08/31/25 - Psalm 94 - "God: The Faithful King"

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Date: 31 August 2025

Preacher: Micah Walton

[0:00] Today's scripture reading is found in Psalm 94.! Please find Psalm 94 and follow along.

O Lord, God of vengeance, O God of vengeance, shine forth.
Rise up, O judge of the earth. Repay to the proud what they deserve. O Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked exult?
They pour out their arrogant words, all the evil doers boast. They crush your people, O Lord, and afflict your heritage. They kill the widow and the sojourner and murder the fatherless.
And they say, the Lord does not see, the God of Jacob does not perceive. Understand, O dullest of the people, fools, when will you be wise?
[1:18] He who planted the ear, does he not hear? He who formed the eye, does he not see? He who disciplines the nations, does he not rebuke? He who teaches man knowledge, the Lord knows the thoughts of man, that they are but a breath.

Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O Lord, and whom you teach out of your law, to give him rest from days of trouble, until a pit is dug for the wicked.
For the Lord will not forsake his people. He will not abandon his heritage. For justice will return to the righteous, and all the upright in heart will follow it.
Who rises up for me against the wicked? Who stands up for me against evildoers? If the Lord had not been my help, my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence.
When I thought, my foot slips, your steadfast love, O Lord, held me up. When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul.
[2:29] When wicked rulers be allied, can wicked rulers be allied with you, those who frame injustice by statute? They band together against the life of the righteous, and condemn the innocent to death.

But the Lord has become my stronghold, and my God, the rock of my refuge. 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 God's word. Thanks be to God.
Before we get started in this psalm, I just want to take a moment to say a word that I have no authorization to say. On behalf of all the men who have participated in this preaching cohort over the summer, I would like to say thank you to Pastor Brent for his work in discipling and teaching and guiding us as we learn how to better handle God's word.
And I would like to thank all of you for being in attendance and faithfully participating in this as those who are receiving God's word. It is a very rare thing to find a pastor who is willing to give up his pulpit time, and it's a very rare thing to find a church who is willing to listen to men from within the church and I just really want to express our appreciation.
[4:06] I don't have their permission to do this as a group, but I want to express our appreciation for what has happened. So praise the Lord. So what can we say about this psalm?

Psalm 94, thank you for the reading of God's word. Expressive the way I was hoping it would be read. Praise the Lord. I think every single person who has preached this summer has mentioned that the psalm we're looking at is part of book four, which was organized during or shortly after the exile.
That is actually very important to the context of this psalm. The fact that Israel was dealing at a time when they had no king, when their king had been overthrown, and when a foreign nation ruled them, that is a very important consideration of this psalm.
And more specifically, this psalm is in a block of eight psalms, that is Psalm 92 to Psalm 99, all of which deal in some regard with God as king.

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And that's a very important point for the context of this psalm as we desire to read it and understand it. We don't know who the author is.
[5:32] Some commentators have said it might have been Moses. Good guess. It might have been David. Fair guess. We don't really know. In fact, there's a lot we don't know about how this psalm came to be.

But it doesn't really matter. Because what it teaches us is an eternal truth that will stand forever. And so we can study this psalm, and we can learn from it, and we can grow from it.
We also know that this psalm is a prayer. It is a prayer to God. It is speaking to God in a number of places as we read through here. And we know that it is a lament.
It is a cry of sorrow of a difficult situation that they are in. And this psalm, interestingly enough, is a call for justice.
It's what's called an imprecatory prayer. And an imprecatory prayer means it is calling down judgment upon God's enemies.
[6:36] With that in mind, the final thing that we need to recognize about this psalm is that makes it an uncomfortable psalm for us to read and study.

I'm willing to guess that there are individuals here. I didn't look at your faces. My vision isn't that good. But I'm willing to guess that as that was read, and it said, O Lord, God of vengeance, O God of vengeance, shine forth.
I'm willing to bet there were people that were like, not so much. You know? We struggle with that. There are people in the world today who think that the Old Testament God is a God of anger, and the New Testament God is a God of love and grace and compassion. And I want you to understand that that is a wrong division.
God is a God of vengeance, and God is a God of grace. He is both of those things, and we really need to come to terms with that.
[7:42] One of the commentaries that I was reading by a man named James Montgomery Boyce, in his commentary, he said the following things. I'd like to read this to you because I think it's very, very important for what we're dealing with.

