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## Psalm 94

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Psalm 94.

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### Topics.

- Lord, God of vengeance, shine forth! Rise up, O Judge of the earth.
- Fools, when will you be wise? The LORD knows the thoughts of man.
- The LORD will not forsake His people; He will not abandon His heritage.
- When I thought, "my foot slips," your love, O LORD, held me up.
- Can wicked rulers be allied with the righteous.
- The LORD has become my stronghold, and the rock of my refuge.

**FOR INFORMATION:** concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

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### INTRODUCTION

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Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

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### BOOK FOUR (PSALM 90-106)

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### PSALM 94:1-7

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#### God of Vengeance, Shine Forth! Rise up, O Judge of the Earth.

- **Psalm 94:1-7:** O LORD, God of vengeance, O God of vengeance, shine forth! <sup>2</sup>Rise up, O judge of the earth; repay to the proud what they deserve! <sup>3</sup>O LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked exult? <sup>4</sup>They pour out their arrogant words; all the evildoers boast. <sup>5</sup>They crush your people, O LORD, and afflict your heritage. <sup>6</sup>They kill the widow and the sojourner, and murder the fatherless; <sup>7</sup>and they say, "The LORD does not see; the God of Jacob does not perceive."

**O LORD, God of vengeance:** since God is Holy and a God of justice the act of vengeance administered by God is an act of justice. Mankind is sinful and flawed they need lawyers, courts, witness's evidence and a jury to administer justice, but God needs none of these since God not only sees all our outward behaviour, he also sees the inward motivation of our hearts and the thoughts of our minds.

Added to this He is Holy and justice is a pillar of his throne. Verse ten shows that the focus here is not only upon the wickedness of individuals but also the wickedness of nations, kings, rulers and governments (v10) most likely through war, oppression and deception. Here is a perfect description of the wicked, they are prideful, arrogant and their works are evil. They boast of their achievements and afflict, oppress and destroy God's people and kill widows, travellers and children that are fatherless and are so self-centred and narcissistic that they think the LORD does not see their outward works of wickedness or the evil dwelling in their hearts.

**Rise up, O judge of the earth:** (v2) it is almost certain that the Psalmist is praying for God to rise up and judge all the wickedness of Israel's prideful, arrogant and murderous enemies, but it can also be seen as a prayer for God to rise up and judge all the cruelty, oppression, wickedness and ungodliness upon all the earth. This is truly the heartfelt cry of all the faithful when they see the innocent suffering at the hands of rapist, terrorist, murders and those who abuse children etc. At this present time God's judgment is delayed since we are living in a time of God's grace so that those who may be saved will be saved. It could be said that we are living in the long day of death and the long day of grace until the glorious day Christ returns to gather the faithful to himself and judge the wicked.

**O LORD, how long shall the wicked exult themselves?** (v3) the idea here is that the wicked exalt themselves above others and see themselves as superior to the righteous and those who have less. The underlying message of some religious teachings today is that the righteous prosper and flourish while the wicked suffer and lack, but these words of the Psalmist show that real life is not as black and white or as simple as that. Clearly the wicked are exalted and prospering at the time this Psalm was being written and one has to be blind not to see that at this present time those who deny God oppress the poor and use lies, deception and violence for their own selfish gain are prospering.

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## PSALM 94:8-11

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### **When will Fools be Wise? The LORD knows the Thoughts of Man.**

- **Psalm 94:8-11:** Understand, O dullest of the people! Fools, when will you be wise? <sup>9</sup>He who planted the ear, does he not hear? He who formed the eye, does he not see? <sup>10</sup>He who disciplines the nations, does he not rebuke? He who teaches man knowledge— <sup>11</sup>the LORD —knows the thoughts of man, that they are but a breath.

Here is one of the reasons it is foolish for anyone to think that they can be saved by their own self-righteousness, God knows all our thoughts, thoughts of anger, selfishness, pride, envy, lustful thoughts and thoughts of jealousy, greed, bitterness, resentment, covertness and such like things. Since not one of us is free of some kind of sinful thought we all stand as sinners before the pure Holiness and light of God Those who act wickedly are counted as fools, because they do not consider that the God who created all things and who judges the nations sees what they do and do not bear in mind that their life is but a breath of wind.

