

# Cry and Joy of the Oppressed – Psalm 64 – Pastor Shawn Mathis

Let us listen attentively to the word of God.

Hear my voice, O God, in my meditation. Preserve my life from the fear of the enemy. Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked and the rebellion of the workers of iniquity, who sharpen their tongue like a sword and bend their bows to shoot their arrows. Bitter words that they may shoot in secret at the blameless. Suddenly they shoot at him and do not fear.

They encourage themselves in an evil manner. They talk of laying snares secretly. They say, who will see them? They devise iniquities.

We have perfected a shrewd scheme. Both the inward thoughts and the heart of man are deep. But God shall shoot at them with an arrow.

Suddenly they shall be wounded, so he will make them stumble over their own tongue. All will see them, shall flee away. All men shall fear and shall declare the work of God, for they shall wisely consider his doing. The righteous shall be glad in the Lord and trust in him, and all the upright in heart shall glory.

Let us pray. Indeed, God, as we read this psalm, and we see a little bit of our life in here as we cry out through perhaps oppression, but at the same time at the end, we come back always to you, Lord, to know that you are in charge and that you guide all things in your providence and ultimately when Christ returns.

And you shall shoot at the enemies of God, enemies of the church, with an arrow, and suddenly they shall be wounded, and they will stumble upon their own plans and their own tongue, God, and fall into their own snares as we read elsewhere in the other parts of the psalms. And in that may we find comfort and hope. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as we go through the psalm, may we embrace it and the truth therein that there is, of course, a time to cry out, but also a time of joy, even when we are oppressed by the wicked around us.

May this truth set into our hearts by faith and faith alone we pray. Amen.

So we have again a psalm of the oppressed, or about the oppressed, here of David being pursued or undermined to the extent that what? He feared for his own life.

Preserve my life from the fear of the enemy, their hidden secrets, and their plans and their sharpened tongues to come after me. Preserve my life. Because obviously they want to take his life.

This was more common, of course, because, well, David was what? A man of war and a king. A man of war and a king. Pretty much the same thing.

Although not all kings were necessarily warriors, and not all warriors became kings, but often the two overlapped. As a man of war, as you recall in the stories of 1 and 2 Samuel, he

is in constant danger with little reprieve at times. And as king, there are, quote, intrigues, usually surrounding him of the rebellions that he encountered from both of his sons.

Thankfully, we don't have such imminent danger in our life or troubles, especially in society here in the West and America, going after our churches in this regard. They go after them other ways, of course. And we have sister churches, however, on the other hand, who are in blatant oppression, who have people who come after their life and wish to kill them.

So let's look more carefully here into the cries and joy of the oppressed, of the oppressed of God's people. I don't have a lot of room for the titles at times, you know, in the line here, but the liberal churches will talk about the oppressed, and they mean anybody and everybody. It doesn't matter if they're wicked and while they're being oppressed.

This is about the righteous who are oppressed. That's the point. That's the point of all those passages of the Psalms and elsewhere, that they should go before God, and God will hear their just cause.

## **Cry of the Oppressed**

In verses 1 through 6, the severity of the oppression, hear my voice, oh God, my meditation. That is, he's talking like he doesn't believe God can hear him. Of course God can hear him.

Why would he say this? We speak this way often when we are at the bottom of the pit of our life, when things are so hard. God, have you abandoned me? Now you know intellectually that's not true, because God is everywhere. He's omnipresent.

But emotionally, you feel that way. And so this expresses here David's emotions. David could be very emotional, to be sure.

An expression of severe problems and difficulties, a mind overcome with distress, even. I've said this before, but differently, of course. And here, he continues in verse 2, 1b, preserve my life in the fear of the enemy.

That is, they wish to kill him. As a king, they hate him, or as a general, they wish to kill him. He was a fighting man, as we know.

He was despised by them. Preserve my life from them, from them coming after me, from their complaints and lies about me, as we read in the next few sections. This is a common concern of his before them.

And thus shows again the severity of the oppression, not just economic oppression and the like, but they literally want to come after him with their bows and strike him down, as we know, in his own life. Now our fellow Christians and brothers and sisters in foreign countries definitely have death threats upon them. Destruction of various sundry churches, we hear about at times in Africa, recently in Syria again, because Syria collapsed last year, and so it's in chaos and the like.

