

Psalms 9 and 10 – John Karmelich

1. How do we give God the problems we face in life? (Now there's an interesting way to open a lesson! ☺) Do we just sit there and let others hurt us because we have giving our issues to God in prayer? Do we fight what we are called to fight after praying to God for His results to be done? To put it another way, how do we handle when someone has treated us wrongly?
 - a) The first and important thing is actually to give God that issue to deal with and then, and only then do we pray for guidance on how to respond on our part.
 - b) These two psalms deal with God and His justice. When we want God to fix what is wrong and make it right, these two psalms are a good place to read.
 - c) The related point is about giving God whatever pain we have inside of us. It is about letting go of ways people have hurt you or me and giving that pain to God.
 - d) King David wrote these psalms. Remember that David lived in a "kill or be killed" world. Much of his life had to do with physical battles to the death. While our lives may not have had those types of physical struggles, most of us understand pain, in the sense that we have been hurt by others and we carry that pain around with us in the past.
 - i) It wasn't until I have worked my way through both of these psalms that I saw how these psalms affect me personally. They are about giving God the emotional pain that is inside of us, due to our fears and ways people have hurt us.
 - ii) These psalms also ask some tough questions. There are points where David asks God to hurt his enemies. So does that mean that God wants us to harm those that harm us? We'll deal with that question in this lesson.
 - e) With all of that said, my title for this lesson is simply, "Giving God our pain". Without inflicting any more pain on you about this title, I'll move on from here. ☺
2. Let me also say that this has been a difficult lesson for me to write because it deals with the issue of personal emotional pain. It is the type of lesson that makes one think about the ways we have been hurt and what we should do with that pain. The purpose of these two psalms is to give our pain and fears to God. The way God has taught me this week is by reminding me of episodes of my life that were emotionally painful to deal with.
 - a) I want to remind all of us that God does care about the pain we carry around inside of us and that He wants us to turn over to Him any and all "bad feelings" we have for others.
 - b) What God desires of us, is a healthy loving relationship and He does not want anything to block that relationship. One of the biggest things that does block our relationship with God is legitimate pain we feel from ways we have been hurt in the past or in the present.
 - c) Which does lead to the two psalms we are coving in this lesson. The purpose of these two psalms is about giving our pain to God.
3. Let me give some technical notes before we start. Psalm 9 and 10 were possibly one psalm at one time. Even if they are separate psalms, there are good arguments why they should be studied together. Let me explain further why these psalms are connected:
 - a) If you read these two psalms in the original Hebrew, there is a pattern that follows the Hebrew Alphabet. It would be like saying, the first line begins with an "a", the second line with a "b" and that pattern continues through both psalms.
 - b) This pattern is only in the original Hebrew and it does not translate that way into English. This pattern continues through Psalm 9 and Psalm 10 and ends there. This pattern is not perfect through the Hebrew Alphabet, but it is noticeable.
4. Meanwhile, I said these two psalms deal with the issue of personal pain. Instead of holding onto that pain, let us give it to God so we can enjoy our relationship with Him.

5. Psalm 9, introduction: For the director of music. To the tune of "The Death of the Son." A psalm of David.
- a) Like the previous psalms, we learn that David wrote this one. We also know it was meant for public worship. We also have this strange footnote that this psalm was meant to be sung to a (long gone) tune called "The Death of a Son".
 - i) In King David's lifetime, he did lose a few sons, but I suspect after studying the entire psalm, this song has nothing to do with the death of any of David's children.
 - ii) It is also strange in that part of this psalm is upbeat and deals with praising God. If that is the case, why have this reference to the "death of a son", if the psalm focuses on praising God for the victories He has given us over the issues we face?
 - iii) I suspect (but cannot prove) that David wrote this psalm some time when he or someone close to him was dealing with the pain caused by the death of a son. That type of sorrow all people can relate to is expressed in this psalm where the purpose of the psalm is to give praise to God.
6. Psalm 9, Verse 1: I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders.
- a) Well, verse 1 opens up "happy enough". ☺ It says that David wants the intended reader of this psalm to praise God in effect, "with everything we have". That is the idea behind the term "all of my heart". It doesn't mean to sing as loud as one can. It means to praise God as if one truly means it and one believes it to be true as much as any fact one has.
 - b) OK, suppose I am in a bad mood or I just can't praise God that much. If that is the case, I would simply praise God as much as one can for the moment. Know that this psalm is about praising God and we should "give it all we got" not because God needs to hear it, but so as for us to get in the right frame of mind when we are giving thanks to God.
 - c) The second sentence says we are to "tell of all of His wonders". So does that mean I should stop praising God and start telling others the good things God has done in my life? Not exactly. Remember that this psalm is designed to be sung publicly. The idea is for the group to sing out loud of the ways God has blessed our lives.
