

The Lord Helps His People

Psa. 94

Introduction:

1. It has long been a problem. Why do the wicked prosper while the people of God are afflicted?
2. Wicked Cain killed faithful Abel. The Egyptians oppressed the Hebrews with slavery. Job suffered although he was righteous. And even Jesus died on a cross. Is it any wonder that the Psalmist asks, "O God, why have You rejected us forever?" (74:1).
3. Are you suffering? Oppressed in some form of slavery? Is death snapping at your heels? Are you financially stressed because someone defrauded you? Are you angry because someone took advantage of you?
4. The Psalms are reflective of the fact that you are not alone when you ask, "Why do the wicked prosper while the people of God are afflicted?"
5. Psa. 94 addresses the issue. (Read 1-7.)

Discussion:

I. The Psalmist calls for God's vengeance (1-7).

A. We may think of vengeance as a wild harsh manifestation of anger in view of some injustice.

1. This is the thing of which movies are made.

A peaceful rancher's family is senselessly murdered while he is away. His house is burned. His children are killed. His wife raped before she is shot. The men are so wicked they even kill the child's dog as they ride away. The husband returns to being the gun-slinger of a past life and hunts down the wicked murderers. We are excited that they get what's coming to them.

2. When we are the actual victims of injustice, and are powerless to rectify the situation, like the Psalmist, we may pray to God to adjust the situation.

B. Why God's intervention is necessary.

1. The wicked seem to be winning the day.
2. They have no regard for humans (vs. 5-6), nor for the Lord (v. 7).
3. They celebrate and boast (2-4).
4. They crush and afflict the powerless (5-6).
5. They claim the Lord does not see, nor pay attention (7).

II. The Lord teaches us that He might grant us relief from our adversity (vs. 8-15).

A. Against the idea that God does not see, nor give attention, the Psalmist says, "Yes, He does!" He responds with a series of questions.

1. "When will you understand, you stupid ones?" This corresponds with their address, "Pay heed, you senseless among the people." So he identifies as senseless and ignorant those who think God does not see or give attention.
2. "He who planted the ear, does He not hear? He who formed the eye, does He not

see? He who chastens the nations, will He not rebuke, even he who teaches man knowledge?"

3. His affirmative statement rebukes the false thinking that God does not give attention. "The Lord knows the thoughts of man, that they are a mere breath." Our thinking is so very limited. God knows our thoughts. In addition He teaches man knowledge. His thinking is so far superior to ours, yet we say, "He does not see or pay attention? We accuse Him of not understanding?"
- B. Not only does He pay attention, He chastens us and teaches us out of His law.
 1. The purpose of that teaching—"That we may be relieved from the days of adversity, until a pit is dug for the wicked."
 - a. Yes, the wicked will be dealt with.
 - b. And the people of God will be relieved.
 2. "The Lord will not abandon His people, nor will He forsake His inheritance."
 - a. He has not abandoned them.
 - b. He will not abandon them.
 3. The real question is, "Do we believe it?"
 - a. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).
 - b. All those examples of faith in Heb. 11 are about people who "endured a great conflict of suffering" (cf. Heb. 10:32-39; 11:27, 12:1-3).
 4. The teaching of His law prevents us from having to experience some of the consequences of failure. It gives us the wisdom to avoid some of the pain associated with sin by calling us out of it. But then the law teaches us that we will have to endure the hardships of the wicked against us until God sets things straight. The reason for the delay is identified in 2 Pet. 3:9-15a.

III. The Lord's help holds us up (vs. 16-23).

- A. "Who will stand up for me against evildoers? Who will take his stand for me against those who do wickedness?"
- B. If the Lord did not help I would have no help.
 1. "I would soon have dwelt in the abode of silence."
 2. "If I slip, the lovingkindness of the Lord holds me up."
- C. Are there anxious thoughts? Certainly! But God's consolations (revealed truths about the coming relief, God's assurances) delight our souls.
- D. God is not on the side of those who would destroy His people (20-21).
 1. He is our stronghold and rock of refuge.
 2. The Lord brings back their wickedness on them.
 3. He will destroy them in their evil.

IV. What should our response be?

- A. The Psalms answer (95:1-7a; 96:1-3; 97:1).
 1. Sing for joy.

2. Kneel and worship.
 3. Tell of His glory.
 4. Recognize that He reigns.
- B. Trust in His revelation. No matter what we are called on to suffer respond in faithful trust in His promise of deliverance (1 Pet. 4:12-13).
- C. "Let us lay aside every encumbrance and the sin that so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:1-3).
- D. No, it is not easy.
1. But the benefits are great. First to us.
 2. Then to all those who are saved while the patience of God is extended.
 3. And so, we share the sufferings of Christ and entrust our souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right (1 Pet. 4:19; cf. 1 Pet. 2:21ff).

Conclusion:

1. How long will the wicked prosper while the people of God are afflicted?
2. We do not know.
3. We only know that the Lord will not forsake us. He will not abandon us. He is our help. He remembered Abel. He delivered Israel. He restored Job. He resurrected Jesus and seated Him at His own right hand.
4. And so, we trust in Him.