He said, The problem some people will have with these verses is that they invoke the idea of vengeance. The reason such people have this problem is that they do not distinguish between vengeance and revenge.
Revenge is a response to personal injury, while vengeance is a function of legitimate judicial authority.
God is king. God reigns and rules, and God has the authority to bring judgment and justice upon those who have opposed him their entire lives.
God reigns and rules. We need to recognize the legitimate judicial authority of God as he exercises his role as king of this world.
[9:03] Before we dive into this psalm properly and look at each of the individual verses, let's take a moment and look to the Lord in a word of prayer. Heavenly Father, we do thank you for your word.

We recognize that this psalm is inspired by you. You wanted us to know these things. Father, you have shared these words with us so that we can apply them to our heart, to our lives.
Father, so that we can change the way that we live and honor you with our lives. Father, we pray that you would use this word in our hearts and in our lives this week, and we will praise you always. We thank you, Father, in Jesus' name. Amen. God is the faithful king who will fulfill every covenant promise he has made.
Every covenant promise. Now, in saying that, I just used a word that's one of those religious words and a lot of people are going to say, wait a minute, what do you mean? Covenant promise. What in the world is a covenant promise?
[10:08] What is that? We use the word covenant. We speak of a covenant of marriage. A covenant is an agreement that is made between two people.

In marriage, it's the covenant between the husband and wife and God that they will live together. But a covenant can be made between a king and another king or another nation.
You can think of it as something kind of like a treaty or a contract, an agreement upon how things are going to work. And basically, God is saying to the people, and I'm breaking this down as basically as I can, God is saying to the world, there are two ways that you can function with God.

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You can oppose him or you can submit to him. He is your king and you will honor him as such or you will rebel against him and face the consequences.
Those are the only two options. There is no other way. We have a choice to make. We have a responsibility to fulfill.
[11:24] And that is to come to him in humility and acknowledge our sinfulness and rely upon his grace and mercy to save us.

In this psalm, Psalm 94, the nation of Israel has no king. They are returning from an exile. There is a foreigner who is in charge of them.
And so, the psalmist divides this psalm into two sections. By the way, the title of this sermon that I have is God the Faithful King.
There is two sections to this psalm. The first one is the section that deals with those who are outside the covenant. That is going to be in verses 1-11.
The second part of the psalm is just the opposite. Those who are within the covenant. So, look with me, if you will, please, at the first 11 verses and let's discuss those who are outside the covenant.
[12:30] Notice first the psalmist's call for justice. This is verses 1-3. O Lord, God of vengeance, O God of vengeance, shine forth. Rise up, O judge of the earth.

Repay to the proud what they deserve. O Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked exalt? The psalmist is crying out for justice.
The psalmist is not the one who is saying that God is a God of vengeance. God himself says that. In Deuteronomy 32 verse 35, in the song of Moses, it is recorded, vengeance is mine and recompense. God claims the right as king to bring justice to those who oppose him.
Oh, we need to recognize the weight of that. God has the authority to bring justice and the psalmist cries out for that justice to come.
[13:44] In the covenantal agreement that we've been talking about, that contractual agreement, when God spoke to Abraham in Genesis chapter 12, he said to him, I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you, I will curse.

And in you, all the families of the earth will be blessed. God has established these two groups of people, those who bless and those who curse.
one more verse of scripture that relates to this, Acts 17, 31. In Acts 17, 31, I'm cutting into a sentence and I hope you don't mind, but it says, because he, that is referring to God, because he, God, has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.
We have the promise of God that this passage of scripture, God will rise up, God will bring vengeance and he's going to do it in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ who is king forever and will rule over all creation.
So how do the proud, what are they doing that's wrong? What are they doing? Notice that it refers to them in verse 2, rise up, O judge of the earth, repay the proud what they deserve.
[15:31] What are the proud doing that's wrong? Well, this psalm tells us, it tells us exactly what they're doing that's wrong. Look with me at verses 4 to 7.

