



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Holy Book of Psalms

Psalm 69

Bishop Youssef



Introduction

- This Psalm is titled *To the Chief Musician. Set to "The Lilies."* A *Psalm of David*
- Some believe that *the Chief Musician* is the Lord God Himself, and others suppose him to be a leader of choirs or musicians in David's time, such as Heman the singer or Asaph (1 Chronicles 6:33, 16:5-7, and 25:6)
- As with Psalm 45, this Psalm is *Set to The Lilies*
- *The Lilies*, Some say it may refer to general beauty of the composition, or to the tune, or even to a six-stringed instrument that had a resemblance to a lily, or that was shaped like a lily
- There is a controversy among scholars about this Psalm



Introduction

- Many commentators and scholars believe that this Psalm has nothing to do with David, but David is only speaking prophetically of the Messiah to come, about the passion of Christ, and the ultimate destruction of the Jews because of it
- It is Messianic Psalm; refers to the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ and to His salvation work
- And some believe that David, being a man of suffering, is clearly writing about himself and his difficulties
- They claim that the confession of sin in verse 5, and the wishes of revenge in verse 22, are wholly unsuited to the meek and sinless Jesus



Introduction

- It is reasonable to say that the David is speaking of himself, and of Christ
- What David spoke of himself in a figurative sense is, in many places in this Psalm, fulfilled literally through the suffering of Jesus
- No Psalm, with the exception of Psalm 22, is so frequently quoted in the New Testament
- Verse 4 in John 15:25; verse 9 in John 2:17; verse 21 in Matthew 27:34, Mark 15:23, and John 19:29; verse 22 in Romans 11:9; and verse 25 in Acts 1:16



Introduction

- St. Paul quotes verse 22 as a prophecy of the wickedness of the Jews, and the punishment they were to receive
- He quotes verse 23 in the same way
- Psalm 69 is the Psalm of the cross, on which Christ endures death for the sake of His bride
- The Psalm consists of the typical elements of a lament, a prayer in time of trouble
- The sense of sorrow is more intense in this Psalm than any other Psalm



Introduction

Psalm Outline

- A Lamentation From the Heart 69:1-12
- An Urgent Plea for Salvation 69:13-21
- Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28
- A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- David begins the Psalm with a description of how he feels from the suffering he is enduring
- In the midst of his distress, he knows that his only source of assistance is his Creator, hence his petition, *Save me, O God*
- David had many times in his life where this prayer was needed
- He felt he was about to drown, his very life is threatened *the waters have come up to my neck*
- Indeed, it was like drifting into deep waters where nothing but death awaited

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- But most commentators apply it to Christ
- Our Lord in this verse is seen as a Jonah, crying, *“The waters surrounded me, even to my soul; The deep closed around me;”* (Jonah 2:5)
- When Christ utters these words to His Father, He does not pray, as we must, to be delivered from sin, but from the sufferings of body and soul endured in His Passion
- These show the weakness of the human nature, the weight of sin upon Him, and His sense of the wrath of God

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- In other Psalms David rejoiced at being set upon a rock (Psalm 40:2)
- Here he is in the opposite position, sinking down in the *mire, where there is no standing*
- *Mire* is a metaphors for dangers and difficulties, which restrain a man and weaken him
- *Where there is no standing*, No solid ground; nothing for the foot to rest on
- This verse does not signify despair of mind, but difficult and distressed circumstances

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- We can picture Jesus sinking down into the *deep mire* of humanity's sin and guilt, coming truly to the *deep waters, where the floods overflow*
- *there is no standing*, Everything gave way under Christ the Sufferer and no support
- Afflictions are often compared to waters in Scripture, Christ's sorrows and sufferings are very appropriately signified by deep waters and overflowing floods
- No wonder it was said of Jesus before He went to the cross, *He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed* (Matthew 26:37)

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- St. Augustine says, “Thanks to His mercy, He who came to the depth of the sea, and let Himself be swallowed by a great fish, but vomited Him on the third day (Matthew 12:40; Jonah 2:10). He came down to the same depth where we were cast as well, where we met our destruction; there He came by Himself; suffered the waves of the shouts of men, saying: ‘Crucify Him, crucify Him!’; and with the increasing violence of the storm, He went down to the depths of the sea. The Lord endured suffering on the hands of the Jews”