7. Verse 2: I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.
- a) So far, we haven't gotten to any reasons why to praise God, just that we should.
 - b) Verse 2 is a reminder to be joyful in God. So what does that mean?
 - i) The idea is be joyful is because of all of our sins are forgiven.
 - ii) If one is saved and one knows one is saved, one should just feel this sense of joy within them. If one knows one does not have to worry about eternal judgment and the fact that all of our sins are forgiven, one should be joyful. What can one suffer in this lifetime, in comparison to that joy? I don't know about you, but that would help me deal with the "death of a son" as the Psalm title implies.
 - iii) Let us say we don't feel joyful at the moment because we are in pain. No matter how bad those circumstances are, those issues will end at our death (at the worst) or hopefully, prior to that. The joy of having a personal relationship God is greater than that pain because joy is eternal. If that won't cheer you up, nothing will. ☺
 - c) The second sentence says we will sing praises to His name, "Oh Most High".
 - i) Does that mean God's name is "Most High". Know that there are lots of names and titles for God and each one describes different aspects of who He is.
 - ii) Most of those names have the word "Jehovah" followed by another word describing some aspect of God. What is more important than knowing those names is to understand what God is capable of doing and why one should show gratitude for God in one's life. Even the name "Jehovah" is not a true name, like we think of a name, but it means, "I am that I am". The idea is to remember that God can do things to make a difference in our life and that is why the various titles for God's name deal with what various things He can do in our lives.

- iii) I usually refer to God as just "God" or sometimes I say, "Father". He is also a God that protects us from our enemies and works our lives for His glory if we turn over our lives to Him. We don't have to worry so much about the exact name we call God by, as long as we understand why it is we are praising Him.
 - iv) It is important to understand that God wants a "respectful" relationship in that He wants us to remember that He is God and we are not.
 - v) This, believe it or not, leads me back to this verse. The English term "most high" is used here. That title means in effect God is "up there" and we are "down here". It means that He is in charge and He desires to be in charge of our lives. His desire is that we turn our desires and our problems over to Him and let Him rule over our lives.
8. Verse 3: My enemies turn back; they stumble and perish before you.
- a) Here in Verse 3, we get to the "heart of the psalm". Verses 1 and 2 focus on praising God and Verse 3 changes topics to say that David's enemies will lose because of God.
 - i) Let me explain Verse 3: If one knows one is doing God's will, those who oppose God's plans will lose in the end, no matter what is happening at the moment. So how do I know I am doing God's will? Often it is as simple as just praying, living a godly life and trusting that God is working in one's life. Sometimes God gives us specific directions to follow and often God is "just silent" in that He wants us to just "go forwards in our life" and trust that He is working.
 - ii) With that said, let me explain the term "enemies". Sometimes it is literal if one is fighting in a battle like David did. If one finds they are in such a battle, one can have assurance that no matter what happens in warfare, God is there and He is working out His plan for our lives, if we are willing to trust Him.
 - b) OK, now let's say you and I are not involved in physical warfare at this time. How does this verse apply?
 - i) First, remember that as Christians we are always (emphasis on always) involved in warfare, whether we realize it or not. There are demonic forces that want you and I to not make a difference for God. Such forces cannot take away our salvation, but they can make us ineffective witnesses for God by scaring us to be too timid or too afraid to step out and make a difference for Him.
 - ii) This verse is reminding us that "no matter what", we have already won such a battle. When we trust God, the victory is guaranteed no matter how "threatening" is the battle that is in front of us.
 - c) Now let me approach "battling our enemies" another way: Let's say we are dealing with an emotional or physical problem that appears to be too big to overcome. Or let's say we have to go to work or school to face some major obstacle that is preventing us from what we want to accomplish.
 - i) What we have to remember is to think like David here and realize that the battle is already won. We may win or lose the specific battle at hand, but the overall outcome is already decided for those who trust in God and trust in His purpose for our lives.
 - ii) Going back to David, he was first told he would be king one day when he was a teenager. David was on the run from King Saul for many years after that. During that time, David had to learn to trust that God would work out His plan for David's life on God's timing and not David's timing.
 - iii) During times like this, David is crying out for God to provide David (and us) with the strength and power to face whatever it is we have to face. David and us need to remind ourselves that the war is "already won", and all we have to do is trust that God is making it possible on His timing.

9. Verse 4: For you have upheld my right and my cause; you have sat on your throne, judging righteously.
- a) Getting back to the issue of facing our battles, David is reminding himself through this psalm that God is allowing the "right thing" to happen on His timing. David is confident that God has already judged the situation at hand and given victory to David.
