

Psalm 69 • Christ on the Cross

Introduction

The surest way we know that this is a Messianic Psalm – a Psalm speaking about Christ – is by the fact that it's referenced seven times in the New Testament as applying to Him. It contains many things which verify that the historical event of the cross fulfilled God's advanced announcements it would take place.. But there is a greater application of this Psalm for us in that the details of what happened on the cross are not only documented here as they were personally experienced by Christ, but reveal how they work within each of us on the same personal level. Ultimately this is not merely an historical event that we study from afar like any other occurrence in history, but something that every person in every age must deal with on a personal level.

¹Save me, O God,
For the waters have threatened my life.
²I have sunk in deep mire, and there is no
foothold;
I have come into deep waters, and a flood
overflows me.
³I am weary with my crying; my throat is
parched;
My eyes fail while I wait for my God.
⁴Those who hate me without a cause are
more than the hairs of my head;
Those who would destroy me are
powerful, being wrongfully my
enemies;
What I did not steal, I then have to
restore.

[Read v.1-4]

Q: How might this, in general, speak to Christ's role as a Priest?

A: Priests not only offered up sacrifices, but it was part of their duties to intercede, to offer up supplications.

In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.

Hebrews 5:7

Q: From a literary standpoint the imagery of "deep waters and a flood" provide a picture of approaching death, but what might they represent spiritually?

A: These same terms are used throughout Scripture to refer to all the nations of the earth. It's a spiritual way of saying that all the people of the earth are in alignment against Christ.

Q: To someone growing up with the Old Testament, what might be significant to them about the statement, "My eyes fail"?

A: One of the curses of the Law (Lev. 26:16) was the failing of the eyes. It might indicate Christ becoming a curse for His people.

Q: What is the application of v.4 in the statement, "What I did not steal, I then have to restore"?

A: This verse is a very strong way of conveying the fact that although Christ never broke the Law, He bore the penalty of it on everyone's behalf.

Point: We are presented with a glimpse into the true experience on the cross, of Christ interceding on behalf of everyone even though everyone rejected Him and was against Him.

⁵O God, it is You who knows my folly,
And my wrongs are not hidden from You.
⁶May those who wait for You not be
ashamed through me, O Lord GOD of
hosts;
May those who seek You not be
dishonored through me, O God of
Israel,
⁷Because for Your sake I have borne
reproach;
Dishonor has covered my face.
⁸I have become estranged from my

[Read v.5-12]

Q: What might be an example of the reproach Christ experienced as expressed in these verses?

When His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, "He has lost His senses."

Mark 3:21

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brothers
And an alien to my mother's sons.
⁹For zeal for Your house has consumed
me,
And the reproaches of those who
reproach You have fallen on me.
¹⁰When I wept in my soul with fasting,
It became my reproach.
¹¹When I made sackcloth my clothing,
I became a byword to them.
¹²Those who sit in the gate talk about me,
And I am the song of the drunkards.

Q: What might be an example of the domestic estrangement Christ experienced as expressed in these verses?

*For not even His brothers were believing in Him.
John 7:5*

Q: What might be an example of commitment to God's service Christ experienced as expressed in these verses?

*His disciples remembered that it was written, "ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME."
John 2:17*

Q: What is the basic thought being communicated in v.10-11?

A: That no matter what Christ did, even if it was the most humblest of things, the people rejected and ridiculed Him.

*"For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon!' The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'
Luke 7:33-34*

Q: What is the basic thought being communicated in v.12?

A: Those "who sit in the gate" refer to the leaders who in those days most often conducted all their business at the city gates. Those referred to as "drunkards" refer to those people who would have been at the extreme end of the spectrum opposite the leaders at the gates. It's a poetic way of stating that Christ is being rejected and ridiculed by everyone from top to bottom, rich to poor, powerful to weak and everyone in between.

Point: Christ's rejection was complete within His family, society, and every nation, discounting not just His message but His works.

[Read v.13-15]

¹³But as for me, my prayer is to You, O
LORD, at an acceptable time;
O God, in the greatness of Your
lovingkindness,
Answer me with Your saving truth.
¹⁴Deliver me from the mire and do not let
me sink;
May I be delivered from my foes and
from the deep waters.
¹⁵May the flood of water not overflow me
Nor the deep swallow me up,
Nor the pit shut its mouth on me.

Q: What is the example Christ provides at the moment of greatest distress?

A: Although He is honest about the circumstances, He does not rave and rant about Himself, but undertakes prayer to God who is ruler of all circumstances.

*Thus says the LORD,
"In a favorable time I have answered You,
And in a day of salvation I have helped You;
And I will keep You and give You for a covenant of the people,
To restore the land, to make them inherit the desolate heritages;
Isaiah 49:8*

Q: What is significant about the fact that Christ requests God the Father to "Answer me with Your saving truth"?

A: There is a connection between God's actions and His Word. If the work of the cross is fully accomplished by God, it will confirm the whole Word of salvation in and through His Son, confirming that His Word is a true and real salvation.

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Q: And how would answering Christ's petitions in v.14-15 fulfill His greater request that the Word of God's salvation be confirmed?

A: These are all the things originally detailed in the opening verses which are all aligned against Christ. It would show that every single one of these things are overcome by God's salvation, all physical circumstances, human persecution, and general rejection by the world.

