

Psalm 94:1-11

This psalm was composed to be sung on the fourth day of the week, according to the rabbis. The Syriac version says it concerns "the company of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram."

According to Babylonian Talmud, Erachin 11a, at the time of the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem the Levites were singing this Psalm, and as they came to the words "and He turneth back upon them their iniquity" (**Psalm 94:23**), the enemies pressed into the Temple, so that they were not able to sing the closing words, "Yahweh, our God, will destroy them."

In relation to the reading on adultery and the Trial of Jealousy of the suspected wife, verses 9-11 emphasize God's all-seeing presence - "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?"

A cry against tyranny, both from within and without

Psalm 94:1-2 - "O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself. Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud."

Or, "God of retributions, Jehovah, God of retributions, shine forth."

The word for vengeance is plural, denoting the completeness of His retribution.

- **Isaiah 35:4** - "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you."

- **Deuteronomy 32:35** - "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; for their day of disaster is near, and their doom is coming quickly."

Seen ultimately in the overthrow of Babylon:

- **Revelation 18:20** - "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her."

- **Romans 12:19** - "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.'"

"Lift up thyself" - Ascend thy tribunal to pronounce the sentence. Or awake and arise, and exert your power.

"thou judge of the earth" - Abraham gives this title to God in his appeal for Sodom:

- **Genesis 18:25** - "That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

"render a reward" - An *evil* reward, according to the Targum.

Psalm 94:3-4 - "LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?"

"How long?" - an appeal made throughout the psalms - is the continual cry of the souls under the altar:

- **Revelation 6:9-10** - "...I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 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?"

Why does God allow the Beast to continue his blasphemies? We don't know, but He hardened Pharaoh's heart to:

- **Revelation 13:5** - "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months."

Targum: "how long shall they sit in tranquillity, or prosperity?"

It seems like a long time to us, but not in God's timeline:

- **Job 20:4-5** - "Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?"

- **Revelation 18:8** - "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

"speak hard things" - that which is unrestrained, unbridled, and insolent

Persecution

Psalm 94:5 - "They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage."

"break in pieces" = *daka'* - crush, shatter, break in pieces, bruise, oppress, make humble

Psalm 94:6 - "They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless."

These are the most vulnerable in society, uncovered and without protection. Justice to the weak is a sign of the best government, oppression is a sign of the worst (**Deuteronomy 10:18; Isaiah 10:2**).

The God of Jacob

Psalm 94:7 - "Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it."

"the God of Jacob" - or "the mighty God of Jacob" is found 17 times in the Old Testament.

The title focuses on unmerited grace - God loved Jacob and hated Esau while they were still in the womb. "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated" (**Romans 9: 10-13**).

It also is a reference to patience - Jacob had to work for Laban seven years, then seven more for Rachel. He was years under fear of Esau. And God had to be patient with Jacob the trickster, too.

It would also call to mind God's promise:

"Then Jacob made a vow, saying — If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I return safely to my father's house, then the Lord will be my God." (**Genesis 28:20,21**)

Jacob's name was changed to Israel after he wrestled with the Angel (**Genesis 32:28**).

But mostly, this is reference to Messiah:

Jacob's blessing of his children includes this:

First he blesses Judah:

- **Genesis 49:10** - "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

Then, blessing Joseph, Jacob says:

- **Genesis 49:24** - "But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)"

i.e. Shiloh, the Lawgiver, the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel will come from "the mighty God of Jacob" to deliver Israel.

Psalm 94:8 - "Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?"

To be brutish is to think and act as an animal - responding to the senses only, in which you "god is your belly" and God, the spiritual realm and even human reason are absent from your universe.

God Sees

Psalm 94:9 - "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?"

- **Proverbs 20:12** - "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them."

Psalm 94:10 - "He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?"

God judged the world with a flood, and destroyed Sodom. He will also judge among his own people.

Targum: "Is it possible that he should give the law to his people, and, when they have sinned, should they not be corrected?"

- **1 Peter 4:17** - "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"

"he that teacheth man knowledge" - The Natural Law is given to all humanity in nature, and they will be judged by that:

- **Romans 2:12** - "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law"

- **Romans 2:14** - "Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the Law, do by nature what the Law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the Law"

Psalm 94:11 - "The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity."

"thoughts" - *machashabah* - devices, purposes, projects, counsel, inventions

"man" = *'adam*

"vanity" = *hebel* - emptiness, air, a vapor, insubstantial, transitory, and therefore unsatisfactory