

Psa. 10:1 ¶ Why standest thou afar off, O LORD? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?

I think most of us can relate to the thoughts of the Psalmist when we suffer from the mistreatment of evil men and/or watch as evil men seem to prosper without repercussion. Without the rest of scripture to enlighten me, I would be approaching the LORD today with this same prayer in light of the times in which we live. We are blessed to have the whole of God's word to help us face such times with the knowledge that God is ever in control and working in the lives of those that love Him.

Psalms 99:1 "The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble...."

Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

From our perspective it sometimes seems that the LORD is hiding because he does not respond to our prayers for deliverance according to our desire or expectation. We need to focus on the truth that His purposes are always for the greater spiritual good, and He knows what is needed to conform us to the image of His Son.

Romans 8:29 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son...."

Psa. 10:2 The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

In God's sovereignty, He chose to give man the privilege of choice—a privilege that resulted in yielding to the temptation of sin. Because of that choice, our adversary, Satan, has established an ever-growing sphere of influence that God is allowing in accordance with His purposes for a short period of time—especially from a heavenly perspective.

Psalms 90:4 "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."

2 Peter 3:8 "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

That truth doesn't keep those that have placed their faith in God from wanting to protect the poor from persecution by those that are wicked. It's just natural to want to see the wicked suffer in like manner as they have caused suffering. The psalmist was not privileged to have the example and teachings of Jesus to guide him.

In looking at the word for *poor* in the Hebrew, it notes, "depressed, in mind or circumstances...humble...needy." In other words, it is much more than a reference to one's economic status.

Psa. 10:3 For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.

The psalmist continues to describe the wicked man as a man of pride who boasts about all he has achieved or accumulated and shows favor to those that are covetous—a thing that the Lord hates. The Hebrew for *covetous* makes reference to plunder, greed and wounding. In other words, it is inflicting harm on others to satisfy one's own desires.

Sadly, this is an apt description of the mindset of many in our country today that want to force their morals on those that choose to obey God in accordance to His word.

Psa. 10:4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.

Psa. 10:5 His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them.

The pride of the wicked person is the root cause of his actions. It is the primary reason he refuses to seek God; He does not want to submit to any authority other than his own. Without benefit of God's love and empowerment, it is only to be expected that his ways are perverted and harmful to others (from the Hebrew for *grievous*). He reasons that he is invincible since God has not judged him, and lords it over his enemies.

Again, it is hard for the follower of God to understand why the LORD allows such sin to flourish, but we can find strength in the truth that His ways are far beyond our understanding.

Isaiah 55:8–9 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

Psa. 10:6 He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity.

Psa. 10:7 His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.

Because his evil has been allowed to go unchecked, the wicked man often becomes quite cocky. He is quick to curse and swear at others and to take advantage of others using deceit and oppression or cruelty (from Hebrew for *fraud*). He uses words as weapons to cause worry, injury and sorrow to others.

John Gill makes note that the phrase “under his tongue” is a reference to serpents that have little bags of poison under their teeth. The wicked man uses words to poison the hearts and souls of men.

Psa. 10:8 He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor.

Psa. 10:9 He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net.

Psa. 10:10 He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones.

Wicked people like to act in secret to murder the innocent and take advantage of the weak and helpless. The psalmist compares the wicked person to a lion lying in wait to catch his prey and a hunter using a trap. Like a lion he crouches low, waiting to catch his victims when they are most vulnerable.

I can't help but think of politicians in particular that so like to project a certain type of public persona and agenda that is in total contradiction with the person they are behind the scenes and their true agenda.

Psa. 10:11 He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see *it*.

The wicked person is convinced that God takes no notice of his actions.

I liked the way the psalmist phrased it. He knows that the wicked man realizes that there is a god; he just thinks that God pays him no attention (from the Hebrew for *forgotten*). He thinks God does not see him. The scripture tells us differently.

Proverbs 5:21 "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings."

Hebrews 4:13 "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

Psa. 10:12 ¶ Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble.

The psalmist lifts up a prayer for God to intercede on behalf of those that are helpless before the wicked.

Psa. 10:13 Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require *it*.

The psalmist questions why the wicked person scorns, blasphemes and provokes (all from the Hebrew for *contemn*) God. It is basically because he feels like he is prospering and suffering no consequences for his actions. This logic is identified in the writings of Solomon.

Ecclesiastes 8:11 "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

Psa. 10:14 Thou hast seen *it*; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite *it* with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.

The psalmist knows that the LORD God is aware of all the actions of the wicked. He knows that the LORD will eventually hold the wicked accountable. He knows that the poor can trust in Him as their Father.

Psa. 10:15 Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil *man*: seek out his wickedness *till* thou find none.

Psa. 10:16 The LORD *is* King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land.

The psalmist can't help but call out for God to judge the wicked and subdue all evil. He is eager for the LORD to establish His kingdom and get rid of the wicked forever.

My heart is certainly in tune with the psalmist on this point. I can hardly wait to see Jesus on the throne and the wicked forever subdued and eventually eliminated from our presence for eternity.

These verses also bring to mind the martyrs under the altar in Revelation.

Revelation 6:9–11 “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.”

The LORD does not rebuke these saints for their desire for God to avenge them. They know that vengeance belongs to God, and He will take out His vengeance on the wicked in accordance with His perfect plan.

Psa. 10:17 LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

Psa. 10:18 To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.

I liked the simple wording of the NLT for these verses: *“LORD, you know the hopes of the helpless. Surely you will listen to their cries and comfort them. You will bring justice to the orphans and the oppressed, so people can no longer terrify them.”*

How blessed we are to know that this is true! The LORD does know our hopes and needs. He does listen to those that cry out to Him for comfort. He will bring justice to the fatherless and the oppressed. The day is coming when all who have placed their faith in Him will no longer suffer at the hands of the wicked.

2 Peter 3:13 “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”