

The Story of the Life of Christ – Lesson 13

Date: Passover, 14 Nisan (April 7) 27 AD

In the last lesson, we studied Jesus' first travels after He had come out of the desert and found His first 6 disciples; John, Andrew, Peter, Nathanael, Phillip, and James. They had first gone to the wedding at Cana, where Jesus turned the water into wine. Then they had gone down to Capernaum for a short stay, where Mary was reunited with her sister, Salome, who was also the mother of James and John. After some preaching and a few miracles, Jesus and His disciples returned to Nazareth (presumably with Mary and the rest of Jesus' family). Then He went into the synagogue and proclaimed that He was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1-2, which meant He was the Messiah. When the people tried to kill Him, the LORD delivered Him, and He returned to Capernaum where he preached and performed miracles of healing and casting out demons. He then left Capernaum and began to preach throughout Galilee. It was at this point, just over six months after He had been baptized by John the Baptist on the Day of Atonement in 26 AD, that He went down to Jerusalem for Passover.

The First Trip to Jerusalem for the Passover.

John 2:13 **When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem.**

This was the Passover of 27 AD ¹ which occurred that year on Wednesday, April 7. Jesus evidently arrived in the days just before the Passover. Those were the days when the Temple officials were busily engaged in selling lambs (young sheep just over a year old) to be sacrificed on the day of the Passover.

When imagining the Passover or Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem in the 1st Century AD, we must understand that it was a city that normally had a population of 50 to 80 thousand people. During Passover, it sometimes had a temporary population of over a million. Thousands slept on rooftops, although by far the most camped on the hillsides surrounding the city. They particularly preferred camping on the Mt. of Olives which was closest to the Temple. Most stayed for at least three days, although some stayed for the entire week of the Feast of Unleavened Bread which began on the 15th Nisan. That day *immediately* followed the twilight sacrifice of Passover in the fading moments of 14th Nisan.

John 2:14 **In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves,² and others sitting at tables exchanging money.**

¹ *The next Passover that Jesus attended was the last Passover in 30 AD.*

² *Cattle, sheep, and doves were the animals used in other kinds of offerings (burnt offerings, fellowship offerings, sin offerings, and freewill offerings) made by ordinary people. Like the lambs for Passover, the religious leadership had decided they had to be bought in the Temple and sold by the Temple which could certify that they were without defect.*

It is worth noting that in the original Tabernacle, as set up during the Exodus, each offering was to be brought from outside of the Tabernacle from the herds of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. The first record of selling the sacrifices inside the later Temple appeared much later. While it was no doubt first viewed as a convenience, by Jesus' day it had become mandatory. The priests of the Second Temple would only accept an animal certified by them to be spotless. It thus became a source of great profits as the people were overcharged for the animals. God had already provided a source of income for the priests in the Law of Moses.³ Money changing also became the same sort of racket. Things purchased in the Temple could only be purchased with a Sanctuary Shekel. These were also exchanged at an inflated price. These two methods were the greatest source of money for the corrupted High Priesthood in Jerusalem.

John 2:15 **So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.**

Jesus overturned these tables here, at the first Passover visit of His ministry. Three years later at His next and last Passover visit (Matthew 21:12-13) He did the same thing. These tables were also in place during His other visits to the Temple during His ministry. This begs the question. Why did he do it only during His two Passover visits?

I think the answer is that Jesus knew that the Passover was supposed to speak of His great sacrifice and His free gift of salvation. In order to stoke their greed, the High Priest and his officials had completely corrupted the message of Grace which would finally be written with the blood of Jesus Christ. Jesus was thus moved to make a demonstration of His displeasure both times He was confronted with this blasphemy against the true message of Passover.

