

May 21st, 2020 Daily Devotional:

Psalm 10

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

2 In arrogance the wicked persecute the poor— let them be caught in the schemes they have devised.

3 For the wicked boast of the desires of their heart, those greedy for gain curse and renounce the Lord.

4 In the pride of their countenance the wicked say, “God will not seek it out”; all their thoughts are, “There is no God.”

5 Their ways prosper at all times; your judgments are on high, out of their sight; as for their foes, they scoff at them.

6 They think in their heart, “We shall not be moved; throughout all generations we shall not meet adversity.”

7 Their mouths are filled with cursing and deceit and oppression; under their tongues are mischief and iniquity.

8 They sit in ambush in the villages; in hiding places they murder the innocent. Their eyes stealthily watch for the helpless;

9 they lurk in secret like a lion in its covert; they lurk that they may seize the poor; they seize the poor and drag them off in their net.

10 They stoop, they crouch, and the helpless fall by their might.

11 They think in their heart, “God has forgotten, he has hidden his face, he will never see it.”

12 Rise up, O Lord; O God, lift up your hand; do not forget the oppressed.

13 Why do the wicked renounce God, and say in their hearts, “You will not call us to account”?

14 But you do see! Indeed you note trouble and grief, that you may take it into your hands; the helpless commit themselves to you; you have been the helper of the orphan.

15 Break the arm of the wicked and evildoers; seek out their wickedness until you find none.

16 The Lord is king forever and ever; the nations shall perish from his land.

17 O Lord, you will hear the desire of the meek; you will strengthen their heart, you will incline your ear

18 to do justice for the orphan and the oppressed, so that those from earth may strike terror no more.

Commentator and Old Testament scholar James May says this about Psalm 10:

“On behalf of themselves as the lowly and on behalf of the lowly with whom they have been taught to identify, the congregation voices the plea, “Arise, O Lord.” The cry is an ancient rubric that in early Israel was addressed to the ark when it was brought out to lead the army in battle against the enemies of the people. Now the congregation uses it to pray for God’s intervention in the world. They want the nations to learn that they are only ‘enosh [mortal, of the earth, created, totally human and not divine], to experience the fear of the Lord....They want the nations to discover that their schemes and strategies and practices are self-destructive. They want to live in a land and world from which arrogant nationalism has vanished. They want to live in a world determined by the justice of God’s reign. ‘Let not ‘enosh prevail!’ ‘Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.’ Let all the nations live as the lowly, in identity with the lowly.”

James L. Mays, *Psalms (Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, 1994)*, 74-75.

Let us pray:

Timeless and mysterious God, we cannot begin to understand your ways, but we trust your justice and your mercy. Help us to face the unbelief and injustice in our day with strength from your Holy Spirit and confidence in your ultimate redemption. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

(Prayer from *Psalms for All Seasons: A Complete Psalter for Worship*)