

## PSALM 69

*A Cry of Distress and Imprecation on Adversaries.*

### INTRODUCTION.

- A. From Roy H. Enoch (4-26-95).
- B. To the chief Musician. Set to "The Lilies." A Psalm of David. "The Prayer of One Afflicted for the Truth"
- C. Many commentators give reasons why David could not have written the psalm as is claimed in the ancient superscription, but the inspired apostle Paul in Rom. 11:9 says that David wrote it, and his inspired word is worth more than all of the denominational scholars in the world.
- D. This psalm is quoted in the NT more than any other psalm except Psa. 22.
  1. 69:4 "Those who hate me without a cause..." by Christ in Jo. 15:25.
  2. 69:9 "...zeal for Your house has eaten me up..." is quoted in Jo. 2:17.
  3. 69:9b "the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me" in Rom. 15:3.
  4. 69:22 "Let their table become a snare before them, and their well-being a trap" in Rom. 11:9.
  5. 69:23 "Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see" in Rom. 11:10, where Paul applied it to the hardening of Israel.
  6. 69:25 "Let their habitation be desolate" in Ac. 1:20, applied to Judas Iscariot.
  7. 69:21 "They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink" is not quoted in the New testament, but all four of the gospel accounts of the crucifixion recorded the giving of vinegar to Christ on the cross (Mt. 27:48-50; Mk. 15:36; Lk. 23:36; Jo. 19:29).
- E. Although Christ and many other inspired writers applied many verses of this psalm to Christ, there are some passages which could not apply to Him as David admits his own sins as in 69:5 "O God, You know my foolishness; and my sins are not hidden from You."
- F. Coffman uses the following headings for the divisions of this psalm:
  - I. The Psalmist Describes His Situation (69:1-4).
  - II. A Prayer for Deliverance (69:5-6).
  - III. The Cause of David's Suffering (69:7-12).
  - IV. An Intensified Appeal to God (69:13-18).
  - V. A Sad Complaint (69:19-21).
  - VI. Prayer for the Overthrow of Ungodly Enemies (69:22-28).
  - VII. A Sigh for Help (69:29).
  - VIII. Assurance of Being Answered (69:30-33).
  - IX. A Hopeful Outlook for the Future (69:34-36).

### THE TEXT.

- 69:1** Save me, O God,  
For the waters have threatened my life.
- 2** I have sunk in deep mire, and there is no foothold;  
I have come into deep waters, and a flood overflows me.
- 3** I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched;  
My eyes fail while I wait for my God.
- 4** Those 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.
- 5** O God, it is You who knows my folly,  
And my wrongs are not hidden from You.
- 6** May 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,
- 7** Because for Your sake I have borne reproach;

Dishonor has covered my face.  
**8** I have become estranged from my brothers  
 And an alien to my mother's sons.  
**9** For zeal for Your house has consumed me,  
 And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.  
**10** When I wept in my soul with fasting,  
 It became my reproach.  
**11** When I made sackcloth my clothing,  
 I became a byword to them.  
**12** Those who sit in the gate talk about me,  
 And I *am* the song of the drunkards.  
**13** But 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.  
**14** Deliver me from the mire and do not let me sink;  
 May I be delivered from my foes and from the deep waters.  
**15** May the flood of water not overflow me  
 Nor the deep swallow me up,  
 Nor the pit shut its mouth on me.  
**16** Answer me, O LORD, for Your lovingkindness is good;  
 According to the greatness of Your compassion, turn to me,  
**17** And do not hide Your face from Your servant,  
 For I am in distress; answer me quickly.  
**18** Oh draw near to my soul *and* redeem it;  
 Ransom me because of my enemies!  
**19** You know my reproach and my shame and my dishonor;  
 All my adversaries are before You.  
**20** 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.  
**21** They also gave me gall for my food  
 And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.  
**22** May their table before them become a snare;  
 And when they are in peace, *may it become* a trap.  
**23** May their eyes grow dim so that they cannot see,  
 And make their loins shake continually.  
**24** Pour out Your indignation on them,  
 And may Your burning anger overtake them.  
**25** May their camp be desolate;  
 May none dwell in their tents.  
**26** For they have persecuted him whom You Yourself have smitten,  
 And they tell of the pain of those whom You have wounded.  
**27** Add iniquity to their iniquity,  
 And may they not come into Your righteousness.  
**28** May they be blotted out of the book of life  
 And may they not be recorded with the righteous.  
**29** But I am afflicted and in pain;  
 May Your salvation, O God, set me *securely* on high.  
**30** I will praise the name of God with song  
 And magnify Him with thanksgiving.  
**31** And it will please the LORD better than an ox  
 Or a young bull with horns and hoofs.  
**32** The humble have seen *it and* are glad;  
 You who seek God, let your heart revive.  
**33** For the LORD hears the needy  
 And does not despise His *who are* prisoners.  
**34** Let heaven and earth praise Him,  
 The seas and everything that moves in them.  
**35** For God will save Zion and build the cities of Judah,  
 That they may dwell there and possess it.

