

What is the cause

The Whole Booke of Psalmes (1621) - *Psalm 10*

John TOMKINS (1586 - 1638)

CANTVS
MEDIVS
TENOR
or Playnsong
BASSVS

Glocester Tune

S.
A.
T.
B.

What is the cause that thou O Lord, art now so far from thine?
And keepest close thy countenance from us this troublous time?

2. The poor do perish by the proud,
and wicked men's desire:
Let them be taken in the craft,
that they themselves conspire.

3. For in the lust of his own heart,
th' ungodly doth delight:
So that the wicked praise himself,
and doth the Lord despise.

4. He is so proud that right and wrong
he setteth all apart:
Nay, nay, there is no God saith he,
for thus he thinks in heart.

5. Because his ways do prosper well,
he doth the laws neglect:
And with a blast doth puff against
such as would him correct.

6. Tush, tush (saith he) I have no dread,
least mine estate should change:
And why? for all adversity,
to him is very strange.

7. His mouth is full of cursedness,
of fraud, deceit and guile:
Under his tongue doth mischief fit,
and treatise all the while.

8. He lieth hid in ways and holes,
to slay the innocent:
Against the poor that pass him by
his cruel eyes are bent.

9. And like a Lyon privily
lies lurking in his den:
If he may snare them in his net,
to spoil poor simple men.

10. And for the nonce full craftily
he coucheth down I say:
11. So are great heaps of poor men made
by his strong power his pray:

The Second part.

12. Tush, God forgetteth this (saith he)
therefore I mau be bold:
His countenance is cast aside,
he doth it not behold:

13. Arise O Lord, O God in whom
the poor man's hope doth rest:
Lift up thy hand, forget not Lord,
the poor that be oppressed.

14. What blasphemy is this to thee,
Lord dost thou not abhorre it?
To hear the wicked in their hearts
say, tush, thou car'st not for it?

15. But thou seest all this wickedness,
and well dost understand:
16. That friendless and poor fatherless
are left into thy hand.

17. Of wicked and malicious men
then break the pow'r for ever:
That they with their iniquity
may perish altogether.

18. The Lord shall reign for evermore,
as King and God alone:
And he will chase the Heathen folk
out of his land each one.

19. Thou hearest O Lord the poor men's plaints,
their prayers and request:
Their hearts thou wilt confirm until
thine ears to hear be pressed.

20. To judge the poor and fatherless,
and help them in their right:
That they may be no more oppressed
with men of worldly might.

Critical notes:

Editorial natural added in Cantus bar 3, note 7:

Note values reconstructed in Cantus bar 1, notes 6-8;

this setting is similar (although not the same) to the one of Psalm 48 & 143;

Text somewhat modernised.