

PSALM 69

David penned this psalm when he was in affliction; and in it,

I. He complains of the great distress and trouble he was in and earnestly begs of God to relieve and succour him (v. 1-21).

II. He imprecates the judgments of God upon his persecutors (v. 22-29).

III. He concludes with the voice of joy and praise, in an assurance that God would help and succour him, and would do well for the church (v. 30-36). Now, in this, David was a type of Christ, and divers passages in this psalm are applied to Christ in the new Testament and are said to have their accomplishment in him (v. 4, 9, 21), and v. 22 refers to the enemies of Christ. So that (like the twenty-second psalm) it begins with the humiliation and ends with the exaltation of Christ, one branch of which was the destruction of the Jewish nation for persecuting him, which the imprecations here are predictions of. In singing this psalm we must have an eye to the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that followed, not forgetting the sufferings of Christians too, and the glory that shall follow them; for it may lead us to think of the ruin reserved for the persecutors and the rest reserved for the persecuted.

PSALM 69:1-12

COMPLAINTS AND PETITIONS

To the chief musician upon Shoshannim. A psalm of David.

In these verses David complains of his troubles, intermixing with those complaints some requests for relief.

I. His complaints are very sad, and he pours them out before the Lord, as one that hoped thus to ease himself of a burden that lay very heavy upon him.

1. He complains of the deep impressions that his troubles made upon his spirit (v. 1, 2): “The *waters of affliction*, those bitter waters, *have come*

unto my soul, not only threaten my life, but disquiet my mind; they fill my head with perplexing cares and my heart with oppressive grief, so that I cannot enjoy God and myself as I used to do.” We shall bear up under our troubles if we can but keep them from our hearts; but, when they put us out of the possession of our own souls, our case is bad. *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity*; but what shall we do when the spirit is wounded? That was David’s case here. His thoughts sought for something to confide in, and with which to support his hope, but he found nothing: He sunk *in deep mire, where there was no standing*, no firm footing; the considerations that used to support and encourage him now failed him, or were out of the way, and he was ready to give himself up for gone. He sought for something to comfort himself with, but found himself *in deep waters that overflowed* him, overwhelmed him; he was like a sinking drowning man, in such confusion and consternation. This points at Christ’s sufferings in his soul, and the inward agony he was in when he said, *Now is my soul troubled*; and, *My soul is exceedingly sorrowful*; for it was his soul that he made an offering for sin. And it instructs us, when we are in affliction, to commit the keeping of our souls to God, that we may be neither soured with discontent nor sink into despair.

2. He complains of the long continuance of his troubles (v. 3): *I am weary of my crying*. Though he could not keep his head above water, yet he cried to his God, and the more death was in his view the more life was in his prayers; yet he had not immediately an answer of peace given in, no, nor so much of that support and comfort in praying which God’s people used to have; so that he was almost weary of crying, grew hoarse, and his *throat* so *dried* that he could cry no more. Nor had he his wonted satisfaction in believing, hoping, and expecting relief: *My eyes fail while I wait for my God*; he had almost looked his eyes out, in expectation of deliverance. Yet his pleading this with God is an indication that he is resolved not to give up believing and praying. His throat is dried, but his heart is not; his eyes fail, but his faith does not. Thus our Lord Jesus, on the cross, cried out, *Why hast thou forsaken me?* yet, at the same time, he kept hold of his relation to him: *My God, my God*.

3. He complains of the malice and multitude of his enemies, their injustice and cruelty, and the hardships they put upon him, v. 4. They hated him, they would destroy him, for hatred aims at the destruction of the person hated; but what was his iniquity, what was his sin, what provocation had he given them, that they were so spiteful towards him? None at all: “*They*

