

## PSALM 10

## THE CRY OF THE OPPRESSED

There is probably not another Psalm which describes the mind, manners, works, words, feelings, and fate of the ungodly with so much fullness and light as this Psalm does! This Psalm is a picture and a description of that person who is so well-esteemed in their own short-sighted vision that not even an Apostle could hope to stand as high as they do on the mountaintops of piety and holiness! But in reality, they are detestable in the eyes of God.

In the preceding Psalm, David spoke of the ungodly being converted; and he prayed for those who were to be thus transformed from being workers of darkness to children of light. But here he is speaking of the ungodly who are left in their wicked state, and who misuse their power to prevail over the weak. Concerning these hardened sinners, the Psalmist is in a great uncertainty of mind as to whether they will ever be converted or not.

In this Psalm, three different parties are presented to our view in succession: the Lord, the wicked, and the righteous. God is seen as standing afar off (verse 1) – seeming to cover His eyes from the painful sight, being of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. The wicked (verses 2-11) is seen in all his ungodliness and unprincipled selfishness – doing evil as if no eye was watching him. The Godly person (verses 12-14) calls the Lord's attention to these scenes, and raises the cry for His Divine interposition. Then, at verse 15 and onward, the scene suddenly changes! God has come near; "the arm of the wicked is broken." "Thou shalt seek out his wickedness, and find none," the Psalmist says. The wicked man's extirpation and destruction shall be complete (compare Jer. 1:20). "The Lord is King" indeed! He has heard the desire of the humble; "he has judged the fatherless and the oppressed" – that is, He has acted righteously and justly

**Overview of the Psalm, adapted from Charles Spurgeon:**

*We have already had instances of Psalms which seem to have been meant to form a pair (like Psalms 1 and 2, and Psalms 3 and 4); and this one, along with the ninth, is another specimen of such a double Psalm. The prevailing theme seems to be the oppression and persecution of the wicked; we will, therefore, entitle it, "The Cry of the Oppressed."*

*The first verse, in an exclamation of surprise, explains the intent of the Psalm: namely, to invoke the interposition of God for the deliverance of His poor and persecuted people. From verses 2-11, the character of the oppressor is described in powerful language. In verse 12, the cry of the first verse bursts forth again, but with a clearer utterance. In the next few verses (13-15), God's eye is clearly beheld as regarding all the cruel deeds of the wicked; and as a result of Divine Omniscience, the ultimate judgment of the oppressed is joyously anticipated, in verses 16-18. To the Church of God during times of persecution, and to individual saints who are smarting under the hand of the proud sinner, this Psalm furnishes suitable language for both prayer and praise.*



on their behalf; just as Othniel, Gideon, Samson, and other Judges of Israel did, when they brought down the foes and set things right in the land.

Toward the end of this sacred song, there is much that is prophetic; the gloominess of the Psalmist's present circumstances turns his eye forward in search of the coming daylight. In verse 16, faith is seen in its fullness of strength – singing as if it was already in possession of its anticipated victory and deliverance: “The Lord is King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land!” Such confidence and faith must appear strange and unaccountable to the watching world. They must feel like the fellow-citizens of the man whose powers of vision were supposedly so extraordinary that he claimed that he could distinctly see the fleet of the Carthaginians entering the harbor of Carthage, while he himself stood at Lilybaeum in Sicily. A man seeing across an ocean, and able to tell of objects so far away – he could feast his vision on what others saw not. Even now, in a spiritual sense, Faith now stands at her Lilybaeum; and she sees the long-tossed fleet safely entering the desired haven. She enjoys the bliss of that distant glorious day as if it had already come!



Our Savior, in the days of His earthly ministry, could very well have used the words of this Psalm to describe the state of matters in His days. He saw the buyers and sellers making gain in the courts of the Temple, and probably saying to themselves the words of Zechariah 11:5: “Blessed be the Lord; for I am rich!” – even as it is said here, in verse 3, “The wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.” In the Sadducees, He saw before Him many persons of whom it might be said, “God is not in all his thoughts” (verse 4). Their ways were hardened (verse 5); they feared no adversity. They said – as one translation graphically renders it – “Tush! I shall never be cast down” (verse 6). The Pharisees, scribes, and elders of Jesus’ day furnished abundant exemplification of the statement that “mischief is under his tongue” (verse 7). In other words, the storehouse or cellar that seemed to be under their tongue was always providing their lips with plans and suggestions of evil. Their lying in wait, like a lion in his den, most vividly paints a picture of the plots that were entered into against Christ. And at the same time, “the servant is not above the master.” The members of Christ’s Body have always met with the same treatment. Therefore, every one of His people can use this Psalm when they experience earth’s unholiness and atheism, and when they feel like Lot in Sodom – whose “righteous soul” was “vexed from day to day by their unlawful deeds.” It is a very proper song to be sung by those who suffer under the persecutions that are expended upon them by the Antichrist and his demons.

Pray for grace so that whenever we are under our afflictions, we may look to Jesus, and never forget that He is King forever and ever.