Point: *The working of salvation through the cross is actually a physical confirmation of the power and truth of God's Word.*

¹⁶Answer me, O LORD, for Your lovingkindness is good;
According to the greatness of Your compassion, turn to me,
¹⁷And do not hide Your face from Your servant,
For I am in distress; answer me quickly.
¹⁸Oh draw near to my soul and redeem it;
Ransom me because of my enemies!
¹⁹You know my reproach and my shame and my dishonor;
All my adversaries are before You.

[Read v.16-19]

Q: What is Christ experiencing at this point on the cross?

A: The worst consequences of bearing all mankind's sin, which is the turning away of the Father.

Point: *Regardless of the intensity of the physical circumstances, Christ testifies that the even greater pain is spiritual separation from God the Father. Our greatest fear should not be suffering in this life, but the quality of our relationship with God.*

Q: What does Christ desire to be one of the results of God's personal redemption?

A: That it would be a testimony to His "enemies" and "adversaries".

Application: *Even in the midst of the crucifixion experience, Christ's greater concern is for His relationship with the Father and that His redemption would serve as an example to even those most aggressively rejecting Him personally.*

²⁰Reproach has broken my heart and I am so sick.
And I looked for sympathy, but there was none,
And for comforters, but I found none.
²¹They also gave me gall for my food
And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

[Read v.20-21]

Q: What is being documented here?

A: That where all the humans present at Christ's crucifixion were concerned, there was absolutely no compassion, mercy, or the least bit of comfort offered. It's not that He was merely rejected, but completely forsaken and despised.

Q: So what do we now know that the drink offered to Christ at the cross (John 19:29-30) represented spiritually?

A: His being completely and utterly forsaken and rejected spiritually, physically, and emotionally by every human being. It was literally a bitter thing to taste, this complete rejection by everyone.

Point: *The work of the cross is not limited to simply dealing with the issue of sin, but at the time it took place represents the complete rejection of Christ on every level by everyone present.*

²²May their table before them become a snare;
And when they are in peace, may it become a trap.
²³May their eyes grow dim so that they cannot see,
And make their loins shake continually.
²⁴Pour out Your indignation on them,
And may Your burning anger overtake them.

[Read v.22-28]

Q: How does this list of consequence portray an increasing pattern?

1. The items in v.22-23 are basically personal consequences: their table, their peace, their eyes, make their loins shake.
2. The items in v.24-26 are group consequences: Pour out Your indignation, make their camp desolate, none dwelling in their tents.
3. In v.27-28 they conclude with the ultimate spiritual consequences: Add iniquity to iniquity, may they not come into Your righteousness, name blotted out of the book of life.

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²⁵May their camp be desolate;
May none dwell in their tents.
²⁶For they have persecuted him whom
You Yourself have smitten,
And they tell of the pain of those whom
You have wounded.
²⁷Add iniquity to their iniquity,
And may they not come into Your
righteousness.
²⁸May they be blotted out of the book of
life
And may they not be recorded with the
righteous.

²⁹But I am afflicted and in pain;
May Your salvation, O God, set me
securely on high.
³⁰I will praise the name of God with song
And magnify Him with thanksgiving.
³¹And it will please the LORD better than
an ox
Or a young bull with horns and hoofs.
³²The humble have seen it and are glad;
You who seek God, let your heart revive.
³³For the LORD hears the needy
And does not despise His who are
prisoners.

³⁴Let heaven and earth praise Him,
The seas and everything that moves in
them.
³⁵For God will save Zion and build the
cities of Judah,
That they may dwell there and possess it.
³⁶The descendants of His servants will
inherit it,
And those who love His name will dwell
in it.

Point: The consequence for rejecting Christ are experienced by both the individual and nations at large. The consequence they experience in the course of this life are merely a shadow of the more dire consequences to follow in eternity.

[Read v.29-33]

Q: What are v.29-30 expressing from an Old Testament point of view?

A: That the system of offerings and sacrifices established by the Law were not just fulfilled in Christ, but superior in surpassing them.

Point: The earthly offerings and sacrifices were but a “covering” – a temporary measure which was the most a human could do; but the work of the cross was the permanent fulfillment of the Law and redress for sin.

Q: How was v.32 fulfilled at Christ’s first coming?

A: Those to whom He appeared for the 40 days after His resurrection can definitely be characterized as “the humble”, not being prominent people in their time or society. “Let your heart revive” reminds of what occurred to the men on the road to Emmaus who testified, “Were not our hearts burning within us?” (Luke 21:32)

Q: Who are the “prisoners” being referred to in v.32?

A: It could refer to those who are imprisoned for their faith, but in the greater spiritual sense it probably refers to those who are prisoners to sin and the Law before coming to Christ who subsequently become prisoners of hope in Christ afterward.

Point: Everything changes through the prism of the cross: the Law is fulfilled, the offerings and sacrifices are fulfilled, and the heart is changed from a servant of death to a servant of Life.

[Read v.34-36]

Q: Are these verses speaking literally or symbolically?

A: Literally.

Q: So what does this mean in terms of literal Zion and Judah?

A: It is speaking of the work to yet be completed both literally where Israel (“Judah”) and Jerusalem (“Zion”) are concerned, and for all mankind in the coming Millennial Reign.

“Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant **with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah**, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. “But this is the covenant which I will make **with the house of Israel** after those days,” declares the

LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."
Jeremiah 31:31-34

Overall Application

Probably the most important pattern conveyed by this Psalm is how personal the cross is. It was personal in a completely unique way for Christ as He experienced it, but it can only have an effect on a personal level with each individual. Those present who crucified Him were motivated in very personal ways just as those who accept the work of the cross experience it personally.