hate me without a cause; I never did them the least injury, that they should bear me such ill-will.” Our Saviour applies this to himself (~~4:15~~ John 15:25): *They hated me without a cause.* We are apt to use this in justification of our passion against those that hate us, that we never gave them cause to hate us. But it is rather an argument why we should bear it patiently, because then we suffer as Christ did, and may then expect that God will give us redress. “They are *my enemies wrongfully*, for I have been no enemy to them.” In a world where unrighteousness reigns so much we must not wonder if we meet with those that are our enemies wrongfully. Let us take care that we never do wrong and then we may the better bear it if we receive wrong. These enemies were not to be despised, but were very formidable both for their number — *They are more than the hairs of my head* (Christ's enemies were numerous; those that came to seize him were a great multitude; how were those increased that troubled him!) and for their strength — *They are mighty* in authority and power. We are weak, but our enemies are strong; for *we wrestle against principalities and powers. Then I restored that which I took not away.* Applying this to David, it was what his enemies compelled him to (they made him suffer for that offence which he had never been guilty of); and it was what he consented to, that, if possible, he might pacify them and make them to be at peace with him. He might have insisted upon the laws of justice and honour, the former not requiring and the latter commonly thought to forbid the restoring of that which we took not away, for that is to wrong ourselves both in our wealth and in our reputation. Yet the case may be such sometimes that it may become our duty. Blessed Paul, though free from all men, yet, for the honour of Christ and the edification of the church, made himself a servant to all. But, applying it to Christ, it is an observable description of the satisfaction which he made to God for our sin by his blood: *Then he restored that which he took not away; he underwent the punishment that was due to us, paid our debt, suffered for our offence. God's glory, in some instances of it, was taken away by the sin of man; man's honour, and peace, and happiness, were taken away; it was not he that took them away, and yet by the merit of his death he restored them.*

4. He complains of the unkindness of his friends and relations, and this is a grievance which with an ingenuous mind cuts as deeply as any (v. 8): “*I have become a stranger to my brethren; they make themselves strange to me and use me as a stranger, are shy of conversing with me and ashamed*

to own me.” This was fulfilled in Christ, whose *brethren did not believe on him* (~~405~~ John 7:5), who *came to his own and his own received him not* (~~411~~ John 1:11), and who was forsaken by his disciples, whom he had been free with as his brethren.

5. He complains of the contempt that was put upon him and the reproach with which he was continually loaded. And in this especially his complaint points at Christ, who for our sakes submitted to the greatest disgrace and made himself of no reputation. We having by sin injured God in his honour, Christ made him satisfaction, not only by divesting himself of the honours due to an incarnate deity, but by submitting to the greatest dishonours that could be done to any man. Two things David here takes notice of as aggravations of the indignities done him: —

(1.) The ground and matter of the reproach, v. 10, 11. They ridiculed him for that by which he both humbled himself and honoured God. When men lift up themselves in pride and vain glory they are justly laughed at for their folly; but David chastened his soul, and clothed himself with sackcloth, and from his abasing himself they took occasion to trample upon him. When men dishonour God it is just that their so doing should turn to their dishonour; but when David, purely in devotion to God and to testify his respect to him, *wept, and chastened his soul with fasting, and made sackcloth his garment*, as humble penitents used to do, instead of commending his devotion and recommending it as a great example of piety, they did all they could both to discourage him in it and to prevent others from following his good example; for *that was to his reproach*. They laughed at him as a fool for mortifying himself thus; and even for this he *became a proverb to them*; they made him the common subject of their banter. We must not think it strange if we be ill spoken of for that which is well done, and in which we have reason to hope that we are accepted of God. Our Lord Jesus was stoned for his good works (~~412~~ John 10:32), and when he cried, *Eli, Eli — My God, my God*, was bantered, as if he called for Elias.

(2.) The persons that reproached him, v. 12.

[1.] Even the gravest and the most honourable, from whom better was expected: *Those that sit in the gate speak against me*, and their reproaches pass for the dictates of senators and the decrees of judges, and are credited accordingly.