And as a side bar, as a reminder, this is why classically the Christian churches have never wanted to quickly and suddenly overthrow even tyrants. Because even tyrants maintain some semblance of order, as opposed to the kind of chaos going on right now in Syria, as we see, for example, in the fall of Iraq and like places. Because they know the consequences are much worse in many ways.

They ran for it. They wanted to kill the Christians, and they had an even hand now to do it. So we must pray for them, even though we don't know the fullness of the stories.

Often we hear things secondhand, and I know sometimes there's confusion there, maybe even exaggerations, but it's true. We know it's been a long-standing problem in various parts of the world, China, North Korea, the Middle East, Africa, large places of the world, where the kind of oppression and kind of hatred towards the gospel, towards God's churches, is beyond what we can comprehend. We saw a little bit more of it, of course, in 2020 and in our own lifetime in the last several years, but it still has not reached the level of the kind of severity in which the likes of David and our fellow Christian churches elsewhere have to struggle under.

Preservation of life, they're hiding from the secret plots of the wicked from the rebellion of the workers of iniquity, who sharpen their tongue and continues on to describe their various and sundry wicked ways. The secret plots of the wicked here, David's enemies, are not open about it. He mentions this several times in these verses here.

It's kind of interesting. So they're either lying to his face, which is often the case, speaking equivocal words to hide their true intent, meaning one thing and saying another, and of course secrecy is the watchword for many sinners, because it reflects their guilty conscience. We must not forget that they know there's a God, they know there's sin, they know they're sinners, they know they're doing wrong, and they don't want to be exposed.

That's what they do in the dark. We know this. We've done this ourselves, to be sure.

Maybe smaller sins, but still real sins nevertheless. And it's a serious problem here, because again, in this context, David's either the general or the king. In either case, he's a position of power and influence, and he has others trying to kill him with influence and power.

So this is a political problem, a military problem, and a social problem, all wrapped up in one. Praise be to God, we don't have that. Ours is more or less just a social problem.

Sometimes political, of course. Again, Christians in America have lost their jobs for standing for the truth. That's a form of oppression.

He describes them as those who are rebels as well, from the rebellion of the workers of iniquity. They're rebels. And not in a good sense.

I know in Star Wars series, I remember my daughter watched that, what, five years ago? Can you imagine that? It came out in 78, 79. You have to wait until she's old enough to appreciate it, right? And the rebels are the good guys, right? Not here. A thousand times no.

I don't think rebels are ever used in a good sense in the Bible. But of course, it can be in real life insofar as it's just a relative position. If the nation's wicked and we're standing against it, they're going to call us rebels.

I don't care. Call me what you will. I'm going to follow Jesus.

It doesn't matter. The rebellion here is a good description of those outside of the Lord. They know God exists, but He's a distraction to their desires.

He's a roadblock that hampers their sinful activities, and thus they purposely reject Him in His ways. And that's what all of us were before we were born again. Many of us were not raised in the covenant family of God, and so we came later into the church, baptism and the like, and we know what it was.

How we didn't care to submit to God. To submit to His will. It's what we saw this morning.

Worshiping God is an expression of submitting to Him. We were rebels. But God in His great grace and Christ Jesus, where He loved us with everlasting love, He brought in rebels and in spite of the rebellion, in spite of them hating Him, trying to tear down His kingdom, and brought them into the kingdom and transformed them by the power of His Holy Spirit.

That's the beautiful picture here. So when we understand the depravity of man and how we too were there, we can see all the more glorious of the greatness of God's redemption. But here in particular it's about oppression, of course, and that these men are not repenting.

These are unrepentant rebels, wicked men who have these plans to kill Him, to take Him out one way or another. It continues on in the description here, verses 3-6, "...who sharpen their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows their mouths like a bow, shooting an arrow. Bitter words," verse 3, "...that they may shoot in secret again." There it is.

The words of death. They sharpen their tongues. The same imagery we read elsewhere in the Psalms.

In other words, it's not just mean words, emotionally hurtful words. That's not the idea here. These are dangerous words.