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- David goes on to describe his physical state, declaring that he is *weary* from *crying*, his *throat* is *dry*, and his *eyes fail*
- David was worn out with all the energy spent in his crying and crying out as he waited for God to rescue him
- The psalmist feels that he prayed and cried to God long and fervently, and yet God seems to neglect and forsake him
- Jesus, “*prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*” (Luke 22:44)
- *My throat is dry*, Similar prophecy as in Psalm 22:15, “*And My tongue clings to My jaws*” (Psalm 22:15)

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- We read in John 19:28: *“the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, ‘I thirst!’”*
- St. Augustine comments on *My eyes fail* and says, “Far be it that this should be taken of the person of the Head: far be it that His eyes should have failed from hoping in His God: in whom rather there was God reconciling the world to Himself, and Who was the Word made flesh and dwelled in us, so that not only God was in Him, but also He was Himself God. Not so then: the eyes of Himself, our Head, failed not from hoping in His God: but the eyes of Him have failed in His Body, that is, in His members. This voice is of the members, this voice is of the Body, not of the Head.”

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- This begins the description of the real problems David expressively described in the previous verses
- He lived under the great stress of knowing there were many people who simply hated him, and *without cause*
- David's pain comes from his enemies *who hate him without cause*
- He acknowledges the strength of his enemies, but their attempts to destroy him are ill directed, for he is innocent of their false charges
- The injustice is so great against David that he is forced to restore what he did not steal

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- It's hard for us to believe that such a wonderful, godly man as David would be so hated
- And was even more evident in the hatred *without cause* directed to Jesus Christ, David's Greater Son
- The concept of this part of the fulfillment of the prophecy is not only that the Jewish leaders hated Jesus, but they were accusing Him falsely, *without a cause*
- *Are more than the hairs of my head*, They were a multitude that came to take Christ in the garden
- And multitudes of priests and Pharisees initiated to ask for the release of Barabbas, and the crucifixion of Jesus

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- This verse is the first of this Psalm that is quoted in the New Testament and applied to Jesus
- Jesus specifically referred to it as He was teaching His disciples the night before His death, He said, *“If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’”* (John 15:24-25)
- Jesus is predicting this part of His upcoming trials that would happen in a matter of hours

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- And He is telling His disciples that He was going to pay the price for things that He had not done and a great act of injustice was about to take place
- David could only imperfectly say, *I have stolen nothing*, but his Greater Son could say it in a remarkable way
- David took what was not his – Bathsheba
- Yet Jesus *refused* to take what was rightfully His; *He did not consider it robbery to be equal with God* (Philippians 2:6), choosing to set aside Divine privileges that were rightfully His

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- For this, Jesus was condemned by humanity: *He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God* (John 19:7)
- *You know my foolishness*, In many of the Psalms, David proclaimed his innocence compared to his adversaries
- In this Psalm David confessed his sin and appealing to God's mercy
- By *foolishness* David is saying that he had never intentionally injured *Those who hate* him, but had always intended and endeavored to act right toward them
- In the midst of this suffering David admits that he is not perfect, but does have error in his life

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- However mindful of righteousness he might be in his dealings toward people, yet toward God, he was a sinful man
- Though aware of his innocence and felt that his enemies hated him *without cause*, yet he was not unaware to the fact that he was a sinner, and he was not unwilling to confess before God, that he is
- But Christ had no sins of His own to bear, but He bore our *sins*
- St. Augustine comments on *my sins are not hidden* and says, “It is plain, clear, open, that this must be perceived to be out of the mouth of the Body. Transgressions none had Christ: He was the bearer of transgressions, but not the committer.”

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- David's concern was not only the effect it had upon himself, but especially the effect it had upon the people of God
- The thought of embarrassing those who seek God was painful to David
- We again meet the feeling so common in the Psalms (Psalm 44:17-22), that the sufferings of any member of Israel would bring dishonor to the name of God
- *those who wait for You*, Those who worship God
- True godliness is often, in the Scriptures, represented as waiting on the Lord, Psalm 25:3,5,37:9; Isaiah 40:31

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- Let them not feel humiliated and feel it a dishonor to have it said that David is one of them
- David points out an important truth: our sins have an impact on how people view God
- Further, other people who trust God are impacted by the sins of another
- He is concerned that his harsh treatment, which many would assume was the result of some sin, would bring reproach upon the Lord's faithful people and prays that it may not be so
- He does not want dishonor brought upon God's people through him

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- *those who wait for You*, The people of God, and believers in Christ, are described by such that "wait on the Lord"; for the coming of Christ, and salvation by Him
- They may not believe when they see Him suffering
- They would be in danger of being put to shame and in confusion, when they should see Him under the power of death and the grave
- So, in this petition Christ addresses His divine Father as *the Lord God of hosts*, as God omnipotent; to encourage their trust and confidence in Him