John 2:16 **To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!"**

Under the Mosaic Law, the people were to sacrifice their own animals and they were to do it themselves without the aid of the priests, as set forth in Exodus:

Exodus 12:3-6 "Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month ⁴ each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. If any household is too small for a

³ *That source was the tithe taken out of the tithe given by the other tribes of Israel to maintain the tribe of Levi (Numbers 18:26-28). The priests were all descended from Aaron and made up a small part of the tribe of Levi. This tithe was still taken out, but according to Josephus, the High Priest Annas kept it for himself. As a consequence Annas had become the richest man in Judea.*

⁴ *On the tenth day of the first month in 30 AD, Saturday, the day before Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem in 30 AD, Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus, was inspired to anoint Jesus Christ at the supper in Bethany. That fulfilled this shadow given in Old Testament ritual. He was thus anointed, or chosen for burial.*

whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people ⁵ of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight.⁶

However, after they entered the Land they were to observe this practice wherever the Tabernacle (later the Temple) was:

Deuteronomy 16:1-2 “Observe the month of Abib (*later called Nisan*) and celebrate the Passover of the LORD your God, because in the month of Abib he brought you out of Egypt by night. Sacrifice as the Passover to the LORD your God an animal from your flock or herd at the place the LORD will choose as a dwelling for his Name.”

It was only in the post-exilic period that the priests had instituted the selling of these items in the Temple. It was an economic boon, but unlawful. They could have allowed animals sold outside the Temple to be brought in for the sacrifices. However, then they would have lost control of the market and that would have destroyed their monopoly and their profits.

John 2:17 **His disciples remembered that it is written: “Zeal for your house will consume me.”⁷**

It is not completely clear if the disciples made the connection with what is written in Psalms 69:9 at that time or later. It might have been later, as was recorded about His later entry into Jerusalem on a donkey:

⁵ As seen here, the original practice at Passover was to have each household perform the slaughter of the lambs. At King Hezekiah’s first Passover circa 710 BC, the priests slaughtered many lambs for the people who were not purified. In Josiah’s time circa 630 BC the High Priest and King Josiah provided many of the lambs. By Jesus’ day virtually every lamb was slaughtered in the Temple, and most of them were purchased there. This was undoubtedly encouraged by the High Priests to increase their revenue and control.

⁶ The actual sacrifice was originally to occur on the 14th at twilight. The Hebrew word עֶרֶב {eh'-rev}) in Exodus 12:6 and Leviticus 23:5 literally means “the darkening” from a primitive root through the idea of covering with a texture. However, in Jesus’ day, the priests had expanded the meaning so that twilight was taken to mean after the sun had begun to decline (some time after 12 PM). This allowed the tens of thousands of sacrifices to be done in the Temple for the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who came to Jerusalem. When the Last Passover of 30 AD came, the Darkening that signified Passover came at 12 Noon when darkness covered the earth from 12 noon until 3 PM as Christ suffered for the sins of the world. Thus, the shadow of Passover was perfectly fulfilled in reality by the death of the real Passover Lamb.

⁷ Psalms 69:9

John 12:16 “At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him.”

We will study the great Messianic Psalm 69 in its entirety shortly.

John 2:18 Then the Jews demanded of him, “What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?”

There is no doubt that the Jews had heard of the sign the Father had given to John the Baptist when He had spoken from Heaven and said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17b). This was the kind of sign they wanted for themselves. Later He raised three people from the dead (two in public) and they still wouldn’t believe. On the day He entered Jerusalem for His last Passover, the Father did speak to Jesus from Heaven in the hearing of the Jewish leaders (John 12:28). As a result, that night they only intensified their plans to kill Jesus by agreeing to pay Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus.

John 2:19 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple,⁸ and I will raise it again in three days.”

Jesus understood that the original Tabernacle and the Temple that replaced it were only symbols of His birth, life, and death. He already knew and believed that they would kill Him. By killing Him they would be trying to destroy God’s true Temple. He also knew from scripture He would be raised from the dead after three days. That meant that He would raise the true Temple of His Life again.

⁸ *Here we find an important principal in understanding the Temple and the chronology of the life of Christ. The LORD had promised David that the real Temple would be built by a descendant of David (2 Samuel 7:12-13). That real Temple wasn’t to be built out of timber and stone. It was to be built out of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, the Son of David who was the “stone that the builders rejected” (Psalms 118:22). This is proven by this verse (John 2:19). The stone Temples in Jerusalem that preceded the life of Jesus (Solomon’s and Zerubbabel’s) were only figures of the life and ministry of Christ. In this regard it is worth noting some timelines related to those two Temples. If you compare 1 Kings 6:1, 1 Kings 6:37-38, and 1 Kings 11:42-43 you will find that the glory of Solomon’s Temple was destroyed in its 34th year never to be regained. The Temple of Jesus Christ’s earthly life was brought to an end in its 34th year, but it was raised in greater glory in three days. If we compare Ezra 6:15 with Haggai 1:14-15 we see that the Temple of Zerubbabel was completed in exactly three years, six months, and 7 days after the beginning of its construction. The Temple of Christ’s ministry was also three years, six months, and 7 days long. That was the amount of time from His baptism on the Day of Atonement in 26 AD to His resurrection on the Feast of the Firstfruits in 30 AD. The date construction began on the Zerubbabel Temple was also the date Christ was born in 4 BC according to my research. See *The Chronology of Christ* by Richard S. Thompson. It is also noteworthy that the High Priest who helped build Zerubbabel’s Temple was named Joshua (Jesus).*

