

The Reproached Man

Jesus in the Psalms

Psalm 69

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I. Defective Prayers?

Psalm 69 is an *imprecatory psalm* – a psalm which prays God’s _____ on certain people.

II. The Reproached Man

Psalm 69

To the Chief Musician. Set to “The Lilies.” A Psalm of David.

¹Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to *my* neck. ²I sink in deep mire, Where *there is* no standing; I have come into deep waters, Where the floods overflow me. ³I am weary with my crying; My throat is dry; My eyes fail while I wait for my God.

⁴Those who hate me without a cause Are more than the hairs of my head; They are mighty who would destroy me, *Being* my enemies wrongfully; Though I have stolen nothing, I *still* must restore it. ⁵O God, You know my foolishness; And my sins are not hidden from You. ⁶Let not those who wait for You, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed because of me; Let not those who seek You be confounded because of me, O God of Israel. ⁷Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; Shame has covered my face. ⁸I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother’s children; ⁹Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. ¹⁰When I wept *and chastened* my soul with fasting, That became my reproach. ¹¹I also made sackcloth my garment; I became a byword to them. ¹²Those who sit in the gate speak against me, And I *am* the song of the drunkards.

¹³But as for me, my prayer *is* to You, O LORD, *in* the acceptable time; O God, in the multitude of Your mercy, Hear me in the truth of Your salvation. ¹⁴Deliver me out of the mire, And let me not sink; Let me be delivered from those who hate me, And out of the deep waters. ¹⁵Let not the floodwater overflow me, Nor let the deep swallow me up; And let not the pit shut its mouth on me. ¹⁶Hear me, O LORD, for Your lovingkindness *is* good; Turn to me according to the multitude of Your tender mercies. ¹⁷And do not hide Your face from Your servant, For I am in trouble; Hear me speedily. ¹⁸Draw near to my soul, *and* redeem it; Deliver me because of my enemies. ¹⁹You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; My adversaries *are* all before You. ²⁰Reproach has broken my heart, And I am full of heaviness; I looked *for someone* to take pity, 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. ²²Let their table become a snare before them, And their well-being a trap. ²³Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see; And make their loins shake continually. ²⁴Pour out Your indignation upon them, And let Your wrathful anger take hold of them. ²⁵Let their dwelling place be desolate; Let no one live in their tents. ²⁶For they persecute the *ones* You have struck, And talk of the grief of those You have wounded. ²⁷Add iniquity to their iniquity, And let them not come into Your righteousness. ²⁸Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, And not be written with the righteous. ²⁹But I *am* poor and sorrowful; Let Your salvation, O God, set me up on high.

³⁰I will praise the name of God with a song, And will magnify Him with thanksgiving. ³¹*This* also shall please the LORD better than an ox *or* bull, Which has horns and hooves. ³²The humble shall see *this and* be glad; And you who seek God, your hearts shall live. ³³For the LORD hears the poor, And does not despise His 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. ³⁶Also, the descendants of His servants shall inherit it, And those who love His name shall dwell in it.

- A. Cry for Deliverance (1-3)
- B. Description of Suffering (4-12 cf. Ps 35:13-14)
- C. Prayers for Deliverance and Vindication (13-29)
- D. Promise of Praise (30-36)

III. Psalm 69 in the Christian Era

A. Prophecies of the Christ

There are numerous allusions to and quotations of Psalm 69 in the NT:

- 69:3 cf. Jn 19:28. Jesus declares “*I thirst,*” in order “*that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*”
- 69:4 cf. Jn 15:25. it “*is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’*”
- 69:8 cf. Jn 7:5. “*even His brothers did not believe in Him*” (cf. Mk 3:21, 31).
- 69:9a cf. Jn 2:17. “*Then His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for Your house will eat Me up.’*”
- 69:9b cf. Rom 15:3. “*For even Christ did not please Himself, but as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.’*”
- 69:21 cf. Mt 27:34, 48; Mk 15:23, 36; Lk 23:36; Jn 19:28-30.

Clearly as our Lord Himself and the Apostles sang this song, they saw in it descriptions of our Lord’s innocent sufferings.

B. Imprecations and the NT (cf. Lk 23:34)

1. Psalm 69 and the scribes and Pharisees (69:25 cf. Mt 23:38; Lk 13:35)
2. Psalm 69 and Judas (69:25 cf. Acts 1:20)
3. Psalm 69 and Unbelieving Jews (69:22-23 cf. Rom 11:9-10)

We should pray and work for the conversion of the wicked. But for those who are confirmed in sin (see Heb. 6:4–6; 1 John 5:16), God has promised judgment, and surely it is right to pray for that which God has promised to do. Paul utters such an imprecation in the New Testament: “If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed” (1 Cor. 16:22). We must also always remember that if we diminish the necessity and righteousness of judgment, we will diminish the work of Christ on the cross. (Robert Godfrey)

C. Imprecations versus Personal Vengeance (cf. Mt 5:44; Lk 9:51-56)

1. Imprecatory prayers are not a remedy for personal affronts and injuries. They are cries for *justice* not opportunities to indulge thoughts of *revenge, bitterness, or resentment*.

¹⁷Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. ¹⁹Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. ²⁰Therefore “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.” ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Rom 12:17-21 cf. Dt 32:35; Prov 25:21-22)

2. Imprecatory prayers reckon with degrees of responsibility and culpability.
3. Imprecatory prayers leave open the hope of repentance & conversion. Luther explains:
We should pray that our enemies be converted and become our friends, and if not, that their doing and designing be bound to fail and have no success and that their persons perish rather than the Gospel and the kingdom of Christ [perish]. Thus the saintly martyr Anastasia, a wealthy, noble Roman matron, prayed against her husband, an idolatrous and terrible ravager of Christians, who had flung her into a horrible prison, in which she had to stay and die. There she lay and wrote to the saintly Chrysogonus diligently to pray for her husband that, if possible, he be converted and believe; but if not, that he be unable to carry out his plans and that he soon make an end of his ravaging. Thus she prayed him to death, for he went to war and did not return home. So we, too, pray for our angry enemies, not that God protect and strengthen them in their ways, as we pray for Christians, or that He help them, but that they be converted, if they can be; or, if they refuse, that God oppose them, stop them and end the game to their harm and misfortune.

IV. Conclusion