

# Psalm 94 • O God of vengeance, shine forth!

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Psalm 94. This is an interesting Psalm because it's a psalm that calls upon God to take vengeance against the wicked, particularly against those who oppose the people of God. And you might say, well, isn't vengeance a bad thing? Well, vengeance is something you and I are not to take. But there's nothing saying that you can't ask the Lord to take vengeance. We're to leave it in His hands. We're to leave all those judgments in His hands. And that's what the psalmist is doing.

He says,

*"1 O LORD, God of vengeance, (Even speaks to him by that name) O God of vengeance, shine forth!"*

*2 Rise up, O judge of the earth; repay to the proud what they deserve!*

*"3 O LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked exult?" (ESV)*

And that word, exult, we've mentioned several times in the Psalms, it means to be glad or to rejoice. And he's saying, how long will the wicked rejoice in their wicked deeds, or their wickedness.

He says in verse 4,

*"They pour out their arrogant words; all the evildoers boast.*

*5 They crush your people, O LORD, and afflict your heritage.*

*6 They kill the widow and the sojourner, and murder the fatherless;*

*7 and they say, "The LORD does not see; the God of Jacob does not perceive."*

*8 Understand, O dumbest of the people! Fools, when will you be wise?*

*9 He who planted the ear, does he not hear? He who formed the eye, does he not see?*

*10 He who disciplines the nations, does he not rebuke? He who teaches man knowledge -*

*11 the LORD- knows the thoughts of man, that they are but a breath.*

*12 Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O LORD, and whom you teach out of your law,*

*13 to give him rest from days of trouble, until a pit is dug for the wicked.*

*14 For the LORD will not forsake his people; he will not abandon his heritage;*

*15 for justice will return to the righteous, and all the upright in heart will follow it.*

*16 Who rises up for me against the wicked? Who stands up for me against evildoers?*

*17 If the Lord had not been my help, my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence.*

*18 When I thought, "My foot slips," your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up.*

*19 When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul.*

*20 Can wicked rulers be allied with you, those who frame injustice by statute?*

*21 They band together against the life of the righteous and condemn the innocent to death.*

*22 But the LORD has become my stronghold, and my God the rock of my refuge.*

*23 He will bring back on them their iniquity and wipe them out for their wickedness; the LORD our God will wipe them out."*

This is a psalm, essentially, speaking of the coming of judgment. And none of us really likes to talk about judgment, especially, judgment coming. But we always like to talk about peace and safety. But the only way that peace and safety can prevail is when Jesus returns to rule the earth. And judgment is a necessary part of that.

The only way that peace is going to rule is if violence is put down. The only way safety is going to prevail is when danger is put away. And that's when the Lord comes out in judgment and basically, deals with the wicked and the lawless to establish order in the world.

It would be great if Jesus just came on the scene and all of a sudden everybody was just better. The wicked and the evil were like, hey, I'm not wicked anymore. I'm not evil anymore! Wouldn't that be wonderful? As if there's kind of this tap of the magic Disney wand or something, and all of a sudden we're just all better. But that's not how it works.

The Bible says, that there is a day that God has set aside when He will judge the world. And that's how God is going to establish order, by judging those who are of disorder. But you know what? Here's the weird thing. It's really the same for all of us who are called by His name.

When you talk about judgment, do you know that as Christians, every day, every day we submit to judgment. And we do it every time we open up the Bible. We don't call it judgment. We call it conviction. But when you stop and think about it, it's the same thing. Because what does the Word of God do in our lives? Well, the Bible says that it's *"a double edged sword."* And you know what that double edged sword does? It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12) Isn't that what the Word of God does?

When you and I open up the Scripture, don't you feel the Lord, lovingly judging through His Word, the thoughts and attitudes of your heart? And again, we call it conviction. And we respond to that conviction with, hopefully, a heart of repentance. And we say, oh, Lord, busted! You got me! Guilty! Please, Lord, forgive me. Strengthen me to do Your will. I long to do what's right.

Well, what's going on? What's going on when that happens? It's the same thing that's going to happen when Jesus comes back. It's judgment for the sake of restoring order. Why is God judging the thoughts and attitudes of our heart through His Word? It's because He knows there's disorder in our hearts and minds. There's disorder. That's what causes - that's what sin... That's the result of sin in our lives. Sin brings disorder.

There's disorder in our bodies. There's disorder in our minds. There's disorder in our spirit and soul. There's disorder in our lives. And so, we come to church, or we open our Bibles at home, or we're listening somewhere as we're driving and we hear the Word of God being taught and we're convicted. And we're instantly

like, oh, yes. Thank you, Lord! I needed that. Ouch, but yeah, I needed that." Right?

And we respond to the Holy Spirit. We say, yes, Lord! And He's bringing order. He's bringing order to disorder. Because the Bible says, "*Our God is not a God of disorder but of peace*—" Right? (1 Corinthians 14:33) The more you allow, or, invite the Holy Spirit into your life, the more He's going to put in order (Pastor Paul making motion with hands and mouth, to indicate creating order) the things of your life.

It's like inviting Him in to clean up your room. You remember doing that with your parents? I used to hate that. When I... Because when my mother would tell me to clean my room, which, and it was almost never clean, I would, I'd say, okay, okay. And I just want to shut the door. And just take my... And it would take me hours. But, if you did it right, it could be kind of fun because you find things you haven't seen in weeks under your piles of junk. It's like, I just thought I lost that! And you start playing with it again, and...

But, when my mother would come in to help me clean the room, of course, I had to work. And work hard. Pick that up. Put that over there. Now put that in your... What is this? What? I don't even recognize that. Get that out of here! And she's just going through. And, although it's a bad picture, it's that similar sort of an idea of inviting the Holy Spirit into our lives.

When the Word convicts us, we're like opening the door to a room that's messy and disorderly. And He's going, eww, that's terrible! And you and I think you even know better. Wouldn't you like it if that room was put in order? And don't you...

Have you ever cleaned up a place in your life, like your room, your living room or whatever? And have you ever just looked at it then and just kind of went, ah! When things are in order, it's like you can have peace. Right? When things are chaotic, it steals your peace. That's one of the reasons we like to have order in our lives. Order in our surroundings.

Well that's what God's doing in our lives through that system of judgment through the Word. Judging the thoughts and attitudes of the heart, bringing conviction, bringing His spirit to bear as we surrender those things. So, that He can establish a new order. His order in our lives.