

April 28, 2019

Psalm 22

The grass is greening, the flowers are blooming, the sky was blue. And then what? You knew what was coming; the weather-woman told us - snow. Children, you know what's coming - next month, on a Saturday morning, the weather warm, the sky blue, friends calling. You know what's coming - every Saturday morning: "Have you cleaned your room?" every spring: "Have you swept the garage yet?" every time your friends call: "Have you done your chores yet?" You know what's coming.

You know what's coming; you've seen that look before - another broken promise. You know what's coming; you've heard that tone of voice before - more lies. You know what's coming - another kick to the gut, another cut, another one of the million cuts that are killing you inside. You know what's coming.

You know what's coming - every month, another bill you can't pay. Every doctor, another test. Every morning, more of the same. You know what's coming.

And sometimes it seems - there's no end; no way out. Sometimes it seems Murphy's Law rules - "If anything can go wrong, it will go wrong." And when it rains, it pours. So what do you do? Sometimes you just want to scream: "I can't take it any more!" Sometimes you just want a screen to hide you, a bottle to numb you. Sometimes it seems that the whole world is against you; sometimes it seems that even God is against you. And you know what's coming.

Jesus knew what was coming. He knew the weather he was coming to; he knew the chores his mom and dad would find for him. He knew how we hurt each other, how we would hurt him. He knew the broken promises he would face, the lies he would hear. Jesus knew what was coming. He knew the cost and the bill collectors. He knew what allergies and arthritis and colds and cancer do to us; he knew what whips and fists and cross and nails would do to him. Jesus knew what was coming. He knew he would have no place to hide when the world turned against him, no place to hide when God

turned against him. Jesus knew what was coming.

A thousand years before Jesus went to the cross, in Psalm 22 Jesus spoke through David so that we can know what Jesus knew. Jesus knew how God would turn against him. **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me!”** Jesus knew how the world would turn against him - **“I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: ‘He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.’ Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.”** Jesus knew what was coming. (He knew there was no stopping it, no way out.)

How could he face it? Knowing what was coming, how could he leave heaven? Knowing what was coming, how could he go to Jerusalem? Knowing what was coming, how could Jesus keep on going? Jesus knew what was coming! He knew his cry: **“My God, why have you forsaken me?”** would be answered. He knew his cry: **“O LORD, be not far off; O my Strength, come quickly to help me. Deliver my life Rescue me** [save me; hoshiani (remember hosanna?)” Jesus knew his cry would be answered.

So, knowing what was coming, how could Jesus keep on going? Jesus knew what was coming. More specifically, Jesus knew what God had coming for him. Even when it looked hopeless, Jesus knew, the LORD, his God, would answer his prayer. Even when he felt helpless, Jesus knew the LORD, his God, would deliver him. Even though he would look like a wreck, Jesus knew the LORD, his God, wouldn't kick him to the curb. Jesus knew the LORD, his God, would hear and answer his cry: **“Save me.”** That's what kept Jesus going. Easter is what kept Jesus going.

And then what? Jesus knew he would get to celebrate Easter! Not alone. Not just in heaven. Jesus knew he'd get to celebrate Easter with his disciples; he knew he'd get to celebrate Easter here with you. Celebrate

how? Well, how do we celebrate Easter? We do some talking and we do some eating, don't we? Jesus saw himself doing the same thing - celebrating Easter with us, serving up a meal, a meal that would satisfy the rich and the poor alike. Jesus saw himself celebrating Easter with us, talking with us, talking up the big rescue worked by God. "Look what our God can do! Look what our God does! The lions, the bulls, the dogs ... all the powers of evil couldn't stop him. Death and the grave couldn't stop him. Our God keeps his word; our God delivers his people!" That future, celebrating Easter with you - that's what kept Jesus going.

We saw it play out on Good Friday. On the way to the cross, then on the cross, Jesus was fed an earful of evil, but that evil talk didn't stop him. Why not? Jesus knew what was coming. Evil wouldn't get the last word. Jesus knew he would get the last word; he would get to answer the evil talk of this world. How? He would get to talk up the big rescue worked by God - "Look what our God has done! Look what our God can do!"

With all that Jesus was up against, that's what kept Jesus going. He knew what was coming. He knew his God would come through for him. He knew he'd get to celebrate Easter with you.

What does that mean for us? We know some of what we have coming. Some of what we have coming frustrates us; some angers us. Some makes us sick inside; some breaks our hearts. Some worries us; some makes us afraid, afraid to go forward. With all that we have coming, how can we keep going? The same way Jesus kept going. Jesus knew God would come through for him, and we get to know God will come through for us. We might not see it; we might not feel it; but we get to know it. Our feelings might tell us we're helpless and hopeless, so why bother? Voices in us and around us might tear us down: "You're not good enough; where is your God now?" But there is another voice you get to listen to. It's the voice of someone who knows your worst and he says, to you: "Look to the cross, I took what you have coming; listen to me: I forgive you." That's the voice you get to listen to. It's the voice of someone who has been through the worst of this world and he says, to you: "The LORD came through for me, and the LORD will come through for you." With all that's coming, that's the voice you get to listen to. It's the

voice of someone fired up for you, to celebrate Easter with you forever! And he will make it happen. That's the voice you get to listen to.

Then whether the sky is blue or gray; whether you're hearing love or hate, truth or lie; no matter what you see you have coming in this world, with Jesus this is what you have coming - your God will come through for you; he will work Easter for you! Amen.