 - b) Like all of you, I have problems and issues facing me. I don't know how God is going to work them out, but I pray that He does, on His timing, and I pray for God to help me to trust Him through these issues. I don't know what is going to happen with these issues that I am facing, but I trust that God will work them out for His glory and I get to share in that ultimate victory.
 - i) Do I understand how God is going to work? No.
 - ii) Do I trust that God is going to do the right thing? Of course.
 - iii) With that said, how do I know what is God's will for this situation? I doubt David knew any more than we do in our situation. David is saying God is going to work out his life (and your life and my life) for His glory. In that sense, end of issue.
 - c) Part of my morning prayer this day was to remind myself that I don't have to "push my will" get my desires done. I have to "let go" of what I want and let God take control. That in effect, is what David is praying for in this verse.
 - i) Getting back to my morning prayer, I don't have the answers. I just know that God has the answers and I have to trust Him to see me through the battle I am dealing with at this moment.
 - ii) By the time you read this, my problem may be a non-issue. My point is not to get you to care about my problems, but to be aware that God wants to take over the issues you are dealing with right now and God wants you to know that the outcome is "already certain" and we don't have to worry about it.
10. Verse 5: You have rebuked the nations and destroyed the wicked; you have blotted out their name for ever and ever. ⁶ Endless ruin has overtaken the enemy, you have uprooted their cities; even the memory of them has perished.
- a) Getting back to David's specific problems, he is facing some enemies in battle, and David is reminding himself that those who are wicked have already lost the battle and they will be sent to hell, and even the memory of those nations will be gone.
 - i) OK, I believe that requires some explaining. Good thing I'm writing. ☺
 - ii) Does that mean whoever we face on the battlefield of life is definitely God's enemy and they will go to hell forever? Of course not. It does mean is that those who live their lives in opposition to God's plans (whether they realize it or not) will not only go to hell, but even the memory of who these people were will be lost forever.
 - iii) Think of it this way: How many people from say the 4th century or the 12th century do you know by name? Unless you are an expert on ancient history and know the names of those who have made a difference for God, those who oppose God, even their names become long forgotten.
 - iv) Even the names recorded in the bible of those who oppose God are only mentioned (in the sense) for us to learn from them and learn "what not to do" in order to live a life pleasing to God. We may read of their story, but the actual memory of those people have perished.
 - b) So, does this mean that those who die who ignore God "evaporate" in the sense that their souls no longer exist? No, because God created our souls as "eternal" and God cannot destroy what He has created. Our physical bodies wear out, but not our eternal souls.
 - i) OK John, I get and understand the idea that we live forever. If that is true, what is David talking about here when he says, "even the memory of them has perished".
 - ii) The idea is that the victory of those trusting in God is so guaranteed, that even the memory of those who oppose God will be wiped out from those who trust in God.

- c) Let me explain this another way: One thing I fear in heaven, is worrying about the lost souls of my family and friends. I believe God somehow, someway, helps us eliminate the memory of such people as we spend eternity with God in His presence.
- i) So how does that work? Am I so happy in heaven that I just forget or don't care about those I knew who refused to turn from God? Possibly. Does God somehow wipe out our memory of those who turned from Him? Possibly.
 - ii) The point is we can't enjoy an everlasting loving relationship with God if we are worrying about lost souls. I take the view that somehow even the memory of those who are lost is somehow, taken from our memories, however that happens.
 - iii) Does that mean we shouldn't care about those who have turned from God at this moment? Of course not. A lot of my prayer life is praying for those I know who don't have God in part of their life.
 - iv) The point of this verse (I knew I'd get back here eventually) has nothing to do with caring about those who have turned from God. The point is about understanding the outcome of those who do turn from God. Understand that God wants us to live the life of "Loving what He loves and hating what He hates". What God hates is sinful deeds and those who refuse to turn from those deeds.
 - a) These verses teach us that those who refuse to repent will spend eternity away from God's presence and somehow, even the memories of those people will not come to mind to those who trust in God.
- d) My final point is neither David, nor you nor I know what is going to happen "this day" in our lives. However, we can be assured that the final outcome is certain and that is what David is reminding himself through this psalm.
- e) OK, everyone, take a deep breath, exhale, ☺ and let's move on to Verse 7.
11. Verse 7: The LORD reigns forever; he has established his throne for judgment. ⁸ He will judge the world in righteousness; he will govern the peoples with justice.
- a) OK, at this point David cries or yells out that God "rules" forever and the fact that He will judge the world. Ok, David probably already believed that. So why state it here?
 - i) Remember that David is dealing with a lot of suffering as he wrote this psalm. He may be about to face some enemy in battle. For David to write these lines is his way of reminding himself (and us) that no matter what is going on, God is in charge, He will rule forever and people who reject Him will be judged "fairly" based on what they did know (or should have known) about Him.