Maybe even to life itself. Evil judgments perhaps. We don't know a lot of the details.

They bend their bows, a picture again of the tongues, forming words about to bring oppression upon them, harm and the like, maybe commanding His soldiers against Him, literal backstabbing in a political sense of taking down His kingdom, rigging judges and judgments. There's all kinds of ways in which backroom deals are exercised to bring about wickedness, and it's by the mouth. There's a small person, a little thing in our body, a small member as James says, but it boasts much great things and can bring about much damage and danger to God's people.

And it's oppressive. As they lie about the churches, for example, today and politicians and the media and the Hollywood, they portray us, it's a form of lying, a violation of the 9th commandment, about believers. They're using their tongue to tear us down.

To shoot in secret, and since honesty and forthrightness is expected in our circles, and it should be expected in our circles, Christian circles, I don't mean Presbyterian, but all Christian circles, it's, I think, hard for us to wrap our head around the fact that many unbelievers, I'm not going to say all of them, but many unbelievers put on a mask speaking smooth words, but inwardly they plan for evil. And again, I'm fine they put a mask on so far as I don't want to see the ugly, thank you very much. I really don't.

But we shouldn't be naive, especially church leaders, in realizing there are plans to take down and manipulate, that happened in 2020 with the COVID, where churches shut down, but apparently parlors and hair salons in California could stay open. I mean, just garbage like that was a form of clear injustice. And they were speaking double, obviously, it was double talk, clear double talk.

They had plans otherwise behind our backs, but it was so obvious by this time. Now, they continue on here. They suddenly shoot at him and do not fear.

Why don't they fear in verse 4? Because they do it in secret. Says it twice. They think they're going to get away with it.

That's what backstabbers do. They think they can get away with it. That's why they come up behind you.

Because they're cowards at the end of the day. Many of them are just cowards. They think that their evilness is bad enough, they've got to hide it, but they won't stand before your face, as it were, collectively in the church of God, for example, and say, we don't like you, we want to get rid of you.

But they speak sweet words, they lie and hide about it, hide this truth behind their words, as we read elsewhere in the Psalms. It seems to be a constant theme. I think there's two other Psalms we went over in the prior chapters about this way of speaking, or not speaking, as the case may be.

When the laws and the social pressures, etc., and the like, favor the wicked plots, they won't hide them in secret any longer. And we've seen this with Obergefell, for example, where they would lie about the homosexual lifestyle and say, look at this octogarian family couple here, and you find out later, in an interview, when we picked these people, because we know you're all suckers, for a sob story. This is not the real thing, is what they said.

They admit it wasn't a real thing. It was all a setup before Obergefell to get their plots and evil plans passed. Lying comes naturally to a lot of these people.

We must not forget this. Verse 5, they encourage themselves in an evil manner. They talk of laying snares secretly, and they say, who will see them? We've got these traps we can set up, and people are going to fall into it.

Evil is easily multiplied by groups of wicked men, and they just go on and on, and it gets worse and worse. Social media, Hollywood, etc., and the like, shows people of course clapping each other, and high-fiving each other, because we are humans who live in

community, and we want some of that accolade and praise, and there's nothing wrong with it if it's a good praise for good works. But they do it for evil purposes, to reinforce their wickedness and violations of God's holy law.

They like to hang out with one another. Makes them feel good. And plus, it smooths their conscience.

Well, they're like me. We're all in the same boat. I don't know what you guys are talking about.

You guys are the crazy ones. They've literally said this in op-eds and everything else. You Christians, what is up with you guys? They reinforce their wickedness this way with these schemes and these plans.

And we don't want this. We need to pray against this. We need to pray for protection, because they do gather together.

They have a lot of power and influence. In America, they will have these unedited movies that they have the law set up so that they really don't want you touching these and having them edited for you to watch. But if you go to China, China calls the shots and they edit the movies for them, because they hate us and they love the money of China.

That's part of their getting together. They want to do what they want to do, unless there's enough pressure upon them, as it was in the case of China. China's a wicked government, but at least in that case, they're making good edits, apparently.

They don't want this, and they're going to listen to them. So we need to pray. As one practical effect of this, although he's not mentioning it here, we know elsewhere in the Bible, we want righteous magistrates to hold back the wicked.