John 2:20 **The Jews replied, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?”**

Jesus went to this Passover in Jerusalem on 14 Nisan 27 AD. This date is supported by the following facts. According to Josephus,⁹ the temple was started in the eighteenth year of Herod the Great’s reign which covered parts of 20 and 19 BC. Although it was not to be completed for another 36 years, according to the Bible, on the occasion of this visit, the Jews told Jesus that the Temple had been under construction for forty-six years. Since neither Josephus nor the Jews in this passage were precise, the math works out to either 27 AD or 28 AD. From other facts about the life of Christ, we know it was actually 27 AD.

John 2:21 **But the temple he had spoken of was his body.**

The Temple Jesus had spoken of was not the figurative Temple of stone, but the real Temple of the incarnate Jesus Christ and His righteous life and atoning death.

John 2:22 **After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.**

The disciples didn’t remember this until after Jesus was raised from the dead. However, the High Priests and the Pharisees did remember His statement he had made here three years before. That was just before He was raised from the dead (Matthew 27:62-63). That was the reason they had the Romans put a guard put on the tomb.

John 2:23 **Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name.**

Jesus did many miraculous signs at Jerusalem, just not the one that the Jewish leaders demanded. It wouldn’t have changed a thing for most of them. There was one of the Jewish leaders that saw the miraculous signs and began to be drawn to the faith. His name was Nicodemus. We shall study Jesus’ conversation with him in John 3.

John 2:24 **But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men.**

I take that to mean that Jesus would not yet proclaim openly that He was the Christ, although everything about His life history and His acts proclaimed Him. He knew that as soon as He publicly acknowledged that He was the Christ, the Jews would feel that they had the right to kill

⁹ *Antiquities of the Jews, Book XV, Chapter 11, Verse 1* “AND now Herod, in the eighteenth year of his reign, and after the acts already mentioned, undertook a very great work, that is, to build of himself the temple of God.”

Him, as they did after His first public acknowledgement of that fact before the Sanhedrin (Matthew 26:63-64, Mark 14:61-62).

^{John 2:25} **He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.**

Jesus was fully aware of the treachery and betrayal He could expect from men. Yet He still died for the sins of all of them.

At this point we will diverge to study one of the greatest Messianic Psalms in the Old Testament which was quoted by John in John 2:17. Although it was written down with the pen of David, it was inspired by the Holy Spirit in the voice of Jesus Christ even though the incarnated Jesus wouldn't think these thoughts until a thousand years had passed. God isn't restricted by time.

The Messianic Psalms – Psalms of the Christ *Psalm 69*

When Paul said, "We have the mind of Christ,"¹⁰ he was talking about the Old Testament. At the time he wrote, only four other books of the New Testament had been written (Matthew, Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians). For the first time the Old Testament had been revealed in its full meaning by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This Psalm is one of those Psalms of the Messiah, which speak in the voice of Jesus Christ. Jesus included these Psalms when He spoke in Luke: Luke 24:44 "He (Jesus) said to them, 'This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is **written about me in** the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the **Psalms**.'" A great benefit of these Psalms is that they give us a unique view of the mind of Christ, which helps us fulfill the command found in Philippians:

Philippians 2:5-8 "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Psalm 69 is quoted in the New Testament as speaking of Jesus Christ. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, it was written in the first person by the pen of David. However, it is clearly not about David. It is truly one of the most striking of the Messianic Psalms written in the voice of Christ.

Psalm 69

¹⁰ *1 Corinthians 2:16 "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ."*

The first question to be answered is: Why do we identify this Psalm as written in the voice of Christ?

