

Psalms 10:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou hast seen it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.

Analysis

Thou hast seen it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless. David now answers his own earlier question (verse 1: why does God stand afar off?). Though God may seem distant, He sees everything. This verse affirms divine omniscience, divine justice, and divine care—the theological truths that sustain faith when experience contradicts them.

"Thou hast seen it" (ra'itah, רָאִיתָ) emphatically declares that God has observed the wickedness described in previous verses. Ra'ah means to see, perceive, consider. Though the wicked think God does not see (verse 11), David affirms that God sees comprehensively. His apparent inaction is not blindness or indifference but sovereign timing.

"For thou beholdest mischief and spite" (attah tabit amal vaka'as, אַתָּה תִּבִּיט עֲמָל וְכַאֵס) intensifies the first statement. Nabit means to look at, gaze upon, consider carefully. Amal (mischief, trouble, toil) and ka'as (spite, vexation, anger, grief) describe the wickedness and suffering David has catalogued. God not only sees but carefully observes both the evil and the pain it causes.

"To requite it with thy hand" (latet beyadekha, לָתֵת בְּיָדְךָ) reveals God's purpose for His observation. Natan means to give, render, or requite. God observes in order to repay appropriately—to punish the wicked and vindicate the oppressed. "With thy

hand" indicates direct divine action using God's power. Divine justice may be delayed but is not denied.

"The poor committeth himself unto thee" (alekha ya'azov chelekha, אֶלֶיָּךְ יֵעָזֵב חֶלֶקָה) pictures the oppressed entrusting themselves to God. Azav can mean to leave, forsake, or commit/entrust. In this context, it means to cast oneself upon God, to abandon oneself to His care. Chelekah can mean unfortunate, poor, or helpless. Those with no human help commit themselves to God.

"Thou art the helper of the fatherless" (yatom attah hayita ozer, יָתוֹם אַתָּה הָיִיתָ עֹזֵר) grounds confidence in God's character and past action. Yatom (orphan, fatherless) represents the most vulnerable in ancient society. Ozer (helper) describes one who aids, assists, or comes to the rescue. The perfect tense "has been" points to God's consistent historical pattern—He has always defended the fatherless, and His character does not change.

Historical Context

The fatherless (orphans), along with widows and strangers, formed a triad of vulnerable people whom Israel's law specifically protected. Deuteronomy commands: "Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless" (Deuteronomy 24:17). God declares Himself "a father of the fatherless" (Psalm 68:5) and warns: "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise... my wrath shall wax hot" (Exodus 22:22-24).

The prophets condemned Israel's failure to protect these vulnerable groups. Isaiah rebuked: "The fatherless and the widow... are thy princes" (Isaiah 1:23—they oppress rather than protect). Jeremiah commanded: "Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow" (Jeremiah 22:3). Malachi warned that God will be "a swift witness... against those that oppress... the fatherless" (Malachi 3:5).

James later defined pure religion as "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" (James 1:27). The consistent biblical witness is that God has special

concern for society's most vulnerable, and His people must share that concern. Where human fathers fail or are absent, God Himself acts as Father and defender.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does affirming 'Thou hast seen it' change your perspective when it appears God is not acting?
2. What does it mean practically for 'the poor to commit himself' to God, and how is this different from passive resignation?
3. Why does Scripture repeatedly emphasize God's care for the fatherless, widows, and strangers?
4. How should God's character as 'helper of the fatherless' shape the church's ministry priorities?

Interlinear Text

רָאָה תָּה	כִּי	אֶתְּ הוּא	לַעֲמֹל	וְעַל	וְעַל	תִּבְטֹחַ
Thou hast seen	H3588	H859	mischief	and spite	it for thou beholdest	
H7200			H5999	H3708	H5027	
לִתְּ	בְּיָדְךָ	עָלֶיךָ	יַעֲזֹב	חֵל כָּה	יְתֹום	
to requite	it with thy hand	H5921	committeth	the poor	of the fatherless	
H5414	H3027		H5800	H2489	H3490	
הוּא יְתֹום	אֶתְּ הוּא	עוֹזֵר:				
H859	H1961		himself unto thee thou art the helper			
			H5826			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 68:5 (Parallel theme): A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.

Psalms 146:9 (Parallel theme): The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

Psalms 55:22 (Parallel theme): Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

Jeremiah 49:11 (Parallel theme): Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.

Deuteronomy 10:18 (Parallel theme): He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

Hosea 14:3 (Parallel theme): Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.