

## ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 20, 2016

The Rev. Dr. Jim Durlless '78/'80, Lecturer in Biblical Languages

### SCRIPTURE

#### PSALM 94

- 1 O LORD, you God of vengeance,  
you God of vengeance, shine forth!
- 2 Rise up, O judge of the earth;  
give to the proud what they deserve!
- 3 O LORD, how long shall the wicked,  
how long shall the wicked exult?
- 4 They pour out their arrogant words;  
all the evildoers boast.
- 5 They crush your people, O LORD,  
and afflict your heritage.
- 6 They kill the widow and the stranger,  
they murder the orphan,
- 7 and they say, "The LORD does not see;  
the God of Jacob does not perceive."
- 8 Understand, O dullest of the people;  
fools, when will you be wise?
- 9 He who planted the ear, does he not hear?  
He who formed the eye, does he not see?
- 10 He who disciplines the nations,  
he who teaches knowledge to humankind,  
does he not chastise?
- 11 The LORD knows our thoughts,  
that they are but an empty breath.
- 12 Happy are those whom you discipline, O LORD,  
and whom you teach out of your law,
- 13 giving them respite from days of trouble,  
until a pit is dug for the wicked.
- 14 For the LORD will not forsake his people;  
he will not abandon his heritage;
- 15 for justice will return to the righteous,  
and all the upright in heart will follow it.
- 16 Who rises up for me against the wicked?  
Who stands up for me against evildoers?
- 17 If the LORD had not been my help,  
my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence.
- 18 When I thought, "My foot is slipping,"  
your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up.
- 19 When the cares of my heart are many,

- your consolations cheer my soul.
- 20 Can wicked rulers be allied with you,  
those who contrive mischief by statute?
- 21 They band together against the life of the righteous,  
and condemn the innocent to death.
- 22 But the LORD has become my stronghold,  
and my God the rock of my refuge.
- 23 He will repay them for their iniquity  
and wipe them out for their wickedness;  
the LORD our God will wipe them out.

## DEVOTIONAL

James Luther Mays begins his commentary on Psalm 94 by stating that the theme of the psalm can be found in the line from the hymn “This Is My Father’s World” which affirms that, “though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet.”

There are, indeed, many times in life when “the wrong” seems so strong. There are times when we look around us and all we see are violence, injustice, suffering, loneliness, and hopelessness. It is at those times that we join the psalmist in praying that God will rid the world of all “the wrong” that we see around us and that God will bring renewal to our communities, transforming what seems to be a hopeless end into endless hope.

During this season of Advent, hold tightly to the affirmation that God is still in control—that “though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet.”

## PRAYER

Almighty God, we affirm that, though the wrong seems oft so strong, you are the ruler yet. We join with the psalmist of old in praying that you will rid our world, our communities, and our homes of all of the wrong that we see around us, this Advent season and throughout the year. Amen.

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