



Singin' In 'The Reign'! **Psalm 69**

Dr. Deane J. Woods

(Part 2)

Editor's Note: In the previous article, the writer identified a simple motif common to both the 50's Hollywood hit Musical "Singin' in the Rain" and Psalm 69: "Both begin with SINKING and end with SINGING!". Bizarre as it sounds, these two diverse sources also evidenced seven further correlations, albeit with each one diametrically opposed to its counterpart! While Psalm 69 foreshadowed seven Messianic predictions, the movie featuring legendary star Gene Kelly and his team, depicted seven counter correspondences which are, in fact, *antithetic parallels*. Thus, (1) "the old must give way to the new" (2) "True godly love is always reciprocal – especially so in the biblical sense of

Messiah's love for His redeemed" (3) "The world judges partially. With God, it is always impartial, based on righteousness and is therefore just" (4) "The Eternal Lover of our souls is never fickle or deceptive. Not so with worldly love" (5) "There's a world of difference between happiness and joy" (6) "At some unexpected time in history, the final curtain will go up and all that's hidden will be revealed" (7) "The final lot of the down-trodden, humiliated and oppressed will be one of assured acceptance, blessed privilege and eternal joy – only in the Messiah!". There will be "Singin' in 'The Reign'!"

Then followed *the main point of the article*: the spiritually edifying, seven foreshadowings of the Messiah in Psalm 69.

David's experiences foretold Messiah's reprehensible experiences whenever He would come (Cf. Gal 4:4). Space permitted only the first three messianic vignettes found in the biblical record: He would be (1) *Hated and Rejected* (Ps 69:4; cf. Jn 15:18, 25); He would also be (2) *Hassled and Reproached* (Ps 69:7-8; cf. Jn 7:3-5), leading to His being (3) *Hounded and Repudiated* (Ps 69:9; cf. Mt 26:65-67 and Jn 1:10-12).

We turn now in this present piece to the final four examples from David's experiences which point inexorably to the coming of Messiah to Israel.

Open your Bible to Psalm 69, read it through carefully and prayerfully

Messiah Humiliated and Reviled

This aspect is seen in *His being angered by their disrespect toward the Temple*.

He was always about His Father's business and doing His will (Lk 2:49; Cf. Jn 8:29; Heb 10:7, 9; Lk 22:42).

His Father's House must be a House of prayer for all nations, not a commercial den of unscrupulous money changers whose avaricious hearts were deviously cloaked in respectable religion (Cf. Mt 21:13ff). His vigilance for things spiritual and desire that all would come into a right relationship with His Father, caused His enemies to humiliate and revile Him. Psalm 69:9a found its messianic fulfilment in John 2:13-17:

¹³And the Jews' Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, ¹⁴And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the

changers of money sitting: ¹⁵And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers money, and overthrew the tables; ¹⁶And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. ¹⁷And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up." (Emphases added).

Fellow Traveller on the Highway to Heaven, don't let the disrespect of the ungodly, or the religiosity of pious masqueraders cause you to deviate from the path the Messiah has chosen for you! There is a place for righteous indignation (Eph 4:26) when we are humiliated as He was. But when believers observe those who pay little respect for the things of

God, His work or the place of corporate worship, discerning words of godly condemnation are justified (Cf. Paul and Peter in Galatians 2). The point is this: No matter what people say or do to restrict us, or seek to ruin His work, remember our LORD said: "I will build My church ..." (Mt 16:18). So let us keep up the good work He's entrusted to us and keep the gospel flag flying high! Your faithfulness will be rewarded!

Messiah Heavy-hearted and Reproached, Again!

Just like David, the Messiah reflected the shepherd king's heavy heart at being reproached by his peers and made the object of ridicule and scorn. As noted already, David is on record as saying that he would bear reproach of those who reproached God, for His sake which stated: "*For the zeal of thine house*

hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon me." (Psalm 69:9b Emphases added).

The apostle Paul took up this same theme when he wrote of the Messiah in Romans 15:3. He said that He never once pleased Himself! The verse stated: "For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."

Here is a challenge for all who would be Messiah's disciple: It involves personal faith in Him, for salvation is a free gift of God's grace! The daily walk of a believer, however, involves denying self thereby acknowledging His Lordship over one's redeemed life as he grows in the grace and knowledge of Christ (Lk 9:23, 52-60; 14:26-30ff; 2 Pet 3:18).