First: Verse 4 of Psalm 69 is quoted by Jesus Christ himself in the Gospel of John:

John 15:24-25 “If I had not done among them what no one else did, their sin would not have been exposed. But now they have seen these miracles, and they have hated both me and my Father. But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: ‘They hated me without reason.’”

In that passage Jesus said that the phrase from Psalm 69, “they hated me without reason,” referred to Him. Therefore, the “me” in the whole Psalm obviously also referred to Him. I think you will see that the rest of the Psalm also clearly described Jesus Christ.

Second: Verse 9 of this Psalm was also quoted in John 2:17, which says it was also fulfilled in the person of Christ:

“In the temple courts he (Jesus) found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, ‘Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market!’ His disciples remembered that it is written: ‘Zeal for your house will consume me.’” (John 2:14-17)

So the “me” here is similarly identified as being Christ.

Thirdly: Verse 25 of this Psalm was quoted by Peter in Acts 1 whereby he indicated that he also understood that Psalm 69 spoke of the disciples of Jesus Christ:

Acts 1:15, 17, 18 “In those days Peter stood up -- and said, ‘Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. He was one of our number and shared in this ministry. For,’ said Peter, ‘it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it,’”

With that we can begin the study of the Psalm understanding that it is the voice of Jesus speaking a thousand years before He lived.

Psalm 69

For the director of music. To the tune of “Lilies.” Of David.

As we have noted before, the superscriptions in Psalms are part of the inspired word of God, written at the time of the rest of the Psalm. The one above seems to tell us that David wrote this Psalm, although the “of” in “Of David” here can sometimes mean “concerning.” The Psalm was

to be sung to the tune “Lilies.” Lilies are identified with the restored Israel. See Hosea 14:5. There were also other Psalms which were to be sung to the tune “Lilies.” Psalm 45, to be sung to the tune “Lilies,” has to do with the wedding of the Lord to His bride Israel. Psalm 80 is also to be sung to the tune “Lilies” and deals with the ultimate restoration of Israel by the Messiah. In the Song of Songs 2:1 where the “Solomon” of that story is a type of Christ, He said, “I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.”

Thus, just the tune itself gives us some evidence that this Psalm is Messianic and speaking in the voice of Christ.

Psalm 69:1 Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck.

Waters in scripture often speak of judgment as in the flood of Noah, or in the waters of the Red Sea which destroyed the Egyptian army pursuing Moses. Here the waters spoke of the judgment of Christ for our sins.

Psalm 69:2a I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold.

This is very similar to the earlier Messianic Psalm 40: Psalms 40:2 “He lifted me out of the slimy clamorous pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.” This describes the complete helplessness to which Jesus submitted Himself as He sank under the weight of judgment for our sins.

Psalm 69:2b I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me.

This describes the feeling of Christ on the cross as similar to a man who sees water rise closer and closer to covering his mouth and nose, but with no way to get out. “Floods” often speak of judgment (as in Noah’s flood).

Psalm 69:3a I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched.

Jesus is recorded to have said aloud only seven things at Golgotha, so this calling out was probably mostly in silent prayer to God. The thirst and parched throat would have been a natural result of His bleeding from His scourging. The fifth thing He said is recorded in John:

“Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, ‘I am thirsty.’” (John 19:28)

Psalm 69:3b My eyes fail, looking for my God.

This may be speaking of the utter darkness that descended on the cross from noon until 3 PM:

Luke 23:44-45a “It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, for the sun stopped shining.”¹¹

Psalm 69:4a **Those who hate me without reason outnumber the hairs of my head; many are my enemies without cause, those who seek to destroy me.**

As previously mentioned in the introduction, this was quoted by Jesus Christ as relating to Himself in John 15:25. As Jesus hung on the cross, He would have been surrounded by many hundreds of those hundreds of thousands who normally gathered for Passover. Most of those surrounding Him were those who rejoiced at His death even though He was “the one” for whom the people of Israel had waited for almost two thousand years. During His three-and-a-half-year public ministry, He had done nothing but preach truth and love as well as heal and feed the people. Now, even as they were hating Him, He was bearing the judgment for their sins.

