

# “THE WORLD’S BEST ARCHER”

## PSALM 64

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### INTRODUCTION

Leupold comments on Psalm 64: “There is nothing very unique about this psalm” (468). He suggests that there may not even be a specific situation reflected in the psalm. Psalm 63 had primary focus on God, not man. This psalm reverses the emphasis but still has the same outcome with praise and rejoicing in God. Much of the psalm focuses on the scheming of wicked men, but when God takes His counteraction man’s schemes evaporate. The deliverance seen is not the result of man’s plans and efforts, but entirely the result of God’s work. David does not express that he needs deliverance from an especially serious situation in his life. The psalm may be applied to any similar situation when the believer encounters foes who are without principle. David’s enemies are treacherous especially with the use of their tongues, putting slanderous accusations out against David like “poisonous arrows” or “insidious snares” (L. 469). But, God is the best archer, and He totally turns the tables on them (vv. 7ff).

For an outline: The first 6 verses present a lament about man’s plotting, the last four verses describes God’s overthrow of them. In addition, v. 1 is a prayer for assistance and v. 10 contains a note of exaltation and praise. Thus we may suggest the following outline: “Prayer, lament, deliverance, exultation” (p 469).

#### I. PRAYER (1)

- A. Hear my voice in my complaint.
- B. Preserve my life from the dread of the enemy

#### II. LAMENT (2-6)

##### A. The Camp of the enemy (2)

1. The secret council/counsel—of the Evildoers
2. Their thronging—of those who do iniquity

##### B. The Weapons of the enemy (3)

1. A tongue sharpened like a **sword**
2. Bitter speech aimed like an **arrow** [“aimed” is “tread”—foot on the bow in order to shoot an arrow]

##### C. The Methods of the enemy (4)

These cowardly opponents “cannot afford to be those of honest opposition”; so they conceal themselves and their plans. Contrast the honest and courageous statement of “truth” by Paul, “not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God” (II Cor. 4:2), and Paul’s open opposition of Peter “to his face” in Gal. 2:11. These enemies use “lies and innuendo” (K. 228).

1. Secretive shooting at the “blameless”
2. Sudden shooting without fear

They do not have the genuine “fear of the Lord” typical of the godly, and do not fear the consequences of their wicked behavior—especially since, as noted above, they likely act in anonymity.

##### D. The Thoughts of the enemy (5-6)

1. They harden themselves for an evil purpose/word/thing
2. They talk of concealing snares
3. “Who will see?”
4. They “search out” injustices
5. “We are perfect/complete/ready [same root as “blameless”] with a searched out search/plot”

The direct discourse of David’s foes has no formal introduction here with the verb “saying,” but that these are intended to be their words is clear from the context. The wicked foes “believed that their plots had been so well conceived that no one would be able to detect or counteract them”

6. Man's inward thought of each man and the heart are **deep**—deep in sin and perversity.

What a comment on the depravity of man!

Some suggest, somewhat plausibly, that David wrote this psalm when in Saul's court after he had become aware of plots against his life by those who may have been envious of his success, popularity, skill, and godliness. Such persons would seek "to injure him and traduce him to the king." If that is the case, the words could well express David's amazement at the depth of the nefarious designs of those out to harm him when compared with his honest and upright heart. David observed "the deep duplicity and treachery of the aspirants to royal favour, by whom he was surrounded" (P. 494).

### III. DELIVERANCE (7-9)

#### A. God's searching arrows (7)

Man's crafty plans may be "deep" but not too deep for God who knows the heart (Jer. 17:9). The wounds they had intended to inflict upon David have become their own wounds.

1. Suddenness
2. Arrows
3. Shooting
4. Tongue
5. The pain they feel and wounds they experience that were intended for the godly

#### B. The deadly tongue turns on its owners (8)

1. God's providential action against the evildoers
2. The reversal of the action of their own tongues
3. The flight/shaking of the heads of the wicked

#### C. The Change in Attitude of all men (9)

1. Fear—reverence for and awe of God
2. Declaration of God's Work (cf. Ex. 8:19)

How appropriate that David refers to the telling and speech of those who witness the just judgment of God, for the wicked had been doing much speaking of their own as witnessed in the preceding verses: they had "sharpened their tongues" (v. 3), they had "aimed bitter speech as an arrow" (v. 3), "they talk of laying snares secretly" (v. 5) and they "say, 'Who can see them'" (5), and "they are saying [implied] that they are "ready with a well-conceived plot" (6).

3. Understanding of God's Work

### IV. EXULTATION (10)

- A. The "Righteous man" is glad in the LORD
- B. They "take refuge in Him."
- C. The "Upright in heart" Glory—rejoice.

### CONCLUSION

Illustration—family for whom we have been praying; felt like imprecatory prayer! God has been at work bringing justice. Give thanks in **everything!**

### **GOD IS THE WORLD'S BEST ARCHER!**

Trust in Him; take shelter in Him. Rejoice in Him.