

Psalm 72

Author: Solomon

King David's life is coming to an end, and his son Solomon has been declared king (1 Kings 1:34). Israel is at the height of power and prosperity. There is peace in the land. Finally, the people speak of hope for Israel under this new leadership, instead of only deliverance from enemies, conflict, and pain.

This Psalm is both a prayer for Solomon and prophetic in nature, because it also speaks of the coming King whose rule will be from sea to sea (verse 8). David's coming King is our King, Jesus, and David captures His characteristics in these Moreover, they offer a charge to His children.

Read Ephesians 5:1.

What are we charged to do?

If we are to imitate Him, we must know what Christ is like. By studying David's description of the King, we can know what Christ is like and then accept the charge to be like Him.

Defend (verse 4)

Who are the afflicted? The Hebrew word for *afflicted* is ani (aw-nee). Its meaning might surprise you. At first glance, one might assume that afflicted refers to the sick. But in reality, the afflicted is anyone depressed in mind or in circumstances. Who among us can't think of an individual who is depressed in mind or circumstances? The depressed aren't just found on the street corner. They may be sitting in the seat next to us each Sunday, or they might be in the cubicle beside us at work. With so many in need, how can we make a difference in their lives?

Years ago, Christian artist Babbie Mason recorded, "Each One, Reach One". What a great word! Just think of the difference we can make if each person in our study would reach just one of these afflicted or oppressed.

Read Proverbs 31:9.

How can we each reach one?

Read 1 John 3:17. How do we demonstrate God's love in us?

Pause to pray, and ask God to give you the name of someone who you can reach today.

Care (verse 12)

Another characteristic of the coming King is care. He cares—for us and for all those who are needy. We demonstrate our love for God when we provide for and look out for those who have no one to help. We *hear* their cries when we read a pamphlet in our mailbox, see a commercial on our television, or pray the prayer list from Sunday School. The stories of these,

often nameless and faceless individuals, should do more than capture our attention for a mere moment. They should change our actions for a lifetime.

Read James 1:27.

How does God view our help to the distressed?

As believers, we have a responsibility to carry out the call of Christ. Jesus fed the hungry, helped the hurting, and watched out for the weak. As we extend our hand or open our wallet to those in need, we invite the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit into our lives as well as into the lives of those we help. In caring for the needy, we may be lifting up the person who will one day find a cure for cancer, translate the Bible into the last known language, or marry our granddaughter.

Read Matthew 25:34-40.

Who are we helping when we help the afflicted or those who have no help?

We would never willingly turn God away, would we? While we want to help others, is it our responsibility to help *everyone* in need? No. Our responsibility is to help those God *leads* us to help, so we must be discerning and follow His leading. Yet we can't let our resources limit us, and we can trust God to help us help those who have no help, even if it stretches us sometimes. He fills in all the blanks.

Read Proverbs 19:17.

What is God's response to our sacrifice?

Defend the defenseless. Care for the neglected. Imitate our coming King. Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)