

God in Hiding

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 09 June 2024

Preacher: Jonathan Chancey

[0 : 0 0] Amen. Well, let's open up our Bibles this morning to the Book of Psalms. Book of Psalms. We are diving into our summer series in the Book of Psalms this morning, beginning again. We preached Psalms chapters 1 through 9 last summer, and we're beginning in chapter 10 this summer. And for the next 11 weeks, we'll be walking through the Book of Psalms, chapters 10 through 20. We paused our series in Daniel. We were preaching Daniel chapter 1 through 6, and we'll pick that up, Lord willing, in the fall. But this morning, we begin with Psalm chapter 10. So when you found that in your Bibles, if you would, let's stand together in honor of God's Word as I read Psalm chapter 10.

Why, O Lord, do you stand far away? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble? In arrogance, the wicked hotly pursue the poor. Let them be caught in the schemes that they have devised.

For the wicked boasts of the desires of his soul, and the one greedy for gain curses and renounces the Lord. In the pride of his face, the wicked does not seek him. All his thoughts are, there is no God. His ways prosper at all times. Your judgments are on high, out of his sight. As for all his foes, he puffs at them. He says in his heart, I shall not be moved. Throughout all generations, I shall not meet adversity. His mouth is filled with cursing and deceit and oppression. Under his tongue are mischief and iniquity. He sits in ambush in the villages. In hiding places, he murders the innocent.

His eyes stealthily watch for the helpless. 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. The helpless are crushed, sink down, and fall by his might. He says in his heart, God has forgotten. He has hidden his face. He will never see it. Arise, O Lord. O God, lift up your hand. Forget not the afflicted.

Why does the wicked renounce God and say in his heart, you will not call to account? But you do see, for you note mischief and vexation, that you may take it into your hands.

[2 : 3 8] To you, the helpless commits himself. You have been the helper of the fatherless. Break the arm of the wicked and the evildoer. Call his wickedness to account until you find none.

The Lord is king forever and ever. The nations perish from his land. O Lord, you hear the desire of the afflicted. You will strengthen their heart. You will incline your ear to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more. Lord, we thank you again for your good and holy word. And we pray for ears to hear it and hearts to receive it and to understand it. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

You may be seated. You may have heard and seen a missions organization in the news over the past few weeks called Missions in Haiti, Inc.

And the website for Missions in Haiti, Inc. says that its goal as an organization is to see the gospel of Christ make a difference in the lives of Haiti's young people. And so the organization, it seeks specifically to share the gospel with the youth in Haiti because as they said on their website, they said although the entire nation is steeped in poverty, the children suffer the worst.

Thousands are malnourished, uneducated, and headed for hopeless lives apart from Christ. That's the situation in Haiti. The organization has started a home called the House of Compassion that houses 18 boys and 18 girls through their schooling age all the way until they are independent and able to provide for themselves.

[4 : 25] They've started another boys' home that has 22 young boys there cared for, along with a church that they've established there in Haiti and a school with over 240 students, all with the goal of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ and the love of Jesus Christ with the young and the weak and the vulnerable there in Haiti.

That's what Christians do. That's what God has done for us in Christ. And so we share that heart of compassion for the weak. But if you saw them in the news, then you know that they weren't in the news for the incredible work that they've been doing.

They were in the news because three of their leaders, Davy and Natalie Lloyd, age 23 and 21, as well as Jude Montice, the country's director for Missions in Haiti, Inc., were ambushed as they left their church and eventually were gunned down and murdered by a gang.

And the sad truth is that this is the world that we live in. The world that we live in is broken and it's cursed by sin.

And events like this, like what happened in Haiti, are commonplace. They happen every day all over the globe. And we know this. We know that this happens. But even still, when we hear things like this, we have to ask, why does this happen?

[5 : 52] And our heart feels the injustice of situations like this. And we want to cry out, God, that's not fair. God, don't you see?

God, don't you care? Where is God when things like this happen? Where is God when the wicked attack?

Does he not see what's happening here? Why does he not step in and act and make things right? Well, thankfully, none of us in the room, as far as I'm aware, have experienced that level of attack and injustice.

But I'd be willing to bet that all of us on some level have seen or experienced some sort of injustice. You know what unfair feels like, don't you?

And maybe you've been taken advantage of or treated unfairly. Maybe you've been hurt and you feel like you did nothing to deserve it. All of us in the world that we live in have come in close contact with wickedness.