It says, they pour out arrogant words, all the evildoers boast, they crush your people, O Lord, and afflict your heritage, they kill the widow and the sojourner, they murder the fatherless, and they say, the Lord does not see the God of Jacob does not perceive.
They exalt themselves with proud and wicked words. Notice their speech, verse 4, they pour out arrogant words.
That word pour out there is interesting. It's not like, you know, taking a cup and pouring it out on the ground. It's more the idea of taking a huge bucket of water and slinging it in somebody's face.
It is just an in-your-face kind of pouring out of words. They are saying things that is absolutely offensive to God.
[16:45] They exalt in their speech. I think of the account in Scripture, I hope you are familiar with this, David and Goliath. Have you heard of those two guys? David and Goliath? The boy and the giant who were going to fight.

When David came out against Goliath, he had in his hand a staff and a sling and Goliath was all dressed out in armor and he cried out and said, do you come at me like I'm a dog with a stick?
And the Bible says, I'm not going to turn there, it's in 1 Samuel 17, the Bible says, he cursed David by his gods.

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Those are arrogant words. How did that conflict end up? Did Goliath win? No. Goliath fell to the ground by a boy that had a stick and a sling in his hand because God gave him the victory.
People pour out arrogant words against God when they stand outside the covenant of grace. Not only do they boast in their speech, but in verses 5 and 6 we see that they are in direct opposition to the covenant.
[18:06] It says, they kill the widow and the sojourner, they murder the fatherless. I'm sorry, I read verse 6 first, I wanted to read verse 5.

They crush your people, O Lord, and they afflict your heritage, they kill the widow, the sojourner, and they murder the fatherless. So this is a direct opposition to God's covenant.
He said he would bless Abraham and his seed, but who are these people attacking? They're attacking your people, O Lord, the very ones that God said he was going to take care of.
And they're not just your people, O Lord, it says they afflict your heritage. That means God's inheritance, the very thing that God has planned to glorify himself through all eternity.
That's what they're attacking. They're attacking God at the very heart of his plan and his purpose.
Not only that, but they oppress the weakest and most vulnerable people.
[19:10] They kill the widow and the sojourner. They murder the fatherless. In Exodus 22, verses 21 to 24, Deuteronomy 10, 18 to 19, and 24, verses 17 to, I think, 21, somewhere in that range.

God explicitly tells Israel that they are supposed to take care of these people specifically. They are supposed to take care of the widow. They're supposed to take care of the fatherless.
They're supposed to take care of the sojourner, the person who was in their midst. This is exactly what Israel is supposed to be doing in obedience to God.
But what they do is proudly the opposite. They do exactly what God does not want them to do. In verse 7, we see that they deny God's power.
The Lord does not see. The God of Jacob does not perceive. God doesn't know what we're doing. They act as if God isn't even in existence.
[20:24] This is absolute opposition to God. That's why they're outside the covenant. it. But notice, even in all of this, even in this absolute opposition to God, notice that there is grace implied for them if they will just bring themselves to confess their sins and give themselves to God.

Notice with me the significance of verses 11, I'm sorry, verses 8 through 11. Notice! going on. That's a call for them to respond to the grace of God even though they've been in rebellion to Him. Yes, God is a God of vengeance, but God is a God who holds out grace and mercy to anyone who will come to Him in humility and faith.
Notice with me what the wicked need to know in order to become wise. Look at verse 9. He who planted the ear, does he not hear?
He who formed the eye, does he not see? He is responding, the psalmist is responding, God knows exactly what's going on and we need to recognize that God knows exactly what is going on.
[22:17] He knows their thoughts, verse 10. He who disciplines the nations, does he not rebuke? He who teaches man knowledge, the Lord, he knows the thoughts of man that they are but a breath.

In Jeremiah chapter 17 verses 9 and 10 it says, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick. Who can understand it?
I the Lord search the hearts and test the mind to give every man according to his way, according to the fruit of his deeds. And in Genesis chapter 6 and verse 5 it says, the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intent of the thought and of his heart was only evil continually.
God knows us better than we know ourselves. God knows mankind. He knows what motivates us and what moves us. And God is well aware that wickedness and sin is deeply rooted in our human experience.
So that's in the psalm. That's clearly in the psalm. Those who are opposed to God's covenant. But what about the New Testament? Does the New Testament call for the same thing?
[23:45] Is there parity between the New Testament and the Old Testament or are they at odds with each other? And I would suggest to you that the same thing is true today.

Do people pour out wicked words and rise up today? I would say yes, things are actually getting worse and worse as time goes by.