There is a further aspect of Messiah's reproach and brokenness of heart that demands our attention in this study. It is seen in the New Testament in Mark 14:32-50 where the prophecy of Psalm 69:20 would be fulfilled when His disciples forsook Him in His time of need, and fled! The text stated: "Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." (Ps 69:20)

Add to this the Gospel account of Jesus agonising in prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane:

³³And he takes with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; ³⁴And says unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry here, and watch. ... ³⁷And he comes, and finds them sleeping, and says to Peter, Simon,



Garden of Gethsemane

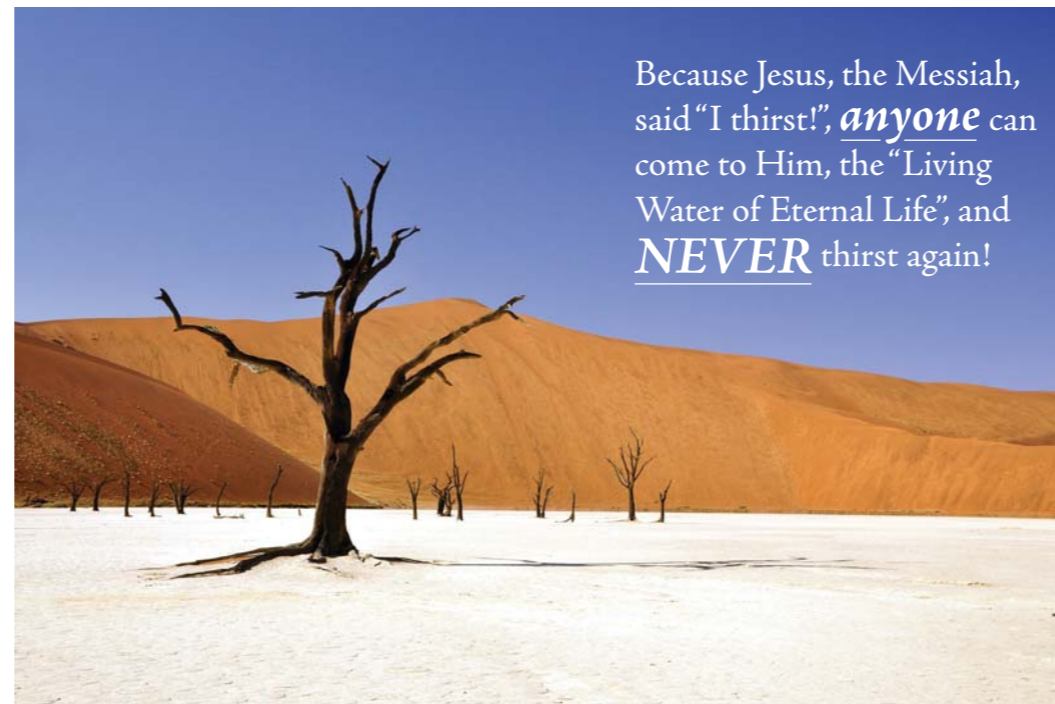
why are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? ... ⁴⁰And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither knew what to answer him. ⁴¹And he comes the third time, and says unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Later, they all forsook Him and fled! (Mk 14:50-52). We can only imagine Messiah's broken heart at this hour of need. With the burden of our sin upon Him (necessitating even the help of angels in the Garden - Lk 22:43!), so that He would bear our sin up on to the cross (1 Pt 2:24), so He went willingly to the Cross for the sake of sinners – Jews and Gentiles alike! It was there that He was made sin for us (2 Cor 5:21), so becoming our Substitute (Cf Gen. 22:1-9ff)

Reader friend, have your best associates or companions forsaken you? Was it at an hour of greatest need when you thought they would be there to comfort and encourage you? Whatever might have happened, whatever the burden, cast it upon the LORD and He will sustain you. David found it to be so and you, too, can appropriate His abiding promise in Messiah! (Ps 55:22; cf. 2 Cor 1:20). Is the disciple's learning experience an easy road? Remember: the Messiah went all the way on "Calvary Road", as Roy Hession's book reminds us. It was on Golgotha that He suffered and died, alone! Furthermore, Horatius Bonar's song was right: "This is the way the Master went, should not His servants tread it still?"

Messiah Helped but non Responsive! In Psalm 69:21, David wrote of those who had reproached him, broken his heart by showing him no sympathy or offering their comfort by adding that "They gave me also gall for my food; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." This foreshadowed Messiah's ignominious treatment on the Cross. He would be offered gall and vinegar to drink. Matthew's Gospel highlighted Jesus' messianic fulfilment of David's prophetic insight when he wrote: "They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof,

he would not drink." (Mt 27:34). But it is John who recorded the telling contextual clue in his parallel account: "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, says, I thirst." (Jn 19:28, emphases added). This statement told us expressly that Jesus was fully cognizant right up to the point of his "(dismissing) His spirit" (Mt 27:50; Jn 19:30), just as He had told His disciples earlier (Jn 10:18). He knew the will of His Father at all times (Lk 2:49; Heb 10:7, 9) and even at the point of death, He must fulfil scripture! At Calvary, His murderers



Because Jesus, the Messiah, said "I thirst!", anyone can come to Him, the "Living Water of Eternal Life", and **NEVER** thirst again!

tried to help Him die by offering the usual, legitimate, drug concoction of vinegar and gall to numb the sense and pain, but he did not respond as they would have expected. He would not drink it; He must die with clear faculties – He died thirsty!

