

THE PSALMS

Series: Selected Psalms Phase 1

Psalm 10: Oppression of the Poor ... Plea for Vindication Psa. 10:1-18

Today's Study: Psa. 10 Part A (Vv. 1-11)

1. Complaints ... Perception of the Psalmist v. 1
2. Character of the Oppressor Vv. 2-6
3. Conduct ... The Oppressors' Behavior Vv. 7-11

INTRODUCTION

1. Highlights from Psalm 9

Due to the volume involved, I am presenting for this review the outline used for studying Psalm 9 and some highlighted pointers.

Subject: Victory Praise – Adversaries Overcome

Part A Psa. 9:1-10

(a) Praise the LORD with All Your Heart – Justice Assured Psa. 9:1-10

The beauty and power of sincere praise! Praise that flows naturally and from a heart wholeheartedly committed to God, praising Him who is worthy to be praised! One of the very first thing that David did in this psalm (Psalm 9) was to openly proclaim the purpose of writing the psalm: **It is specifically meant to be a praise song to the LORD.**

(1) Marvelous Works He has done (Psa. 9:1)

- Praise the LORD (v. 1a)
 - Facing the foe, it takes a fully made-up mind and the grace of God to sincerely and openly bless the LORD in spite of the imminent and discouraging situation that was seemingly prevailing.
 - Even in the face of the enemy's threat, the psalmist praised God for the deliverance given in the past and what would come in the future.
- Perfectly and wholeheartedly God's (v. 1b).
The **whole heart** emphasizes that this is not done with divided affection, or with a partial gratitude. He meant that **all** his powers would be employed in praising and serving the LORD.
- Proclaim the "Good News" (v. 1c).
David described an important and often neglected way to praise God: **"Tell of His marvelous work."**
- Phenomenal, far-reaching, beneficial and eternal (v. 1d).
The wonder of God demonstrates His omnipotence and comprehensive care for His people (Psa. 7:7-14; etc.).

(2) Most High God – None Like Him (Psa. 9:2)

- Gladness and joy flow freely from God's people (v. 2a).

- Great and mighty God (v. 2b).
“Songs are fitting expression of inward thankfulness, and it would be well if we indulge ourselves and honored our LORD with more.” (Spurgeon)
- (3) **Mighty Warrior and Guardian of His People** (Psa. 9:3)
- Defeat of the enemy (3a).
David acknowledges the almighty power of God as that which the most formidable enemy was not able to contest with or stand before.
 - Divine presence (v. 3b)
“Infused with confidence of God’s unfailing presence we can face whatever obstacles or opponents stand in our way” (POSB).
- (4) **Maintaining Equality and Justice** (Psa. 9:4).
- Rights are maintained (v. 4a).
Our integrity and innocence will be upheld by God . . . **guaranteed!**
 - Righteous judge (v. 4b).
God has the right and authority to make decisions based on His righteous standards.
- (5) **Magistrate Who Judges Righteously** (Psa. 9:5-6)
- Exultation! There is triumph over evil! (9:5)
God is **a righteous judge**, who not only loves righteousness Himself but will take care that righteousness is done by the children of men and He will avenge and punish all unrighteousness.
 - End of the wicked . . . obscurity sets in (9:6)
- (6) **Monarchy for Eternity** (Psa. 9:7).
- Eternal monarchy (v. 7a)
Beloved, earthly kingdoms rise and fall but even through it all the LORD remains the One True and Living God, He is from ages to ages the same (Psa. 90:2; 102:25-28).
 - Established sovereignty (v. 7b)
The enduring existence and the unchanging dominion of our LORD, are the firm foundation of our joy.
- (7) **Mediator and Universal Judge** (Psa. 9:8)
- Universal justice (v. 8a).
There is assurance that the Almighty God will, without any exemption or partiality, execute universal justice upon the entire world.
 - Uprightness in His administration (v. 8b).
Focusing on appearing before the impartial tribunal of the Most High God should help us to scrutinize ourselves when tempted to sin, and comfort when slandered or oppressed.
- (8) **Majestic Protection Guaranteed** (Psa. 9:9-10)
- Refuge found in the LORD (v. 9).
Beloved, He who gives no haven to the impenitent and wicked in the day of judgment is the defense and refuge of the saints in the day of trouble.

- Relying wholly on the LORD (v. 10).
Ignorance is worst when it is in relation to ignorance of God, and knowledge is best when it exercises itself upon the name of God!

Part B Psa. 9:11-20

(b) Participating in Giving Thanks Encourages Psa. 9:11-12

(1) Savory and Satisfactory Are Praises to God (Psa. 9:11)

- Delight in glorifying the Lord (v. 11a)
The heavenly spirit of praise is gloriously contagious, and he (David) can stimulate all those with whom he is acquainted to unite in this glorious deed of praising God.
- Dwells in Zion (v. 11b).
God is omnipresent (Jer. 23:24) and yet His special presence dwelt among Israel of which the Ark of God was symbolic and remained not only in the Tabernacle (later in the Temple) but was central in the life of the nation (Isa. 8:18; Ex. 25:8; 2 Chron. 7:16; etc.).
- Declare His goodness to everyone (v. 11c).
With enthusiasm make a proclamation of the goodness of God wherever man is found.

(2) Servants/Precious in the Eyes of God (Psa. 9:12).

- Retributive justice for the afflicted (v. 12a)
The motive behind David's summons to the people for united praise was based on the fact that God vindicates **all** abuse experienced by His people.
- Remembered, loved and justified are the people of God (v. 12b).
The message here, beloved, is that the righteous will not be forgotten; that even the fiercest and awful of his allotments He will still regard and intervene to save them.
- Recurring memories of their suffering (v. 12c).
"The voices of those whose oppression is a greater burden than they can bear will echo until He brings justice upon their oppressors . . ." (POSB).

(c) Pray for the LORD'S Mercy and Deliverance Psa. 9:13-14

(1) Plea in the Midst of Desperation (Psa. 9:13).

- Plea to God for help (v. 13a).
There were memories of the past and confidence concerning the future, these factors controlled the man of God and as he approached the mercy seat to pleaded for help in a time of need.
- Persecuted by malicious and hateful adversaries (v. 13b).
His deep desire was that God would not forget the troubling situation he was in and that God would be mercifully intervening for him!

