

The Suffering Savior Depicted

Book of Psalms

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Bible Text: Psalm 69:1,2

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Let's take our Bible and look together in Psalm 69. I weighed whether or not to come back to 68 and sum up some of what we have read there, but I believe that we have been over it enough to know the tenor, if you will, of what is written there pertaining to Christ and his glory and the praises to God through him. There is no worship apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. And everything God does for his people is through his Son.

Psalm 69 called here a prayer for deliverance, but I have entitled this simply Christ's suffering's depicted, that as we read here what some commentators call the complaints of David, and I don't necessarily like that word. These were cries which the Lord gave him as a needy sinner to look to God through Christ. But in it we see types of our Lord Jesus Christ in his sufferings. Such was his humanity. And I can't emphasize that enough. He was no less God in becoming a man and yet he was no less a man for being God. That is the mystery of godliness, God became a man. So we read:

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, A Psalm of David.

Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away. O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee. Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel. Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me. When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach. I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them. They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards.

But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation. Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters. Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me. Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies. And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily. Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies. Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee. Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them. Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents. For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded. Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous. But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs. The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God. For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners. Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein. For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession. The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein.¹

Most gracious heavenly Father, I pray that as we open your Word once again this morning that you would be pleased to be our teacher. I pray that you would not leave us alone to our own interpretations knowing that no part of this inspired Word is subject to private interpretation, that you give us exactly what we need to know concerning yourself, concerning sin, judgment, salvation, Christ, and that by your Spirit you would teach us of yourself through your Son. We know that there is no other mercy seat than him. I pray that even as we take up this Word and endeavor in some small way to understand the sufferings which Christ endured to save sinners such as we are, I pray that our hearts would be affected and that you would melt them and arrest any thought.

¹ Psalm 69:1-36.

Bring it into subjection to the one obedience or the Lord Jesus Christ that he worked out for sinners such as we are. Bless our time of worship, I pray, and we give you all the praise and the glory in his precious name. Amen.

Well, just reading this particular psalm I am sure some of these verses that I read have awakened in your own thoughts how this whole chapter pertains to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is difficult not to see it if we have any understanding of Scripture, for example, in verse four.

“They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head.”²

Our Lord spoke of being hated without a cause in John chapter 15. And then other portions, for example, in verse 18 that correspond with Isaiah 53.

“I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother’s children.”³

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.”⁴

Again, in verse nine how can you not see how this pertains to the Lord Jesus Christ?

“For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.”⁵

Cited in John chapter two and also by the apostle Paul in Romans 15. So it is not by any stretch of the imagination when I tell you that the title to this psalm is the sufferings of Christ depicted. In fact, as I read through it, my mind went back to Psalm 22. I don’t know if the Lord took your mind there, but a number of these Scriptures in here were cited already in Psalm 22. For example, Verse 19.

“Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee.”⁶

And a couple of other verses in there. So in this particular lesson that is what I want to do. I know that David was writing this out of his own experience. And yet even as our Lord taught the proper interpretation of Scripture he said:

“...they are they which testify of me.”⁷

² Psalm 69:4.

³ Psalm 69:8.

⁴ Isaiah 53:3.

⁵ Psalm 69:9.

⁶ Psalm 69:19.

⁷ John 5:39.

And if we all we do is study what befell David here, two things: One, if David were here he would stop us. He would most certainly tell us it is not about me, that if that is all you see, then you have missed the meaning of these Scriptures. But the second thing I believe is that through the common afflictions that we may face, even as David, and I often told you that if the Lord has taught us the gospel, we are by nature then enemies of this world, just the fact that the Lord has been pleased to reveal Christ in us. If we ever open our mouth to speak it will be contrary to what the religious world knows and believes. And it causes conflict, especially if you were to speak up as much as they speak up about their religion. I have done that in the office where I work. If somebody starts getting a little bit overboard on their religion, I start speaking up point for point and it is amazing to see how some go quiet and then if you could be a little fly on the wall to hear actually what they are saying to one another about what is this strange doctrine? Who is this that, you know, is a preacher and yet doesn't identify with what is known as Christianity today?

I can't identify with it. I just drove by on the way down here and saw some congregation up here that has got a new slogan on their sign. It is push, P U S H and it stands for: Pray until something happens. I mean, that is their concept of prayer. It is god waiting, their god, little g o d, waiting for us to do something to make it happen. And I have heard preachers say that. Don't waste God's time, that if you are not willing to pray, if you are not willing to do, if you are not willing to give, if you are not willing not put in the effort, then don't bug God. And we know that is an old, old lie that goes all the way back, if you will, to Mount Carmel when Elijah was brought to challenge the false prophets. And there were many. He was one. There were over 450 false prophets that danced around that altar that they built. And Elijah mocked them. He said, "Cry louder."