[6 : 59] And if you've ever asked these questions, God, where are you? God, why don't you act? God, do you care? God, do you see? God, are you hearing my prayers?

If you've ever asked these questions, well, guess what? You have a lot in common with King David here in Psalm chapter 10. In fact, this entire section of Psalms that we're beginning this morning, Psalms chapter 10 through 14, they give us an up close and personal view into the lives of the wicked.

And they describe for us what wickedness looks like here in our world. And it gives us the response of the righteous to the wicked as well as God's response to the wicked.

Here in Psalm chapter 10, David shows us the response of the king to the actions of the wicked. And we're going to see that response in three parts here this morning. If you're taking notes, this helps you to follow along.

We see three responses here to the wicked. We have the question in verse 1. We have the case in verses 2 through 11. And lastly, we'll see the confidence in verses 12 through 18.

[8 : 09] The question, the case, and the confidence. First, verse 1, it gives us the question. It really is two questions, isn't it? Look there to verse 1. David is looking out at the actions of the wicked, and we'll see exactly what those actions were here in just a moment.

But he looks out at the actions of the wicked, and he calls out to God, God, why are you not doing something about this? God, where are you? And sometimes when we see the wickedness in the world, we want to cry out, why is it that the wicked seem to be able to do whatever it is they want to do, and they prosper?

Why is it that the wicked get to take advantage of the poor and the vulnerable? Why is it that the wicked seem to run rampant, and God doesn't seem to do anything about it?

They don't suffer any sort of consequence. Why is it that the wicked seem to prosper while the righteous seem to suffer? But you know, it's interesting here, the questions David asks.

He doesn't ever ask why the wicked do what they do. That question never crosses his mind. He understands that the wicked are wicked. He doesn't need anybody to explain why the wicked act wickedly.

[9 : 33] His questions, they're directed to the Lord. You see this too, don't you? You know, aren't you seeing the same thing that I'm seeing? So why does it seem as if you've hidden yourself?

Why do you stand far away while the wicked go and they do whatever they want to do? You know, at first glance, as we read this, these questions, they seem on the surface like they might be offensive to the Lord or irreverent to ask these questions.

But really, what I want you to see here is that these questions are rooted in what David knows and believes to be true about God and his character.

David knows that God is just, so therefore, why is he letting all of this slide? David knows that God sees all. He knows that he's sovereign, so therefore, why does it seem like God has hidden himself?

David knows that God is good, so therefore, he asks God, God, where are you? See, these questions, they aren't attacks on God's character. These questions, these are questions of faith.

[10 : 45] These are expressions of confidence in the character of God. The wicked may ask, where is your God? And they ask in disbelief, not thinking that God will ever call them to account, but the righteous, they look out and they see the wicked running rampant, and they ask, God, where are you?

Not because they don't believe God is there, but because they do believe he's there. So they ask these questions in faith. You know, these questions are rooted in a tension that I'm confident all of us feel.

Am I alone in this? All of us feel this tension here on this side of eternity. We know that God is good. We know that God is sovereign. We know that God is just.

We know that God will right every wrong. We know that God sees and he cares, and yet, here and now, the wicked seem to get away with a whole lot, don't they?

And the wicked are often successful in their efforts. They pile up money. They get promoted at work. They seem like they can do whatever they want to do without any consequence. Those who know the Lord, we feel this tension.

[11 : 57] We know God is good. So where is he? Where is he when three missionaries are gunned down by wicked men in Haiti? And how can they just get away with it?

We know the names of the dead, but we have no idea the names of the attackers. Why? Because they're off running free. When will a good God step in and make things right?

This is the tension that David is feeling. Do you feel it? And I know that we understand these questions too, church. This isn't just an abstract concept for us.

You know, we pray together every week in Sunday school, and as we meet together in different venues, and I hear your struggles. Where is God when evil men hack into our bank accounts and steal our money?

Steal our identity. Make our lives difficult. Where is God when someone lets their dogs loose on our property? Wreak havoc. Destroy what belongs to us.

[12 : 59] Where is God when a contractor takes all of our money and doesn't come to finish the job? Why is he not stepping in and coming to the rescue like he did with Daniel?

We've been studying Daniel. And Daniel was tossed into the lion's den. The scheme of the wicked was to destroy him. God intervened, redeemed him immediately. Why does he do that all the time?