- Protector/deliverer . . . I am in Your hands (v. 13c).
David knew what it meant to be delivered from adverse situations and he once more looked forward for God to act on his behalf.
- (2) **Praise Assured for His Deliverance** (Psa. 9:14)
- Declaration of praise assured (v. 14a).
Spurgeon notes: *“Saints are not so selfish as to look only to self; they desire mercy’s diamond that they may let others see it flash and sparkle, and may admire Him who gives such priceless gems to His beloved.”*
 - Delight in acknowledging God publicly (v. 14b).
David’s objective was to publicly declare all that the LORD had done for him . . . his testimony would be that the LORD delivered him from death and brought him back home to Zion (Jerusalem).
 - Deliverance deserves our appreciation and praise (v. 14c).
David focused on *“salvation”* or *“deliverance”* given by God’s mercy and grace. Likewise, we all have so much to be thankful for and it is all because of His mercy and grace!!
- (d) **Proclaim the Truth of God’s Justice Psa. 9:15-18**
- (1) **Reaping What One Sows – the Norm of Life** (Psa. 9:15).
- Sabotaged by their own evil plot (v. 15a).
Retribution will be experienced, the evil nations and all the wicked will reap whatever injustice and evil they have done and planned to do to others.
 - Subtle and evil plans boomerang on the perpetrators (v, 15 b).
They are taken in the net which they themselves laid for the ensnaring of God’s people. It must be a frustrating experience because they are snared in the work of their own hand.
- (2) **Righteous Judgment Speaks of God’s Character** (Psa. 9:16)
- Righteous judge is known for who He is (v. 16a).
The greatness of God is demonstrated by the way He can use the plans and efforts of the ungodly, while also bringing *righteous judgment* upon them.
 - Reaping what they sow (v. 16b)
Plotting ensnares the plotters. Only righteousness can be depended on not to turn against us.
 - **Reflection** on a most important matter emphasized (v. 16c)
The words *“Higgaion”* (KJV) and *“Selah”* both call for meditation of the truth in Psa. 9:16.
“We would do well to stop and contemplate the certainty of God’s judgment . . .” (POSB).

NOTE: Hereafter, I will be able to list only the remaining points without any comment, due to time.

(3) **Realizing the Awful Consequences of Rebelling Against and Rejecting God** (Psa. 9:17).

- Eternal destination of the wicked (v. 17a).
- Everyone who rejects God will be doomed (v. 17b)

(4) **The Redeemed Needy and Afflicted Will Be Justified** (Psa. 9:18)

- Exceptionally special are the needy (v. 18a).
- Expectations of the poor fully guaranteed (v. 18b).

(e) **Petitioning God for His Justice and Judgment to Be Executed Psa. 9:19-20**

(1) **Humble the Pridedeful Arrogant Men** (Psa. 9:19)

- Restrain them . . . set bounds to their hostility (v. 19a).
- Reckon with them, it is time for judgment (v. 19b).

(2) **Hold Them Accountable . . . They are but Men** (Psa. 9:20).

- Horrifying the godless, evil men (v. 20a).
- Human frailty cannot prevail against God (v. 20b).

2. Introduction to Psalm 10

(a) **Author and Occasion of the Psalm**

There is no title, however, David is regarded as the author. Barnes note: *“From the place which it occupies among the acknowledged Psalms of David, it is morally certain that it was regarded by those who arrange the Book of Psalms, as having been composed by him. There is nothing in the psalm that forbid this supposition.”*

We have nothing to specify as to the occasion on which the psalm was composed. As noted in our previous lesson, both Psalms 9 and 10 are believed to have been originally one psalm. This fact is confirmed in the Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate that both psalms are united. It is noted that both psalms share a partial acrostic pattern – each verse begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Note also that both psalms addressed God’s justice upon the wicked.

Some leading scholars disagree that these psalms were originally one. While some do not agree that they originally were not one psalm, we noted in our previous lesson that there is some contrast between both psalms: (a) Psalm 9 glories in the sovereignty of God, particularly in relation to the heathen enemies’ nations, (b) Psalm 10 rather deals with problems of unfaithfulness and wickedness within the nation itself.

Most likely, the psalm was composed like many other psalms when the writer was in the midst of trouble and when he seemed forsaken by God as indicated in Psa. 10:1. The nature of the trouble is so far indicated as to show that it arose from the conduct of some formidable enemy, someone who was wicked and pursuing a secret, devious, private and treacherous plan to destroy the

reputation of life of David. In these circumstances the writer calls upon God to intervene for him.

(b) Contents of the psalm.

The psalm is divided into two parts (a) in the first part we have the character and conduct of the enemy (Vv. 1-11); and (b) secondly, the psalmist appeals to God to intervene and deliver him from the evil schemes of his adversary (adversaries) (Vv. 12-18).

This psalm is a powerful presentation of David's experience with his adversaries. C. H. Spurgeon notes: *"There is not, in my judgment, a psalm which describes the mind, the manners, the works, the words, the feelings and the fate of the ungodly with so much propriety, fullness, and light, as this psalm."*

3. Main Points for the Lesson Psalm 10.

We will be discussing six main points to cover this lesson.

(a) Part A Psa. 10:1-11

- (1) Complaints . . . Perception of the Psalmist v. 1
- (2) Character of the Enemy Vv. 2-6
- (3) Conduct . . . Enemy's Behavior Vv. 7-11

(b) Part B Psa. 10:12-18

- (1) Cry . . . of the Afflicted v. 12
- (2) Clarifying His Concerns Vv. 13-15
- (3) Confidence in the Most High Vv. 16-18

Part A Psa. 10:1-11

A. Complaints . . . Perception of the Psalmist Psa. 10:1

Verse 1 is a reflection of what we experience and express whenever we face evil. Man is finite and is also limited in his understanding, we cannot figure out why God is not intervening right here, right now and in exactly the way we want Him to act. Initially, the cry of the psalmist's heart is one of a disturbed and troubled spirit, and we observe in other Old Testament passages that he returns to the fact of God's established faithfulness and loving care.