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Do people brag and say things that are just offensive to God? Not too long ago I watched an interview of a woman and she was literally bragging about how many abortions she had.
I can't hardly imagine bragging about killing children. Evil rises up in this world.
It is here today. What about opposition against the weak, those individuals? Abortion is obviously an example of that.
[24:54] But what about the other weak people in this world? I learned a staggering statistic this week.

Did you know that 10% of all the deaths in Canada are a result of assisted suicide? 10% of all the deaths assisted suicide.
That's what they call it, assisted suicide. In reality, it's euthanasia. They're putting people to death because they're old and in nursing homes and they don't want to care for them anymore.
the weakest people in our society deserve our care, not evil.
Is there a call for wisdom today? Well, there is in Christendom, in churches, we are calling people to come to Christ. That's the whole point of what we're doing.
[25:59] The Great Commission is nothing more than for us to go out and make disciples and to tell people about their need of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what we are doing as Christians.

This psalm makes it very clear that God needs and will rise up in vengeance against those who oppose Him and oppose His covenant of grace.
There's a second section to this psalm. We're going to look at it next, verses 12 to 23. In this section, we see those within the covenant.
We see how God is dealing not with those who are outside, but those who are within the covenant, who respond in faith and turn to Him and His grace.
What does God provide to those within the covenant? Look with me at verse 12. Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O Lord, and whom you teach out of your law to give him rest from his days of trouble until a pit is dug for the wicked.
[27:21] This psalm teaches us that God provides us the information that we need, the training and instruction on how to live. Blessed is the man whom you discipline.

Unfortunately, we think of discipline in a negative sense, but the word discipline is not a negative word. A coach disciplines an athlete to become better at what they're doing.
Discipline is training and instruction. It's like a dance teacher teaching somebody how to be more graceful in their moves and how to be more proficient in what they're doing.
Discipline is training how to do something right. Discipline is not punishment. It is not vengeance. It is training and teaching.
Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O Lord, and whom you teach out of your law. God gave Israel his word so that they could know it and study it and learn it and we are the most blessed of all people because we can literally own a copy of God's word and we can carry it around with us and we can read it and we can know what God has to say.
[28:45] Oh, God is good to those who come to him in faith. He is so rich in blessing. verse 13 he goes on.

Why does he teach them? Why does he discipline them? Why does he show them out of his law? Verse 13 to give him rest from his days of trouble until a pit is dug for the wicked.
And the rest from days of trouble is not necessarily talking about this life and our experience here and now. It's talking about when our eyes close in death we will have rest in him and our days of trouble will be over.
How does God show his care within his covenant? Verses 16 and 17 says, who rises up for me against the wicked? Who stands up for me against the evil?
If the Lord had not been my help my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence. God protects his people. It doesn't mean bad things don't happen.
[29:52] Certainly bad things happened to Israel. They were taken captive and sent into exile. Bad things happened. But God protected them through it all for his purpose for their good because God is a gracious and loving God.

Not only does he offer protection, verse 18, he offers strength. When I thought my foot slips your steadfast love, O Lord, held me up. God is the one who holds us up as we are struggling in this life.

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He's the one that gives us the ability to endure the trials we're facing. I honestly do not understand how people who don't believe in God can face the trials of life.
I couldn't do it. I really couldn't do it. If I didn't know God was on my side, I couldn't do it. verse 19, God promises comfort in times of trial.
It says, when the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul. That is so true. God has blessed us.
[31:03] Think of David and all the Psalms that he wrote and all the poetry that he was involved in. The Lord has blessed and given assurance. Verse 20, it says, can the wicked rulers be allied with you, those who frame injustice by statute?

Think for just a moment. In the book of Daniel, I think it is chapter 3, there's Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed and Nego, those guys.
King Nebuchadnezzar built an altar and they were told if you bow down to this, all is good, but if you don't, we're going to throw you into a fiery furnace.
And what did they do? They stayed true to God. And what happened? They got thrown in a fiery furnace. Think about that.
If you were pushed to the point that if you don't obey our law, we are going to kill you.
[32:15] Would you say, fine, take my life? God says that those people who pass those laws that oppose Christianity, they're not on God's side.

