

Praying Imprecatory Psalms (God's Judgment) Upon Evildoers

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Let's say an intruder with a gun broke into your house with the intention to rob and harm your family. Would it be proper to immediately pray that God's vengeance would fall upon this intruder before he attempted to kill or harm your family? Is it appropriate for Christians to pray that God would express His vengeance toward the socialists or communists who are seeking to overthrow America and the religious expression of free speech and worship in this country? Is praying for God's judgment, invoking God's wrath upon evil and wicked people, out of character with New Testament revelation? Didn't Jesus say we are to love our enemies? In other words, what is the place of the imprecatory psalms in Christian prayer?

The imprecatory psalms (a type of lament) vocalize Israel's tears in the face of injustice and suffering. By praying down the curse of God on their enemies, the people of Israel sought to protect themselves while at the same time uphold God's character of goodness and justice. The imprecatory psalms were used to bring deliverance to God's people who were being bombarded with evil aggressors in a world desecrated by sin. Is it actually wrong to pray against the sinister forces of evil, including wicked people, that are seeking to hinder the Gospel advancement (1 Cor. 16:9) and wanting to destroy Christians, Christianity, and truth?

When reading through the Old Testament Book of Psalms, these types of prayers seem be uncomfortable to pray until you need them! Let's face it, there are times we sense a great need to pray that God would intervene for us as evil aggressors come against us and seek to harm our families and personal lives, to persecute us, and overthrow us with their wicked ideologies and attacks on Christianity.

I personally know missionaries who were frightened beyond measure when communists were coming after them to kill them for preaching the Gospel. I know that they submitted their prayers and lives into the hands of God, but I also know

they prayed for God's safety and deliverance from these wicked communistic invaders. Would not imprecatory prayers be proper to pray in a situation like this? One particular missionary told me the word was out that during the night the communists were coming to kill him. This preacher was taken to a different location to escape the wrath of the enemy. That night he said to me, "I heard every dog bark and every stick break." On another occasion, this same missionary shared that "Two of us stayed in a closet all evening fearful of what the communists would do if they found us." The missionary also mentioned to me that he sensed that a third person was with them in the closet!

The question we need to address is this. Would it be improper to pray for God's judgment to fall upon those who were seeking to kill these missionaries? If I were in the closet that night, I do believe I would be invoking imprecatory prayers upon my enemies, ultimately committing the situation and my life into God's hands. At first glance, the imprecatory psalms seem contrary to what Jesus taught about loving your enemies instead of hating your enemies (Matthew 5:44-45). However, on closer inspection, we see that the imprecatory psalms do not promote an attitude of hatred, but an attitude of desiring God's justice.

We love to pray through Psalm 23, the beloved Shepherd Psalm (and such like), but we should not necessarily avoid other psalms that pray for God's justice to be meted out upon evildoers throughout the earth. There seems to be Scriptural evidence that allows God's people to pray in a general way against their enemies who are seeking to destroy them, Christianity, and the Gospel witness. Although God's Word allows for the protection and self-preservation of one's life (Exodus 22:2-3; Luke 11:21; 22:36), the imprecatory prayers are not a call to bear arms but to express faith in God's justice to be brought against evildoers in accordance with His own will and purpose.

As Christians who live under the New Testament revelation, which is specifically given to the Church, we are commanded to pray for our leaders so we can lead a peaceful life.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 gives this command:

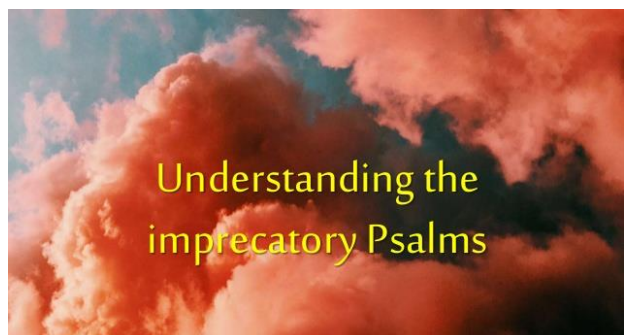
"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