The question of why God seemed so far off in times of trouble was discussed when we studied Psalm 2. Psalm 10 is the second psalm of nine in which the psalmist asks God, **"Why?"** (the others are: Psalms: 2, 22, 42, 43, 44, 74, 80, 88). David's questions (in Psalm 10) were based on his perception and not actuality; these questions came as a result of how things appeared, it looked as if God was ignoring the wickedness that was so rampant within his nation.

Spurgeon Notes:

The presence of God is the joy of His people, but any suspicion of His absence is distracting beyond measure. . . . It is not the trouble, but the hiding of the Father's face, which cuts us to the quick.

Brief Note: "Cut (one) to the quick"

"To strike the deepest, most fragile part of one. Typically used to describe emotional wounds.

"Why do You stand afar off, O LORD? Why do You hide in times of trouble?" (Psa. 10:1 NKJV)

1. Hold Back at Such a Time as This? (10:1a)

"Why do You stand afar off . . ." (v. 1a NKJV)

(a) Briefly clarifying some word usage:

(1) **"Stand"** (NKJV): "Idly standing rather than acting."

(2) **"Afar off"** (NKJV): "Intentionally distancing Himself from the oppressive activity of the wicked.

(3) **"Hide"** (NKJV): "Concealing Himself so He cannot be found in the midst of trouble."

(b) The psalmist question: *"Why do You stand afar off? (v. 1)* literally is asking: "What is the reason why You are doing this?"

(c) To *"stand afar off"* in such circumstances, is an attitude of indifference and unconcern.

(1) One example: When no one comes near us if we are sick or going through a time of bereavement or when facing other circumstances.

(2) If a man did such it would not be a surprise or a matter of great concern but if God should do such it filled him (David) with great wonder and a troubled mind!

(3) There is great affection to God and His favor; for, in the time of trouble, that which David complains of most passionately is God withdrawing His gracious presence.

2. Hidden but You Are Our Only Hope! (Psa. 10:1b).

"Why do You hide . . ." (v. 1b NKJV)

(a) To the psalmist this was as if God had concealed Himself or kept away!

(b) As noted above, this means: "Conceal Himself so He cannot be found in the midst of trouble.

(c) **God's withdrawing is very grievous to His people at any time, but especially in times of trouble.**

(d) To the tearful eye of the hurting believer, the LORD seem to stand still, unmoved, as if He is calmly looking on and will not sympathize with His afflicted child.

- (1) Even more troubling, the LORD appears to be far off and hidden; He seems to be no more “a very present help in time of trouble,” but at some location that is inaccessible to man.
- (2) Beloved! Let us, then, even remember that the LORD is always near us . . . **“He was there all the time!!** The refiner is never far from the mouth of the furnace when His gold is in the fire, and the Son of God is always walking in the midst of the flame when His holy children are cast in them.”

3. **Help Needed but Where Are You LORD?** (Psa. 10:1c)

“You hide in time of trouble.” (v. 1c NKJV)

- (a) **“Times of trouble”**: According to scholars, this was a rare word in the Hebrew vocabulary. “It means a cutting off, that is, of hope of deliverance. The notion of distress intensified to despair is conveyed.”
- (b) The psalmist is enquiring, wanting to know if the LORD has concealed Himself in a time of affliction, sorrow and persecution.
 - (1) The prevailing trouble that they were experiencing was produced by conspiracies of the horrible and resentful adversaries who were determined to destroy.
 - (2) **The question he asked, however, is put in a general form, as if it were strange and unaccountable that God should ever fail to intervene in time of trouble.**
- (c) **“Why do You hide in times of trouble?”** A brief summation and application:
 - (1) To the psalmist, God seemed far away. But even though he had honest doubts, he did not stop praying or conclude that God no longer cared.
 - (2) He was not complaining but simply asking God to hurry to his aid.
 - (3) It is during those times when we feel alone or oppressed that we need to keep praying, telling God about our troubles (1 Thess. 5:17; Matt. 7:7-8; Luke 18:2-8; etc.).

B. **Character of the Oppressor Psa. 10:2-6**

Here we have the psalmist’s accusation lodged against the oppressors. He vividly brought about a general characterization of the oppressors. Their deeds betray their self-importance (see Vv. 2-5 . . . as long as they prosper, v. 5) with which they defy God (see Vv. 3-4; see especially their words in Vv. 6, 11, 13). They greedily seek to oversupply their uncontrolled cravings (see v. 3) by victimizing others, taking account of neither God (see v. 4) nor His law (see v. 5).

Evil people seem to become very successful based on the world’s standards. They vigorously search for those who are poor, helpless or weak to take advantage of them. Instead of being ashamed of their heinous acts, the wicked boast about them. These people disregard God’s will and put Him aside as if He does not exist. Because of material success, these evil people assume there will never be any consequences for their evil actions.

1. Proud Persecutors of the Poor (Psa. 10:2)

“The wicked in his pride persecutes the poor; Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised” (Psa. 10:2 NKJV).

(a) Pride of the wicked (10:2a)

“The wicked in his pride . . .” (v. 2a NKJV)

(1) Psa. 10:2 contains the formal indictment against the wicked: **“The wicked in his pride persecutes the poor.”**

- The accusation has been presented in two distinct charges: **pride** and **tyranny**; **pride is the root cause of tyranny.**
- In verse 2 we have the humble petition of the oppressed: **“Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised.”**

(2) *“The wicked in his pride persecute the poor”*: as noted above his heinous act is the result of his pride, haughtiness and ambition motivated by his own selfish and power-hungry purposes which he is determined to accomplish irrespective of his violation of the rights and comfort of others.

- He regards their (the poor) interest and happiness as unworthy in comparison with his own aim and purposes and so he tramples their rights in pursuit of his own.

- **Psa. 73:6 Amplified Bible**

“Therefore pride is about their neck like a chain; violence covers them like a garment [like a long, luxurious robe].”

(3) **Pride** was the motivating factor underlying the original sin against God.

- Lucifer, who was the highest archangel created by God, filled with pride set his heart on exalting himself above God (see Isa. 14:3-23, NB Vv. 12-14).
- Proverbs noted seven abominations the LORD hates and pride is the first on that list (Prov. 6:16-19)
- Beloved, the root cause of most sins against people is **pride**. The wicked have puffed-up sentiments of themselves and purposed to do whatever they see necessary even at the expense of others.

