

Psalm 58

Psalms 58:1-5 [New King James] *“Do you indeed speak righteousness, you silent ones? Do you judge uprightly, you sons of men? No, in heart you work wickedness; you weigh out the violence of your hands in the earth. The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent; they are like the deaf cobra that stops its ear, which will not heed the voice of charmers, charming ever so skilfully.”*

With its passion for justice this Psalm will not allow us to ignore the scandal of evil in high places.

David’s outcry against human despots is matched by Asaph’s **Psalm 82** against principalities and powers.

Both realms are faced with God’s judgement in Isaiah 24:21-22, “*that day*” refers to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, to rule the earth.

The Old Testament is filled with references to justice and is a key subject in the Psalms. Unfortunately, many judges and rulers in ancient times took justice into their own hands [as do leaders in some nations today]. They had complete authority with no accountability and the power to make their own laws.

When the earth’s judges are corrupt there is little hope of justice in this life, but the Creator God loves justice and those who obey Him will experience perfect justice, with mercy, in eternity.

Psalms 58:6-9 [New King James] *“Break their teeth in their mouth, O God! Break out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD! Let them flow away as waters which run continually; when he bends his bow, let his arrows be as if cut in pieces. Let them be like a snail which melts away as it goes, like a stillborn child of a woman, that they may not see the sun. Before your pots can feel the burning thorns, He shall take them away as with a whirlwind, as in His living and burning wrath.”*

The violent rhetoric prompts the question whether an impassioned curse of tyrants is better or worse than a shrug of the shoulders or a diplomatic silence.

The New Testament leaves us in little doubt [Matthew 23:13-36] this is the view of the One who is to come to judge the whole world, [2 Corinthians 5:10-12].

Psalms 58:10-11 [New King James] *“The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance; He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, so that men will say, ‘Surely there is a reward for the righteous; surely He is God who judges in the earth.’”*

The language used is prophetic, [Revelation 19:11-21], but the present aspiration is praiseworthy, that all people should at last openly acknowledge the worth of righteousness, [Philippians 2:9-11] and confess the inescapable judgement of God.

Of all people, national leaders should be just and fair. When they are not just and fair, people suffer.

The rich get richer, the poor poorer, politicians wrest power from people and national morality deteriorates, as God is ignored.

When right triumphs at last “*the righteous will rejoice,*” [Psalm 58:10].

Be assured by God's Word, the Christian Bible, that there will come a day of accountability and that the Creator God will judge all things, even those that are hidden in each generation, [1 Corinthians 4:5].

Be careful never to end yourself on the side of injustice, lest you find yourself standing before an angry judge, Jesus Christ.

When tyranny is allowed formidable scope, so will faith.

The righteous will see their harvest, but its glory will be that which is sown in tears and patience.

James 5:1-11 [New King James] *“Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. Indeed the wages of the labourers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you. Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord, that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.”*

James points out the context of this Psalm in his own words, especially the need the righteous have in indomitable patience.