

Christ In The Old Testament

Lesson 6

Psalm 69

Psalm 69 is similar to the text of our previous lesson in that it is written from the perspective of a man who suffers greatly at the hands of wicked individuals. It is not only because of his own sin that he suffers (**69:5**), but also because of the injustice of others who view his attempted righteousness with contempt (**69:4**). Through all of the trials, however, the speaker always turns to God for his help and guidance. He is not afraid to proclaim his loyalty to the Lord boldly, and does what he can to stand tall for the name of God (**69:7-9**). Also like **Psalm 22**, certain aspects of this piece are obviously Messianic, although we must use caution when applying this fact to the psalm. Not all of the psalm is supposed to be prophetic – obviously, **69:5** is not referring to Jesus because our Lord had no sins, and would not need to pray such things to God; **69:18** is also not Messianic because it is not Christ who needs the ransoming, for *He* is *our* ransom! What we would like to study in this lesson are the various points found within the psalm that are directly Messianic. It becomes quite clear, from prophecies given and prophecies answered, that **Psalm 69** can be applied to Christ, and that numerous lessons of spiritual import can be found within its words.

“Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; those who would destroy me are powerful, what I did not steal, I then have to restore” (**69:4**). By the end of Jesus’ mortal life, His enemies far outnumbered His followers. What is even worse is that they hated Him so harshly without a single good cause – in fact, this verse is quoted by our Lord Himself in **John 15:25** as being fulfilled by the Jews. There was no crime committed by Jesus, nor was there any fault in His life, yet they hated Him all the more and executed Him like a common criminal. In a very true sense, those who hate Jesus today are even more numerous than those who hated Him in His lifetime. The enemies of Christ are all over the world – some are teaching false doctrines, others are adulterating the church with sins, many more are just stubborn and refuse to obey. In any case, this verse includes a prophecy that will always be true; that is, a great host of people will hate Christ without a cause. *“What I did not steal, I then have to*

restore.” This is another excellent phrase, indicative of the selflessness of Jesus. While He Himself was without sin (**Hebrews 4:15**), He still had to pay the ultimate price for our sins. In that sense, He was guilty of no crimes, but suffered the penalty for all of ours! Also see **Isaiah 53:6**, *“All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.”*

Discussion Question: What other New Testament passages help us understand the way Jesus bore our sins or paid the price for our redemption?

“I have become estranged from my brothers, and an alien to my mother’s sons” (**69:8**). For David, this statement was all too true, for his own brothers had acted jealous toward him several times. First, when he came to the battle field to survey the Philistine warrior Goliath, and then later, after being appointed king by Samuel. In **1 Samuel 16:6-13** and **1 Samuel 17:28** we see some examples of this hostility. As for Christ, this sentence also became a reality to an extent. While it is certain that one of Jesus’ brothers by the name of James became a strong leader in the church, and it seems that some of our Lord’s brothers eventually became believers (**Acts 1:14**), there was a time when his own brothers did not accept Him for who He claimed to be. *“For not even His brothers were believing in Him”* (**John 7:5**).

“For zeal for Thy house has consumed me...” (**69:9**). David wrote this passage in truth, for he certainly had a zeal for the house of the Lord throughout his days as king. He was instrumental in setting up the tabernacle in **2 Samuel 6:12-19**. David was eager to build a temple for God in **2 Samuel 7:2**, and also displayed his zeal – even after being told that he was not allowed to build the temple – by properly gathering materials for its construction by Solomon (**1 Chronicles 28:11-18**). Christ fulfilled this prophecy by clearing out all of the moneychangers and swindlers from the temple square (**John 2:17**). Many curious Bible readers have had questions about this act in the life of Christ, so some time should be spent studying the texts of **Matthew 21:12-13**, **Mark 11:15-18**, and **Luke 19:45-48**.

Discussion Question: In the story, was Jesus justified in His anger with the moneychangers?

What is the difference between righteous anger and unrighteous anger? Indeed, the difference is motive; good anger is motivated by selflessness, such as a desire to preserve the purity of worshipping God or indignation over an injustice done to another person; bad anger is motivated by selfishness, such as when somebody hurts you and you want to get even. Jesus was not “getting even” with the moneychangers, nor was He doing this act for His own glory. Rather, He saw the temple as a sacred place, meant only for solemn worship and not for earning money. Let us always share the same kind of “*zeal for our Father’s house*” – the kind of zeal that leads us to keep worship pure and unadulterated by falsehood, apostasy, or materialism.

“Reproach 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” (69:20). Is this not the sad picture of our Lord in the Garden, praying by Himself, with none to comfort Him? Turn to **Matthew 26:36-56** and consider how Jesus’ friends treated Him in His moment of greatest need. They slept during His fervent prayers, ignored His warnings against temptation, and then fled from Him when the guards came to take Him away.

Discussion Question: The “broken hearted” theme is echoed in **Isaiah 53:3**, where the writer notes how the Messiah would be a “man of sorrows, acquainted with grief.” What were some of the things that contributed most to Jesus’ heartache?

“They also gave me gall for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar” (22:21). This prophecy is fulfilled completely in the account of Christ’s death on the cross. *“Gall was actually mingled with the drink which was given to Christ just before He was crucified, and which He tasted, but would not swallow (Matthew 27:34)” (Pulpit Commentary, Vol. VIII, 54).* Upon the cross, Christ uttered the phrase, “I thirst” and was given a sponge soaked in vinegar, or sour wine (**John 19:29-30**).