Christians who identify with their LORD in His death in order to share the joy of reigning with Him in life (Rom 5:17) may have to forego erstwhile legitimate things, situations or even relationships that are in the will of God for others, but not for them at some given point of time.

Like their Saviour, they must die thirsty. To illustrate the point, just think of the statistical imbalanced ratio of single women to men on the Mission Field. Statistics tell us that it still continues around 6:1. Countless faithful, women servants of Christ have told this writer of their personal battle facing the issue and yet being willing to forego marriage and go to the Field single, and with no prospects of marriage. God's work, worldwide, would be the poorer if they had stayed at home, unwilling to die thirsty! Let's salute such single women (and widowed)

workers, and commend them to God in prayer!

Messiah Heard and Removed!

In the imprecatory verses of Psalm 69 (vv 22-28), David sought God's vengeance on his enemies. In verse 25 he wrote: "Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents." This can only allude to the Messiah by association, for it referred directly to Judas who betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver. This led to His arrest, mock trial and crucifixion. In this sense, then, Messiah had been heard (Cf. Heb 1:1 – He's

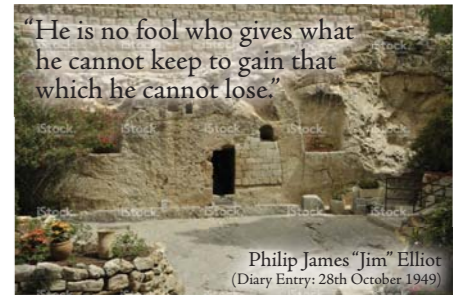
God's 'last word' to man!) and removed at the Cross, so as to become inaudible in death – but only for a season. In His Resurrection, he lives by the power of an endless life (Heb 7:16, 25) and now speaks from heaven (Heb 12:25) and we are told that His word lives and abides forever (1 Pt 1:23-25).

But what does the New Testament record of Judas' final lot? Acts 1:16-20 provides the answer in clear terms: The Potter's Field which he purchased with the betrayal money would be uninhabited!

¹⁶Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spoke before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. ¹⁷For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. ¹⁸Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his entrails gushed out. ¹⁹And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called, in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, Field of blood. ²⁰For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his dwelling place be desolate, and let no one live in it: and let another take his office [of overseer].

Herein is our final application from the seven separate (yet inter-related), foreshadowed Messianic prophecies found in Psalm 69. It relates to two parts: Firstly, the words of our testimony and ministries may have been heard by all with whom we've come into contact. Yet, it is inevitable that there will be some who have heard this message or witness, yet willfully decide to go unheeded. Worse still, others will persist in sinister character assassination or back-stabbing.

When this happens, such victims must rest in the LORD in whom we trust and let Him repay injustice and personal rebuke in His own way and time. It is His right to do so (Rom. 12:19-20). "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the LORD." What solace and consolation are in the words of Genesis 18:25: "... Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?".



Secondly, ill-gotten gain may at first appear to have its advantages, but at the end of the day, its results are at best, merely temporal, and at worst may well be the cause of horrendous heartache, being devoid of peace-in-the-heart, and finally, even death! The Messiah said: "What shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Mk 8:36-37). Jim Elliot had this eternal perspective when, as a young missionary headed for Ecuador, he wrote: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose".

Conclusion

One final word as we close Psalm 69 and its vignettes of a Suffering, yet finally, a Sovereign Messiah:

If you are presently sinking in the mire of undeserved circumstances, let the Scriptures all conquering, sovereign Saviour transform your attitude into victorious singing! He alone has made it possible by His once-for-all death, burial and resurrection for all who believe to enjoy His victory as LORD and our never ending Great High Priest who intercedes for His own *now* (2 Cor 2:15; Heb 7:16-25) and we will all be "Singer" in The Reign" of His glorious Kingdom, *then!* It's a certainty according to the Scriptures: He will return to planet earth, someday in the future (Jn 14:1-3) – and it may be sooner than we think! (Cf. Mt 24:42, 44; 25:1-13, 14-30)

Will you be there, Jewish or Gentile friend? He's opened the door of salvation for all (Rom 10:13) and with this eternal perspective, we may well say: "Hollywood Musicals will give way to Holy Word Marvels!". Hallelujah!

One Little Word!

What are you doing?

A famous answer is given to this question by two different builders. One blurts out his answer: "I'm bricking up a wall, what does it look like I'm doing?" But the other, though working on the same task, expressed a very different view: "I'm creating a cathedral for God's glory to be a blessing to many." Both builders were working on the same task, Yet they were directed by different perspectives.

