

“The LORD Will Not Cast Off His People”

When the Wicked Seem to Triumph

Psalm 94

Psalm 93 declared a great and unshakable truth: “*The LORD reigneth.*” It presents that truth simply and powerfully — God is on the throne, His rule is established, and nothing can overthrow His authority.

But as we come to Psalm 94, we are immediately confronted with a question that naturally arises from that truth: If the LORD reigns, why do the wicked seem to prosper?

This psalm does not deny the reign of God — it assumes it. But it wrestles with how that reign is understood in a world filled with injustice, oppression, and apparent silence from heaven.

The psalm opens with the cry, “*O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth... shew thyself.*” This is not a cry of unbelief — it is a cry of faith that is struggling to reconcile what it knows about God with what it sees in the world.

What begins as a plea for God to act becomes:

- A reminder that God does see
- A revelation that God is teaching His people
- And ultimately, a confidence that God will judge the wicked and preserve His own

Psalm 93 tells us that God reigns.

Psalm 94 shows us what it means to live by that truth when life doesn’t seem to reflect it.

I. A CRY FOR DIVINE VENGEANCE — vv. 1-7

A. The appeal to a righteous Judge (vv. 1-2)

1. The possession of vengeance

- a) "To whom vengeance belongeth" is repeated for emphasis.
- b) This is not a sinful desire for revenge. It is an acknowledgement that justice belongs to God alone.

Romans 12:19

¹⁹ Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

2. The petition for manifestation — "shew thyself"

- a) Literally, "shine forth" — a call for God to make His justice visible.
- b) The issue is not whether God is just, but that His justice seems hidden.

3. The plea for justice — "Lift up thyself... render a reward to the proud."

- a) "Lift up thyself" — a call for God to arise as Judge
- b) "Render a reward" — the idea of repayment according to works

B. The frustration over the prosperity of the wicked (vv. 3-4)

"LORD, how long shall the wicked... triumph?"

- 1. The perplexing delay — "how long?" — a familiar cry in Scripture. This is not unbelief, but faith under pressure.

Revelation 6:10

¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

2. The pride of the wicked — “How long shall they utter and speak hard things?” (v. 4a)

“Hard things” — arrogant, insolent speech — they speak as if accountability does not exist.

3. The boasting of the wicked — “All the workers of iniquity boast themselves” (v. 4b)

One of the marks of a depraved society is not just sin — but boasting in sin.

C. The oppression by the wicked (vv. 5-6)

“They break in pieces thy people, O LORD...”

1. The targets of their cruelty (v. 5) — “thy people,” “thine heritage”
2. The vulnerable they afflict (v. 6)

“Widow,” “stranger,” and “fatherless” — these represent those least able to defend themselves.

- The wicked often reveal themselves most clearly in how they treat the helpless.

D. The delusion of the wicked (v. 7)

“Yet they say, The LORD shall not see...”

1. Practical atheism — they may not deny God’s existence outright, but they deny His awareness, His involvement, and His judgment.

2. The denial of divine judgment — “neither shall the God of Jacob regard it” — they believe they are unseen and therefore safe.

II. A CORRECTION OF FOOLISH THINKING — vv. 8-11

The wicked have convinced themselves that God does not see — that He does not regard what is happening. But before the psalm moves on to comfort the believer, it first confronts that false thinking directly.

A. The rebuke of spiritual foolishness (v. 8)

1. The description of the wicked — “brutish” and “fools” — acting without spiritual understanding and are morally and spiritually blind.

Psalm 14:1

¹ The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God...*

2. The call to consider — “when will ye be wise?” — this is a challenge to think rightly and implies that their position is indefensible if honestly examined.

B. The reason from creation (vv. 9-10)

This is one of the clearest arguments in Scripture for God’s omniscience.

1. The argument from design (v. 9) — an argument from cause to effect: the Creator cannot be less than His creation.

Proverbs 15:3

³ The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

2. The argument from authority (v. 10) — God is

fully aware and fully capable of judgment.

C. The revelation of man's vanity (v. 11)

1. The extent of God's knowledge — not just actions, but thoughts are known to Him.

Psalm 139:2 [quoted in 1 Cor. 3:20]

² Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising,
thou understandest my thought afar off.

2. The evaluation of man's thinking — "they are vanity" — empty, futile, without substance or lasting value.

III. THE COMFORT OF DIVINE INSTRUCTION — VV. 12-15

Up to this point, everything has been outward — the wicked, their actions, their thinking. Now the focus turns inward — to what God is doing in the life of His people.