(b) Persecute the poor (v. 2b)

“. . . persecute the poor . . .” (v. 2b NKJV)

(1) **“Doth persecute the poor” (KJV)** . . . various interpretations: (a) *“burns the sufferer”* (b) *“must the afflicted suffer”* (c) *“When the impious [man] is proud the poor [man] is burned”* (d) *“In the exaltation of the impious one the helpless is consumed”*

(2) The statement is simply saying: **“In the pride of the wicked, he persecutes the poor;” he burns after him, he is inflamed against him he hotly pursues him.”**

(3) The word poor in this instance means the afflicted.

- These are the crushed, the downtrodden; those in circumstances of humiliation and poverty.

- The wicked, plotting and scheming to find ways to exploit other people, they especially prey on those who are weaker than them (the wicked), those who do not have the resources to defend themselves.

(c) Punish them using their own plans (v. 2c):

“Let them be caught in the plots which they devised” (v. 2c NKJV).

- (1) David prayed that the wicked would be caught in their own schemes, that the evil they planned for others would come upon them.
- (2) The prayer is reasonable, just and natural. Even our enemies themselves being judges, it is right that it should be done to men as they wished to do to others.
 - These wicked men have formed a scheme to take advantage of, or to destroy others; and the psalmist prays that as a just retribution, this very calamity would come upon them.
 - No man could have a right to complain if the mischief and wrong which he had devised for others should be brought upon himself. The truth is that if this should happen in all occasions, there is no doubt it would effectually save men from wrong.
- (3) Spurgeon notes:

“There are none who will dispute the justice of God, when He shall hang every Haman on his own gallows, and cast all the enemies of his Daniel into their own den of lions.”

2. **Perverse, Perverted and Arrogant** (Psa. 10:3)

“For the wicked boast of his heart’s desire; He blesses the greedy and renounces the LORD” (Psa. 10:3 NKJV)

(a) Boaster of his evil deeds (v. 3a)

“For the wicked boast of his heart’s desire” (v. 10:3a NKJV)

- (1) He was a boaster and especially one who was inclined to boast of his wealth.
 - He made some proclamation about himself as being superior to others and he looks with scorn or disrespect on others.
 - He esteems himself or makes pretentious (showy, flashy, etc.) display of something on which he prides himself, such as wealth, strength, beauty, talent, prowess, etc.
- (2) The indictment has been read and the petition presented, the evidence is full and conclusive upon the matter of **pride** and no jury could hesitate to give a verdict against a prisoner at the bar.
 - The witnesses testify, stating that he is a boaster. He is a preposterous boaster, he is one who is fixated on wickedness and boast on his shameful and wicked deeds.
 - Bragging sinners are the worst and most contemptible of men, especially when their depraved desires – too depraved to be believed – become the theme of their boasting.

(3) It's unfortunate but it happens, people who exploit others are often proud of their selfish, sinful desires and shamelessly boast of their wicked deeds.

(b) Bless the greedy and hates God (v. 3b)

"He blesses the greedy . . ." (v. 3b NKJV)

*". . . and blesseth **the covetous** . . ." (KJV)*

(1) One scholar interprets as: *"And winning (i.e. when he wins) blesses, despise Jehovah."*

- In other words, he hypocritically thanks God for his success (only verbally but no real concern for God), but despise Him in his heart.
- Some scholars believe that the Hebrew word from which we derive *"the covetous"* (KJV) is saying: to cut in pieces; then to plunder, to spoil; and then to be greedy for gain.
- Obviously, the wicked referred to was most likely not a professed religious man but was a proud and vain boaster who attributed all success to himself and despise God and all His claims.

(2) The Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible (POSB) notes:

"They admire and look up those whose hearts are greedy, just like theirs. They salute and study the ways of those who are most successful in taking what belong to others for themselves. They glory in the very activities the LORD deeply despises."

(c) Baseless affection (10:3c)

". . . and renounces the LORD." (v. 3c NKJV)

(1) The wicked despises or abhors the LORD.

- He makes a shameless boast of his own corrupt and baseless passions; when he is successful he makes no acknowledgement to God, but blasphemes Him and despises Him in his heart.
- A correct rendering of this thought (v. 3c) would be: *"And having obtained, he imprecates – he despises – Jehovah."*
- Coverdale renders this as: *"The covetous blesseth himself and blasphemeth the LORD."*

(2) What we have here is an example of a complete and shameless depravity – but, beloved, this is not one that was found only in David's time!!

(3) A few thoughts by C. H. Spurgeon:

- *"This is insolence, which is pride unmasked."*
- *"He is haughty enough to differ from the judge of all the earth, and bless them who God hath cursed."*
- *"So did the sinful generation in the days of Malachi, who called the proud happy and set up those that worked wickedness (Mal. 3:15)."*

3. **Practical Atheist – Confidently Self-Centered** (Psa. 10:4)

"The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts" (v. 4 NKJV).

(a) External and vain acclamation loved (v. 4a)

"The wicked in his proud countenance . . ." (v. 4a NKJV).

- (1) **"The pride of his countenance"** (KJV) is a phrase that is used because pride shows itself mainly in the countenance, or in self-important expression and manner.
- (2) The proud boastings and corrupt gains of the wicked have been received as evidence against him, and now his own face confirms the accusation, and his empty heart cries aloud against him.
- (3) In general, the wicked do not consider that they have God to contend with and do not seem to care. He proudly cast off the thoughts of God and all dependence upon Him and devotion to Him.
- (4) **The wicked through the pride of his countenance:** that is, the pride of his heart which appears in his very countenance (Prov. 6:17), he has no desire for God.

(b) Exempting God in totality (v. 4b).