[2.] The meanest, and the most despicable, the objects (^{<BIB>}Psalm 35:15), and scum of the country, the *children of fools*, yea, the *children of base men*, (^{<BIB>}Job 30:8). Such drunkards as these make themselves vile, and he was the song of the drunkards; they made themselves and their companions merry with him. See the bad consequences of the sin of drunkenness; it makes men *despisers of those that are good*, (^{<BIB>}2 Timothy 3:3). When *the king was made sick with bottles of wine he stretched out his hand with scorers*, (^{<BIB>}Hosea 7:5). The bench of the drunkards is the seat of the scornful. See what is commonly the lot of the best of men: those that are the praise of the wise are the song of fools. But it is easy to those that rightly judge of things to despise being thus despised.

II. His confessions of sin are very serious (v. 5): “*O God! thou knowest my foolishness*, what is and what is not; my sins that I am guilty of are not hidden from thee, and therefore thou knowest how innocent I am of those crimes which they charge upon me.” Note, Even when, as to men's unjust accusations, we plead *Not guilty*, yet, before God, we must acknowledge ourselves to have deserved all that is brought upon us, and much worse. This is the genuine confession of a penitent, who knows that he cannot prosper in covering his sin, and that *therefore* it is his wisdom to acknowledge it, because it is naked and open before God.

1. He knows the corruption of our nature: *Thou knowest the foolishness* that is bound up in my heart. All our sins take rise from our foolishness.

2. He knows the transgressions of our lives; they are not hidden from him, no, not our heart-sins, no, not those that are committed most secretly. They are all done in his sight, and are never cast behind his back till they are repented of and pardoned. This may aptly be applied to Christ, for he knew no sin, yet he was made sin for us; and God knew it, nor was it hidden from him, when it pleased the Lord to bruise him and put him to grief.

III. His supplications are very earnest.

1. For himself (v. 1): “*Save me, O God! save me from sinking, from despairing.*” Thus Christ was heard in that he feared, for he was saved from letting fall his undertaking, (^{<BIB>}Hebrews 5:7).

2. For his friends (v. 6): *Let not those that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts! and that seek thee, O God of Israel!* (under these two characters we

ought to seek God, and in seeking him to wait on him, as the *God of hosts*, who has all power to help, and as the *God of Israel* in covenant with his people, whom therefore he is engaged in honour and truth to help) *be ashamed and confounded for my sake*. This intimates his fear that if God did not appear for him it would be a discouragement to all other good people and would give their enemies occasion to triumph over them, and his earnest desire that whatever became of him all that seek God, and wait upon him, might be kept in heart and kept in countenance, and might neither be discouraged in themselves nor exposed to contempt from others. If Jesus Christ had not been owned and accepted of his Father in his sufferings, all that seek God, and wait for him, would have been ashamed and confounded; but they have confidence towards God, and in his name come boldly to the throne of grace.

IV. His plea is very powerful, v. 7, 9. Reproach was one of the greatest of his burdens: “Lord, roll away the reproach, and plead my cause, for,

1. It is for thee that I am reproached, for serving thee and trusting in thee: *For thy sake I have borne reproach.*” Those that are evil spoken of for well-doing may with a humble confidence leave it to God to *bring forth their righteousness as the light*.

2. “It is with thee that I am reproached: *The zeal of thy house has eaten me up*, that is, has made me forget myself, and do that which they wickedly turn to my reproach. Those that hate thee and thy house for that reason hate me, because they know how zealously affected I am to it. It is this that has made them ready to eat me up and has eaten up all the love and respect I had among them.” Those that blasphemed God, and spoke ill of his word and ways, did therefore reproach David for believing in his word and walking in his ways. Or it may be construed as an instance of David's zeal for God's house, that he resented all the indignities done to God's name as if they had been done to his own name. He laid to heart all the dishonour done to God and the contempt cast upon religion; these he laid nearer to his heart than any outward troubles of his own. And *therefore* he had reason to hope God would interest himself in the reproaches cast upon him, because he had always interested himself in the reproaches cast upon God. Both the parts of this verse are applied to Christ.

(1.) It was an instance of his love to his Father that *the zeal of his house did even eat him up* when he whipped the buyers and sellers out of the temple, which reminded his disciples of this text, ^{<B17>}John 2:17.

(2.) It was an instance of his self-denial, and that he pleased not himself, that the *reproaches of those that reproached God fell upon him* (^{<B18>}Romans 15:3), and therein he set us an example.

