

## The Book of Psalms

### Psalms 9-10(Part II)

#### Opening Prayer

#### ***Read Psalms 9-10***

#### Overview

Please review the overview given in Part I of the study on Psalms 9 and 10. There you will find the reasons for taking these psalms together as one.

The major theme of the combined psalm could be summarized as: “The powerful Lord is the champion of the poor and oppressed”. This theme begins in the combined psalm as a song of praise, but by the end of the combined psalm it is a lament for the Lord to act. Also take note of the possible historical background given in Part I.

#### Structure

The general theme of the combined psalm is “the powerful Lord is the champion of the poor and oppressed.” With that in mind the combined psalm may be broken down as follows:

1. Giving thanks to God (9:1-2)
2. God’s righteous judgment to the nations (9:3-6)
3. God’s righteous rule of the world and refuge of the oppressed (9:7-10)
4. Singing the praises of God enthroned in Zion (9:11-14)
5. The self-entrapment of the nations and God’s care of the needy (9:15-20)
6. The arrogance of the wicked (10:1-11)
7. Prayer for God’s intervention on behalf of the afflicted (10:12-18)

*(Note that numbers 1-3 of this outline were addressed in Part I of the study of Psalms 9 and 10, thus our study picks up with part 4 of the structure outline.)*

#### Singing the Praises of God enthroned in Zion (9:11-14)

:11 - From the very beginning God’s people have been a people who sing to Him. God even commands it as He does here in Psalm 9. Singing is what we were created to do. As God commands singing, we must acknowledge that singing cares not only for our spiritual health, but there are immense physical benefits to it as well. Such as:

1. Improves our posture
2. Gives us a workout
3. Improves our mental outlook
4. Raises mental awareness

These are just a few of the benefits of singing. It shouldn't surprise us that our spiritual, mental, and physical well-being are so closely connected and that God provides activities and means for all of them to grow at the same time.

:12 - “avenges bloodshed” or “requires blood” – This is both a warning to those who take life and an exhortation for those afflicted who seek payment. **Read Genesis 9:5-6.** God is the giver of life and should be ended only by Him and those who represent Him.

*In what ways has life become so cheap in our world?*

*How have things like assisted suicide and abortion contributed to the cheapening of life? What other things do this as well?*

:13-14 – The psalmist calls for the Lord who delivers the poor and afflicted to deliver them even beyond death. Notice that the psalmist desires to be delivered from the “gates of death” and to the “gates of the daughters of Zion”. In other words from the netherworld of death to the place of God's presence. There is also the notion that even after death we gather to sing praises to God. This shows the remarkable unity of the doctrine of heaven in Scripture. **Compare with Revelation 4 and 5.**

*In what part of our worship service do we acknowledge that we continue our worship of God in heaven?*

### The Self-Entrapment of the Nation and God's Care of the Needy (9:15-20)

:15-16 – Three times in these verses is the idea of the wicked being caught up in their own devices laid out. Yet, the passage also seems to indicate that this being caught up is also the Lord “making Himself known.” God allows and uses the natural consequences of our actions to teach and discipline us.

- “higgaion Selah” – Here the typical Selah is accompanied by another musical term which probably means “meditatively” or “softly”.

:17-18 – Verses 17 and 18 play against one another. 17 tells what happens to those who are against God and do not acknowledge Him. Verse 18 tells what happens to those who hope in the Lord.

*How can this idea help us when the wicked seem to prosper?*

:19-20 – This notion of God’s presence as that which judges and executes judgment is a repeated notion in the psalms. We saw it earlier in **Psalm 7:6**. We see it also in **Number 10:35**, where the Ark of the Covenant goes before the Israelites and thwarts their enemies.

- The psalmist calls for God to show his enemies their own mortality. That they are “but men”. Pride goeth before the fall. We see this time and again in the enemies of Israel in the Old Testament. (ie Goliath)

*What is the difference between the fear that the psalmist calls for the enemies of God to have and the fear that believers should have?*

(Note the “Selah” at the end of Psalm 9 indicating that a continuation is intended)

### The Arrogance of the Wicked (10:1-11)

:1 - God can seem removed from our “times of trouble”. He may appear at times to simply be standing afar off or idly by. Yet a common theme of the psalm is that we “wait for the Lord”. **Read Psalm 27:13-14; 33:20-22**

*Why might we be a people with less patience than people of old?*

*What might waiting actually do for us?*

:2 - Here we see yet more evidence that Psalms 9 and 10 were meant to be one psalm. Compare this verse with Psalm 9:15-16.

:3-4 - This same type of wicked person is called a fool in both **Psalm 14:1 and Psalm 53:1**. Anyone who denies God’s existence is a fool because he denies what is plainly evident in the world around him. The world itself is evidence that God exists. **Read Romans 1:20**

*How does the existence of the world prove God’s existence?*

:5-11 – These verses are an ongoing description of the despicable acts of the wicked against the poor and afflicted. These verses highlight how devious, cunning, and truly wicked the person is. While not going through verse by verse all of the tricks of the wicked, let’s note these three:

1. He snorts at God’s judgments (10:5)
2. He operates from the shadows (10:8)
3. He recruits others to his dark deeds (10:10)

### Prayer for God’s Intervention on Behalf of the Afflicted (10:12-18)

:12 - The call for God’s intervention that was given in 9:19 is repeated here and specified on behalf of the afflicted. Often a biblical writer will invoke God’s hand to be lifted as a blessing, but here the phrase is best understood as judgment. The same kind of use of the phrase occurs in **2 Samuel 20:21**.

:13 - Here the ignorance of the wicked is repeated. The wicked had already convinced himself that God would not see his wickedness. (9:12) The notion is repeated here as a way to set up verses 14-15.

:14-15 – Now the psalmist declares the opposite of what the wicked hoped for. God does see what the wicked have done and will act. The psalmist calls for the eradication of the wickedness, “until you find none”.

:16-18 – These verses serve almost as a doxology. They are an acknowledgment of what God has already done. They praise His name and speak of the deliverance as an accomplished act. Notice how the psalmist relies on what God has done to be confident of what God will do. (10:17)

*How does God’s past faithfulness give us confidence in our prayer life?*

### Summary

Taken as a combined psalm, this is the longest psalm we have covered in this series. Yet its unity is easy to see. The Lord remains the hope for the poor and afflicted. The wicked may appear to prosper at times, but in the end the Lord is faithful and delivers us.

Closing Prayer