" . . . does not seek God . . ." (v. 4b NKJV)

- (1) *" . . . will not seek **after God** . . ." (KJV)* ... you will observe **"after God"** is in italics in the KJV which means it was not in the original and was supplied by the translators.
- (2) Pride is not only exalting self above God and His commands, it is also ignoring God, acting as if He does not exist. The sinner is unwilling, in any appropriate way to acknowledge God
- (3) *" . . . in the pride of his countenance **will not seek, inquire for, and yearn for God**"* (Amplified Bible).
 - *"Proud hearts breed proud looks and stiff knees."*
 - *"It is an admirable arrangement that the heart is often on the countenance, just as the motion of the wheels of a clock find their record on its face."*

(Quotes from C. H. Spurgeon)

(c) Emptied entirely of God (v. 4c)

"God is in none of his thoughts" (v. 4c NKJV)

- (1) *"God is not in all his thoughts" (KJV)* ... or, *"All his thoughts are, there is no God!" (Psa. 14:1)*
- (2) Psalm 10:4 expresses the prevailing feelings of a sinner about God . . . note the following:
 - **First:** He wishes there was none, and practically believes that there is none.
 - **Second:** The reason or ground of these feelings is **pride**. **Pride** will prevent him from seeking God in the following ways:
 - It makes him unwilling to recognize his dependence on any being.
 - It makes him unwilling to confess that he is a sinner.
 - It makes him unwilling to pray.

- It makes him unwilling to seek aid from any one, even God, in business, in the implementation of his plans or in sickness and affliction.
 - It makes him unwilling to accept the terms of reconciliation and salvation proposed by God, unwilling to repent, to believe, to submit to His sovereignty, to acknowledge his indebtedness to a simple grace for the hope of eternal life.
- (3) **Pride** is at the root of all atheism, theoretical or practical; at the root of all the reluctance which there is to seek the favor of God; it is **pride** at the root, therefore, of the misery and wretchedness of the world.
- (4) **The attitude expressed in this verse (Psa. 10:4) is not theoretical atheism but practical atheism: God is in none of his thoughts. He is too proud to seek after God or to acknowledge his dependence on Him.**
- The wicked do have many thoughts but none about God. Despite all that flood his mind they are heaps of chaff and not grain of wheat.
 - There is absolutely no place where God is found in the thoughts of the wicked. This is damaging accusation; for where the God of heaven is not, the lord of hell is reigning and raging; and if God be not in our thoughts, our thoughts will bring us to damnation.
- (5) Irrespective of who, when, where, etc., everyone has an internal awareness that there is a God (Rom. 1:19-20).
- In reality, the Bible has shown that there is not an honest atheist because God has revealed Himself deep within everyone (Deut. 29:29; Psa. 8:3-4; 19:1; Rom. 1:19-20; 2:14-15).
 - The transgression of the wicked is manifested in their refusal to respond to the revelation of God; they have no intention to seek or to know God although He has revealed Himself in the depth of their hearts
 - **Psa. 10:4 Amplified Bible**
 “The wicked one in the pride of his countenance will not seek, inquire for, and yearn for God; all his thoughts are that there is no God . . .”
4. **Produces Evil – Spiritually Insensitive (Psa. 10:5)**
“His ways are always prospering; Your judgments are far above, out of his sight; As for all his enemies, he sneers at them” (v. 5 NKJV).
- (a) Persevere a difficult and uncertain pathway (v. 5a)
“His ways are always prospering . . .” (v. 5a NKJV)
*“His ways are always **grievous** . . .” (KJV)*
- (1) The word rendered **“grievous”** (KJV) has been translated various ways for centuries.
- The Septuagint and Latin Vulgate renders it: *“His ways are defiled”*
 - Various other translations have been rendered, for example: (a) *“His ways are firm”*, (b) *“His ways are confident”* (c) *Etc.*

- Other reliable versions of the Bible translate as: **“prosper”** (for example NKJV, ESV, NIV, etc.
- (2) **The wicked:** His ways, his methods and conduct were always perverse, forced and harsh; there was always something devious and unnatural about him, he was not straightforward and honest; he did not see things as they are and did not act in a plain and upright manner.
- (3) He is fearless and determined in his sinful pursuits; he will have his way although his acts are tiresome to himself and annoying to others; he struggles with pain in his wicked courses, however, his pride makes him deliberate and stubborn.
- (4) **“His ways are always prospering”:** Here the psalmist protest to God; not only did the wicked man **seem** to enjoy constant prosperity, but he did so despite the fact that God’s **judgments are far above, out of his sight**.
- This may sound like a complaint against God; yet it should more so be seen as complete confidence in God’s rule and authority. The psalmist recognized that the wicked could never prosper unless God allowed it, so he appealed to God.
 - See Psa. 73 (*time would not allow for a discussion*) **note carefully Vv. 12-17 . . . “Then I understood their end” (Psa. 73:17b).**
- (b) Principles of God rejected (10:5b).
“Your judgments are far above, out of his sight” (v. 5b NKJV).
- (1) **“Your judgments”:** The laws or principles of God’s government.
- These are God’s divine laws that govern the human race, these are overlooked by the wicked.
 - They are out of the range of the wicked man’s vision.
 - He does not see them, and have no desire to know them.
 - His thoughts crawl on the earth, and he is never elevated in his views so as to see the great principles of truth.
- (2) He is not prudent of his duty by the law of God, nor of his danger by the wrath and curse of God.
- Tell him of God’s authority over him, he turns it off by stating, he never saw God and therefore does not know that there is a God, He is in the height of heaven and we have nothing to do with things above.
 - Tell him of God’s judgments which will be executed upon those that continue in their trespasses and he will not be convinced, claiming such is vain imaginations.
 - **Eph. 4:18 NKJV**
“. . . having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.”
- (c) Purposed to ridicule his enemies (10:5c)
*“As for all his enemies he **sneers** at them” (v. 5c NKJV)*
*“As for all his enemies he **puffeth** at them” (KJV)*

- (1) Obviously, the wicked continues unchecked in his evil ways and sneers (insult, scorn, mock, etc.) in disrespect upon all who try to stand up to him.
- (2) He treats his enemies with contempt and scorn, as if he had no fear of them, moreover he was entirely confident of his own ability to overcome them.
NOTE: *As observed above there are two interpretations describing the wicked man's act: one uses "sneer" (NKJV) and the other "puffeth" (KJV), however, both speak of the disdainful attitude of the wicked.*
- (3) The word "puffeth" means to breathe, to blow; and the idea here is that he acted as though he could sweep away his enemies with a breath . . . blow them away with his breath.
- (4) He proudly despises all his enemies, and looks upon them with the uttermost contempt.
 - He puffs at those whom God is preparing to be a scourge and ruin to him, as if he could confound them all, and was able to make his part good with them.
 - He defies and dominates; and when anyone resist his destructive behavior, he sneers at them and threatened to annihilate them with a puff.
 - The psalmist examined and exposed the sins of the wicked who is not afraid of his enemies.
 - There is pride and sin in the wicked man's **heart**, in his **mouth**, and **under his tongue**. No wonder the psalmist wanted God to stop such a person.
 - Spurgeon notes:
"Ah! there is one enemy who will not thus be puffed at! Death will puff at the candle of life and blow it out, and the wicked boasters will find it grim work to brag in the tomb."
- (5) The wicked ways are always grievous, or adapted to produce evil, because he had no just views on moral subjects – the great principles of truth and right are far out of his sight.

