

## Imprecatory Praying

To make an imprecation is to curse or to call down evil upon someone or something. It has been a puzzle to many Christians, how we should interpret many psalms that are termed the “imprecatory psalms”. We can easily interpret and practice psalms like 1, 23, 34, and 100, but what of the ones that call down bitter curses upon personal or national enemies? They are obviously inspired by God and he has included them in the Bible, but what do we do with them, especially in the light of Jesus’ commands to love our enemies and do good to them that hate us and despitefully use us?

One source lists the major imprecatory psalms as 5, 10, 17, 35, 58, 59, 69, 70, 79, 83, 109, 129, 137, and 140. Some of them are particularly vindictive, calling for our enemies to be destroyed, to fall, and be cast out, to break their arms, to break their teeth, that they would be snared and trapped, their eyes darkened, their habitation desolate, and even that they would not come to righteousness, but be blotted out of the book of the living. We would have trouble praying for the literal breaking of bones and teeth and blindness, but in a figurative way we can apply some of these – breaking arms as representing their power, teeth as representing their vicious words and cruel actions, and their eyes darkened to what we are doing, like when people smuggled Bibles into Communist countries. I do not claim to understand all these or what to do with all of them, but in current events we see things happen that would seem to make their use appropriate.

For example:

1. The ruthless and wicked attacks by Gazan Palestinians against Israel on Oct. 7 of last year.
2. The shocking support of the Palestinians and protests against Israel in this country, at universities, the White House, the Golden Gate bridge, in Dearborn, and by the House members known as “the Squad” (AOC, Ilhan Omar, Rashida Tlaib (“Tbleep”), and Ayanna Pressley). Many Jewish university students are being terrorized and under justifiable fear because of death threats at the universities.
3. The totally irrational hatred of the media against Israel, and its attempts to turn public outrage against Israel and its war against Hamas.
4. The backstabbing by our own president and Sen. Chuck Schumer, against Israel, and especially Israel’s Prime Minister, Bibi Netanyahu, even calling for his removal from office. It is apparent that Biden’s goal is a ceasefire that will preserve Hamas as a fighting force, and ultimately to force a two-state “solution” in the mideast. Ironically, the Palestinians themselves do not want two states. They want to destroy Israel and the Jews altogether, which is what is meant by the phrase, “From the river to the sea”.
5. Palestinians and Iranians typically dance in the streets when Americans or Israelis are killed, from 9/11 until now, wildly rejoicing at the murders, rapes, and other atrocities done against us.
6. Lately protestors have chanted “Death to America” at rallies, like in Dearborn just a week or two ago.
7. Our president is quite apparently trying to destroy the country and to create hatred against “MAGA Republicans” and “Christian nationalists”. We are being flooded by illegal aliens in a transparent bid to get their votes, and in the process we are losing many jobs, and being overwhelmed by gang violence, Fentanyl, and enemy spies coming freely over the border.

While there are many such issues that are political and economic, not completely “religious”, it is apparent that our country and Israel are under massive spiritual attack. We have been under the judgment of God, and our prayer is that it is a chastening, and not a final giving up to national destruction. The sins of abortion alone are sufficient to bring us down, but now we are adding the release of murderers without punishment as prosecutors and DA’s refuse to do their duty. The blood of innocents is staining our streets, and there is no justice. As ancient Israel in Egypt, and in the time of the judges, we need to cry out to God in repentance and cries for mercy and deliverance. We may find appropriate words in many of the imprecatory psalms.

### So how can we, and should we pray?

**We can begin by pouring out our complaints to the LORD and crying for mercy**

- Ps. 94:3-6 – “LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? How long shall they utter and speak hard things? And all the workers of iniquity boast themselves? They break in pieces thy

people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage. They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.”

