

# Yahweh Malak Psalms

## 'The LORD Reigns' - Psalms 93-99

### STUDY TWO - Psalms 93 & 94

Ray Bell ~ 3rd September, 2015

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#### **Psalm 93... a fitting start to our studies, and to this collection of psalms**

- 'LORD' = Yahweh = Covenant God of Israel - their Redeemer, who has made himself known and betrothed himself to his people.
- 'The LORD Reigns' - is not only a confession or statement of faith, it is a VICTORY CRY!

One way of describing something another person cannot see is to use words, ideas, images and concepts which are familiar. This is precisely what the psalmist does here in Psalm 93.

- The LORD who is "unseen", yet who reigns over ALL THINGS which are seen and tangible, is described by and compared with some of the most powerful and mighty elements of his own creation!

The LORD is robed (royalty) in MAJESTY, and has put on STRENGTH as his belt. His reign (throne, voice/decrees, might) surpass all else. However, the LORD's reign is not a matter of sheer power and might. It is not merely that his VOICE is louder and mightier than the roaring floods and raging seas, WHAT HE SAYS (his decrees) are trustworthy, and HOLINESS befits his house... forevermore.

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**Do you ever wonder** if God really is interested and involved in what is going on in your life? Especially when it comes to the injustices you observe and experience? Sometimes it may seem he is far off, perhaps watching on from a distance, but not really doing that much about anything. Perhaps even, not interested in doing anything... or worse still, not *able* to!

**Psalm 94 addresses this very issue** as the psalmist *pleads* with the LORD that if he is watching, interested and willing, that he might get involved... that he would jump in sooner rather than later, and do something about the injustice the psalmist is enduring.

**The psalmist is inciting the LORD to act in VENGEANCE.** Do we ever pray like this? *Should* we ever pray like this? On what basis do we/should we? On what basis does the psalmist call for vengeance?

The word here, often translated 'vengeance', is in fact far less emotive than we might attribute to such a word. It involves a more balanced and appropriate punishment or consequence for wrongdoing. In other words, it is far less *emotionally* driven than how we might act, but is still very much *morally* driven!

**Verses 4-7** describe the situation and the 'proud' wicked ones the psalmist is petitioning the LORD to repay. They are arrogant, in both word and deed. They are boastful evildoers. Not mere 'trouble makers', they are crushing *the LORD's* people and afflicting *his* heritage. They kill widows and aliens, and murder the fatherless - those to whom God himself loves and executes justice for (Deut 10:17-19). And to top it all off, these evildoers think they can get away with it all, presuming the LORD doesn't see any of their wicked ways.

**But the psalmist knows better than they do! (vv. 8-11)** And in his prayer for vengeance upon them, he speaks as if he is addressing his oppressors personally. It seems the plea for vengeance has softened somewhat, and the psalmist wishes his persecutors might come know the LORD. Or at least, that they might acknowledge that he reigns, and that they cannot, and will not, escape his judgment.

**There is another change of tone and shift in audience in verses 12-15** as the psalmist addresses the people of God. His words are directed away from the wicked evil doers deserving of the LORD's rebuke, and are now directed to an 'invisible audience' as he TEACHES those who *receive* the discipline of the LORD.

This 'teaching' and 'education' is not a mere passing on of information, or data collection. It is *knowledge* - moral, relational, 'theo-logical' - knowing God and heeding his 'trustworthy decrees' (Ps 93:5).

**DISCIPLINE is not always NEGATIVE or REACTIVE!** Nor should it always be punitive or retributive. True and godly discipline should be positive and pro-active—teaching, growing, equipping and maturing. As with the tree planted by streams of water in Psalm 1, such 'discipline' helps us get our roots down deep so we can weather the storms and produce fruit in due season.

We can have great confidence, even in times of trouble, for (v14) the LORD will not forsake his people. He will not abandon his heritage. (Note the connection with v5 - the very point of attack for these evildoers is that which the LORD will not forsake or abandon.) Furthermore (v15), justice will be returned to the righteous. What comfort and relief! *(A great point of conversation with both believers and unbelievers... being prepared to give reason for the hope that is in us.)*

**Some rhetorical questions conclude this psalm (vv. 16-23)** as the psalmist finds his hopes have been lifted, even as he has been praying and considering these matters. He has looked back and remembered the LORD's faithfulness and deliverance in times gone by. And so now he can look forward, with assurance and faith in the LORD who reigns.

The psalmist KNOWS the LORD - not just in his heart or mind, but in his experience. He has been helped by the presence of the LORD standing with him (v16). He has been supported by the LORD's strength (v18), and he has been comforted, to the point of having a cheerful soul, by the LORD's compassion (v19). *He has not simply HEARD that the LORD is helpful, supporting and compassionate (it's not just hearsay!) - he HAS BEEN helped, supported and comforted BY THE LORD!*

#### **A LESSON IN PRAYER...**

Through his own prayer, the psalmist has been led to a place of comfort and assurance. The very act of praying has settled his heart. Note how the psalm finishes on a far less urgent note than the one with which it began. It concludes on a note of sure and settled confidence in the LORD's faithfulness and justice (vv. 22-23).

**We too can have the same rest and assurance** as we know that whatever happens, whatever statutes and laws might be passed, whoever comes into power, locally or globally, things may well become uncomfortable, maybe even painful, but whatever the case, the LORD is our stronghold! Our rock and refuge! Wickedness will not go unchecked, nor unpunished. Yahweh Malak - The LORD reigns!

**The LORD is interested** and involved in what is going on in our lives, especially when it comes to injustices and those who deny him or reject his kingship. He is patient, but he is not far off. And so we can pray, for justice, and for godly vengeance - in his time, and his way. And as we pray, we can find rest, and take refuge in the One who is our stronghold - the rock of our refuge, knowing that in his Son, Jesus Christ, he is both just and the justifier of those who have faith in him.