A Little Word with Lots of Meaning!!

There is a word in the Psalms that is repeated over and over - yet often not considered part of the text: it is the Hebrew word *selah*. You will notice it appears throughout the Book, yet it is not given an English translation. Even in our English Bibles, the word remains as it is in Hebrew, *selah!* It is an intriguing little word. In our English Bibles, this word is often set apart from the text, standing on its own. Yet in the Hebrew it is kept as an integral part of the text.

So what does it mean? Some think it means "to pause" - to stop and think about what the Psalmist has just conveyed. Others believe it is a directive for the musicians (possibly to pause for effect). Some hold that it comes from the root *calal* which means to weigh or value; others from *s'lah* which means to praise, while others that it is from the root *s'lal* meaning to raise or lift up. So it is a tricky little word to get a handle on. Yet even if you combine all these aspects, far from contradicting each other, they are quite complementary! Why would the musicians pause? For effect. What effect? To weigh the value of what has been proclaimed; to praise and lift our thoughts to what we have just read - important thoughts that are higher than ours (cf. Isa 55:8-9).

The meaning that resonates most with me is from the root which means "to lift". To lift what? Our hands? Our voices? Our eyes? Our hearts? Well it doesn't specifically say - so probably the answer to all of these is "yes"! But whatever we lift, it must come from the

very core of our being - a desire to draw near to Adonai, to lift our life into His perspective.

Finding the word in the Shepherd Psalms...

This significance comes out beautifully in the "Shepherd Psalms" (Psalms 22, 23, 24). Did you know these 3 Psalms are linked? They are linked by their revelation of Messiah as THE Shepherd. Psalm 22 reveals the "Good Shepherd" (John 10:11) who lays down His life for the sheep; Psalm 23 reveals the "Great Shepherd" (Hebrews 13:20-21) who makes us complete in every good work; and Psalm 24 reveals the "Chief Shepherd" (1 Peter 5:4) who gives the crown of glory.

Notice where *selah* turns up in this trio of Psalms - and how they call us to "lift up" our soul to His presence and perspective. Where does *selah* turn up? At the very end! After leading us in Psalm 22 to the Shepherd who *purchases* our salvation; and in Psalm 23 to the Shepherd who *provides* all our needs; David takes us in Psalm 24 to the Shepherd who *promises* an everlasting kingdom - complete with everlasting gates (v7, 9) and, even better, the entry of the everlasting King of Glory!

We travel through two and a half Psalms before we reach our first *selah*. It is after the words calling those "who seek Your face" (24:6) that we get our first *selah* in this Psalm trilogy. And the next words transport us - "lift us up" - to the great and glorious moment when the eternal King receives His kingdom. This is where we are called to lift our hearts and thoughts and vision. This is why the Shepherd purchased our salvation, and provides all our needs: for His promise of an eternal kingdom. It is real and something we can lift our souls to with absolute assurance. For when we lift our faith to this promise, we arrive at a high place, a fortress, which God guarantees to those who place their faith in the Messiah who suffered for them (Ps 22).

Finding the word in our Soul...

And how does the very next Psalm begin after a wonderful, comprehensive revelation of the Perfect Shepherd who

will be lifted up as the King of Glory? Psalm 25:1 "To you O LORD, I lift up my soul. O my God I trust in you...." This is *selah* - the response of the human heart that is lifted up to the great salvation of the Chief Shepherd. It is the heart transported by faith - believing in the Shepherd who purchased salvation with His own death (Ps 22), trusting in His provision that daily restores our soul (Ps 23), and learning to lift our vision to His regal entry that will inaugurate the only kingdom worth living for.

I know a number of people who have chosen to begin the new year in the Psalms. And as they do, they will keep coming across this untranslated Hebrew word - *selah* (73 times!). It is a reminder - a call from God Himself - to lift our eyes, our hearts, our very souls to His purposes. Whether you begin the year in the Psalms or anywhere else, I hope you learn to lift your hopes to the LORD through this year. And as you do, I think you will be surprised how many times the Hebrew concept of *selah* is echoed throughout the Scriptures (eg. Matt 6:31-33; Col 3:1-3; 2 Kings 6:16-17).

So let me ask you again the question I began with: "What are you doing?" May your answer be like that of the second builder, whose eyes were lifted to the heart of God and saw God's purposes with every brick he placed. *Selah!*

Kevin Vigus

Ministry Representative, WA

The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry (Australia) Inc.

P0 Box 171 Melrose Park SA
5039 Australia

Office and Books:

c/o EBC Community Centre
Suite 406 (Upstairs)
Cnr. Rothesay Ave and Dorene St
St Marys SA 5042 AUSTRALIA

Phone/Fax: (+ 618) 08 8276 1333
Email: australianoffice@foi.org