One of the characteristics of wisdom is having the ability to see the end result of an action or behaviour done in the present moment. Those who behave in a manner without considering the ramifications of their behaviour and actions is from heavens perspective and from a wise person's perspective counted as fools. Psalm fifty-three describes a fool as one who says in their heart that there is no God they rebel against His will, are corrupt and full of wicked acts. They have no understanding or knowledge of what is important to God or have turned from the LORD and do not seek after Him and therefore God has rejected them.

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## PSALM 94:12-15

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### **The LORD will Not Forsake His People; or Abandon His Heritage.**

- **Psalm 94:12-15:** Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O LORD, and whom you teach out of your law, <sup>13</sup>to give him rest from days of trouble, until a pit is dug for the wicked. <sup>14</sup>For the LORD will not forsake his people; he will not abandon his heritage; <sup>15</sup>for justice will return to the righteous, and all the upright in heart will follow it.

Since Israel had entered into a covenant with God at Mount Sinai that stated if they did what was right before Him God would bless all they did, but if they turned from Him to worship foreign gods He would withdraw

his hand of blessing upon their health, their land, their farms and everything they set their hand to do and instead of favouring their armies He would favour the armies of their enemies. New Testament Christians have not entered into any such covenant, but God still disciplines us should we act as a child against His will. He does this by withdrawing his joy, peace and contentment that dwells within those who faithfully walk before Him with a clear conscience. Walking with a clear conscience does not mean that we are without sin, if we were able to attain to the glorious state of living a sin-free life Christ died for no reason. This is why we are saved by grace, walking with a clear conscience means we are not deliberately doing anything that is violating the law of love and Jesus command to all his followers love your neighbour as yourself, meaning do not deliberately do anything that is inflicting harm or hurt upon anyone physically, verbally, financially, sexually, mentally, emotionally or spiritually.

**Justice will return to the righteous:** (v15) the ultimate fulfilment of these words will be when Christ returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to gather the faithful to himself, judge the wicked and establish God's Kingdom of righteousness justice, joy and peace on earth.

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## PSALM 94:16-19

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### **When I thought, "My Foot Slips," Your Love, O LORD, Held Me Up.**

- **Psalm 94:16-19:** Who rises up for me against the wicked? Who stands up for me against evildoers? <sup>17</sup>If the LORD had not been my help, my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence. <sup>18</sup>When I thought, "My foot slips," your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up. <sup>19</sup>When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul.

**The land of silence** refers to the grave, it seems the Psalmist is surrounded by evildoers and has no one to stand up or defend or comfort him against their wickedness toward him, but he finds his strength and comfort in the love of God. In our modern world this could be likened to a young person being constantly bullied by those in their school and having no friends to comfort or strengthen them, so they feel suicidal in the darkness of their despair and depression and the land of silence becomes a very attractive place to be. Should such young people know the love of God as this Psalmist did, they would be strengthened and comforted in the same way that he was so that their foot would not sadly slip into the land of silence.

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## PSALM 94:20-21

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### **Can wicked Rulers be Allied with the Righteous?**

- **Psalm 94:20-21:** Can wicked rulers be allied with you, those who frame injustice by statute? <sup>21</sup>They band together against the life of the righteous and condemn the innocent to death.

It seems that certain leaders and rulers of Israel are aligning themselves with those who pervert justice and gather together against the righteous and innocent for their advantage and gain. This may be difficult for the faithful to understand, but when it is considered how many kings of Israel did what was utterly offensive to God to advance their own power and kingdom it becomes clear that some in the Kingdom of God use their privileged position and authority for their own advantage and gain. Added to this there are some preachers of religion even today who twist the Scriptures of the Bible to appeal to self, ego and pride to attract a greater number of followers not because they care about saving the lost to eternal salvation, but to extend their global religious empire and their fame and their worldly riches.

**The LORD has Become My Stronghold, and the Rock of My Refuge.**

- **Psalm 94:22-23:** But the LORD has become my stronghold, and my God the rock of my refuge. <sup>23</sup>He will bring back on them their iniquity and wipe them out for their wickedness; the LORD our God will wipe them out.

As one travels through the Old Testament (especially the Psalms of David) it becomes clear that when they talk of the LORD strengthening them, they do not mean physically, but inwardly. God strengthened their heart and their mind by His Spirit, His love and His grace. The words, "God is my stronghold, and my rock," means that He is the strength of their mind and their heart, it is His love and grace that kept them from falling apart while troubles, grief's, sorrows and hardships surrounded them.