This exhortation consists of praying for those, both good and bad (evil), who are placed in authority in accordance with God's providential ways, as He brings His sovereign purpose to pass in the world (Daniel 2:21). If they are wicked leaders, we should pray for their salvation and transformation. We can also pray that even in their unsaved state God might steer their hearts in a right direction for the good of the country (Prov. 21:1), so we might be able to exist peaceably in the land where we dwell. Of course, we cannot possibly lead a quiet and peaceable life under the totalitarian regime of communism. So how should we pray when our enemies want to take away our freedoms and peace, when they want to persecute Christians, and even call for the destruction of Christians as a Nero did?

The fact that we should pray for our leaders, even wicked leaders, does not negate the fact that we should never include prayers for God's wrath and justice to come to pass upon evil leaders and aggressors in the world, who are against Christianity and the Gospel. This study will highlight the need to sometimes pray in a general way, while avoiding the specifics, that God will bring about His righteous justice among the wicked, while ultimately leaving vengeance in the hands of an all-wise God. We have the answer to Abraham's age-old question: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen 18:25). The answer is yes!

When considering what is occurring in our country with the present cancel culture movement, it may be time to ignite imprecatory psalms against our enemies who oppose Christianity, the Gospel, and Biblical/ethical norms for human society. The real aim of this leftist, progressive, and socialistic movement is to change and control us politically, historically, economically, religiously, racially, environmentally, medically, philosophically, socially, culturally, biologically, and individually. They want to ultimately create a utopian, atheistic society without God and the Bible. In light of this, it seems that it is necessary to start praying imprecatory psalms against our enemies which are attempting to overtake and change our country into a communist nightmare and godless society.

In this study, I'd like to address the subject of praying prayers of judgment on Christian persecutors and evildoers. Imprecatory prayers are prayers for God's judgment to fall on wicked people, whatever form of judgment God



chooses to use upon wicked people. Major imprecatory Psalms include Psalm 69 and Psalm 109, while Psalms 5, 6, 11, 12, 35, 37, 40, 52, 54, 56, 57, 58, 59, 79, 83, 94, 137, 139 and 143 are also considered imprecatory. We will look at a few examples of them.

Psalm 7:1

“O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me.”

Psalm 5:10

“Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.”

Psalm 25:2

“O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.”

Psalm 35:4

“Let them be confounded (disappointed) and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.”

Psalm 58:8

“As a snail *which* melteth, let *every one of them* pass away: *like* the untimely birth of a woman (stillborn baby), *that* they may not see the sun.”

Psalm 69:24

“Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger (burning anger) take hold of (overtake) them.”

Of all the psalms of imprecation, Psalm 109 is unrivaled for first place. No other Psalm calls down the judgment of God with such comprehensive detail.

Psalm 109:13-15 says:

“Let his posterity be cut off; *and* in the generation following let their name be blotted out. Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out. Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.”

Psalm 109:25-27 concludes with these words:

“I became also a reproach unto them: *when* they looked upon me they shook their heads. Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy: That they may know that this (judgment) *is* thy hand; *that* thou, LORD, hast done it.”

In light of the execution of Christians around the world and the communistic attack upon Christians, perhaps it is time to ask: “Should we be praying the imprecatory psalms against ISIS and other terror groups?” Many have wondered if the spirit of imprecatory prayers (calling for vengeance) is a proper way for New Testament saints to pray who no longer live under the Mosaic Law system. However, it seems that this type of praying should not only be confined to Old Testament theology, but is a type of prayer that can span the dispensations of Law and Grace, as does capital punishment (Gen. 9:6) and God’s basic moral laws (Rom. 8:4; James 2:8). Some things are not specific to one dispensation but are transdispensational. In other words, they are similar in every dispensation.

The word imprecatory speaks of invoking a curse or evil upon someone else. Does God want us to curse our enemies in view of what Jesus taught in the New Testament about loving our enemies? How do imprecatory psalms align with New Testament revelation?

Jesus taught in Matthew 5:44:

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.”