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- Christ prays against that which was the great danger of weak souls in the first days of the Church
- And some Fathers say that *those who wait for You* are the believers waiting in Hades till Christ should come to set them free, on whose behalf He prays that He may rise again from death, that they may not be disappointed of their hope
- The psalmist confirms that the true reason why these adversities have come upon him, *Because for sake of God Himself*
- It was not because of some fault he did, or an evil he committed against someone

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- The expression *Shame has covered my face* indicates that his dishonor is constantly before him
- Jesus, *have borne reproach* because He took upon Himself to do the Father's will, and teach His truth, therefore, people were angry
- All Christ's words and works were to the end of increasing the honor of His Father in the hearts of men
- Therefore, He reproached sin, preached holiness, and worked miracles, that they might believe His sayings

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- And He indeed suffered *reproach*, for they said of Him, “*a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!*” (Luke 7:34); “*You are a Samaritan and have a demon*” (John 8:48)
- They could find no real fault in Him, but were forced to conspire a lying accusation before they could begin their sham trial of Him
- *Shame has covered my face*, when He was struck, blindfolded, and spit upon, and at last dragged to the most humiliating death

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- What grieves David's heart is to see his own *brothers*, disregard him and count him as a stranger
- *my mother's children*, Is intended to denote the most intimate relationship because in families where a man had many wives, as was common among the Hebrews, the nearest relationship would be denoted by being of the same *mother* rather than of the same father
- A part of Jesus' suffering was due to the fact that even His kinsmen, "*did not believe in Him.*" (John 7:5)
- And even in some sense to His disciples and followers

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- Some of His disciples and followers upon hearing some doctrines delivered by Him which they did not agree with, withdrew from Him, and walked no more with Him as we read, *“Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, ‘This is a hard saying; who can understand it?’”* (John 6:60)
- They were ashamed to be identified with Him, *“when His own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, ‘He is out of His mind’”* (Mark 3:21)
- David was also rejected and spoken against because of his *zeal* for God and His *house*

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- David's jealousy for the honor of God's house was like a consuming fire within him, Psalm 119:139,39:3
- The *zeal* connected to God's *house* for David was evident in his desire to build God a temple (2 Samuel 7:1-3) and in the diligent preparation he made for the temple that his son Solomon would actually build (1 Chronicles 22:1-5)
- The word *house* could signify the Temple, (1 Chronicles 22:1)
- Or might suggest the nation of Israel (Numbers 12:7; Hosea 8:1), and David's passion for its faithfulness to the Lord (Jeremiah 12:7)

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- David may either mean that every reproach uttered against God was as keenly felt by him as if it had been directed against himself
- Or that, when men reproached him, they really meant to reproach God in him
- This verse is very properly applied to our Lord, who went about doing good; and gave up His life, not only for the redemption of man, but to *“exalt the law and make it honorable.”* (Isaiah 42:21)
- When Jesus drove the moneychangers out of the temple courts, His disciples remembered this very verse (John 2:17)

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- The Apostle Paul referenced verse 9 in speaking of the sacrificial nature of Jesus in Romans 15:3, “*For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.’*”
- St. Augustine says, “Is the Father reproached, and not Christ Himself? Why have ‘the reproaches of men reproaching You fallen upon Me’? Because ‘he that has known Me, has known the Father also:’ because no one has reviled Christ without reviling God: because no one honors the Father, except he that honors the Son also.”

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- He wept for their wickedness and reproaches which they cast upon God and the godly
- His so much fasting continuously with weeping, made him with no more strength and was exhausted
- David's practice of fasting appears both here and also in Psalm 35:13,109:24; 2 Kings 12:16,22
- *When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting*, This refers to his acts of devotion; to his endeavors to discipline his soul so as to lead a strictly godly holy life
- So, David was rejected because of his foolishness and sins verse 5 and when he repented, then people disapproved of that

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, and over the city of Jerusalem
- He wept because of the sins of His people; because the hardness and unbelief of the Jews that rejected Him
- He said to His disciples, *“My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even to death.”* (Matthew 26:38); *“He began to be troubled and deeply distressed.”* (Mark 14:33); and *“His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”* (Luke 22:44)
- Christ fasted forty days and nights in the wilderness
- Often, He neglected Himself and was without food for some time

