

# Psalms – A Tale of Two Questions

*Psalm 10 ESV*

- [1] *Why, O LORD, do you stand far away?  
Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?*
- [2] *In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the poor;  
let them be caught in the schemes that they have devised.*
- [3] *For the wicked boasts of the desires of his soul,  
and the one greedy for gain curses and renounces the LORD.*
- [4] *In the pride of his face the wicked does not seek him;  
all his thoughts are, "There is no God."*
- [5] *His ways prosper at all times;  
your judgments are on high, out of his sight;  
as for all his foes, he puffs at them.*
- [6] *He says in his heart, "I shall not be moved;  
throughout all generations I shall not meet adversity."*
- [7] *His mouth is filled with cursing and deceit and oppression;  
under his tongue are mischief and iniquity.*
- [8] *He sits in ambush in the villages;  
in hiding places he murders the innocent.  
His eyes stealthily watch for the helpless;*
- [9] *he lurks in ambush like a lion in his thicket;  
he lurks that he may seize the poor;  
he seizes the poor when he draws him into his net.*
- [10] *The helpless are crushed, sink down,  
and fall by his might.*
- [11] *He says in his heart, "God has forgotten,  
he has hidden his face, he will never see it."*
- [12] *Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up your hand;  
forget not the afflicted.*
- [13] *Why does the wicked renounce God  
and say in his heart, "You will not call to account"?*
- [14] *But you do see, for you note mischief and vexation,  
that you may take it into your hands;  
to you the helpless commits himself;  
you have been the helper of the fatherless.*
- [15] *Break the arm of the wicked and evildoer;  
call his wickedness to account till you find none.*
- [16] *The LORD is king forever and ever;  
the nations perish from his land.*
- [17] *O LORD, you hear the desire of the afflicted;  
you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear*
- [18] *to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed,  
so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.*

## Intro

Show of Hands → B 9-10

Address the newcomers and nons

- ↳ we have questions too!
- ↳ we have struggles too!

Then you ask: Why, O LORD, do you stand far away? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?

## A Reason for the Questions – v2-11

Two Things: The Wicked and Their Actions

- LAST WEEK ⇒ God faithfully and forcefully reigns
- What about when it doesn't FEEL like he is reigning and it doesn't LOOK like he is reigning?

- school friends treat you terribly + betray you
- when your children reject all you believe in
- when bodily sickness is your most constant companion
- when depression and despair are the words that best sum up your mental state

★ - protesters ⇒ recognize their is a problem... don't dismiss

## Describing the Wicked – v2-6

- Pride
  - [2] In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the poor;  
let them be caught in the schemes that they have devised.
  - [3] For the wicked boasts of the desires of his soul,  
→ not smug/internal but belligerent/external
- Insolence (insulting confidence) and Impiety (no reverence and respect)
  - and the one greedy for gain curses and renounces the LORD.
  - [4] In the pride of his face the wicked does not seek him;  
all his thoughts are, "There is no God."
- Apparent Prosperity
  - [5] His ways prosper at all times;
- Apparent Invulnerability
  - your judgments are on high, out of his sight;  
as for all his foes, he puffs at them.
  - [6] He says in his heart, "I shall not be moved;  
throughout all generations I shall not meet adversity."

existence and  
↳ the characteristics of the wicked undermine our sense of God's care + closeness

## Describing Their Actions – v7-11

- Hostile Speech

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

- Hidden Threats

*[8] He sits in ambush in the villages;  
in hiding places he murders the innocent.*

*His eyes stealthily watch for the helpless;*

*[9] he lurks in ambush like a lion in his thicket;*

- Deadly Intent

*he lurks that he may seize the poor;*

*he seizes the poor when he draws him into his net.] – HUNTER*

*[10] The helpless are crushed, sink down,  
and fall by his might.*

*[11] He says in his heart, "God has forgotten,  
he has hidden his face, he will never see it."*

## A Question for God – v1

*[1] Why, O LORD, do you stand far away?*

*Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?*

- Is this the question of the faithful?
- Are the Psalms instructing that this is an appropriate question?
- Yes. Because it is a question asked in faith!
- Do you question a being that cannot hear you? No. It is assumed God is listening.
- Do you question a being who is not near you? No. It is assumed God is near enough to hear.
- As you read the whole psalm, it is clear these questions are asked as a prompt; it is expected God will act.