And of course, Hollywood's just full of wickedness. Until the 50s and 60s, some of you may recall as kids, the movie theater industry was very much limited. There's a lot of things you would not ever see on TV.

And of course, the 60s and 70s, they just blew it all out of the water. And it's just been downhill ever since. And of course, they were pushing it, I know, in some of the movies in the 40s and 50s.

But still, it's a big change. And that's because God had graced us for a long time with leadership in Hollywood. They were those who had influence.

And they exercised it for some good, even if they weren't Christians. Here we read again of their, what? Secret plans. They talk of laying snares secretly.

Who will see them? This seems to be a strong theme in this oppression of David and of godly people. Again, lots of things going on in backroom deals. And not just politicians, but in churches as well, unfortunately.

It's reiterating the secrecy here that they have these plans, they have these plots, they have these snares, they have these holes in the ground in which they cover up with the leaves and some wood and the like, so it's very fragile. But once you step on it, you fall into it. Or a snare, which is a specific trap in which it falls on you, falls on the animal, captures them, and the like.

Something along those lines is the picture and the metaphor, but we all know what's going on here. They're setting us up legally, they're setting us up socially, politically, they, as we talk about in politics, they reframe the narrative. That's one way in which they trap you.

Or they think they trap you. And see, we've proven you're a bigot, for example. What? Where'd that come from? No, no, you have the whole assumption wrong, because now you've walked into their way of thinking and their way of talking, and they think they've gotten away with it.

That's what the wicked do, and they encourage each other in this regard. Perfected shrewd schemes, verse 6, they devise iniquities, we have perfected a shrewd scheme, they declare. We've matured it, we've worked it out, this is the one that's really going to take down David, it's really going to take down the churches, really going to take down these Christians in my job, in my neighborhood, in my family, perhaps.

Micah 2.1 we read, Micah 2.1, where are those who devise iniquity, see, and work out evil on their beds? At morning light they practice it because it is in the power of their hand. The unbeliever, the sinner outside of Christ, has thoughts of sin on their way to bed, and they have these plans of what they're going to do the next day, and as soon as they wake up they're going to practice it because they've been meditating upon it throughout the day, throughout the night apparently, and when they have the ability they're going to do it. That's a nice summary of the depravity of man.

If it's within their power to do some wickedness, some evil desire they like, it could be something as simple as gluttony, or something as terrible of course as rebellion against the government. They're going to do it. That's the nature of the fallen man.

So when we read these descriptions in the psalmist as Paul does, remember these are good verses to remind us of sin, of wickedness, of the depravity of man, the natural inclination that as soon as they have the ability to exercise their wicked will, they will. So why should we ever want to give it to them? I don't believe that for a second, within the church or society. And of course it should remind us not to fall down these paths as well and say, brother, sister, we shouldn't be playing games in secret like this to try to trap people in the Christian church or whatever else and use our tongue for evil, but rather to use it for good, to build up, to encourage one another.

So you see in the negative examples, clearly what you shouldn't do, and therefore on the flip side what you ought to do as believers. Now the deep thoughts here, both the inward thought and the heart of man are deep. So he's describing here not just a general, because it's a poem.

In a poem you're not going to say everything at once. It assumes the prior understanding of the verses before it. Both the inward thought, that is the inward evil thoughts of perfecting a shrewd scheme and the heart of man are deep.

Deep with what? Deep with sin. That's what he's describing. Full of wickedness and transgression and violations of God's holy law.

With these plans to take out God's holy people and to undermine his church. These perfected shrewd schemes here in verse 6 are described as deep wicked thoughts as they bubble up to the surface. The heart of man, who can know it? It's full of iniquity, but God can and the Spirit does.

We don't. Sometimes it surprises us to be sure. We discover it over time.

What always comes to my mind, I mean it's here, brothers and sisters, it's here in America, Planned Parenthood, in which they had secret plans literally cannibalizing children. It's terrifying. That's what's going on.

These are real things. We need to pray for our nation to repent and to expose such wickedness and to protect the church in particular. These are moral monsters who want to make a quick buck with grotesque methods.