Many will conclude that Jesus’ command to love your enemies trumps these antiquated imprecations of the psalms. While acknowledging the place of these psalms in history, they render them outdated and obsolete. But Jesus is still on Old Testament ground (the Dispensation of the Law) when

He makes this statement. It’s very clear that Jesus did not teach in this particular sermon and specific passage of Scripture that we should pray for the death and judgment of our enemies or that bad things might happen to them. If this is true, then how should we pray for them? We should pray for their salvation first and foremost, for their transformation, committing them to God’s will and purpose.

Of course, in other passages of Scripture Jesus warned people of their coming damnation in hell (Matt. 23:33; Luke 13:3). He also spoke of the coming death of wicked sinners (Rev. 2:18; 20-23). Jesus didn't always seem to show much love to the scribes and Pharisees and some others within the Bible when speaking to them. You might say, "But those quotes of Jesus that call for judgment aren't really prayer requests and therefore cannot be called imprecatory prayers." You're right, they aren't prayer requests. However, since Jesus is God, He doesn't have to always work through the process of taking His requests to the Father. He can just make the requests happen and they are an expression of God's will and purpose.

Paul in a general way (not a specific manner) spoke of anathema (God's curse and judgment) on those who distort the Gospel (1 Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:8-9). Jude also spoke of the righteous judgment of God to fall upon the false teachers and wicked (Jude 11-15). Although these are not specific prayers that people would be damned in hell, since God alone brings eternal vengeance against people (Rom. 12:9; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6), they do give warning to those who pervert the Gospel, persecute Christians, and who persist in degrading sins and false teachings.

The general spirit of these warnings also indicate that God's people can reserve the right to ask God to express His wrath and judgment upon those who are wicked, unrepentant, and seeking to hinder the cause of Christ (2 Tim. 4:14). We must remember that both love and vengeance and wrath and mercy are part of God's eternal character (Hab. 3:2). Therefore, we see both aspects of God's character being expressed from the lips of Jesus (Matt. 11:21-24; Rev. 2:23) and God's servants, who submit their prayers to the Lord's righteous judgment over the wicked (Rom. 2:5; 2 Cor. 11:15), and to the One whose face is against all those who do evil (1 Pet. 3:12). The discerning Christian must love justice and righteousness since "justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne" (Ps. 89:14), while at the same time they are called upon to love their enemies in the way Jesus taught.

Bible teacher James Steele remarks:

"The imprecatory Psalms, properly prayed, are the utterances of a righteous heart that mercifully, longs to see evil mitigated, God vindicated, and Christ exalted. One does not love anything who does not love righteousness and justice. When such prayers, however, are motivated by bitterness and wrath, they are not in keeping with scriptures, are not righteous, and are not loving."

Because of the dual nature of God's eternal character, our prayers need to be balanced. We need to always love our enemies (Luke 6:27, 35) as we pray for their repentance, salvation, and that God might change their lives, while at the same time committing them to God's justice and righteous wrath to be satisfied against sinners. Christians should have no problems with praying in the will of God for justice to be enacted (Rev. 6:9-10). In every case God's people should submit their prayers to the will of God. As Jesus said, "Thy will be done" (Matt. 26:42). Like Jesus, we can express our faith in the Heavenly Father to do what is right in view of our injustices (1 Pet. 2:24).

The other thing we notice about the imprecatory psalms is that they are dealing with groups of people not individuals. Pastor Paul Reiner gave some good advice when he said we should probably pray in a more general fashion for our enemies as David the Psalmist did in Psalm 35:1: "Plead *my cause*, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me." There are many other imprecatory psalms that follow this same pattern of praying in a general way for God to overthrow the enemies of God's people. The repeated use of the pronoun "them" seems to substantiate Pastor Reiner's point.

Psalm 5:10

"Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee."

Psalm 21:12

"Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, *when* thou shalt make ready *thine arrows* upon thy strings against the face of them."

Psalm 34:16

"The face of the LORD *is* against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth."

Psalm 35:3

"Draw out also the spear, and stop *the way* against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I *am* thy salvation."

