

A MESSIANIC PSALM

Friday, May 11

Reading: Psalm 69:19-36

Psalm 69:20 *Scorn has broken my heart and has left me helpless; I looked for sympathy, but there was none, for comforters, but I found none. 21 They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst.*

When we read the psalms we sometimes get a shadow of Jesus in its verses. We call these “Messianic Psalms” because they point us to the life of work of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Psalm 22 is a prime example of a Messianic psalm as it presents in vivid detail the crucifixion of Christ. Psalm 69 carries many of these same themes and thoughts. In fact Psalm 69 is the third most quoted psalm in the New Testament.

Early in Jesus’ ministry the words of Psalm 69:9 had come to the apostles mind as they saw Jesus cleanse the Temple of the moneychangers and merchants (John 2:17; see Rom. 15:3 for the last half of this verse). And Psalm 69:25 is quoted in reference to Judas and choosing an apostle to take his place (Acts 1:20)

But the most poignant verses point us to the cross. The cry of being hated without reason or cause (69:4) is repeated by Jesus in the Upper Room the night before His crucifixion (John 15:25) to remind us that the hatred the world had for Him will be transferred to those who follow Him (John 15:18-25).

Though not directly quoted in the New Testament, Psalm 69:19-20 pictures the abandonment Christ felt as He hung on the cross. He was even forsaken by the Father as He bore the sins of the world. It points to the spiritual agony Christ suffered for us. The offering of gall and vinegar to Jesus at Calvary is recorded in all four gospel accounts with John emphasizing it was done to fulfill Scripture. This is an example of the physical suffering Christ endured for us. In these words we get a glimpse of Christ’s sacrifice that purchased our salvation.

So what do we do with Psalm 69:22-28? These harsh cries for God to punish the wicked (even asking that “they be blotted out of the book of life”) do not seem to fit with the One who prayed from the cross “Father, forgive them.” The Apostle Paul applies the words of verses 22-23 to the hardening of Israel’s hearts because of their rejection of Jesus (Rom. 11:7-10). For those who reject God’s gift of salvation through Christ, a day of judgment is coming. One day Christ will return and pour out His wrath on the wicked. They will “not be listed with the righteous.”

After all the gloom and suffering of this psalm, David concludes with a song of praise (69:30-36). David knows that a thankful and repentant heart pleases God more than any animal sacrifice ever could. Two phrases catch my eye and both are blessings believers receive because of the sacrifice of Christ. First, is the phrase “may your hearts live” (69:32). Eternal life is made available by God because of the death of His Son. Second, the psalm says God’s people will “possess...inherit...and dwell” in Zion (69:35-36). This is a promise of the New Jerusalem, the heavenly Zion in which “those who love His name” will live in the presence of God forever.

Do you know Christ as your Lord and Savior? Will you be “listed with the righteous” or will your name be “blotted out of the book of life”?

THRU THE BIBLE Reading: 2 Samuel 22-24; Acts 6