The Messianic Psalm 40 in verse 12 speaks of the number of sins which were poured out on Christ as being “more than the hairs of my head.” In this Psalm it speaks of those who hate Him without reason as “outnumbering the hairs of my head.” These two verses together speak to the fact that Jesus even died for the sins of those that hated him.¹²

Psalm 69:5b **I am forced to restore what I did not steal.**

Who was it that stole what Jesus was forced to restore? It was Satan who stole man’s access to a relationship with God through deceit. Jesus restored the access to a relationship with God through His death on the cross.

Psalm 69:5 **You know my folly, O God; my guilt is not hidden from you.**

The folly and guilt here was that for which Jesus, as “the son of Man,” took responsibility. It was not His own, but mankind’s folly and guilt. This is not alone among the Messianic Psalms (see also Psalms 38:18, Psalms 39:8, Psalms 40:12, Psalms 41:4, Psalms 89:32) where Jesus (the sinless) associated Himself with the sins and failure of mankind because He was the son of Adam who was paying for them. The New Testament testifies to the same:

2 Corinthians 5:21 “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

Romans 4:25 “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”

¹¹ Also *Matthew 27:45, Mark 15:33*

¹² *In other words, unlimited atonement.*

1 Peter 2:24 “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree,¹³ so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.”

In Isaiah it also says:

Isaiah 53:12 says, “he was numbered with the transgressors.”

Psalm 69:6 **May those who hope in you not be disgraced because of me, O Lord, the LORD Almighty; may those who seek you not be put to shame because of me, O God of Israel.**

As Jesus hung on the cross, He knew that all our hope depended on Him. This verse is also another confirmation that, in His incarnation, Jesus had laid aside the omniscience of His deity. Here, he was praying to the Father that He would not fail. Omniscience would have known that He wouldn't fail.

Psalm 69:7 **For I endure scorn for your sake, and shame covers my face.**

This was probably speaking of the marks of shame with which the Jews had covered Jesus' face by plucking out His beard and covering his face with spittle. This had also been prophesied in Isaiah:

Isaiah 50:6 “I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard;¹⁴ I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting.”¹⁵

Psalm 69:8 **I am a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my own mother's sons;¹⁶**

This was fulfilled in John 7:5 “For even his own brothers did not believe in him.”

Psalm 69:9a **for zeal for your house consumes me,**

¹³ This is one of the places which identifies the cross with a tree. That an important connection in scripture. For one thing, it identifies the cross with the “tree of life.”

¹⁴ One of the most humiliating things for a man in that culture would be to cut off or pull out his beard (2 Samuel 10:4-5, Isaiah 7:20, 15:1-2, Jeremiah 41:4, 48:37).

¹⁵ Matthew 26:67-68 “Then they (the Jewish guards in Caiaphas' courtyard) spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him and said, ‘Prophecy to us, Christ. Who hit you?’” Also Mark 14:65, Mark 15:19

¹⁶ Common descent was normally marked through one's common father. Because Jesus' brothers didn't share a common father with Him, Jesus marked His relation to them through their common mother.

As mentioned earlier, this verse was quoted in our passage in John 2:14-17. It helps identify this Psalm as written in the voice of Christ. In that passage Jesus also said, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.””

Note that the corruption of the Temple by the moneychangers on that Passover was an affront to Jesus, because the message of the Temple and Passover was supposed to represent His life and mission. Three years later, when He laid down His life, the zeal for God’s house (His mission) would literally “consume” Him.

Psalm 69:9b and the insults of those who insult you fall on me.

He knew that those who were insulting Him were actually insulting the Father because as He had told his disciples the night before He died: “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” (John 14:9b)

Psalm 69:10a When I weep

That last week Jesus wept on the following occasion: Luke 19:41-44 “As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, **he wept over it** and said, ‘If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.’”

Psalm 69:10b and fast,

This, verse indicates that Jesus did a lot of fasting that last week as we would have expected, since He must have also spent a lot of time praying and the two were connected. Psalm 109:24-25, another Messianic Psalm, supports this: “My knees give way from fasting; my body is thin and gaunt. I am an object of scorn to my accusers; when they see me, they shake their heads.”

Psalm 69:10c I must endure scorn;

While Jesus was weeping and fasting on behalf of His enemies, they scorned and rejected Him and His sacrifice.

