

June 27, 2010

How do these closing verses compare and contrast to the rest of this Psalm?

What truths or ideas does David affirm about God in these verses?

What truths or ideas does David affirm about what is going on in the world in these verses?

Look back at the opening verse of this Psalm. How does the first verse compare with the closing verses?

What do you think transpired in David's soul between the opening words of this Psalm and the ending? What "movement of soul" happened in David between how he began and where he ended?

Psalms like this one didn't come flowing out of David in one simple, fully-composed blast. This Psalm is, most likely, the product of some reflection and meditation. The Psalm is, in other words, not merely a prayer prayed, but a thoughtful, crafted prayer--reflecting more than merely spur-of-the-moment thinking. Realizing that, what do you think David intends for his readers to grasp, as they journey through this Psalm with him?

How has this Psalm encouraged you in your talking with God? How has it challenged you in speaking to God about what is on your heart?

Day Five

The next few Psalms in the book of Psalms build on some of the thematic elements found in Psalm 10. Let's touch on the next couple,

drawing on what we have already observed.

Read Psalm 11. How does this Psalm compare and contrast with Psalm 10?

What does David request of God in this Psalm?

What does David recognize about God as pictured in this Psalm?

Read Psalm 12. How does this Psalm compare and contrast with Psalm 10?

What does David request of God in this Psalm?

What does David recognize about God as pictured in this Psalm?

One of the great sources of "noise" in our lives comes from the trouble and evil we see in the world around us. And as people "interpret" that trouble--both believing people and non-believing people--their voices and their explanations can fill our hearts and heads with noise. As you think back over Psalm 10 and reflect on the next few Psalms, what kind of strategy could you adopt that would help you turn down this kind of noise?

What have you learned from David that might help lessen the noise that interrupts your soul due to the existence of wicked people in the world?

Psalms:

Turning Down the Noise

June 27, 2010

Day One

What do you do when you are really feeling bad about how life is going? Who do you openly "vent" to?

It might seem surprising, but David vents to the Lord. He is open with what is on his heart, even when the things on his heart seem hard to understand and when the things on his heart seem somewhat "unkind." Those Psalms where such feelings are expressed might be "laments" (where the psalmist is presenting the sorrow he feels) or "imprecatory psalms" (where we hear the psalmist's distress in his call for God's judgment on his enemies). Psalm 10 carries some of these flavors. Keep that in mind as you read the entire Psalm.

What is the overall "tenor" of this Psalm? How would you imagine David speaking these words to God?

How do you feel about the passion and intensity with which David makes his heart known to God?

Can you imagine yourself saying such things, expressing such thoughts to God? Why or why not?

Weekly Devotional



What, ultimately, would happen if David was not open and honest with God about what he is thinking and feeling (as he is in this Psalm)? What would that do to his relationship with God?

We do not look at Psalms like this one and insist that we should begin a habit of prayer where we call down judgment on our enemies. But if we cannot be honest with God about the magnitude of the angst and distress we feel, then we have no way of letting Him get to that part of our heart and we end up shutting off parts of our soul from Him.

Ultimately, who *do* you want to talk with about what is most eating at you, most disturbing you, most bringing you to the edge of your patience?

Talk to the Lord about how the ideas of this Psalm stir your thinking along these lines.

Day Two

Let's look a bit more closely at the distress that David gives voice to in this Psalm. Read Psalm 10:1-11.

What is David's fundamental issue? What drives him to talk to God this way?

Do you think David is correct in the way he has assessed how the "wicked" carries on in his life? Why or why not?

How does David characterize the attitude of the wicked toward God?

Do you think what David says about the wicked's assessment of God in the world is correct? That is, is what David reports that the

wicked say and think true? Why or why not?

Have you ever felt about life and about the "wicked" in the world the way David seems to feel here? If so, when and why? If not, can you imagine ever getting to that point? Why or why not?

Look at how David presses further and requests of God. Read 10:15. The language there is harsh. What do you think David really wants? What is his heart crying out for?

Why would God, through the Spirit, inspire David to not only pen these particular words but to have them preserved in Scripture for us? What benefit is it to you to hear David praying like this and to grasp the significance of this kind of heart-cry to God?

Day Three

This Psalm that we are exploring does not end with David's cry of distress. Read Psalm 10:12-15.

In spite of the trouble David sees in the world around him, what else does David indicate that he knows? What else enters into his thinking as he attempts to make sense of the world around him?

What difference does it make to affirm that God sees and notes what is going on, what the wicked are doing (as described in 10:14)?

How does this awareness impact the way David must be thinking?

What do people usually think about God's involvement or attentiveness to life's story when things appear to be going bad?

Although David can and does raise his concerns, what is different about his disposition from those who simply declare "God is totally out of touch!" or "He is totally detached from what is happening!"?

There are times, in the passion of the moment, when we make requests of God that might not be either for good or in line with His will. Such requests, however, neither force God to act nor do they confuse or antagonize God towards us. He knows! He truly understands what is going on in our hearts and can empathize with the turmoil we might be feeling. And, in the midst of such distress, He does long to comfort us. So, when we cry out in pain or anger or frustration, asking Him to take some action that, in a more temperate mood we would readily conclude is not something He would normally do, He is not distressed by our praying. We are free, in His presence, to openly speak. This is what David does.

We do not hear God's response to David's request in 10:15. Assuming that all prayer carries some sense of "dialogue" and is not merely monologue (where *we* do all the talking!), what can you imagine God saying to David in response to this request?

In what ways might that response come to David? In what ways might such a response come to you in your times of angst and sorrow?

Day Four

Let's look at the close of this particular Psalm. Read Psalm 10:16-18.

What is the tone or tenor of these verses?