*What causes you to question God's care + closeness?*

Do you question God with faith?

*⇒ we see the psalmist's faith in the request that follows*

A Prayer Request – v12  $\Rightarrow$  asking for involvement vs. asking for information (faith)  
*[12] Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up your hand;  
 forget not the afflicted.*

- A call for divine intervention, even hostility against the wicked lift your hand

Do you ask for an answer to your own question? *Do you just want information or do you want involvement?*

A Response – v14

*[14] But you do see, for you note mischief and vexation,  
 that you may take it into your hands;  
 to you the helpless commits himself;  
 you have been the helper of the fatherless.*

- God does see
- God does intervene
- This is a declaration of faith in God and an objection to the words of the wicked

Do you declare truth in regards to your own question?

*\* Declare the truth you know in regards to the questions you ask!  
 \* Do you realize that God is not obvious to all people ... His love, and  
 care need to be explained !!*

A Question for Men – v13

*[13] Why does the wicked renounce God  
 and say in his heart, "You will not call to account"?*

- A question based on God's honour and the fame of his name
- Why does the wicked revile God? Why does the sin of the wicked go unchecked?

A Request – v15

*[15] Break the arm of the wicked and evildoer;  
 call his wickedness to account till you find none.*

- Breaking the arm = breaking the power = destroy their ability to destroy
- ~~Seek~~ <sup>Search</sup> and destroy  $\rightarrow$  Vietnam War/helicopter/withdraw – not fortify
- Is this appropriate for the NT believer? It is exactly what we are saying when we say "Come Lord Jesus!"

A Response – v16-18

*[16] The LORD is king forever and ever;  
the nations perish from his land.*

*[17] O LORD, you hear the desire of the afflicted;  
you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear*

*[18] to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed,  
so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.*

- Absolute confidence in the absolute sovereign
- Wicked is temporary, the King is forever
- This definitely has a future orientation to it
- God hears and God vindicates those in need!

Are you in need? Oppressed? Afflicted?

God reigns. God hears. God strengthens. God will be just. God will destroy that which terrifies.

MAIN IDEA: THOUGH THE WICKED APPEAR TO PROSPER IN THEIR WICKEDNESS, THOUGH THEY SEEM TO SIN WITHOUT RESTRAINT AGAINST THE VULNERABLE AND OPPRESSED, THE LORD WHO IS THE ETERNAL KING SEES THEIR HEART AND ACTIONS AND THE LORD WILL JUDGE THEM. THEREFORE, THE FAITHFUL HAVE GOOD CAUSE TO PRAY FOR DELIVERANCE AND JUDGMENT.

Where do we see Christ?

The wicked man is one of them

The wicked one in v2-11 describes someone nearby, someone observable, someone in relational closeness

The wicked man <sup>is</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>one of</sup> us

*Romans 3:9-18 ESV*

*[9] What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, [10] as it is written:*

*"None is righteous, no, not one;*

*[11] no one understands;  
no one seeks for God.*

*[12] All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;  
no one does good,  
not even one."*

*[13] "Their throat is an open grave;  
they use their tongues to deceive."*

*"The venom of asps is under their lips."*

*[14] "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness."*

*[15] "Their feet are swift to shed blood;*

*[16] in their paths are ruin and misery,*

*[17] and the way of peace they have not known."*

*[18] "There is no fear of God before their eyes."*

→ Paul uses a phrase from Ps10 to prove his point that All are wicked!

*You and I are the wicked one!!!*

So, the psalmist's prayer request to God about us is, "Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up your hand against you and I; [15] Break the arm of you and I...call their wickedness to account till you find none."

Does God answer that prayer? Does God arise against us, deal with us, call our sin to account till there is none?

He does ... through Christ!

**2 Corinthians 5:21 ESV** [21] For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**1 Peter 2:24 ESV** [24] He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree ...

*What is the tale of two questions? THE GOSPEL*

*Believers → this is how you answer the questions!*

*Non-s → there is an answer for us about the nature of God, his care, sin*