

ROADMAP FOR LIFE

Psalms 1-41: The Genesis Psalms

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PSALM 10: A PRAYER WHEN YOU ARE HURTING

The Psalms are typically thought of as joyful songs. But many of them are prayers, and some are the cry of a sorrowful soul. Psalm 10 is a perfect example of a hurting heart calling out in prayer to God.

Psalm 10:1 | *“Why standest thou afar off, O LORD? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?”*

Here is the number one question we ask when things go wrong: “Why?” In difficulty we all want to know, “Lord, why is this happening to me? Why do I have to go through this? Why are you allowing it? Why does it seem as though you are so far away and not helping me?”

Instead of using his “why” in this psalm to talk to others, the psalmist used it as an entry point to talk to God Himself. We must do the same. Bring your “why” into the presence of God and you will bring God into the conversation. When the psalmist turned his questions toward Heaven and laid out his emotion before God, he brought his situation and emotion into a divine perspective. By the end of the psalm, answers begin to arrive. The only answers you will ever find are in the presence of God.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

From a historical standpoint, this psalm fits in the time of the Babylonian captivity. Judah had been carried away to a strange country, a foreign land, and they were troubled. Many Bible teachers put Psalm 10 chronologically at the end of Daniel 7, which describes the visions Daniel saw of what God would do to the Gentile nations and the judgment that was coming. The final verse in that chapter, verse 28, gives insightful context:

“Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.”

In other words, “I thought about all this. I got troubled. I got worked up. My countenance fell. I kept the matter in my heart.”

Are we tempted to do that when we have struggles? Some of you have questions and hurts today, and you are so worked up on the inside, but you try to hide it from everybody else. You keep the matter in your heart; although you don’t know it, your countenance has changed. Those bitter thoughts on the inside begin to show on the outside.

When that happens, do what Daniel did. He was a man of prayer, as was David. Though we do not know with certainty who penned Psalm 10, we know that he did the right thing in bringing his questions to the God of truth. He brought his trouble to the only One who could bring triumph out of the struggle.

THE STRUCTURE

After the introductory question in verse one, Psalm 10 can be divided into three parts.

We See the Wickedness All Around Us (Verse 2-6).

“The wicked in his pride doth	persecute the poor: let them be	taken in the devices that they have imagined. For the wicked boasteth
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of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth. The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. His ways are always	grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them. He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity."
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That sounds like the world we live in today! Wicked men do terrible things and think they are getting by with it, living in ease. Where is God in the midst of all this? If you think you are the first person to ask that question, you are wrong.

We See the Wicked Are Against Us (Verses 7-15).

Wicked men, filled with cursing and vanity, are lurking in secret places, murdering innocents, working against the poor, and waiting like a lion to snare his prey in a net. Verse 11 reveals their belief that God will never see or know about their wickedness. In their pride they give no thought to God.

Notice the plea in verse 12: "*Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble.*" Do you see the great contrast between the proud and the humble? Into which group do you fall? Remember, God brings the proud low but comes near the humble (James 4:6).

VERSES 13-15

"Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? He hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it. 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. Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man: seek out his wickedness till thou find none."
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We Remember that God Is for Us (Verses 16-18).

Here the psalmist moves from describing wicked men to communing with the holy God.

“The LORD is King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land. LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause	thine ear to hear: To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.”
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In the middle of so much hate, he begins to rehearse the love of God. God defends the fatherless and cares for the afflicted — the most defenseless and helpless people in the world, those for whom no one else speaks. You do not have to convince God to care. He cares more than you care, and He loves more perfectly than you and I could love. The King sees, He knows, and He will make all wrongs right in the end.

TWO APPLICATIONS

Stay humble before God. As I read Psalm 10, God convicted me of my own pride. It is easy to spot pride in others while ignoring the pride in our own heart. Most men are hard on others and easy on themselves. Spiritual men are hard on the sin in their own heart and merciful to others.

Bring your hurts to Him. Never forget this when you are hurting or having a hard time. The psalmist not only prayed for his own needs but also for the needs of others, including the fatherless and the afflicted.

You may know someone who is struggling and want to commiserate with them, but you think, “I don’t understand why.” You may not know what to say to them, but one thing you can always do for hurting people is pray for them. Bring their needs to God and watch God come to them. Learn to intercede for the needs of hurting people all around you.

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Psalm 10 is a prayer for the poor and the oppressed. Maybe that is you today; maybe it is someone you know and love. Either way, humble yourself before the Lord and bring it into His presence. He is the King. He does all things well and He loves perfectly. You can trust Him in the midst of your hurt.

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Psalm 1-41: The Current Psalm

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