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- All what Jesus suffered for our sake and to glorify God the Father, was used as a matter of reproach against Him
- *I also made sackcloth my garment*, This was often done as expressive of grief and sorrow and here was an expression of repentance and humiliation
- That sackcloth, for Jesus, was the form of a servant, the Manhood of poverty and suffering, which men scorned and ridiculed
- *By word, a parable a proverb, a label*
- He became a subject of mockery and ridicule

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- In our world this is a deliberate strategy, to disrespect and dismiss people simply by giving them a label
- St. Augustine comments on *I became a byword to them* and says, “that is, for a ridicule. It is called a parable, whenever a comparison is made concerning some one, when he is evil spoken of.”
- Some point out, that as the Lord taught by parables, so He may be said to have been Himself a parable to His disciples
- Then David says that he became the target of scorn and disapproval from almost everyone, from the leaders of the city to the city drunks

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- The gates of cities were places for men to gather; places where business was transacted; places where courts were frequently held, and were no doubt also places of gossip, (Psalm 9:14; Jeremiah 17:19; Job 29:7; Isaiah 14:31,28:6)
- He is the talk of the city
- Many spoke against Christ; against Him as the Son of God, against His doctrines and against His people and followers
- They consulted together how to seize Him, and kill Him, as the chief priests and elders frequently did
- *The drunkards* are variously explained

A Lamentation From the Heart

69:1-12



- Some apply it to those Jews who, having just been drinking the Paschal wine-cups on the night of Covenant Thursday, hurried from their feast to the house of Annas, to join in condemning Christ
- It is said by another that it refers to what the soldiers did at the Crucifixion, substituting the wine prepared for the sufferers to reduce their sense of pain, to vinegar instead
- And some say He was ridiculed by all people; both high and low conspired against Him
- The High Priest and the thief on the cross both despised Jesus

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- When all enemies have joined forces against him, and everyone ridiculed him; the psalmist found no one to whom he could raise his complaint, except to raise it to the divine throne
- David cannot appeal to his own righteousness
- Rather he appeals to God's love and mercy as he pleads for deliverance
- He would seek God and make his prayer to the One who would hear *in the multitude of His mercy*
- In view of his great distress, David lifts up a prayer to God for deliverance *in an acceptable time*

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- It was a time of rejection with man, but of acceptance with God
- God would never close the doors of His mercies; for it is always His pleasure to hear the cries of the oppressed and persecuted
- An important part of devout prayer is the recognition and exaltation of the Creator's character
- David appropriately speaks of Heaven's overflowing loving-kindness
- God hears the prayers, not for the sake of his worthiness, nor of his fervent supplications, but for the sake of the multitude of His mercy, His care for the salvation of all

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- Even in suffering no trace of bitterness in his heart
- But David begs for an answer to his prayer; a response would thus demonstrate that God does save
- Christ offered prayers in these circumstances, and not blaming, complaining, or condemning
- He committed Himself to Him that judges righteously, and prayed both for Himself and for His enemies too
- He did not answer them; *“as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.”* (Isaiah 53:7)
- But He opened His mouth unto the Lord His God, for He would hear and deliver

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- *in the acceptable time*, Because the good will and pleasure of God was seen therein; in not sparing His Son, His own and only begotten Son, and delivering Him up to death for sinners
- And because at this time the good will of God was done
- The sufferings of Christ were well pleasing to Him; the sacrifice of Christ was *a sweet-smelling aroma*; the righteousness of Christ was acceptable to Him
- God has sent Jesus into the world to save it, so He asks God to hear Him in the promised *truth of Your salvation*, that His Atonement may redeem mankind, and His Resurrection justify all believers, and the sayings of the prophets thus be fulfilled

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- In this prayer to God, David returns to the figurative flood/mud image of verses 1-2
- He asks for deliverance from the mire and deep waters, which he explains as the wrath of *them that hate me*
- *And let me not sink*, The psalmist is asking to not be overwhelmed by his sorrows
- Christ is also speaking asking to *be delivered from those who hate me, And out of the deep waters*
- Both from His enemies, the ungodly and unfaithful Jews, and the griefs which they caused Him and from the depth of the grave

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- The enemies of Christ, *those who hate me* are compared to deep waters; the floods of the ungodly
- He seeks a deliverance and saving
- When the sinner says these same words, his prayer is to be delivered from carnal sin and worldly greed within his own soul
- And from outward troubles and sufferings which may shake his faith
- St. Augustine says, “He says this, because of the infirmity of His members.”