 - b) OK John, good for David. He felt better once he realized that God is in charge and He will judge the world based on His standards of right and wrong. How does any of that help me with my problems?
 - i) I don't know how God is going to get you or I through whatever we are dealing with at this moment. I can't even promise that any of us will be alive tomorrow. All I know for sure is that the only way life would be "fair", would be if there is a God and He judges people fairly based on how they have acted in this world.
 - ii) The point is to remind ourselves that if we are trusting in God, we are already victorious whether we realize it or not. The outcome is "assured" in the sense that God knows the outcome and we are part of the winning side no matter what happens with whatever we have to face.
 - iii) What I have also discovered is when I do turn the situation over to God the outcome of the situation at hand is usually never as bad as I feared it to be. Relying on God's strength to get through whatever we are dealing with is far greater than relying upon our ability or our own "stuff". That does not mean we throw away whatever resources we have at hand. It means we trust in God to get us through the situation and if it is God's will, He will use whatever resources we have to win our battles.

- c) This leads me to the final sentence: "He (God) will govern the peoples with justice."
 - i) So how is this exactly happening? It appears that this life is very much not fair and often the wicked do prevail for a time. Even if you or I do our best to live by God's standards, others will not and although they may suffer eternally, they certainly appear to be winning in this lifetime.
 - ii) Notice the word "will": It is not a reference to now, but some future date. Yes, I do believe it refers to heaven, but I also believe it refers to a day when Jesus will rule over the world from Jerusalem. I don't know when that day will occur, but I do believe it will happen just as I believe David understood it would happen.
 - iii) Which surprisingly, leads me back to the title of this Psalm. David said in the title that this psalm was to be played to the tune of "Death of the first born".
 - a) I have this strange view (which means I may be totally wrong) that David somehow understood that the Messiah had to die for the sins of the world. When we get to Psalm 22, I will give that as further proof of this view.
 - b) My point here is that I believe David understood in both the concept of a Messiah (future eternal king) who died for David's sins as well as the idea of a Messiah who would rule the world one day.
 - c) That would explain the title of this psalm as it ties to the psalm. At the same time, it explains this verse and the concept of God one day judging the world based on His justice.
 - iv) OK, enough theology, ☺ let's get back to the Psalm itself.
12. Verse 9: The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.
- a) The idea here is that those who trust in God, do go through times where it seems like everyone is out to get us, or at the least, it seems like the world is falling apart around us. The point here is that are only hope is to trust in God through such times and that He will work out "life" for His glory.
 - b) This verse specifically mentions "a stronghold in the times of trouble". The idea is that we can trust in God to rescue us through whatever we are dealing with at this moment. The idea is that God is listening to our prayers and He wants to guide us through whatever we are dealing with at the present time.
 - c) The verse says that God is a place to run to for those who are oppressed. So how do I know if I am oppressed? As best I can tell, no one is trying to kill me today! ☺
 - i) Let me put it this way: If we are making an effort to make a difference for God, then whether we realize it or not, we are among the "oppressed". We may or may not feel that oppression, but understand that there are demonic forces out there that want to prevent you and I from accomplishing what God wants to do.
 - ii) So how do they oppress us? I don't feel a pitchfork in my side. ☺
 - a) When we have fears that we won't make it through the day, that is a form of oppression. When we have fears that we will lose the battle that is in front of us, that is oppression.
 - b) Remember that nothing happens to the believer that is not "God ordained". He allows these things to happen in our lives so that we do learn to trust Him through difficult times. Such oppression is God's way of saying to us, "Trust Me, I have a plan and I will work it out for your benefit and My glory. Just trust in Me".
13. Verse 10: Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.
- a) Just when I am sure I have ignored the verse at hand, the next verse reminds me that I am on the right track. ☺ In the last verse, I wrote about trusting God through difficult times and that the battles we fight are "God ordained" in those battles to happen so we trust more in Him. Verse 10 is saying God never forsakes those who trust in Him.

- b) We don't have to worry about whether or not we are trusting God enough, we simply spend time each day thinking of Him and He promises to guide us.
 - c) David is saying that God has never forsakes (turned away) from anyone who has sought Him. When someone has a heart for God, in a sense we don't have to worry about them, because we know that God does have His hand upon that person. (That doesn't mean we shouldn't help others, it is just a reassurance that God is watching out for all that love and trust in Him.)
14. Verse 11: Sing praises to the LORD, enthroned in Zion; proclaim among the nations what he has done.
- a) At this point in the psalm we can sing praises to God. We realize that whatever situation we are going through, He is in charge, and He is working out things for His glory.