You know, the hard truth is that that sort of miraculous intervention of divine justice, like what we saw with Daniel, is the exception rather than the rule.

Often, unfortunately, we don't get justice here. Often, unfortunately, the wicked seem to win.

And unfortunately, we may never fully have these questions answered on this side of eternity, at least not in the way that we want them to be. But if anything, this first verse of Psalm chapter 10, I think David shows us that these questions are okay to ask.

[14 : 03] These questions are okay for us to ask as we look out and we see the wickedness around us. But more than that, I believe that if you are grieved by injustice that you see here in the world, if you're bothered by wickedness, if you're personally affected by any sort of injustice or wickedness, it is good and it is right for us as God's people to cry out in prayer and call upon the Lord to act.

Not doubting who he is, not doubting his goodness, but appealing to his goodness. God, would you see and would you do something about this?

David shows us that it's okay to ask these questions in faith and appeal to God's holiness and his justice and to ask, Lord, I know you're good, I know you're sovereign, I know you're just, so will you act?

David asks these questions in verse 1 and then 2nd, in verses 2 through 11, David lays out his case before the Lord. This is our second point.

The second response is the case. David is fully aware of the wickedness around him and so he begins to call it out. It's as if he's acting like a prosecuting attorney.

[15 : 21] He's bringing his case before the judge. He's listing out all the offenses, all the ways that the wicked are guilty. Verses 2 through 11 are exhibit A through Z.

So what is it that has David so bothered? Well, we don't know exactly the specific situation, what the issue was here, but we do know clearly that these wicked people were taking advantage of the poor.

Look there to verse 2. Verse 2 says, In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the poor. In verse 8, it says, He sits in ambush in the villages, in hiding places.

He murders the innocent. His eyes stealthily watch for the helpless. He lurks in ambush like a lion in his thicket. David says, The wicked lurks that he may seize the poor and draws him into his net.

The helpless are crushed, sink down, and fall by his might. The wicked are attacking the poor. Why would they do this? It's because the poor are vulnerable.

[16 : 25] They're an easy target. And these wicked people aren't pursuing the rich. They're not pursuing the strong. They're not pursuing anybody who might theoretically be able to defend themselves.

They're taking advantage of the weak and the vulnerable. It says that they lurk like a lion. I don't know if you've ever watched a National Geographic show and seen a lion go on the hunt.

Lions go after the weak, don't they? And the vulnerable, they take the first easy meal they can get. If a zebra falls away from that pack, if they start to slow down, if they break their leg, they don't keep running for the strong, what do they do?

They attack the weak. That's who the lion is after. In a similar way, David says, The wicked are hunting down the poor and the vulnerable because to them, they're easy targets.

This is evil behavior. This is far from the heart of God. The Lord cares for the orphan and the widow. The Lord has a heart that cares for the fatherless, for the poor, for the helpless, for the oppressed, and he calls his people to do the same.

[17 : 35] But to the wicked, they don't see a need to meet or a person to love. They see an opportunity to exploit. And apparently, their weapon of choice here, verse 7, it says, is their words.

Verse 7 says, Their mouths are filled with cursing and deceit and oppression. And under his tongue are mischief and iniquity. The weapon that the wicked use to trap the poor and the vulnerable is a net of lying words.

And I know I don't have to tell you that here, some 3,000 years later in the year 2024, not much has changed. It's a sad truth, but we know this.

You cannot believe everything somebody tells you. You cannot believe everything you see on television. You cannot trust every word that you read.

You cannot trust every person that you meet. Now, we don't need to be jaded and distrust anybody and everything. We don't need to be overly skeptical of everybody and everything that we hear, but we do need to be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

[18 : 54] We do need to understand that wicked people then and wicked people now still want to trap you with lying words. I almost got caught the other day.

Everywhere you turn, there's a new scam to fall into. I don't know how many times I've been called saying that I owe back taxes or need a new insurance plan. It's about every day now.

I saw somebody giving away a guitar. They said that they had the sob story. It was moving. Their son had died in a car crash and they had this guitar at their home that they wanted to go to a good home.

They didn't want to sit there and look at it anymore. And they said, I will give this guitar away for free if you will just give me your payment information so that you can pay shipping for it, but you get the instrument for free, right?