That's not being done because God thinks that that's a great thing to happen to you, but God promises to take care of you through it all. If you're not familiar, by the way, with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they lived through that process.
They came out of that fiery furnace. It was a marvelous thing. Verses 21 and 22, notice with me, it says, they band together against the life of the righteous and condemn the innocent to death, but the Lord has become my stronghold and the rock, my God, the rock of my refuge.
God has promised his security. He will take care. And finally, verse 23, he will bring back on them the iniquity and wipe them out for their wickedness.
The Lord, our God, will wipe them out. One of the things we all want in this life is vindication. We want to be proven right. That's one of the things about movies that kind of bother me.
[33:41] In a movie, the hero of the movie is always vindicated in the end. He's always shown to be right or powerful or smart or to win, to get the girl, whatever.

Life doesn't work that way. A lot of people die without ever being vindicated in this life. But God promises a day is coming in which vindication will happen for each and every one of God's people. Wow, what a promise that is. So what does this have, how does this apply to us? Does the New Testament teach us that we should live according to God's word like this psalm teaches that they are supposed to live according to God's word?
Colossians 3 verses 16 and 17, you're very familiar with it. It says, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thanksgiving in your hearts to God.
And whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. God teaches us from His word how to live to His glory and His honor.
[35:03] We have what we need to be able to glorify God in His word. Does God promise us a fruitful life and a future vindication?

Yes, indeed. You guys know Romans 8 very well, verses that you're so familiar with, starting at verse 28, reading down through verse 32, and we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good for those who are called according to His purpose.
For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son in order that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.
And those whom He predestined, He also called, and those whom He called, He also justified, and those whom He justified, He also glorified. what then shall we say to these things?
If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?
[36:19] Do you realize the implications of those promises for how we live our lives? We have the privilege of glorifying God and living for Him in this world.

In the beginning of this sermon, I said that God is a faithful King who will fulfill every covenant promise He has made.

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I said that a covenant was an agreement that was made between two parties, and in this reference we're talking about those whom God is going to save and those God is going to judge.
church. I want to turn to a couple of passages in the New Testament. If you have your Bible, you're welcome to read along, but I promise you I'll read them to the very, very best of my ability.
We're going to be in Revelation starting verse 19. The book of Revelation verse 19. I'm going to read selected verses from this chapter starting at verse 11.
[37:34] Revelation 19 starting at verse 11. Reading through verse 16 it says, Then I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse and one sitting on it is called faithful and true and in righteousness he judges and makes war.

His eyes are like a flame of fire and on his head are many diadems and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood and the name by which he is called is the word of God.
And the armies of heaven arrayed in fine linen, white and pure were following him on white horses.
From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations and he will rule them with a rod of iron and he will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God almighty.
on his robe and on his thigh he has a name written king of kings and lord of lords.
Jump with me to chapter 20 and verse 11. Chapter 20 and verse 11. And I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it from his presence earth and sky fled away and no place was found for them.
[39:20] And I saw the dead great and small standing before the throne and books were opened and another book was opened which is the book of life and the dead were judged by what was written in the books according to what they had done.

And the sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them and they were judged each one of them according to what they had done.
Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death the lake of fire and if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life he was thrown into the lake of fire.
These verses are the same as the first 11 verses in Psalm 94. God is king.
He will judge those who are outside the covenant. And if that offends you, if that bothers you, it's because you're outside the covenant.
[40:34] examine your heart and determine within your own soul. Are you right with God? Have you come to an understanding of what it means to be forgiven because of Jesus' death on the cross?

These verses apply to people today. This is what's waiting for people who reject God. God. Since we're in Revelation, let's turn a little bit further.
Chapter 22 verses 1 to 5 and then verse 14. This is the New Testament equivalent to the second half of Psalm 94.
24. Then the angel showed me a river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the streets of the city.
Also, on either side of the river, the tree of life, with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding fruit in each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.
[41:45] No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His servants will worship Him.

They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads, and night will be no more. There will be no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.
Jump to verse 14. Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life.
They may enter the city by the gates. You fall into one of two groups of people. people. You are either in the covenant and forgiven, and your future is sure in God, or you stand outside the covenant in your sin, in rebellion against God.
And if that offends you, be offended. I beg of you, be reconciled to God. Turn to the Lord in faith.
[43:15] Pray with me, please. Let's

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