 - b) It is interesting to note that this is not the end of the Psalm. It would be an appropriate ending to say in effect, "God has guided me through this issue, so let's now all stop and give praises to Him". So why have this verse here in the middle of the psalm?
 - i) I suspect the reason it is in the middle of this psalm is because it is "indicative" of the times in our lives when we are in the "middle of something", yet despite whatever problems we are dealing with, we can stop and praise God for working out our lives for His glory and at the same time see us through our problems.
 - c) There is another part of this verse that is worth noting. The second line of this psalm tells us to go proclaim the goodness of God among the nations.
 - i) So, does that mean we should move to another nation and start singing about how good God is? Well, if one is on a mission trip, it wouldn't hurt. ☺ I believe the idea was about letting the "good works" of God spread so that others become aware of the existence of God.
 - ii) It is a call to not be afraid to praise His name publicly or simply share the good news with other people so the word about God spreads.
 - d) This psalm appears to have a "double reference" to how to praise God. There are times we should praise God for the victories we get to enjoy when we put the situation in God's hands. Then there are times when we should just praise God for "who He is". That is the back and forth type of praise I see in this Psalm.
15. Verse 12: For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not ignore the cry of the afflicted.
- a) From the "Praise God among the nations" reference of Verse 11, we jump back into the fact that God is the "avenger of blood" here in Verse 12 and the fact that God does not ignore those who are suffering.
 - b) What David is doing is combining praise to God with two reasons of why we do give praise to Him: Let me summarize this verse with this thought:
 - i) The world would only be a fair place if there was a god and He does take revenge for those who suffer wrongly and those who cry out to Him in pain.
 - ii) This world would be very unfair if this life is all there is to our existence. The world is full of people who get away with injustice and may innocent people who suffer until their death. Knowing that there is a God who "rights the wrongs" gives peace to those suffering. It is a reason to give praises to God for who He is.
 - c) OK John, since you brought this up, how do I know for sure, that "this is true", that there is a God who we can pray a prayer of gratitude for "righting the wrongs of the world"?
 - i) That's what the bible "as a whole" is all about. It gives evidence for the existence of God and shows how He works. Is God limited to working only through bible characters? Of course not. These stories are written as examples for us of how God can and does work in our lives.
 - ii) So why doesn't God just reveal Himself to the world in some miraculous way so everyone could see Him? If He did that, people would come to Him out of fear, and not by faith. Further, the "next generation" would have to see the same thing.

16. Verse 13: O LORD, see how my enemies persecute me! Have mercy and lift me up from the gates of death,¹⁴ that I may declare your praises in the gates of the Daughter of Zion and there rejoice in your salvation.
- a) Speaking of "God watching our lives", I bring you Verses 13 and 14. These verses have David crying out to God to "notice" how David's enemies are persecuting him. David is asking God to rescue him so that he can live another day to praise God.
 - b) OK John, you just talked about the evidence of God working in our lives. If that is true, why is David telling God that his enemies are pursuing him? Doesn't David know that God is aware of all things? ☺
 - i) These verses are not saying that God has to be told about what is happening. These verses are David asking God to "act now".
 - ii) So if God only works on His timing, why ask Him to act now? The short answer is we don't know what is God's timing, so we can and should ask Him to act now and make a difference in the life around us.
 - c) These verses are teaching that God does interfere in the lives of people. Even though God knows all things, He still wants us to petition Him to perform in our lives to give us more reasons to praise Him for our victories.
 - i) It's kind of like the idea of "God wants to do things in our lives, but He won't do them unless we ask in the first place". At the same time, God knows when we are going to ask for His help, and He then works out the results as He desires.
 - d) Getting back to the specific's of this verse, David is petitioning God to save him from whatever David is dealing with so he can praise God in the gates of the Daughter of Zion, which is a poetic way of saying among the Israelite people.
 - i) So, does that mean we should praise God among Israelites when something good happens? Well, it wouldn't hurt if we lived among Israelites. ☺ The idea today is about praising God when He does work through our problems for His glory.
17. Verse 15: The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug; their feet are caught in the net they have hidden.
- a) As I mentioned in the last lesson, those that oppose God are like "Willie E. Coyote" where the evil plans of the villain (like the "Coyote") are made for others. God somehow causes those evil plans to hurt those who made the plans in the first place (like the "Coyote").
 - b) To put it another way, this verse is a prayer to God in effect, "Those evil forces that oppose You are making (or have made) plans to hurt those who are doing God's will. May those plans be blocked and may those who plan to hurt believers, fall due to those plans that they made to hurt others."
 - c) So, why pray for our enemies to be hurt specifically by the bad plans they make?
