



## Singin' In 'The Reign'!

### Psalm 69

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(Part 1)

If you were asked: "Is there any way Psalm 69 (one of the most quoted or alluded to Psalms in the New Testament), corresponds with the iconic hit Movie Musical, *Singin' in the Rain*?" (featuring legendary star Gene Kelly), you'd quickly answer: "No way!", right?

Would it surprise you to learn that there is? It has to do with a simple motif that is common to both:

**Psalm 69 and this Hollywood spoof of the '50's both begin with SINKING and end with SINGING!**

Does this sound too simplistic and in need of explanation? Take a deeper look!

**Psalm 69 and Its Seven Foreshadowed, Messianic Predictions!**

As Psalm 69 opens, David described his unjustified persecutions in terms of *waters that have come up to his neck*; he has sunken into a *deep mire, where there is no standing (foothold)* (vv 1-2). One can swim in water, but when it comes to muck and mire (like quicksand), suffocation looms! David's future looked bleak, his life's prospects fragile (vv 3-12). Left to his own resources, he is in despair – "SINKING" under the weight of untoward circumstances for which he was not responsible, and for which (left to his own resources), he had no answers!

The Psalm's unfolding revelation of David's sad experiences, provide seven separate (yet interconnected) prophetic predictions or allusions of Israel's coming Messiah. We shall highlight these in this study.

Significantly, each of the seven passages quoted or alluded to by New Testament writers in relating them to Jesus (*Yeshua*), depicted aspects of the *Suffering Messiah* but who ultimately would be praised as the *Sovereign Messiah*. 'Sinking' turns to 'Singing'! This is reflected by His ministering initially amongst sinful men who finally crucified Him. But Messiah's rejection is not the end of the Bible's Grand Story: Death gives way to Resurrection! Hence the Psalm 69 ends with joyous *SINGING*.



A new era is heralded in which all the earth will break forth into praise to the mighty, Sovereign Deliverer. He is none other than the Messiah-King, returned in triumph (vv 34-36)! Make no mistake: There will be joyous *Singin'(g)* in 'The Reign' – with this writer's apologies to the musical's lyricists!

**The Hit Musical and Its Seven Fundamental, Antithetic Parallels!**

Now consider the plot of *Singin' in the Rain*.

It begins with SINKING, and ends with SINGING; even in rain of a different sort! Recall the unfolding drama of this worldly, celluloid record of Gene Kelly and his counterparts and note seven discernible, parabolic, *antithetic parallels* relative to David's experiences recorded in Psalm 69.

First, Kelly's light-hearted depiction of Hollywood in the late '20s has three stars portraying performers caught up in the transition from Silent movies to Talkies.

Vocationally, two of the three screen stars are *sinking* in the mire of old technology and, like David, there seems to be no firm foundation on which to stand! They are at the point of despair! **Antithetic Parallel 1:** *The old must give way to the new!* We will see this in Psalm 69:34-36 – the anticipated Millennial Reign of Messiah!

Second, Kelly and his partner's problem is further exacerbated by the fact that the lady actress falls deeply in love with her screen counterpart in actual life, but her overtures find a negative response in the other. **Antithetic Parallel 2:** *True, godly love is always reciprocal – especially so in a biblical sense of the Messiah's love for His redeemed*

*and vice versa!* David described this in Psalm 69:5-9 and especially in verses 29-33 and 36 "those who love His name shall dwell in (Zion)".

Third, when Kelly found out that his partner was devoid of a singing talent (so essential for the new movie medium of sound!), and can't sing acceptably even with the best of voice trainers, another person with an angelic voice was given the lead vocal

role. **Antithetic Parallel 3:** In the world there is partiality based on one's abilities or lack thereof. This is not so with God, and David attests to this truth. Even when he acknowledged his failings and sins, and is misunderstood by his peers and detractors, He found solace in coming in faith to his *impartial* LORD (Ps. 69: 5-12. 13-18).

From this point in the film, Kelly's love became directed towards the newly appointed singer, not his former, long-time, screen partner! It's in this context that he sings: *"I'm singin' in the rain ... What a glorious feelin', I'm happy again"*. What can we learn from this twisted set of circumstances and fickle, worldly love? **Antithetic Parallel 4:** *The Eternal Lover of our souls is never fickle or deceptive, though His ways can be often misunderstood!* David's one, true, sincere love is again illustrated in the reality of Psalm 69:9-12. His longing for God and His spiritual work is grossly misunderstood by others and they respond with reproach and disdain!

But that is not all in Kelly's flippant experiences! Fifth, there had been dark clouds in the past for this besotted romantic. This is obvious from the continuing words as he sang: *"I'm laughing at clouds, So dark up above ... Let the stormy clouds chase, Everyone from the place, come on with the rain ... I'll walk down the lane ... just singin', singin' in the rain!"* Seemingly, everything was now going his self-centred way! He'd been sinking vocationally, emotionally and romantically; now he'd discovered true love and the former mire is transformed into a virtual, firm foundation for him and so he bursts out singing! In contrast, David declares his firm foundation is none other than God, His Saviour. He alone is the One who is the reason for his singing (vv 29-33), for "(he) will praise the name of God with a song, and magnify Him with thanksgiving" (v 30). His heart is open, not surreptitious – "the humble shall see this and be glad, and for those who seek God, (their) hearts shall live" (v 32). **Antithetic Parallel 5:** *There's a great difference between happiness and joy!* Kelly is now happy, but it does not transform into lasting joy! Happiness is dependent on happenings –

circumstances in life's experiences that can change on a whim; Joy, on the other hand, is the result of one's coming to a settled conviction of thankfulness (even in spite of circumstances), deeply rooted in One who never changes (cf. Mal 4:6; Heb 13:8; Gal 5:22-23).

This leads to the observation that in order for Kelly to hide his coquettish love, he must devise a covert, deceptive plan with Como (his 'Muso' friend). Deviously, he got his present love to sing behind a curtain while his spurned screen partner would lip-sync the words in full view of the audience. At a critical time in the sham performance, the curtain was raised and the true, sonic voice behind the microphone was exposed to the misled viewers.

This sorry, deceptive performance highlights the last two **Antithetic Parallels, 6 and 7**. The penultimate one is this: *At some unanticipated time when the crowds least expect, the Final Curtain will go up, and all that is hidden will be revealed!* Kelly's Singin' in the Rain came to an end, but David, this son of Jesse, will join all the redeemed and sing *"forever"* (Psalm 69:34-36). These verses so poignantly foreshadowed the future, glorious, Reign of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords "before whom nothing is hid"!

Finally, note the contrastive differences resulting from the curtain going up. In the film, the on-screen, lip-sync singer was left humiliated and rushed away, utterly embarrassed and broken! Laughter gave way to sadness, tears and shame! In Psalm 69, however, David awaited "(God's) salvation (to) "set (him) up on high" (v 29); he will "praise (His) name with a song and magnify Him with thanksgiving". He may be "poor and sorrowful" now (v 29) but a brighter day is assured and "all tears will be wiped away" (cf. Rev 21:4) when he at last "dwells in Zion" (v 35, 36). So we conclude with **Antithetic Parallel 7:** *The final lot of the down-trodden, humiliated and oppressed will be one of assured acceptance, blessed privilege and eternal joy, having in this life acknowledged one's spiritual need and accepted the gracious offer of God's forgiveness in the Messiah!*

So there it is: Seven "antithetic parallels" when these separate sources from

two divergent genres are compared. Moreover, their correspondence is further enhanced when the person who may be said to be the suffering subject is Rejected; Reproached; Repudiated; Reviled; Reproached (again); non Responsive and Removed!

### **Prophetic Predictions of Messiah in Psalm 69.**

The following brief comments are necessary before setting forth the messianic "Seven Quotes and Allusions" from Psalm 69 which are cited in the New Testament:

- Apart from Psalm 22, Psalm 69 is the most quoted (or alluded to) Psalm in the New Testament.



- The Psalm is not all messianic, as David speaks of himself as a sinner in verse 5. The Messiah is sinless (cf. 2. Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15). Neither are the imprecatory passages against David's enemies in verses 22-28 applicable to Jesus, the Messiah.
- The title heading of the Psalm is noteworthy. Perhaps C.H. Spurgeon, the Prince of Preachers, expressed it best in his *Treasury of David* when he said:

*To the Chief Musician upon Shoshannim. Thus for the second time we have a Psalm entitled "upon the lilies." In the forty-first they were golden lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh, and blooming in the fair gardens which skirt*

*the ivory palaces: in this we have the lily among thorns, the lily of the valley, fair and beautiful, blooming in the garden of Gethsemane ... We commence our exposition of this Psalm with much trembling, for we feel that we are entering with our Great High Priest into the Most Holy Place.* (Emphases added)

- C. C. Ryrie's suggested outline of this Lament psalm relates to David's ...
  1. Despair in Persecution (vv 1-12)
  2. Desire for Punishment of his Enemies (vv 13-28)
  3. Declaration of Praise (vv 29-36)

## **Messiah Hated and Rejected**

In terms of the chronological sequence of



verses quoted from Psalm 69 in the New Testament, John (the beloved disciple), is the first. In a context where Jesus, the sinless Messiah, explained to His disciples the world's hatred of Him and therefore those who follow Him, John 15:18 and 25 (quoting Psalm 69:4) stated:

*If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you ... But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their laws, 'They hated me without a cause.'*

Jesus here taught that the world – i.e. all people, plans, societies, organizations and philosophies without God – will always be against Christ and His committed

disciples. Like branches as part of a vine, so they are to abide in Him (cf. 15:1-8ff). Love and joy are perfected in Him, the One who chose them as His disciples and to whom His command to love one another is directed (vv 9-17), amidst a world that heaps unloving, ever-increasing vitriolic hatred on them! Hatred (v 18) leads to persecution (vv 19-20) and that finally to possible excommunication and even death (16:2).

Why is this so? Jesus stated four reasons. First, Believers are identified with their Lord (vv 18-20). Second, Believers (in an ultimate sense), do not belong to this world (v 19). Third, the world is spiritually ignorant and blind (v 20). Finally, the world will not own up to its own sin! (vv 20-22; 16:1-4). Despite all the overt evidence given them by the Messiah in His presence when on earth as the Incarnate Emmanuel (God with us), and now in the present world being witnessed to by His faithful disciples (Acts 1:8; cf. Mt. 5:16f), people and all systems without God delude themselves that they are accountable sinners to anyone save themselves. As for their accountability to God said to be revealed in the written Word, and the Incarnate Word (Jesus, the Messiah), that is totally unacceptable!

So, David's experience of unjustified persecution in Psalm 69:4 (cf. Ps 35:19) is quoted as being a realized fulfilment in John 15:25 in the Person of Jesus, the Messiah (cf. 20:30-31)! Furthermore, it is dramatically illustrated by the events recorded in Luke 23:13-22:

*<sup>13</sup>And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people. <sup>14</sup>Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverts the people; and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: <sup>15</sup>No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. ... <sup>21</sup>But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.*

Is this a word in season for you? Could it be that you are presently suffering (unjustly) for Christ's sake? Take heart, dear Brother or Sister! Remember that such suffering and rejection is ultimately a gift of grace (Phil 1:30). Prayerfully meditate on such passages as John 16:33; 2 Timothy 2:7-

8, 9-12; Hebrews 12:3-4; Cf. 10:38; 1 Peter 4:12-16. Count it all joy that you are privileged to share the fellowship of His sufferings (Phil 3:10; cf. Col 2:23) as you resolutely continue to love not the world (1 Jn 2:14-17) nor get caught up in being squeezed into this world's mould (So J. B. Phillips on Romans 12:2). Our Messiah was Hated and Refused, and so will we in being faithful to Him! There can never be a crown without a cross!

## **Messiah Hassled and Reproached**

David opened his heart in verses 5-8, and in so doing acknowledged his own folly (v 5) and accountability to God (v 6). He trusted that his testimony amongst men would not cause them to be ashamed nor dishonoured (v 6a,b). Then in verses 7 and 8, he wrote:

*Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; shame has covered my face ... I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my Mother's children.*

Turning to John 7:3-5, the Messianic allusion is at once apparent. The text says:

*His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judaea, that Your disciples may also see the works that You are doing." "For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show Yourself to the world." For even His brothers did not believe in Him.*

Only after His Resurrection did they come to believe (Acts 1:12, 14; 1 Cor 15: 5-8ff; James 1:1).

That Jesus had other half brothers and sisters is clear from Mark 6:1-6; Mt 13:53-56. Doesn't it seem incredible that his family who lived with Him, conversed with Him, saw Him grow up in the 18 silent years (cf. Luke 2:54; 4:1ff), knew of His miracles (Jn 7:3-4), tested Him etc., yet did not understand or believe in Him? Indeed, there were times before the death, burial and resurrection they thought He was crazy (Mk 3:20-21). Now at this important time of Tabernacles, their disbelief again became evident! Fancy, they were happy to go to the Feast, but their Brother is a reproach to them! Traditions can easily hide Truth!

Now they ridiculed Him – go back to Jerusalem at this Feast time and do the

spectacular and gain a following! What worldly wisdom was in evidence here! The Devil had tried that same temptation in Mt 4:12ff; Moreover, He had not been willing for the crowd to make Him King in Jn 6:15. No! It was not the right time – He must work to the Father's divine schedule – Jn 2:4; 7:6, 8, 30, 8:20; 12:23; 13:1; 14:22ff and 17:1) and so He did not succumb to the fleshly plans of men, choosing rather to do the Father's will (Heb 10:7ff).

We must also remember that because Jesus was born of the Spirit (Lk 1:35), born of Mary (Mt1:16), He could not be described in Psalm 69:8 as being alien to my *father's* children, (emphasis added)!

Perhaps there is no clearer example of Jesus' being hassled and reproached than in Matthew 26:65-67:

*<sup>65</sup>Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. <sup>66</sup>What do you think? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. <sup>67</sup>Then they spat in his face, and buffeted him; and others hit him with the palms of their hands, <sup>68</sup>Saying, Prophecy unto us, O Christ, Who is he that smote you?*

What do these astounding words say to us? In a word: He bore reproach for God's sake (cf. Heb 12:2-3; See Ps 69:9).

Have you brothers, sisters or other relatives who hassle you and reproach you? Do they reject you because you are in Christ? Do they ridicule you, or offer their own worldly suggestions as to what you should do and when you should do it? Choose willingly to accept the ignominy, and walk according to the Messiah's perfect plan for your redeemed life. Work to His divine schedule; seek first



His Kingdom and all else of a practical, temporal nature will be added unto you (Mt 6:33). What's more, you will prove as J. Hudson Taylor did that "God's work, done in God's way, and (in God's time) will never lack God's supply"!

Messiah's resurrection makes all the difference, whether to his brethren or to us! To acknowledge His resurrection is to be saved for time and eternity (Rom 10:9-10); To appropriate His resurrection life is to be set free, experientially in our daily walk with Him.

The same divine power that raised Him from the dead (Eph 1:19-21), is the saving Life of Christ lived out through the indwelling Spirit of God (Rom 5:10; Gal. 2:20). What victory there is because of His bodily resurrection (1 Cor 15:57-58; 2 Cor 2:14)! We identify with Him in the likeness of His death and share in the likeness of His resurrection (Rom 6:1-13ff) and fruit unto holiness results (v 22)!

### **Messiah Hounded and Repudiated**

Not only did Messiah's biological half brothers family hassle Him and make Him a reproach, His own people (the Jews) did likewise. In fact, they hounded and repudiated Him, as John 1:10-12f reveals:

*He came to His own [Greek: own things; creation] and His own [Greek: people] did not receive Him ... But to as many as received Him ...*

It is enlightening to observe that John in his gospel told of his evangelistic purpose in setting forth his selective signs to show that the Word who became flesh (Jesus; see 1:1-14) is, in fact, the Messiah (Jn 20:30-31). The seven signs all occurred in the first 12 chapters. From chapters one through twelve, there was a growing unbelief amongst His Own people despite the accumulated, apostolic evidence seen in the miraculous signs – not only to indicate His deity but, more fundamentally, His messiahship! Moreover, chapter 12 will close the first section of the Gospel and give way to the second literary marker ("His own") in this Fourth Gospel that shows Messiah is the Son of God, and God the Son!

Chapter 13 opened with the phrase 'His Own' used for a second time. John told us "He loved His own to the end". That is, He loved "His own" who believed to the very end of His love, to its extremity, to its ultimate consummation – death, and on the Cross!



The rest of the Gospel dealt with Jesus and His interaction with His disciples and all believers! The Resurrection follows His death on Golgotha!

Jewish friend reading this article, please read Isaiah 53 and you will find the prophet spoke of One "*who is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief ... He was despised and we did not esteem Him.*"

Of whom does he speak? It's certainly not Israel as the personal pronouns and context so clearly indicated. It is none other than the sin-bearing Servant of Yahweh, the Messiah, Yeshua, son of David! (Mt 1:1-17). John, His beloved disciple, shows how He was hounded and repudiated by "His own" people. Dear friend, why continue in unbelief in Yeshua as the Messiah? Acknowledge Him and receive Him as your Saviour, now! It is His invitation: Hear, believe, receive and be saved!

*To be continued in next edition.*

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