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- The reference is still to verses 1,2; and the prayer is for deliverance from the dangers and difficulties there spoken of
- In his anguish, he passes here from the idea of running streams, and deep waters, to that of *a pit*, representing himself as in that *pit*, and praying that it might not be closed upon him, leaving him in darkness and in mire, from which he could not then escape
- The general idea in all these expressions is the same - that of overwhelming trouble from which he prayed to be delivered
- Indeed, that *the pit* will not shut its mouth upon Him, Christ

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- St. Augustine says, “The sinner may use these words, too, of a spiritual resurrection from the grave of iniquity, and he will find that, so long as he is willing to confess his guilt, the mouth of the pit will not close over him; but when he attempts to excuse himself, then it shuts.”

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- Appealing to God because of His love, *lovingkindness*, David once again asked for the *multitude* of God's *tender mercies* which is better than life (63:3), and which *endures forever* (100:5)
- David begs that God, consistent with the multitude of His tender mercies, will turn to him
- According to St. Augustine, the Head herein teaches His members how to pray
- They are to plead with God His loving-kindness, and not their own merits; to deal with them according to the multitude of His mercies, not according to that of their sins

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- And it is the reason given by the prophet Joel, *“Return to the Lord your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.”* (Joel 2:13)
- *do not hide Your face*, Suggests that he does not want God to be angry with him
- By presenting himself to God as His *servant* and in *trouble*, David hoped to appeal to God’s compassion
- Surely God cannot continue to withhold His mercy and help from one who is bound to His service

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- *Your servant*, Points to Him Who is the Only-begotten of His Father, and Who is also pure and meek
- Most truly a servant, not only by accepting to have the nature of man, and being, so far, inferior to the Father, but by His perfect obedience
- He then, Who only can look on the Face of God, prays that it may not be hidden from Him
- When He was on the cross, suffering, His Father hid His face from Him
- And every repentant who has become as a little child in humility may use these words too, for though “*God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.*” (1 Peter 5:5)

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- *For I am in trouble*, Pressed on every side, surrounded by the assembly of the wicked, who were mocking Him, carrying the sins of the world and the wrath of God on Him
- David often complains that God is far from him (Psalm 10:1,22:19,38:21,71:12, etc.), and prays that He will *Draw near*
- The sense of distance and separation are intolerable
- *Deliver me because of my enemies*, Because of their conspiracies and wicked plans and lest they blaspheme the name of God and boast that He is not able to rescue those who put their trust in Him

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- It is not for Himself that He asks to be delivered, but for His enemies; for the thief who reviled Him, for the soldier who pierced Him, for the nation that rejected Him, that by His deliverance from the grave, they may believe in Him
- God delivers in two ways: sometimes He delivers the soul alone from the danger of sin, allowing the body to perish, as with the Christian martyrs—this is hidden deliverance
- Sometimes He delivers from bodily dangers also, as the three children from the fiery furnace,—and this is open deliverance

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- The appeal to God's compassion continued, especially because David bore much reproach in his loyalty to God as he mentioned in verse 9
- Whatever David has suffered at the hands of his enemies has been fully known to God, who has permitted it
- Having seen and known, God will not forget
- *My adversaries are all before You*, God has seen his adversaries also, and still has them in His sight
- These words can express the greatness of the contempt that was cast upon Jesus

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- The hurt and injustice in the words of insult addressed to Him by the Jews, calling Him a demoniac, a glutton, and a winebibber which was all known to God
- *My shame*, outer, indeed, and before men only, in that He had been scourged, afflicted, spitted upon, condemned, stripped of His garments and crucified as a robber
- *My adversaries are all before You*, And unless God deliver Him openly, they will not know why He suffers these things, and will neither be defeated nor corrected

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- St. Augustine looks at the reproach, as the humiliating words directed against the believers; at the shame, as accusing them of being without conscience, or that their behavior contradict with it; whereas he looks at the dishonor, as their claim that their behavior causes the face to blush
- According to St. Augustine, the only crime of the Christians, the body of Christ, that would bring on them the reproach, shame, and dishonor, is nothing but, they are Christians
- The humiliation of his hardships had broken David's heart, which he compares to a dreadful, incurable sickness (Jeremiah 15:18)

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- He desperately needs some consolation from a friend, but when he sought for comfort, he found none
- Instead of finding comfort or help, he finds continued mistreatment
- It is questioned whether David was ever without friends to *pity* and *comfort* him, and suggested that at this point he passes from narrative to prophecy
- He describes, not his own condition, but that of the Messiah, speaking as he was moved by the Holy Spirit
- Jesus was certainly left without *pity or comfort*, when "*all the disciples forsook Him and fled*" (Matthew 26:56)