 - i) In short, it is to be a witness to the wicked people. If wicked people get hurt by the bad plans they make for those who are trusting in God, the way they get hurt ends up being a "witness" to them that God is real and He is working.
 - ii) Does God have to work this specific way? Of course not. It is just a "good way" for God to work and get the attention of both His people and the "wicked".
18. Verse 16: The LORD is known by his justice; the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands. Higgsaion. Selah
- a) There is an old expression that says in effect, if you ask a devout Christian what is God, the response would be "God is love". If you ask a devout Jewish person what is God, the response would be, "God is a justice". The correct answer is both, but that is how each group tends to think of God first.
 - i) With that said, let's discuss the "God of Justice". The essential idea is that we as humans cannot fix all the wrongs of this world. That doesn't mean we shouldn't try as God works through people. The idea is that God cannot stand "injustice" and God's justice can get done if we pray for it.

- b) OK, why should I personally care about God's justice? Why is this important?
 - i) Most of us know that life is not fair. The only way life would be fair is there is a God and He does take care of justice "His way" and on His timing.
 - ii) Further, God likes to make those who do wicked deeds get caught by their own schemes intended for other people. That is one way to pray for God's justice.
 - iii) If we are praying for God's justice, does that mean we don't need a police force or a military? Yes we need them, and often God works through such forces to get His justice done. The point is we give God the credit when justice is done.
 - iv) We should let go of our worries about injustice and giving that injustice to God. The reason religious Jews see God as a "God of justice" is about letting go of their pain and giving that pain to God. The idea is about having peace knowing that God is in charge and He will take care of these issues.
 - c) The verse ends with two untranslated words: higgaiion and selah.
 - i) Both words in a sense mean to stop and think about what was just said. It is David's way of saying, "this is important stuff, so stop and meditate upon the facts of this verse." I think I've done that enough here, so I'll move on.
19. Verse 17: The wicked return to the grave, all the nations that forget God. ¹⁸ But the needy will not always be forgotten, nor the hope of the afflicted ever perish.
- a) One should contrast these two verses. The idea of Verse 17 is to remember that wicked people (i.e., those who don't care about God) get what they deserve eternally, while at the same time Verse 18 reminds us that God does not forget those who cry out to Him due to the pain others have caused them.
 - b) OK, God takes care of injustice on His timing. How does that help my life right now?
 - i) It means we can stop worrying about whatever is bothering us and give those worries to God. I've learned that "worrying" is the opposite of faith. When we don't turn things over to God is when we worry.
 - ii) I don't know how God is going to get you or I through whatever we are dealing with right now. I do know that God loves us and He also wants justice against those forces that harm those who trust in Him.
 - iii) Because of that fact, one should never lose hope in God. One has to remember that God does work on His timing. I don't know how He is going to work in my life, but no matter what happens, no matter how good or how tragic, I can trust that He is working out my life ultimately for His glory.
20. Verse 19: Arise, O LORD, let not man triumph; let the nations be judged in your presence.
- a) If we believe that there is a God and He does work on His timing, why should we pray Verse 19? The answer is we don't know what God's timing "is", so it is ok to ask Him to work now and to work in a way that we can see the results.
 - b) In other words we are praying for a way for us to glorify God by asking Him to work in a way that we can see His justice be done. In your or my particular situation, God may, or may not grant that request, but it is ok to ask God and that is what this line is saying.
 - c) The key point again, is about giving our pain to God, and letting Him deal with the results as opposed to us trying to get revenge on our own. Yes, God is a god of justice and yes the nations and individuals that turn from Him, will be judged. It is something we as Christians should accept, but at the same time we should pray for this to happen.
 - d) So if God is going to do it anyway, why pray about it? This goes back to the idea that there is a God and He does respond to our requests when it is His will to get "that" done.
 - i) Remember that prayer is about getting God's will done and not ours. If that is true, we need to pray for God's will and a big part of His will is His justice.
 - ii) Prayer is more than us letting go of our problems and fears. It is about praying for God's will to be done. That means praying for God to give justice on those who those who refuse to turn to Him.

21. Verse 20: Strike them with terror, O LORD; let the nations know they are but men. *Selah*
- a) The final line of this psalm asks us to petition God to strike those who don't fear Him with terror. We are to ask God to let people know that there is a God "one way or another". If people refuse to turn to Him out of love, then may He get to them through His justice.
 - b) Yes this psalm is about God helping us during times when we are hurting, but it is also about letting God's justice get done to those who turn from Him. We have to accept both facts. Do I comprehend how all of that works out for His glory? Of course not. I simply pray for His love and His justice to get done as He sees best.
 - c) OK, time for Psalm 10.