And do you know what? That was exactly what they did. Maybe he is on vacation. Maybe he is away. And it is an interesting term that is used there. I have studied it in the original language. Maybe he is gone to the bathroom is literally the sense that Elijah was using. It was a mockery for him, but they took it seriously. And such is the blindness of their hearts. That is the God of works religion. And they were David's enemies. They stood against him. You think about the idolatry that was in the land against which David as a king had to do battle. And then most of these, it is true, like most people say. Most wars today are religious in nature. And for David it was so. It had to do with the God that he worshipped, why he faced these enemies. It wasn't just political. There were idols that he would go in and destroy and in return they fought against his God. But such was the situation that our Lord Jesus Christ faced many decades and millennia later when he came into this world and Scripture says he came unto his own and his own received him not. Or that portion that read in verse nine:

"For the zeal of thine house has eaten me up."⁸

If you go and look at the context, what did the Lord do? He took a rope and went into the temple and chased out the money changers. These were guys that had made a market place of what was to be precious unto God. These poor people would come along with a

⁸ Psalm 69:9.

sheep and they would purposely find something wrong with it and here they had traveled all this way with this poor sheep that now was turned down by these leaders, religious leaders telling them it wasn't the right sacrifice. And they would take it away from him and then say, "But, since you have traveled so far, you can get one of ours that has been, quote, unquote, sanctified from back here behind the temple." And with a little bit of money you can buy and offer it.

And what they would do with that person's sheep was take it around back and if they came from another place where they couldn't buy in the currency that was there, the money changers were there to exchange that currency in order to... it was a fraudulent market going on. And that very sheep they took from that poor person and put around back was the one they sold to the next one. It had nothing to do with the honor and glory of God. And I don't have to spend a lot of time to tell you that is exactly what goes on in so-called Christendom today where preachers are CEOs of enterprises and they find ways to get people to contribute and pay money and put on these large productions under the guise of taking up love offerings to pay for it, but receiving far more than they ever give out. And so the religion snowballs and grows and they put... the bigger it grows the more they want to put their name to it. Such and such a ministry, you know? All of these things nothing has changed over the years.

But for one of the Lord's these are things that weigh them down. They are burdened. It is like Paul on Mars hill as he walked around and saw the idolatry and as the Word describes it in Acts 17 the devotions of men. Actually in the original it is the words superstitions. That this what it is. These are man's religion is nothing but superstition. It is a false idea of God. It is a false idea of themselves and a false idea of worship, but they based on superstition.

You think about even in the secular world, what we call the secular world, how many superstitions there are. I was coming out of an office this week with an associate and a black cat ran in front of us and he just stopped. He said, "Oh, on, a black cat. What day is it?" And it happened to be Friday. So that made it even worse. You know? I think he was thinking at any point if we didn't do something, throw salt over the shoulder. I don't know what you are supposed to do, they say, but there is something bad in the works. To me it was just a scared cat running from one yard to another trying to escape whatever. Those are superstitions. And people identify them in the secular world and think, oh, those are just old wives' tales, but how many superstitions exist today and stand anti Christ? They stand against this work. And it goes all the way back to Cain. Actually, it goes all the way back to the garden and the fall, that superstitious thinking that somehow God was hiding something and really didn't want them to eat of any other tree other than the tree of life and those which were in the garden, but not to touch the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

What did Satan do but sow a superstitious thought in their mind and heart? And, you know, that is where the fall took place. It wasn't when they partook of the fruit. Seeing that that fruit that God had said was wrong to touch, seeing that it was good. That is where the fall took place. Sin is conceived in the heart. And it brings forth death. And

that describes what men today born in this world continue to do, build on that religion. That fictitious religion, fairy tale religion that somehow many by his devices and works is going to offer something satisfactory to a holy God when God is already declared all the way back to the garden. God took the fig leaves off of Adam and Eve and killed an innocent animal. God was the first to ever preach the gospel in this fallen world. And men have sought to deviate from it ever since. And the more time goes, the more men find ways to invent, to build on that foundation.