5. **Perilous Lifestyle – False Hope** (Psa. 10:6)

The wicked thinks in his insolence, "God never punishes;" his thoughts amount to this: "There is no God at all." Instead of the true security of those who trust in God, the wicked clings to a false security, monitoring their enemies and boasting that they will never come to disaster. He is a man who has no apprehension about the future; one who felt that his advancement would be one of continued prosperity, and that adversity would never come to him.

"He has said in his heart, 'I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity.'" (10:6 NKJV).

(a) Deceived by his evil heart (v. 6a)

"He has said in his heart, 'I shall never be moved . . ." (v. 6a NKJV)

- (1) The phrase **“he has said”** means that this was his deliberate and settled character. This was not an overnight decision but one carefully thought out and firmly decided on.
 - (2) The phrase **“in his heart,”** means that he had reasoned this matter, he had said this to himself in a spirit of self-gratification and confidence and nothing can persuade him otherwise.
 - (3) **“I shall not be moved”**: That is, he was confident of his present standing, and he apprehended absolutely no change.
 - He had formed his plans so wisely that he believed he had nothing else to understand, he carefully went through all the details.
 - He feared neither sickness nor adversity; he dreads not the power of his enemies; he feared nothing even from the providence of God.
 - He was certain that he had laid the foundation for permanent prosperity.
 - (4) Note some quotes from Spurgeon:
 - *“But let us remember that this man’s house is built upon the sand, upon a foundation no more substantial than the rolling waves of the sea.”*
 - *“This is the ruin of fools when they succeed they become too big, swellheaded and self-conceited as if their summer last forever and their flowers bloom eternally.”*
 - (5) See Luke 12:13-21, **NB Vv. 19-21**.
- (b) Deliberate over his acts and continue to desire the impossibility (v. 6b)
“... I shall never be in adversity” (v. 6b NKJV)
- (1) **“... never be in adversity”** may be read as: **“Unto generation and generation.”**
 - What is being expressed here by the wicked is that they and their families would continue to be prosperous; that a permanent foundation was laid for honor and success and for transmitting accumulated wealth and honor down to future generations.
 - It is a common feeling among wicked men that they can make permanent their titles and positions and rank and that nothing will occur to reduce them to the humble condition of others.
 - (2) The fact is established that man is proud and conceited and will go a long way to prove that he is vindictive and cruel.
 - Haman’s pride was noted to be the father of a cruel design to murder all the Jews.
 - Nebuchadnezzar built an idol, in pride he commanded all men to bow down before it; and then cruelly stands ready to heat the furnace seven times hotter for those who would not yield to his tyrannical will.
 - (3) The wicked are fully persuaded that their accomplishments will always be maintained.
 - They have reassured themselves that they are firmly established and cannot be overthrown.

- The wicked uses his success to over-confidently takes himself the entitlement of the righteous. However, God has guaranteed that the righteous will not be removed (Psa. 16:8; 37:9-10; 62:2; 112: 6; 125:1; Pro. 10:25, 30).

C. Conduct . . . the Oppressor's Behavior Psa. 10:7-11

David's portrayal of the wicked, as noted in these verses, is one of predators. These evil people make relentless efforts to earmark unsuspecting and vulnerable people. The same person who claims that God does not exist is also prone to ridicule the reality that God will not know or care about their wickedness. Undoubtedly, the character of the wicked manifest itself in their conduct.

1. Foul, Fraudulent, False and Evil (Psa. 10:7)

"His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression; under his tongue is trouble and iniquity" (10:7 NKJV)

(a) Profaneness, deceit and oppression (10:7a)

"His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression" (v. 7a NKJV)

(1) What is in our hearts will come out in our speech and actions! (See Luke 6:45). The wicked foul words and evil actions tell of the corruption of his heart. Note, briefly, five evils that the wicked boastfully and disrespectfully practices (see Psa. 10:7):

- **Cursing:**
 - The Hebrew convey several definitions, for example: "oath to testify truthfully (Lev. 5:1; 1 Kings 8:31); etc.
 - As used in our text it refers to the wicked making promises he has no intention on keeping.
- **Deceit:**
 - In the sense of: deceiving, fraud, craft, false, feigned, subtlety, etc.
 - The term signifies the intentional misleading of someone through distorting or withholding the truth.
 - Jacob stole Esau's blessing through deceit (Gen. 27:35)
- **Fraud (KJV) ... Oppression (Other Translations)**
 - In the sense of cutting to pieces ... oppression, deceit, fraud.
 - Threats and intimidation used to force others to get his way; **oppression.**
- **Mischief (KJV) ... Trouble (Other Translations)**
 - In the sense of iniquity, labor, pain, sorrow, perverseness, trouble, etc.
 - It can refer to trouble or mischief directed at another person
- **Vanity (KJV) ... Iniquity (Other Translations)**
 - In the sense of evil, affliction, false, unjust, vain, sorrow, etc.
 - Deceptive speaking which leads to sorrow.