^{<B13>}PSALM 69:13-21

PLEADING WITH GOD

David had been speaking before of the spiteful reproaches which his enemies cast upon him; here he adds, *But, as for me, my prayer is unto thee*. They spoke ill of him for his fasting and praying, and for that he was made the song of the drunkards; but, notwithstanding that, he resolves to continue praying. Note, Though we may be jeered for well-doing, we must never be jeered out of it. Those can bear but little for God, and their confessing his name before men, that cannot bear a scoff and a hard word rather than quit their duty. David's enemies were very abusive to him, but this was his comfort, that he had a God to go to, with whom he would lodge his cause. "They think to carry their cause by insolence and calumny; but I use other methods. Whatever they do, *As for me, my prayer is unto thee, O Lord!*" And it was in an acceptable time, not the less acceptable for being a time of affliction. God will not drive us from him, though it is need that drives us to him; nay, it is the more acceptable, because the misery and distress of God's people make them so much the more the objects of his pity: it is seasonable for him to help them when all other helps fail, and they are undone, and feel that they are undone, if he do not help them. We find this expression used concerning Christ.

^{<B19>}Isaiah 49:8, *In an acceptable time have I heard thee*. Now observe,

I. What his requests are.

1. That he might have a gracious audience given to his complaints, the cry of his affliction, and the desire of his heart. *Hear me* (v. 13), and again, *Hear me, O Lord!* (v. 16), *Hear me speedily* (v. 17), not only hear what I say, but grant what I ask. Christ knew that *the Father heard him always*, ^{<B14>}John 11:42.

2. That he might be rescued out of his troubles, might be saved from sinking under the load of grief (*Deliver me out of the mire; let me not stick in it, so some, but help me out, and set my feet on a rock,* ^{40:2} Psalm 40:2), might be saved from his enemies, that they might not swallow him up, nor have their will against him: “*Let me be delivered from those that hate me, as a lamb from the paw of a lion,* v. 14. Though I have come into keep waters (v. 2), where I am ready to conclude that the floods will overflow me, yet let my fears be prevented and silenced; let not the waterflood, though it flow upon me, overflow me, v. 15. Let me not fall into the gulf of despair; let not that deep swallow me up; let not that pit shut her mouth upon me, for then I am undone.” He gave himself up for lost in the beginning of the psalm; yet now he has his head above water, and is not so weary of crying as he thought himself.

3. That God would turn to him (v. 16), that he would smile upon him, and not hide his face from him, v. 17. The tokens of God's favour to us, and the light of his countenance shining upon us, are enough to keep our spirits from sinking in the deepest mire of outward troubles, nor need we desire any more to make us safe and easy, v. 18. “*Draw nigh to my soul, to manifest thyself to it, and that shall redeem it.*”

II. What his pleas are to enforce these petitions.

1. He pleads God's mercy and truth (v. 13): *In the multitude of thy mercy hear me.* There is mercy in God, a multitude of mercies, all kinds of mercy, inexhaustible mercy, mercy enough for all, enough for each; and hence we must take our encouragement in praying. The truth also of his salvation (the truth of all those promises of salvation which he has made to those that trust in him) is a further encouragement. He repeats his argument taken from the mercy of God: “*Hear me, for thy lovingkindness of good.* It is so in itself; it is rich and plentiful and abundant. It is so in the account of all the saints; it is very precious to them, it is their life, their joy, their all. O let me have the benefit of it! Turn to me, *according to the multitude of thy tender mercies,*” v. 16. See how highly he speaks of the goodness of God: in him there are mercies, tender mercies, and a multitude of them. If we think well of God, and continue to do so under the greatest hardships, we need not fear but God will do well for us; for *he takes pleasure in those that hope in his mercy,* ^{147:11} Psalm 147:11.

