

Psalm 10 continues Psalm 9 (there is no new heading for Psalm 10). It develops the prayer of 9:13-20 only now the prayer is much more intense.

Trouble now

Long-term hope may be contrasted with immediate trouble. David's prayer begins:

¹*Why, O Lord, do you stand afar off?
Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?*

• *Powerful evil and wickedness*

It is one thing to believe in the eventual abolition of evil, but right now evil and wicked may be very powerful and very near at hand. God, on the other hand, may seem distant and uninvolved. In such a time David prays.

The problem faced fully and thoroughly

David faces the problem fully and thoroughly. Verse 2 is a summary of the entire psalm.

²*In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the poor;
let them be caught in the schemes that they have devised.*

• *David thinks socially and so should Christians*

The injustice of life is the contrast between the powerful and the weak, the rich and the poor. Generally the rich and the poor tend to drift apart, with the rich becoming ever more oppressive and the poor becoming ever more downtrodden. Our world is very concerned (or so it says) about the poverty that grips vast populations. The few have the many as their servants! We notice that David thinks very socially. He is God's king and so is responsible for the welfare of the people under his care. We who are Christians are in much the same position; we reign and rule in the Lord Jesus Christ. We should use our 'kingship' for the blessing of others and for bringing to them the good news - spiritual and social - of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(i) The plans of the wicked to get rich

David holds the sheer facts before himself. Verse 3 begins to develop the thought of what these wealthy and arrogant people are like in their inner character.

(i) They like to talk to each other of their plans to get rich.

^{3a}*For the wicked boasts of his inner desires...;*

(ii) The wicked have no interest in God

(ii) They have no interest in the God of the Bible

³*For the wicked boasts of his inner desires;
the person who is greedy for gain curses and despises
Yahweh.*

(iii) The wealthy wicked too busy with his own concerns

God expects us to seek him, but
(iii) the wealthy wicked is too busy with his own concerns.

*For the wicked person in his haughty pride does not seek
God.*

He may believe in God but he acts as if God does not exist.

⁴*All his thoughts are 'There is no God!'*

(iv) He does not consider that judgement will ever come upon him

(iv) He thinks that no kind of judgement will ever come upon him.

⁵*His ways stand secure at all times;
your judgements are far above, out of his sight;
as for his enemies - he scorns them.*

⁶*He says in his heart, 'I will never be shaken;
in generation after generation there will be no trouble.*

Maybe this wealthy but arrogant man is healthy and successful at the moment, and he feels that he is going to go on in what he is doing for the rest of his life. God is irrelevant - he believes. It is as if He lives up in the sky somewhere and is not likely to do anything about wickedness.

(v) His talk is oppressive

(v) His talk is oppressive.

⁷His mouth is filled with cursing and deceit and oppression; under his tongue are mischief and iniquity.

(vi) He plans deliberately to exploit others

(vi) His plans to exploit other people are quite deliberate.

*⁸His sits in hiding places in the villages; in places where he cannot be seen he murders the innocent; his eyes secretly watch for the helpless victim.
⁹He creeps around in his hiding place like a lion in his lair; he creeps around in order to seize the poor person; he seizes the poor by pulling him into his net.
¹⁰He creeps along, crouching down and the victim falls by the wicked man's power.*

(vii) He talks as if God is unconcerned about righteousness

(vii) He talks to himself as if God is unconcerned about righteousness.

¹¹The wicked person says in his heart, 'God has forgotten; he has hidden his face; he never looks at what is happening'.

David's Prayer

The prayer of God's righteous King will eventually bring a change. David is praying. Let us look at the character of his prayer.

(i) He asks God to call the wicked to account

(i) He asks God to call to account the oppressive rich and exalt the humble poor as they believe in God's salvation.

*¹²Yahweh, arise! O God, lift up your hand! Do not forget the afflicted!
¹³Why do the wicked renounce God, and say in their hearts, 'You will not call us to account'?*

(ii) He is confident that God is taking note

(ii) He is quite sure that God is already taking note of his prayers.

You have seen! For you do look upon misery and vexation that you may repay it by your powerful hand.

(iii) A message of hope

(iii) He has a message of hope for the poor.

¹⁴The helpless person leaves himself with you; you are the helper of the fatherless.

(iv) A word of warning

(iv) He has a word of warning for the oppressive rich.

¹⁵Break the arm of the wicked and evildoer; call his wickedness to account until there is no more to be found.

(v) He is sure that it will happen

(v) He is sure that it will happen.

*¹⁶Yahweh is king forever and ever; the nations will certainly perish from his land.
¹⁷Yahweh, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear
¹⁸working justice for the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may terrorize people no more.*

Some Conclusions

Let us draw some conclusions.

(i) The basic injustice of life

(i) The basic injustice of life is the contrast between the powerful and the weak, the rich and the poor. This is a worldwide phenomenon. It has always been there and today it is more obvious than ever.

(ii) The gospel and society

(ii) It is obvious that the biblical message intertwines personal salvation with the state of society. Where the gospel is weak the polarity between rich and poor will be strong. Where the gospel is strong in society the

(iii) *God's king and his rule in society*

God's children -

(iv) *Work to correct society's imbalances*

(v) *Have a message of hope for the poor*

(vi) *Know that justice is on the way*

(vii) *Know that the gospel brings the presence of the future*

gulf is lessened. The poor are exalted. The rich are humbled and become more generous, using their wealth wisely and rightly.

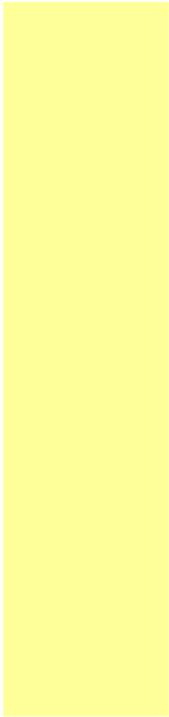
(iii) God's king is our Lord Jesus Christ. He was foreshadowed by King David. He exercises his kingship today in and through his people. God's children inherit the kingship; they rule and reign in Christ; they are already by the Holy Spirit enthroned in heavenly places.

(iv) God's children preach and work and pray for the correction of the imbalances in society. They resist the rich and when they become rich they are humble people themselves.

(v) God's children have a message of hope for the poor. 'The helpless person leaves himself with you...!'

(vi) God's children know that justice is on its way and that wickedness is destined to be abolished.

(vii) God's children also know that the gospel brings 'the presence of the future'. Where the Lord Jesus Christ reigns and his forgiveness and spiritual power is experienced, the 'just society' of the future glorified world begins to show itself in the here-and-now. When we preach the gospel the transformation of society is a side-effect and David's vision of God's just king begins to be fulfilled. When Jesus comes in glory the programme will come to its perfect fulfilment.



	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)</i> books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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