

## Psalm 69

**Title:** A Cry For Help

**Author and Date:** David

**Key Verses:** Psalm 69:1, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18

**Type:** Lament (Individual Complaint)

### **Outline**

- A. Prayers to God: the cry for help offered (verses 1-29).
- B. Praises to God: the cry for help answered (verses 30-36).

### **Notes**

Title: “For the Chief Musician; set to Shoshannim. A Psalm of David.” For “the Chief Musician”, see the notes on the title of Psalm 4. For “Shoshannim”, see the notes on the title of Psalm 45. This term also appears in Psalm 80. “A Psalm of David.” Paul attributes the words of this psalm to David in Romans 11:9-10.

Summary: Psalm 69 is a lament (individual complaint) of the psalmist as he cries to God for help from his enemies (verses 4 and 18). He cries out to God: “Save me” (verse 1), “deliver me” (verse 14), “answer me” (verses 13, 16, and 17), and “ransom me” (verse 18). Psalm 69 moves from prayers to praises. The psalmist begins with sinking (verse 2) and ends with singing (verse 30). There are several verses in this psalm quoted in the NT and applied to Jesus, making portions of this psalm of David a prediction about the Son of David.

The psalmist begins with a cry for help because his troubles are great (verses 1-3). He is suffering without cause (verse 4) and he is innocent (verse 5). He does not want his fellow-believers to be hurt (verse 6) as he suffers for righteousness’ sake (verse 7). He describes the terrible reproach from those who are close to him (verses 8-12). The psalmist cries to God. He wants an answer and he wants deliverance from his great troubles (verses 13-18). He then returns to describing his terrible reproach (verses 19-21).

Next, the psalmist offers up an imprecatory (cursing) prayer. He desires (“let”) that God would curse his enemies with divine punishment (verses 22-28). On the other hand, he desires (“let”) that God’s salvation would set him on high (verse 29).

Finally, the psalmist closes with a promise to praise God (verses 30-33) and he calls upon heaven and earth to praise God as well (verses 34-36).

Verses 1-2: The psalmist is not literally drowning in the water and sinking in the mire. He is describing, in a poetic way, his distress and the reproach against his “soul” (see also verses 10, 14, and 15) and his “heart” (verse 20). He is drowning in a sea of troubles. He wants God to “save” him from his enemies (verses 4 and 18). Being overwhelmed with water and sinking in the mire are poetic ways of describing one’s intense suffering (Job 22:11; Psa. 32:6; 40:2; 42:7; 124:4-5). Jeremiah, on the other hand, was actually put in a pit of mire (Jer. 38:6) and Jonah was drowning (Jonah 2).

Verse 4: The psalmist is innocent and suffering “without a cause”. The words, “they hate me without a cause” (KJV), are quoted in John 15:25 and applied to Jesus’ unjustified rejection by the Jews (see also Psa. 35:19).

Verse 5: The psalmist protests his innocence. If he has sin, God would know it.

Verse 6: Note that the psalmist cared for others even in the midst of his own suffering.

Verse 7: The words, “For thy sake” (KJV), state the reason for the psalmist’s suffering.

Verse 8: See 1 Samuel 17:28. Job faced similar rejection from his friends and family (Job 19:13-15). Also, compare verse 11 with Job 17:6.

Verse 9: The first part of this verse (“zeal of thy house”) is quoted in John 2:17 and applied to Jesus’ zeal in cleansing of the temple. The second part of this verse (“the reproaches of them that reproach thee”) is quoted by Paul in Romans 15:3 and applied to Jesus’ reproach and suffering on the cross for our sins.

Verse 13: The psalmist prays in “an acceptable time”; that is, at the right time for God to hear and answer him before it is too late.

Verse 21: The psalmist was given poisoned food and unpleasant drink. Jesus was also given vinegar to drink while on the cross (Mt. 27:34, 48; Mk. 15:23; Lk. 23:36; Jn. 19:28-30).