So this was a burden to David when we read here in verses one and two. This cry unto the Lord where literally he pours out his soul before the Lord. And it had to do with this opposition that he faced as a man in this world. And if you are the Lord's, you know what I am talking about. You are going to know that isolation. You can't just grab anybody that says they are a Christian and sit down and have fellowship. It doesn't take long to find out in a hurry we are talking about two different things here and then this trouble begins in the heart. And where do I begin? And this person is thinking that we believe the same thing and I have gotten to where I cut to the chase with him. I believe we are talking about two different gods here. Well, let's just see. And when you say that all of the sudden they are on guard. What are you talking about? Isn't a Christian a Christian? No.

It is like a man I heard this morning on the news. There is quite a push now to get rid of all religious symbols. And a cross or anything that identifies a building with a religious symbol, so called Christian symbol. I personally am in favor of that. They kind of bother me seeing steeples and crosses and these things that are nothing but idolatry. But this particular priest that was talking about and said, "I am going to make some people mad," because when I say that I am in favor of not having any particular symbol, they are not going to understand why I say that. And so it caught my attention. So why he is saying it? And his point of view was any building should be open of any type of religion. So even if you don't believe in Christ, but it is a center of worship, then there shouldn't be anything offensive to that other because we are all, after all, children of God.

Now, you know, I am sitting there thinking that is not why I would want those symbols removed. It is because it has nothing to do with the gospel and that yet when people walk in and sit down and notice even a building like this that doesn't have any religious symbols, at least the gospel is preached from this pulpit, they would be brought to see a difference. It is not that anybody can believe anything, but there is a truth. There is the way, the truth and the life. It is set forth in Christ. But it stands in opposition to what men and know and believe.

So this is the spiritual warfare that we see here in Psalm 69 that David is describing. He says:

"...the waters are come in unto my soul."⁹

⁹ Psalm 69:1.

So it tells me right there this is not just some physical conflict. David was a man of war. If it had to do with just a physical conflict, he had elite troops that he could send at any time and destroy an enemy. Such was the power and strength that the Lord had given him. He was a man of war, a bloody man. But here was the conflict as he describes it, of his soul. So that tells me that it is spiritual in nature.

And, again, as a child of God, I can identify with what he is talking about, how the soul is burdened over lost sinners and particularly those that we are acquainted with. They might be our children. They might be other family members that are caught up in a false hope and a false religion or even indifference as to the gospel.

I read recently that hate is not necessarily a emotion of anger toward something or someone, but hate is something as simple as indifference. Here is a cause which is Christ and his gospel and his work and what he accomplished. And indifference toward that is hatred. It is a hatred towards God and toward Christ. And these are things that weighed upon David's heart and soul to the point where you read here in verse two:

“I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.”¹⁰

To me this is a chastening of heart and soul that, yes, was due to circumstances, perhaps, outside of himself, but nonetheless, the Lord directed him. As the Lord has taught me over the years and my heart becomes weighed down and burdened, not only over the hardness of men's hearts, but the hardness of my own heart, because where there is life, you sense like in your body, you sense your affliction like no other.

You know, Mike might come and tell me my shoulder is hurting, my head is aching and I might tell him, you know, I am really sorry. I hope you get feeling better. But that doesn't affect me. But you let me have a headache, let me have a sore shoulder, now I am beginning to feel it and whether anybody else senses it or not, it is something that the Lord has given me. And such was the weight of this burden upon David and so I don't want us to think here that it was just certain simply external things, but the very weight of his own sin before a holy God and that unless there was that just sacrifice to be true, as God gave him eyes to look to Christ he would come and pay his debt. But even in his day those sacrifices that were offered up, knowing that they were but a covering, he would have no confidence even in those sacrifices, but what they represented. You know, give me the real sacrifice which is Christ and Christ alone.

And so when he speaks here of the shame and the reproach that he bore, for example, verse seven:

“Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.”¹¹

¹⁰ Psalm 69:2.

¹¹ Psalm 69:7.

Why do you believe that there was a reproach? Well, enemies had heard about him. They had heard of his falls. They had heard of his sin and were throwing it up in his face. What kind of king are you? Who are you to say that you are a Christian? And it doesn't take much for you just to slip a word to say something in front of somebody and they say, "You call your self a Christian?" And all of the sudden that becomes a reproach in your conscience and mine.

But I have found in reality all it is the Lord's way of causing you not to trust any kid of self righteousness, because in the end if it brings you to bow and to realize that but for the grace of God, but for the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, I would be just like those who stand opposed to Christ. And that is a blessing if the Lord brings you to bow.

So these are all things of consideration here.