An Urgent Plea for Salvation

69:13-21



- *Reproach has broken my heart, This was his case when His “soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.”* (Matthew 26:38)
- Almost everyone recognizes the fulfillment of this verse in Jesus, *“when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink.”* (Matthew 27:33-34)
- These words are literally applicable to Christ
- *gave me gall for my food*, It refers to some poisonous bitter plant
- The gall and vinegar was not only literally given to Jesus but was also symbolic of the brutal treatment He received from the people

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- At the thought of the intolerable inhumanity of his enemies he can no longer restrain himself and calls out to God for judgment to fall upon his enemies
- Some commentators, feeling the difficulty of such wishes proceeding from the psalmist, have regarded these verses as the utterance of the psalmist's enemies, invoking destruction upon him and his companions
- However, this verse, and the 3 following ones (23-25), according to St. Augustine, are a prophecy, written in such a way that seem as though He wishes evil for His enemies

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- But, actually, the Lord Christ never prayed against His enemies, but always for their sake (Luke 23:34)
- This and the following verses are to be read in the future tense, and considered as predictions rather than as revengeful spirit
- They are prophecies of what should be, being delivered out under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Acts 1:20
- In Romans 11:9-10, St. Paul quotes 22-23 and applies it to the perpetual hardness of the nation of Israel regarding the Messiah, and the divine penalty imposed in consequence thereof
- The whole passage is a prayer that they might receive a proper recompense for what they had done

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- *their table* figuratively points to their prosperity, the abundance of all things
- The word *snare* here means unexpected danger; danger rose suddenly upon them
- Let the recompense come suddenly upon them, while they think themselves at peace, or when they are surrounded by all the comforts and luxuries of life
- It was not uttered in a bitter spirit, or that anything more is intended by it than that the psalmist desired that justice might be done to all people

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- Every chastisement which fell on the Jews corresponded exactly to some one of their outrages against Christ
- They rebelled against Jesus saying, *“We have no King but Cesar.”*
- It was the harsh rule of Cesar's soldiers which drove them into the rebellion which was their destruction
- They betrayed Christ at the Passover: it was at the Passover they were besieged
- They gave Him vinegar and gall: they suffered all the tortures of famine themselves

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- They cast Christ out of the city to crucify Him, and they were cast out of their own city, and scattered over the world
- *Let their eyes be darkened*, Metaphorically, let their understandings, which they have partially blinded, be wholly *darkened*
- They given up to such judicial blindness, that they could not discern the signs of the times that the Messiah must be come
- They could not see the evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus in the miracles He performed; nor in the prophecies of the Old Testament fulfilled in Him

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- *their loins*, This also belongs to the loins of their minds or souls; of which we read, “*gird up the loins of your mind.*” (1 Peter 1:13)
- The loins of the body are the seat of strength
- Weaken their loins, in which a man's strength lies, that they may not be able to rise up against their enemies
- Take away their courage that they may not be able to see or choose their way; and that they may not be able to walk in it
- St. Augustine compares the attitude of Jews and Christians towards the truth to the spies carrying the grapes on the pole (Joshua 2:1)

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- The Jews go first, counting themselves to have the pre-eminence, but not seeing the precious goods, and even turning their backs upon it; while the Christian, coming behind, sees and worships
- The psalmist prays that Heaven's *indignation* might be *poured out upon* these persecutors; that God's fierce anger would overtake them
- That their habitations might be made desolate
- It denotes the severity of God's wrath towards them; upon them; and that their destruction would be inevitable
- To have God's wrath poured upon anyone is inconceivably dreadful

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- That was proclaimed by the Lord Christ when He wept upon Jerusalem, saying: *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets, and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See, your house is left to you desolate”* (Matthew 23:37-38)
- Quoting this phrase, St. Peter applied it to the traitor Judas, saying: *“For it is written in the book of psalms: ‘Let his habitation be desolate, and let no one live in it’”* (Acts 1:20)
- And which was done when wrath came upon them to the uttermost, in the destruction of their city, 1 Thessalonians 2:16