Should have known better. But the fact is there are scams everywhere you turn. There's people wanting to take advantage of you everywhere you turn. Elder fraud is increasingly common and the FBI actually says that senior citizens lose over \$3 billion every year to elder fraud.

[20 : 08] And I won't tell you who fits in this category and who doesn't? You can do that yourself. But I will just say this. We need to be aware. People want to take advantage of you.

They'll call you and tell you that you've won a sweepstakes for just a small fee you can collect. And they'll sell you insurance or some policy you don't really need or that may not exist. They'll call you and tell you a loved one is in jail and need money to be bailed out.

There are a million ways that you can get taken advantage of. The possibilities are endless and increasingly endless for a wicked person to make a quick dime off of somebody vulnerable.

And David's bothered by this. David's upset about this. And David says that ultimately this type of wickedness, you know where it begins?

Ultimately, this type of wickedness is rooted in a heart rejection of God. Verse 3. It says, the wicked boast of the desires of his soul.

[21 : 15] He's prideful. And the one greedy for gain curses and renounces the Lord. In the pride of his face, the wicked does not seek him.

All of his thoughts are there is no God. You know, another way to translate that, you might have a footnote there at the bottom, is that in the pride of his anger, the wicked says he will not call to account.

In other words, God won't do anything about this. I can do whatever I want. And God won't call it to account.

And David says, God, don't you see what they're doing? Here in verses 2-11, it's as if David is pointing all of this out. He's laying it all out before the Lord.

And he's saying, God, they say you won't judge them because you haven't judged them. They're saying there's no consequence for their actions because there haven't been any consequences for their actions.

[22 : 19] They're rich and fat and happy and successful and they're doing great while your people are struggling. Why don't you do something about it?

His ways prosper at all times, he says in verse 5. And because of this, because of this complete lack of consequence, he says in his heart, I shall not be moved.

Throughout all generations, I shall not meet adversity. The issue here is that God's inaction in the face of injustice makes the wicked feel invincible.

evil. They've assumed that God's inaction means God's indifference. But we know that that's a fatal mistake. And we know God is not indifferent to the actions of the wicked.

And the Bible speaks about God's delaying judgment not as a sign of indifference but as a demonstration of his patience. It's our issue and when we look out and when we see wickedness all around us, when we see the wicked being successful in their efforts to exploit the poor, when we see the wicked doing whatever they want to do and it seems like God isn't doing anything about it, our issue isn't that we are more just than God or that we are more holy than God or that we are more aware of the situation than God.

[23 : 54] but that we are far less patient than God. God is infinitely just. He is infinitely holy.

He is totally aware of every situation in his domain everywhere on the earth at all times and in all places and yet God is patient towards the wicked.

God is long suffering towards the wicked. He delays judgment but not forever.

He is not infinitely patient towards the wicked and one day that bill will come due. And so it's because of this that David calls out to the Lord third with confidence.

here in verses 12 through 18 this is the third response of the king the Lord David calls out in confidence to the Lord.

[24 : 56] Look there to verse 12. David turns his attention from the wicked now to the Lord and he prays arise arise O Lord O God lift up your hand forget not the afflicted why does the wicked renounce God and say in his heart you will not call to account but you do see 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 break the arm of the wicked and evil doer call his wickedness to account till you find none this is a call for God to take action why?

because again David is confident in the holy character of God and once again we've come full circle here you see that? once again we're back to the holy righteous character of God the sovereign kingship of a good and holy God the same character the same confidence in the character of God that led David to ask the question where are you?

is the same character and confidence that leads David now to call God to action David shows us that the confidence of the righteous in the face of wickedness and injustice is that the Lord is king verse 16 the Lord is king forever and ever the nations perish from his land oh Lord you hear the desire of the afflicted you will strengthen their heart you will incline your ear to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more church God's kingship is our ultimate confidence in the face of wickedness and injustice David the king he looks up and he rests in the truth that ultimately God the king does what a good king ought to do that God the king makes certain that justice is done that God the king makes certain that the afflicted one is cared for and restored that God the king makes certain that all his enemies are dealt with in full he rests in the truth that God the king is both strong and tender he is a terror to the wicked but a helper to the fatherless this is both a word of warning for the wicked and a word of comfort for the afflicted