When he talks about sinking in deep mire where there is no standing, I think back to when the Lord began to work in my own heart and show me that everything that I thought was righteousness wasn't and a supposed progressive sanctification when I was getting better and better somehow sinning less and less than when the Lord truly showed me that it was nothing but a quagmire, it was nothing but sinking sand. I was like the fool that was building on sinking sand and that there was no standing. There is no standing in anything in ourselves. And I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me. If God were to judge me based upon my works, I would be as a drowning man. And would know nothing but consternation, confusion and condemnation. And such is our state before the Lord.

You go over to Jonah chapter two. When I read about the waters overflowing me, I think of Jonah. I think of his arrogance. He was none less the Lord's even in his flight. And that is a blessing that the Lord will not allow one of his to escape. We might run hard the other way, but, you know, we can't get ahead of the Lord. I know that is an expression that some people use, but it is impossible. The Lord uses all circumstances to chasten any of his own and certainly with Jonah, you know, in the end he wasn't one second late in arriving in Nineveh. He arrived exactly at the time God purposed. We would look at it and think, well, he got there late. No, he didn't. It was exactly when the Lord purposed, not too soon, not too late. And yet in between time, how the Lord caused him to see his helplessness apart from the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When it says here in Jonah two and verse five:

"The waters compassed me about, even to the soul."¹²

There was some soul searching going on in the belly of that fish.

"...the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head."¹³

¹² Jonah 2:5.

¹³ Ibid.

Oh, that we would see that any works of our own are nothing better. It is nothing but weeds wrapped around our head, that if we would in any sense confide in the works of these hands or the thoughts of this heart, as any kind of standing before God, that it would most certainly bring us to the bottom. That is what he says in verse six.

“I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God.”¹⁴

Where was he caused to look? Again, verse three, the waves.

“For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.”¹⁵

Notice whose billows and whose waves. It was the Lord.

“Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.”¹⁶

What was in the holy temple? The mercy seat, the sacrifice. So the Lord was dealing mightily in Jonah even as he is dealing here with David.

“I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing.”¹⁷

But thank God he is caused to see there is no standing there, that that standing is in Christa alone.

“I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.”¹⁸

Well, as I said, all of this points to our Lord Jesus Christ. Do you remember the words of our Lord in the garden before he went to the cross when he said:

“Now is my soul troubled.”¹⁹

“My soul is exceeding sorrowful.”²⁰

It was his soul that our Lord made as an offering for sin. It was the travail of his soul. And not bearing his own iniquity but bearing the iniquity of his people. I don't know as we can ever truly enter into the sufferings of Christ there. You know, if he shows me even in a small way my own sin, all I can do is say, “Well, that is my sin and I deserve condemnation.” But here was the Lord himself as the suffering servant bearing the sin of his people. It is one thing to bear your own reproach. It is another thing to bear the

¹⁴ Jonah 2:6.

¹⁵ Jonah 2:3.

¹⁶ Jonah 2:4.

¹⁷ Psalm 69:2.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ John 12:27.

²⁰ Matthew 26:38; Mark 14:34.

reproach of another, knowing that it wasn't yours, but men put it to your account. That is what substitution is. And that is what our Lord endured. And such was his suffering. It was not just a rehearsal for some play or production like you see men doing today in their so-called passion plays. There is nothing more blasphemous to me than any would even think of playing the part of our Lord or thinking that somehow they can portray it as it was. There is one thing that can never be portrayed. You can take and portray physical sufferings of a person being crucified, because that was a common place thing. Our Lord died under a common method of execution for criminals in his day. Such was his lot that the Father purposed for him, but the one thing that distinguished him was not in that he died, but how he died and why he died and he who died. That is what the world can't see. But in that there was this affliction of his soul. And so when we are afflicted, when the Lord in his mercy just shows us a small portion of who we are, and we become overwhelmed even by that one thing, or that ... those few thoughts of our sin, of standing before a holy God. Imagine the soul affliction of Christ before the Father when the Father put the whole weight of the sin of his people upon him and he cried unto his Father that he might be delivered. Not from the cross. When David said, "Save me, oh God," it was... even as Christ prayed for deliverance. It was not that he be delivered from the cross, but delivered through the cross, that his soul would not see corruption. And it was the very same spirit that caused him to cry unto his Father, his what? The Father gives to any one of his children and causes them to cry unto him.

Well, there is a lot more here, but I pray that this would be an encouragement to us that we not be discouraged or discontented with the Lord is pleased to show us a small portion of our sin and we sink in despair, but that the Lord use it to cause our eyes to turn to Christ and behold him and see him as that sin bearer who died for sinners such as we are.