

Psalm 94 – “God Our Judge”

Overview

Psalm 94 is an appeal to the Lord, as “Judge of the earth,” to redress the wrongs perpetrated against the weak by arrogant and wicked persons who occupy seats of power. It speaks conviction and terror to the persecutors and comfort and peace to the persecuted. Because the Lord is the Judge of the universe, we can appeal to Him for justice. God’s justice ensures that wickedness will not triumph no matter how bad the circumstances appear.

1. “Avenge” is generally used in the sense of achieving justice, whereas “revenge” stresses retaliation. “Vengeance” consists of the Lord Himself avenging wrongdoing. Compare Romans 12:18-19 and 1 Thessalonians 4:6.

Only in God is it possible for love, compassion, and vengeance to be exhibited along with holiness in the same act. When God takes vengeance, he does not act merely out of outraged feelings. He acts as the moral judge of the universe, responsible to punish sin as well as reward righteousness.

2. What does it mean for God to “shine forth”? See also Deut. 32:36, 42; 33:2

3. How would you describe the tone of verses 1-3? Explain your answer
 - a. Vengeful and bitter
 - b. Self-righteous
 - c. Pleading
 - d. Confident and direct

4. What is the psalmist’s complaint in verse 3?

5. What is the sin of the wicked in verses 4-7? How do they misuse power? Why do they oppress the powerless?

6. What is the significance of the group of people mentioned in verse 6? See also Deut. 10:18-19; Ps. 46:9 and James 1:27.

7. How is injustice connected to disregard for the Lord?

8. What is the psalmist's warning in verses 8-11? What is his argument?

9. If God created man, what can we deduce about God; about man?

10. Has the psalmist found an answer for the question posed in verse 3?

11. How does the focus change in verse 12? If wickedness goes unpunished, what can the psalmist hope for the righteous in verses 12-13?

12. What kind of encounter has the psalmist had with the wicked in verses 16-21? What keeps him going?

13. What does the fact that God has committed himself to judge the world show about his character?

14. Have you ever continued doing wrong because no punishment or ill consequences followed? How did you become aware of your misdeeds? Would you consider a group to help keep you accountable?

15. List responsibilities of the righteous that you find in Psalm 94?
 - a. Verses 1 – 7 _____
 - b. Verses 8 – 11 _____
 - c. Verses 12 – 15 _____

d. Verses 16 – 23 _____

16. According to Psalm 96:10, 13 how will God judge?

The New Testament, like the Old Testament, strongly affirms God as the ultimate judge. John wrote that Jesus was sent into the world not to condemn, but so that all who believe might be saved (John 3:17). The verdict of condemnation is passed on the lost by their own condition and actions. The Father “has entrusted all judgment to the Son” (John 5:22, Acts 10:42). A person’s response to Jesus has become the dividing line between life and death (John 5:19-30). So Jesus announced to the crowds during the week of his death: “As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it” (John 12:47-49).

The book of Romans picks up the theme and portrays God our judge. In chapter 2, Paul sets forth principles that govern God’s judgment.

17. Describe God’s judgment based on the following verses:

a. Romans 2:2 _____

b. Romans 2:6-11 _____

Applying Psalm 94

- Take trouble and persecution to the Lord in prayer
- Count yourself blessed when God disciplines you
- Remind yourself that God will never abandon His people
- Delight in God’s comfort when troubled by disquieting thoughts

We can remain patient and not be disturbed by the plotting of our foes. Their time is short, their end sure because God is our Judge.