- (2) What is being conveyed here is that the wicked man is one who is full of imprecation, swearing, execration – he is a profane man who refuses to acknowledge God.
- (3) *“His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression” (v. 7a)*
- There is only a little evil there, but his mouth is full of it.
 - There is **cursing** which he verbalizes against God and men, **deceit** in which he entraps anyone who is off-guard, and **fraud** by which, even in his general business, he robs his neighbors.
- (b) Problems and iniquity (10:7b)
- “Under his tongue is trouble and iniquity” (v. 7b NKJV)*
- (1) **“Under his tongue,”** means that underlying what the wicked says, irrespective of how harmless it seems to be, it is just as the tongue of the serpent, there lies mischief and iniquity, as the poison is hidden under the serpent’s tongue.
- (2) **“Mischief” (KJV) or “trouble.” “Vanity” (KJV) or “Iniquity”.** Both words were briefly defined and explained above. In essence the wicked:
- Causes distress, offenses and injustice to others by what he says.
 - Whatever he says is evil, and is suited to produce trouble and sorrow, as the concealed poison in the mouth of the serpent causes death.
- (3) Much more could be stated but I will close this pointer with three quotes:
- John Trapp
“Such cursing men are cursed men.”
 - Adam Clarke
“What a finished character! A blasphemer, a deceitful man, and a knave.”
(**“knave”**: reprobate, rogue, villain, etc. ... insert mine)
 - Thomas Horne
“He wants no prophet to teach him, no priest to atone for him, no king to conduct for him; he needs neither a Christ to redeem, nor a Spirit to sanctify him; he believes no Providence, adores no Creator, and fears no Judge.”

2. Furtive (Secretive), Subtle and Deceitful (Psa.10:8-10)

Verse 8: Cunning and Crafty in Carrying Out Their Evil Deeds

(a) Sits in lurking places (v. 8a)

“He sits in lurking places of the villages” (v. 8a NKJV)

- (1) These wicked men act as robbers do, who hide themselves in the neighborhood of the villages so that they will be able to make a sudden charge upon the victims. The objective is to seize and rob the inhabitants that live in the villages.
- (2) These men are very cunning and crafty in carrying out their plans.
- They have ways and means to effectively coordinate what they intended, that they may adequately accomplish their objectives.

- Like Esau, that cunning hunter (Gen. 25:27), they (the wicked) ***sit in lurking place, in the secret places and his eyes are secretly set to evil.*** They do so secretly not because they are ashamed or afraid of God but because they (the wicked) don't want their evil objectives to be discovered.
- (3) The wicked have always secretly seek ways and means to trap and hurt the righteous; they are lurking watching for anything to be used to accomplish their evil goals. Note some reference without comment: 1 Sam.18:9; Psa. 37:32; Isa. 29:20; Mark 3:2; Luke 14:1.
- (b) Secret places to attack his victims (v. 8b).
"In the secret places he murders the innocent" (v. 8b NKJV)
- (1) It is from these isolated places that the wicked suddenly attacks those who are unsuspecting, and who have done him no wrong.
- (2) The word ***innocent*** (v. 8) does not mean sinless in the general sense, but that they were innocent in regards to the robbers. They had done them no wrong; they had given the wicked no reason for the attacks on them.
- (3) The following is a quote from Life in the Spirit Study Bible:
"In the secret places he murders the innocent" (Psa. 10:8-10 NKJV). These verses (Psa. 10:8-10), can be applied to those who traffic in drugs, alcohol and abortion, where the result is physical, emotional and spiritual ruin for many.
- *Out of greed (cf. v.3), such people draw the poor, the young and the thoughtless within their nets. Through testimony and advertisement, they cunningly emphasize the pleasure of their products while hiding the tragic suffering that comes as a result of their business (v. 9).*
 - *These wicked individuals are arrogantly oblivious to their moral accountability before God (Vv. 3-4,11, 13); their final end will be disastrous (see Psa. 73). No believer should participate in the promotion of what will harm another human but rather in love, compassion and concern seek to help all others avoid such temptations."*
- (c) Stealthily settled to destroy (v. 8c).
"His eyes are secretly fixed on the helpless" (v. 8c NKJV)
- (1) ***"Privily"*** (KJV) or ***"Secretly"*** (other translations): The Hebrew word means to hide, to conceal, to lay up in private; to hoard, to keep back; to hold back; etc.
- In our text it means to conceal, to lurk in ambush, and the idea is that his eyes will secretly watch, or keep looking out for his prey.
 - He, the wicked, remains concealed but his eyes are attentively observing the movement of those who he intends to rob.
- (2) Without any mercy he targets the ***poor*** (v. 8); those who are distressed, afflicted and defenseless.

- The essence of what is conveyed here is that instead of being a helper of the poor and distressed, he is determined to take every advantage and deprive them of all their rights and comforts.
- **Prov. 30:14 Amplified Bible**
“There is a class of people whose teeth are as swords and whose fangs as knives, to devour the poor from the earth and the needy from among men.”
- The evil desires of men! See also Est. 3:6; Psa. 140:3; Matt. 27:23; John 12:10.

(3) A few quotes by C. H. Spurgeon:

- *“He acts the part of the highwayman, who springs upon the unsuspecting traveler in some desolate part of the road.”*
- *“There are always bad men lying in wait for saints. This is a land of robbers and thieves; let us travel well-armed, for every bush conceals an enemy.”*
- *“There are enemies at our table as well as across the sea. We are never safe, only when the LORD is with us.”*

Verse 9: Cruel and Vicious in Their Conspiracy

(d) Lay in wait secretly (v. 9a)

“He lies in wait secretly, as a lion in his den” (v. 9a NKJV)

(1) The thought presented here is the same as in verse 8, here reference is made to acts displayed to a lion and a hunter.

- **“As a lion in his den”**: As a lion crouches down in his den, ready to spring upon his prey.
- The picture here is that the lion is concealed but on the lookout, and when his prey passes near his den, he suddenly springs upon it and secures it.

(2) This is how the wicked man functions.

- He carefully develops his plans. His purposes are concealed. Along with his plans they are both hidden.
- Whenever that moment of opportunity arises he attacks his victim, who is taken by surprise and has no power of defense or escape.

(3) The wicked are very cruel and barbarous.

- Their malice is against the **innocent** (v. 8), who never provoked; against the **poor** (v. 10), who cannot resist them and over whom it will be no honor to celebrate.
- Those that have power have a duty to protect the **innocent** and provide for the **poor**; however, these wicked men intend to be destroyers of those whom they should be guardians.

