

## The Contrast of Good & Evil (part II)

### Psalm 9:9-20

Pastor Michael Lynn / West Hampden Baptist Church

May 10, 2023 p.m.

Introduction: Last week we began a look at Psalms 9 & 10. They are usually associated together because of their treatment of good & evil, the use of acrostics (utilizing the letters of the Hebrew alphabet between them), & the fact that there is no heading (superscription) for Psalm 10. Wiersbe divides Psalm 9 into 2 parts: Personal praise: God saves the king (:1-8), & National praise: God shelters the people (:9-20). We looked at just verses 1-8 last week by considering: There is rejoicing in the praise of God (:1-2); there is recalling of the power of God (:3-5); & there is reporting of the purpose of God (:6-8). Consider with me tonight verses 9-20, following Wiersbe's outline: The refuge – God will not forsake them (:9-10); the avenger – God will not fail them (:11-17); & the conqueror – God will not forget them (:18-20). In this section David refers to God's people as the *oppressed* (:9); as the *humble* (:12, the afflicted), & as the *needy & poor* (:18). Note how the Lord promises to be their shelter.

#### I. The **refuge** – God will not **forsake** them (:9-10)

[Note that verses 9 & 10 each begin with the Hebrew letter *Vau*.]

##### A. The definition of a refuge (:9) >

1. A high & safe place; a citadel for the oppressed.
2. A stronghold for times of trouble:
  - a. A high tower or fort – “A fortification of great natural strength, where an enemy cannot come, or even get a sight of those whom he would destroy” (Plumer). Consider Masada, or Petra?
  - b. “*Trouble*” (only here & 10:1) – “It seems to mean the *extremity* of trouble in which all hope of deliverance is cut off” (Kirkpatrick, 1902). [Compare Scroggie in 1948.]

##### B. The determination of a refuge (:10) >

1. Those who know the Lord:
  - a. This speaks of knowing His nature & character.
  - b. “*Seek*” – those purposed in heart to know God.
2. Those whom the Lord will not forsake.

Summary: “To *seek God* is put for the whole of religion, which consists in seeking to know Him, to be like Him, to possess His favor & His protection, to serve & obey Him, to have communion with Him, & finally to be with Him in glory” (Plumer).

#### II. The **avenger** - God will not **fail** them (:11-17)

##### A. Praise & proclamation (:11-12; note both verses start with Hebrew letter *Zain*) >

1. Praise of Who He is – enthroned in the heavens (:11a).
2. Proclamation for what He is doing (:11b-12):
  - a. “*People*” – literally “peoples,” speaking of all nations of the world.
  - b. “Jehovah is the Goel, the Avenger of blood, who investigates all offences against His sacred gift of human life, & demands satisfaction for them (Gen. 9:5-6)” (Kirkpatrick).  
Abortion?
  - c. The Lord's attention to the needs of the humble (poor or meek – from root word “to bend” or “bow down” – the lowly). “The condition of one who is bowed down by external circumstances of poverty, trouble, or oppression” (Kirkpatrick).

Summary: “When God is the avenger, He has all the evidence He needs to find & punish rebellious sinners (Wiersbe).

B. Gates of death & gates of Zion (:13-14; note both verses start with Hebrew letter *Cheth*) >

1. “*Gates of death*” (:13) – the gates open but there is no exit; eternal doom (Mat. 7:13).
2. “*Gates of the daughter of Zion*” (:14) – speaks of the citizens of Jerusalem; contrasted with the gates of verse 14 (See Mat. 7:13-14) & compare John 3:36 & 5:24.

Application: “God’s *salvation* is the deliverance God secures to believers & accomplishes in them” (Plumer).

C. Recompense (retribution) & righteousness (:15-16; Hebrew letter *Teth*) >

1. The *heathen* fall in the pits they dug for others & the *wicked* are snared in the traps they set for others (:15).
2. God’s judgment is both righteous & fair (:16).

Note: “*Higgaion*” can be “meditation” or a musical notation, & “*Selah*” can mean pause, reflect, think on or a musical notation as well. The combination of these words suggests “a thing to be meditated on with the greatest attention” (Henry).

D. Destiny & determination (:17; verses 17 & 18 start with Hebrew letter *Yod*.) >

1. The destiny of the wicked – “*hell*” – Hebrew *sheol* – variously translated as *grave*, *pit*, or *hell*. “In this case it must be *hell*, else nothing happens to God’s enemies but what courses on His friends also” (Plumer).
2. The determination of their destiny – “*all the nations that forget God*” – “Forgetfulness of God is the cause of all the wickedness of the wicked” (Henry).

III. The conqueror – God will not **forget** them (:18-20)

A. Man may (& often times does) forget God; but God does not forget man >

1. The *needy* or **poor** shall be remembered forever (:18).
2. The wicked *man* (Hebrew “*enosh*” – refers to weak & frail man), but man does not want to admit it) will be punished eternally.

B. Man desires to prevail but he will certainly fail (:19-20) >

1. “The prevailing of man is the carrying of his counsels & measures against the laws of God & the principles of righteousness” (Plumer).
2. Put “the fear of God” in them – the realization is that they are not God. “One day the Lord will put the rebels in their rightful place & they will discover that they are only – dust!” (Wiersbe).

Summary: “It is a mercy to any man so far to be put in fear as to make him know that he is but a man, a frail, dying, feeble creature” (Plumer).

Conclusion: The psalmist will continue his theme of the contrast & conflict of good & evil in chapter 10. Plumer says of chapter 9, “What a great teacher is experience! How it enriches the soul with knowledge & with confidence. The Christian’s strength is acquired in exercising unto godliness. Of this truth, this whole Psalm is proof.” For those who know the Lord, they can & will trust Him, but to trust Him one must continually get closer to Him. Then those who know & trust Him will testify of Him (:11). How well do you know the Lord? As your refuge, are you assured that He will never *forsake* you? As your avenger, are you assured that He will never *fail* you? And as your conqueror, are you assured that He will not *forget* you? Again I ask, “How well do you know your God?”