2. He pleads his own distress and affliction: “*Hide not thy face from me, for I am in trouble* (v. 17), and therefore need thy favour; therefore it will come seasonably, and therefore I shall know how to value it.” He pleads particularly the reproach he was under and the indignities that were done him (v. 19): *Thou hast known my reproach, my shame, and my dishonour*. See what a stress is laid upon this; for, in the sufferings of Christ for us, perhaps nothing contributed more to the satisfaction he made for sin, which had been so injurious to God in his honour, than the reproach, and shame, and dishonour he underwent, which God took notice of, and accepted as more than an equivalent for the everlasting shame and contempt which our sins had deserved, and therefore we must by repentance take shame to ourselves and bear the reproach of our youth. And if at any time we be called out to suffer reproach, and shame, and dishonour, for his sake, this may be our comfort, that he knows it, and, as he is before-hand with us, so he will not be behind-hand with us. The Psalmist speaks the language of an ingenuous nature when he says (v. 20): *Reproach has broken my heart; I am full of heaviness*; for it bears hard upon one that knows the worth of a good name to be put under a bad character; but when we consider what an honour it is to be dishonoured for God, and what a favour to be counted worthy to suffer shame for his name (as they deemed it, ~~4454~~ Acts 5:41), we shall see there is no reason at all why it should sit so heavily or be any heart-breaking to us.

3. He pleads the insolence and cruelty of his enemies (v. 18): *Deliver me because of my enemies*, because they were such as he had before described them, v. 4. “*My adversaries are all before thee* (v. 19); thou knowest what sort of men they are, what danger I am in from them, what enemies they are to thee, and how much thou art reflected upon in what they do and design against me.” One instance of their barbarity is given (v. 21): *They gave me gall for my meat* (the word signifies a bitter herb, and is often joined with wormwood) *and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink*. This was literally fulfilled in Christ, and did so directly point to him that he would not say *It is finished* till this was fulfilled; and, in order that his enemies might have occasion to fulfil it, he said, *I thirst*, ~~4455~~ John 19:28, 29. Some think that the hyssop which they put to his mouth with the vinegar was the bitter herb which they gave him with the vinegar for his meat. See how particularly the sufferings of Christ were foretold, which proves the scripture to be the word of God, and how exactly the

predictions were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, which proves him to be the true Messiah. This is he that should come, and we are to look for no other.

4. He pleads the unkindness of his friends and his disappointment in them (v. 20): *I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; they all failed him like the brooks in summer.* This was fulfilled in Christ, for in his sufferings all his disciples forsook him and fled. We cannot expect too little from men (miserable comforters are they all); nor can we expect too much from God, for he is the Father of mercy and the God of all comfort and consolation.

~~<462>~~ PSALM 69:22-29

PROPHETIC IMPRECATIONS

These imprecations are not David's prayers against his enemies, but prophecies of the destruction of Christ's persecutors, especially the Jewish nation, which our Lord himself foretold with tears, and which was accomplished about forty years after the death of Christ. The first two verses of this paragraph are expressly applied to the judgments of God upon the unbelieving Jews by the apostle (~~<419>~~ Romans 11:9, 10), and therefore the whole must look that way. The rejection of the Jews for rejecting Christ, as it was a signal instance of God's justice and an earnest of the vengeance which God will at last take on all that are obstinate in their infidelity, so it was, and continues to be, a convincing proof of the truth of the Christian religion. One great objection against it, at first, was, that it set aside the ceremonial law; but its doing so was effectually justified, and that objection removed, when God so remarkably set it aside by the utter destruction of the temple, and the sinking of those, with the Mosaic economy, that obstinately adhered to it in opposition to the gospel of Christ. Let us observe here,

I. What the judgments are which should come upon the crucifiers of Christ; not upon all of them, for there were those who had a hand in his death and yet repented and found mercy (~~<423>~~ Acts 2:23; 3:14, 15), but upon those of them and their successors who justified it by an obstinate infidelity and rejection of his gospel, and by an inveterate enmity to his disciples and followers. See ~~<425>~~ 1 Thessalonians 2:15, 16. It is here foretold,

