

The Contrast of Good & Evil (part III)

Psalm 10:1-12

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Introduction: We continue tonight our look at Psalms 9 & 10, which I have entitled “The contrast of good & evil.” This 2 psalms are closely associated because of their treatment of the age-long problem: the conflict between the righteous & the wicked. They also are connected by their use of acrostics (utilizing the letters of the Hebrew alphabet), & by the fact there is no superscription for Psalm 10, but carries the same theme as Psalm 9 with David as the author. While Psalm 9 emphasizes the enemy from without, Psalm 10 suggests the enemy is within (a corrupting & destroying influence). Wiersbe divides the Psalm into 3 parts: “Questioning God (:1); Rejecting God (:2-13); & Trusting God (:14-18).” I see 3 parts as well, but I suggest: The cry of the oppressed one (:1 & 12); the character of the oppressing one (:2-11); & the conquest by the Omnipotent One (:12-18). In contrast to Psalm 9, the wicked in this Psalm seem to come from within the covenant community – that is, those who profess to know God but live as if He does not exist (“practical atheists”? & cf. Titus 1:16). Tonight we will consider just the first 2 divisions of the psalm & look at the final section next week.

I. The **cry** of the oppressed one (:1 & 12)

A. The **perception** of the psalmist (:1) >

1. Because of his trial & suffering, he senses that God is “*afar off*.”
2. By “*trouble*” – he speaks of “the *extremity* of trouble in which all hope of deliverances is cut off” (Kirkpatrick). This word is found only here & in 9:9.
- 3.. But there is a “needs be” element here: I Peter 1:6 says, “*Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptation...*”

Application: “It is not the trouble, but the hiding of our Father’s face, which cuts us to the quick” (Spurgeon).

B. The **petition** of the psalmist (:12) >

1. “*Arise, O LORD*” – see Numbers 10:35, “*Rise up, LORD, & let thine enemies be scattered.*”
2. “*Lift up Thine hand*” – request for action; execute His decisions.
3. “*Forget not the humble*” – contrasted with verse 11; the true child of God knows he is not forgotten.

Summary: “The import of the prayer is, Show all men that these Thy enemies are mistaken in saying that Thou hast forgotten the cause between Thy people & their persecutors” (Plumer).

II. The **character** of the oppressing one (:2-11)

A. Their **reckless character** (:2-6) >

1. They are proud (:2) –
 - a. They live for pleasure & to please their own selfish desires.
 - b. “They (the poor) are taken in the devices that they (the wicked) have imagined” (Kirkpatrick).
2. They are boastful (:3) –
 - a. They boast (praise, celebrate) in their wickedness & are not ashamed of it.
 - b. They bless the “*covetous*” – those who appropriate others by violence or injustice.
3. They are “God-forgetting” (:4) –
 - a. Their pride keeps them from seeking God.
 - b. “The only place where God is not is in the thoughts of the wicked” (Spurgeon). Ps. 14:1.

4. They are contemptuous (:5) –
 - a. He thinks his ways are secure (“*grievous*” – profane); he feels God is too far away to interfere with his plans.
 - b. He “*puffeth*” at his enemies – his scorn & contempt for them; he insults God & despises men.
5. They are self-secure (:6) –
 - a. “The first negative here is very strong: I shall not *from age to age*, I shall not *generation upon generation*, I shall not in all coming ages, I shall *never, no never* be moved” (Plumer).
 - b. He feels he shall never face natural evil – hurt, trouble, affliction.

B. Their **ruthless conduct** (:7-11) >

1. Their mouth full of (:7):
 - a. “*Cursing*” (against God & man); “*deceit*” (to trap the unwary); “*fraud*” (to rob).
 - b. “*Mischief*” & “*vanity*” are tasty (“*under his tongue*”) – “Mischief & iniquity are thoroughly to the wicked man’s taste” (Kirkpatrick).
2. Their methods (:8-10):
 - a. They lie in wait as a brigand (a member of a gang the ambushes & robs people in forests). .
 - b. They lie in wait as a lion lurking for his prey.
 - c. They set snares to trap the poor (to be sold into slavery?).

Summary: Their victims are the innocent & defenseless poor.
3. Their mental state (:11):
 - a. “*God hath forgotten*” – “God will not trouble Himself to interfere” (Kirkpatrick).
 - b. “*He hideth His face*” – “The sense is that the wicked denies that God has a providence over the world, that He remembers, sees, or has His face turned towards human affairs, or holds men accountable to Him” (Plumer).

Conclusion: We see here the evidence of Jeremiah 17:9, “*The heart is deceitful above all things, & desperately wicked: who can know it?*” Yet we will see next week the truth of the next verse: “*I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to the fruit of his doings*” (Jeremiah 17:10). The depravity of man is evidenced more & more in our day, reminding us of what Paul told Timothy, “*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come...*” (II Timothy 3:1-5). In these dark days, how much more is the light of the Gospel needed? The need of those who have been blinded by Satan is that our testimony can be their own: “*For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*” (II Corinthians 4:6). Might we be found faithful in obeying our Lord’s command, “*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, & glorify your Father which is in heaven*” (Matthew 5:16). And again, in the words of Paul: “*That ye may be blameless & harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked & perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world*” (Philippians 2:15). How is your light tonight?