Now, as a reminder, not all rebels and the unbelievers think and sin the same way to be sure. Even the best of them still have secret thoughts of doing things their own way. Desiring things they should not desire.

And I know we feel the same tug. I went over that with Romans 7 a little bit in Sunday School class on sanctification. We feel the same tug as well.

So sometimes we have that kind of sympathy. I grant that. Okay, brother, sister, I've been there.

I can see this particular sin. I've struggled with it as well. But nevertheless, if they have not Christ Jesus, it's going to send them to hell.

Let us imitate David when the plans of the wicked are moving against us. It could be even our family members. Sometimes, as Christ reminds us, they are our worst enemies and wish to take us down.

But certainly any of those politicians and businesses and the like who wish to tear down Christianity, that we would cry out to God for protection and mercy. And again, not just socially, politically, militarily, which is the clear context here, but in your own personal endeavors against sin. Against your own sin.

Pray to God because your own sin oppresses you, even if you don't realize it. Oppression isn't simply and only political, although that's what we often think of in the American context is we're often very much overly politicized. We don't think in terms of sociology very much, or just being social creatures, but politics.

Everything's politics. If you have the wrong politics, you're a wicked person. But your own sin brings oppression upon you in your own inclinations, and we must fight against that and cry out to God against the oppression upon ourselves.

## Joy of the Oppressed

The next section here shows the answer that he has of this oppression. As he prays to God, and I pray the same for all of us, but God shall shoot at them with an arrow, and suddenly they shall be wounded. And he rejoices in this.

There is joy. There is glory in this. And all the upright, verse 10, in heart shall glory.

That is, glory in the Lord God Almighty for his justice, for his judgment, and for his redemption. God sees and judges. The joy of the oppressed begins with verse 7, as I read, that God shoots at them with an arrow, and suddenly they shall be wounded.

And he will make them stumble over their own tongue. God's arrow, in other words, is effective. It will come to pass, and it will bring down his enemy.

No matter how deep and secretive their plots are, the inward thoughts of the hearts of men are deep. They're hiding these things, secretive, secretive, secretive. They say it three times, and a fourth time implied that we have these traps that no one can see them.

God sees them, and his arrow sees them, and he will take them down. That's what he's saying here in verse 7. They cannot run far enough away, hide deep enough in the earth, be well connected with enough powerful men. God will shoot at them, and when he shoots, when he wills it, it will come to pass.

Reminding us, if we have a weak view of God's sovereignty, you're going to feel pretty miserable, because Satan is going to be very strong in that theology. And the will of man will be strong as well. But when you believe in the omnipotence and the sovereign power of God and his justice, when he shoots an arrow, it will hit them, and they will be wounded, not kind of, maybe, could be, but will be, shall be, and always.

And it's a wound that comes suddenly upon them, it catches them off guard. They have all these plans, they're all in the back room, they're smoking their cigars, and they're drinking their drinks. They say, we have our plan, no one's going to see this, we're going to pull it off.

We have the great conspiracy. And God, what? We read, Psalm 2, sits in heaven, laughs in derision, and his laughter turns into an arrow that strikes them down, if they will not repent. The arrows of judgment.

The Lord will bring to pass the intent of his heart, he sees their evil heart, he knows the depth of men, and he brings judgment upon their conscience. Their arrows are ineffective against him, but his arrows always hit true. And the psalmist takes comfort in that fact.

In God's arrows of judgment, a vindication of his people from scurrilous lies. Because that's what they are. They've always lied about us.

I told you about that in the early church, where they said, we were incestuous, we were brothers and sisters, and we were cannibals by eating bodies in the Lord's Supper. They were just twisting our words. They're clearly metaphors.

But they didn't care, because they hate Christianity, and they still hate Christianity. Mankind is a witness. This is interesting here in verse 9, at least to me.

All men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God, for they shall wisely consider his doing. And in contrast to that, the righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and trust in him, and all the upright in heart shall glory. So you have man, or mankind in general on the one hand, and God's people or the elect on the other.

And both will see that God is a just God, and he will execute what should be executed. Fairness and all these things. The evidence of judgment now, that mankind witnesses them stumbling, verse 8, over their own tongue.

