

The Poor Man

Jesus in the Psalms

Psalm 70

Stuart W. Bryan

I. Dealing with Trouble

Hebrews 5:7–9

⁷[Jesus], in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, ⁸though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. ⁹And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,

II. The Poor Man

Psalm 70

To the Chief Musician. *A Psalm* of David. To Bring to Remembrance.

¹Make haste, O God, to deliver me! Make haste to help me, O LORD!

²Let them be ashamed and confounded Who seek my life; Let them be turned back and confused Who desire my hurt. ³Let them be turned back because of their shame, Who say, "Aha, aha!"

⁴Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; And let those who love Your salvation say continually, "Let God be magnified!"

⁵But I *am* poor and needy; Make haste to me, O God! You *are* my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay.

A. Cry for Help (1)

B. Prayer Against His Enemies (2-3 cf. Ps 7:14-16)

C. Prayer for God's Friends (4)

D. Cry for Help (5)

*¹⁴Behold, the wicked brings forth iniquity; Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood. ¹⁵He made a pit and dug it out, And has fallen into the ditch which he made. ¹⁶His trouble shall return upon his own head, And his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown.
Psalm 7:14-16*

III. Pushing the Antithesis

A. Antithesis (Gen 3:15; Ps 11:5; Pr 15:29; Jn 3:36)

One consequence of God showing mercy after the Fall is that there are those who live *for God* and those who rebel *against God*. In theological terms, there is an _____ in the world – between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman (cf. Gen 3:15). While this _____ finds its fulfillment in Satan and Jesus, it manifests itself among men (e.g., Rom 16:20). So, on the one hand, our psalm prays that God would thwart the designs of His

enemies (2-3). On the other hand, it prays that God would further the joy and praise of His people (4). God distinguishes between the friends and enemies of His Christ. We are either *for Him or against Him* (cf. Mt 12:30; Jn 3:36).

B. Two Types of Love (Pss. 5:4-6; 11:5; 139:19-22; Mal 1:2-3; Mt 5:43-48)

⁴³*"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, ⁴⁵that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? ⁴⁸Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."* (Mt 5:43-48)

So how do we reconcile Jesus' teaching on God's love to His enemies with:

- Ps 5:4-6 – *For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, Nor shall evil dwell with You. The boastful shall not stand in Your sight; You hate all workers of iniquity. You shall destroy those who speak falsehood; The LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.*
- Ps 11:5 – *The LORD tests the righteous, But the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.*

Theologians have endeavored to answer this question by distinguishing two types of love – God's *love of benevolence* and His *love of complacency*. God's *love of _____* is His love of His creatures as creatures. God loves even the wicked as His creature who bears His image. God's *love of _____* is His love of delight in which He delights in the character of the object of His love. This is the love that the Father has eternally for His Son, *"This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"* (Mk 1:11). It is this same type of love that God has for His people.

So does God love His enemies? Yes and no (Mal 1:2-3). And even Jesus calls us to imitate God's *benevolent love*, so we are to imitate God's *complacent love* as well (Ps 139:19-22):

¹⁹*Oh, that You would slay the wicked, O God! Depart from me, therefore, you bloodthirsty men. ²⁰For they speak against You wickedly; Your enemies take Your name in vain. ²¹Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate You? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? ²²I hate them with _____ hatred; I count them my enemies.*

C. Crying for Justice (cf. Mt 22:15ff; Mk 14:21; 1 Pet 2:23; Rev 6:10)

The imprecatory psalms remind us that wickedness is indeed wicked. They summon us, like our God, to hate wickedness and despise it; to pray that the wicked would turn from their wickedness and, failing that, be overthrown. So the martyrs in heaven cry out to God with a loud voice, *"How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"* (Rev 6:10) Crying for _____ is righteous. Taking _____ is not.

¹⁷*Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. ¹⁹Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

IV. Conclusion