

God Knows Our Sorrows

Today, as we begin this second half of Psalm 69, allow me to give a brief review of some important points that we saw from verses 1-18. Beginning with the heading:

—**Sinking in the mire**, we saw that David is experiencing severe persecution from fellow Israelites. He's clearly *overwhelmed* which is shown in the metaphorical language of being on the verge of drowning. In verse 4, we got our first look at how portions of this Psalm reach across redemptive history as they prefigure the coming of Jesus Christ. On the night prior to his crucifixion, Jesus is teaching his disciples that those who hate him will also hate them. In John's gospel, Jesus connects his life situation to Psalm 69:4 by saying: "But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: 'They hated me without a cause.'" (John 15:25) David is showing us that—although he is not without sin—he has done nothing that would cause this intense persecution and he's crying out to God for help. Secondly, David gives us an example of:

—**Seeking to honor God in the midst of reproach**. In the second section from verses 5-12 David teaches us that—when we suffer—we don't want to sin against God in our suffering and be a *negative example* to others. David prayed, "Let not those *who hope in you* be put to shame *through me*, O God of Israel." Along with that, David gave us a *positive example* of showing zeal for the worship of God in the midst of reproach. David uses another phrase that's fulfilled by Jesus in the New Testament. "For zeal for your house has consumed me." No matter what our suffering is—whether persecuted by others or any type of physical or emotional suffering we're experiencing—we want to be a *positive example* so that others will see that we want nothing to hinder the proper worship of God, either by ourselves or others. Lastly, we saw that:

—**Steadfast love and faithfulness of God is our hope**. In David's prayer he continues to cry out to God for deliverance from those who are persecuting him, but in his prayer he focuses—not merely on his enemies—but on the *character and promises of God* as his only true hope. These truths are examples to all Christians because we've been promised that we'll undergo suffering as we seek to be faithful to God's word and ways in our lives. Let's begin this last half of Psalm 69 with the truth that:

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Look at verse 19: "You *know* my reproach, and my shame and my dishonor; my foes are known to you as well." David knows the scriptures and therefore, he knows his God. Christians should always continue to look to God's word for counsel and encouragement. The apostle Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 1 of certain afflictions that he and others went through and he tells us that, "We were so utterly burdened beyond our

strength that we despaired of life itself.” He then goes on to tell of the most important lesson that they learned during this time. “But this was to make us not rely on ourselves but on God who raises the dead....On him we have set our hope...” We know as well that Jesus Christ endured suffering such as we’ll never have to experience and he sympathizes with us and he knows us completely.

David gives us an example of setting our hope on God who knows all things. In these first few verses David is expressing the depths of sorrow. His pain is not merely physical but he’s hurting from the inside-out because of persecution from some of his fellow Israelites. “Reproaches have *broken my heart*, so that I am in despair. I looked for pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.” (vs. 20) David is not only not receiving any sympathy or comfort from anyone, his enemies are wickedly continuing to try to harm him. Look at the first phrase of verse 21: “They gave me *poison* for food and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink.” Verse 21 is either cited directly or alluded to in all four gospel accounts during the time of the crucifixion of Jesus. (Mt. 27:34, 48; Mk. 15:23, 36; Lk. 23:36; John 19:29) It’s interesting that in Luke’s account we read: “The soldiers also *mocked him*, coming up offering him sour wine.....” Jesus, the Son of God, *knows our sorrows* because he’s borne more reproach than any of his followers—including us—would ever have to bear. But more than that, even as Jesus was receiving the mocking and reproach of others, he *never sinned—not once!* Not only did he not sin, but even as he hung on the cross he prayed to the Father: “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34)

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