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- The wicked, of whom David speaks, are so harsh that they even add to the suffering of those who labor already under the chastening hand of the Lord
- These persecutors delighted in speaking about the difficulty of those who were afflicted
- Instead of pitying one who is afflicted of God, or showing compassion for him, they "add" to his sorrows by their own persecutions
- This verse is a prophecy about Christ who was not only smitten and scourged by men, but was stricken and smitten of God

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- As we read in Isaiah, *“He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement for our peace was upon Him”* (Isaiah 53:3-4)
- And, *“And one will say to him, ‘What are these wounds between your arms?’ Then he will answer, ‘Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.’ ‘Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion,’ Says the LORD of hosts. ‘Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered’; Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.”* (Zechariah 13:6-7)

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- What then was their sin, asks St. Augustine, if they did but carry on, as it were, God's work?
- Christ was delivered up by the Father, delivered up by Himself, by Judas, and by the Jews
- What then is the difference between the cases?
- It is that the Father and Son acted out of love, Judas from betrayal, the Jews from hate
- What happened to Christ was according to His pleasure, and to that of the Father, to suffer and to be crucified for the sake of the salvation of the World

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- But as for the others, Judas and the Jews, what they did was not for the sake of a good cause, but because of their envy and grudge
- They rejoice over the details of the sufferings of Him Whom they *esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted*
- The Jews persecuted Christ unto death which was the cause of their ruin and destruction; 1 Thessalonians 2:15
- Instead of taking away their iniquities by forgiveness, the Psalmist says, *let one iniquity accumulate upon another* and give them up to their own vain minds and evil lusts
- Unbelievers, insisting on their unbelieve, they will add sin to sin, and so, punishment to punishment

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- The evil ones are so vile that the psalmist prays that God will simply let them alone as their iniquities multiply
- He trusts that in their rebellion they will not be permitted to enter God's righteousness
- The word *iniquity*, sometimes signifies punishment, as in Genesis 4:13
- So, it may mean here to punish them according to their deeds, as their sins and iniquities require
- Or, add punishment to their punishment; add future and everlasting punishment; let them be punished with everlasting destruction

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- According to St. Augustine, crucifying the Lord Christ, on the assumption that He is just a regular man, the Jews committed an iniquity
- Their iniquity was that they killed a just Man: there was added another, that they crucified the Son of God
- But the fact that He proclaimed Himself and His Person, and yet, they persisted on opposing Him, they added iniquity to their iniquity
- And as the Lord Christ Himself says in the parable of the vineyard and the vinedressers: *“when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’*” (Matthew 21:38)

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- And He also said to them: *“If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.”* (John 9:41)
- And, *“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.”* (John 15:22)
- In view of their disposition to disregard and contempt the will of God, and to persecute the innocent, let their name *be blotted out of the book of the living*
- The meaning is: let them not be accounted among the righteous; giving them the punishment they deserve

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- *the book of the living*, The book of life; in which the names of some people are written, and others not, Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5,13:8,17:8,20:12-15
- Some interpret it as let them not be numbered among living people; let them be cut off
- St. Augustine explains, “For had they been some time written therein? Brethren, we must not so take it, as that God writes any one in the book of life, and blot him out...He foreknows... before the foundation of the world those who will reign with His Son in life everlasting.”

Asking for the Defeat of his Enemies 69:22-28



- He continues and says, “How then are these men blotted out from that book wherein they were never written? This has been said according to their own hope, because they thought of themselves that they were written. What is, ‘let them be blotted out from the book of life’? Even to themselves let it be evident, that they were not there.”
- *And not be written with the righteous*, Is parallel with *Let them be blotted out of the book of the living*, and shows that the hidden meaning of being blotted out from the book of life is to have it made evident that their names were never written there at all

A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36



- David did not only pray for the downfall of his enemies
- He also asked God to rescue him from drowning in the mire of hateful men and to establish him *up on high*
- In contrast to the fate which his enemies deserve, the Psalmist looks forward to his own deliverance
- While complaining from those cruel enemies, the Psalmist confesses that he is lowly, miserable, and helpless on his own to confront them
- The Messiah was poor in a literal sense, as it was prophesized, Zechariah 9:9

A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36



- This verse in general may signify the low estate of Christ in His humiliation, being in the form of a servant, humbled and obedient to death
- He was *poor*, in taking on Himself our human nature, thus emptying Himself of His glory
- And the character of *sorrowful* well agrees with Him, who was a man of sorrows all His days
- *set me up on high*, In the might of His Resurrection, in the glory of His Ascension
- And not in His own Person alone, but lifting up with Him the members of His body