22. Verse 1: Why, O LORD, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?
- a) First, notice there is no introduction to this Psalm. There is no comment about who wrote the Psalm or any musical reference. That is another reason why people think that Psalm 10 is a continuation of Psalm 9.
 - b) Verse 1 is asking in effect, "God, look at all the bad things that are happening around me. Why aren't you doing something about it". To say "God is hiding" is just a poetic way of saying that God is not reacting fast enough for us to notice any results.
 - c) If God does respond on His timing, why petition Him at all? Sometimes God holds off working on a particular situation because He is waiting for us to petition Him about that situation. Sometimes He is waiting for us to notice something about the situation before He works. Sometimes God is just waiting for that bad group or person to repent.
 - i) In summary, God has His reasons to work things out on His timing, but we are not privy to know what those reasons are.
23. Verse 2: In his arrogance the wicked man hunts down the weak, who are caught in the schemes he devises. ³ He boasts of the cravings of his heart; he blesses the greedy and reviles the LORD. ⁴ In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God. ⁵ His ways are always prosperous; he is haughty and your laws are far from him; he sneers at all his enemies. ⁶ He says to himself, "Nothing will shake me; I'll always be happy and never have trouble."
- a) Verses 2 through 11 could and should be read as one big group. All of these verses say in effect, "The wicked think they are winning at life and continue to do what they do". I only listed verses 2-6 here to give you a "feel" about the tone of these verses.
 - b) One gets the feeling that if these verses don't scare us to trust God, nothing will. ☺
 - c) Let me summarize the point of each of these verses:
 - i) Verse 2 says that the wicked have "successfully" caught who they did trap.
 - ii) Verse 3 says the wicked boast about the desires that he or she (the wicked) crave.
 - iii) Verse 3 goes on to say such people bless the "greedy" and turn from God.
 - iv) Verse 4 says such people don't bother or don't care to seek God.
 - v) Verse 5 says the wicked are prosperous as if they are going to win in the long run.
 - vi) Verse 5 also says the wicked are full of self-pride and don't care about God's laws.
 - vii) Verse 6 says that nothing will ever change from this situation and such a wicked person will always be happy and never have trouble.
 - d) As one can see, none of this is good, and it will get worse in the next set of verses.
 - e) This psalm so far, is one big prayer request in effect to say, "Look God at what the wicked people are getting away with. Why aren't you doing something about this? Why are you allowing them to go on and on like this as if you don't exist?"
 - i) The answer of course, is that even if such people go to their grave getting away with living that lifestyle, that is all the reward they will ever get.
 - ii) I am convinced that often God doesn't work simply because His people (that's you and me) aren't praying for victory over the wicked. In effect, this psalm is a petition for us to be aware of what is happening so His will, will get done.
 - iii) With that said, let me list the rest of the "negative things" of the wicked.

24. Verse 7: His mouth is full of curses and lies and threats; trouble and evil are under his tongue. ⁸He lies in wait near the villages; from ambush he murders the innocent, watching in secret for his victims. ⁹ He lies in wait like a lion in cover; he lies in wait to catch the helpless; he catches the helpless and drags them off in his net. ¹⁰ His victims are crushed, they collapse; they fall under his strength. ¹¹ He says to himself, "God has forgotten; he covers his face and never sees."
- a) I could again list all of the things the wicked do wrong in these verses, but one can just as easily read the bad stuff in these verses, so there is no need to restate them again.
 - b) The main point here is that it appears that wicked people are getting away with stuff and God is not doing anything about it.
 - c) I suspect when we pray this type of prayer, we are asking God in effect, "Why aren't You working faster to fix the bad things that are happening around me?" One possibility is God can answer that prayer in effect with, "Well, it's about time You came to Me for help".
 - d) As I read this prayer, I keep thinking of the book of Habakkuk. That is a small book near the end of the Old Testament. Habakkuk's prayer to God was in effect, "Why aren't you doing something about the wicked?" God's response was in effect, "If I told you all I am going to do about them you, Habakkuk, won't be able to handle it."
 - i) That may in effect, be God's response to us. It is, "If I told you now, all of the plans I have for those who are wicked, you won't be able to mentally handle it all."
 - ii) This leads me back to these lines of the psalms. As opposed to reading them, I would encourage you to personalize them. Tell God about the injustice you see in your life and ask God to work out those problems for His glory. The point of this psalm (both of them) is for us to turn over our problems and the problems we see to God so He can deal with it His way on His timing.
 - iii) That in effect, is a great summary of this lesson. This whole lesson has been dealing with the issue of why doesn't God deal with the problems in our life right now on our timing? The answer is to remember that God is aware of the problems we face, He is going to deal with them and He is working on His timing.