Psalm 69:11 when I put on sackcloth, people make sport of me.

This begs the question, When did Jesus wear sackcloth? We know that he usually wore a fine linen garment which was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom (John 19:23). However, when Jesus was scourged and then taken out to be crucified he would have been given the cheap rough sackcloth uniform of a prisoner. This also makes sense because

otherwise, his fine robe, which the soldiers were to claim for their own, would have been spoiled by the blood from the scourging and become worthless.

As he was taken out through the city streets, many of the people even made jokes about his bloody appearance and the cruel torture he was to undergo on the cross.

Psalm 69:12a Those who sit at the gate mock me,

In ancient times, “those who sit at the gate” were the leaders of the people (Genesis 23:10, 34:20, Deuteronomy 21:19, 22:15, 25:7, Joshua 20:4, Ruth 4:1,11, Job 29:7). In 30 AD, they were the Sanhedrin, who tried Jesus. This also referred to the fact that Jesus had to die outside the gate:

Hebrews 13:11-12 “The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp.¹⁷ And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood.”

It was also just at the gate of Jerusalem that Jesus fell carrying the cross, and they had to compel Simon of Cyrene to carry it (Matthew 27:32, Mark 15:21, Luke 23:26). It was probably at this fall that the jeering and mocking was at its worst.

Psalm 69:12b and I am the song of the drunkards.

Even the drunkards who were excluded from the city on Passover and gathered at the gate made up an insulting song about His suffering.

Psalm 69:13 But I pray to you, O LORD, in the time of your favor; in your great love, O God, answer me with your sure salvation.

Jesus, who could have resumed the powers of His deity and delivered Himself at any time instead trusted the Father to deliver Him in His own perfect time.

Psalm 69:14-15 Rescue me from the mire, do not let me sink; deliver me from those who hate me, from the deep waters. Do not let the floodwaters engulf me or the depths swallow me up or the pit close its mouth over me.

Jesus prayed that the Father would finally deliver Him through the judgment which he had also described as “mire,” and “flood waters” in verses 1 and 2.

¹⁷ *Exodus 29:15*

Psalm 69:16-18a Answer me, O LORD, out of the goodness of your love; in your great mercy turn to me. Do not hide your face from your servant; answer me quickly, for I am in trouble. Come near and rescue me;

This reflected Jesus' growing desperation through the hours he was undergoing judgment. He longed to end His separation from the Father. This was also reflected in His cry close to the end of His three hours of suffering:

Mark 15:34 "And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"—which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Yet through it all, He kept His eyes fixed on the great love and mercy of the Father. He alone really knew the love of the Father:

John 6:46 "No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father."

The great eternal purpose of Jesus' life and death was to demonstrate to us and all creation what the Father's love was like. When we understand and believe that, we can walk securely with our eyes fixed on the love of God even when we don't understand anything else:

John 14:6-7,9b "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him. -- Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.'"

Psalm 69:18b redeem me because of my foes.

The question might be raised, "How could this apply to Jesus?" We know that He redeems us by His blood, so how could He possibly need redemption Himself? His redemption of us is recorded in the following:

Titus 2:13b-14a "Jesus Christ, - gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own."

Galatians 4:4-5 "But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons."

However, Psalm 31:6, another Messianic Psalm, also speaks of the redemption of the Messiah. Psalm 26:11 also speaks of this redemption. Perhaps the sense is that Jesus Christ, having totally identified Himself with fallen mankind, still had to rely on the acceptance by the Father of His redemptive payment for all mankind of whom He was a part. Perhaps this is also the sense in which it is spoken of in Hebrews:

Hebrews 9:12 “He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.”

Psalm 69:19 You know how I am scorned, disgraced and shamed; all my enemies are before you.

Jesus knew that though He had lost personal fellowship with the Father during this ordeal, the Father had witnessed it. It counted toward proving His personal righteousness and faith through every test.

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.

None of His disciples, family or friends had given Him any support. None of them could really understand what was going on. He had invited His three closest disciples to pray with Him in the Garden, but they had soon fallen asleep. He had been left to endure this hour totally alone.