1. That their sacrifices and offerings should be a mischief and prejudice to them (v. 22): *Let their table become a snare.* This may be understood of the altar of the Lord, which is called *his table and theirs* because in feasting upon the sacrifices they were partakers of the altar. This should have been for their welfare or peace (for they were peace-offerings), but it became a snare and a trap to them; for by their affection and adherence to the altar they were held fast in their infidelity and hardened in their prejudices against Christ, that altar which those had no right to eat of who continued to serve the tabernacle, ^{<830>}Hebrews 13:10. Or it may be understood of their common creature-comforts, even their necessary food; they had given Christ gall and vinegar, and therefore justly shall their meat and drink be made gall and vinegar to them. When the supports of life and delights of sense, through the corruption of our nature, become an occasion of sin to us, and are made the food and fuel of our sensuality, then our table is a snare, which is a good reason why we should never feed ourselves without fear, ^{<812>}Jude 1:12.

2. That they should never have the comfort either of that knowledge or of that peace which believers are blessed with in the gospel of Christ (v. 23), that they should be given up,

(1.) To a judicial blindness: *Let their eyes be darkened*, that they see not the glory of God in the face of Christ. Their sin was that they would not see, but shut their eyes against the light, loving darkness rather; their punishment was that they should not see, but be given up to their own hearts' lusts, which were hardening, and the god of this world should be permitted to blind their minds, ^{<404>}2 Corinthians 4:4. This was foretold concerning them (^{<2160>}Isaiah 6:10), and Christ ratified it, ^{<4134>}Matthew 13:14, 15; ^{<820>}John 12:40.

(2.) To a judicial terror. There is a gracious terror, which opens the way to comfort, such as that of Paul (^{<4106>}Acts 9:6); he trembled and was astonished. But this is a terror that shall never end in peace, but shall make their loins continually to shake, through horror of conscience, as Belshazzar, when the joints of his loins were loosed. "Let them be driven to despair, and filled with constant confusion." This was fulfilled in the desperate counsels of the Jews when the Romans came upon them.

3. That they should fall and lie under God's anger and fiery indignation (v. 24): *Pour out thy indignation upon them.* Note, Those who reject God's great salvation proffered to them may justly fear that his indignation will

be poured out upon them; for those that submit not to the Son of his love will certainly be made the generation of his wrath. It is the doom passed on those who believe not in Christ that the *wrath of God abideth on them* (~~488B~~ John 3:36); it takes hold of them, and will never let them go. Salvation itself will not save those that are not willing to be ruled by it. Behold the goodness and severity of God!

4. That their place and nation should be utterly taken away, the very thing they were afraid of, and to prevent which, as they pretended, they persecuted Christ (~~488B~~ John 11:48): *Let their habitation be desolate* (v. 25), which was fulfilled when their country was laid waste by the Romans, and *Zion, for their sakes, was ploughed as a field*, ~~388D~~ Micah 3:12. The temple was the house which they were in a particular manner proud of, but this was *left unto them desolate*, ~~488B~~ Matthew 23:38. Yet that is not all; it ought to be some satisfaction to us, if we be cut off from the enjoyment of our possessions, that others will have the benefit of them when we are dislodged: but it is here added, *Let none dwell in their tents*, which was remarkably fulfilled in Judah and Jerusalem, for after the destruction of the Jews it was long ere the country was inhabited to any purpose. But this is applied particularly to Judas, by St. Peter, ~~488D~~ Acts 1:20. For, he being *felo de se* — a suicide, we may suppose his estate was confiscated, so that *his habitation was desolate and no man of his own kindred dwelt therein*.