36 The descendants of His servants will inherit it,  
And those who love His name will dwell in it.

## COMMENTS.

### A. The Psalmist Describes His Situation.

We do not know the exact situation that David is referring to here, but two events in his life come to mind as fitting the somewhat figurative description: his being pursued by Saul; and the rebellion of Absalom much later in life. Brother Coffman thinks the psalm fits the time of Saul better, but the references to his sins and foolishness in 69:5 may better describe his sins of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah, and the neglect of his family that prompted the rebellion of his son, Absalom.

**[v1-3]** May be figurative language to describe his overwhelming grief.

**[v4]** “Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head;” In both occasions mentioned above, he was outnumbered by overwhelming forces.

### B. A Prayer for Deliverance.

**[v5]** David acknowledges his sins freely.

**[v6]** He makes a touching prayer that the righteous not be made ashamed because of his sins nor that they be discouraged and confused because of him.

### C. The Cause of David’s Suffering.

**[v7-9]** It seems to me that these three verses may better describe David when he was being pursued by Saul. He was dedicated to the Lord and yet, it was dangerous for friends and family to associate with him.

**[v9]** “...zeal for Your house has eaten me up...” certainly describes David at the time of Saul. God’s house was the tabernacle and David took the sword of Goliath there in tribute to God, and when Saul was pursuing him, he went to Ahimelech the High Priest and requested food, and ate the showbread, and took the sword of Goliath and fled (1Sam. 21:1-6). Saul killed 85 priests because of this, and would certainly cause David the kind of grief mentioned in this verse.

**[v10-12]** These verses seem to better describe his humiliation when his son, Absalom, rebelled and he left Jerusalem (see 2Sam. 15:30). At that time it seemed that all of the nation were swayed by Absalom and rejected David.

### D. An Intensified Appeal to God.

**[v13]** “...in the acceptable time...” David was not demanding deliverance at a particular time, but when it was acceptable to the Lord.

**[v14,15]** “Let not the floodwater overflow me...” He returns to the figure of speech of the beginning of the psalm. The picture is that his trouble is like a flood of waters and a mire or bog. “The pit” is a common expression to refer to the grave or death.

**[v18]** “Draw near to my soul, and redeem it; deliver me...” David has hope in no other deliverer or help.

### E. A Sad Complaint.

**[v19]** “You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor...” This seems to me more characteristic of his fleeing from Absalom than fleeing from Saul. When fleeing from Saul, he felt that he was justified and did not deserve what he was suffering.

**[v21]** “They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink..” We know of no instance when this was literally true of David, but it may be poetic language to describe his suffering. It was reported by all four of the gospel writers that Jesus was given vinegar to drink.

### F. Prayer for the Overthrow of Ungodly Enemies.

**[v22-28]** This imprecatory prayer is asking for God’s righteous judgment upon the wicked. It is written by inspiration and in complete harmony with what the Scriptures say about the just punishment that sin deserves. In Rom. 11:7-10 Paul applies this passage to the just punishment that the disobedient of God’s nation of Israel received for their wickedness.

G. A Sigh for Help.

**[v29]** David seems here to pray that he might be lifted to a higher plane than the fighting, bitterness and oppression of men. This would be a most appropriate prayer to become like the Christ with more of a spirit of forgiveness than vengeance and self-vindication.

H. Assurance of Being Answered.

**[v30-33]** We are reminded over and over in the OT that what God wants most in our worship is a humble and contrite heart. Men still seem to have a tendency to focus on the external ritual without changing their hearts. More than the animal sacrifices, God wants a humble heart that seeks justice and the welfare of one's fellow men. We still need to learn this lesson over and over, it seems. Yet, God will not tolerate a disregard for His directions for worship, as He tests our faith by submission to His instruction.

I. A Hopeful Outlook for the Future.

Complete confidence is expressed in God's deliverance and blessings. Therefore, praise and thanksgiving is offered even before the "acceptable time" for deliverance when it will be accomplished.

**[v35]** "For God will save Zion and build the cities of Judah..." Many "scholars" use this verse to prove that this refers to the time of Zedekiah or even the times of the Maccabees between the testaments. But Jerusalem and the nation was saved from the rebellion of Absalom and those who were with David and faithful to God were returned to dwell in those cities again.