Psalm 44:5

"Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us."

Psalm 59:1

“Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.”

The consistent witness of Scripture seems to affirm the legitimacy of God’s people making use of imprecatory prayers in their individual, family, and corporate prayers. However, if we get too specific in names, we might be praying out of line. The early church had the Old Testament psalms. They knew what imprecatory prayers were. One might wonder if the early church specifically prayed for the demise of Saul of Tarsus when he was persecuting the church. However, this would have been a mistake. In the end, look what God did to Paul’s life. He went from being the greatest distraction to the greatest asset of the Church.

This is a reminder that we must always pray for God’s will to occur in relation to the enemies of the cross of Christ and those who are persecuting His children. You never know what God will do in the life of a person! We must love our enemies by praying for their eternal salvation and deliverance from their evil ways, and simply commit them to God’s vengeance when necessary, whatever vengeance God chooses to bring against them, allowing the Lord to have His way with our enemies.

So, should we pray the imprecatory psalms? I believe we can. In a general way, we can pray that God would enact His justice on our enemies. But be careful about who you label as an enemy. It’s not okay to pray judgment upon the lady who holds up the line at the grocery store or the driver who pulls his car in the space where you were waiting to park your car! We are talking about groups of people who are persecuting believers around the world and seeking to overthrow Christianity and God’s way of truth. Of course, coupled with the prayer for justice is prayer that individuals and evildoers from any specific group, which are committing sinful atrocities, would come to repentance.

It would seem that in the midst of our imprecatory prayers, we should pray for the repentance of our enemies since God is “not willing that any should perish” (2 Pet. 3:9), and then leave the ultimate judgment and damnation of our enemies in the hands of God. We can pray for the *demise* of their works without calling for their personal *destruction* in hell. It’s possible to pray for God’s judgment to come on His enemies and at the same time pray for repentance for the individuals within that

group of enemies. This is not a contradiction; it's a reflection of God's desires for repentance and justice.

Our attitude is what is important in this type of prayer. If we possess bitterness and resentment, and out of anger want people to burn in hell, then we are wrongfully praying.

Luke 9:54-55 is an example of bitterness and revenge:

"And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of."

Russell McKinney has come to some good conclusions about these types of imprecatory prayers. "If nothing else, the imprecatory passages from the Old Testament and the New Testament prove that love (even God's love) doesn't cancel out other godly characteristics. Justice, for example, still has a place in God's plans. Vengeance does as well. As a matter of fact, the imprecatory prayers found in the Psalms can accurately be taken as requests for God to honor His words from Deuteronomy 32:35, where He says, "Vengeance is Mine." Furthermore, they are merely Old Testament calls for God to do what He promises to do in Romans 12:19 and Hebrews 10:30, where He says, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay."

"So, to sum all this up, there are times in our Christian lives when we are perfectly in the right to pray imprecatory prayers. What differentiates these prayers from mere fleshly requests for revenge is our motivation. First, if we are praying from a motivation of sincere love for others, we can rightly pray imprecatory prayers. Second, if we are genuinely seeking God's justice, we can rightly pray imprecatory prayers. Third, if we are joining God in a righteous indignation against the rank evil of wicked people, we can rightly pray imprecatory prayers. Fourth, if we are simply asking God to keep His word about repaying vengeance, we can rightly pray imprecatory prayers.

"Look, I'm not saying that imprecatory prayers should be our default setting in regards to our times of prayer. But I am saying that the Bible does sanction such prayers when the situation calls for them. Certainly those situations won't crop up every day in our lives, but we mustn't kid ourselves by thinking that they never will.

If they cropped up in David's life, Paul's life, Jude's life, and Jesus' life, they will crop up in ours, and when they do we shouldn't be afraid to humbly, reverently, and (don't forget) lovingly ask God to judiciously deal with them. The truth is, to do any less is to fail to employ the totality of scripture."