(e) Lion-like attitude and victims are lynched and destroyed (v. 9b)

“He lies in wait to catch the poor; He catches the poor when he draws him into his net” (v. 9b NKJV)

- (1) We made reference earlier of the actions of a lion and a hunter; (see v. 9a); we now have a more descriptive presentation of the acts of the hunter.
 - The same method used by a hunter to catch wild beast is implemented by the wicked to entrapped his victims.
 - His actions describe the conduct of a large class of men – men who secretly lay plans of seduction, evil, fraud, and who spring suddenly on their victims when there is no hope of escape (see notes on 8b).
- (2) The wicked hunts for the weak and helpless, their aim is to allure and capture the poor who they hunt like a ravaging beast.
 - They hunt for precious lives and it is God’s people that they are persecuting; against whom the wicked cherishes a deadly hatred because they are God’s.
 - These hunters are under the control of Satan who is the believer’s arch enemy and is as a roaring lion seeking someone to seize upon and destroy.
- (3) This evil hunter is insidious, artful and underhanded (dishonest, deceitful) in his doings; a man who would stoop to any act of deception and treachery to accomplish his purpose.

Verse 10: Corrupt, Hypocritical and callous.

- (f) Crouched to crush his victims (v. 10a)
“So he crouches, he lies low (v. 10a NKJV)
- (1) *“He crouches and humbles himself as beast of prey do that they may get their prey within reach.”*
 - This posture reveals dishonorable spirits of the persecutors who will stoop to anything to achieve their evil objectives, no matter how menial a task is.
 - It also shows their deception by covering their malicious plot with the pretense of meekness, humility and kindness to those they plan to do the greatest harm.
 - Their crouching is not an act of humility but preparation to effectively capture their opponents.
 - (2) Spurgeon notes:
“The lion crouches that he may leap with greater force, and bring down his strong limbs upon his prey.”
- (g) Compassionate-less ... absolutely no mercy (v. 10b)
“That the helpless may fall by his strength (v. 10b)
- (1) ***“That the helpless (poor KJV) may fall:*** The fact is that they do fall by the arm of the persecutor and oppressor who trample them down.
 - (2) ***“By his strength”:*** Under these strong men the poor and unprotected fall, and are crushed to the earth. The unprotected and weak became victims of oppression and robbery.

3. False Hope . . . Crumbling Foundation (Psa. 10:11)

“He has said in his heart, God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see.”

(a) Forgotten (his evil) by God, so he believes (v. 11a)

He has said in his heart, God has forgotten” (v. 11a NKJV)

(1) His practical, habitual feeling is that God has forgotten or that God didn't take an account of earth's activities.

(2) This thought highlighted the murder, oppression and bullying of the wicked and show the great evil behind these evil acts. All along, the wicked cherished the thought that God **has forgotten**, and would **never see** his wickedness against the poor and helpless.

(3) *“This cruel man comforts himself with the idea that God is blind, or at least, forgetful: a fond and foolish fancy indeed.”* (Spurgeon)

(b) Failed to be noticed by God, he assumed (v. 11b)

“. . . He hides His face; He will never see.” (v. 11b NKJV)

(1) **“He hides his face”**: His vain assumption was that God has hidden his face; that is, He does not look on what is occurring.

(2) **“He will never see”**: That is, God will never see what is done.

- It cannot be supposed that any man would deliberately say either that the memory of God has failed, or that He will not see what was done upon the earth, but the meaning is, that this is the practical feeling of the wicked man and he acts as if such was a reality.
- When his own conscience rebuked him with the consequences of his heinous acts and ask how he would answer to the righteous judge of heaven and earth, he turned it off by responding: *“God has forsaken the earth” (Ezek. 8:12; 9:9). This is a blasphemous reproach!*

(3) *“. . . the wicked man thinks he can conceal his evil deeds from God, that God will not see him. He proudly overlooks God's omniscience, the fact that He sees and know all (Prov. 15:3; Job 34:21; Jer. 16:17).” (POSB)*

Psalm 10:12-18 will be discussed in Part B

DO NOT JUST READ THE BIBLE STUDY AND OBEY IT

2 Tim 2:15 NKJV: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 Tim. 3:16-17 NKJV

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

PSALM 10 PART A
Review Questions

1. List and explain the two parts in which Psalm 10 is divided.

2. Explain the usage of: (a) *“stand”* (b) *“afar off”* (c) *“hide”*; as used in 10:1.

3. Complete by choosing the correct answer:
“It is during those times when we feel alone or oppressed that we need to keep praying,
_____ (1
Thess. 5:17; Matt. 7:7-8; Luke 18:2-8; etc.)

4. What is the root cause why the wicked persecutes the poor?

5. As used in 10:2, what does the word *poor* means?

6. Complete the following:

"No man could have a right to (a) _____ if the (b) _____ and wrong which he had (c) _____ for others should be (d) _____ upon (e) _____. The truth is, if this should happen in all (f) _____, there is no doubt it would (g) _____ save men from wrong."

7. Briefly explain: ". . . **and renounces the LORD.**" (10:3c).

8. (a) What two things are noted about the prevailing feelings of the sinner about God ... as noted in 10:4? (b) List four ways pride prevents the wicked from seeking God.

9. Briefly explain the following phrases used in 10:6: (a) "**he has said**", (b) "**in his heart**", (c) "**I shall not be moved.**"

10. Complete the following:

“It is a (a) _____ feeling among (b) _____ men that they can make (c) _____ their (d) _____ and positions and (e) _____ and that nothing will occur to (f) _____ them to the (g) _____ condition of others.”

11. Complete by choosing the correct answer:

“Undoubtedly, the character of the wicked _____.”

- (a) is seen in their love.
- (b) manifest itself in their conduct.
- (c) manifest itself in their humility.
- (d) manifest itself in their fears.

12. What five evil things are noted in 10:7 about the wicked’s boastings and disrespectful practices? (Briefly)

13. What “*under his tongue*” means, as used in 10:7b?

14. (a) Briefly note why the wicked remain in secret places (see v. 8b). (b) Briefly explain *innocent* as used in 10:8b.

15. (a) Answer True or False. (b) Explain your answer.

“The wicked crouches, he lies low’ (10:10a). This demonstrates his humility and willingness to be of help to the poor.”