Psalm 69:21a They put gall in my food

This referred to the gall put in the wine they first offered Jesus, which he turned down. The question is: What is gall? Here, the Hebrew word translated “gall” here is רֹשֶׁה {roshe}. The Septuagint, which was the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament made 160 years before the crucifixion, translated this by the Greek word χολή {kho-lā'}. That is the same word used in Matthew 27:34 “There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall (χολή); but after tasting it, he refused to drink it.”

Gall was probably an extract of *Citrullus colocynthus*—a wild vine that clammers and climbs. The fruits are round and look like oranges, sometimes mottled with green. The pulp inside is poisonous and bitter. This plant was found around the Dead Sea. The effect of this drink would have been to shorten the suffering and render the drinker somewhat insensible.

Psalm 69:21b and gave me vinegar for my thirst.

This referred to the sour wine they gave Him at the last:

John 19:28-29 “Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, ‘I am thirsty.’ A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips.” Also see Matthew 27:48.

Psalm 69:22a May the table set before them

The table of the LORD speaks of His provision as in Psalm 23:5a “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.” Ultimately, the great table of the LORD is the bread and cup of communion ¹⁸ which speaks of the LORD’s provision of His righteousness (the bread) and forgiveness of sin (the blood) to those who believe.

The table set before the Jews was the long-promised salvation of the Messiah.

Psalm 69:22b become a snare; may it become retribution and a trap.

However, instead of bringing salvation, the work of Christ condemned them because of their rejection and hardness of heart. We see the same concept taught in prophecy when it speaks of Christ the stone:

Romans 9:33 “As it is written: ‘See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.’”¹⁹

Isaiah 8:13-15 “The LORD Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread, and he will be a temple; but for both houses of Israel he will be a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall. And for the people of Jerusalem he will be a trap and a snare. Many of them will stumble; they will fall and be broken, they will be snared and captured.”

Psalms 118:22-23 “The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes.”

Isaiah 28:16 “So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.

Psalm 69:23 May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever.

Psalms 69:22-23 was quoted by Paul in Romans 11:9-10 where he made clear that the condemnation contained in this prayer was fulfilled upon in the Jews of Christ’s day after they had rejected Him.

Psalm 69:24 Pour out your wrath on them; let your fierce anger overtake them.

The LORD gave the Jews forty years to change their rejection of Christ. Although, obviously, many of the great Christians of the first century were Jews, the vast majority of Jews rejected Him. As a result the LORD brought down on them the prophesied destruction ²⁰ of the Temple

¹⁸ *Romans 10:21*

¹⁹ *Isaiah 28:16*

²⁰ *Daniel 9:26, Ezekiel 4:6.*

and Jerusalem in 70 AD.

Psalm 69:25 **May their place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in their tents.**

This was quoted in Acts 1:20. Although Peter referred to Judas there, the passage was actually applied to all the Jews of that generation and the next who rejected Jesus. They lost their place, their Temple and their country. Over a million of them lost their lives.

Psalm 69:26 **For they persecute those you ~~wound~~ scourge and ~~talk about~~ recount the pain of those you ~~hurt~~ wound.**

The word translated “wound” by the NIV is the Hebrew verb נָכָה {nä·kā'} with the Hiphil stem. It would be better translated “scourge.” The word for “hurt” here is the Hebrew קָלַל {khä·lä'l} which is better translated “wound.” We find the connection for both words in Isaiah’s prophecy about the Messiah:

Isaiah 53:5 “But he was **wounded** for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with **his stripes** (*or scourging*) we are healed.”

The word the NIV translated “talk about” is the Hebrew word סָפַר {sä·far'} with the Piel stem which is better translated “recount.” It conveys the unholy glee with which many of the Jews, especially the High Priests (Annas and Caiaphas) and most of the Sanhedrin, rehearsed in their minds and before others the dreadful humiliation and sufferings which they had personally seen Jesus undergo.

Psalm 69:27a **~~Charge them with crime upon crime~~ Add iniquity to iniquity;**

I have substituted the more literal translation of the KJV, NAS, and ASV. Their first iniquity was that they had rejected the only way of salvation. The second iniquity was that they had rejoiced in the suffering of the one who came to save them, and had even tried to add to His suffering.

Psalm 69:27b **do not let them share in your salvation.**

Having rejected Christ, there was no way they could partake of the salvation He provided.

