

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.

Read verses 1-4

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.

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.

Application: *We are presented with a glimpse into the true experience on the cross, of Christ 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 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.

Read verses 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

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.

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

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.

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 verses 13-15

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.

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.

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

Read verses 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.

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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 .

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.
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.

Read verses 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.

Application: *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.*

Read verses 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.

Application: *The consequences 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.*

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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.

Read verses 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.

Application: *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 verses 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

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Application: The work of “Judah” and “Zion” speaks of what is yet to come in the ***Millennial Kingdom***.

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.