

Psalm 64

Prayer during the Day Saturday Week 2
Office of Readings for the Common of Apostles

The psalmist is amazed at how corrupt are the hearts of the wicked. He is confident, however, that crime does not pay. The title to this psalm reads: 'To the leader. A Psalm* of David.'

¹Hear my cry, O God; listen to my complaint; preserve my life from the dread enemy.

²Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked, from the scheming of evildoers,

³for they whet their tongues like swords, and aim cutting words like arrows,

⁴as they ambush the innocent and shoot. They shoot suddenly and without fear.

⁵They hold fast to their evil purpose; they talk of laying hidden snares, thinking, 'Who can see us?

⁶Who can search out our crimes? We have thought out a cunningly conceived plot.'

In the secret recesses of the heart* they are corrupt.

⁷But God shoots his arrow at them. Suddenly, unexpectedly, they are wounded.

⁸Because of their tongue he brings them to ruin.

All who see them shake their heads in horror.

⁹Everyone is afraid*; they will speak of what God has brought about, and ponder what he has done.

¹⁰The just* rejoice in YHWH* and take refuge in him. All the upright* in heart* praise him.

We find the word 'complaint' [Hebrew *śiḥ*, שִׁחַ] nineteen times in the psalms, placing this psalm among the 'psalms of lamentation'.

Their arrows are sharp, all their bows bent.

– Isaiah 5:28

The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse – who can understand it?

– Jeremiah 17:9

The crooked of mind do not prosper, and the perverse of tongue fall into calamity.

– Proverbs 17:20

For thus said YHWH God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.

– Isaiah 30:15

YHWH will fight for you, and you have only to keep still.

– Exodus 14:14

Be still, and know that I am God!

– Psalm 46:10