

Psalms for Every Season: Cursing Psalms

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Psalm 69

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Reflection & Discussion

Imprecatory psalms are outpourings of anger, pain and a desire for justice

When we are hurt, ignored, mistreated or just overwhelmed something inside of us cries out wanting to be seen and heard and vindicated.

*What do you know or think about imprecatory psalms or the 'cursing' psalms?

*What are some of the mixed messages we hear from the church, culture, or friends and family about expressing anger and pain?

God would rather hear our anger honestly than have us hide it, deny it, or act on it destructively

Read and discuss Psalm 69:1-4 and 13-18(NIV)

*¹ Save me, O God,
for the waters have come up to my neck.*

*² I sink in the miry depths,
where there is no foothold.*

*I have come into the deep waters;
the floods engulf me.*

*³ I am worn out calling for help;
my throat is parched.*

*My eyes fail,
looking for my God.*

*⁴ Those who hate me without reason
outnumber the hairs of my head;
many are my enemies without cause,
those who seek to destroy me.*

*I am forced to restore
what I did not steal.*

*¹³ But I pray to you, Lord,
in the time of your favor;
in your great love, O God,
answer me with your sure salvation.*

*¹⁴ Rescue me from the mire,
do not let me sink;
deliver me from those who hate me,
from the deep waters.*

*¹⁵ Do not let the floodwaters engulf me
or the depths swallow me up
or the pit close its mouth over me.*

*¹⁶ Answer me, Lord, out of the goodness of your love;
in your great mercy turn to me.*

*¹⁷ Do not hide your face from your servant;
answer me quickly, for I am in trouble.*

*¹⁸ Come near and rescue me;
deliver me because of my foes.*

*What do you notice about this passage and the emotions it conveys?

*Think or share about a time when anger, disappointment and confusion overwhelmed you and whether you brought it to God or hid, denied or acted destructively.

*Why would indifference be more harmful to our relationship with God than anger?

If we don't bring our anger honestly somewhere, it starts shaping us

Read and discuss Psalm 69:22-28(NIV)

*²² May the table set before them become a snare;
may it become retribution and a trap.*

*²³ May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see,
and their backs be bent forever.*

*²⁴ Pour out your wrath on them;
let your fierce anger overtake them.*

²⁵ May their place be deserted;

let there be no one to dwell in their tents.

*²⁶ For they persecute those you wound
and talk about the pain of those you hurt.*

*²⁷ Charge them with crime upon crime;
do not let them share in your salvation.*

*²⁸ May they be blotted out of the book of life
and not be listed with the righteous.*

*What happens inside you as you hear these words? When have you been in a season where cursing was the response of your heart?

*Have you been able to release your anger to God before? What is the contrast of asking God to deal with it?

Bringing these emotions into God's presence can take us somewhere different than we started

Read and discuss Psalm 69:30-36(NIV)

*³⁰ I will praise God's name in song
and glorify him with thanksgiving.*

*³¹ This will please the Lord more than an ox,
more than a bull with its horns and hooves.*

*³² The poor will see and be glad—
you who seek God, may your hearts live!*

*³³ The Lord hears the needy
and does not despise his captive people.*

*³⁴ Let heaven and earth praise him,
the seas and all that move in them,*

*³⁵ for God will save Zion
and rebuild the cities of Judah.*

Then people will settle there and possess it;

*³⁶ the children of his servants will inherit it,
and those who love his name will dwell there.*

*What shifts do you notice in the psalmist?

*What does bringing anger and hard emotions to God say about our faith and relationship?

Surrendering our anger and desire for vengeance to God surrenders it to the One who bore our suffering personally

Jesus stepped into the pain of the psalm directly.

*As you look at the whole psalm what do you notice about the metamorphosis the author goes through? What is notable about the movement?

*Is there a place that anger or bitterness is defining you?

*What is the Spirit saying to you through this psalm about your current season of life? Where are you being invited to bring all of your difficult emotions to God?

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