

THE MOST TERRIBLE POVERTY

Monday, April 2

Reading: Psalm 41

Psalm 41:1 *Blessed are those who have regard for the weak; the LORD delivers them in times of trouble. 2 The LORD protects and preserves them— they are counted among the blessed in the land— he does not give them over to the desire of their foes. 3 The LORD sustains them on their sickbed and restores them from their bed of illness.*

Mother Theresa inspired millions by serving “the poorest of the poor” in Calcutta, India for over 50 years. She once said, “We have drugs for people with diseases like leprosy. But these drugs do not treat the main problem, the disease of being unwanted. That’s what my sisters hope to provide. The sick and poor suffer even more from rejection than material want. Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty.”¹

God has a special concern for the poor, the weak, the outcast. Both the Old and New Testament constantly stress the fact that God watches over those who cannot help themselves. In Psalm 41, David reminds us that God blesses those who care for the weak. The promise is that God will help those who have helped others.

David knew what it was like to be weak and rejected. In many of the psalms we have seen David crying out about his sickness or feeling alone because of the abuse of his enemies. In this psalm he expresses his enemy’s joy and gossip because of his illness. He is feeling the burn of rejection as even a close friend has turned against him! But David knows that God is just and will show him mercy.

God’s care for the weak is seen clearly in the Beatitudes from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:3-12). Over half the list pronounces blessings on those who are poor, mournful, meek, hungry and thirsty for righteousness, and persecuted. Jesus told the disciples that when they ministered to the hungry and thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the prisoner they were really doing it for Him (Matt. 25:33-40).

The promise of Psalm 41:1-3 does not mean that those who help the needy get a “free pass” when it comes to the problems and illnesses of life. But they have the promise of God’s presence through the trials of life (41:11-12).

What is your response to the unwanted and lonely people that surround us every day? We have all been guilty of hurrying by without looking. We may have even trained ourselves to not notice them at all. But God notices and cares for the hurting, the downtrodden, the weak. He has a special place in His heart for them and asks that we do as well. If you want to be truly blessed, reach out to someone in need with the love of Christ.

¹ <https://www.sermoncentral.com/illustrations/sermon-illustration-brian-mavis-quotes-church-63?+ref=TextIllustrationSerps>