Once again, we need to remember that when Jesus spoke about loving our enemies (Matt. 5:44), He was still on Old Testament ground. So how does His thinking sync with the imprecatory psalms? Is there some unresolved tension between these two types of prayers? Many will ask, "Isn't praying curses on enemy's contradictory to God's message of love and forgiveness?" In answer to these questions, it would seem that our prayers should always include concern for our enemies, their lostness and need of salvation. This aligns with God's love. On the other hand, we can also pray that, if God will, He might judge evildoers who are corrupting God's truth, righteousness, and seeking to thwart the spread of the Gospel and destroy Christianity. This type of prayer aligns with God's justice and wrath (Rev. 15:3). We must remember that God is a God of love (Eph. 2:4; 1 John 4:10) but also of righteous justice and wrath (Rev. 6:16; Rev. 14:10).



I remember eating at a Cracker Barrel restaurant with a dear preacher friend of mine. He said to me that he was trying to understand how the prayers of the psalms for judgment upon wicked people can be harmonized with the Lord's instruction to love our enemies. The simple answer has to do with the nature of God who is both a loving and righteous God in His dealings with people. This is what we must recognize as we pray. In short, there is

nothing wrong with praying that God's vengeance might be meted out on people in accordance with His perfect way and plan (Isa. 55:8-9; Rev. 15:3). However, it is wrong to develop personal hatred and animosity toward others and seek to do them personal harm outside the bounds of governmental authority (Rom. 13:1-5).

William Ross makes this inciteful observation:

"We must recognize that the majority of the Psalter is non-violent. The instances where a psalmist speaks positively of violence are rare indeed. Wherever we do

find imprecation in Scripture, it is not triumphalistic or gloating. Instead, it issues from a position of weakness and victimization (Ps. 35:7; 69:1-3; 109:22-25).

We also discover that when violence against one's enemies is included in their prayers, it is done with the mindset that God would be the ultimate Judge and bring His righteous wrath in His own timing and way.

Psalm 137:8-9 is a case in point:

"O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy *shall he be* (God), that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy *shall he be* (God), that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones."

Although these prayers sound harsh to our safe, American ears, remember that Israel faced many battles and persecutions and pressures from enemy nations. These prayers call out for God to protect them. But notice that in this prayer the call for judgment and destruction is ultimately left in the Lord's hands. The psalmists always come to this conclusion and they had this underlying premise in their imprecatory prayers. Imprecation always recognizes God as the sole source of deliverance and righteous judgment.

Psalm 59:5

"Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah."

Psalm 40:13

"Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me."

Psalm 109:27

"That they may know that this *is* thy hand; *that* thou, LORD, hast done it."

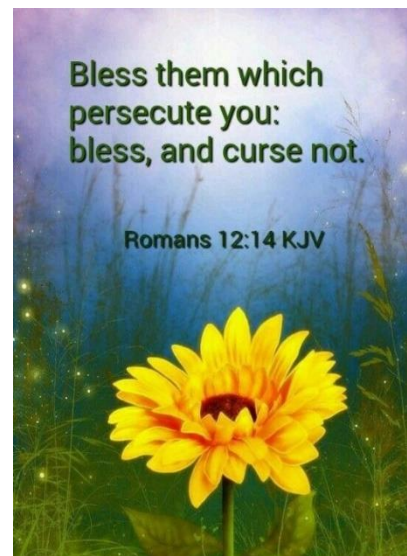
Remember that the only one laughing at the wicked is God himself (Ps. 2:4; 37:13; 59:8). This means we must leave God's justice and wrath to His own timing and the way He wants to express it toward the evildoers. We are not to engage in it personally, unless we are under the governmental authority, which is seeking to restrict evil aggression from occurring, but even then, God is ultimately the "revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom. 13:1-4).

Here is the obvious point. Ultimately, vengeance belongs to God and our prayer must be that God will do what is right, fair, and just. If a personal wrong has truly been done to us, we seek God in prayer about it, and then leave room for God's judgment and trust Him to do what is best. That is the way to be at peace with God and all men (Romans 12:17-21). Finally, if all our prayers revolve around vengeance and wrath to be meted out upon enemies, our hearts are not expressing love toward our enemies as Jesus taught (Matt. 5:44). In fact, bitterness likely has overcome our hearts. To avoid the temptation of bitterness and a revengeful spirit of animosity toward others, we should guard against overemphasizing the place of these imprecatory psalms in the Christian life.

