation. I have taken it be the latter, similar to ὅτι.

The LORD is the One who has worked our salvation. He is the only One who is worthy of our praise and adoration. Righteousness belongs to the LORD. Not only do we think of the righteousness of the LORD in the sense that He is righteous. He forsook His Son. He sentenced the Messiah to suffer the pains of hell. He was righteous when He spoke His verdict. He comes to us and declares that we are righteous in His sight through faith in the Messiah, Jesus. The righteousness of the Messiah is now credited to us. The LORD is righteous in giving this decree. “In Christ He has performed all that was necessary for our salvation. He, and He alone, deserves all praise and glory for it.”^{xiii}

The צְדָקְתוֹ of God is a truth worth perpetuating.

Having studied Psalm 22 we as children of God, as pastors and servants of the LORD, are again reminded of the great blessings we have received from the LORD.

Solo Dei Gloria

To God be the glory; great things He has done!
He so loved the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin
And opened the life-gate that all may go in.
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let the people rejoice!
Oh, come to the Father through Jesus the Son
And give Him the glory- great things He has done! (CW 399:1)

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ⁱ Leupold, p. 194

ⁱⁱ Pieper, p. 305

ⁱⁱⁱ Pieper, p. 306

^{iv} Pieper, p. 306

^v Brug, p. 110

^{vi} Reichel, p. 2

^{vii} Pieper, p. 308

^{viii} Pieper, p. 308

^{ix} Pieper, p. 309

^x Pieper, p. 310

^{xi} Pieper, p. 310

^{xii} Pieper, p. 310

^{xiii} Stoeckhardt, p. 83