God is king and God sees all it's a warning for the wicked that when we think that no one is watching when we think that we've successfully hidden our sin maybe we can hide things from one another maybe we can deceive one another but the Lord is not fooled the Lord takes note of every evil deed this is a call for the wicked to repent because no one can hide their sin from the Lord the only place to run is to him for mercy it's a warning to the wicked and at the same time it's a comfort for those who are afflicted God the king will take your affliction into his own hands God hears your cries God sees your struggle verse 14 says you will take it into your hands you break the arm of the wicked and the evildoer you call his wickedness to account till you find none how liberating is that truth some of us have a hard time with this as we get this this pent up anger and frustration we call it righteous anger we get so mad and so worked up and we turn on the news and we see injustice everywhere we look but listen to this and just rest in this truth

Christian our confidence is that God the king will himself take up the cause of the weak God himself will take up the cause of the afflicted and the poor God himself will defend his people and God himself will repay every wicked deed which means we don't have to go around breaking the arms of the wicked and evildoers as much as we may like to God will do it we can turn the other cheek when we're wronged not because justice is not important but because we are confident God our king has seen it and God our king will address it if any of us have been wronged we rest in the sovereign reign of God and we trust that God himself will take up our cause commit yourself to him and our confidence and David's confidence is that

[30 : 18] God the king will execute justice God the king will relieve his people and he will judge the wicked but I have one more question here for us which is when when we believe that God will do this we believe that there's relief coming for his people we believe that there's a day coming when judgment will be brought upon the wicked but when I'd like you to flip over to 2nd Thessalonians as we close chapter 5 through 9 excuse me chapter 1 verses 5 through 9 Paul writes this is evidence of the righteous judgment of God that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God for which you are also suffering since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us when will justice come when will

God repay his enemies and relieve his afflicted people look there when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels and flaming fire inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus they will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints and to be marveled at among all who have believed because our testimony to you was believed church our ultimate hope for justice is not here and now we may never get perfect justice here and now we may suffer loss here and now we will be cheated and we will be wronged and the wicked will look like they're getting away with it but our hope and our confidence is not in the here and now ultimately our confidence is in the day of the

Lord when our King Jesus Christ will return to relieve his saints and to afflict his enemies for final and complete justice it's then that the wicked will finally be judged and the righteous will finally be delivered here in part but then in full that's our hope so church our call as we face all sorts of wickedness here in this world our call is to rest in the reign of King Jesus and to call upon him for that future coming justice to break its way into the present but we know that justice will only come in full on that day when he returns and so we live each day now in light of that coming day if you're not a follower of

Jesus Christ the application for you from this passage is to repent and to call upon him in faith to bend the knee to King Jesus to trust in him and he will not turn even the most wicked sinner away and if you are afflicted if you're tired of seeing injustice every single day here in this present age our application this morning is to take heart Christ our King knows exactly what it's like to face affliction at the hands of evil men does he not Christ the King steps down into our weakness steps down into our flesh to suffer to be beaten and to die if anybody had a claim to say that's not fair it was Christ and that he triumphed over sin and darkness and the grave he rose from the grave the first time he came to suffer and die and rise and the next time he comes it will be to reign forever and to bring perfect justice

I want to close this morning by pointing you to a passage that we know well from the book of Revelation this is where the story ends church this is our hope that we have to look forward to gives gives us a picture of what God's people have to look forward to when Christ returns Revelation 22 it says behold the dwelling place of God is with man he will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will be with them as their God he will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore for the former things have passed away it says no longer will there be anything accursed but the throne of God and of the lamb will be in it and his servants will worship him they will see his face and here's how it ends he who testifies to these things says surely

[36 : 05] I am coming soon surely I am coming soon surely I am coming soon if you are walking in wickedness the day of judgment is coming soon and if you are afflicted if you are tired of injustice if you are ready for wickedness to be dealt with surely I am coming soon we say amen come Lord Jesus let's pray Lord we do desire for wickedness in this day to be dealt with Lord it's our heart desire that you would bring justice and we thank you Father for the hope of Christ that you have shown us at the cross how seriously you take sin that you have shown us perfect justice and given us certain hope for salvation at the cross and

Lord the great hope that we have of his return that he will come and reign forever no longer will there be anything accursed any wickedness or any death or any pain Father we we pray God that if there are any who do not know you Lord would you draw them to yourself and give them the hope of Christ this morning we pray all of this in Jesus name amen