 - iv) That surprisingly, leads us to the next verse. ☺
25. Verse 12: Arise, LORD! Lift up your hand, O God. Do not forget the helpless.
- a) It is important to think of us as "helpless". The idea is to totally let go of our problems and give them to God. Even if we have the resources to deal with the problems at hand, the key of course is to give those issues and problems to God as if we have no resources at hand. Our desire should be to let God work His way on His timing.
 - b) With that said, asking God to "lift up your hand" is a poetic way of asking God to work now in our life to deal with the situation at hand.
26. Verse 13: Why does the wicked man revile God? Why does he say to himself, "He won't call me to account"? ¹⁴ But you, O God, do see trouble and grief; you consider it to take it in hand. The victim commits himself to you; you are the helper of the fatherless. ¹⁵ Break the arm of the wicked and evil man; call him to account for his wickedness that would not be found out.
- a) In these verses we have a dialogue in effect between wicked people and God.
 - i) The wicked say in effect, "I can keep on doing what I am doing because there is no god or person who can stop me from doing what I am doing". God does know what is happening and the victims of the wicked can plead to Him to help.
 - b) OK, most of us have heard of missionaries who have died at the hands of enemies of Christianity. Why hasn't God worked in their lives? The answer is He has heard their prayers and while we don't understand how God is working out such problems, He is doing it, on His timing and ultimately for His glory.
 - c) The good news of such situations is those missionaries are saved. God is trying to work in the lives of those who have done them harm for the wicked to turn to God. His justice will get done as eventually all die, including those who commit such wicked deeds.

- d) Given that fact, why should we pray for God to rescue us if He is not willing to rescue missionaries facing death? The short answer is we never know until we ask Him. His plans for you and me are different from each other and different from missionaries who have been killed. I look at life by thinking "God has allowed me to live another day and therefore, I should use that day for His glory".
 - i) Once we have the attitude that we live to make a difference for Him, it changes our perspective about life and about our prayer life.
 - e) Getting back to the verses, the writer wants those who turn from God to suffer.
 - i) So does that mean God wants us to pray for harm to those who want to hurt us? That seems to be an underlying point of this psalm: What do we do with those who don't want to turn to God?
 - ii) The answer comes back to God wanting us to "Love what He loves and hate what God hates". We as humans are called on to judge the behavior of what we deal with. We should pray in effect that if such people are "one of His", then we should pray for their hearts to be open to His truth. At the same time, we can pray if such people are never meant to be saved, may their plans come to "nothing".
 - iii) If I had to summarize both of these psalms, the issue does come back to loving what God loves and hating what God hates. Since we don't know what is in people's hearts, we are to judge their actions. We can pray for those who are turning from God to change, but in the meantime, we are to pray for their evil actions to "fall back on them". That is the essence of both of these psalms.
27. Verse 16: The LORD is King for ever and ever; the nations will perish from his land.
- a) The final couple of verses remind us of the ultimate outcome of both believers and nonbelievers. This verse reminds us that God will rule forever. There is a "next life" and the plans of the wicked will eventually (either in this life or at their death) come to an end.
 - b) The idea of the "Lord is King for ever" is to remind ourselves that just as we have given our lives to God "now", so that ruler (God) and servant (us) relationship go on forever and those who decide to reject that relationship will suffer for eternity.
28. Verse 17: You hear, O LORD, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry, ¹⁸ defending the fatherless and the oppressed, in order that man, who is of the earth, may terrify no more.
- a) Here is the conclusion of both of these psalms. It is the reminder that God hears the prayers of those who are crying out to Him. He helps those that need help. Why?
 - i) The last line says it all: (That those who fear God) "may terrify no more".
 - ii) The goal of these psalms is not so much to know what happens to our enemies, but what to do with the fears we have. It is about giving them to God.
 - iii) What God wants is an open loving relationship with us. If we are so worried about what others are saying about us, or worse, planning to hurt us, that fear is blocking our relationship with God. It is about letting go of those fears so we can have a healthy and "unblocked" relationship with God the Father.
 - b) One quick point: Verse 18 stresses the "fatherless and the oppressed". The idea of the fatherless is about one who is young but doesn't have a living (or healthy) father who can guide us in life. The "oppressed" refers to those who are suffering at the hands of others. The general idea is that God has a "special eye" out for those who need extra help.
 - c) With that said, I can now wrap up these psalms with my closing prayer.
29. Let's pray: Father, help us to love what You love and Hate what You hate. Help us to have a "healthy hatred" of the deeds of wicked people and at the same time pray for their souls that they may turn to You and trust You with their lives. When we face problems around us, help us to remember that You are in charge, You are aware of our problems and we are trusting You to deal with those problems. Bless our lives and help us to make a difference for You in all that we do. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen.