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## Lent Day 13: The Scorn

4-5 minutes

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### Psalm 69:1-12 (ESV)

*Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in deep mire, where there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters, and the flood sweeps over me. I am weary with my crying out; my throat is parched. My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God. More in number than the hairs of my head are those who hate me without cause; mighty are those who would destroy me, those who attack me with lies. What I did not steal must I now restore? O God, you know my folly; the wrongs I have done are not hidden from you. Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me, O Lord God of hosts; let not those who seek you be brought to dishonor through me, O God of Israel. For it is for your sake that I have borne reproach, that dishonor has covered my face. I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother's sons. For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me. When I wept and humbled my soul with fasting, it became my reproach. When I made sackcloth my clothing, I became a byword to them. I am the talk of those who sit in the gate, and the drunkards make songs about me.*

David is drowning in his troubles (vv. 1-3). He is crying out in

solitary agony, cast aside by his friends and family (v. 4) and set upon by his foes (v. 8). His reputation is under attack. The champion whose name was once celebrated in the streets is now being mocked in the taverns (v. 12). Israel's savior is crying for salvation and he hears no reply (v. 3).

The pain we feel when our reputation is under attack is uniquely excruciating. No matter whether we come from cultural backgrounds that prize the family name or are individualists who seek to make a name for ourselves, that name is our resumé. Kill it and we are in danger of a full-blown identity crisis. How are we tempted to respond when it is our reputation that is being assaulted? Do we cover up our flaws? Do we succumb to despair? Do we drive ourselves (and others) crazy in a hopeless quest for perfection? David is on a different track.

Even in his distress, David's mind is not on himself. He is not preoccupied with his own honor. His zeal is for the Lord's house. This is what consumes him (v. 9). Honestly confessing his faults, he prays there would be no collateral damage from his own folly that would defame the God of Israel or those who look to him (vv. 5-6). David makes his appeal, boldly staking his claim upon the steadfast love and faithfulness of his just and omniscient Lord (v. 13). In short, he locates himself in God's own reputation.

Many years later, the one called the Son of David entered the temple in Jerusalem at Passover, driving out the merchants and money-changers. His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house has consumed me" (John 2:17). This confrontation sparked the events that would culminate in the greatest loss of dignity imaginable. The creator of the universe, humiliated as a criminal on a cross, prayed for his enemies,

offering them all the benefits of his good name. In Jesus, we inherit an eternal reputation that can never be tarnished.

## **Prayer**

*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of David, Son of God, we confess that we have sought too much to make a name for ourselves, and have considered too little the name you have given us. You, whose name is above all names, made yourself of no reputation. You humbled yourself, taking the form of a servant, and endured the violent scorn of those to whom you offered your title. Through the ultimate exchange, you have written your name on our foreheads, and written our names, indelibly, in your Book of Life. Give us the wisdom and faith necessary to humbly receive your exaltation. Teach us by the Spirit and the word to grow together into that name, and thereby to begin to reflect the traits associated with it. For your kingdom, by your power, for your glory, Amen.*

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