Our mission is to care for souls as we take the Gospel to all nations (Matt. 28:19-20). Our goal should be to expand God's flock, not to eradicate anyone who is not a sheep! We don't want to develop the same mindset of the Muslims who seek to eradicate everyone who does not believe like they do and impose Sharia Law on society. This is neither Christian, Biblical nor American.

We must also remember something else. All of us were once enemies of God (Col. 1:21-22). I am thankful that the prayers of God's people were focused on my salvation and not my demise. This reminds us that imprecatory prayers should be what someone has termed as the "the nuclear option." In other words, the majority of our prayers should not be focused on bringing God's vengeance against wicked sinners. Our goal in prayer is the salvation of the lost while recognizing that the unsaved sometimes will seek to destroy Christianity, God's people, and God's truth in a society, which may call for the use of imprecatory prayers.

In the end, we must recognize God's sovereignty in acting out His own justice on evil and evildoers. But we can be sure of one thing, until God decides to judge, Jesus commands us to keep loving our enemies, to pray for them, even to bless them (Luke 6:27-28; Rom. 12:20; 1 Pet. 3:9). We also know that Jesus did speak more about love than bearing the sword (Matt. 10:34-35; Luke 12:51-53). In similar fashion, Paul instructed Christians to "bless them that persecute you: bless, and curse not" (Rom. 12:14). Mounce states that "The principle of nonretaliation for personal injury permeates the entire New Testament."



Of course, Jesus and Paul were speaking about the general mindset and attitude we are to possess toward our enemies and lost people. We are called upon to show kindness toward our persecutors instead of possessing a spirit of bitterness, animosity, and revenge toward them (Acts 7:59-60; Luke 23:34). Again, it all boils down to possessing a right attitude toward our enemies. We are to keep loving them while at times submitting and surrendering them to God's righteous hand of judgment. None of the instructions given by Jesus or Paul prohibit calling evil what it is and desiring that God deal with it promptly and specifically, at certain times in our life, when we are threatened and overtaken by wickedness and evildoers. Nor do these instructions forbid praying for God's justice to be done throughout the earth as evil continues to make inroads and advancement against God's people. We see this most clearly in the book of Revelation where the heavenly martyrs call out for justice and vengeance.

Revelation 6:9-10

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

If the heavenly saints can pray for God's justice and wrath to come upon their evildoers, then certainly the earthly saints can pray in the same manner. Of course,



their imprecation is qualified by the sovereignty and agency of God Himself to answer their prayer in His perfect timing ("How long?"). This means that as we pray for God's justice to be meted out upon our enemies, we must submit to God's sovereignty, His way, and timetable. This imprecatory instruction was seen in the Old Testament, it will be true during the future Tribulation Period, and it's also true today.

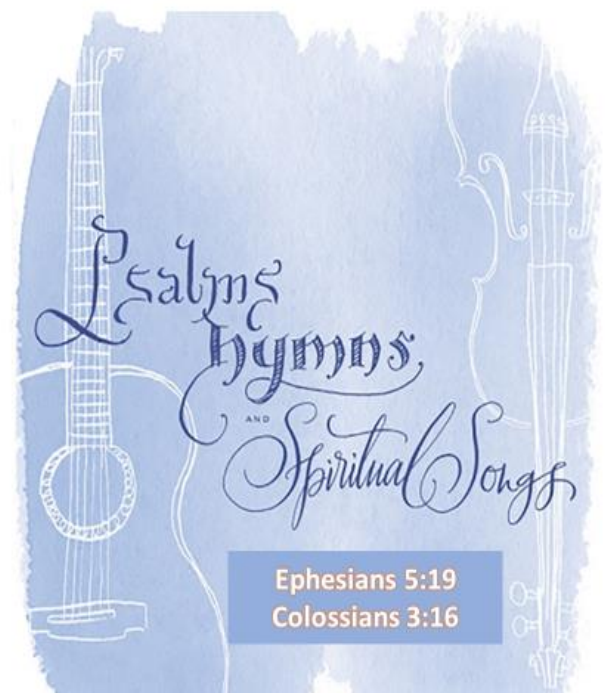
Praying for the destruction of our enemies is not an unscriptural prayer, but it is only permissible when directed to God's righteous justice and will – not our will. Again, imprecatory prayers of judgment recognize God as the sole source of deliverance and righteous judgment (Ps. 59:5; 40:13; 109:27). Praying the