5. That their way to ruin should be downhill, and nothing should stop them, nor interpose to prevent it (v. 27): “Lord, leave them to themselves, to *add iniquity to iniquity*.” Those that are bad, if they be given up to their own hearts' lusts, will certainly be worse; they will add sin to sin, nay, they will *add rebellion to their sin*, ~~488B~~ Job 34:37. It is said of the Jews that they *filled up their sin always*, ~~506B~~ 1 Thessalonians 2:16. *Add the punishment of iniquity to their iniquity* (so some read it), for the same word signifies both sin and punishment, so close is their connexion. If men will sin, God will reckon for it. But those that have multiplied to sin may yet find mercy, for God multiplies to pardon, through the righteousness of the Mediator; and therefore, that they might be precluded from all hopes of mercy, he adds, *Let them not come into thy righteousness*, to receive the benefit of the righteousness of God, which is by faith in a Mediator, ~~388B~~ Philippians 3:9. Not that God shuts out any from that righteousness, for the gospel excludes none that do not by their unbelief exclude themselves; but let them be left to take their own course and they will never come into this government; for being ignorant of the demands of God's righteousness,

and going about to establish the merit of their own, they *have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God*, ^{<518>}Romans 10:3. And those that are so proud and self-willed that they will not come into God's righteousness shall have their doom accordingly; they themselves have decided it: they *shall not come into his righteousness*. Let not those expect any benefit by it that are not willing and glad to be beholden to it.

6. That they should be cut off from all hopes of happiness (v. 28): *Let them be blotted out of the book of the living*; let them not be suffered to live any longer, since, the longer they live, the more mischief they do. Multitudes of the unbelieving Jews fell by sword and famine, and none of those who had embraced the Christian faith perished among them; the nation, as a nation, was blotted out, and became not a people. Many understand it of their rejection from God's covenant and all the privileges of it; that is *the book of the living*: "Let the commonwealth of Israel itself, Israel according to the flesh, now become alienated from that covenant of promise which hitherto it has had the monopoly of. Let it appear that they were never written in the Lamb's book of life, but reprobate silver let *men call them, because the Lord has rejected them*. Let them *not be written with the righteous*; that is, let them not have a place in the congregation of the saints when they shall all be gathered in the general assembly of those whose names are written in heaven," ^{<515>}Psalms 1:5.

II. What the sin is for which these dreadful judgments should be brought upon them (v. 26): *They persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and talk to the grief of thy wounded*.

1. Christ was he whom God had smitten, for *it pleased the Lord to bruise him*, and he was esteemed *stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*, and therefore men *hid their faces from him*, ^{<2518>}Isaiah 53:3, 4, 10. They persecuted him with a rage reaching up to heaven; they cried, *Crucify him, crucify him*. Compare that of St. Peter with this, ^{<4023>}Acts 2:23. Though he was *delivered by the counsel and foreknowledge of God*, it was *with wicked hands that they crucified and slew him*. They talked to the grief of the Lord Jesus when he was upon the cross, saying, *He trusted in God, let him deliver him*, than which nothing could be said more grieving.

2. The suffering saints were God's wounded, wounded in his cause and for his sake, and them they persecuted, and *talked to their grief*. For these things *wrath came upon them to the uttermost*, ^{<5126>}1 Thessalonians 2:16;

and see ^{<1234>}Matthew 23:34, etc. This may be understood more generally, and it teaches us that nothing is more provoking to God than to insult over those whom he has smitten, and to add affliction to the afflicted, upon which it justly follows here, *Add iniquity to iniquity*; see ^{<3015>}Zechariah 1:15. Those that are of a wounded spirit, under trouble and fear about their spiritual state, ought to be very tenderly dealt with, and care must be taken not to *talk to their grief and not to make the heart of the righteous sad*.

III. What the psalmist thinks of himself in the midst of all (v. 29): “*But I am poor and sorrowful*; that is the worst of my case, under outward afflictions, yet *written among the righteous*, and not under God's indignation as they are.” It is better to be poor and sorrowful, with the blessing of God, than rich and jovial and under his curse. For those who come into God's righteousness shall soon see an end of their poverty and sorrow, and his salvation shall set them up on high, which is the thing that David here prays for, ^{<2810>}Isaiah 61:10. This may be applied to Christ. He was, in his humiliation, poor and sorrowful, a man of sorrows, and that had not where to lay his head. But God highly exalted him; the salvation wrought for him, the salvation wrought by him, *set him up on high, far above all principalities and powers*.

^{<1688>}PSALM 69:30-36

THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE

The psalmist here, both as a type of Christ and as an example to Christians, concludes a psalm with holy joy and praise which he began with complaints and remonstrances of his griefs.

