

INTRO

Introductory Illustration

"We are more than conquerors in our afflictions, not by avoiding them." (John Piper, *Don't Waste Your Life*).

And in the afflictions, God still reigns as the sovereign King!

- **Polycarp**: burnt at the stake b/c he **didn't** deny Christ (2nd c)
- **Blandina** - a Christian woman tortured, survived a feeding to animals & finally slain by the sword for affirming that God *alone* was God (2nd c)
- **Sanctus** - martyred after hot-copper plates were repeatedly pressed upon the most sensitive parts of his body by the corrupt, pagan, arrogant Roman government (2nd c)
- **Bloody Mary** - in her short reign, she massacred more than 300 Protestant martyrs by violently condemning them to death (16th c)
- **The Current Iranian defense minister** has affirmed that it is impossible to defeat Iran through wars because of their production and systems (21st c)

Believers often find themselves oppressed by the wicked -- but when they do, they should leave vengeance with God (Lawson). Don't retaliate - God will rise in judgment!

****READ THE TEXT****

Background to Ps 94

- **Author:** Anonymous. But an old Greek translation (the Septuagint) has *A Psalm of David; for the Fourth day of the week* (so also does the Latin Vulgate).
 - So, according to Rabbinic tradition, **Ps 94** was read on Wednesdays.
- **Situation:** There is clearly a **hostile** situation going on. The arrogant people (v.2-3) are afflicting and destroying God's people (v.5-6) while saying that God *does not see it* (or care) (v.7). They even band themselves together to condemn the innocent (v.21).
 - ***But all the while the psalmist has his HOPE and his point of view fastened on God!***

God is a God/King who Judges

WHAT KIND OF JUDGE IS GOD???

He is an...

- Active Judge (1-2)
- Repaying Judge (2a, 23)
- Powerful Judge (9a)
- Omniscient Judge (9b)
- Disciplining Judge (12)
- Faithful Judge (14)
- Steadfast Judge (17-18)
- Protecting Judge (19-22)
- Destroying Judge (23)

Retaliation = revenge. This psalm shows God as the revenger/avenger

THESIS--Psalm 94 highlights one grand truth: the LORD is the King -- and He is a King who judges. We will flesh this out in 3 points as we travel through the psalm...

I. BE AWARE — O KING! (1-7)

These verses serve to call God to action & to 'inform God'.

- A. "Vengeance" consists of the Lord Himself avenging wrongdoing.
 - 1. God is called the **tAmq'n>-lae** – God of **vengeances**. He is the Holy God who rightly has vengeance upon those who act *dishonorably*
 - 2. **V.2** – God is summoned to "**rise up**" and to "**return**" the recompense upon the arrogant.
 - a) What a reminder that God **does** pay back the wicked for their deeds. God's vengeance is *not* vindictive but it's a response to all the evil done by the wicked.
 - b) **Lamentations 3:64** ⁶⁴ You will recompense them, O LORD, According to the work of their hands.
 - 3. When *justice* seems absent, the result is **not** to take matters into your own hands but to *cry out to God* to provide the justice in His way and in His time and for His glory (cf. Barrick)
- B. V.2 - render recompense (sandwich structure with the end of the psalm)
- C. Vv.3-6 - the description — they are boasting, arrogant speech, crush God's people & kill the defenseless (widow, orphan, stranger = abortion).
- D. V.7 - Wicked people reject the truth that **God sees all and knows all**.
 - 1. This is the heart of all nonbelievers: **practical atheism**. God doesn't see, nor does he hear, nor will he act, nor will he condemn me.
 - 2. Remember: "The Captain of your salvation will not be caught off guard!" (Varner).

II. BE WARNED — O FOOLS! (8-11)

There may be no more obvious demonstration of foolish thinking than someone imagining that God is unaware of what they are doing.

The kingship of God beckons us to warn sinners!

- A. Vv.9-11 - God even knows an individual's thoughts. No evil can be done in total secrecy—God sees and will judge accordingly.
 - 1. Rev 2.23 - I am the one who searches the mind/heart & will give to each of you according to your deeds! (**Jesus speaking!**)
 - 2. **Prov 20:12** ¹² The hearing ear and the seeing eye, The LORD has made both of them.
- B. **V.11**- a mere breath = vanity (Ecclesiastes)
- C. See quotation of this verse in 1 Corinthians 3:20 and the reference to the concept in Romans 1:21. **Be warned!!**
- D. **v.11 is quoted in 1 Cor 3:20 (context!)**
 - 1. God reads the hearts of ALL men -- even though for a time they are unpunished

2. Jehovah reads the inmost thoughts & motives of all people.
3. **Let us be warned & remember that God sees under our skin!**

III. **BE BLESSED — O BELIEVERS!** (12-23)

In stark contrast, now a blessing comes to all who respond positively to divine instruction.

A. **There is benefit in God's chastisement (12-15)**

1. **v.12-15** - the DISCIPLINE/chastening of the LORD -- the evils that God's people endure are actually designed by God for their SPIRITUAL PROFIT/good/wellbeing (Lawson, 106)
2. *Spurgeon*
He may chasten & correct,
But he never can neglect;
May in faithfulness reprove,
But he ne'er can cease to love.
In sum: these verses show the person who has God-given happiness; bestowed through a positive & trusting response to the discipline & instruction of God (Tate, 494).

V.14 - God will not abandon/forsake us!

B. **There is strength in God's lovingkindness (17-18)**

1. There is tremendous hope & support in God's loyal love. God has remained faithful for centuries while His people were in trouble...will He fail now? **Surely not!**
2. **V.18 - God's loyal love holds us up.**
 - a) Titus 3.4-5 - God's love for mankind...He saved us!

C. **There is comfort in God's consolations (19)**

1. Same words found here in Isa 66:11-13 speaking of the tender comfort a nursing child has with his mother.
2. The verb "delights" is a rare word speaking of a **supreme/towering delight** (the greatest of all) (Ps 119.47).
3. **2 Cor 1:3-5****
 - a) God's consolations are —

Compassionate
Tender
Dependable
Delightful
Passionate (Hos 11.8).

D. **There is protection in God's stronghold (20-22)**

1. God's protection is must stronger & greater than any 'throne of destruction'/corrupt throne that attempts to rival it.
 - a) God shares His **throne** with No one! (he has no ally's to His throne!)
2. V.22 - GOD is my stronghold, the rock of my refuge

E. **There is assurance in God's victory (23)**

1. Note how the psalm begins with YHWH Elohim (v.1) & ends with the same phrase (v.23- YHWH Elohim; LORD GOD). = The unrivaled, supreme, towering power of God!

BE WARNED!!!

- 1. God rises in judgment against all the proud!**
- 2. God rises in judgment because He knows everything!**
- 3. God rises in judgment with perfect righteousness!**
- 4. God rises in judgment to destroy all the wicked eternally!**

V.22 - provides a never ending stream of *confidence & comfort*.

A believer will never be judged by God's vengeance.

Rom 5:9 ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of *God* through Him.

CONCL-

Concluding Illustration

- 1 Peter 4:12-19 - when unjustly treated -- entrust your soul to a faithful Creator!
- But at the end of the day, **the righteous must live by faith** (Hab 2.4).