

The Psalms Prepare for the Messiah
The Sufferings of the Coming One
Psalm 69:1-21
Sermon Outline

Introduction: Sometimes we suffer for doing the right thing. Psalm 69 gives voice to this sort of suffering and invites us to speak out about it, declaring our sufferings and drawing hope from the sufferings of Jesus, which the psalm predicts.

I) Declaring our sufferings

A) Notice what the psalmist says about his sufferings

1) Underserved

He isn't perfect (v 5) but he is faithful

- v 4a: *they hate me without cause*
- v 9: *Zeal for your house has consumed me*
- v 6: *let them not be put to shame through me*
- Jn. 18.8: *If you seek me, let these others go*

2) Multi-layered

- Falsely accused: v. 4
- Publicly ridiculed: v. 12
- Disowned: v. 8
- Crushingly lonely: v. 20

3) Overwhelming: vv. 1-3 Exemplary in character

- Drowning: v. 1
- Buried alive: v. 15
- Unrelieved: v. 3

B) What are we to do with these dire words?

- Speak them
- Admit to the world that Jesus entered
- Don't be surprised when you take a hit for doing the right thing

II) Drawing our hope from Christ's sufferings

A) They exceed ours

- Absolute versus relative innocence
- Loneliness more acute
- Abandoned by God: v. 17: *Hide not your face from your servant...*

B) Why did he suffer?

Take Away:

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) Sometimes we suffer from doing foolish things. Sometimes we suffer from doing the right thing. Recall and share an example of each.
- 2) Itemize the psalmist's sufferings in Ps. 69:1-21. Note first their nature (vv 4-21) and then their effect (vv 1-3). Recall parallel sufferings in your experience or the experience of those you know and love. Recall parallel effects in your own life or the lives of those you know and love. How did you/they cope?
- 3) Reflect on the following statement: "God gives us the dire words of Psalm 69 because he wants to encourage us to speak them. In other words he wants us to feel his permission to be honest about what is wrong with the world—to say the sorts of things that we might be shocked to hear said in church."
- 4) Assume that Psalm 69 describes not only our experience when we suffer for doing the right things but also Christ's experience. Where do you see Christ's sufferings in the psalm? Try to think of actual moments in the Gospels.
- 5) Reflect on the following statement: "We go through times when it feels like God has deserted us. But it only feels that way—even when our suffering is for doing something stupid or wrong. But for God's Son it was different. When from the cross he cried, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me,' he was giving expression to something that no follower of Jesus will ever have to face."
- 6) When we say that Christ's sufferings atoned for sin, what do we mean? In what ways and places does Psalm 69 hint at the atonement?
- 7) Spend some time in prayer, using the words and phrases of Psalm 69 to help you give voice to the sufferings in life that trouble you. Think as well of the names for God that are given in the psalm and use them to fuel your prayer with hope. Give Christ thanks for his atoning work.