- Ps. 94:20-23 – “Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law? They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood. But the LORD is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge. And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the LORD our God shall cut them off.”
- The children of Israel cried out to God in their Egyptian bondage, and also against the oppressions they suffered in the times of the judges. Even in the book of Revelation, we see the souls of the martyrs under the altar, crying out for vengeance – “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (6:10)
- Pray that God would hide and protect us from enemies (Ps. 17:8-9, 13-14), and that we would be delivered from our haters (69:14). These enemies include individual people, our own government and its agencies, cartels, terrorists, and spies coming across our borders, and the big enemies like China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea. **But we recognize that it is not just these people or governments that are the real enemies, but Satan and his demons, principalities and powers.**

### Concerning personal enemies

1. For personal enemies we pray mercy on them, and that God would turn them around and give them repentance. In the meantime, we also pray that God would deliver us out of their wicked hands.
2. We can pray Ps. 140:1-13, especially verse 8 – “Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; lest they exalt themselves.”
3. We can pray psalms like 35:1-8, and 59:1-5, 10-13

### Concerning Israel

4. We can pray Ps. 79 for Israel in their current distress
5. We can pray Ps. 129:5 – “Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.”
6. We pray for the peace of Jerusalem (122:6), and for the preservation of his chosen people, the Jews.
7. We pray that they would be kept until the day of their national eye-opening and salvation, recognizing Jesus as their Messiah.
8. We pray for the Israeli government to have the wisdom, strength of will, and the financial and military capabilities to fight against their enemies, and that they would not continue to be hamstrung by American bullying.
9. Gen. 12:2-3 – God told Abraham “I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great: and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed.” We pray that we would continue to stand in support of Israel, and that he would turn some of the cursers into blessers, but that as he said he would curse those who curse Israel, that he would truly do it, and let that curse fall upon them who persist in opposition to his people.

### Concerning our own government and leaders

10. We pray for our leaders (kings and all that are in authority), that they would be so influenced by God as to do the right things, or at least to be restrained in their desires to do evil.
11. We pray for our leaders, especially the current president, that he would be prevented from truly harming Israel, and from bringing permanent and irreversible destruction on this country. We also pray to be delivered from him and the consequences of his corruption, lying, and dementia, and that God would keep us safe from the nations like China that would take advantage of an impotent and compromised leader.
12. We can pray Ps. 109:8 – “Let his days be few; and let another take his office.” (and no, I do not mean that we should pray for his assassination)
13. We pray that God would somehow restore to us real leadership and moral strength, and to deliver us from the people who are actually running this country “behind the scenes” (Obama, the State Department, FBI, CIA, DHS, DOJ, IRS, etc.)
14. We pray for President Trump and the members of the Supreme Court (especially Clarence Thomas and the other conservative members) against assassination attempts, or from other accident or death that

would throw the country into civil and constitutional turmoil. Note that just two days ago Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-MS) introduced legislation that would strip Pres. Trump of secret service protection if he is convicted and jailed. The obvious motivation is to make it easier for an assassin to get to him. And now Hillary Clinton accuses Trump of wanting to imprison and kill his opposition, which is exactly what the left is trying to do to him, and to the “J6” people.

#### **Concerning national enemies**

15. We pray that the wicked (Iranian leadership, Hamas, Hezbollah, the Democrat party, the mainstream news media, the current federal state governments that are attempting to prevent a real election, etc.) would fall into their own pits, the ones they have dug for us.
16. We pray for individuals that are currently in rebellion against God, Israel, the church, and even traditional and scriptural morality, that some of them would be given enlightenment and repentance to be saved and delivered from their all-consuming hatred.

We are not to avenge ourselves, nor to engage in plots or assassinations. David’s bitterest and deadliest enemy was king Saul, and yet David twice refused to kill him when he had the opportunity, and executed the man that confessed to having killed Saul after he was wounded in battle. David dared not to stretch forth his hand against God’s anointed, even though that man was trying to kill him. He resorted to prayer, and so should we.

We should especially be praying for the day comes when Christ returns and establishes his kingdom where the swords will be beaten into plowshares, where nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make him afraid ...” (Mic. 4:1-4)

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