They shall flee away, and the men shall fear, and they shall declare the work of God. All men who see them shall flee away, shall fear, and see the work of God. And they'll consider wisely his doing, that is God's doing, God's justice therein.

And this is done in history. Unbelievers recognize this when empires fall, when greedy corporations are exposed, when wicked politicians go to jail, they rejoice as well. Don't forget that.

When we talk about the depravity of man, we don't mean they're running around all the time, just foaming at the mouth, wishing to kill people and bring rain and destruction. They just want to fulfill their own desires, they care nothing about God. That's simply the long and short of it.

But even in the midst of doing that, they still have a glimmer of the law of God in their hearts. That's why they have guilt, because they know, they have the knowledge written on their heart. And they know, this is unjust, and they rejoice in justice, and that's a good thing.

Not always, to be sure, but they do. They'll recognize it. This is what this is saying.

They recognize the work of God in history, and in the law courts of the land even. Even though not perfect, this is a good thing. And it's a snapshot of the coming, what, final judgment of our Lord and Savior.

The falling of the nations, the capturing of greed corporations, the wicked politicians going to jail, those are but small little things that all point to the great day of judgment, because wickedness, they know, is everywhere. Even the unbeliever knows. They caught that one politician, they missed the other one.

They caught this wicked man, and this terrorist, and whatever else, but we know there are other ones. This isn't fair, they cry out. We're like, exactly.

Your heart knows this isn't fair, because God has made your heart, He has defined justice, and He will return and make all things right. You know this is going to come, and these are but small reminders that it will come, that day of judgment. Where? When Jesus returns, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

And they better confess it now, because when they confess it then, it's too late. The righteous rejoice, verse 10. The righteous shall be glad.

This is the joy of us seeing God do righteously. And the upright in heart shall glory. And of course, again, I hope you see by now, you're Hebrew experts, and see the parallelism of the first section of verse 10, and the second section, or stick they're called, or lines of verse 10.

The righteous paralleling upright to be glad, and they shall glory in the Lord. Here it says in the first section, trust in Him. We rejoice.

Mankind witnesses these things, they see it, they see God's judgment, but we rejoice in it, because we understand what it means. Who are the righteous and upright in heart? Those sanctified by the Spirit, as we saw in 2nd Ezekiel class. They are called saints, or holy ones.

We don't usually use that language, it's there in the Bible. You're a saint. You're a saint to the most high.

I know you don't feel like a saint, you don't always act like a saint, this is true. Nevertheless, you're saved in spite of your sins, that's the whole point of salvation. That's the glory of it.

And you are called saints of the most high. You are holy ones. And righteousness, or upright, and the like, is synonymous with that.

That's why I put on that list there, I went through all the different ways, I didn't cover all of them, of describing sanctification, or people who are sanctified, and one word is righteous. Even if you don't feel like it, that's what the Bible calls you, because you're righteous in Christ Jesus. Now one of the things you see here in the first part of verse 10, is they will be glad, they're happy, of course David's especially happy, because God is bringing deliverance to him in the here and now, and we ought to as well.

We have days of Thanksgiving, and we ought to continue these things, it's a long-standing tradition in America, we have Thanksgiving. We literally have a day for that. The churches do days of Thanksgiving as well as days of fasting.

We ought to do that when a great deliverance has occurred. And maybe it hasn't happened in the church, but it happened in your life, remember it, remind it, remind your children about it, and maybe even celebrate it once a year. But here, I want to focus on this little word, trust.

They are rejoiced, they are glad in the Lord, the covenant keeping God, and trust in Him. The Old Testament saints, the Jews of old, never were supposed to, and those who were godly never did, trust in the ceremonies, trust in the good works, trust in their circumcision, trust

in the priesthood, none of that. But they trusted in God Almighty, the maker of the covenant, and the keeper of the covenant.

They were, what? Saved by faith alone, in Christ alone, to the glory of God alone. It's the same thing in the Old and New Testament. If it's not, it's two different religions, we have two different gods.

