

Verses 11-12 of Psalm 9 return to the theme of verses 1-2. David wants to praise God.

Rejoicing

¹¹*Sing praises to Yahweh, who sits enthroned in Zion!*

Tell among the peoples his deeds!

¹²*For he who executes justice on crimes of bloodshed is mindful of them; he does not forget the cry of the afflicted.*

• *We rejoice in what we know about the future*

• *Worldwide justice is coming*

• *The gospel brings justice*

• *Meanwhile God hears the cries of his people*

We live in a very violent world. Our television sets tell us every day of murders and genocides and killings of one kind or another. We ask ourselves, will it ever end? This is the point in which we rejoice in what we know about the future. The world struggles with its own violence. It draws up programmes to bring criminals to justice. They do not work as well as we would like. But this is the very point where we have to learn to live upon God's righteousness. It is coming. The judge of all the world will do what is right. Crimes of bloodshed will be handled by the One who executes justice. Until that day comes we learn to live on God, trust in that he will handle our own case and that worldwide justice is coming. Precisely how it will all work out we do not know. We are waiting to see how much will be achieved by the preaching of the gospel before Jesus comes. One thing is sure. Justice follows the preaching of the gospel to the nations. There will be no justice in this world except as the follow-up of the preaching of the gospel. The best thing we can do to bring justice into our world is to proclaim the message of salvation.

Meanwhile God handles the lives of his people and still is able to hear the cries of the afflicted.

Structure

We can see now that the psalm has an A-B-C-D-C-B-A structure in verses 1-12.

• *Forwards and backwards*

- A. Joyful gratitude, 9:1-2
- B. Defeated enemies, 9:3
- C. A just decision, 9:4
- D. Destruction, 9:5-6
- C. A just decision, 9:7-8
- B. Defeated enemies, 9:9-10
- A. Joyful gratitude, 9:11-12

• *Prayer for a foretaste of the future*

David's conviction that one day evil and wickedness of every kind will be exterminated leads him to pray. If wickedness is to be wiped out one day then we can pray that a foretaste of the future may be given to us even now. In our praying we may request that wickedness might experience its downfall even at the present time.

Verses 13-20 again have a forwards and backwards structure.

- Help me now - David prays 9:13-14
- The extermination of evil is expected 9:15-17
- The oppressed will indeed survive 9:18
- Back to praying! 9:19-20

Praying

It can be seen that the praying of verses 13-20 is based upon the rejoicing of verses 1-12.

Help me now - David prays

• *Help me now*

¹³*Be gracious to me, O Lord!*

See my affliction from those who hate me,

Lift me up from the gates of death.

¹⁴*Do it so that I may publicly tell of all your wonders.*

In the gates of the daughter Zion I shall rejoice in your salvation.

• Asking for God's mercy and grace

David asks that grace may be shown to him. When we pray we are basing our hopes for answered prayer on God's grace. We have no right to pray in our own name – although sometimes David will mention the justice of his requests not as a person pleading his own righteousness but as someone who knows the kingdom he is serving is a righteous one. For God's kingdom we plead for what is right; for ourselves we plead for God's mercy and God's grace.

• Extreme troubles

Even the most extreme troubles can be taken to God. David was in danger of losing his life. He reckons he is close to the gates of death. But God can rescue us from every kind of calamity, the little ones which nag us every day, and the big ones which bring us close to the gates of death.

• Praise – a reason for God to answer prayers

David uses praise as a reason for having his prayers answered. Praying people in the Bible often argue with God, giving him reasons why he must answer their prayers. One reason that is given is that God will get glory if he answers their request. David says to God: hear my prayers because then I shall be able to 'publicly tell of all your wonders'. ¹ Praying people want God to be glorified and they say so as they pray. As in the Lord's prayer their first request is: hallowed by your name!

¹ 9:14

• The extermination of evil is expected

The extermination of evil is expected

¹⁵The nations have sunk in the pit that they made; in the trap which they hid, their own foot has been caught.
¹⁶Yahweh has made himself known; He has achieved justice. By the work of their own hands the wicked are caught. Higgaion. Selah.
¹⁷The wicked shall go to Sheol, all the nations that forget God.

• A hint of judgement beyond the grave

Much of the thought of judgement in the Old Testament is concerned with **this** world, but there are occasional hints ¹ that the same principles will apply **beyond** the grave. Wickedness will one day be abolished. Death itself will be thrown into the lake of fire. Every kind of wickedness will be wiped out. The new heavens and new earth will contain memories of God's justice (the smoke of their torment which ascends for ever) but the horrors of bloodshed and every kind of wickedness will be exterminated for ever.

¹ like 9:17a

• The oppressed will indeed survive

The oppressed will indeed survive

¹⁸For the needy shall not always be forgotten, nor the hope of the poor perish forever.

The godly poor - that is the people of God - will eventually be raised to glory and will abide for ever. The rich may be included but only if they identify with God's people, the godly poor.

¹ see 1 Corinthians 1:27-29; James 2:5

• Back to praying

Back to praying!

¹⁹Yahweh, arise! Let not man triumph! Let the nations be judged before you!
²⁰Yahweh, put them in fear, O Lord! Let the nations know that they are but men! Selah



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