I. He resolves to praise God himself, not doubting but that therein he should be accepted of him (v. 30, 31): “*I will praise the name of God*, not only with my heart, but with my song, and *magnify him with thanksgiving*;” for he is pleased to reckon himself magnified by the thankful praises of his people. It is intimated that all Christians ought to glorify God with their praises, *in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs*. And *this shall please the Lord*, through Christ the Mediator of our praises as well as of our prayers, better than the most valuable of the legal sacrifices (v. 31), *an ox or bullock*. This is a plain intimation that in the

days of the Messiah an end should be put, not only to the sacrifices of atonement, but to those of praise and acknowledgment which were instituted by the ceremonial law; and, instead of them, spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving are accepted — the calves of our lips, not the calves of the stall, ⁸⁸⁸⁵ Hebrews 13:15. It is a great comfort to us that humble and thankful praises are more pleasing to God than the most costly pompous sacrifices are or ever were.

II. He encourages other good people to rejoice in God and continue seeking him (v. 32, 33): *The humble shall see this and be glad.* They shall observe, to their comfort,

1. The experiences of the saints. They shall see how ready God is to hear the poor when they cry to him, and to give them that which they call upon him for, how far he is from despising his prisoners; though men despise them, he favours them with his gracious visits and will find a time to enlarge them. *The humble shall see this and be glad*, not only because when one member is honoured all the members rejoice with it, but because it is an encouragement to them in their straits and difficulties to trust in God. It shall revive the hearts of those who seek God to see more seals and subscriptions to this truth, that Jacob's God never said to Jacob's seed, *Seek you me in vain.*

2. The exaltation of the Saviour, for of him the psalmist had been speaking, and of himself as a type of him. When his sorrows are over, and he enters into the joy that was set before him, when he is heard and discharged from his imprisonment in the grave, the humble shall look upon it and be glad, and those that seek God through Christ shall live and be comforted, concluding that, if they suffer with him, they shall also reign with him.

III. He calls upon all the creatures to praise God, the heaven, and earth, and sea, and the inhabitants of each, v. 34. Heaven and earth, and the hosts of both, were made by him, and therefore *let heaven and earth praise him.* Angels in heaven, and saints on earth, may each of them in their respective habitations furnish themselves with matter enough for constant praise. Let the fishes of the sea, though mute to a proverb, praise the Lord, for the sea is his, and he made it. The praises of the world must be offered for God's favours to his church, v. 35, 36. For God will save Zion, the holy mountain, where his service was kept up. He will save all that are

sanctified and set apart to him, all that employ themselves in his worship, and all those over whom Christ reigns; for he was King upon the holy hill of Zion. He has mercy in store for the cities of Judah, of which tribe Christ was. God will do great things for the gospel church, in which let all that wish well to it rejoice. For,

1. It shall be peopled and inhabited. There shall be added to it such as shall be saved. *The cities of Judah shall be built*, particular churches shall be formed and incorporated according to the gospel model, that there may be a remnant to *dwell there* and to *have it in possession*, to enjoy the privileges conferred upon it and to pay the tributes and services required from it. Those that love his name, that have a kindness for religion in general, shall embrace the Christian religion, and take their place in the Christian church; they shall dwell therein, as citizens, and of the household of God

2. It shall be perpetuated and inherited. Christianity was not to be *res unius aetatis — a transitory thin*. No: *The seed of his servants shall inherit it*. God will secure and raise up for himself a seed to serve him, and they shall inherit the privileges of their fathers; for the promise is to you and your children, as it was of old. *I will be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee*. The land of promise shall never be lost for want of heirs, for God *can out of stones raise up children unto Abraham* and will do so rather than the entail shall be cut off. David shall never want a man to stand before him. The Redeemer shall see his seed, and prolong his days in them, till the mystery of God shall be finished and the mystical body completed. And since the holy seed is the substance of the world, and if that were all gathered in the world would be at an end quickly, it is just that for this assurance of the preservation of it heaven and earth should praise him.