**The LORD our God will wipe them out:** since there are no specific details of what period of history the writer is referring to these words can refer to the following three scenarios:

1. An immediate application to the Psalmist own personal troubles and hardships.
2. The first resurrection when Christ returns in glory and the wicked are judged according to their wickedness. (Rev. 20:4-6).
3. To the Great White Throne judgment and second death when God descends to earth and judges the dead raised from the sea and the grave. (Rev. 20:11-15).

**God will wipe the wicked out (v23)** since this is a foundational teaching of the Bible and a truth of God it is important to know what the character of a righteous person looks like to avoid being judged amongst the wicked. Jesus told his followers that there is, no commandment greater than the following two:

- You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. (Mark 12:30).
- You shall love your neighbour as yourself. (Mark 12:31).

These two commandments are not only the greatest commandments in the entire Bible but also the greatest commandments under sun, the moon, the stars and all the heavenly hosts. Before God and the Lord Jesus Christ there is no other commandment more important than these two commandments. After loving God with all our heart, mind and strength the thing that delights Him the most is when those who belong to Christ are obeying his command to, "love your neighbour as yourself," (Matt. 22:39). To, "Love your neighbour as yourself," means do not deliberately do harm to other humans. No sane person deliberately does things to inflict pain on themselves, loving others as you love yourself is not about feeling some warm and fuzzy emotion towards others, it is about not hurting others as you would not hurt yourself.

James the brother of Jesus said:

- If you really fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself," you are doing well. (James 2:8).

James calls Jesus command, "Love your neighbour as yourself," the royal law and says if we are keeping this one law we are doing well. The thing God hates the most is when we deliberately do harm to another person, physically, verbally, financially sexually, emotionally or spiritually and the thing God loves the most is when we do-good to others. It is interesting to notice that the major crime that God points out in Noah's time and one of the main reasons for the flood was because of all the violence in the land.

- Micah wrote: “What the LORD requires of mankind is to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with their God” (Micah 6:5-10).
- Isaiah says: “The LORD loves justice, hates robbery and wrong doing” (Isaiah 61:8).
- Jeremiah said: “Those who know God practise steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, because it is in these things that God delights” (Jer. 9:24).

The great prophets Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah not only show the law is about doing-good to others and protecting them from harm and hurt, but also clearly show that the spirit under-pinning the Ten Commandments, is love because each law protects another human from harm.

Paul in his letter to the Romans wrote:

- Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:10).

Paul shines a brilliant spotlight on the truth that the spirit underpinning the law is love, because the spirit of the law is to protect the innocent from all types of harm and hurt, whoever keeps the law will do no wrong to a neighbour (neighbour embraces all mankind not just those in God's Kingdom). Those who belong to Christ aim to keep the law not to get saved, but because it honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of Jesus and the Christian faith and because it is the right and loving thing to do. The faithful in Christ's global Kingdom not only understand that righteousness that leads to eternal life is a free gift of God that comes through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and cannot be earned by self-effort, but also know that from the love of God dwelling within their heart and displayed on the bloodstained cross of Calvary they are called to live a lifestyle that honours the King and Saviour they worship and follow and called to treat others with decency, respect and honest justice.

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## JESUS FAMOUS SERMON ON THE MOUNT

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The constant theme throughout Jesus famous Sermon on the Mount is doing what is right before God by seeking the way of peace in all situations. Jesus calls Christians to treat people fairly and with respect, dignity, decency grace compassion, kindness, mercy and to be quick to forgive. This means living a life that honours God and the Lord Jesus Christ is about doing right to those in the church and those outside of it. This is the reason the message Jesus spoke on the mountain is referred to as, “The Famous Sermon” because the principals if followed not only by Christians, but all humanity are the only way to peace (Matt 5). Based on the commandment, love your neighbour as yourself and the law it could be said that a wicked and evil person is one who deliberately and consciously denies the existence of God and deliberately does harm to other humans. For further information on Jesus Famous Sermon see:

- Matthew 5 in, Commentary NT (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Those who do all they can to love God with all their heart, mind and strength and love their neighbour as themselves. (Mark 12:30-31) will hear the words of their Master, “Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.” (Matt. 25:21).

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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