Psalm 69:28 **May they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous.**

To be blotted out of the book of life means to have rejected the LORD’s salvation and have to stand before the LORD at the Great White Throne Judgment on the basis of one’s own works. Although I won’t teach about the Book of Life here, I have copied all the scripture verses on the Book of Life at the end of this lesson for your personal study and convenience.

Psalm 69:29 I am in pain and distress; may your salvation, O God, protect me.

Jesus was in real physical pain and distress of soul as He showed when He sweated blood in the Garden.

Psalm 69:30 I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving.

Jesus had faith that, at the end of it all, He would praise the "name" (character) of the Father who had sent Him to the cross according to His Eternal plan.

Psalm 69:31 This will please the LORD more than an ox, more than a bull with its horns and hoofs.

This is another way of stating the thought of the Messianic Psalm 40 quoted in Hebrews 10:5-6:

Psalms 40:6-7 "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced; burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require. Then I said, "Here I am, I have come-- it is written about me in the scroll."

Psalm 69:32 The poor will see and be glad-- you who seek God, may your hearts live!

Who are the poor? They are all those who have humbled themselves before God, have realized their spiritual poverty, and have sought Him. Those will be glad and their hearts will live because Christ became the effectual sacrifice for us to which the Temple sacrifices could only point. This is the same point that was made in Messianic Psalm 22:26 "The poor will eat and be satisfied; they who seek the LORD will praise him-- may your hearts live forever!"

Psalm 69:33 The LORD hears the needy and does not despise his captive people.

For those who read this Psalm when it was written, a thousand years before the Cross, and for all the generations in the centuries that followed, this stood as reassurance that the LORD was not deaf to the cries of his captive people. His "captive people" were actually more than just the Jews. They were all the world's people who were captive to sin and death, and were waiting for the Redeemer.

Psalm 69:34 Let heaven and earth praise him, the seas and all that move in them,

Those generations should believe that what He said He would do, He would do.

Psalm 69:35 for God will save Zion and rebuild the cities of Judah. Then people will settle there and possess it;

That this was written to those coming generations is demonstrated by the fact that this was written long before Zion (Jerusalem) and the cities of Judah needed saving or rebuilding. This

was written about 1000 BC. The first destruction of Jerusalem and the cities of Judah came in 585 BC by the Babylonians. The second came in 70 AD by the Romans.

Psalm 69:36 the children of his servants will inherit it, and those who love his name will dwell there.

Notice that this makes clear, along with many other passages in the Old Testament, that citizenship in Zion wouldn't be restricted to the physical descendants of Abraham, but to "those who love his name," the spiritual descendants of Abraham.

The Passages on the Book of Life

Exodus 32:31-33 "So Moses went back to the LORD and said, 'Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. But now, please forgive their sin--but if not, then blot me out of *the book you have written.*' The LORD replied to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of *my book.*'"

Psalms 87:1-7 "He has set his foundation on the holy mountain; the LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are said of you, O city of God: Selah 'I will record Rahab and Babylon among those who acknowledge me-- Philistia too, and Tyre, along with Cush -- and will say, 'This one was born in Zion.' Indeed, of Zion it will be said, 'This one and that one were born in her, and the Most High himself will establish her.' The LORD will write in *the register of the peoples: 'This one was born in Zion.'* Selah As they make music they will sing, 'All my fountains are in you.'"

Malachi 3:16 "Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. *A scroll of remembrance* was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name."

Daniel 12:1 "At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people--*everyone whose name is found written in the book*--will be delivered."

Hebrews 12:22-23 "But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose *names are written in heaven.*"

Revelation 3:4-5 "Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the *book of life* but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels."

Revelation 13:8 “All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast--all whose names have not been written in the *book of life* belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.”

Revelation 17:8 “The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction. The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the *book of life* from the creation of the world ²¹ will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come.”

Revelation 20:11-15 “Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the *book of life*. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone’s name was not found written in the *book of life*, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

Revelation 21:22-27 “I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s *book of life*.”

²¹ *This is not to say that the names were “predestined” before “the foundation of the world” without the intervention of volition, but that they were foreseen by the foreknowledge of God. In the same way Revelation 13:8 uses the same phrase about Jesus Christ, the He was the lamb that was slain before “the foundation of the world.” His volition was clearly involved, but God seeing through time saw it as a fact even before it had happened.*