We only have one God, and therefore one religion, and one way to the Savior, which is to God, which is through the Savior. Christ, I use the title Christ on purpose, because it means the anointed one, or Messiah, however you want to pronounce the Hebrew, in the Old Testament. They didn't know Him as Jesus per se, because they had less knowledge than we do, but they knew Him as someone different, unique, that they ought to trust and depend upon.

That's the point. They trusted in Him. And they glory in Him, of course, the upright in heart show glory, glory not in themselves, but glory, or honor, and magnify, and adore, all those synonyms I covered in the morning sermon, God Almighty, because He deserves all of it, and more.

We can never give Him enough. That's what He's referring to here, what He has done. He's exercised, and He's caught the enemy, He's caught the wicked, He protected His people, He vindicated their name, and He's brought final judgment.

Now, last thing I want to say here, it's implicit here, of course, because the Psalms are about God, and God the Father is there, and God the Son, as we saw in Psalm 96 this morning, and the Holy Spirit mentioned a few times. The New Testament makes it more clear that the work of God in judgment, the final day, the end of all time, before the new heaven and new earth, is not just the work of God the Father, but of God the Son. We teach, and we rightly teach, Jesus Christ is our Savior.

He's the Savior of all who repent of their sins, and believe and trust upon His perfection and righteousness, and not their own. But He's also a judge. We must teach and preach what the Bible teaches and preaches, and it teaches that Jesus Christ is not only a Savior, but He is a judge.

He's the coming judge. If they will not have Him as their Savior, He will be their judge, and only their judge. John 5.27, we read, and Christ says, He has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

As the Son of Man, the Father has given Him power to execute judgment. Now, of course, He says at the time, I'm not coming to do judgment right now. I've come to die, and to raise again from the dead, but I've still been given that power and authority, and it's going to happen.

In Revelation 19, I think it's a good place to stop here, because we rejoice, and we glory, and we trust in whom? God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. And we read here of the Son in particular, in Revelation 19.11, and we rejoice in the judgment that He will bring in this vision of the future. Now I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and

he who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.

His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood.

His name is called the Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed him on white horses. Now out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he shall strike the nations.

And he himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He himself treads the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God. That's three times already we read of Christ Jesus judging, striking, and the fierceness and the wrath of Almighty God in the winepress, which is another picture of judgment upon all those who hate Him and hate His people.

And, verse 16, he has on his robe and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Then the beast was captured, verse 19, and with him the false prophet who works signs in his presence. These are the leaders of the rebellion.

By which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire, burning with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword, which proceeds from the mouth of him who sat on the horse.

Jesus will bring judgment if people will not have Him as their Savior right here and now. Both messages must be preached, brothers and sisters, and we must pray for the churches to preach both messages. There's a time and a place, I know, as I mentioned this morning, to talk about mortification and crucifixion and sanctification, that strong language and a powerful motivation.

This is serious stuff. There's also a time for those struggling who are humble to say, God is working in you and not emphasize the crucifixion as much as the putting on and putting off imagery he uses in Ephesians, which is not a strong image or sharp, but more gentle. And same with preaching.

There's, of course, a time to emphasize the Savior and the redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ. There's also a time and a context in which we warn them, if you will not accept Him, you will be cut down with the sword that comes out of His mouth, the sword of His Word, the Word of Truth, where He gives the truth of the Word of judgment upon them for rejecting Him. It's a terrifying vision to behold for the unrepentant rebellious, and that's the point.

We want to wake them up from their slumber. But as people rejoice and be glad for this justice, for His mercy should have brought upon us in Christ Jesus, Maranatha, come quickly, Lord, we pray.

Let us pray. Indeed, God above, we ask that we would be strengthened in our difficult times of oppression, perhaps at work or in our neighborhood, but always and certainly, Lord, one degree or another with our own sins that we struggle against. May we stand firm and pray

and implore your mercies upon us through Christ Jesus and rejoice in the judgment you have, the judgment you had upon our Lord and Savior of our own sins, that He took our burden of guilt and the like upon His own shoulders and died for us instead, so the arrow of God was shot upon His heart. But, Lord, also as well upon the unrepentant sinners who wish to take down the kingdom of God and to tear you down as well, the judgment would be exercised and we would rejoice therein.

Our God and Savior, help us, we pray, to understand this psalm and to live accordingly.