imprecatory psalms can be useful when it acknowledges our weakness and God's righteous justice in bringing about His perfect plan in the world. In other words, we must recognize God's sovereignty in acting out His own justice on evil. While it is a solemn thing to desire God's judgment to fall upon unrepentant sinners, it is worse still for evil to go unpunished.

As Christians, we must exercise wisdom in our intercession for the persecuted church. While we profess that all Scripture is profitable and for our learning (2 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 15:4), we must carefully consider the ways in which this is true of these psalms and properly apply them in our time of praying. These psalms call us to renounce our man-centeredness and embrace God's purpose for the world which sometimes calls for judgment. They move us to exalt God for His righteous justice and universal wrath that He unleashes upon evildoers in the world (Ps. 105:7; Rom. 1:18; 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:12). One thing is certain, God is still a God of justice and judgment (Rev. 16:7; 19:2) as He was in the Old Testament. Once again, imprecatory prayers seem to be transdispensational in nature since nothing in the New Testament revelation directly forbids the use of them. In other words, they do not appear to be a dispensational matter but something which can be aligned with God's character and ways in every dispensation.

The Bible instructs us to sing "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), even those songs that may sometimes call for the destruction of our enemies which are also the enemies of God. We cannot overlook this New Testament instruction given in the context of the Church epistles. We used to sing a chorus in my teen years from Psalm 25:2.

"Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul,
Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.
Oh my God, I trust in Thee,
Let me not be ashamed,
Let not mine enemies
Triumph over me."



It's true that there are some dispensational changes regarding certain types of prayers within the psalms when we look at New Testament revelation (Ps. 51:11; John 14:26; Rom. 8:9). However, there seems to be no Biblical roadblocks that forbid God's New Testament saints from praying for deliverance from the enemies of the cross of Christ, from those whose goal is to keep God's people from worshipping in church, and from the evildoers who want to limit the Christian's freedom of speech against immoral practices (homosexuality, transgenderism, same-sex marriages) and from spreading the Gospel.

The same spirit of the imprecatory psalms is seen in Paul's prayer which is found in 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all *men* have not faith." There is a definite similarity between Paul's prayer and the imprecatory prayers found in the psalms. Praying against our enemies is not foreign to New Testament revelation. We need to remember that our deliverer is God, and we cannot be delivered without His help.

2 Timothy 4:18 is similar in tone:

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen."

In 2 Corinthians 1:10 Paul adds these words:

"Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver *us*."

If we remove the vocabulary of the imprecatory psalms from our homes and churches, we might be missing out on the deliverance that God wants to bring into our lives! Praying the imprecatory psalms is a call that expresses faith in God to bring about His purposes in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil. 2:15), which might include expressing His wrath against wicked aggressors and evildoers that are seeking to overthrow Christianity, the truth, and who are seeking to create an atheistic society.

Ecclesiastes 3:8 reminds us that there is:

"A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace."

Love and hate are both needed, provided we love and hate the proper things (Rom 12:9; 1 John 4:20). This informs us that within our individual relations with others, there is a time to protest and pray against evil and evildoers, reminding ourselves that we must hate the sin but love the sinner (John 3:16). Also, within national relations, there is a time to engage in war against those who promote evil. In conclusion, when making specific imprecation prayers toward the enemies of Christianity, each Christian must always balance their prayers with “Father, save the lost!” with “Father, pour out your wrath upon evil.” Blessed are the balanced! We need a HEART as well as some HEAT when dealing with the lost and evildoers of our society.