A. The blessedness of divine chastening (v. 12)

1. A surprising declaration
 - a) "Blessed" — happy, favored, spiritually prosperous
 - b) This is connected to chastening, not to ease. We tend to associate blessing with comfort — God associates it with correction and instruction.
2. The source of chastening — "Whom thou chastenest, O LORD" — this is something God Himself is using for the betterment of His children.

Hebrews 12:6

⁶ For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

3. The purpose of chastening — “and teachest him out of thy law. God is forming understanding, dependence, and obedience.

Hebrews 12:11

¹¹ Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

B. The rest produced through instruction (v. 13)

1. The goal is rest — not necessarily removal of adversity, but rest in the midst of it.
2. The duration of adversity — “until the pit be digged for the wicked” — judgment is coming, but it is not always immediate.

2 Peter 2:9

⁹ The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

C. The assurance of God’s faithfulness (v. 14)

1. The ground of comfort — “for” — this explains everything that comes before it. Why does God chasten? Why does He delay judgment? Because He has not abandoned His people.
2. Two key expressions
 - a) “Will not cast off” — not reject, not abandon
 - b) “Will not forsake” — not leave behind

Deuteronomy 31:6 [quoted in Heb. 13:5]

⁶ Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor

be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he *it is* that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

3. "His people... His inheritance" — speaks of possession and relationship. The believer is not just helped by God — we belong to Him.

D. The certainty of coming justice (v. 15)

1. The restoration of order — judgment will return to where it belongs: aligned with righteousness.
 2. The alignment of the righteous — "And all the upright in heart shall follow it" — the righteous will be vindicated, aligned with God's judgment, and rejoice in His justice.
- The greatest evidence that God has not cast us off is not the absence of trouble — but the presence of His work in us through it.

IV. THE CONFIDENCE OF PERSONAL TESTIMONY — VV. 16-23

God has not cast off His people — He is teaching them, sustaining them, and will ultimately vindicate them. But that truth is not meant to remain abstract. It is meant to be lived. And so, the psalmist now moves from what God does for His people in general to what God has done for him personally.

A. The realization of human inability (v. 16)

1. The question of helplessness — this reflects a real struggle. The psalmist looks around and finds no human defender and no adequate help.
2. The isolation of the righteous — There are moments when the believer realizes that no

earthly help is sufficient.

Psalm 142:4

⁴ I looked on *my* right hand, and beheld, but *there* was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.

B. The recognition of divine help (vv. 17-18)

1. The nearness of despair (v. 17) — “almost dwelt in silence” — near death. This is an honest assessment of his situation.
2. The intervention of God — “unless the LORD had been my help” — the psalmist recognizes that he would not have made it without the Lord.
3. The stability given by mercy (v. 18)
 - a) “Foot slippeth” — loss of stability, spiritual or emotional
 - b) “Held me up” — sustained, supported, prevented collapse

Psalm 37:24

²⁴ Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth *him with* his hand.

C. The relief of divine comfort (v. 19)

1. The inner struggle — “multitude of thoughts” — anxiety, confusion, inner turmoil.
2. The source of comforts — “thy comforts” — this comes from God’s Word, His presence, and His promises.

3. The result — “delight my soul” — God restores joy.

2 Corinthians 1:3–4

³ Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; ⁴ Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

D. The rejection of wicked authority (vv. 20-21)

1. The character of the wicked rule
 - a) “Throne of iniquity” — corrupt authority
 - b) “Which frameth mischief by a law” — legalized injustice
2. The continued opposition to the righteous (v. 21)

The conflict remains real, but God is not aligned with the oppressor.

E. The reaffirmation of divine refuge (v. 22)

1. Personal confession — “My defence... my God... my refuge” — personal faith
2. Imagery of security
 - a) “Defence” — high place, stronghold
 - b) “Rock” — stability, unshakable foundation

F. The assurance of final judgment (v. 23)

1. The principle of retribution — “And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity” — the wicked will

reap what they have sown.

2. The certainty of destruction — “Shall cut them off in their own wickedness”
3. The final confidence — “yea, the LORD our God shall cut them off” — ends where the psalm began: with God as judge.

Conclusion:

There will be times when:

- Your foot seems to slip
- Your thoughts are overwhelmed
- And no one else can stand for you

But the testimony of this psalm is clear:

“Unless the LORD had been my help...”

And not only that:

“The LORD is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge.”

Psalm 94 does not remove the reality of injustice — but it gives us the right perspective on it.

The LORD reigns — even when it doesn’t look like it — and He will make it known in His time.