A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36



- Moving to greater confidence, the psalmist vowed to *praise* and *magnify* God for His rescue
- Confident of receiving the deliverance for which he has prayed, he anticipates it by offering thanksgiving
- *the name of God*, is to be praised, The Messiah sung the praise of God with His disciples at the supper, a little before His death
- This sincere praise honored God even more than an animal sacrifice
- Spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving are more acceptable than the most perfect animal sacrifices, Psalms 50,51

A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36



- The reference to *horns and hooves* suggests a mature, clean offering
- He does not mean to minimize the requirements of the Law; rather, he is emphasizing the importance of true, heartfelt devotion compared even to the very best of sacrifices

A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36



- *Shall see*, How ready God is to hear the poor and distressed when they cry to Him, and to grant their petitions!
- The trial of the psalmist would not be wasted
- He would become a lesson to others who *seek God* and show them how their *hearts shall live*
- St. Augustine says, “Let them believe, and in hope be glad. Let them be more needy, in order that they may deserve to be filled... Seek the Lord, you needy, hunger you and thirst; for He is Himself the living bread that came down from Heaven.”
- *The humble shall see*, The resurrection and exaltation of Christ

A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36



- The meek and humble followers of Christ, as His disciples were, saw Him risen from the dead
- They saw Him alive, to whom He showed Himself forty days after His resurrection, Acts 1:3
- They saw His hands, and feet, Luke 24:40; and side, John 20:20; and the prints of the nails and spear in them, John 20:25
- They saw Him go up to heaven, to be set on high at the right hand of God, Acts 1:9
- And humble believers now see Him by faith
- God *hears the poor*, and He would not have heard them, unless they were poor

A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36



- He looks on sinners and looses them from the chains of their sins
- Those who are willing to be freed by Him are His prisoners, because they are held captive by the devil against their will
- And all believers who submit themselves to His commandments, keeping them truly, are, in another sense, His prisoners also
- It may be also taken of all men who are tied down on earth by their bodies
- Or it may be appropriately taken of the Fathers who waited in Hades for the Coming of Christ

A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36



- All creation, all things above and all below, is called to join in a choir of praise to God for the redemption of Zion
- *Heaven and earth* are not big enough to give God the praise He is due
- *Heaven and earth*, the hosts of both, Angels in heaven, and saints on earth were created by Him, and therefore *let heaven and earth praise him*
- *The seas and everything that moves in them* will also bring Him praise
- The reason for the song of praise is *For God will save Zion*

A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36



- *Zion*, The church of Christ, as it is often called
- God will save His people; He will protect and defend them
- This expresses the confident assurance of David that, God would not forsake His people
- *That they may dwell there and possess it*, Who are they who dwell in the cities of Judah, but those who seek the Lord, the humble, the poor, the captives, and the singers of praise; whether they are in heaven, or on earth
- He gathers all together when they enjoy His salvation work, to set out of them the new Zion – the holy church of God

A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36



- This sounds like a forward promise fulfilled by Christ as St. Paul expressed: *“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.”* (Hebrews 12:22-24)
- In spite of our suffering and despite the trials that come in life, we know that we have our home in Zion, the city of the living God

A Praise of Conquest 69:29-36



- Whatever might be the present troubles, David's faith was unwavering - his confidence unshaken - in regard to the faithfulness of God
- He knew that he and others who *love His name* would *inherit* the land and *dwell in it*
- The general feature of the true people of God, who enjoy dwelling with God, or the dwelling of God among them, is love
- They enjoy that together with their descendants who follow their lead, and who partake of their faith
- *the descendants of His servants*, This is a reference to God's children, the seed of the kingdom



Discussion

- What imagery is used to describe David's situation? (69:1-2,14-15)
- What initial plea introduces this Psalm? (69:1-4)
- What motivated David to write this Psalm?
- How is the Lord described?

Discussion



- How did David plead his case before the Lord? (69:4)
- How did David explain that his enemies were spreading false accusations about him?
- What confession did David make to the Lord?
- What was David's motivation in asking for God's deliverance?

Discussion



- How was David mocked for his commitment to the Lord?
- How did David own family treat him during his time of distress?
- How did David demonstrate his humility before God?
- How did David respond to the mocking of his enemies?
- How did he feel about his predicament?



Discussion

- What did David want the Lord to do for him?
- What pleases God more than sacrifices?
- What call to praise concludes the Psalm?
- What are the references to Jesus in this Psalm?
- How does a Psalm like this help us to take on our trials without grumbling? How does it teach us to suffer rightly?