Verses 22-23: Paul quotes a portion of these two verses (“Let their table ... let their eyes”) in Romans 11:9-10 and applies it to the unbelieving Jews who were hardened toward Jesus Christ. Paul also attributes these words to David (Rom. 11:9).

Verses 22-28: Note the use of “let” in verses 22-28. These verses form the imprecatory (curse) portion of the psalm where the psalmist offers his wish or desire to God that God curse his enemies with divine punishment (verse 24, “thine indignation ... thy wrathful anger”, KJV).

Verse 25: The words, “Let their habitation be desolate” (KJV), are quoted by Peter in Acts 1:20 and applied to the death of Judas. Peter said that Judas fulfilled this scripture (Acts 1:16).

Verse 26: Note the words “thou hast smitten ... thou hast wounded” (KJV). David recognizes that God is sovereign and the righteous suffer by God’s hand to fulfill his plan (Isa. 53:4).

Verse 31: Animal sacrifices are important (Psa. 40:6-8; 50:8-13; 51:16-17), but these sacrifices could not please God better than the psalmists’ own praise and thanksgiving (verse 30).

## **Questions**

1. What request does David have for God and why (verses 1-3)?
2. How are the enemies described (verse 4)?
3. What does God know (verse 5)?
4. What is David’s desire for others who wait for God and seek God (verse 6)?
5. What happens to David because he serves God (verses 7-9)?
6. What happens to David when he weeps and fasts (verses 10-12)?
7. How does God answer prayer (verse 13)?
8. What request does David have for God (verses 14-15)?
9. Why does David believe God will answer him (verse 16)?

10. What request does David have for God (verses 17-18)?
  
11. What else does God know (verses 19-20)?
  
12. What do the enemies give (verse 21)?
  
13. What wishes does David have for his enemies (verses 22-28)?
  
14. What wish does David have for himself (verse 29)?
  
15. What does David promise to do and what does he believe will be the result (verses 30-31)?
  
16. What are the humble (meek) and why (verses 32-33)?
  
17. What are the heavens and earth called upon to do and why (verses 34-36)?

### **Applications for Today**

1. When I cry to God for help, he will save me, answer me, deliver me, and ransom me (verses 1, 13, 14, 16, 17, and 18). Who is our savior (Lk. 2:11; 1 Jn. 4:14), our deliverer (Rom. 11:26; Gal. 1:4; 1 Thess. 1:10), and our ransom (Mk. 10:45; 1 Tim. 2:6)?
  
2. Sometimes we suffer without cause (verse 4). Who suffered without cause (Jn. 15:25), was given vinegar to drink (Mt. 27:48), and was reproached for our sakes (Rom. 15:3)?

3. God knows our foolishness and sins (verse 5). What does God know about us (Psa. 44:21; Lk. 16:15; Acts 15:8)?
  
4. The righteous often suffer reproach because they serve God and obey his word (verses 7-9). Why did Jeremiah suffer (Jer. 15:15)? What does Jesus say about suffering for righteousness' sake (Mt. 5:10-12; Lk. 6:22)? Why did the apostles suffer (Mt. 10:18, 22; 24:9; Jn. 15:21; Acts 9:16; 2 Cor. 4:11; 12:10)? Why do Christians suffer (1 Pet. 3:14; Rev. 2:3)?
  
5. The psalmist was zealous for God's house (verse 9). Who also was zealous for God's house and how did he show it (Jn. 2:15-17)?
  
6. The psalmist curses his enemies (verses 22-25). How does Paul make use of verses 22-23 (Rom. 11:9-10)? How does Peter make use of verse 25 (Acts 1:20)?
  
7. When a person does not live a righteous life, he is blotted out of the book of life (verse 28). Who are written in the book of life (Ex. 32:32-33; Dan. 12:1; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5)? Who are not written in the book of life (Rev. 13:8; 17:8; 21:27)? When will the book of life be opened (Rev. 20:12)? What happens to those who are not written in the book of life (Rev. 20:15)?
  
8. Let us all praise God with song and magnify him with thanksgiving (verse 30). Who magnified the Lord and why (Lk. 1:46; Acts 10:46)?